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Character Stats for TFT

6-4-2021

This is for everyone who writes, formally or informally, for *TFT*, and all our editors.

To make it easier to use the stat blocks in *TFT*, both for characters and for some monsters, we're establishing a specific style for what gets listed, in what order, and the way it's expressed.

Typography: indent each category with an ordinary paragraph indent. Alphabetize lists. Separate elements in a list with commas. If the elements of a list are complex, use bullet points as in the example. Do not end list elements (or anything else) with periods, except for complete sentences under Special Notes. If a list has only one item, use the singular form of the list head (e.g., "Language: Common," but "Languages: Common, Goblin").

Here is an example of a (very unlikely, very advanced) character who has every single category of stat. This is to give an example of the order in which they should appear. If a category is empty, just skip it; don't write "none." If something requires detailed explanation, write "(see below)" and explain it in text.

Doctor Mandrake, wizard, age 99

ST 12, DX 13, IQ 18, MA 10

Talents: Alchemy, Knife, Literacy, Horsemanship, Sword

Spells include: Cleansing, Cleanse Poison, Create/Destroy Elemental, Darkness, Dazzle, Dispel Missiles, 4-Hex Image, Glamor, Iron Flesh, Lesser Magic Item Enchantment, Lightning, Minor Medicament, Regeneration, Remove Thrown Spell, Spell Shield, Staff III, Wizard's Wrath

Languages: Common, Goblin, Sorcerers' Tongue

Weapon: Silver shortsword (2d-1)

Attacks: Halitosis (1d-3) (see below)

Special Ability/Weakness: Allergic to cats (-1 to DX and IQ in presence of any feline)

Armor: Enchanted silken robes stop 3 hits/attack

Equipment: Torches (2), wizard's chest

Magic Items:

- Gem of Summoning (4-Hex Dragon)
- Powerstone, 5 ST (emerald; see below)
- Staff III (Mana 12): 2' ebony wand, value \$300 (1d)

Special note: Dr. Mandrake becomes violently angry if he is reminded, intentionally or not, of his age.

Here, after a blank line, begins the text description of Dr. Mandrake's background, place in the adventure, what the deal is with that emerald, and so on. It should not be more than a few paragraphs long. It should be written in complete sentences!

And here, just for contrast, is a simple monster listing. Same format, but much simpler, and therefore much less space!

Little Crabmen

ST 7, DX 10, IQ 3, MA 8 (walking or swimming)

Armor: Shell stops 1 hit/attack

Attacks: Two pincer attacks (1d-1 each)

Now, to discuss each of the categories, which will take much more space than even the longest listing . . .

Name – The name of the character, or of the type of monster. Not indented.

Description – Two types of description are acceptable. One is the straight description per the above. Include the race if not human, and the age of human and humanoid characters because that helps us visualize them. The other possible descriptive line is the often "cute," often alliterative one that helps define the character or tie them in with their role in the adventure. For Doctor Mandrake, we might have used, for instance, "Overpowered Opponent," or "Bad-Breath Boss," or, if his role were benign, perhaps "Persnickety Patron." Note, as per the Little Crabmen above, that there does not have to be a description if we don't need one.

Stats – List the four basic stats. List MA even if it is the normal 10. It doesn't take up any extra space! If a stat is reduced (the typical reason would be that the character wears armor) give both basic and adjusted stat; the adjusted stat is in parentheses and after a space. If Doctor Mandrake wore leather armor, his stats would be ST 12, DX 13 (11), IQ 18, MA 10 (8).

Talents – List the character’s talents, alphabetically, separated by commas. If there is a specialization, put it in parentheses – e.g., Weapon Expertise (Sword). For a leveled talent, list only the highest level – e.g., Unarmed Combat IV. For a talent that can be taken multiple times for an increased bonus, show how many times – e.g., Missile Weapons x3.

Spells – List the character’s spells, alphabetically, separated by commas. If you wish to leave some slots open to allow for GM improvisation, you may start with “Spells include” instead of just “Spells.”

Languages – List the character’s languages, alphabetically, separated by commas. Don’t say “human tongue;” say “Common.” The only “official” language that has “tongue” after it, by the way, is Sorcerer’s Tongue. Most race languages are just the name of the race. Goblins speak Goblin, Orcs speak Orcish.

Weapons – List each weapon carried, alphabetically. Follow it by the damage it does, in parentheses. List the *actual* damage, not the book damage . . . if Dr. Mandrake had Weapon Expertise (Sword), which he does not, he would do an extra hit with his sword, and his sword damage would be listed as (2d). If the weapons are very weird or special, a (see below) may be called for. For a weapon with two damages, like a bastard sword, give both damages with a slash between them and assume the GM understands, or will quickly learn, why the weapon has two numbers.

Attacks – This category is usually a characteristic of monsters, but we gave it to the good Doctor to show its position in the sequence. He should lay off the onions.

Special Abilities/Weaknesses – There is no need to duplicate special abilities given by talents. If the specials cannot be explained briefly, use (see below) and explain more fully in the text below. Even if the special abilities are of a type defined in another book (e.g., vampires), take a paragraph in the text below to give a capsule version for the user’s convenience.

Armor – This category comprises natural armor, the armor that the character wears, and the shield that the character carries. Name and list each separately, showing how many hits/attacks it stops. But you don’t have to call the category “Armor and Shields” or anything like that. An always-on magical defense should be listed here for the user’s convenience, even if it is granted by an item listed under Magic Items. Ditto for Toughness, even though it’s on the Talents list.

Equipment – List all equipment carried, alphabetically. Quantities go in parentheses. This is a good place for bullet points if the equipment requires any explanation at all.

Magic Items – Ditto. The wizard’s staff is a magical item, and worth

describing both for game mechanics and flavor. If it has a Mana stat, remember to list it! If it has a value as loot, give it – but remember that it is dangerous to touch a wizard's staff until long after he has given it up or died. If players forget that . . . well, oops!

Notes: (Whatever needs to be added to play the character properly.)