



# ADVENTURERS LEAGUE

## DUNGEON MASTER PRIMER

Presented By Jonathan

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**D&D**  
**ADVENTURERS  
LEAGUE**

# THE DUNGEON MASTER

# WHAT IS THE DUNGEON MASTER?

- The storyteller and facilitator for the rules
- Helps facilitate role-playing and fun for the table
- Guides along the story for the players
- Helps manage expectations of the table



# WHAT DO YOU NEED?

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- Paper and Pencils
- Dice
- Willingness to make mistakes
- An understanding of the rules



# COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

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- Trying to “Win” at D&D
  - Something more seen in older editions of D&D; Players had an antagonistic relationship with the DM.
- Expectations
  - As a DM, you have to deal with expectations and make sure everyone is on the same page.
  - Be up front with your players and talk things out.
  - Sometimes you have to be okay with a player walking away, especially when the game you want to run is so different from the game you want to play.
- Knowing every rule
  - You don't need to know every rule! A basic understanding of the rules is often enough.
  - When unsure, make a judgement call at that moment to not stop the flow of the game, but check it afterwards.

# BEFORE THE GAME...

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You should:

- Read and familiarize yourself with the module.
- Understand the basic rules of the system you are running
- Have a list of names behind the screen
- Prepare the probably NPCs adventurers will encounter.



## BEHIND THE SCREEN

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# DIFFICULTY CHECKS

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- The bread and butter of D&D
- Most common reason to roll dice in this game.
- Anything that has the chance to fail is a difficulty check in D&D
- E.g. Jumping over a large gap might be a Athletics check
- E.g. Discerning magic would be an arcana check
- No real hard rules on what type of check something is; DM's call on what check would make sense

## DIFFICULTY CHECKS (CONT'D)

Very Easy (DC 5) Requires a minimum level of competence or a bit of luck to accomplish.

Easy (DC 10) Requires a minimum level of competence or a bit of luck to accomplish.

Moderate (DC 15) Requires a bit more competence to accomplish. Can be completed more often than not by a character with both natural aptitude and specialized training.

Hard (DC 20) Include anything beyond the capabilities of the average person without aid or exceptional talent. Even with a bit of training and skill you still need some luck to pull it off (or maybe some specialized training).

Very Hard (DC 25) Achievable only by especially talented individuals. Nobody else should even bother trying.

Formidable (DC 30) Achievable only by the most trained, experienced, and talented individuals, and they probably still need help to pull it off.

# BUILDING AND PLAYING NPCs

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- It's NOT about the accent, it's about the identity of the way of speaking.
- Creating an NPC
  - Evocative Descriptions
  - Speed
  - Tone
  - Vocal Quirk
  - Vocabulary
  - Visual Queues

# RUNNING ENCOUNTERS

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- Tracking Initiative & Hit Points
  - Initiative Tents
  - Paper tracking
- Stat blocks
  - Always good to have in front of you
- Combat Tactics and Roleplaying
  - Monsters want to win too! What's the creature's winning objective?
  - Run goal-oriented combat as opposed to just a hack and slash.