

humans or character types before contracting lycanthropy? If so, will the creature's hit points be the same as it had as a human, or do you roll new hit points according to the hit dice given in the Monster Manual for the particular weretype? What about other shape changers, such as bronze dragons?

ADA: Any creature, regardless of shape-changing or polymorphing abilities, retains the same hit points and saving throws in all forms. The statistics given in the Monster Manuals are nice and convenient, but are not binding; nearly anything can be found in a form larger, smaller, dumber, smarter, (et al.) than those described.

ADQ: Rakshasas, as described in Monster Manual, can be slain by crossbow bolts blessed by a cleric. This is a very unusual use of the bless spell. Does the usual 6 round duration apply, or can characters get some bolts blessed and then kill a rakshasa with them a week later? How many bolts can be blessed with one spell?

ADA: Similar to the options given for a dispel magic spell, a bless spell may be directed at either an area or an item. If cast at an item, no creatures can be affected at the same time. In this mode, the spell is an Enchantment (rather than a Conjunction, the typical use). The cleric may bless an object weighing up to 1 pound per level of the caster. If the item is of sufficient quality (in the case of a crossbow bolt, of at least 50 gp value), the enchantment will function in a manner similar to normally (magic-user) enchanted missiles — permanent until fired — with the added vulnerability that the magic can be removed by a dispel magic spell (at standard chances of success).

ADQ: Do druids get bonus spells for high wisdom as clerics do?

ADA: Druids ARE clerics, and of course gain the bonuses. Non-cleric casters of cleric spells (such as paladins) do not gain the bonus spells.



DQ: The table of thieving abilities on page 27 of the Players Companion book confuses me. The given chances for success are lower than those given in the Expert rules! Why can a 14th level thief open a lock better than a 25th level thief?

DA: The percentages given in the revised Expert rulebook are incorrect; the unrevised chart was published. (Most sets include an errata sheet with the correct percentages). The unrevised percentages may be used if you (as DM) run occasional games, rather than a campaign. But if characters are played enough to earn higher levels (say, 20 or more), use the revised figures. The correct chart, complete for all characters (levels

1-36), will be in the D&D® MASTER Set. DQ: When I recently went to my local hobby shop to purchase the D&D® Companion Set, I was quite disturbed to see that it was designed go with the new D&D® Basic and Expert Sets. I have flipped through my friend's new Basic and Expert sets and found them very incompatible with my second edition sets. It follows that the new D&D Companion set will also be incompatible with my edition of the rules systems. So in order to upgrade my rules, I would have to buy two new boxes and the higher priced D&D Companion Set. Needless to say I feel that this is quite redundant and absurd. I don't feel that I should have to buy revised editions of what I already have to get the Companion Set promised years ago. What are your opinions on this?

DA: There are very few rules that have been changed in the revised editions; the new sets ARE compatible with the old (that is, the "old red box"; the "blue book" edition is primitive in comparison). I closed some loopholes, and added more detail on some subjects, but was careful to change very little of the existing rules—providing more guidelines instead.

—You asked for my opinions. Personally, I think you should (a) not buy revised BASIC; it's designed for beginners, and you have the old editions; (b) do buy the revised EXPERT; I put a lot of new things into it, and I don't think you'll be disappointed (and the reviews agree); and (c) do buy the COMPANION set; it's not a rehashing of old stuff. I made it the best I could, combining my ten years of role playing experience (egad, has it really been that long?) with the spirit and foundation of the original game.

DQ: What are the prices for the new armor types in the Companion Set (scale and banded)?

DA: Scale mail (AC 6) costs 30 gp, and banded (AC 3) costs 50 gp. And if you're a DM, note the chart on page 55 (DM Companion book), which gives encumbrances of all types and sizes, including the slightly smaller demi-human armors and even giant-sized. You may modify costs for those proportionately.

DQ: My 14th level magic-user got killed in a battle with a scorpion when he was out of spells and had lost his dagger. Could he have picked up a sword and used it in a life and death situation?

DQ: Sure! Don't get hung up on abstractions; anyone can use any weapon, regardless of class, in emergencies. BUT this does NOT mean that the character knows how to use it properly. If I were DM in such a situation, I'd first roll 1d6; on a 1-2, he hits himself; 3-5, the weapon is jarred out of his hand (even with a technical miss, probably hitting armor or a wall or something); 6, make a standard Hit Roll, but with a pen-

alty (at least -2 but not more than -12, depending on the weapon, situation, etc.).

Note that the situation is a bit different for clerics. Their abhorrence of edged weaponry might require a saving throw (for PCs) and/or morale check (for NPCs); if failed, the character would be unable to force himself even to try such a thing, and even success would still involve severe penalties to the Hit Roll. If a successful hit occurs, another check should be made immediately, with failure indicating that the cleric drops the forbidden weapon in disgust.

But in any event, retreat is a preferred option; big dumb creatures (like the scorpion you mentioned) would probably stop to munch on something appetizingly convenient, rather than chasing your possibly dangerous magic-user. Against more intelligent monsters — have you ever tried a bluff?



SFQ: Can a Dralasite with enough limbs make five melee attacks per round?

SFA: Yes, but the character would need a dexterity score of at least 100 to make enough limbs for five melee attacks per round.

SFQ: Why do Yazirians walk more slowly over long distances than Humans?

SFA: The Yazirian musculature is built for the lower gravity of their homeworld. As a result, their muscles are not heavy enough to sustain prolonged motion at the same rate as humans and it takes them longer to cover a sizable distance on foot.

SFQ: Can an anti-shock implant be removed from one's own body using only strength?

SFA: Yes, but not without injury. Anti-shock implants are placed surgically, and can only be safely removed by surgery.

SFQ: What special seating arrangements do Vrusk require in vehicles?

SFA: The standard Vrusk seat resembles a freestanding padded table supported by a single leg. When seated, the Vrusk folds its remaining legs around the underside of the seat.

