Knave

KNAVE is a rules toolkit created by Ben Milton for running old school fantasy RPGs without classes. Adding, subtracting and modifying rules is both expected and encouraged. Knave's features include:

High compatibility with OSR games. If you have a library of OSR bestiaries, adventure and spell books, little or no conversion is needed to use them with Knave.

Fast to teach, easy to run. If you are introducing a group of new players to OSR games, Knave allows them to make characters and understand all the rules in minutes.

No classes. Every PC is a Knave, a tomb-raiding, adventure-seeking ne'er-do-well who wields a spell book just as easily as a blade. This is an ideal system for players who like to switch up their character's focus from time to time and don't like being pigeonholed. A PC's role in the party is determined largely by the equipment they carry.

Abilities are king. All d20 rolls use the six standard abilities. The way that ability scores and bonuses work has also been cleaned up, rationalized, and made consistent with how other systems like armor work.

Optional player-facing rolls. Knave easily accommodates referees who want the players to do all the rolling. Switching between the traditional shared-rolling model and players-only rolling can be done effortlessly on the fly.

Copper standard. Knave assumes that the common unit of currency is the copper penny. All item prices use this denomination and approximate actual medieval prices.

A list of 100 level-less spells.

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Designer commentary. The rules include designer comments explaining why each rule was written the way it was, to aid in hacking the game.

Character Creation

1 PCs have six abilities: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. Each ability has two related values: a **defense** and a **bonus**. When creating a PC, roll 3d6 for each of their abilities, in order. The lowest of the three dice on each roll is that ability's bonus. Add 10 to find its defense.

After you've finished rolling, you may optionally swap the scores of two abilities.

Example*: You roll a 2, 2, and 6 for Strength. The lowest die is a 2, so your PC's Strength has a bonus of +2 and a defense of 12. Repeat this process for the rest of the abilities.*

Designer's Note: *"Ability defense" is my term for what is normally called ability scores. I refer to them this way to make it clearer how they work during opposed saves, explained later.*

The rolling mechanic will make most abilities start at 11/+1. The bonus and defense of three abilities will rise by 1 point each time the PC gains a level, up to a maximum of 20/+10 by level 10. This puts everything on an intuitive ten point scale, and is intended to mirror the way that attack bonuses, hit dice, and saving throws in most OSR games increase by about one point per level.

2 PCs start with 2 days of rations and one weapon of their player's choice. Roll on the Starting Gear tables on the following page to determine starting armor and equipment.

Designer's Note: *Rolling for starting equipment dramatically speeds up the character creation process, which is important if you're playing a high-lethality game like Knave. If you want to permit shopping for equipment, however, have players roll 3d6x20 to find their starting copper pieces. Note that spell books are not normally available to new PCs, but you could always add "random spellbook" to the Dungeoneering Gear table, or simply allow new PCs to roll a random spell in exchange for not starting with any armor.*

PCs have a number of item slots equal to their Constitution defense, and items they carry must fit into available slots. Most items take up one slot, but some take up more. Some small items can be bundled together into a single slot. Ask the referee if you are unsure.

Designer's Note: *Item slots make tracking encumbrance very fast and easy, which is important since resource management is an important aspect of the game. They also represent character customization slots, since what a Knave is carrying goes a long way towards determining their playstyle and role in the party.*

Armor comes with an armor defense value. Note that value on your character sheet with its corresponding Armor bonus (always 10 less than the defense). If the PC is not wearing any armor, their armor defense is 11 and their armor bonus is +1.

Designer's Note: *"Armor defense" is essentially the same concept as armor class in most OSR games. It's been renamed to emphasize the connection between the way it and ability defenses work. The armor bonus exists in order to allow combat to be run entirely player-facing, as explained in the combat section.*

3 Roll 1d8 to determine your PC's starting and maximum hit points. A PC's healing rate is 1d8+ Constitution bonus. Their exploration speed is 120ft per exploration turn, and their combat speed is 40ft per round.

Designer's Note: *All hit dice are assumed to be d8s in Knave, for PCs, NPCs, and monsters. This simplifies the game and keeps things compatible with the stats in most OSR books. Note that a PC's Constitution bonus is not added to their hit point rolls. Referees who don't want starting PCs to be quite as fragile might want to allow starting HP to be rerolled if it is below 5.*

4 Invent or roll the rest of your PC's traits, such as their physique, face, skin, hair, clothing, virtue, vice, speech, background, and alignment, using the random tables on the following page. Choose a gender and a name for your PC, but don't get too attached. It's a dangerous world out there.

