

Vampyrvania System Reference Document v 0.8

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The full version of *Vampyrvania* will feature revised and expanded rules, original artwork by Imaginary Monsters, more flavor text, more enemies and boss monsters, and a full adventure (called a “stage”) for play. Additional stages and material will follow.

Introduction

This document is a pre-release beta meant to be used for playtesting purposes for *Vampyrvania*, a tabletop roleplaying game inspired by horror video games from the 8, 16, and 32-bit console eras. It does not simulate the logistics of traditional dungeon crawls or wilderness exploration, but instead focuses on fast-paced combat against classic monsters in spooky and dangerous Gothic horror locations.

All rules are subject to change.

Do you or your players have feedback on the game? Please submit it here.

Playing Vampyrvania

The Vampire Master (VM) presents **encounters**—situations and challenges—to the players, who declare how their player characters (PCs) in the group party respond and act to achieve their goals. The VM is responsible for describing the world, controlling monsters and non-player characters (NPCs), and using the rules, dice, and their best judgment to resolve in-game conflicts and determine outcomes.

In each encounter, PCs may take **actions** on their turn. When each character has acted and the results of their actions are determined, the round is over, and a new one begins. The VM and the players work together to decide who acts in what order, but everyone should get a chance to do something each round, even if that means just waiting for the situation to develop.

A **turn** generally represents a few moments of in-game time—enough for a character to take one or two significant actions like cross a room, open a door, attack an enemy, search for treasure, leap across a pit, cast a spell, and so forth. A **round** is the collective measure of time for all of an encounter’s PCs, monsters, and NPCs to take action.

Turns and rounds are purposefully elastic to keep the game fluid and fast-paced.

To resolve an outcome that isn’t clear or when there is a significant consequence for failure, players make a **check** or a **roll** (these terms are often used interchangeably). They add their relevant attribute to a d20 roll and account for bonuses or penalties assigned by the VM. The result must meet or exceed 13 for a success. For rolls made in combat, this number often differs, depending on the enemy’s stats.

Rolling a 1 on the d20 means the attempt fails and something bad happens; rolling a 20 means success and something exceptional happens. The VM determines these outcomes.

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Favor and Disfavor

When circumstances **Favor** a character's attempt, they add 1d6 to their roll. When poor conditions **Disfavor** their effort, they subtract 1d6 from their roll. Favor cancels out Disfavor and vice versa. If Favor or Disfavor are stacked (that is, multiple d6s are added to the roll), only the highest result is applied.

Character Attributes

Might represents physical strength, fortitude, and endurance.

Precision represents dexterous ability and aim.

Magic represents knowledge of the arcane and the occult.

Agility represents speed, jumping or leaping ability, and the potential to evade physical danger.

Character Life and Health

Maximum Life represents how long a character can survive in combat and other dangerous situations. The **Current Life** (often referred to simply as Life) score is reduced by monster attacks, traps, environmental hazards, and other threats. When this value reaches 0 or below, the character is incapacitated and cannot act. (Their Current Life is set to 0 regardless of how much damage they took.)

New characters begin play with Current Life equal to their Maximum Life. Current Life cannot exceed Maximum Life, no matter how much healing they receive.

- ▶ When incapacitated, characters survive a number of rounds equal to their Might attribute. Another character must **Stabilize** them (an action), bringing them back up to 1d4 Current Life.
 - ▷ In certain circumstances, the VM may rule that the character was merely knocked unconscious, in which case they will awaken later.
- ▶ Incapacitated characters lose benefits acquired from Numeral Slabs.
- ▶ When a character is stabilized or otherwise recovers from being incapacitated, they have a lingering injury.
 - ▷ Roll 1d4. A 1 applies Disfavor to Might rolls, a 2 applies it to Precision rolls, 3 to Magic rolls, and 4 to Agility rolls.
 - ▷ This injury can be healed by obtaining a Crimson Orb or by receiving the care of a trained healer for a week.
- ▶ If they are incapacitated twice in the same adventure, the character dies.

Recovery of lost Life is possible:

- ▶ Characters may recover 1d4+1 points of lost Current Life by **binding wounds**.
 - ▷ They may self-administer this treatment if they are not incapacitated.
 - ▷ Another character may apply this treatment as an action.

