

Tales from the Badger Den Players Guide

This document serves as the rules for creating a character to play in the Tales from the Badger Den organized play program in the Madison D&D Community. This includes rules for advancing your character in levels.



TALES FROM THE BADGERS DEN

This is a shared world campaign and organized play program created for Madison D&D players by Madison D&D players. The rules following in this document will outline the standards for creating and leveling a character in the Badger Den system.

For more information on the program, or to ask questions, you can join our Discord community or check out our publicly posted information on our website.

www.madisondnd.com

MADISON D&D COMMUNITY

We are an organized play community working primarily in and around Madison, Wisconsin. A Discord server is also offered that allows for streaming and online play with people outside of our geographic area.

LEADERSHIP TEAM

All decisions on the content and program policies are discussed and decided by the Leadership Team (LT). Any feedback or questions on the program announcements can be directed to members of the LT. The team members are as follows:

- Joe Alfano (dmzombiejoe) – Program Lead
- Mike Pampinella (pampiolite) – Story Lead
- Rick O'Donnell (vosgien) – Story Lead
- Mark Mapes (bip1767) – Story Lead
- Dianah Havitz (little_rudo) – Player Representative

CREATING A CHARACTER

For base character creation, follow the rules from Player's Handbook 2024 (pg. 33). Also refer to the *Allowed Sources* sidebar included here as well as the following notes. All characters begin at 1st level.

ALLOWED SOURCES

This is Madison D&D, so therefore allowable resources will be D&D. For the beginning of the organized play program, the following resources will be allowed for character creation:

- Player's Handbook (2024)
- Free Rules (2024)
- Forgotten Realms: Heroes of Faerun (see guidance section for changes or limitations)
- Eberron: Forge of the Artificer (see guidance section for changes or limitations)
- Ravenloft: Horrors Within (see guidance section for changes or limitations)
- Arcana Unleashed
- Madison D&D Player Certs that allow specific rules

Step 1: Choose a Class. Class and Subclass should come from the list of *Allowed Sources*.

Step 2: Choose a Species. Species and Subspecies are chosen from the list of *Allowed Sources*.

Step 3: Choose a Background. In addition to the *Allowed Sources*, you may also choose to make a *Custom Lineage* using the section below as guidance.

Step 4: Set Ability Scores. You may set your ability scores using either a *Standard Array*, or by using the *Point Cost* method.

Step 5: Choose Alignment. Madison D&D doesn't allow for player characters to be of Evil alignment.

Step 6: Determine Hit Points. Madison D&D uses fixed hit points, granting full hit points at 1st level and calculated hit point gains per level based on hit dice.

Step 7: Choose Equipment. When generating your character, you may choose either the base equipment for class/background, or the set gold amount and purchase your equipment.

Step 8: Roll for a Trinket (optional). If desired, a player can roll on the trinket table (PHB p.159) for their character.

Step 9: Fill in the Details. Fill in all of the generated numbers (saving throws, armor class, etc.) and generate the personality for your character (bonds, ideals, flaws, etc.).

CUSTOM LINEAGE

The custom lineage rules were not continued into the 5.5 rules with the release of the Players Handbook. Until such time as this rules option is flushed out in a published title, Badgers Den characters cannot use this option.

CUSTOM BACKGROUND

There are currently no rules for a custom background for players.

For Badgers Den, we will allow a player to use the rules in the Dungeon Master's Guide (p.55) to create a background. The specifics for the process are found on the page listed above in the "DM Toolbox" section.

USE THE MOST CURRENT CONTENT

As the current source material for player creation is the Player's Handbook (2024), that source will have the most current source material. In the event of a rule reprinted from the Player's Handbook (2014), or an errata that appears in the future, use the most current version.

RULES AS WRITTEN

Madison D&D strives to give players a consistent experience at each of the tables they play at. To this end, we will be using Rules As Written (RAW) for our determinations.

QUESTIONING RULINGS (RULES LAWYERING)

In the event where there is a question at the table, the DM makes the call. After a session is done, we will have a method on our Discord Community Server for asking rules questions of the Community Organizers, as well as a Rules FAQ channel where our clarifications will be posted.

