

Journeys



Dark Sun characters will often roam across the Tablelands during the course of their adventures. But travelling is not simply a means of getting to a destination, nor something to be undertaken lightly. A great part of the life of an adventurer is spent in the wastes. Often, what distinguishes an adventurer from a common villager is the skills they possess to help them survive while on a journey.

Travelling shows an adventurer what lurks out in the barrenness, and lets him seek the feral beauty that stirs the untamed heart in all of us. In short, a journey in Dark Sun is synonymous with adventuring.

The Dungeon Master knows where an adventure starts and likely has an idea where it may go, but the party has to reach that destination by crossing the wastes. Adventurers make various non-weapon proficiency or ability checks along the way, to deal with the various

perils that may occur, as well as to determine how the rigours of travel may have affected them when they face their next challenge.

Once a party decides to undertake a significant journey from one place to another, the journey rules outlined here can be used. A Dungeon Master may decide that a journey is either short enough, or familiar enough, that the journey rules need not be used, and they can happily be ignored to serve the pace of the game.

The journey rules break down a journey into three distinct stages, each one influencing the one that follows it in some way. The first stage represents the party **embarking** on the journey: plans are made, supplies gathered, maps studied and routes agreed upon. The party decides between them who will undertake which tasks on the road.

But there is more to this stage than simply preparations. It also represents the party's ability to stay to the course, to keep their spirits high, and may take into account the harsh Athasian weather. In broad strokes, it gives a feeling of the overall tone of the journey from its outset.

The second stage represents **events** arising, and the tasks carried out by members of the party during the course of the main part of the journey. Depending on the length of the journey, the party will make one or more rolls that represent the challenges or opportunities that they find placed in their way.

These rolls will determine both the nature and the magnitude of the encounters they will face and may require several of the party to work together to overcome any challenges.

The third stage of the journey is representative of the party's **arrival** at its destination. The party's Guide makes a roll, often modified by the outcomes of the tasks undertaken by other members of the party during the main part of the journey.

The result of this final roll will determine whether the party arrive in high spirits, full of tales of bold deeds, beautiful moonrises, and delicious meals cooked over open fires, or if they trudge the final miles, footsore and dispirited, backs bent under the weight of packs, silently brooding upon empty bellies, wrong turns, and poor choices.

Journey Rules Summary

- Players assign tasks and plan route.
- Dungeon Master determines **Peril Rating** of the journey.
- The Guide makes an **Embarkation Roll** (d12) – this is modified by half the Guide's Will Bonus plus their navigation non-weapon proficiency slots, minus the Peril Rating.
- The Dungeon Master either relays the result, or optionally hints at it
- Determine the number of **Journey Events**.
- Events are created by rolling a d12, potentially modified by the Embarkation result.
- Events are played through, noting down the result for reference.
- The **Arrival Roll** (d8) is made, and results are applied.

Step One: Embarkation

When the players have decided on a destination, they need to choose the best route to get there. Using the Merchant's Map, they indicate the general route they intend to follow, and the Dungeon Master consults his own map to determine the **Peril Rating** of the journey.

The difficulty and danger of the journey is based on its length, on the area and terrain traversed, and on the weather while the journey is taking place (journeys in extreme heat are more strenuous than those when the weather is cooler). Athas is a perilous place, so the shortest route may not always be the safest.

While the DM consults his maps, players assign their characters a task for the journey, roughly summarising what they will be doing for the length of the trip.

An experienced party differs from novice adventurers in the capability of its members to collaborate effectively. When they are travelling, the characters usually divide up some of the duties according to ability.

The tasks divided between the party are as follows:

- **Guide:** In charge of all decisions concerning route, rest, and supplies. Guides rely on the **navigation** non-weapon proficiency.
- **Scout:** In charge of setting up camp and opening new trails. Scouts rely on the **survival** non-weapon proficiency.
- **Hunter:** In charge of finding food in the wild. Hunters rely on the **hunting** non-weapon proficiency.
- **Look-out:** In charge of keeping watch. Look-outs rely on the **observation** non-weapon proficiency.