- ▷ This type of healing can only apply to a character once per day.
- ▷ Stabilizing is a different type of healing for incapacitated characters only.
- ▶ Resting in a safe area for 6-8 hours restores 1d6+1 lost Life.
- ▶ Resting in an inn, home, or comfortable location with warmth, heat, food, and water recovers all lost Life.
- ▶ Consuming Wall Meat restores 1d6 lost Life.
- ▶ Crimson and Azure Orbs restore all lost Life and heal injuries.

Creating Characters

1. Choose an archetype:

Slayers are trained warriors who battle the monstrous forces of evil.

- ▶ +1 to Might or Precision
- ▶ +1 to Maximum Life
- ▶ Have a 1-in-6 chance to make a second melee attack on their turn
 - ▷ The number required for a success is declared by the player, who then rolls the die.
- ▶ May use any weapon
- ▶ May use any subweapon
- ▶ May not use grimoires
- ▶ Do not suffer Disfavor on subsequent attacks made while holding the line
- ▶ Heart Die maximum: d8

Scoundrels are thieves, cutthroats, and others who use stealth and distance to attack their foes.

- ▶ +1 to Precision or Agility
- ▶ May use staves, daggers, and short swords
- ▶ May use any subweapon
- ▶ Have a 1-in-6 chance to make a second attack with a subweapon on their turn
 - ▷ The number required for a success is declared by the player, who then rolls the die.
- ▶ May not use grimoires
- ▶ May scale and traverse walls and ceilings as a move action with a successful Agility check each round

- ▶ May use a Sneak Attack in combat with a successful Agility roll and a successful attack roll against 13 to add Favor to their damage against the target.
 - ▷ Failing the Agility roll provokes a free attack from the target if adjacent to the enemy.
 - ▷ Failing either roll results in a miss.
 - ▷ This ability can only be used against a given target once.
- ▶ Heart Die maximum: d10

Magicians wield powerful mystical energies.

- ▶ +1 to Magic
- ▶ May use daggers and staves
- ▶ May not use subweapons
- ▶ May use any grimoire
- ▶ Have a 1-in-6 chance to make a second Magic attack on their turn
 - ▷ The number required for a success is declared by the player, who then rolls the die.
- ▶ Magicians can read, write, and glean knowledge from scrolls, tomes, artifacts, and other sources of occult and arcane knowledge.
- ▶ Heart Die maximum: d10

Dhampirs are the offspring of vampires and humans.

- ▶ +1 to Might, Magic, or Agility
- ▶ May use short swords or staves
- ▶ May make natural attacks when unarmed
 - ▷ Natural melee attacks: +1 attack bonus | 2 damage as human, 1 as bat, 3 as wolf | Near
- ▶ May not use subweapons
- ▶ May use one type of grimoire
- ▶ May transform into:
 - ▷ Bat
 - ▷ Mist (after one advancement)
 - ▷ Wolf (after two advancements)
- ▶ May cast Vampire Fireballs as a Magic attack (See the Grimoires and Spells section)

- ▶ Have a 1-in-6 chance to make a second Vampire Fireballs Magic attack on their turn
 - ▷ The number required for a success is declared by the player, who then rolls the die.
- ▶ Heart Die maximum: d8
- ▶ The Dhampir must drink the blood of a living creature once per week or suffer Disfavor to all rolls.
 - ▷ Drinking human blood grants Favor to all of the Dhampir's rolls for 1d4 days.
- ▶ While in direct sunlight, the Dhampir suffers Disfavor to all rolls, as mental and physical exertion becomes more difficult.
- ▶ NPCs may be suspicious of or hostile to the Dhampir if their true nature is discovered.

Transforming costs a heart roll and requires an additional heart roll for each round the Dhampir remains in their altered state. Returning to human form does not cost a roll. They may only make natural attacks while in these forms and may not use magic or other items until returning to human form.

As a bat, they may fly.

As a mist, they may not attack or receive damage, nor may they interact with the environment or others in a meaningful way, but they may bypass certain obstacles like locked doors, grates, bars, etc. with ease.

