

Getting Started

Hello and welcome! You're looking at a project that has just started in September 2023. We're still in the process of migrating our campaign doc over to this website. So there isn't a whole lot here yet. A ton of stuff should be added over the coming weeks. If you'd like an update when things are in more usable condition, email epoems@riseup.net and we'll send you an email back when Demon Idol is ready to be more useful.

In the meantime, remember to [own your data](#), and make backups of your campaign files!

How we use the rulebooks

AD&D consists of [a number of rulebooks](#) published during the 70s and 80s. Demon Idol attempts to follow the letter of the PHB, DMG, DDG (for ability scores over 18), and monster books. It also uses the spells, magic items, and some additional rules from UA. Whether your table uses the classes and races in UA is a matter of individual campaigns (see [Campaign Guide](#)). The books published after Gary Gygax's departure in 1985 (DSG, WSG, MotP) are considered for inspiration, and sometimes we adopt rules from these books, but they are not used directly, and can safely be ignored in most cases.

How to learn AD&D

In order to learn AD&D, you have to read the rulebooks. There isn't a shortcut to learning the game. Non-DMs can often start playing having read very little of the rules if they have a DM who has read through them.

If you know someone who already read the rulebooks, you might be able to start playing right away by learning from them, and then you can read the rulebooks steadily in your own time. But in practice, very few people play the game by the rules. We've found that many people who say they run AD&D have not read the rulebooks, or ignore many of the rules, or play some game that is not AD&D, such as OSRIC, OSE Advanced, Hyperborea, or a mashup of AD&D and "AD&D 2nd Edition". We aren't opposed to these games, but you should take care to make sure you're learning the game you think you are.

Sometimes people think they know how to play AD&D reasonably well because they've played other versions of old-school D&D. But AD&D is a different beast. It has some of the same mechanics as other kinds of D&D, but it also has a lot that doesn't exist in any other version of the game. People who have been playing the game for 30 years discover rules they didn't know exist, simply because they never read through the rulebooks.

When reading the rulebooks, you can safely skip over the spell and magic items descriptions, and you certainly don't need to read every monster entry. These things you can look up during the game. But everything else should be read - even the stuff you think you know from other old-school adventure games.

Where Demon Idol comes in

Demon Idol is intended to be used in conjunction with the rulebooks. If you've already read the rulebooks, you can go ahead and start reading through the links under the "Rules" action of the sidebar over at the left of this page. Those pages contain various annotations and explanations of the rules, especially in cases where the rulebooks aren't clear or fail to provide [gameable material](#). Or if you're curious about a particular rule, you can use the search feature at the top of the page.

If you've never read the rulebooks though, it's time to get started. DMs should read the PHB, DMG, and rules content of the MM (see [Rulebooks Guide](#)). Players can survive with a look at the PHB if they have a friendly DM willing to teach as they play. As you're reading, you can check Demon Idol for rules clarifications, or follow along in Demon Idol with the corresponding section of the rulebook you're presently reading.

Over time, we plan to add more helpful tutorial and instruction material to Demon Idol. But since we're just getting started, it's mostly just info about game rules. But that's okay - it's a great opportunity for you to dive into the books, which are a joy to read.

We plan to add other resources to the site over time as well, including various sheets and generators.

Feedback

We plan to set up some easier way to give feedback and ask questions, but in the meantime, please don't hesitate to email ALL questions, comments, and critiques to eapoems@riseup.net. I love talking about AD&D.

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