With the exception of the party's Guide, more than one character may be assigned the same task (in other words, there may be more than one character acting as Look-out, or more characters going hunting regularly), but normally no character may assume more than one role at the same time (posing as the group's Hunter and Scout, for example).

If there's more than one person assigned to a task then the party must nominate a lead Scout, Hunter or Look-out. That character is the one who makes the rolls and benefits from the assistance of the other characters with that task.

If a task goes unfilled, any relevant tests for that task which come up are taken at a disadvantage – roll twice and take the worse result.



Determining the Peril Rating

The Dungeon Master should consult his map to determine the difficulty of the terrain through which the journey passes. Whichever type of terrain forms the majority of hexes passed through by the proposed route determines the overall terrain type:

Easy Terrain: 1

Mild/familiar terrain, extensively mapped with well-travelled roads and/or frequent settlements.

Terrain Types: Silt (familiar routes), verdant belts, roads.

Moderate Terrain: 2

Areas that the party may have some knowledge of, that they may have travelled through once or twice.

Terrain Types: Salt flats, scrub plains, silt (unfamiliar routes), stony barrens, trails.

Hard Terrain: 3

Unfamiliar areas, trackless wilderness.

Terrain Types: Boulder fields, rocky badlands, sandy wastes, silt (unknown routes).

Severe Terrain: 4

Dangerous and deeply inhospitable regions where considerable peril awaits.

Terrain Types: Forest, forest ridge, mountains, mud flats, swamps.

Daunting Terrain: 5

Areas steeped in danger and malign influences. Only the bravest of adventurers should dare terrain of this sort.

Terrain Types: The Dead Lands, the Valley of Dust and Fire.

Increase the level of the terrain by one when the temperature is at Furnace level or higher. Journeys are harder when the harsh Athasian climate is at its most brutal.

Optionally, the Dungeon Master does not have to inform the players of the Peril Rating of their journey and thus keeps the final outcome of the Embarkation roll secret from them, instead paraphrasing to perhaps give some hints of what may lie ahead of them on their journey.

The Embarkation Roll

Once the route is decided upon, and the Dungeon Master has determined the Peril Rating of the journey, the Guide must make an **Embarkation Roll** using a single d12.

This roll is modified as follows: the Guide's navigation non-weapon proficiency slots plus half their Wisdom bonus (round up), minus the Peril Rating of the journey.

The result of the roll is used on the Embarkation Table below. The Guide should make a note of both the numbered result and its effects. The result may be referred to during the following parts of the journey.

Mounts and Vehicles

When travelling, companions may ease their toil by bringing mounts to carry their burdens, or may journey in vehicles such as wagons or argosies. If the party travels aboard vehicles or is equipped with mounts for the greater part of their journey, ignore the first point of Constitution damage incurred while on the journey.

Characters looking for such assistance must start their journey in a settlement where such resources are available and must be able to afford the expense.

Note that there are many places on Athas where mounts are unwilling to venture. This includes the Crescent Forest, the Forest Ridge, and the Ringing Mountains. Reluctant animals can be coaxed over a mountain pass with an animal handling non-weapon proficiency check at a -10 penalty.

Embarkation Table

1. (or less) Dark Signs and Evil Portents

The party's path is likely to lead them through places both ancient and terrible. Modify all rolls on the Journey Event tables by +2. The proficiency check to determine the initial outcomes of these encounters suffers a -10 penalty.

2. A Fell and Foreboding Start

The party sets out under a pall of doom. A sense of foreboding and menace looms at every turn and misfortune dogs their steps. Tasks are harder, and remain so until the feeling of doom can be shaken off. All rolls during Journey Events suffer a -5 penalty until a roll is successfully made, at which point the dark mood lifts.