Designer's Note: *Randomizing most of a PC's traits speeds up character creation, but it also has the effect of creating surprising, unique characters that most players wouldn't think to invent or play.+*

Traits

Physique

1. Athletic
2. Brawny
3. Corpulent
4. Delicate
5. Gaunt
6. Hulking
7. Lanky
8. Ripped
9. Rugged
10. Scrawny
11. Short
12. Sinewy
13. Slender
14. Flabby
15. Statuesque
16. Stout
17. Tiny
18. Towering
19. Willowy
20. Wiry

Face

1. Bloated
2. Blunt
3. Bony
4. Chiseled
5. Delicate
6. Elongated
7. Patrician
8. Pinched
9. Hawkish
10. Broken
11. Impish
12. Narrow
13. Ratlike
14. Round
15. Sunken
16. Sharp
17. Soft
18. Square
19. Wide
20. Wolfish

Skin

1. Battle Scar
2. Birthmark
3. Burn Scar
4. Dark
5. Makeup
6. Oily
7. Pale
8. Perfect
9. Pierced
10. Pockmarked
11. Reeking
12. Tattooed
13. Rosy
14. Rough
15. Sallow
16. Sunburned
17. Tanned
18. War Paint
19. Weathered
20. Whip Scar

Hair

1. Bald
2. Braided
3. Bristly
4. Cropped
5. Curly
6. Disheveled
7. Dreadlocks
8. Filthy
9. Frizzy
10. Greased
11. Limp
12. Long
13. Luxurious
14. Mohawk
15. Oily
16. Ponytail
17. Silky
18. Topknot
19. Wavy
20. Wispy

Clothing

1. Antique
2. Bloody
3. Ceremonial
4. Decorated
5. Eccentric
6. Elegant
7. Fashionable
8. Filthy
9. Flamboyant
10. Stained
11. Foreign
12. Frayed
13. Frumpy
14. Livery
15. Oversized
16. Patched
17. Perfumed
18. Rancid
19. Torn
20. Undersized

Virtue

1. Ambitious
2. Cautious
3. Courageous
4. Courteous
5. Curious
6. Disciplined
7. Focused
8. Generous
9. Gregarious
10. Honest
11. Honorable
12. Humble
13. Idealistic
14. Just
15. Loyal
16. Merciful
17. Righteous
18. Serene
19. Stoic
20. Tolerant

Vice

1. Aggressive
2. Arrogant
3. Bitter
4. Cowardly
5. Cruel
6. Deceitful
7. Flippant
8. Gluttonous
9. Greedy
10. Irascible
11. Lazy
12. Nervous
13. Prejudiced
14. Reckless
15. Rude
16. Suspicious
17. Vain
18. Vengeful
19. Wasteful
20. Whiny

Speech

1. Blunt
2. Booming
3. Breathy
4. Cryptic
5. Drawling
6. Droning
7. Flowery
8. Formal
9. Gravelly
10. Hoarse
11. Mumbling
12. Precise
13. Quaint
14. Rambling
15. Rapid-fire
16. Dialect
17. Slow
18. Squeaky
19. Stuttering
20. Whispery

Background

1. Alchemist
2. Beggar
3. Butcher
4. Burglar
5. Charlatan
6. Cleric
7. Cook
8. Cultist
9. Gambler
10. Herbalist
11. Magician
12. Mariner
13. Mercenary
14. Merchant
15. Outlaw
16. Performer
17. Pickpocket
18. Smuggler
19. Student
20. Tracker

Misfortunes

1. Abandoned
2. Addicted
3. Blackmailed
4. Condemned
5. Cursed
6. Defrauded
7. Demoted
8. Discredited
9. Disowned
10. Exiled
11. Framed
12. Haunted
13. Kidnapped
14. Mutilated
15. Poor
16. Pursued
17. Rejected
18. Replaced
19. Robbed
20. Suspected

Alignment

1-5:	6-15:	16-20:
Law	Neutrality	Chaos

Starting Gear

Armor

1-3:	4-14:	15-19:	20:
No armor	Gambeson	Brigandine	Chain

Helmets and Shields

1-13:	14-16:	17-19:	20:
None	Helmet	Shield	Helmet and Shield

Dungeoneering Gear

Roll twice on this table, and once on the following two.