As a wolf, each move action may be doubled.

2. Assign Points to Attributes

Each character begins with a single point in each attribute. Players assign 4 additional points to the attributes as they see fit.

To determine Maximum Life, double Might then add 1d6.

3. Choose Background

Choose one former profession for roleplaying purposes.

4. Choose Weapons and Equipment

- ▶ All characters begin play with a **main weapon** they can use.
- ▶ Characters begin play with a Heart Die of d4, except for Magicians, who begin with a d6.
- ▶ Magicians begin play with a grimoire of their choice.

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- ▶ Scoundrels begin play with a subweapon of their choice.

Main Weapons

These melee weapons can strike targets that are near.

Unarmed

- ▶ +0 to melee attack roll | Damage 1

Daggers, Short Swords, and Staves

- ▶ +1 to melee attack roll | Damage 2
- ▶ These weapons strike more quickly than their larger counterparts. When first using one of these weapons against an enemy, apply Favor to the first attack roll made with them.

Battle axes, long swords, spears, whips

- ▶ +2 to melee attack roll | Damage 3

The Heart Die

Each time a subweapon or a grimoire is used, a memorized spell is cast, or the Dhampir transforms into a bat, wolf, or mist, the Heart Die is rolled. It represents the remaining supply of a subweapon or the magical energy reserves of the spellcaster.

When a 1 is rolled, the die is reduced one step. When a 1 is rolled on a d4, the lowest Heart Die level, the supply is exhausted and the subweapon or magic cannot be used until a Heart is found.

Hearts increase the Heart Die by one step. **Large Hearts** increase the Heart Die by two steps.

- ▶ Hearts must be assigned to a character immediately upon discovery, as their power will otherwise dissipate.
- ▶ Sometimes they can be found in Magic Candles or within breakable blocks.
- ▶ Enemies typically have a 1-in-10 chance of dropping a Heart when destroyed.

Subweapons

Subweapons are thrown in ranged attacks, but may strike either near or far targets. They require a Heart Die roll to use. Due to their arcane nature, only one subweapon may be carried at a time. When a

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subweapon is discovered, it must be immediately assigned to an eligible character or it is lost. A character may not carry a subweapon if they cannot use subweapons.

The first number in each listing is the bonus the subweapon provides to the roll; the second number is the damage the weapon deals to the target.

Holy Water

A glass vial of blessed water that erupts into burning blue flame when shattered.

- ▶ +0 | Burns for 2 damage per round for 1d4 rounds at impact location
- ▶ This location can occupy a significant portion of a zone, potentially damaging multiple enemies in the vicinity.
- ▶ Target has a 1-in-3 chance of losing an action while taking this damage (does not apply against airborne targets).

Mystical Pocket Watch

A silver pocket watch covered in strange symbols.

- ▶ No roll is made; consumes one full Heart Die step when used
- ▶ Holds enemies with 4 Life or less and moving environmental features in place for 1d3 rounds
- ▶ Enemies with more Life lose one action on their next turn.
- ▶ Some bosses are immune to these effects as per the VM's discretion.

Spinning Cross

The cross cuts through a target, pauses behind, and returns to the thrower. A second attack roll is made against the target on the return pass.

- ▶ +1 (+3 on return attack) | 2 damage
- ▶ May strike multiple targets in a row

Throwing Axe

Tossed in an arc. May be thrown over some obstacles and strike elevated targets.

- ▶ -2 against near ground-level enemies; +2 against flying or elevated enemies | 2 damage
- ▶ May strike multiple airborne targets in an arc

Throwing Knife

Flies in a straight line toward the target.

- ▶ +1 | 2 damage

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Grimoires and Spells

Eldritch or holy texts allow for the casting of spells. They occupy the subweapon slot, and thus only one can be carried at a time. A character who cannot use grimoires cannot carry one, as their power will reject them.

Each casting requires at least one Heart Die roll to use. A Magic check is made against the monster's Evasion, using the first number listed as a bonus and resulting in the damage and effects stated.

The caster is encouraged to be creative with these magics and is not necessarily restricted by what is stated below. All applications of magic power are subject to the VM's approval.