3. The Hunger of the Wastes

The party has the misfortune to have chosen a path upon which beasts of the wastes and raiding tribes are more likely to be encountered. They will need to work hard to avoid encountering those who would wish to do them harm: a brooding feeling of danger seems to pervade their senses throughout the journey, as if unseen eyes watch them at every turn. Modify all results on the Journey Events tables by +1. The first roll made during any encounters suffers a -5 penalty.

4. The Wearisome Toil of Many Leagues

The party finds that the maps that they consulted were poor, inaccurate, or out of date, or that the path they find themselves upon is beset with obstacles, dead ends, and difficult terrain, making the going harder than it should be. Throughout the journey, terrain types are classed as one grade harder to traverse.

5. Harsh Weather

There are frequent sandstorms, scouring winds, the sun beats down unrelentingly, night-frost numbs toes and fingers. Rest is hard to find, sleep is elusive, and every mile walked feels like three. As a result, each member of the party suffers 1 point of Constitution damage per level of Peril Rating.

6. Meagre Supplies and Poor Meals

Whether as a result of unfortunate mishaps during cooking, a scarcity of game, a blunder when picking edible cacti, or a need for haste leading to the party simply eating what scraps they have while on the move, the meals eaten during this journey have a tendency to be, by turns, undercooked, infrequent, burned, tasteless or just foul. As a result, all members of the party suffer a -2 penalty on all non-weapon proficiency checks made throughout the journey.

7. Feasts Fit for Merchant Princes

Perhaps game is plentiful, edible cacti and small oases seem to spring up out of nowhere along the party's path, or the cook brought exactly the correct amount of kuzza pepper. For whatever reason, the party's meals during this journey are a thing to be anticipated with joy, and to be remembered for days after. Accordingly, all members of the party receive a +2 bonus to all non-weapon proficiency checks made during this journey.

8. Fine Weather

Each morning brings a gentle sunrise that raises spirits and fills all who see it with hope for the day ahead, and the nights are cool and soothing to a weary traveller, the wind no more than a light breeze, and the air is free of dust and silt, creating majestic and breathtaking vistas. As a result, each member of the party may ignore one point of Constitution damage accrued during this journey from any source.

9. Paths Both Swift and True

Whether as a result of consulting good-quality maps, referring to the knowledge of local travellers, or simply due to an innate knack for finding the easiest path, the Guide has planned a route that will allow the party to travel swiftly and directly to its destination. Throughout this journey, all terrain types are considered to be one grade easier to traverse.

10. Blessings of the Wanderer

Though foul beasts roam the wastes, the Guide has wisely chosen a path that will conceal the party from the attentions of all but the most determined and alert of foes. In addition, the party seems more aware of their

own surroundings and will likely spy out both trouble and opportunities upon their path. As a result, modify all results on the Journey Events table by +1 and the first roll made during each encounter receives a +2 bonus.

11. With Hopeful Hearts and Clear Purpose

The party embarks with light hearts and a sense of hope. They are resolute and determined to cleave to their path, regardless of hardship or setback. Accordingly, each member of the party gains a +2 bonus on all non-weapon proficiency checks made throughout the journey.

12. (or more) From Auspicious Beginnings

The party sets out upon a path that will likely show them wonders long since forgotten or into dangers that most would quail at the thought of. But the auspices are good and, should the party be true, they will surely prevail. As a result, add +2 to the rolls on the Journey Events Table. Additionally all rolls made to determine the initial outcome of these encounters receive a +5 bonus.



Step Two : Journey Events and Task Rolls

During the journey, members of the party may be called upon to use their wit and talents to ensure that the journey does not fall to ruin.

There are times when a single member of the party may have to overcome a challenge alone whereas, at other times, several companions may need to work together to be successful.

On a short journey, the party will typically be faced with 1-2 events, on a medium journey 2-3, and on a long journey 3-5. The number of events is influenced by the Peril Rating of the journey, with more dangerous journeys leading to a higher number of events.

The number of challenges to be faced is determined as follows:

- **Short Journey** (1-15 hexes on the Dungeon Master's map): $1d2$ for number of events.
- **Medium Journey** (16-40 hexes on the Dungeon Master's map): $1d2+1$ for number of events.
- **Long Journey** (41+ hexes on the Dungeon Master's map): $1d3+2$ for number of events.

Note that Long Journeys are extremely hazardous to low to mid-level characters, and likely to put them in extreme danger. A wiser party will break their journey into shorter, more manageable legs, with long rests at safe places in between.

The terrain modifies the roll to determine the number of events faced as follows:

- Journeys through predominantly **Easy** terrain result in a -1 modifier to this roll, to a minimum of 1.
- Journeys through predominantly **Hard** or **Severe** terrain result in a $+1$ modifier to this roll.
- Journeys through predominantly **Daunting** terrain result in a $+2$ modifier to this roll.

The Dungeon Master should make this roll in secret and should not disclose to the players the number of challenges they will face.

The following table gives a range of possible events. The lower numbers represent minor events, whilst the higher numbers indicate some important or momentous occurrence.

Any non-weapon proficiency checks made on the journey receive a modifier based on the Peril Rating, as follows:

Peril Rating	Modifier
1	+5
2	0
3	-5
4	-10
5	-15

To determine what happens in each event of the journey, the Dungeon Master rolls $1d12$. The result may be modified by the Embarkation roll, or previous events on this or prior journeys. The DM consults the following chart, and narrates the event to the party.

Journey Events Table

1. (or less) A Chance Encounter

The party meets a group of travellers. Perhaps a band of elves, merchants from one of the Seven Cities, or tribesmen hunting their supper. The Scout may either make a survival non-weapon proficiency check to lead the party past the travellers undetected if the party wish to avoid them or any member of the party may attempt a fast talk check if they choose to interact with them.

If the fast talk check is successful, the party may choose to gain some snippets of information concerning the path ahead of them, in which case the first roll of their next travel event receives a $+5$ bonus.

If the fast talk check is unsuccessful, the party has made a poor impression on the travellers and the information they receive is inaccurate or misleading, resulting in the first roll of the next event suffering a -5 penalty.

2. Feasts Beneath the Moons

The party finds signs of easily foraged food or useful herbs at a fortuitous moment, perhaps as their own supplies are running low. The Hunter must make a hunting check in an attempt to take advantage of this.

If successful, they may prepare a meal which will restore 1 point of Constitution damage or heal $2d4$ points of damage to each member of the party.

If they fail this roll, the Guide's Arrival roll will incur a -1 penalty.

The survival check has an additional -5 penalty or $+5$ bonus if the Embarkation roll was 6 or 7, respectively.

3. An Obstacle

Deep sand-drifts, a rockslide, or unexpected subsidence block the path ahead. The party must work together to clear their path. The Guide must make a navigation check and each other party member must check their choice of survival, knowledge (engineering), or Strength.

If the party has mounts, one of the party must instead check animal handling.

These checks suffer an additional -5 penalty or +5 bonus if the Embarkation roll was 4 or 9, respectively.

If all of the checks are successful, the party has worked well together, clearing the route and feeling a sense of satisfaction from their unity. As a result, the Guide's Arrival roll will benefit from a +1 modifier.

If half or more of the tests are successful, the route is cleared with some difficulty and no bonus or penalty is incurred.

If less than half of the rolls are successful, but not all fail, the party has struggled to overcome the obstacle and each of them suffers a point of Constitution damage.

If all the rolls fail, the party is forced to backtrack to bypass the obstacle. Each of them suffers a point of Constitution damage and the Guide's Arrival roll is subject to a -1 penalty.

4. In Need of Help

The party discover a band of travellers who have suffered some misfortune, or a small settlement beset by woes. The party may choose to help them, or not.

If they choose not to, they will suffer a -3 penalty on all reaction rolls within 25 miles (5 hexes) of that location for the next month.

If, instead, they choose to help, the party must make three non-weapon proficiency checks, chosen by the Dungeon Master, to reflect them aiding the needy souls.

Each test must be made by a different character (unless there are fewer than three characters in the party) and will typically be selected from: animal handling, fast talk, healing, herbalism, knowledge (local), observation, survival, or water find

The same skill may be called upon more than once, in which case it must be attempted by different characters.

If all of the tests are successful, each member of the party will receive a +3 bonus on all reaction rolls within 25 miles (5 hexes) of that location for the next month. Additionally, the party will receive a +1 bonus to the Guide's roll upon arrival at their destination.

If half or more of the rolls are successful, the party may select one of its number to receive the reaction bonus, and the party receives a +1 bonus to the Guide's Arrival roll.

If 1 of the rolls is successful, the party receives a +1 bonus to the Guide's Arrival roll.

If all the rolls fail, the party is slightly despondent and receives a -1 modifier to the Guide's Arrival roll.

5. Unwelcome Encounter

Hostile scouts, hunters, or minor beasts of the wastes cross the party's path; this may even be sharp-eyed templars, gathering news for one of the sorcerer-kings.

The Look-out must make an observation check to spot the enemy before they become aware of the party.

If successful, the party has seized the initiative and may decide how to proceed. They may either sneak past the hostile force or ambush them, in which case they benefit from a round of surprise.

If the Look-out's observation roll fails, the hostile scouts set an ambush and they benefit from a round of surprise.

If combat ensues, the Dungeon Master may resolve it as normal, setting out the combat abilities of the small enemy party to give a small to moderate challenge to the party.

In addition to any other modifiers, all rolls made outside of combat during this task are subject to a -5 penalty or a +5 bonus if the Guide's Embarkation roll was either 3 or 10, respectively.

6. Majestic and Stark Wonder

The party finds itself presented with a spectacular vista. A sunset, an oasis, a mountain range. Each member of the party must make a Wisdom check. If successful, they see the beauty of the scene and feel invigorated, recovering one point of Constitution damage.

If unsuccessful, they instead see only the dark sun, hard paths yet to be walked, or steep and daunting dunes to be climbed and suffer a point of Constitution damage.

If all members of the party are successful, they receive a +1 bonus to the Guide's Arrival roll.

If all fail, the Guide's Arrival roll incurs a -1 penalty.

In addition to any other modifiers, rolls made for this task receive a -5 penalty or a +5 bonus if the Guide's Embarkation roll was either 5 or 8, respectively.



7. A Hunt

The Hunter sees signs or tracks left by some game that would likely prove a far better meal than their travelling rations, perhaps at a point in the journey where the party's supplies are running low, or when their spirits seem to be flagging.

The Hunter must make a hunting non-weapon proficiency check to hunt down this game.

If the roll is successfully made by 5 or more, the prey is brought down and a great feast is had, restoring one point of Constitution damage and giving a +I bonus to the Guide's Arrival roll.

If the roll is successful, the party enjoy a hearty meal and each may remove one point of Constitution damage.

If the roll fails, the hunt was unsuccessful and the party spend a hungry night, resulting in each suffering one point of Constitution damage.

If the Hunter fails their roll by 5 or more, the hunt was a disaster, pulling the party off course and leaving them with nothing to show for their efforts but sore feet and growling bellies. As a result, each suffers a point of Constitution damage and the Guide's arrival roll becomes subject to a -I penalty.

In addition to any other modifiers, the roll made during this task is subject to a -5 penalty or a +5 bonus if the Guide's Embarkation roll was either 6 or 7, respectively.

8. A Few Scattered Oases

The Scout has spotted a location that has the potential to be a safe and comfortable place to make camp. Perhaps it is a sheltered gully, close to an oasis, or it may be an existing camp-site, used by merchants, already stocked with firewood and canvas to fashion shelters from the elements. It may even be an ancient building, easily defensible, allowing the party to rest a little easier on their journey. The Scout must make a survival check as the party draw close to the site.