1. Rope, 50ft
2. Pulleys
3. Candles, 5
4. Chain, 10ft
5. Chalk, 10
6. Crowbar
7. Tinderbox
8. Grap. hook
9. Hammer
10. Waterskin
11. Lantern
12. Lamp oil
13. Padlock
14. Manacles
15. Mirror
16. Pole, 10ft
17. Sack
18. Tent
19. Spikes, 5
20. Torches, 5

General Gear 1

1. Air bladder
2. Bear trap
3. Shovel
4. Bellows
5. Grease
6. Saw
7. Bucket
8. Caltrops
9. Chisel
10. Drill
11. Fish. rod
12. Marbles
13. Glue
14. Pick
15. Hourglass
16. Net
17. Tongs
18. Lockpicks
19. Metal file
20. Nails

General Gear 2

1. Incense
2. Sponge
3. Lens
4. Perfume
5. Horn
6. Bottle
7. Soap
8. Spyglass
9. Tar pot
10. Twine
11. Fake jewels
12. Blank book
13. Card deck
14. Dice set
15. Cook pots
16. Face paint
17. Whistle
18. Instrument
19. Quill & Ink
20. Small bell

Item Costs

All prices are given in copper pennies. Payment for things like ships, real estate, and so on usually takes the form of trade goods, favors, or oaths of fealty rather than coins.

Tools & Gear

Air Bladder	5
Bear Trap	20
Bedroll	10
Bellows	10
Black Grease	1
Block and Tackle	30
Book (Blank)	300
Book (Reading)	600
Bottle/Vial	1
Bucket	5
Caltrops (bag)	10
Cards with an extra Ace	5
Chain (10 ft)	10
Chalk (10 pieces)	1
Chisel	5
Cookpots	10
Crowbar	10
Drill	10
Face Paint/Makeup	10
Fake Jewels	50
Fishing Rod/Tackle	10
Glass Marbles (bag)	5
Glue (bottle)	1
Grappling Hook	10
Hammer	10
Holy Water	25
Horn	10
Hourglass	300
Incense (packet)	10
Iron Tongs	10
Ladder (10 ft)	10
Large Sponge	5
Lens	100
Lockpicks	100
Manacles	10
Metal File	5
Mirror (small, silver)	200
Musical Instrument	200
Nails (12)	5
Net	10
Oilskin Bag	5
Oilskin Trousers	10
Padlock and Key	20
Perfume	50
Pick	10
Pole (10ft)	5
Quill and Ink	1
Rope (50ft)	10
Sack	1
Saw	10
Set of Loaded Dice	5
Shovel	10
Small Bell	20
Soap	1
Spike (iron)	5
Spike (wood)	1
Spiked boots	5
Spyglass	1000
Tar (Pot)	10
Tent (3 man)	100
Tent (personal)	50
Twine (300 ft)	5
Waterskin	5
Whistle	5

Light

Candle, 4 hours	1
Lantern	30
Lamp Oil, 4 hours	5
Tinderbox	10
Torch, 1 hour	1

Armor

Shield	40
(Defense +1, 1 slot, 1 quality)	
Helmet	40
(Defense +1, 1 slot, 1 quality)	
Gambeson	60
(Defense 12, 1 slot, 3 quality)	
Brigandine	500
(Defense 13, 2 slots, 4 quality)	
Chain	1200
(Defense 14, 3 slots, 5 quality)	
Half Plate	4000
(Defense 15, 4 slots, 6 quality)	
Full Plate	8000
(Defense 16, 5 slots, 7 quality)	

Weapons

Dagger, Cudgel, Sickle, Staff, etc. *(d6 damage, 1 slot, 1 hand, 3 quality)*	5
Spear, Sword, Mace, Axe, Flail, etc. *(d8 damage, 2 slots, 1 hand, 3 quality)*	10
Halberd, War Hammer, Long Sword, Battle Axe, etc. *(d10 damage, 3 slots, 2 hands, 3 quality)*	20
Sling *(d4 damage, 1 slot, 1 hand, 3 quality)*	5
Bow *(d6 damage, 2 slots, 2 hands, 3 quality)*	15
Crossbow *(d8 damage, 3 slots, 2 hands, 3 quality)*	60
Arrows *(20)*	5
Quiver *(capacity 20)*	10

Clothing

Poor	10
Standard	50
Noble	3000
Furs	5000
Winter	100

Food

Travel rations (1 day)	5
Animal Feed (1 day)	2
Bacon, side of	10
Bread, 1 loaf	1
Cheese, 1 lb	2
Cider, 4 gallons	1
Cod, whole	20
Eggs, 24	1
Flour, 5 lbs	1
Fruit, 1 lb	1
Garlic, bunch	1
Grain, 1 bushel (8 gal.)	4
Herbs, 1 bunch	1
Lard, 5 lbs	1
Onions, 1 bushel	8
Salt, 1 bushel	3
Spices, 1 lb	100
Sugar, 1 lb	12
Wine/ale, bottle	1