PLAYING ADVENTURES

Each Player Character is allowed to play in any adventure in which they are in the appropriate level range, provided that character has not yet played in that adventure previously.

TIER BY CHARACTER LEVEL

Each adventure will be run by tier. The tier of the game will be determined by character level using the following guidelines.

- **Tier 1.** Character Level 1-4
- **Tier 2.** Character Level 5-10
- **Tier 3.** Character Level 11-16
- **Tier 4.** Character Level 17-20

PLAYER AND DM ETIQUETTE

Refer to the Madison D&D Code of Conduct as displayed on our website as well as in our Discord server. In addition to following the Code of Conduct, we expect all players (a DM is also a player) to be respectful, give every player/character a chance to shine, pay attention, be ready for your turn, ask for consent when needed, and check in on the enjoyment of others. A player is expected to follow the character creation rules to not impinge on the fun of the DM and other players. All players will also do their best to not disrupt the play experience of other players.

RULES LAWYERING

If there is a question about the rules at the game table, the DM will make a ruling and the game will continue on. If a player has a question on the ruling or rule, they may check in with the DM after the game, so as to not disrupt game play. In the event of a question, the player or DM may also check in with the Lead Organizers on the ruling – after game play is over.

METAGAMING

In the event a player has either played through an adventure previous to playing it, or has played it previously, they will notify the DM running at the table. While they can still play in the session, this will allow the DM to potentially make adjustments to change up the adventure. If they cannot, the player will make an effort to play through the module without using prior knowledge of it to preserve the play experience for others. Nobody other than the DM will have a copy of the adventure at the table, or a copy of content displaying the stat blocks of creatures being faced.

SPELL ADAPTATIONS

Most spells are instantaneous and will have durations that complete before the end of an adventure (long rest). Spells that require a time related task to complete (such as “cast once per day, every day for a year”) will require the use of downtime days to complete at the rate of 1 downtime day or every day required, rounding up.

PRECASTING SPELLS

Spells with an extended duration (such as *Find Familiar*) will extend from adventure to adventure. Player characters, in general, will not be able to precast any spells prior to the start of

an adventure. If an adventure specifically calls out a change, the ruling of the adventure overrides this ruling.

Clone. A vessel cannot grow another clone until the first clone is utilized.

Find Familiar. A familiar must be chosen from the list in the spell description. Other familiars can be chosen with specific class features (such as a Warlock’s Pact of the Chain), or with campaign certification for a specific type of familiar.

Nystul’s Magic Aura. The caster cannot place another illusion on an additional creature object until the spell’s duration has ended, or it is dispelled.

Simulacrum. A simulacrum cannot cast Simulacrum or any spell duplicating its effect.

Teleportation Circle. Player character permanent teleportation circles can only be established through a Bastion feature, or through a campaign certificate. If a player character owns property (such as a Bastion without the teleportation circle feature, or other property with a campaign certificate), they can establish a permanent teleportation circle by using downtime days to cast the spell there for the required amount of time.

Wish. This spell must be cast in the presence of a DM during the session and only affects characters at your table. Downtime days cannot be used to recover from stress and losing the ability to cast wish can only be undone by wishing for a reroll. The effects of any wish made for something other than duplicating the casting of another spell follow the guidelines for *Wish* outlined in the *Player’s Handbook* (pg. 342).

PLAYER USE OF DM MATERIALS

If players have an item, class ability or spell that requires information from the Dungeons Master’s Guide, Monster Manual, or the DM Information contained within the module, they can use it for the item description or creature stat block. In the event where campaign certification adjusts that, the directions will be contained within the campaign certification.

LOGGING PLAY

Players are required to keep legible character logs to track rewards, changes to a character sheet, and adventures played with the player character. In addition, if the player has chosen for the player character to have a bastion, they are required to keep a bastion tracking log.

Character Log Sheets are required at all events, in-person and virtual. In the event a DM or Organizer requires the need to view the log sheet, it must be in a format that they can easily view it. In the situation of a virtual log sheet, the player must provide a method of viewing it.

Bastion Log Sheets are required for all requests for a Bastion Turn. At special events (conventions, charity events, etc.) a table may be offered at Event HQ for in-person Bastion Turns. Online processes for offering Bastion Turns will be offered as well. (Refer to Discord for the current process.) In both cases the player needs to provide a method for viewing the Bastion Log Sheet.