Earth Grimoire

Rocks and chunks of the ground assail the target.

- ▶ +1 | 2 damage | Near, Far
- ▶ May be cast to create and temporarily suspend small platforms

Flame Grimoire

A pillar of fire erupts from the caster's hand.

- ▶ +x | x damage | Near
- ▶ x = the number of Heart Die rolls made
 - ▷ Each roll after the first is made with Disfavor

Ice Grimoire

Shards of ice slice through foes.

- ▶ +1 | 2 damage | Near, Far
- ▶ Targets with 3 or less Life are frozen for 2 rounds; any further attack shatters them

Lightning Grimoire

Electrical energy gathers into a lethal pillar and strikes.

- ▶ +2 | 1d6 damage | Far
- ▶ Requires two Heart Die rolls to cast

Wind Grimoire

The power of the air is bent to the caster's will.

- ▶ +1; +3 against flying enemies | 2 damage + target is pushed back | Near, Far

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- ▶ May reduce the Attack bonus by 1 in order to target up to 1d3 additional foes

Vampire Fireballs

Vampire magic used exclusively by the Dhampir. No grimoire is necessary, but a Heart Die roll is made as normal.

- ▶ One fireball: +1 | 1 damage | Near, Far
- ▶ One Saintry Relic upgrade:
 - ▷ Two fireballs at normal strength or
 - ▷ One fireball at +2 | 2 damage
- ▶ Two Saintry Relic upgrades:
 - ▷ Three fireballs at normal strength or
 - ▷ One fireball at +2 | 2 damage and one fireball at normal strength or
 - ▷ One fireball at +3 | 3 damage

Why Fight Together?

Parties in Vampyrvania are forged by a common interest to destroy the Vampire Lord. Individuals may be seeking revenge or penance, or may battle evil out of altruism or a sense of religious obligation. Players should discuss their personal and group motivations and how they came to work together, or the VM should provide this information for them. To save everyone time, the **adventure typically begins with the group formed**. Thieving and betrayal among allies is not recommended.

Platforming

Characters may attempt daring jumps or leaps to nearby platforms by making an Agility check. This counts as a move action, in whole or in part, as determined by the VM.

A missed jump (that is, a failed Agility check) resulting in death should be rare. Instead, the VM should consider results like these:

- ▶ A narrow miss, leaving the character helplessly clinging to the platform
- ▶ Falling to a level of the stage below, where additional monsters or obstacles await
- ▶ Suffering minor damage
- ▶ Dropping a carried subweapon or grimoire
- ▶ Suffering Disfavor on their next roll

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Combat

When a combat encounter begins, determine if the monsters or the characters have surprised the other side. If they have, their side acts first in combat. Their opponents may then act.

Otherwise, when combat begins and at the beginning of each new round, the player whose character is nearest the enemy rolls a d6. The result is checked against a d6 roll made by the VM. If the player roll meets or exceeds the VM's roll, the player characters act first. If the VM's roll is higher, the monsters act first.

Boss monsters always act first at the top of the round, and no initiative roll is made during these encounters.

The VM may choose the order in which players act—usually the character closest to the monsters takes the initiative—or let the players decide.

Each character and monster gets one turn per round. On their turn, they usually may take two actions but may only attack or cast a spell once, unless a special ability grants them additional attacks.

Actions:

- ▶ Move
- ▶ Attack with main weapon
- ▶ Attack with subweapon
- ▶ Attack with magic
- ▶ Cast a spell for an effect
- ▶ Transform
- ▶ Hold the line
- ▶ Coordinate actions
- ▶ Stabilize an incapacitated ally
- ▶ Bind wounds
- ▶ Some other action (special combat maneuvers, use item, interact with environment, etc.)

Melee attacks are made against monsters at near range. Roll a d20 + Might + weapon bonus (and any other applicable bonuses or penalties). If the attack meets or exceeds the monster's Evasion, the attack is a hit, and the weapon's damage is subtracted from the target's Current Life.

