

Goodman Games Style Guide **For DCC RPG, MCC RPG, and related materials**

Introduction: This style guide is an attempt to reign in and codify the various rules and styles used throughout the Goodman Games “Crawl Classics” lines. Please keep in mind that this style guide is a living document, and copyeditors, proofreaders, writers, and other creatives are invited to add to this document as needed. Please highlight any new additions **like this** so the editorial team can review.

General Notes

- Word document manuscripts should be in Times New Roman 12, single spaced, with no custom margins, no page headers/footers, and no shading.
- Typically use U.S. spelling (American English) rather than that of the U.K. (downward vs. downwards, etc.)
- Active, not passive voice. Avoid “will” when describing monster/NPC intent or potential timelines.
- Avoid gender-specific language unless referring to a specific individual, character, NPC, etc. Do not use “he or she/him or her” constructions. Use the singular “they,” “them,” “theirs,” and so forth. (Once they trigger the trap, it is up to them to...) Unless a monster is specifically gendered, use “it”.

Punctuation

Ampersands

&: OK in abbreviations, spell titles, and lists (i.e., equipment, bow & arrows) but avoid in general text

Commas

- Series (Oxford) commas used.
- Commas before and after conjunctions such as *therefore*, *however*, etc.
- Commas between independent clauses
- Commas between compound predicates
- Comma after introductory dependent clause
- Commas in numerals of 1,000+ (unless it’s a year)
- Commas after “e.g.” and “i.e.” (and never follow an “e.g.” or “i.e.” phrase with “etc.”)

Apostrophes and Quotation Marks

Ensure all apostrophes and quotation marks are the curved TNR 12 versions:

- These: ‘ ’ “ ”
- Not these: ' "

Semicolons

A semicolon is used in two circumstances: in-line tables and when joining two complete sentences. If not confident or certain in its use, avoid it.

Dashes

Recognize your dashes:

- Dash/Minus sign: 10-20
- Hyphen: 10-20
- En dash: 10–20
- Em dash: 10—20

Periods of time use “to”, not punctuation (It happened 5 to 10 years ago...)

Use an en dash for inclusive numbers (Depending on the result, it falls 10–20 feet...)

Use an em dash when interrupting or emphasizing text (The conflict—likely spanning no more than a week’s time—would be entirely unforgettable, save for the PCs’ involvement.)

Parenthesis/Brackets

Use brackets if parentheses are needed within an existing parenthetical section.

- ❖ (Leonardo [disguised as the dead PC] greets them at the door.)

Hyphenation

Use hyphen for compound adjectives. (He dove into the ice-cold water.) No hyphen when compound adjective follows the word it modifies. (The water was ice cold.)

Closed Prefixes (make note of exceptions in Term List)

ante	micro	pseudo
anti	mid	re
bi	multi	semi
co	non	super
counter	infra	supra
extra	over	trans
inter	post	ultra
intra	pre	un
macro	pro	under

Numbers

- Spell out one to nine. Use numerals for 10 and above.
(**EXCEPTION:** Units of time and stats (hp, AC, modifiers) are always numeric [in 4 rounds...; 3 years ago...; 5 hit points, AC 18.]
- Ordinals for character and spell levels are numeric (e.g., 1st-level, level 2, 8th-level [no text should be superscript; undo Word’s auto-formatting]). In other occurrences, spell out first through ninth, and use numerals for 10th and higher.
- Comma in 1,000 and above (unless the number is a year)
- If two or more numbers are used in a phrase, use numeric versions if they contain at least one higher than 10. (There were 6 girls and 12 boys.)
- Written-out fractions should be hyphenated: one-half, two-thirds.
- Most importantly, be consistent. If there are “20 people” in a location, there should not be “twenty people” in the next paragraph.

Measurements

Use of abbreviations (ft., lbs., oz., etc.) is permitted except in read-aloud text. Type out all words related to units of measure, as if someone is reading them aloud, i.e., instead of 5', type "five feet".

Use punctuation after each measurement in a description, even if they are the same unit of measure.

- 8.5" x 11"
- 5' to 7' high

Format/Layout

Italics

Italics should be used in the following instances:

- Spell names (*magic missile, levitate, protection from evil*)
- Thieves' skills (*hide in shadows, pick lock*)
- Magic items (*scroll of magic missile, Veil of Tru'zaryu*)
- Foreign words

(**EXCEPTION:** *None* of the above should be italicized if they appear within a read-aloud section, which is otherwise italicized.)