Animals

Chicken	1
Cow	100
Dog, hunting	50
Dog, small but vicious	20
Donkey/Pack Horse	300
Goat	10
Hawk	1000
Horse, riding	1000
Horse, war	10,000
Ox	300
Pig	30
Sheep	15

Lodging

Bed, per night	1
Private room, per night	2
Meal	2
Hot bath	2
Stabling and fodder	2

Ships

Ship, high quality	720/ton
Ship, good quality	480/ton
Ship, used quality	240/ton
Ship, poor quality	120/ton
Raft	50
Fishing boat	500
Sloop	5000
Caravel	25,000
Galleon	125,000

Transport

Carriage	320
Cart	50
Wagon	120

Henchmen

Wages are per day, not including food, supplies, shelter, etc.

Laborer	1
Scribe	2
Archer	3
Mason	4
Man-at-arms, on foot	6
Armorer or Blacksmith	8
Man-at-arms, mounted	12
Master Builder	15
Barber-Surgeon	25
Knight	25

Buildings

Hovel	120
Row House	1200
Craftsman's House	2400
Merchant's House	7200
House with Courtyard	21,600
Guildhall	32,600
Stone Tower	48,000
Temple	75,000
Stronghold	100,000
Cathedral	500,000
Imperial Palace	2,500,000

Playing the Game

Abilities

Each of the six abilities is used in different circumstances.

- **Strength:** Used for melee attacks and saves requiring physical power, like lifting gates, bending bars, etc.
- **Dexterity:** Used for saves requiring poise, speed, and reflexes, like dodging, climbing, sneaking, balancing, etc.
- **Constitution:** Used for saves to resist poison, sickness, cold, etc. The Constitution bonus is added to healing rolls. A PC's number of item slots is always equal to their Constitution defense.
- **Intelligence:** Used for saves requiring concentration and precision, such as wielding magic, resisting magical effects, recalling lore, crafting objects, tinkering with machinery, picking pockets, etc.
- **Wisdom:** Used for ranged attacks and saves requiring perception and intuition, such as tracking, navigating, searching for secret doors, detecting illusions, etc.
- **Charisma:** Used for saves to persuade, deceive, interrogate, intimidate, charm, provoke, etc. PCs may employ a number of henchmen equal to their Charisma bonus.

Designer's Note: In a system that relies so heavily on the six abilities, it's important for each of them to play an important role, to discourage dump stats. Non-magical characters tend to dump the mental abilities, for example, so I increased their usefulness.

Item Slots

PCs have a number of item slots equal to their Constitution defense. Most items, including spellbooks, potions, a day's rations, light weapons, tools and so on take up 1 slot, but particularly heavy or bulky items like armor or medium to heavy weapons may take up more slots. Groups of small, identical items may be bundled into the same slot, at

the referee's discretion. 100 coins can fit in a slot. As a general guideline, a slot holds around 5 pounds of weight.

Designer's Note: Using item slots makes encumbrance simple enough that players will be willing to track it. Slots are also the key to character customization, as a PC's gear helps determine who they are. Raising Constitution, therefore, will probably be a priority for most characters.

Saving Throws

If a character attempts something where the outcome is uncertain and failure has consequences, they make a **saving throw**, or **"save"**. To make a save, add the bonus of the relevant ability to a d20 roll. If the total is **greater than** 15, the character succeeds. If not, they fail.

Designer's Note: Requiring saves to exceed 15 means that new PCs have around a 25% chance of success, while level 10 characters have around a 75% chance of success, since ability bonuses can get up to +10 by level 10. This reflects the general pattern found in the save mechanics of early D&D.

If the save is opposed by another character, then instead of aiming to exceed 15, the side doing the rolling must get a total greater than the opposing character's relevant defense score in order to succeed. If they fail, the opposing side succeeds. This type of save is called an ***opposed save***. Note that it doesn't matter which side does the rolling, since the odds of success remain the same.

Example: A wizard casts a fireball spell at a goblin, who gets a saving throw to avoid. This is resolved as an opposed save using the wizard's Intelligence versus the goblin's Dexterity. The goblin may roll plus their Dexterity bonus, hoping to exceed the wizard's Intelligence defense or the wizard may roll plus their Intelligence bonus, hoping to exceed the goblin's Dexterity defense.