Ranged attacks are made against monsters at near and far ranges, with a roll of d20 + Precision + subweapon bonus in the same manner as described above. On a miss, the VM determines where the missile lands and what effect it has, if any. Cover, concealment, or other challenges may interfere with a ranged attack, adding Disfavor to the roll or, in certain cases, preventing it outright.

Magical attacks are made with a roll of d20 + Magic, with ranges, damage, and effects as described by the spell. Magic can often have some sort of effect, even on a miss. For example, ice might freeze a surface or flames might catch nearby.

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Jumping attacks are made against elevated or airborne targets, and use both a move and attack action, thus consuming a character's turn. The character makes an Agility roll to jump in a declared arc, then makes an attack roll if it is a success. Failing the Agility roll means they cannot attack and land somewhere they did not mean to. See the Platforming section for consequences of a failed jump.

When a monster attacks a player character, the player makes an Agility check against the monster's Attack value. They must meet or exceed that value on their roll or their character suffers damage.

Combatants can **hold the line** to restrict the movement of nearby enemies. After a move action (if they choose to take one), they forgo an attack or other actions to assume a defensive stance that allows them to make a melee attack against any targets that pass through the area immediately adjacent to them until their next turn. That is, enemies must be Near. Whether they are "immediately adjacent" to the character or not is up to the VM's discretion, as it may be possible to pass through the same zone but just out of reach of the stationary defender.

The target may choose whether to halt their movement when they reach the combatant holding the line or continue their movement and suffer the free attack. Each attack after the first made while holding the line suffers Disfavor (Slayers excepted).

Unless they are surprised, all player characters and monsters are assumed to be holding the line before their first turn is taken.

Special combat maneuvers are feats of daring, the success of which are dependent on the player's imagination, the judgment of the VM, and sometimes additional dice rolls. They count as attacks if they are meant to directly harm a foe. Some examples:

- ▶ Sliding beneath a tall enemy via an Agility roll to reposition behind them
- ▶ Using a whip or rope to swing across ledges
- ▶ Using improvised weapons
- ▶ Kicking sand in an enemy's eyes
- ▶ Disarming an opponent via an attack roll with Disfavor

Declaring a reaction means a player forgoes their character's actions to instead wait for specific circumstances to develop and then act. These reactions are subject to the VM's approval.

- ▶ "If the enemy enters my zone, I will make a magic attack against it."
- ▶ "If something comes through that door, I will attack it with my whip."

To **coordinate actions** means two players agree to act together toward a single goal that happens and is resolved at the same time. This usually increases the likelihood of success and has a beneficial effect greater than individual actions would.

- ▶ "We want to hold the overturned table against the door to keep the zombies from breaking through."
- ▶ "The Slayer will kneel down so I can run up her back and do a leaping attack against the monster's head."
- ▶ "The other Magician will cast their fire spell as I cast my ice spell, creating a blast of water"

and mist that will extinguish the monster’s flaming sword.”

Rolling “natural” 20s and 1s

Whenever a player rolls a 20 on the d20, their action is an exceptional success. Sometimes this means their success is doubled or some other benefit results. The opposite is true for a roll of a 1.

- ▶ An attack roll with a result of 20 on the die may deal double damage.
- ▶ An attack roll with a result of 1 on the die may provoke an attack from a nearby enemy or accidentally strike an ally.
- ▶ An evasion roll with a result of a 20 may dodge multiple attacks in a single round or grant a free attack to the PC.
- ▶ An evasion roll with a result of a 1 results in double damage from the enemy.

Movement and Ranges

Space and movement are abstracted in this game. Encounter spaces—that is, the places where combat, exploration, and other interactions occur—are divided into **zones**.

Zones divide up a given location. If a significant effort of movement would be required to reach one area or another, or if features such as doors, staircases, windows, obstacles, and so forth mark a clear delineation from one area to the next, then the location has multiple zones.

- ▶ A small room may be a single zone.
- ▶ A larger space may be divided into multiple zones.
 - ▷ For example, the entrance to the council chambers may be one zone; the vampire’s throne at the far end of the room may be in another.
- ▶ Vertical spaces above or below ground level are separate zones.
- ▶ Debris and obstacles may slow down movement within a given zone, necessitating multiple moves to navigate. This is often referred to as difficult terrain.

