

## Combat, Initiative, and Movement.

Initiative is rolled normally for the characters and NPCs. Once everyone has rolled initiative, the Narrator places the combatants' names on a list in order from highest to lowest initiative.

*Aragorn, Legolas, and Gimli are ambushed by Uruks just outside of Fangorn Forest while searching for Merry and Pippin. There are three Uruks and they have made no attempt to conceal themselves. There is no surprise round. Initiative is rolled normally.*

*Aragorn gets a 14, Legolas a 16, Gimli a 9, Uruk1 gets a 12, Uruk2 gets a 10, and Uruk3 gets a 7.*

*The initiative round will flow as follows:*

*[1] Legolas*

*[2] Aragorn*

*[3] Uruk1*

*[4] Uruk2*

*[5] Gimli*

*[6] Uruk3*

*[1] Legolas*

*[2] Aragorn*

*[3] Uruk1*

*[4] Uruk2*

*[5] Gimli*

*[6] Uruk3*

And so on. For time keeping purposes, 6 full seconds have past right before Legolas gets his second turn. Likewise, There are six full seconds between Gimli's first turn until right before his second turn. This way, combat is fluid...and the round does not end for everyone at the exact same time.

*At the beginning of combat, Aragorn is but 2 yards away from Uruk1. Legolas and Gimli are 26 yards behind Aragorn, and several feet to the right of him (when looking at the map below). The two other Uruks are several feet to the right of the one facing Aragorn...and are directly in front of (but 26 yards away from) Legolas and Gimli. (See battle map on following pages)*

At the beginning of combat, Legolas goes first.

*Legolas decides he is going to shoot Uruk2, since Uruk1 is too close to Aragorn, and he has faith that Gimli will handle Uruk3. He spends one action to string his bow, a free action to nock an arrow and draw (via his Quick Draw edge), and a second action to fire at Uruk2.*

*Uruk2 attempts a dodge, but rolls low. His dodge result is less than his defense rating, so he has gained nothing. The arrow hits and Uruk2 is Dazed (-1 penalty to all actions).*

*Next is Aragorn. He spends one action to draw his sword, and another attack Uruk1. Uruk1 attempts a parry, but fails. Aragorn's blow lands and Uruk1 is Dazed.*

*Next is Uruk1's turn. Since his sword was already drawn, he does not have to spend an action to draw it. He performs a basic attack against Aragorn, but at a -1 because he is Dazed. Aragorn attempts a parry at -5 (for his 3<sup>rd</sup> action this round) and succeeds. Uruk1 performs another basic attack for his second action, and Aragorn attempts another parry, but with a -10 this time. He barely succeeds in blocking the Uruk's blow.*

**NOTE: The Uruk did NOT receive a penalty for his second attack, which was actually his 3<sup>rd</sup> action since combat began. This is because ALL multiple action penalties are wiped away when a character begins his turn. Because his first parry came before his turn, he does not receive a penalty for his second swing. However, if he attempts any more parries or dodges before his NEXT turn, he WILL receive the penalties on each successive action.**

*Next is Uruk2. His bow is already strung, so he spends one action to nock an arrow and draw his bow. With his second action, he fires at Legolas (with a -1 penalty because he is dazed). Legolas attempts to dodge the shot, so he makes a swiftness test with a -5 penalty because it is his 3<sup>rd</sup> action. Rolling amazingly high, Legolas gets a total of 18 (even with the -5) on his dodge test. Until Legolas's next turn, the TN to hit him is 18. He easily dodges the Uruk's arrow.*

*Next is Gimli. Gimli is in a bit of a spot because he has no ranged weapons, and there are two Uruks armed with bows about 26 yards away. Deciding that he has no choice, Gimli barrels towards the Uruks.*

Looking on the run chart, a normal sized character can sprint 40 yards in one turn. Gimli, a dwarf, moves 33% slower than men and elves. Doing the math, we see that Gimli can cover about 26.8 yards in six seconds...at a sprint. This means that if he sprints straight at the Uruks, he will reach them immediately before his next turn. Please note that moving in and of itself does not cost Gimli any of his actions...it simply takes time. Should he choose to dodge at any point during his movement, he could do so with no penalty.