If the roll succeeds by 5 or more, the camp-site is all the party could have hoped for, and they may heal wounds as if they had enjoyed full bed rest with supervised healing and herbalism, in addition to recovering a point of Constitution damage. As an added bonus, the Guide will receive a +I modifier to their Arrival roll.

If the roll is simply successful, the party has an undisturbed night, and, if needed, each may recover a point of Constitution damage.

If the roll fails, the camp-site proves to be less than it might have been. The party spend a restless night, beset by feelings that they are being watched perhaps, or discovering that the spot they have chosen is rocky and uncomfortable or prone to sandstorms. They awake weary and dispirited and suffering from a point of Constitution damage.

If the roll failed by 5 or more, the camp is already occupied by something hostile and dangerous; the Dungeon Master should roll on the encounter table for that terrain type. Whatever the nature of the threat, the party have blundered into its midst and combat will surely ensue.

Regardless of the result of the combat, assuming the party survives, the night is a poor one at best and the only memories they carry with them of the camp are those of hard knocks and a final, unfulfilling rest. In addition to any damage sustained, the Guide's Arrival roll is subject to a -1 modifier.

9. A Lingering Memory of a Lost Age

The party discovers a relic of past ages. A statue, a building, the remains of an ancient settlement, perhaps even some finely wrought trinket half-buried in the earth. It is even possible that they witness the Dragon flying high overhead.

With good fortune and a strong will, the party will be uplifted by this sight, sensing something hopeful for the future in this glimpse into the past. With poor fortune, the party will be filled with a sense of doom, seeing the decay of lost glory and the end of hope.

Each member of the party should make a Wisdom check. If successful, they are filled with hope regarding their journey and their personal struggles and gain a +5 bonus on the next saving throw that they must make.

If they make the roll by 5 or more, they are so invigorated by the sight that they may also remove a point of Constitution damage.

Additionally, if at least half of the party is successful, a +1 modifier may be applied to the Guide's arrival roll.

With a failed roll, they see only the fleeting nature of life and the inevitable death of their world, and suffer a -5 penalty on the next saving throw they make.

If they fail the roll by 5 or more, they feel morose and wearied by the scene and suffer a point of Constitution damage in addition to the saving throw penalty.

Additionally, if more than half of the party fail (since we're talking about individual rolls) their roll, a -1 modifier must be applied to the Guide's Arrival roll.

10. An Arid and Bleak Place

The essence of something dark and terrible lingers here. It may be the site of some ancient battle, haunted still by the shades of the fallen, it may be a place where the Dragon worked foul magics, long ago, or a ruin that was once home to a mighty defiler. Athas has a long history, and not all of it is pleasant. That said, even the dark sun may hide something bright and good and even the desert bears beauty at its breast.

The Scout must make a survival check to become aware of the darkness surrounding this area before the party blunders too deeply into it.

If the roll is a success by 5 or more, the party witness some sign that reaffirms their hope in the struggle to achieve their goals. Perhaps they see evidence of the downfall of whatever evil thing once lived here, perhaps a refreshing breeze cuts through the heat, lifting the spirits of all who feel it.

Whatever the reason, each member of the party may remove one point of ability damage to any one score and receives a +2 bonus on the next saving throw they make.

Additionally, the Guide will receive a +1 bonus to their Arrival roll.

On a successful roll, they manage to avoid the pervasive sense of corruption that lingers here and may count themselves lucky. Accordingly, the Guide receives a +1 bonus to their Arrival roll.

If the Scout fails their roll, the party has wandered into the heart of the area and feels the dark nature of the place touch their hearts. Each character must make a Wisdom check or suffer a point of ability to damage to one score (player's choice).

If the Scout's roll fails by 5 or more, some dark thing still lurks here, ancient and evil, and the party have disturbed its slumber...

II. Monstrous Abominations

Elven raiders, gith, a marauding slave tribe, or great beasts of the wastes are moving through the area. Avoiding them will be challenging. If the Guide's result on the Embarkation roll was a 3, a confrontation is unavoidable.