For those who need a more standardized definition, consider a standard zone size to be spaces of about 40 square feet or less. A character could reasonably cross that space in a few seconds’ time (or in a single move action). This definition is flexible based on room layout, obstacles, features, and so forth.

The relative distance between characters, monsters, objects, and locations is expressed by three ranges: near, far, and distant.

Near means two things are within the same zone or next to one another on the connecting edges of adjacent zones. When opponents are near one another, melee attacks can be made and ranged attacks can usually be made as well.

Far means things are not immediately adjacent to one another (even if they are in the same zone), or are in adjacent zones and out of melee striking distance. Significant movement (a move action) would be required to reach one another. Ranged attacks can be made.

Distant means two things are multiple zones away from one another. Whether ranged attacks can be made (with Disfavor) is up to the VM.

A **move action** may be used to:

- ▶ Move within a zone
- ▶ Cross from one zone into part of an adjacent zone
- ▶ Jump up, down, or onto nearby platforms
- ▶ Navigate an obstacle within a zone or into an adjacent zone, to include:
 - ▷ Leaping onto a platform
 - ▷ Climbing up a wall or other feature
 - ▷ Navigating through the dangers of a trapped area

A move can reduce the distance between a character and their target, whether an enemy, ally, object, or location. A target that is far becomes near with a move.

Use common sense when working out how a move action works. Player characters, monsters, terrain features, obstacles, objects, etc. occupy space and may restrict or slow movement, requiring multiple move actions to overcome or move past, even within a single zone.

Sometimes, especially dangerous move actions may provoke free attacks from foes, while others may require Agility checks to be successful. Creatures cannot move completely freely within a zone—obstacles and the enemy may all interfere with movement to restrict it. Use common sense. For example, creatures cannot continually use a move action to maneuver behind their enemies or through their formation to strike at protected foes. These movements are of course possible, but may require catching the enemy off-guard, successful Agility rolls, or other favorable circumstances. Clever play using this flexible system is encouraged; exploits are not.

Players should discuss their intent with the VM before committing to a move action to ensure that they understand the situation.

- ▶ “Can I reach the desecrated altar this turn?”
- ▶ “Am I within striking distance of that enemy? Do I have to move first?”
- ▶ “I’m trying to avoid that enemy’s ranged attacks—will that bookshelf in another zone provide some cover?”
- ▶ “I want to jump over that pit of spikes and land on the platform on the far side near the Magic Candle.”

Vampire Master Section

The following sections are for the Vampire Master's eyes only.

Running the Game

Because a rule is not covered for every possible situation, rulings that are fair and fun for all involved are necessary to run this game. Encourage the players to be creative in how they explore the environments or participate in combat and reward their efforts. In low-stakes situations, if it makes sense that the player characters would succeed in their task, then they do, with no roll necessary.

If a roll is needed to determine an outcome—or because the risk of failure makes the situation more interesting—then identify which attribute is most relevant to the situation, establish a bonus or penalty to the roll (including Favor or Disfavor), and let fate decide.

Death

When an individual player character dies, it is up to you to determine if another can enter the scene, and how, to get the player back in the game. New characters should be prohibited from joining the game during boss fights, as these are the climatic moments of an adventure and the stakes should be high.

If every character in the party is defeated, it is **Game Over**—at least for now.

Character Advancement

After defeating a challenging boss at the end of a stage and finding a Crimson Orb, the player characters may advance a step. They add +1 to an attribute of their choice and +1 to Life. Magicians may forgo the +1 to an attribute (but still take the +1 to Life) to memorize the spell of their currently equipped grimoire, allowing them to use its magic even when they are not carrying the book.

Environmental Objects and Hazards

Breakable Blocks can be struck to reveal special items, including Large Hearts or Wall Meat, valuable treasure, or alternate passages. A careful search of a many areas will reveal their presence.

Crumbling Blocks are pieces of passable terrain that degrade and fall away after a short time, usually after a few seconds or a couple of rounds in combat. Player characters should be given a chance to react as the blocks begin to crumble beneath their feet.