*Finally, it is Uruk3's turn. He sees the dwarf barreling towards him, so he decides to take a shot.*

**NOTE: Because there are six participants, the Narrator divides the round up into 6 parts. After Gimli has taken his turn, but before the next combatant goes, Gimli has moved about 1/6<sup>th</sup> of the 26 yards he intends to cover. This means he is about 21 yards away when Uruk3 takes his shot. This is important because it puts Gimli into Short Range for the Uruk, lowering his TN.**

*Uruk3 uses his first action to nock and draw, and his second action to fire at Gimli.*

**NOTE: At the Narrator's discretion, he/she can apply a penalty to the Uruk's ranged Combat Test because Gimli is a moving target. However, in this case I do not because Gimli is moving in a straight line directly at the Uruk who is trying to target him. IMO, this does not significantly increase the difficulty of the shot. Also, what we have seen here is that even though Gimli beat Uruk3 for initiative, Uruk3 gets to fire his bow first (tips hat to earlier post on the board).**

*Uruk3 loses his arrow at Gimli. Gimli, well aware of what's coming, tucks and rolls, attempting a dodge. Gimli makes a swiftness test with no penalty, and rolls higher than the Uruk, successfully dodging the arrow. He continues his roll, coming right back up on his feet and still sprinting towards Uruk3.*

**NOTE: At the narrator's discretion, Gimli's dodge could have ended his sprint altogether, or at least slowed him down enough to cost him some movement (probably not more than 3 or 4 yards). In this case, I decided to keep the flow and let Gimli maintain his heroism.**

*It is now Legolas's turn. All of his penalties for multiple actions are reduced to zero, and his Defense Rating (that was raised by his last dodge test) drops back down to its original number. He is intent on dropping Uruk2, so he goes on the offensive. As a free action, he nocks and draws, then for his first action, he fires at Uruk2.*

*Uruk2 decides to dodge. Because he has already taken two actions since his last turn, and his next turn has not come up yet, his dodge is at a -6 (-5 for his 3<sup>rd</sup> action in the round, -1 for being Dazed). He fails and is struck by an arrow. He is now Injured (-3 to all tests).*

*Legolas still has one other penalty-free action. He uses a free action to nock and draw, then uses his second normal action to fire again.*

*Poor Uruk2 is in a bind. He attempts to dodge, but this time at a -13 (-10 for his 4<sup>th</sup> action this round, and -3 for being Injured). Shockingly enough, he fails. The arrow drives into him, dropping him down to Wounded (-5 to all tests).*

*Legolas decides that he wants to put one more arrow into Uruk2. As a free action, he nocks and draws, then as his 3<sup>rd</sup> action (with a -5 penalty), he fires at Uruk2.*

*Well, Uruk2 attempts ANOTHER dodge, but this time at a -20 (-15 for his 5<sup>th</sup> action this round, and -5 for being Wounded). Surprisingly, he fails again. Only this time, Legolas scores an extraordinary success, and the narrator rules that Uruk2 is dead.*

*Now, it is Aragorn's turn. He makes two basic attacks with his long sword, at no penalty. Uruk1 attempts to parry. His first parry is at a -6 (-5 for his 3<sup>rd</sup> action this round and -1 for being Dazed). He fails. Aragorn scores an extraordinary success, knocking the Uruk down to Incapacitated (-7 to all tests). Attempting the second parry, Uruk1 is at a -17 (-10 for his 4<sup>th</sup> action in the round, -7 for being Incapacitated). He fails and Aragorn's blade rips through him. The Narrator rules that Uruk1 is dead.*

**NOTE: Uruk1 is next on the initiative list. He has thrown off his mortal coil, and so has Uruk2, so the next character in the order of battle is Gimli who has arrived within striking distance of Uruk3.**

*Now it is Gimli's turn. He decides to maintain his momentum and turn his first action into a charge.*

**NOTE: This is normally not allowable, but given the fact that Gimli has moved up to the Uruk at a full sprint, it seems silly not to allow him the benefits of a charge. Nor would it make any sense to require 3 more yards of movement from him for his action to qualify as a charge.**

*Gimli rolls his attack test as he collides into Uruk3 with his axe. The Narrator rules that since the Uruk had a bow drawn, he cannot attempt to parry (who tries to “parry” a charging dwarf, anyway?), and must attempt a dodge. The Uruk is unwounded, but used up his two actions readying his bow and firing at Gimli earlier in this round. Therefore, his dodge test is at a -5. He fails, and Gimli’s blow lands. Gimli’s attack scores a superior success, and that, coupled with the x1.5 damage from the charge, easily fells the Uruk.*

At this point, all of the enemies are defeated, and the heroes rejoice in their victory.

This is but a sample of how I run combat. It may not be totally true to the rules as presented in the Core Book, but I think it adds to heroic feeling of the game, and, while incorporating enough rules changes and modifications to keep things accurate and believable, it maintains the swift and steady flow that we all want from a combat system.

Also, if you would like for me to play-test any particular situation with my rules, please send me all the info you have on the participants and the setting. I will do the same breakdown for you. Heh...it’s a lot of work, but it sharpens my GMing skills.

Here’s the map of PC/NPC locations relative to each other at the start of combat:

