

## grodog's House Rules for Dragons in AD&D

last updated: 2016-11-25

These rules were inspired by several articles from Dragon Magazine, from the grey-box Forgotten Realms rules on dragons, and Smaug's portrayal in The Hobbit, as well as how I wanted to change dragons for my own campaigns.

I prefer dragons to be less predictable and less "known" than the standard AD&D dragons, and especially to be more varied in alignment by color (Smaug was a golden dragon, after all!).

### *General Notes*

**Senses:** All dragons possess the following senses unless otherwise indicated:

- Infravision 12"
- Ultravision 12"
- Detect hidden/*invisible* opponents within a 1" radius per age level

**Size:** roll d12:

- 01-03 small
- 04-10 average
- 11-12 huge

**Age:** Dragons have 12 categories of age, and gain 1 hit point per hit die per age level. The age levels are:

1. Hatchling up to 01 years old
2. Newtling 02 to 19 years old
3. Young 20 to 39 years old
4. Sub-Adult 40 to 89 years old
5. Adult\* 90 to 129 years old
6. Mature 130 to 199 years old
7. Old 200 to 289 years old
8. Very old 290 to 419 years old
9. Elder 420 to 689 years old
10. Venerable 690 to 999 years old
11. Ancient 1000 to 1559 years old
12. Great Wyrms 1560+ years old

\* at the Adult age, dragons may begin to learn magic, if they are eligible, following the standard progression as defined in the MM, MM2, etc.

### *Breath Weapon Usage*

Per the FR box set (DM's Sourcebook of the Realms, page 15), dragons are able to divide and allocate their breath weapons into as many different usages as they desire, so long as the total breath weapon damage meted out in a single day does not exceed triple their hit points. A

dragon's breath weapon does not decrease in power/damage inflicted as a dragon's hit points decrease during combat, either.

In general, dragons of Average or lower intelligence will follow a predictable pattern in breath weapon usage, often setting its effectiveness based on three usages per day. Only dragons of Low intelligence or less will roll to determine when they will use their breath weapon.

### *Dragonfear*

**Saves:** All dragons of sub-adult age and older radiate *dragonfear*: treat this as a mind-affecting save vs. Paralyzation (19+ WIS scores do not grant immunity to dragonfear). If the target fails the save, creatures of the listed HD/levels or lower are *paralyzed* until the dragon is out of sight, then react with *fear* (as below); if they make the save, they react only with *fear*. For 0-level humans and demi-humans, creatures of less than 1 HD, and all non-carnivorous creatures untrained in warfare, dragonfear's fear effect manifests as a *rout* (see [Chainmail](#)). Creatures with up to 4 HD/levels greater than the dragon's effective CHA suffer *fear* if they fail the save (and are unaffected if they make the save), while creatures with 5 or more HD/levels greater than the dragon's effective CHA are immune to dragonfear from that dragon.

Saves against dragonfear are adjusted by size and age level:

	<u>Effective Charisma*</u>	<u>Dragonfear Save Adjustment</u>
<b><u>Size:</u></b> small	+1 Cha/-1 HD	standard
average	standard	-1
<u>huge</u>	<u>-2 Cha/-2 HD</u>	<u>-2</u>
<b><u>Age:</u></b> Sub-Adult	-1 Cha/1 HD	+2
Adult*	-2 Cha/2 HD	+1
<u>Mature</u>	<u>-3 Cha/3 HD</u>	<u>standard</u>
Old	-4 Cha/4 HD	standard
Very Old	-5 Cha/6 HD	-1
<u>Elder</u>	<u>-6 Cha/8 HD</u>	<u>-2</u>
Venerable	-7 Cha/10 HD	-4
Ancient	-8 Cha/12 HD	-6
<u>Great Wyrms</u>	<u>-9 Cha/14 HD</u>	<u>-8</u>

\* Effective Charisma only applies for awe/dragonfear purposes, and does not reflect the dragon's loquaciousness, persuasiveness, etc. Effective Charisma adjustments for size and age are cumulative. See D&DG for specifics.

**Duration:** The duration of dragonfear is calculated as follows:

<b>Victim's Level/HD</b>	<b>Duration*</b>
0-level and creatures of >1HD/level	5-30 turns
1-2+ HD/levels	4-24 turns
3-5+ HD/levels	3-18 turns
6-8+ HD/levels	2-12 turns
9-11+ HD/levels	1-10 turns
12-14+ HD/levels	1-8 turns
15-18+ HD/levels	1-6 turns
19+ HD/levels	1-4 turns

Duration is cut in half if the saving throw vs. dragonfear is successful. Note, however, that duration may be over-ridden by line-of-sight paralysis and fear effects as well (as mentioned above). Once a dragon that inflicted line-of-sight dragonfear is no longer visible (including if it uses *invisibility*, is obscured by fog, etc.), standard duration dragonfear effects commence.