LEVELING UP

Levels are gained by purchasing them using Hero Tokens, which are normally earned by completing adventures with a player character. A player is not required to level a character, even if they have tokens available for use. There will be alternative uses for Hero Tokens in future events. The cost of leveling a character is as follows:

- Tier 1 (levels 1-4)** 1 Copper Hero Token to gain 1 level
- Tier 2 (levels 5-10)** 1 Silver Hero Tokens to gain 1 level
- Tier 3 (levels 11-16)** 1 Gold Hero Tokens to gain 1 level
- Tier 4 (levels 17-20)** 1 Platinum Hero Token to gain 1 level

REBUILDING YOUR CHARACTER

Rebuilding of characters will be restricted to special documentation. Character rebuilds will not be done without special dispensation.

REWARDS

This section covers information on awards to your player character in the form of magic items, coins, mundane items, and special event awards.

MAGIC ITEMS

One or more magic items will be awarded in each module played. These items will not duplicate and will be awarded at the table. The distribution of permanent magic items will be done in the following method:

- Step 1 (Description of Item)** The DM will describe the item, including it's properties and any restrictions on it (ex: can only be attuned by a bard)
- Step 2 (Interest)** The DM will ask which player characters are interested in the item.
- Step 3 (Tie Breakers)** In the event that multiple characters are interested, the DM will determine the tie breakers involved (see list below)
- Step 4 (Awarding Items)** Once the tie breakers are determined the item(s) are awarded.

Tie Breakers

1. Least amount of permanent magic items.
2. Highest number on a D20 roll.

Non-Permanent Tie Breakers

- Lowest amount of consumable magic items.
- Highest number on a D20 roll.

PERMANENT MAGIC ITEMS

The definition of a Permanent Magic Item is any magic item that is not a potion, scroll, or bundle of ammunition. A bundle of ammunition is described as a group of 1-5 pieces of ammunition of the same type (ex: bundle of 4 *arrows* +1).

MAGIC ITEM LIMITS

There is no set limitations to the amount of magic items a character can own. The limitation will exist in their ability to obtain new items in future adventures. This goes for both permanent and non-permanent magic items.

TIER APPROPRIATE RARITIES

Magic Item availability will be controlled by awards placed in the modules, but will (for the most part) follow the guidelines of:

- **Tier 1:** Uncommon
- **Tier 2:** Rare
- **Tier 3:** Very Rare
- **Tier 4:** Legendary

CHOOSING ITEMS

In the event that a module or adventure is made available that allows for players to choose a magic item, your choice must be a tier appropriate item from the *Dungeon Master's Guide (2024)*. When directed to choose a type of item (type of weapon, type of armor, etc.), you must choose a type of gear available for purchase from the *Player's Handbook (2024)*.

PERSISTENT EFFECTS

If your character has already benefitted from a magic item that bestowed a persistent effect (ex: *ring of protection*), they cannot benefit from the same persistent effect given by a second item.

COINS AND OTHER TREASURE

When treasure is acquired during the course of an adventure with a gold piece value attached to it (coins, gems, art objects, etc.), the DM will total the treasure at the end of the session and distribute an even amount to each character involved.

Mundane items (weapons, armor, etc.) will only be awarded in a module if outlined in the module itself. Mundane items can be claimed by players, or sold at half the cost listed in the *Player's Handbook (2024)* and the coins added in to the treasure to be split above.

STORY AWARDS AND CAMPAIGN CERTIFICATES

Story Awards and Special Event Awards will come with Campaign Certificates that outline the effects of the award. Follow the text on the award. These awards will only be valid if the player presents the certificate at the game table.

DEATH, DISEASE, AND CURSES

In the event of a character death, the player has the choice of magic done at the table to return the character to life, paying for spell casting services to have the character returned to life, or retiring the character. The DM at the table will facilitate the spell casting services if needed.

Diseases will persist with the character (possibly with a certificate for a Story Award associated with it), unless the player takes actions to remove it. It is possible for a character to continue after the session without being aware of the disease.

