

Fatigue, Exposure, Fire and More

“But as it becometh disciples to obey their master, so also it becometh the master to dispose all things with prudence and justice. Therefore, let all follow the Rule as their guide in everything, and let no one rashly depart from it” - The Holy Rule of St. Benedict

Chases and Fatigue

To resolve chases, the keeper should compare the movement rates (MOV) of pursuer and pursued. If they differ, the gap between pursuer and pursued closes or opens by that many units per round, until capture or escape.

For game purposes, all humans have MOV 8 and all riding horses have MOV 12. Both humans and horses have MOV 2 when swimming. Rates for other creatures can be found in the appropriate sections of the Call of Cthulhu rulebook. If absolute distance and movement rates are important to the game the table below provides some specific measurements.

If the effort is sustained too long without rest, the keeper may request a CONx5 roll for every extended period. Each failed CONx5 roll says that the runner tires and moves slower by 1 MOV per failed roll. Complete exhaustion (cannot run or fight, for instance) occurs when MOV has been halved. At this point all skill rolls should be halved and 24 consecutive hours of rest with sufficient food and water are required to recover from exhaustion! If the adventurer attempts any kind of strenuous physical activity while exhausted, roll a successful CONx5 to *not* lose consciousness.

The above rules can be easily adapted to all sustained physical activities like swimming, climbing, combat (intense effort), etc.

Effort	Rate ¹	Duration ²	Rest ³
Explosive (e.g. dash)	MOVx10 yards/round	1 round	2 mn
Intense (e.g. run)	MOVx5 yards/round	CON rounds	1 hour
Sustained (e.g. forced march)	MOV/2 miles/hour	CON hours	1 day

¹One combat round lasts 12 seconds, i.e. there are 5 combat rounds in a minute.

²How long the effort can be sustained before experiencing fatigue.

³The resting time required to fully recover from the effort.

Wilderness survival

There is not much point in “starvation” or “fasting” rules since humans can survive indefinitely on meager food rations if necessary – down to one-fifth of normal. Nonetheless: with a comfortable dry shelter, plenty of drinking water and rest an average human can live 8 to 12 weeks without any food. The first 3 days the adventurer operates normally. In the next CON days physical performance gets impaired and the keeper may rule negative skill roll modifiers. In the final phase the starved adventurer is exhausted (all skill rolls halved), he or she

becomes delirious and eventually dies having lost 50% body weight. To simulate this the starving adventurer incurs a loss of 1 hit point every 5 days. Any strenuous physical activity calls for CONx5 rolls: failing a CONx5 roll costs an additional hit point.

By far the two greatest outdoors threats facing adventurers are dehydration and exposure to cold. Lacking both water and food (all foodstuffs contain some water), lose 1 hit point per day; the keeper rules exhaustion when hit points are halved. As with starvation strenuous activities call for CONx5 rolls: failing a roll, the thirsty adventurer loses another hit point. The keeper may double the hit point loss rate in warm weather (above 70°F or 20°C) and triple it in hot weather (above 85°F or 30°C). Conversely the keeper should halve the hit point rate in cold weather (under 60°F or 15°C).

When exposed to cold air or cold water, the keeper requests CONx5 rolls at regular intervals of time. Each failed CONx5 roll costs 1 hit point of hypothermia damage. The frequency of these rolls depends on the exposure. Indicative frequencies are listed in the table below:

Temperature	Water	Air
Unbearable < 5°F or -15°C	Not applicable	Roll every 2 mn (10 rounds)
Extremely cold < 20°F or -5°C	Not applicable	Roll every ½ hour
Freezing cold < 40°F or 5°C	Roll every 2 mn (10 rounds)	Roll every 4 hours
Cold < 60°F or 15°C	Roll every 15 mn	Roll every day

- ❑ In water, halve the roll interval if naked, and double it if wearing insulated clothing.
- ❑ On land, divide roll interval by 10 if naked or wearing wet clothes. Multiply by 10 if wearing dry insulated clothing. Apply a “wind chill factor” if appropriate.
- ❑ The distance an average human can hope to swim in 50°F or 10°C water is two-thirds of a mile!