#### *Dragon HD, Intelligence, Alignment, Speak and Magic Usage Percentages*

##### **Monster Manual Dragons**

<b>Color</b>	<b>HD</b>	<b>Intelligence</b>	<b>Alignments</b>	<b>Speak</b>	<b>Magic</b>
Black	6-8	Average	CE, NE, CN, N	60%	30%
Blue	9-11	Exceptional	LE, LN, LG, NE, N	80%	85%
Brass	6-8	Very	CG, CN, CE, NG, NE	50%	30%
Bronze	7-9	Exceptional	LG, LN, NG, N, NE	75%	55%
Chromatic	special	[High]	Evil	varies	varies
Copper	5-7	High	NG, N, NE, CG, CN	55%	65%
Gold	12-14	Genius	Any	100%	95%
Green	8-10	Very	LE, LN, LG, N, NE, NG	65%	70%
Red	10-12	Exceptional	Any	95%	90%
Silver	11-13	Exceptional	LG, NG, N	85%	75%
White	7-9	Low	CE, CN, NE, CG, N	50%	20%

##### **Monster Manual II Dragons**

<b>Color</b>	<b>HD</b>	<b>Intelligence</b>	<b>Alignments</b>	<b>Speak</b>	<b>Magic</b>
Cloud	11-13	Genius	N, NE, NG	100%	95%
Faery	special	Exceptional	CG, CN, CE	100%	100%
Mist	9-11	Exceptional	N, NG, LN, LG	80%	65%
Shadow	6-8	Exceptional	NE, CE, CN, N	85%	75%

## Dragon Magazine and Other Dragons

Color	HD	Intelligence	Alignments	Speak	Magic
Jade	3-5	Exceptional	N, LN	65%	40%
Opal	3-5	Exceptional	N, CN, NE, NG	75%	45%
Garnet	4-6	Supra-genius	N, NE, NG, LN, CN	100%	75%
Amethyst	4-6	Genius	N, NE, CN	100%	65%
Emerald	5-7	Exceptional	N, NG	80%	50%
Topaz	5-7	Genius	N, LN	100%	70%
Chrysoberyl	6-8	Supra-genius	N, CN, LN	100%	85%
Ruby	6-8	Genius	N, NE, CN, NG	100%	75%
Sapphire	7-9	Genius	N, NG, LN	100%	80%
Diamond	8-10	Supra-genius	N, LN, NG, NE	100%	95%
Orange	8-10	High	NE, LE, LN, N	75%	60%
Yellow	7-9	Average	CE, NE, CN	30%	10%
Purple	9-11	Very	NE, N, LE	80%	65%
Electrum	9-11	Very	NG, LG, N, LN	70%	70%
Night	varies	varies	Neutral or Evil	100%	99%
Fang	11-13	Very	CE, CN, NE, N	80%	30%
Obsidian	11-13	High	LN, LG, LE	75%	85%
Grey	5-7	Average	NE, CE, CN	40%	40%
Rainbow	13-15	Exceptional	NE, LE, LN	100%	95%
Brown	11-13	Genius	NE, CE, N, CN	90%	90%
Dracodran	7-12	High	Evil	50%	25%

### Notes:

- In my campaigns, Chromatic dragons are not unique to Tiamat, although Bahamut remains the singular Platinum dragon
- Gem dragons are based on TD#37 but I've significantly revised them all (see below)
- Orange, Yellow, and Purple dragons are baselined from Dragon #65 (not TD#38)
- Brown Dragon and Dracodran are my own creations (see below)

### *Attack Routines By Size*

It makes much more sense to me to vary dragon attack damage by size as well as by type, so I've broken them out accordingly.

#### **Monster Manual Dragons (c/c/b)**

<b>Color</b>	<b>Small</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Huge</b>
Black	1-4/1-4/3-18	1-8/1-8/4-24	2-10/2-10/5-40
Blue	1-6/1-6/3-24	1-10/1-10/4-32	2-12/2-12/5-50
Brass	1-4/1-4/4-16	1-8/1-8/5-20	2-10/2-10/6-36
Bronze	1-6/1-6/4-24	1-10/1-10/5-30	2-12/2-12/7-56
Chromatic	varies	varies	varies
Copper	1-4/1-4/5-20	1-8/1-8/6-24	2-10/2-10/7-42
Gold	1-8/1-8/6-36	2-12/2-12/7-42	3-18/3-18/8-64
Green	1-6/1-6/2-20	1-10/1-10/3-30	2-14/2-14/4-48
Red	1-8/1-8/3-30	2-12/2-12/4-40	3-18/3-18/5-60
Silver	1-6/1-6/5-30	1-10/1-10/6-36	2-14/2-14/7-56
White	1-4/1-4/2-16	1-8/1-8/3-24	2-10/2-10/4-40

