



COMBAT BASICS: UNDERSTANDING ACTION ECONOMY

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OUTLINE

- What is Action Economy?
- What kind of actions can I take in a turn?
- Maximizing your Action Economy
- Class Specific Examples
- Q&A

WHAT IS ACTION ECONOMY?

“How much can a character do in a given turn?”

- What a character can do during a turn is limited.
- That’s why efficiently using your turn is important.
- It is a numbers game in more ways than one. (The side with overwhelming numbers is always at an advantage).





WHAT CAN I DO IN A TURN?

Don't you wish you had more than one attack action?

ACTIONS IN A TURN

- One (1) Standard Action
- One (1) Bonus Action
- One (1) Reaction
- One (1) Move



HOW MANY ACTIONS IS IT TO OUTFRAN A KILLER DINO?

STANDARD ACTION

- Attack (you may make extra attacks if your class allows you to do so)
- Cast a Spell
- Dash (double move)
- Disengage (move w/o OA)
- Dodge (grant disadvantage to attackers, gain advantage on Dex saves)
- Help (grant advantage to an ally)
- Hide (situational)
- Ready (declare an action, use your Reaction to perform it on trigger)
- Search (situational)
- Use an Item/Object (e.g. a magic item)



*SHOUTING FOR HELP AND COORDINATING
WITH YOUR TEAMMATES IS A FREE ACTION.
JUST SAYING.*

BONUS ACTIONS

- Usually Class feature, Feat or Spell specific
- Each class has specific Bonus Actions they can perform.
- Some classes have multiple options for their Bonus Action
- Some feats grant Bonus Actions that are specific to the feat, e.g. Polearm Master, Crossbow Expert, etc.
- Only exception is Two-Weapon Fighting (but just because anyone can do it doesn't mean you should)



“I’M A BARD. I’M HELPING.”

REACTIONS

- Again, usually Class feature, Feat or Spell specific
- Contingent upon other actions, whether performed by your party or by foes

MOVE

- Movement Options
- Move your Speed (can be done in between attacks)
- You can freely switch between movement modes e.g. walk, fly etc.
- You need to have enough Movement to get up from Prone (half your Speed), or Crawl



*“BITCH PLEASE.
MY SHIELD SPELL IS FABULOUS.”*

MAXIMIZING ACTION ECONOMY

Do's:

- Keep an eye on the Turn Order
- Understand what Actions, Bonus Actions, and Reactions you have available at all times
- Always strive to make an impact in combat/change the board state in your favor
- Take actions that deny foes their Action Economy if you cannot enhance your own or that of the party
- If you are a spellcaster, RTFS (**R**ead **T**he **F**ucking **S**pell) and pick the most effective one for the situation
- Focus Fire. Every foe you remove drops the nett action economy per round of your opponents by 1



*DON'T BE A BAD ASS BARD.
BE A BADASS BARD.*

MAXIMIZING ACTION ECONOMY (CONT'D)

Don'ts:

- Waste your turn on actions that don't improve the odds for your party or affect the board state (such as running away from combat, hiding behind a rock, or being said rock)
- Heal in combat unless you can heal multiple targets at once (e.g. Life Cleric with Channel Divinity: Preserve Life)
- Use your turn to heal/stabilize someone who is unlikely to contribute meaningfully and will likely drop again in the next round
- Do nothing (at least Help lah!)



*LOOK JIM! I'M STANDING IN FIRE!
HEALS PLOX?*

CLASS SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

Barbarian:

- Enter/Quit Rage is a Bonus Action

Bard:

- Inspire is a Bonus Action
- Cutting Words is a Reaction
- Use Bonus Action to Command summoned minions or Animated objects (see spells for specific descriptions) or deal lingering damage with Heat Metal



*WHETHER YOU ATTACK, PROTECT, OR BECOME
DRAGON SNACK DEPENDS ON HOW WELL YOU
KNOW ACTION ECONOMY.*

CLASS SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

Cleric:

- Some Channel abilities are Reactions
- Spiritual Weapon is cast and commanded as a Bonus Action

Druid:

- Wildshape/Revert is a Bonus Action
- Expending Spell Slots to heal damage while in Wild Shape is a Bonus Action (Moon Druid only)



SPIRITUAL WEAPON IS A GREAT USE OF A CLERIC'S BONUS ACTIONS. LIKE, WHO DOES HEALING WORD ANYWAY?

CLASS SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

Fighter:

- Second Wind is a Bonus Action
- Action Surge lets you take an additional Standard Action
- Some Battlemaster Maneuvers are Bonus Actions or reliant on your Attack action.

Monk:

- Flurry of Blows is a Bonus Action
- Some Ki powers are Bonus Actions or Reactions



*SPEAK SOFTLY, CARRY A BIG SWORD, AND
SWING IT UP TO 5 TIMES A ROUND.*

CLASS SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

Paladin:

- Smite is a FREE action. Have I mentioned FREE? (You may choose to activate it whenever you make a successful melee attack)
- Some Channel divinity abilities are Bonus Actions
- Some Spells are Bonus Actions

Ranger:

- Some Ranger abilities are Bonus Actions or Reactions.
- Casting and moving a Hunter's Mark are Bonus Actions.



*NOTHING SAYS SMITE LIKE A 4TH LEVEL
SPELL SLOT.*

CLASS SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

Rogue:

- Cunning Action is a Bonus Action that modifies Dash, Disengage and Hide

Sorcerer:

- Converting Spell Slots/Sorcery Points is a Bonus Action
- Using Sorcery Points to Quicken a Spell allows you to cast it as a Bonus Action
- Some spells are Bonus Actions or Reactions



*IF ONLY SHIVVING SOMEONE IN THE
KIDNEYS WAS A BONUS ACTION.*

CLASS SPECIFIC EXAMPLES

Wizard:

- Some Spells are Bonus Actions or Reactions
- Casting a Spell through your Familiar uses your Action and your Familiar's Reaction
- Some specific spells can be commanded as Bonus Actions AND impact a foe's action economy (e.g. Bigby's Hand)

Warlock:

- Casting or moving Hex is a Bonus Action



*FOR WIZARDS, BEING AWESOME
IS A BONUS ACTION*

Q&A