Designer's Note: An ability's defense score is essentially its average roll. Requiring the rolling side to beat the opposing defense allows contests to be settled more quickly, eliminates the possibility of ties, and allows the game to be run with players doing all of the rolling if they so choose, since the odds of success are the same no matter which side rolls.

If there are situational factors that make a save significantly easier or harder, the referee may grant the roll ***advantage*** or ***disadvantage***. If a roll has advantage, roll 2d20 and use

the better of the two dice. If it has disadvantage, roll 2d20 and use the worse of the two dice.

Designer's Note: The referee is of course free to impose positive or negative modifiers rather than use the advantage system, but most players seem to enjoy it and it simplifies the math.

Reactions

When the PCs encounter an NPC whose reaction to the party is not obvious, the referee may roll 2d6 and consult the following table.

2	3-5	6-8	9-11	12
Hostile	*Unfriendly*	*Unsure*	*Talkative*	*Helpful*

Combat

At the start of each combat round, determine initiative by rolling a d6. On a 1-3, all of the enemies will act first. On a 4-6 all of the PCs will act first. Reroll initiative each round.

Designer's Note: Using simple group initiative speeds up combat, keeps all of the players engaged, and avoids bookkeeping. Rerolling initiative every round makes combat more dangerous, since it's possible for one side to go twice in a row.

On their turn, a character may move their speed (usually 40 ft) and take up to one combat action. This action may be casting a spell, making a second move, making an attack, attempting a stunt, or any other action deemed reasonable by the referee.

Melee weapons can strike adjacent foes, but ranged weapons cannot be used if the shooting character is engaged in melee combat. To make an attack, roll a d20 and add the character's Strength or Wisdom bonus, depending on whether they are using a melee or ranged weapon, respectively. If the attack total is **greater than** the defender's armor defense, the attack hits. If not, the attack misses.

Alternatively, an attack roll can also be resolved by the defender rolling a d20 and adding their armor bonus, hoping to roll a total **greater than** the defense of the ability the attacker is using. If they succeed, the attack misses. If they fail, the attack hits.

Designer's Note: In other words, attacks are resolved the same way as opposed saves, just using Armor in place of an ability.

On a hit, the attacker rolls their weapon's damage die to determine how many **Hit Points** (HP) the defender loses. A bonus damage die of the weapon's type may be added to the roll if the ideal weapon was used against an enemy type (for example, using a blunt weapon vs. a skeleton).

When a character reaches 0 HP, they are unconscious. When they reach -1 HP or less, they are dead. Players should roll up a new level 1 PC when their old one dies, and should rejoin the party as soon as possible.

Stunts

Stunts are combat maneuvers such as stunning, shoving, disarming, tripping, sundering armor, and so on. They are resolved with a versus save. They may not cause damage directly, but may do so indirectly (for example, pushing an enemy off of a ledge). The referee is the final arbiter as to what stunts can be attempted in a given situation.

Advantage in Combat

Characters can gain advantage in combat by attacking a target that is unaware, on lower ground, off balance, disarmed, distracted, or tactically disadvantaged in any significant way. The referee, as usual, has the final say.

When a character has advantage against an opponent on their combat turn, they may either A.) Apply advantage to their attack roll or stunt against that opponent or B.) Make an attack **and** a stunt attempt in the same round against that opponent, without advantage.

Critical Hits and Quality

During an attack roll, if the attacker rolls a natural 20 or the defender rolls a natural 1, the defender's armor loses 1 point of quality and they take an additional die of damage (of the weapon's type). If the attacker rolls a natural 1 or the defender rolls a natural 20, the attacker's weapon loses 1 point of quality. At 0 quality, the item is destroyed. Each point of quality costs 10% of the item's cost to repair.

Designer's Note: The slow degradation of their gear is another resource clock ticking down during long dungeon raids alongside hit points, spells, torches, and so on.

Morale

Monsters and NPCs all have a morale rating, usually between 5 and 9. When they face more danger than they were expecting, the referee will make a **morale roll** by rolling 2d6 and comparing the result to the NPC's morale rating. If the roll is higher than the rating, the NPC will attempt to flee, retreat, or parley. Morale rolls can be triggered by defeating half of an enemy group, defeating a group's leader, or reducing a lone enemy to half HP. Other effects may trigger a morale roll at the referee's discretion.

Hirelings also make morale rolls when they aren't paid, their employer dies, or they face extraordinary danger. Morale may also be improved by paying hirelings more and treating them well.