Curses will be handled in a case-by-case basis. For instance, a cursed magic item will persist from session to session until the curse is broken. Lycanthropy will need to be cured before the character can be played again. Either through spellcasting at the table or through spell casting services.

DUNGEON MASTER REWARDS

Rewards for dungeon mastering at an event will include venue rewards, special rewards and game rewards. Venue rewards are

up to the venue and organizer for the venue (usually store credit). Game rewards will take the form of rewards to be assigned to one of your player characters (ex: Hero Tokens, magic items, etc.). The specifics for game rewards will be listed in the appendix of the module dedicated to DM Rewards. Special rewards are specific to each event and are determined by the organizer. These are usually in the form of gaming product donated by our sponsors or organizers.

REWARD CERTIFICATES

Rewards Certificates will be given at special events such as conventions, charity events, or the Trading Post. These certs will serve as documentation for the reward. Rewards from modules played (such as magic items) will not have certificates issued and the character log sheet will act as the documentation for the item.

BETWEEN PLAY SESSIONS

Player actions between sessions are limited to the following:

BUYING, SELLING, AND TRADING GEAR

Sell and Buy. You can purchase items, or sell mundane items off using the rules in the *Player's Handbook (2024)*. Spell scrolls from Cantrip to Level 5 can be purchased for double the crafting "Spell Scroll Costs" table in the *Player's Handbook (2024)*. Potions of appropriate rarity can be purchased for the consumable prices as described under the *Dungeon Master's Guide (2024)* "Magic Item Crafting Time and Cost" table. Any player character can purchase a spell scroll, even if they aren't the intended caster, but they may not purchase them upcast (e.g. 5th level *cure wounds*).

Loan. Equipment and consumable items can be lent to other player characters during play, but must return at the end of the session (unless consumed, lost or destroyed).

Trade. Permanent magic items, except for Unique and character-created magic items, can be traded with other characters. Permanent magic items will be traded on a one-for-one basis, with the items being of the same rarity. If the item is a certified item, certificates are required for the trade. At events where a Trading Post is offered, the rules of the event may be different and will be posted at the event.

BASTIONS

Bastions may be created once a player character has reached 5th level as outlined in the *Dungeon Master's Guide (2024)*. The creation of your Bastion will require the use of our Discord server and will use the following guidelines.

- **Request a Location:** Post to the Bastion Discord channel to request a location for your Bastion.
- **Create Your Base:** Start with one Cramped Basic Facility and one Roomy Basic Facility. Choose your Special Facilities as per your level.
- **Fill Out Bastion Form:** Fill out a form listing your bastion facilities (will be pinned in the Bastion channel).
- **Create a Bastion Map:** Post a full map of your Bastion with your form.

Bastion Turn. Once you have an approved location and a set Bastion, you can take a Bastion Turn after each completed adventure. To do so, post to the Bastion Turn channel in Discord with the player name, character name, module completed, venue played at, DM running and what your Bastion Turn involves. An admin will run your Bastion Turn online. Each Bastion Turn is assumed to take 7 days as represented by the cost of 7 Downtime Days to complete.

Orders. No facility's order can result in the same product twice in a row. When making a Craft: Magic Item order, the item created must be as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide (2024)*.

Rebuild a Bastion: You may rebuild one Bastion facility (replacing an existing facility with a new one), provided you adhere to all requirements on special facilities and pay any increased GP and time costs. If the rebuilt facility requires more time than currently available, you must wait until the time cost is paid before using the facility. Facilities with orders that have yet to be fully resolved may not be rebuilt.

Group Bastions: Characters within a group that wish to build a Group Bastion may do so, combining them within the same map and sharing copies of their Bastion sheet with all players sharing in the Bastion. All members of the Group Bastion may utilize the benefits from those Bastions in the sessions they play together.

DOWNTIME ACTIVITIES

Downtime Days may be converted from excess Hero Tokens using the conversion rules below. Conversion and downtime activities should be logged as an event similar to a game in your log sheet. The DM of any game can serve as the DM for this conversion and activity log. If a player is at an event such as a convention or charity event a staff member at the Event HQ may also serve in this capacity. The following activities are allowed:

Token Conversion. A player may convert excess Hero Tokens into Downtime Days for activities. The rate of conversion is 10 days per rank of Hero Token. (Copper: 10, Silver: 20, Gold: 30, Platinum: 40)

Bastion Turn. See the section Bastions for full details.