Magic Candles can be found in a variety of configurations throughout the vampire's castle and grounds. They produce subweapons, Hearts, or other items when struck. The VM may place these as necessary to keep the party equipped to fight, or restrict them to create a greater sense of tension.

Moving Platforms can be stone, wood, giant gears, or other objects in the environment that provide passage through a space. Sometimes, using them requires a successful Agility roll.

Pendulum Traps are giant blades that swing from side to side, dealing 2 damage to unwary explorers

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who fail their Agility rolls.

Spikes are placed throughout the vampire's domain, dealing 1d6 damage. They may be placed passively or triggered and deployed as traps.

Water is a hazard that can carry characters away from their party or contain menacing Deep Ones just beneath the surface.

Items & Power-Ups

Saintly Relics are artifacts revealed to restore balance in the fight against the Vampire Lord. They imbue the party's armaments with divine energy.

- ▶ Weapons, subweapons, the Dhampir's natural attacks, and grimoires may all be upgraded up to three times by finding Saintly Relics.
 - ▷ For each Saintly Relic collected, the attack roll bonus and damage of the chosen attack increases by 1.
 - ▷ Weapons, subweapons, and grimoires upgraded in this way become named artifacts due to their power and unique properties.
 - ◆ These items can be stored for later use and are not lost when the character switches them out, or when the character is incapacitated or dies, and therefore may be passed on to new party members.
- ▶ The Dhampir has their own set of rules related to the Saintly Relic for transformations and the Vampire Fireballs magic attack. Each upgrade may only be applied to one type at a time.

Example Saintly Relics:

- ▶ Hand of glory
- ▶ Bag of teeth
- ▶ Folk iconography
- ▶ Skull of a martyr
- ▶ Bloody vestments of a penitent
- ▶ Preserved eyes of a prophet
- ▶ Hair of a blessed virgin
- ▶ Sacred oils
- ▶ Remnants of the Cross
- ▶ Solomon's Keys
- ▶ Vial of blood
- ▶ Holy foreskin

- ▶ Skeleton of the Favored King
- ▶ Tongue of a mute made to speak
- ▶ Spear that put martyrs to death

Sacred Icons are masterfully crafted religious artifacts created with divine inspiration. They may be raised high to deal 4 damage to all enemies in a single encounter. The holy power of the artifact is expended after one use, but a priest may reconsecrate it... in exchange for a tithe, of course. Give players the opportunity to define the nature of the Sacred Icon when they find one.

Example Sacred Icons:

- ▶ Paintings
- ▶ Statues
- ▶ Scepters
- ▶ Crowns
- ▶ Vestments
- ▶ Ceremonial weapons
- ▶ Censers
- ▶ Chalices
- ▶ Communion plates
- ▶ Silver Crucifixes

Hearts are found by striking Magic Candles and other sources of ever-burning flame. They increase the Heart Die by one step (up to the archetype's maximum). A Large Heart increases it by two steps (up to maximum). Both types must be assigned to a player character immediately upon discovery.

Numeral Slabs can be found by destroying Magic Candles or defeating five enemies or more with a subweapon. The II Slab allows for an additional attack to be made with the subweapon on a single turn in combat; the III Slab allows for yet another. These bonuses are tied to a specific subweapon, and are lost when the subweapon is unequipped for any reason or when the wielder is incapacitated.

The **Potion of Invulnerability** may be consumed to become invulnerable for approximately 30 seconds outside of combat or for 1d3+1 rounds in combat.

Wall Meat is preserved foodstuff stored in secret areas or sold by some merchants. It restores 1d6 lost Life points when consumed.

The **Green Herb** restores 2 lost Life per two Heart Die rolls made. It occupies the subweapon slot and is usable by all character archetypes. It can be shared among the party, but the subweapon it replaces in each exchange is lost.

Crimson Orbs are rewarded after defeating the boss at the end of a stage. They provide a point of advancement and restore all lost Life for each member of the party present. **Azure Orbs** provide a

point of advancement and Life restoration for characters who are behind the others in their party, and are usually awarded after defeating a Miniboss.

Fiends & Foes

These stat blocks are considered standard, but as the heroes advance in power and abilities and invade the domain of the Vampire Lord, the VM should consider bumping up the monsters' attack damage and Life values to keep the late game interesting.