In spite of this, a successful observation non-weapon proficiency check roll from the Look-out will allow the party time to prepare and will grant them a round of surprise in the combat.

A failed observation roll in this instance will indicate that the party has little time to prepare and receives no such bonus.

If the Guide received a I0 on the Embarkation roll, the Look-out's observation check allows the party to find a path that will bypass the enemy force unnoticed.

Should this roll fail, the party will still have time to establish an ambush, and as such will benefit from a round of surprise.

Should the Embarkation roll have been neither 3 nor I0, the party may attempt to sneak past the hostile force. This will require a successful Dexterity check from each of them, with a single successful animal handling roll from one of the party should they have mounts.

If any of these rolls fails, they have been spotted and battle will swiftly follow, with no advantage to either side. The Dungeon Master should make the combat reasonably challenging, without allowing it to dominate the entire session.

12. (or more) What Lurks out in the Barrenness

The party has encountered a traveller upon the road, but all may not be as it at first appears. This is no ordinary wanderer, but rather is a figure of power in the Tablelands. This will be a significant encounter not soon forgotten.

Whether the meeting is for good or ill, for attaining this result the Dungeon Master may well choose to reward the party with additional Experience Points for the encounter.

The traveller may be a pyreen, wandering the lands and appearing, at first glance, to be little more than a ragged wastrel. Or perhaps it is one of the villichi, travelling to or from their hidden refuge. It may be a famous figure like Korgunard, Agis of Asticles, or Sadira, roaming the deep, wild badlands or the rolling dunes.

Alternatively it may be something more sinister. A powerful defiler in search of forbidden lore, ancient kaisharga on some malignant errand, or other long-forgotten undead travelling the lands with foul and evil purpose. Characters may well stumble upon a foe beyond any of them...

If the Embarkation roll was a I, the encounter will automatically be with a malign individual. Conversely, if it was a I2, the party has encountered a powerful and benevolent individual. The outcome of such a meeting however, will depend on how the party approaches matters.

If neither a I nor a I2 was rolled on the Embarkation table, the Look-out must make an observation check.

If this roll succeeds by 5 or more, the party has encountered a person of great standing, and sees them for what they are.

Each member of the party may immediately remove all damage to one ability score and gain a +I bonus to their Arrival roll.

If the Look-out's roll succeeds, they have spotted the traveller, but do not realise who they may truly be. The initial description of this encounter should then be played out as if it was a result of I on this table (**A Chance Encounter**). Should the party choose to interact with the traveller, a successful Wisdom check or some demonstration that the party has true and good purpose should lead to the true identity of the person they have met. Should this happen, the encounter should then play out in much the same way as detailed above.

If the Look-out's roll fails, the party have encountered a dark and powerful foe way beyond any of them. For low-level parties, this could be a superior force of gith, a hunting pack of thri-kreen, or perhaps a particularly large and fierce b'rohg.

At higher levels it could be something much darker and more powerful - a warband of giants, or even a kaisharga about some dark business.

If the party wish to avoid further confrontation, each member must make a Dexterity check (with a single additional animal handling check if the party has mounts) to slip away unnoticed.

Should more than half fail, they will need to flee in haste for fear of their very lives. All suffer a point of Constitution damage, and the Arrival roll will be subject to a -I penalty.

If the Look-out's roll fails by 5 or more, they are automatically spotted, with no chance to sneak away. They must flee in haste for fear of their very lives. They automatically suffer 2 points of Constitution damage, and the Arrival roll will be subject to a -I penalty.



