

Half the Battle

Game Design by
Tom Allen

Half the Battle

*Two parties of adventurers meet in a dungeon.
Violence ensues.*

In Half the Battle you control each member of an adventuring party, in battle with another party that dared to explore the same dungeon as you did. You win the game if you eliminate every member of the opposition.

Each party is comprised of six Characters, represented by a unique die (d4, d6, d8, d10, d10/0, or d12) and a token stating the character's class. For example, a Wizard uses a d4; a Rogue uses a d8. Each party also has one large powerful Monster, which uses a d20.

The game area is the dungeon itself, and it is divided into ten strips called Lanes. The game area looks like this:



The black group on the left is your party, facing towards the right to attack the grey party of your opponent. The dashed lines represent the lanes of the dungeon, within which any number of pieces can stand. But of course, if they're not your allies - then they must be eliminated!

Components

- 1x Bag of Holding Deck (12 cards)



- 10x Lane Dividers



- 2x Character Decks (8 cards each)



- 14x Character Tokens (7 per player)



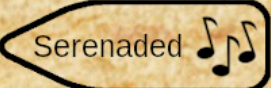
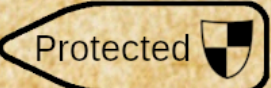
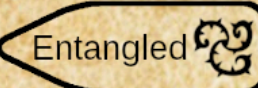
- 1x Initiative Token








- 14x Polyhedral Dice (d4 - d20, 7 per player, red/black)



- 12x Lane Indicator Tokens:

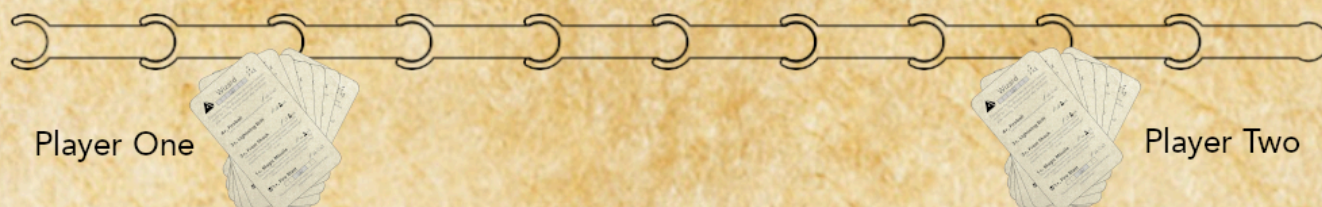
4x  Serenaded, 4x  Protected, 4x  Entangled

- 28x Ability Tokens:

8x Flame Breath , 8x Necrotic Strike , 4x Hex ,
4x Sacrifice , 4x Polymorph 

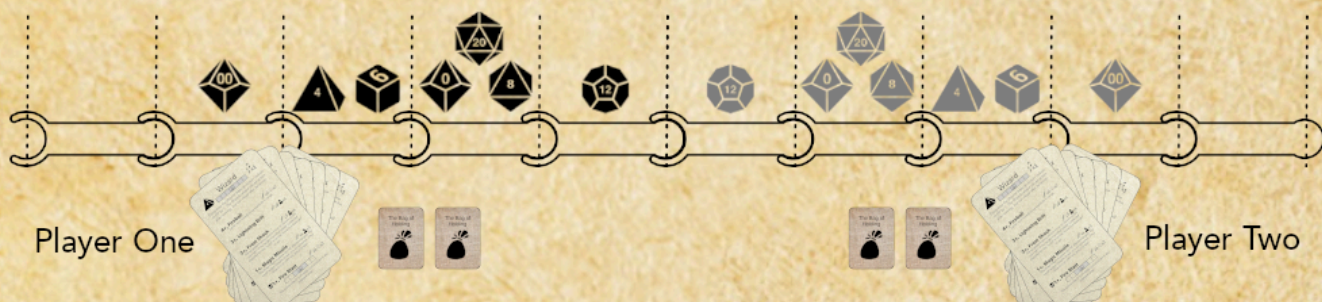
Setup

Arrange the 10 lane dividers into a line as shown. Give each player their character deck (7 double-sided character cards, plus 1 guide card.)



For your first game, both players should use the A team. The team rosters are shown on the back of each guide card.