Healing

After a meal and a full night's rest, PCs regain lost hit points equal to a d8 plus their Constitution bonus. Resting at a safe haven restores all lost HP.

Designer's Note: Constitution bonuses do not affect maximum hit points like in most OSR games, but it is a big help when it comes to healing.

Monsters

All monsters from OSR bestiaries should work as-is in Knave with no major conversion needed. Here are some guidelines.

Hit Dice/Hit Points: All monster hit dice can be assumed to be d8s unless otherwise specified. To get the monster's hit points, just multiply the number of hit dice they have by 4 (or 5 if you're feeling mean.)

Armor: Monster AC (if ascending) is identical to Armor defense. If the AC is descending, subtract it from 19 (if it is from OD&D or B/X D&D) or from 20 (if it is from AD&D) to find its ascending equivalent.

Attack Bonus: Any attack bonus given is unchanged, and can be added to both melee and ranged attacks. If an attack bonus is not given, assume that it is the same as the monster's number of hit dice.

Damage: Damage remains the same.

Morale: Morale rating remains the same.

Saves: Since OSR monsters usually don't come with ability scores, assume that monsters have ability bonuses equal to their level, with the corresponding ability defenses.

Example: A typical 4 HD monster would have a bonus of +4 and a defense of 14 in all of its abilities by default, unless modified by the referee.

Designer's Note: Due to the unified 1-to-10 scale of Knave, monsters and NPCs essentially add their hit dice or level to any attacks or saves they make. Obviously this should be adjusted by the referee when it doesn't make sense.

Advancement

Whenever a PC accumulates 1000 XP, they gain a level. As a guideline, PCs receive 50 XP for low-risk accomplishments, 100 XP for moderate-risk accomplishments, and 200 XP for high-risk accomplishments. The referee should freely notify the PCs of how much XP different objectives are worth when asked.

Designer's Note: This is the way I run advancement because it's simple and easy to understand. Of course, swapping in milestone advancement, session advancement, or an XP-for-coin system works perfectly well. If using XP-for-gold or silver, note that a gold piece is 100 copper, and a silver piece is 10 copper.

When a PC gains a level, they roll a number of d8s equal to their new level to find their new HP maximum. If the result is less than their previous maximum, their maximum HP increases by 1. They also raise the defense and bonus scores of 3 different abilities of their choice by 1 point. Abilities may never be raised higher than 20/+10.

*Designer's Note: You can also raise abilities randomly if you want. My preferred method is to roll a d20 for each ability, in any order, raising that ability by 1 if the roll is **less than** that ability's defense. Keep cycling through the abilities, stopping when three abilities have advanced, and skipping any abilities that have maxed out. In this method, natural talents will tend to advance faster than weaknesses, which makes PCs more varied and specialized.*

Magic

The spell lists from any old-school RPG will work perfectly well in Knave, provided that they go up to 9th level. There are many free lists of classic spells available online.

In Knave, PCs may only cast spells of their level or less, so a level 3 PC could only cast spells of level 0 to 3. Spells are cast out of spell books, which must be held in both hands and read aloud. Each spell book can only be used once per day. Importantly, each spell book only holds a single spell, and each spell book takes up an item slot, so if a PC wants to be able to cast a wide variety of spells, they'll have to fill most of their inventory with spell books.

Designer's Note: It's always seemed odd to me that spell levels don't correspond to PC level in most OSR games. Well, now they do. I also took the abstract notion of spell slots and turned them into something concrete; PCs can cast as many spells as they can physically carry. Boost Constitution if you want your PC to carry around that mobile library.

PCs are unable to create, copy or transcribe spell books. In order to gain new spell books, PCs must adventure for them, by either recovering them from dungeons or looting them from other magicians. The higher the level of the spell book, the rarer and more valuable it is. PCs openly carrying high level spell books are likely to be hounded by bandits and wizards looking to "acquire" them.

When a spell allows for a save, make an opposed Intelligence save against the defender's relevant ability, usually Dexterity for ranged attack spells, Constitution for life-draining spells, Intelligence for mind-altering spells, or Wisdom for Illusions.

Designer's Note: Note that spell books can be easily re-skinned as rune stones, clay tablets, potions, scrolls, or whatever else fits your campaign. If you wanted a more dangerous, low-magic setting for example, you could make spell books potions or scrolls that are only used once and then lost forever. The random spell generator found in my other game, Maze Rats, can be useful for generating ideas for new spells.