Crafting Equipment. You can craft items that require time to complete using the "Crafting Equipment" section in the *Player's Handbook (2024)*.

Copying Spells. Using the guidance from the *Player's Handbook (2024)* section "Expanding and Replacing a Spellbook" to copy spells found in adventures, using 1 downtime day per spell up to 4th level, and 2 downtime days per spell 5th level and up. Copying spells from another character's spellbook can be done immediately after a session of play where both players are present.

Scribing Scrolls. As per the guidance in the *Player's Handbook (2024)*. Spell scrolls may not be upcast (e.g. 5th level *cure wounds*).

Trading Teleportation Circle Locations. After playing a session where both characters are present, each character who created a permanent teleportation circle spends 10 downtime days to trade the circle location and sequence with each other.

Special Events. Interactives and other special events may offer downtime activities. In such cases, refer to the event documentation for the specifics.

PLAYER/DM GUIDANCE

Certain resources and events may require guidance for use in Tales from the Badgers Den. See below for specific guidance by resource.

FORGOTTEN REALMS: HEROES OF FAERUN

All player options other than Regional Backgrounds from this book will be available for player use in Badgers Den. In instances where a player option description refers to a source specific to the Forgotten Realms, a naming/source option will be provided here.

- **Scion of the Three:** The Three are not part of the Pantheon in Badgers Den. As such name this subclass Scion of Entropy replacing Bane with Discord, Bhaal with Disease, and Myrkul with Death. Your rogue follows the powers of entropy instead of gods.
- **Spellfire Sorcery:** A version of Spellfire exists in the Badgers Den campaign setting. Replace all instances of the term Spellfire with Silverflame.
- **Dragon Cultist:** The Cult of the Dragon does exist in Badgers Den so this background and its associated feat are unchanged for Badgers Den characters.
- **Emerald Enclave Caretaker:** Change the name of the background to Oakleaf Shield Warden and the associated feat to Oakleaf Sapling.
- **Harper:** Change the name of the background to Guthryn's Lawkeeper as well as the associated feat.
- **Knight of the Gauntlet:** Change the name of the background to Order of the Blade. The associated feat can remain unchanged.
- **Lords Alliance Vassal:** Change the name of the background to Knight of the Griffon as well as the associated feat.
- **Purple Dragon Squire:** Change the name of the background to Knight of the First Alliance. The associated feat should change the name to First Alliance Rook.
- **Zhentarim Mercenary:** Change the name of the background to Blade of the Crimson Mask and the associated feat to Crimson Blade.
- **Enclave Magic:** Change the name of the feat to Oakleaf Beast Spirit and the prerequisite is changed to Oakleaf Sapling.
- **Harper Teamwork:** Change the name of the feat to Lawkeeper's Guidance and the prerequisite is changed to Guthryn's Lawkeeper.
- **Lordly Resolve:** Change the name of the feat to Griffon's Resolve and the prerequisite is changed to Knight of the Griffon.
- **Purple Dragon Commandant:** Change the name of the feat to First Alliance Commander and the prerequisite is changed to Knight of the First Alliance.
- **Spellfire Adept:** Replace all instances of Spellfire to Silverflame.
- **Zhentarim Tactics:** Change the name of the feat to Crimson Tactics and the prerequisite is changed to Crimson Blade.

EBERRON: FORGE OF THE ARTIFICER

The player options from this book are allowed save for the following exceptions:

- **Backgrounds:** The only allowed backgrounds from this book are Archeologist and Inquisitive.
- **Feats:** All of the feats in this book are Dragonmark connected and not available in Badgers Den.
- **Bastions:** Options not available are Mobile Bastions, Dragonmark Outpost, Kundarak Vault, Orien Helm, and Lyrander Helm.

RAVENLOFT: THE HORRORS WITHIN

All player options are allowed from the book except for the following:

- **Backgrounds:** In any background where a Dark Gift Feat is granted, choose any other Origin Feat from the Players Handbook.
- **Feats:** Any Dark Gift Feat is unavailable for Badgers Den.
- **Bastions:** Haunted Bastion options are not available for Badgers Den characters.