Turn the round character tokens the right way up for each team, then place each die on top, on its maximum value.



Put each player's character tokens and dice in their starting positions as shown. Shuffle the Bag of Holding deck and give each player two cards, face up. These cards are public, so each player may look at each other's.

Roll the d20 to determine each player's monster's starting HP. If equal or lower than 10, add 10. If Monster HPs are tied, everyone re-rolls them again. The player whose monster has lowest HP takes the initiative token.

Playing the Game

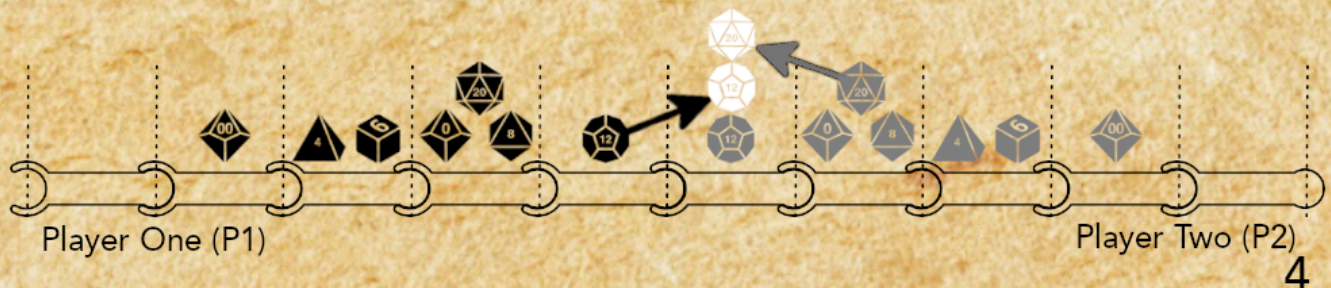
Half the Battle is a turn-based game played across several rounds. A Round consists of two Phases: Selection and Action. The sequence of phases over a single round is:

- *Player One begins with the initiative token*
- Player One performs their selection phase
- Player Two performs their selection phase
- Player One performs their action phase
- Player Two performs their action phase
- *Player Two takes the initiative token and begins a new round, selecting and acting before Player One, and so on*

Selection Phase: Choose any of your party's character or monster cards that is still alive, and announce it to the other player.

Action Phase: Use your chosen piece to move and then take an action, or take an action then optionally move. If your chosen piece is eliminated before your action phase begins, you miss this phase of your turn.




Example: P1 selects Fighter (d12). P2 selects Dragon (d20). P1 moves Fighter and attacks. P2 moves Dragon and attacks. P2 takes the initiative and starts the next round.



Abilities

Each piece in *Half the Battle* has a unique set of actions. But to use a particular action, the piece must have either high health, low health, or a precise value as described on its character card.

Health: Each piece has health points (HP) recorded by the value of their die.

- When a piece takes damage () , subtract the amount from its current HP, and set its die to this new value.
- If a piece on 1HP takes any damage, it dies at the end of that turn.
- If a piece on 2HP or more takes damage equal to or greater than its current HP, it remains alive on 1HP - unless the damage was *lethal*:
 - If a piece takes lethal damage () equal to or greater than its current HP, it dies at the end of that turn.
 - If a piece chooses to use an action marked *fatal* () , it dies at the end of that turn. This can have tactical benefits!

Actions: A piece can use any of its actions that meet the specified criteria. For example:

- a 4+ action can be used by a piece on 4HP or more
- a 2-4 action can only be used by a piece on 2, 3, or 4HP
- a 1 action can only be used by a piece on exactly 1HP

You can only use one of your selected piece's actions during your action phase, unless stated otherwise.

Character Cards

Each piece has its own character card, which gives its overall characteristics and lists its available actions.

The die used by this piece

Amount of movement allowed each turn

Additional rule that applies to this piece

Default range of all actions

Hitpoints required to use this action

Specific range that applies to this action

Additional rule that applies to this action

Damage dealt by this action - if lethal, the icon is: ☠

Symbol that indicates this action is fatal

Healing given by this action

Quantity of lanes affected by this action - if affecting pieces not lanes, the icon is: 👤

Cleric

x1

Every time the Cleric casts a spell, reduce its HP by 2.