100 Level-less Spells

If you prefer spells that are level-less and scale up as the caster becomes more powerful, use the list below. In the following spells, "L" is a number equal to the caster's level, an **item** is an object able to be lifted with one hand, and an **object** is anything up to human size. Unless otherwise noted, all spells with ongoing effects last up to L×10 minutes, and have a range of up to 40 feet. If a spell directly affects another creature, the creature may make a save to avoid it (as described previously). Success reduces or negates the spell's effects.

1. **Adhere:** Object is covered in extremely sticky slime.
2. **Animate Object:** Object obeys your commands as best it can. It can walk 15ft per round.
3. **Anthropomorphize**: A touched animal either gains human intelligence or human appearance for L days.
4. **Arcane Eye:** You can see through a magical floating eyeball that flies around at your command.
5. **Astral Prison:** An object is frozen in time and space within an invulnerable crystal shell.
6. **Attract:** L+1 objects are strongly magnetically attracted to each other if they come within 10 feet.
7. **Auditory Illusion:** You create illusory sounds that seem to come from a direction of your choice.
8. **Babble:** A creature must loudly and clearly repeat everything you think. It is otherwise mute.
9. **Beast Form:** You and your possessions transform into a mundane animal.
10. **Befuddle:** L creatures of your choice are unable to form new short-term memories for the duration of the spell.
11. **Bend Fate:** Roll L+1 d20s. Whenever you must roll a d20 after casting the spell, you must choose and then discard one of the rolled results until they are all gone.
12. **Bird Person:** Your arms turn into huge bird wings.
13. **Body Swap:** You switch bodies with a creature you touch. If one body dies, the other dies as well.
14. **Catherine:** A woman wearing a blue dress appears until end of spell. She will obey polite, safe requests.
15. **Charm:** L creatures treat you like a friend.
16. **Command:** A creature obeys a single, three-word command that does not harm it.
17. **Comprehend:** You become fluent in all languages.
18. **Control Plants:** Nearby plants and trees obey you and gain the ability to move at 5 feet per round.
19. **Control Weather:** You may alter the type of weather at will, but you do not otherwise control it.
20. **Counterspell:** Make an opposed Intelligence save against the Intelligence of the caster of a nearby spell. You may do this out of turn as a reaction, or against an ongoing magical effect. On a success, you may cancel the spell.
21. **Deafen:** All nearby creatures are deafened.
22. **Detect Magic:** You hear nearby magical auras singing. Volume and harmony signify the aura's power and refinement.
23. **Disassemble:** Any of your body parts may be detached and reattached at will, without causing pain or damage. You can still control them.
24. **Disguise:** You may alter the appearance of L characters at will as long as they remain humanoid. Attempts to duplicate other characters will seem uncanny.
25. **Displace:** An object appears to be up to L×10ft from its actual position.
26. **Earthquake:** The ground begins shaking violently. Structures may be damaged or collapse.
27. **Elasticity:** Your body can stretch up to L×10ft.
28. **Elemental Wall:** A straight wall of ice or fire L×40ft long and 10ft high rises from the ground.
29. **Filch:** L visible items teleport to your hands.
30. **Fog Cloud**: Dense fog spreads out from you.
31. **Frenzy:** L creatures erupt in a frenzy of violence.
32. **Gate:** A portal to a random plane opens.
33. **Gravity Shift:** You can change the direction of gravity (for yourself only) up to once per round.
34. **Greed:** L creatures develop an overwhelming urge to possess a visible item of your choice.
35. **Haste:** Your movement speed is tripled.
36. **Hatred:** L creatures develop a deep hatred of another creature or group of creatures and wish to destroy it.
37. **Hear Whispers:** You can hear faint sounds clearly.
38. **Hover:** An object hovers, frictionless, 2ft above the ground. It can hold up to L humanoids.
39. **Hypnotize:** A creature enters a trance and will truthfully answer L yes or no questions you ask it.
40. **Icy Touch:** A thick ice layer spreads across a touched surface, up to L×10ft in radius.
41. **Illuminate:** A floating light moves as you command.