Basic Adventure Structure

INTRODUCTION

The target of the intro will be anyone that picks it up and starts reading. Introduce the adventure, what it's about, what to expect, who the adventure is designed for. Tell any players to not read any further. Describe any unique elements or breaks from convention. Provide a short overview of the adventure's structure and the basics on how to run it. Any specific rules for specific rooms or areas can be detailed in its appropriate area section.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

This is information for only the judge. Tell the whole background of the adventure and its secrets. Include any historical information needed. Describe the true motives and plans of its antagonists. Any list or table with Adventure Hooks belong here, or examples of possible narratives that led the party to the adventure.

PLAYER START

"Boxed" text or descriptions of where the characters first start.

AREAS, ENCOUNTERS or EVENTS

The meat of the adventure. Adventures are usually broken down into bits, whether they are a string of locations or a series of set pieces.

Locations are labeled in numerical order with each area noted by the map number, followed by the location number in the following format: Area 1-1, area 1-2, area 1-3. Area is lower-case. If the adventure contained a second map, each area would be noted as area 2-1, 2-2, 2-3, etc.

ENDING THE ADVENTURE

Describe the effects of successfully completing the adventure. Possibly include any extra rewards, perks, or boons they may have received. Include possible ideas of follow-up or continuing adventures.

PRIMARY Headings

Secondary Headings

Areas

Read-aloud text

Stat blocks

Stat blocks include the following data:

- o Init (initiative modifier)
- o Atk [attack name or weapon, modifier, type: melee/missile fire] (damage)
- o Crit [Table/die type]
- o AC (armor class)
- o HD (hit dice) hp (hit points)
- o MV (movement/speed)
- o Act (action die or action dice)
- o SP (special powers/abilities, vulnerabilities, etc.)
- o SV (saving throw modifiers)
- o AL (alignment)

EXAMPLES:

Whemple (4th-level halfling thief): Init +2; Atk scimitar +5 melee (1d4+2); Crit III/d10; AC 13; HD 4d6 (hp 18); MV 30'; Act 1d20; SP thieves' skills (+3 skill checks); SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +3; AL N.

Giant, hill: Init -2; Atk club +15 melee (2d8+8) or hurled stone +6 missile fire (1d8+6, range 100'); Crit 20-24 G/d4; AC 16; HD 8d10 (hp 40); MV 30'; Act 1d24; SP infravision; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +6; AL C..

Note on Special Properties (SP) Entries: If the SP can be summed up in eight words or less, it can be included in the stat block (e.g. "takes ½ damage from non-magical attacks"). Special Properties with more complex mechanics should be included immediately after the stat block. The SP name should be italicized, and the text following should be in normal font.

EXAMPLE

Abhorrent toad: Init +2; Atk bite +4 melee (1d10+2 plus swallow whole); Crit M/d10, AC 12; HD 4d10+4 (hp 24); MV 30', swim 30'; Act 1d20; SP swallow, bellowing croak, standing leap (20' long jump, 10' high jump), infravision 30'; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +2; AL N.

Bellowing croak: At the start of combat, abhorrent toads may utter a bellowing croak capable of momentarily stunning prey. All creatures capable of hearing it within 20' are stunned for 2d6 rounds (DC 11 Fortitude save negates and grants immunity to the toad's bellowing croak ability for 24 hours). An ally may take an action to alleviate the victim of their stunned condition.

Descriptive text for Monster Entries:

Descriptive text should follow any Special Properties entries and be written in italics.

EXAMPLE

A tremendous gray and green toad, almost as large as a warhorse, emerges from the humid darkness of the swamp. Its gaping maw opens, and a ghastly croak erupts from its swollen throat that hits you like the blow of a warhammer.

See below for Dungeon Denizens monster entry format.

Tables

Full tables: Title should read “Table XX: Table Title”.

Table should be set up as a table within Word. Title rows should be in bold and left-justified.

- If a die roll is required, title the first row “1d6” or “2d6”, etc., as applicable.
- If a roll is more complex (e.g., “Roll d% and add the inverse of your Luck modifier”), title the first row “Roll” and detail the roll requirements within the adjacent text.

Results should be contained within separate fields. Be sure the numbering is sequential.

In printing, table may appear either within a double-lined box or with no outline. Title of table should be in bold and all caps.