5+

Healing Word

x4 / x1

3+

Healing Touch

x8 x1

3+

Sacred Flame

x3 x1

2

Cure Wounds

x3

☠ 1+

Martyr

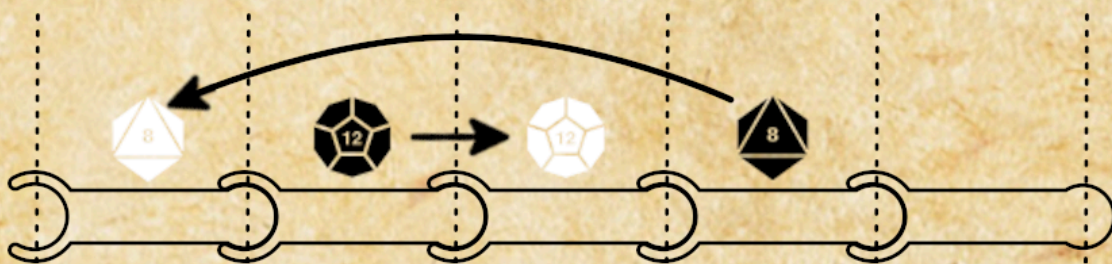
x4 / x3

Instead of healing an ally the Cleric heals themselves. At the end of this turn set the Cleric to 5HP.

Movement

Each character card lists that piece's movement per turn, and the range of its actions. These are measured in lanes.

Lanes: The dungeon is comprised of lanes, and any number of characters from any parties can stand in a single lane. Position within a lane is irrelevant - only the number of lanes between characters affects gameplay.



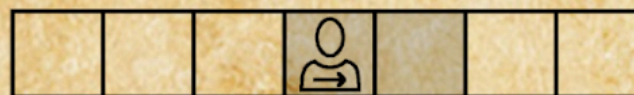
Movement: Moving the black d12 to the white d12 requires one lane of movement ($\ddot{\text{;}}_{x1}$). To move the black d8 to the white d8 requires three lanes of movement ($\ddot{\text{;}}_{x3}$).

You may optionally move your selected piece in your action phase, either before or after taking its action. You cannot move a piece beyond the ends of the dungeon. If you cannot move *and* cannot take an action with your selected piece, you miss the action phase of your turn.

Direction: All characters begin facing the center of the dungeon and never turn around. This means each party's pieces are facing each other in their starting positions, but they can move past each other during the battle. All pieces can move forwards or backwards (unless stated otherwise).

Range and Targets

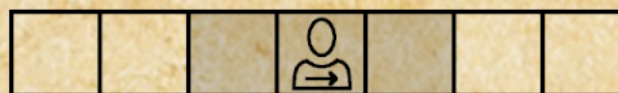
Range: All characters have a default range shown at the top of their card. This applies to all actions, unless another range image is shown for a particular action. For example:



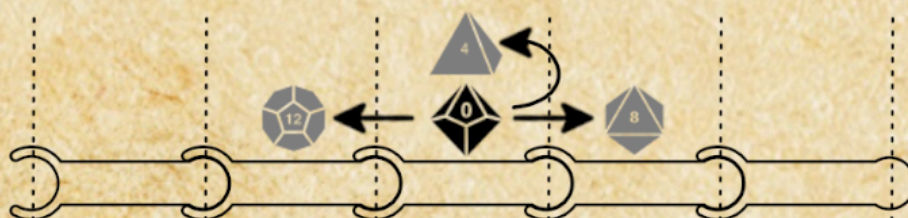
Character's lane and one lane forwards.



Here, the black d12 (facing right) can hit either grey piece.



One lane forwards, one lane backwards, and own lane.



Here, the black d10 can hit any of the grey pieces.

Targeting: Actions affect either one or more individual pieces (👤), or all pieces within one or more lanes (/!\). If an action affects multiple pieces, the player taking the action may choose the order of resolution of damage or effects, to their advantage. Damage or healing actions that affect entire lanes affect only the enemy or ally pieces, respectively. There are some exceptions to this, but these are stated on the relevant actions.

Rage and Items

Rage: Whenever one of your characters kills an enemy piece, at the end of that round you gain that enemy's die as a Rage die. This is the only way to gain Rage dice.