- ▶ **Attack** lists the number a player must meet or exceed on an Agility roll to avoid damage.
- ▶ **Damage** is the amount subtracted from the player character's Current Life if they fail the roll.
- ▶ The distance ranges at which the creature may attack are then listed.
- ▶ If there is a number or die roll with an "x" next to it before the attack name, that attack can be made that number of times in a single round.
- ▶ **Evasion** is the target number a player must roll on an attack to hit and deal damage to the monster.
- ▶ When a monster has 0 or fewer Life points, it is destroyed.
- ▶ Special abilities and unique properties are listed last.

Animated Armor

A set of knight's armor powered by a poltergeist

Attacks:

Flail 14 | Damage 2 | Near

Spinning Axe 14 | Damage 2 | Far

Evasion: 13

Life: 12

Dragon Skull, Pillar

Dragon skulls stacked atop one another as defensive emplacements

For each skull (usually 2, sometimes more):

Attack: 2x Fireballs 14 | Damage 1 | Near and Far

Evasion: 10

Life: 6

Special: Fixed to a location; shoots 1d4 fireballs per round.

Gorgon Head

A fearsome gorgon's head

For updates on the game, visit www.muzzlelandpress.com

Attack: Snake Bites 15 | Damage 1 | Near

Evasion: 15

Life: 2

Special: Flying. Often attacks in endless swarms, striking once and then flying past. Variants can turn characters to stone for 1d3 rounds on impact.

Leaper Goblin

A weird little freak

Attack: Leaping Swipe 16 | Damage 1 | Near

Evasion: 15

Life: 1

Special: Jumps around in unpredictable patterns; may move and attack twice in a single round.

Skeleton

A real bonehead

Attacks: Bone Strike 13 | Damage 1 | Near

Bone Toss 13 | Damage 1 | Far

Evasion: 13

Life: 2

Skeleton, Bloody Bones

A skeleton dripping with crimson ichor

Attacks: Bone Strike 13 | Damage 1 | Near

Bone Toss 13 | Damage 1 | Far

Evasion: 13

Life: 2

Special: After reaching 0 Life, it collapses into a pile of bones for 1d3 rounds, then resurrects. May only be destroyed by holy water or fire.

Vampire Bat

It thirsts—for human blood!

Attack: Bite 14 | Damage 1 | Near

Evasion: 14

Life: 2

Special: Flying; often attacks in swarms of 1d6. Most strike once and then fly off; others are more persistent.

Zombie

For updates on the game, visit www.muzzlelandpress.com

The restless undead, summoned to consume the living

Attack: Grab / Bite 13 | Damage 1 | Near

Evasion: 13

Life: 2

Special: Attacks in seemingly endless numbers.

Boss Monsters

Each boss stat block has a Recommended Advancement range. These numbers represent how many steps of advancement the player characters should have taken before facing the creature. Each boss was playtested against a party of four (with each of the archetypes represented) at the advancement range listed and are designed to be a challenge that requires tactical thinking and a little luck to overcome.

When a boss at the end of a stage is defeated, they drop a Crimson Orb. This red sphere of mysterious energy restores the characters to full Life and triggers one step of advancement (see the Character Advancement section).

As a reminder, boss monsters always act first at the top of a round, and initiative is not rolled.

Golgothan Knight

A giant skeleton with a bull's head, adorned in the armor of a fallen crusader

Attack: Sword 14 | Damage 2 | Near

Evasion: 13

Life: 25

Special: May do a charge attack to hit several player characters in a row (A 16 | D 2 | Near). This attack may begin in one zone and end in another.

Recommended Advancement: 0-1

Giant Vampire Bat

A gargantuan bat with massive eyes and teeth. Often appears in dark, cavernous spaces and ruins, and flies erratically around the arena

Attack: Bite 16 | Damage 3 | Near

Evasion: 16

Life: 30

Special: Flying. May take an additional move action each round. May transform into a swarm of 1d6 smaller bats to make multiple attacks (each bat: Bite 14 | D 2, Near).

Recommended Advancement: 1-2