Fire and Light

Candles, torches, oil lamps and lanterns make portable light by which to Read and to Spot Hidden. The light they give shows from a hundred yards away in darkness. Candles flicker, burn for two to six hours depending on length, and are easy to blow out. Candles are only reliable within a lantern, i.e. a punched-metal cylinder with a rectangular opening that can be covered with a thinned plate of clear ox horn. Torches give a large bright flame, burn for an hour, and only hurricane-force winds can blow them out. If dropped, a torch keeps burning with a successful Luck roll. Oil lamps are not better than wax

candles and can be quite dangerous if dropped, because of the spreading burning oil.

We assume that all people of non-urban primitive cultures know how to quickly make fire using for instance flint and tinder. Under adverse conditions, e.g. wind, the keeper can ask for Luck rolls.

- ❑ A hand held torch does 1D6 hit points of burn damage each round (12 seconds) that it is thrust against a target. The target gets a Luck roll to prevent clothes and hair to catch fire. If they do, the target continues to lose 1D6 hit points per round.
- ❑ To be in a burning hut, on a flaming ship or engulfed in a bonfire costs 1D6+2 damage each round. A Luck roll is needed each round before the victim begins to asphyxiate as per drowning rules.
- ❑ Armor insulates against fire damage for 1D6 rounds. After that, the adventurer takes normal fire damage.

Damaging the Scenery

One day – or one night – the investigators may have to dig up a corpse or a mysterious treasure, or to burrow their way out of the dark pit of a prison, etc. In all cases the keeper may find the following digging rates useful:

1 cubic yard of...	requires...
Loose soil	½ hour of sustained effort
Normal soil	1 hour of sustained effort
Compact clay	2 hours of sustained effort
Lime- or sandstone	25 hours of sustained effort
Granite	40 hours of sustained effort

These nominal figures assume a single average human with appropriate tools, e.g. shovels, spades, picks and wheelbarrows. For large-scale mining or quarrying sites, hire additional workers to dispose of the rubble. Under adverse conditions or with improvised tools, the keeper should increase the effort required. Conversely and at the keeper's discretion, workers skilled in special mining techniques may process raw material at substantially higher rates than listed.

In other situations an investigator may be required to break through obstacles like doors or walls. For these the keeper may apply armor-like rules: each obstacle has a armor rating that absorbs damage, and a number of hit points. Use the appropriate tool/weapon skill as per combat rules to determine every round if the obstacle has been damaged. Each time the damage exceeds the shield rating of the obstacle, the points of damage in excess of the rating are subtracted from the obstacle's hit points.

The table below enumerates different types of obstacles of nominal thickness:

Obstacle ¹	armor	h.p ¹	time ²
Hut walls and door	1	5	½
Pinewood boards	2	10	1
Wattle & daub wall	2	15	2
Stout oaken door	3	15	2
Timber stockade	3	55	10
Masonry wall	6	65	60

¹Hit points – not armor - are proportional to thickness. Adjust if necessary.

²Time to demolition in minutes; assumes a single average human with an appropriate tool and 25% skill at it.

- ❑ Note that taking down a palisade or a castle wall may require a considerable number of rounds. The keeper is advised to use the average time to demolition instead, with suitable modifiers (see also the first table above). In such cases special siege or demolition techniques (battering rams, fire, etc.) are probably more efficient.
- ❑ The most appropriate tool for wood is the timber ax (15% base chance, 2D6 damage). For less than 6-inch thick walls the quarry hammer works wonders (20% base chance, 2D6 damage). For masonry or stone walls thicker than 6 inches one needs a pickax (10% base chance, 2D6 damage).
- ❑ Lacking the tools, the keeper may allow players to use regular weapons (see Weapon Tables), e.g. a battle-ax or a long sword. Optionally the keeper may rule that an inappropriate tool breaks on a fumbled roll of 99-00.
- ❑ The pickax and the timber ax can impale – and get stuck - on a roll of 01 (double damage, ignore damage absorption; skill roll to pull the tool free). For all weapon/tools rolls less than one-fifth of the skill percentile are “critical” blows (double damage, damage absorption applies). Always add damage bonus.
- ❑ Reducing the hit points of a section of the obstacle to zero makes a hole wide enough (roughly half a square yard) for a SIZ 13 or less human to squeeze through. Note that “thin” or supporting structures may collapse when weakened.