#### **Monster Manual II Dragons (c/c/b/tail)**

<b>Color</b>	<b>Small</b>	<b>Average</b>	<b>Huge</b>
Cloud	1-8/1-8/3-30/1-12	1-10/1-10/3-36/3-12	2-12/2-12/6-48/4-16
Faery	1-2 bite	1-3 bite	1-4 bite
Mist	1-6/1-6/2-24/2-8	1-8/1-8/3-36/3-12	1-10/1-10/4-48/4-16
Shadow	2-5/2-5/3-12	2-7/2-7/4-16	5-8/5-8/5-20

## Dragon Magazine and Other Dragons

Color	Small	Average	Huge
Jade	1-3/1-3/1-12	1-4/1-4/1-12	2-5/2-5/2-14 (2-14 = d6+d8)
Opal	1-4/1-4/2-14	1-6/1-6/2-14	2-7/2-7/2-16
Garnet	1-6/1-6/2-16	1-6/1-6/2-20	2-8/2-8/2-24
Amethyst	1-6/1-6/2-20	1-8/1-8/2-24	2-9/2-9/2-28 (2-28 = d8+d20)
Emerald	1-6/1-6/2-24	1-8/1-8/2-24	2-9/2-9/2-30 (2-30 = d10+d20)
Topaz	1-8/1-8/2-24	1-8/1-8/3-24	2-10/2-10/3-30 (2-10 = d4+d6)
Chrysoberyl	1-8/1-8/2-28	1-8/1-8/3-30	2-10/2-10/3-36
Ruby	1-8/1-8/3-30	1-8/1-8/3-36	2-12/2-12/4-40
Sapphire	1-10/1-10/3-30	1-10/1-10/4-32	3-14/3-14/4-40
Diamond	1-10/1-10/4-32	2-10/2-10/4-40	3-14/3-14/4-48
Yellow	1-6/1-6/2-12	1-6/1-6/2-16	2-8/2-8/3-24
Orange	1-8/1-8/2-24	2-8/2-8/3-30	2-12/2-12/4-40
Purple	1-8/1-8/3-24	2-9/2-9/5-27	2-14/2-14/5-50 (5-27 = 2d12+3)
Electrum	1-4/1-4/3-24	1-6/1-6/3-30	2-8/2-8/3-36
Dracolich/Night	varies	varies	varies
Fang			
Obsidian			
Grey			
Rainbow			
Brown			
Dracodran			

## *Non-Standard Sources*

Listed in chronological order.

- Arthur W. Collins, "That's Not in the Monster Manual" (The Dragon #37, May 1980); introduces Neutral dragons based on gemstone types)
- Len Lakofka, "Rearranging and Redefining the Mighty Dragon" (The Dragon #38, June 1980); first examination of dragon subdual rules, damage/attack, etc.; introduces brown, orange, and yellow dragons; revises Tiamat and Bahamut, too!
- Gregory Rihn, "Self-Defense for Dragons" and Lewis Pulsipher, "True Dragons: Revamping the Monster from Head to Claw" (Dragon Magazine #50, June 1981); both introduce additional attack types (wing buffets, etc.)
- Pat Reinken, "Grey Dragon" (Dragon Magazine #62, June 1982); this issue also features Roger Moore's "Evil Dragon Armor" article
- Richard Alan Lloyd, "The Missing Dragons" (Dragon Magazine #65, September 1982); introduces orange, purple, and yellow evil dragons
- Ed Greenwood, "The Electrum Dragon" (Dragon Magazine #74, June 1983)
- Leon Carpenter, "Dragon Damage Revised" (Dragon Magazine #98, June 1985)
- Ed Greenwood's Dracolich in "The Cult of the Dragon" and Leon Carpenter, "Dragon Damage Revisited" (Dragon Magazine #110, June 1986)
- Ed Greenwood, Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting (TSR, 1987; the first edition "grey box"); introduces the concept that dragons may breathe as often as desired with a maximum allocated HP damage/day at triple full HP, among others
- Ed Greenwood, "Fang Dragon" (Dragon Magazine #134, June 1988)
- Mark Mathis, "Obsidian Dragon" and Gregory Detwiler, "Rainbow Dragon" (Dragon Magazine #146, June 1989)

Some of these articles were also reprinted in the Best of Dragon Magazine #3:

- Arthur W. Collins, "That's Not in the Monster Manual"
- Gregory Rihn, "Self-Defense for Dragons"
- Pat Reinken, "Grey Dragon"