Sidebars

Text intended for a sidebar should be prefaced with “/Sidebar” or “/Start Sidebar” and end with “/end Sidebar”.

Title should be in bold and all caps. If the sidebar is just a table, the sidebar title should read “Table XX: Table Title”.

In printing, sidebar should be in a shadowed, outlined box.

Objects/Items of Notes

The simple name of the item should begin a new paragraph, be in bold and sentence case, followed by a colon (also bold). The description of the item should be formatted regularly.

EXAMPLE:

“Hole in the wall: The hole leads to a hidden chamber (area 3-1a).”

References

References to sections within your manuscript, capitalize the section but no formatting should be applied. (Ex: “See Conclusion.”)

Avoid use of “above” and “below” to direct the reader to text/art positioning. Page layout is out of our control. Use previous/following/next/etc. (“in the previous area” or “in the next section”)

OGLs

Note to editors: check PDF proof for title accuracy & current year.

DCC/MCC-Specific Grammar Rules

Ability names are capped and not abbreviated. (Make a Strength check...; if you fail an Intelligence check...). Save names are capped and not abbreviated (Make a Willpower save...; if you fail a Fortitude save....) Exception: Save names within stat-blocks should be abbreviated, and may sometimes be abbreviated within a table.

When Ability checks, skill checks, and saving throws are required, they should be written with DC and the value before the type of check, such as requesting a DC 15 Reflex save or DC 15 Strength check or DC 15 *find trap* check, instead of “a Reflex save of 15, or a Strength check (DC 15) or *find trap* (15). Exception if the DC is variable, but try to stick with the format. Such as DC 15+CL Reflex save or DC 15 Strength check (DC increases by +2 each round).

Skill checks should be described as such. Example: a DC 10 Intelligence skill check or a DC 15 Agility skill check. Do not specify if the skill check is trained or untrained or limit it to a single occupation unless only highly-specific training is required. The judge can determine whether a PC is trained or untrained as necessary.

Spell names/mutations are typically lowercase in text (casting a *levitation* spell; they cast *magic missile*), but those properly named and attributed are capitalized (casting *Hepsoj's Fecund Fungi*; the results of *Lokerimon's Unerring Hunter*)

Referring to spell results/mutation effects: “as per *magic missile*, result 30-32”

Dungeon Denizens Monster Entries

The following format should be used for Dungeon Denizen monster entries:

MONSTER NAME (in all capitals)

Monster background, history, behavior, etc. This is the “fluff” information for the monster.

Stat Block (see above for proper formatting)

Special Properties (SP) descriptions (any special powers the creature possesses that can be succinctly described in the stat block is described in this section. SP name is italicized, the rest of the text is plain text).

Physical description (italicized and composed a “read-aloud” player-facing text).

EXAMPLE DCC DUNGEON DENIZENS MONSTER

ALLOMANDER

These plated creatures have long, snake-like bodies and many legs that allow them to flourish in sewers, abandoned buildings, and dark city corners. Allomanders are natives of the elemental planes, but they have begun to appear more and more in urban environments as cities grow industrialized. The allomander's super-heated core melts metal rapidly, incorporating any consumed material into its armored skin.

Unlike elementals, allomanders can thrive in a heavily populated urban core. Access to sprawling sewer systems for lairs and a bounty of digestible metal makes cities the perfect place for these creatures. Because allomanders exclusively eat metal, they can nest in a region for quite some time without attracting notice. Typically, the presence of an allomander is discovered only when a structure suddenly collapses due to a chewed-up foundation or when storage facilities open their doors to find vast quantities of ore have disappeared overnight. A desperate allomander may even grow bold enough to eat metal landmarks, burrow into smithies, or openly attack vehicles with metal components.

When allomanders do attack living creatures, they do so only out of self-preservation. Because they have no appetite for organic matter, allomanders will grind their foes with teeth and claws and then regurgitate the corpses whole. Finding a group of mangled bodies with their weapons and armor missing can cause a community to panic and head to its armory—only to discover that the weapon stores too have been devoured.

Allomander: Init +4; Atk bite +5 melee (1d6 plus swallow whole on crit) or claw +4 melee (1d8+2) or shard spray breath weapon; Crit M/d14; AC 18; HD 8d8; MV 30', climb 10'; Act 2d20; SP swallow whole, shard spray, infravision 60'; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +4; AL N

Swallow whole: If the allomander lands a critical hit, the target is swallowed whole, where it suffers an additional 1d8 damage at the start of each of the allomander's initiative counts from the allomander's super-heated core and stomach acid. A trapped creature can try to cut its way out with a small weapon (such as a dagger) by inflicting 15 damage against AC 22. Once the allomander digests all the metal on the PC's body, it will spit out the corpse.

Shard spray: As an action, the allomander regurgitates partially digested shards of metal in a cone 10' wide at its end and 30' long. All within the area of the shard spray suffer 1d6 damage (DC 12 Reflex save avoids).

This massive metallic, serpentine creature slinks forward on a dozen legs with its plate-like hide making clicking noises. Its claws, teeth, and metal scales all glint with the jagged edges of steel scraped sharp.

Term List - Frequently Used Terms in DCC and MCC

A

ability scores (write out in regular text, abbreviate in stat blocks: Make a DC 12 Strength check; has a Personality score of 8)

AC (armor class)

action die / action dice (lowercase)

Agi (abbreviation for Agility)

alignment (lawful/neutral/chaotic, all lowercase; only the powers/entities of Law, Neutrality, and Chaos are capitalized)

attacks / attack rolls (not “to hit”)

Ancients/Ancient Ones (n)

ancient (adj)

B

bonus (avoid *get/for*: “the item *bestows/grants/gives* a +1d bonus to/on Fort saves”)

C

checks (spell out ability checks, i.e., DC 15 Agility check; DC 20 Intelligence check)

classes (cleric, thief, warrior, wizard, elf, halfling, dwarf: all lowercase)

corruption (lowercase)

D

[tag: References within text] DCC RPG (capitalized in adventure references, i.e., “see the DCC RPG rulebook, page 230” or “see DCC RPG p. 230”; if referred to by title, “*Dungeon Crawl Classics Role Playing Game*”)

dX (dice; d is lowercase: d4, d6, roll 1d20 - avoid “roll a d20”)

dice chain (d3 – d4 – d5 – d6 – d7 – d8 – d10 – d12 – d14 – d16 – d20 – d24 – d30, chall)

DC (abbreviation for difficulty challenge; insert space, i.e., DC 5, DC 15, etc.; should be indicated before the check or save, DC 15 Reflex save or DC 15 *find trap* check)

downward (not downwards)

damage, damage rolls

difficulty challenge (DC; insert space, i.e., DC 5, DC 15, etc.)

E

F

face-to-face

Fort (abbreviation for Fortitude)

G

H

hp (abbreviation for hit points; usage: 14 hp)

HD (abbreviation for hit dice; usage: “HD 1d8” or “an animal of up to 2 HD”)

I

Int (abbreviation for Intelligence)

J

judge (lowercase)

L

-level (1st-level, 4th-level, 0-level)

life-long (adj)

M

mighty deed (lowercase if truncated; “...if the PC performs a mighty deed...”)

Mighty Deed of Arms (capped if the full ability is named; “...if the PC performs a Mighty Deed of Arms...”)

Mojo (uppercase)

MV (movement, or movement action (not “move action”))

N

O

occupation (lowercase)

P

PCs (player characters; not PC’s, unless it’s possessive [the PC’s equipment])

penalty (avoid get/take/for: “inflicts a -2d penalty to Will saves”)

Per (abbreviation for Personality)

pure strain human (not pure-strain)

R

role-play (v)

role play(ing) (n; adj)

Ref (abbreviation for Reflex)

re-roll

re-animate(d) (hyphenated)

S

save (Capped, may use abbreviations, i.e., DC 15 Fort save; DC 5 Will save; DC 20 Ref save within a Stat Block)

saving throws (general saves; “a +1d bonus to saving throws”)

seeker (MCC usage)

skill check (two words)

[tag: Character Stats] stat increases or decreases (spell out the gain or loss, avoid +/-). Ex: “gain 1 Stamina / lose 1 point of Stamina” or “gains 1d3 Personality / causes a loss of 1d3 Personality”; a loss of -1d3 Personality presents a double negative.)

spell book (two words)

spellburn (one word)

spellcasting/spellcaster (one word)

spell check (two words)

Sta (abbreviation for Stamina)

Str (abbreviation for Strength)

T

toward (not towards)

Terra A.D. (not AD)

U

un-dead

unholy

upward (not upwards)

V

W

Wealth (uppercase when referring to Xcrawl stat)

Will (abbreviation for Willpower)

X

Xcrawl

Y

Z

zero hit points or 0 hp