42. **Increase Gravity:** The gravity in an area triples.
43. **Invisible Tether:** Two objects within 10ft of each other cannot be moved more than 10ft apart.
44. **Knock**: L nearby mundane or magical locks unlock.
45. **Leap:** You can jump up to L×10ft in the air.
46. **Liquid Air:** The air around you becomes swimmable.
47. **Magic Dampener:** All nearby magical effects have their effectiveness halved.
48. **Manse:** A sturdy, furnished cottage appears for L×12 hours. You can permit and forbid entry to it at will.
49. **Marble Madness:** Your pockets are full of marbles, and will refill every round.
50. **Masquerade:** L characters' appearances and voices become identical to a touched character.
51. **Miniaturize:** You and L other touched creatures are reduced to the size of a mouse.
52. **Mirror Image:** L illusory duplicates of yourself appear under your control.
53. **Mirrorwalk:** A mirror becomes a gateway to another mirror that you looked into today.
54. **Multiarm:** You gain L extra arms.
55. **Night Sphere:** An L×40ft wide sphere of darkness displaying the night sky appears.
56. **Objectify:** You become any inanimate object between the size of a grand piano and an apple.
57. **Ooze Form:** You become a living jelly.
58. **Pacify:** L creatures have an aversion to violence.
59. **Phantom Coach:** A ghostly coach appears until end of spell. It moves unnaturally fast over any terrain, including water.
60. **Phobia:** L creatures become terrified of an object of your choice.
61. **Pit:** A pit 10ft wide and L×5ft deep opens in the ground.
62. **Primeval Surge**: An object grows to the size of an elephant. If it is an animal, it is enraged.
63. **Psychometry:** The referee answers L yes or no questions about a touched object.
64. **Pull:** An object of any size is pulled directly towards you with the strength of L men for one round.
65. **Push:** An object of any size is pushed directly away from you with the strength of L men for one round.

66. **Raise Dead:** L skeletons rise from the ground to serve you. They are incredibly stupid and can only obey simple orders.
67. **Raise Spirit:** The spirit of a dead body manifests and will answer L questions.
68. **Read Mind:** You can hear the surface thoughts of nearby creatures.
69. **Repel:** L+1 objects are strongly magnetically repelled from each other if they come within 10 feet.
70. **Scry:** You can see through the eyes of a creature you touched earlier today.
71. **Sculpt Elements:** All inanimate material behaves like clay in your hands.
72. **Shroud:** L creatures are invisible until they move.
73. **Shuffle:** L creatures instantly switch places. Determine where they end up randomly.
74. **Sleep:** L creatures fall into a light sleep.
75. **Smoke Form:** Your body becomes living smoke.
76. **Snail Knight:** 10 minutes after casting, a knight sitting astride a giant snail rides into view. He is able to answer most questions related to quests and chivalry, and may aid you if he finds you worthy.
77. **Sniff:** You can smell even the faintest traces of scents.
78. **Sort:** Inanimate items sort themselves according to categories you set. The categories must be visually verifiable.
79. **Spectacle:** A clearly unreal but impressive illusion of your choice appears, under your control. It may be up to the size of a palace and has full motion and sound.
80. **Spellseize:** Cast this as a reaction to another spell going off to make a temporary copy of it that you can cast at any time before this spell ends.
81. **Spider Climb:** You can climb surfaces like a spider.
82. **Summon Cube:** Once per second, (6 times per round) you may summon or banish a 3-foot-wide cube of earth. New cubes must be affixed to the earth or to other cubes.
83. **Swarm:** You become a swarm of crows, rats, or piranhas. You only take damage from area effects.
84. **Telekinesis:** You may mentally move L items.
85. **Telepathy:** L+1 creatures can hear each other's thoughts, no matter how far apart they move.
86. **Teleport:** An object disappears and reappears on the ground in a visible, clear area up to L×40ft away.

87. **Thaumaturgic Anchor**: Object becomes the target of every spell cast near it.
88. **Thicket:** A thicket of trees and dense brush up to L×40ft wide suddenly sprouts up.
89. **Time Jump:** An object disappears as it jumps L×10 minutes into the future. When it returns, it appears in the unoccupied area nearest to where it left.
90. **Summon Idol:** A carved stone statue the size of a four poster bed rises from the ground.
91. **Time Rush:** Time in a 40ft bubble starts moving 10 times faster.
92. **Time Slow:** Time in a 40ft bubble slows to 10%.
93. **True Sight:** You see through all nearby illusions.
94. **Upwell:** A spring of seawater appears.
95. **Vision:** You completely control what a creature sees.
96. **Visual Illusion:** A silent, immobile, illusion of your choice appears, up to the size of a bedroom.
97. **Ward:** A silver circle 40ft across appears on the ground. Choose one thing that cannot cross it: Living creatures, dead creatures, projectiles or metal.
98. **Web:** Your wrists can shoot thick webbing.
99. **Wizard Mark:** Your finger can shoot a stream of ulfire-colored paint. This paint is only visible to you, and can be seen at any distance, even through solid objects.
100. **X-Ray Vision:** You gain X-Ray vision.

Thanks