On your turn, in either the selection or action phases, any number of Rage dice may be converted into Rage, then discarded. Each Rage die is worth Rage equal to its maximum value (i.e. a d6 is worth 6 Rage).

Converted Rage points can be spent on **one** of the following options per round, and any excess points are lost:

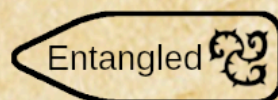
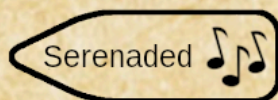
- A special ability token for your Monster (8 Rage)
- Turn any one of your items face-up again, allowing it to be re-used, **or** turn an opponent's item face-down, preventing its use (12 Rage)
- Deal damage immediately to any one piece, in any lane. Each point of damage costs Rage equal to the number of enemy pieces left alive, so it reduces throughout the game. Note: killing a piece this way does **not** generate a Rage die.

Items: During setup, each player is dealt two face-up cards from the Bag of Holding. These cards are single-use items and are turned face-down after use. You may use your items at **any** appropriate time. This may include your opponent's turn, for example, after they have chosen an action and its target, to avoid or mitigate the effects.

Monsters, Indicators, and Winning

Monsters: These differ from other characters in two ways. Firstly, they are immune to lethal damage, treating it as regular damage instead. Secondly, they have a special ability. They can gain ability tokens (🔥 or 🦋) that can be spent to activate this ability as an action. These tokens can be purchased with Rage, and one is gained for free when a monster first reaches 10 health or less.

Indicators: Some pieces have abilities that affect an entire lane continuously or for a limited number of rounds. Arrow shaped tokens can be used to mark these effects:



Other abilities linger for a turn or more, and affect another piece. Small circular tokens are used for these, such as: the Paladin's *Sacrifice* 🦅, the Sorcerer's *Polymorph* 🐓, or the Warlock's *Hex* ⚡.

Winning: You win the game if you eliminate all your opponent's pieces.

Breaking Ties: If all remaining pieces for both players are eliminated in the same turn, the player with most Rage wins. If still tied, the player whose monster started with highest HP wins.

Example Scenarios

Many things are allowed in battle! The examples here show gameplay that is permitted and intended by the rules.

Rob's opponent announces an action that would kill his favourite piece. Rob interrupts play to use his Flimsy Shield which halves the damage done, saving his piece.

Emily has no Rage dice saved up, and the enemy has three pieces left; a Fighter and Rogue on 1HP each, and a Cleric on 6HP. She uses her character's action to kill the Fighter, giving her a d12 at the end of this round. On her next turn now that there are only two enemy pieces remaining, she first spends all 12 Rage points to deal 6 damage to the Cleric. She combines this with her Vial of Poison to make this damage lethal, killing the Cleric. She then uses her character's action to kill the Rogue and wins the game.

Alex's Dragon is attacked for 4 damage by a Ranger who is on 3HP. Alex uses her Mirror Shield to also reflect the damage back at the Ranger. She also uses her Vial of Poison to make the damage to the Ranger lethal, killing it. No Rage dice are generated by this.

Reference & Glossary

Any rules written on a card take precedent over the general rules in this rulebook.

Some words have very specific meanings:

- *A Piece* means any Character or Monster from any team.
- *Target(s)* means the Lane(s) or Piece(s) affected by a chosen action.
- *Ally* means any Character or Monster currently under control of your team, except the selected piece.
- *Enemy* means any Character or Monster currently under control of the opposing team.
- *Monster* means any piece using a d20, and *Character* means any piece that is not a Monster.
- *Lethal* damage kills Characters if it brings them to 0HP, but not Monsters, who remain on 1HP.
- *Fatal* actions kill any piece that chooses to use them, at the end of that turn.

Rule Variations

As an alternative to the standard starting layout of pieces, players may simultaneously place their pieces anywhere in their half of the dungeon. A 60s time-limit is recommended.

After you've played several games with both the A and B teams, have each player pick from either class for each of their seven pieces, for a truly unique battle!





Half the Battle

A tactical game of positioning pieces and competing choices, with characters inspired by Dungeons and Dragons.

Game Design by Tom Allen - tom@jugglethis.net

Art Credits:

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30~45
minutes



2
players



min
age 12+

v1.1