Step Three: The Arrival Phase

As the party completes its journey, they make a roll to determine their overall mood and demeanour. Dependent upon the exhortations of the Guide, the difficulty of the terrain they have travelled, and the party's successes or failures upon the road, they may be in high spirits or despondent; full of vigour or footsore and weary. They may have fine tales to tell, or they may be gritting their teeth and silently scowling at any folk with whom they must interact. This roll is additionally modified depending on the difficulty of the majority of the terrain that the party crossed, as follows:

- **Easy Terrain:** +1 to the Arrival roll
- **Moderate Terrain:** No modifier
- **Hard or Severe Terrain:** -1 to the Arrival roll
- **Daunting Terrain:** -2 to the Arrival roll

The Guide rolls a d8, applies any modifiers from the Embarkation roll, terrain, and journey events, and then compares the result with the Arrival Table:

Arrival Table

1. (or less) Sun-Scorched and Wind-Scoured

The journey has taken a heavy toll on the spirits of the party. The paths they followed have shown them little that is good and have left them feeling tired and without hope. The memories of any good fortune they may have experienced along the way now seem distant.

Each member of the party must make a saving throw against paralysis with a -1 penalty per point of Peril Rating. If their journey took them through an Arid and Bleak place (10 on the Events table), there is an additional -2 penalty. A failure means that each character in the party suffers 1d6 points of Wisdom damage.

2. A Few Bushels of Mouldering Grain

Regardless of whether the party has enjoyed fine food or has subsisted on trail rations, during the final leg of their journey, their supplies dwindle rapidly and they arrive at their destination feeling the pangs of hunger gnawing at them. This hunger will be a distraction to them. As a consequence, everyone in the party suffers 1d4 points of damage to a randomly determined ability score.

3. Life is Grim and Short

Party members are beset by foul moods and short tempers that they must work hard to throw off. They suffer a -5 penalty on all rolls pertaining to social interaction, until they succeed in one of these rolls. If there is a single upside to this dark mood, it is that they are so spoiling for a fight that each member of the party receives a -2 bonus on any initiative rolls, should they find themselves in combat at the destination.

4. An Uncertain Arrival

The party's arrival is poorly timed or it may be that they are unsure if they have even arrived at the correct destination. They may arrive at a settlement late in the night, after the gates have been barred, and may need to work hard to convince a watchman to allow them to enter, or they may have been certain that the gith encampment that they were planning to scout before attacking it was still several miles away, only to find themselves almost in its midst. The mechanics for this result will vary greatly, depending on the nature of the destination.

The Dungeon Master may require the party to make fast talk checks to simply gain access. A short but desperate fight may be played out as the party struggles to overcome enemy guards before an alarm is raised. The Dungeon Master may ask for a navigation check from the Guide to successfully navigate to the correct destination, with a failed roll resulting in all members of the party suffering a point of Constitution damage, as they are faced with additional long miles to reach their true destination.

5. A Long But Worthy Journey

As the party nears the end of their journey they feel every mile they have walked in the aches and pains that beset their bodies. But the aches are good ones, the legacy of a path well walked to a worthy goal. As they arrive, their fatigue seems to slip away like mist beneath the moons, leaving them feeling refreshed and invigorated. As a result, each member of the party may immediately remove a point of Constitution damage.

6. Grimly Determined

The many leagues that the party has travelled have filled them with a sense of clear purpose regarding their goals, dark though the path ahead may be. As a result, the Guide will receive a +1 bonus to their next Embarkation roll.

7. Tales of High Adventure

The party arrives with the tales of their journey on their lips, spirits high, and thoughts filled with fine memories. This joyous mood is contagious to all but the most dour of folk. Accordingly, the party receives a +5 bonus on all rolls pertaining to social interaction, which remains until they fail at one of these rolls.

8. (or more) To Stir the Untamed Heart

The journey has reaffirmed the party's dedication to their struggles and their bonds with each other. They have weathered hardships, faced dangers and persevered and their faith in themselves and each other seems unshakeable. Each member of the party may remove all ability score damage incurred during the journey.





Using the Journey Rules with the Campaign Guide

The **Dark Sun Campaign Guide** contains rules for dehydration and damage for exposure to the elements in **Chapter Eight: Adventuring**. How do those rules interact with the new Journey rules presented here?

The Journey rules present several opportunities for characters to suffer Constitution damage, either due to a poor Embarkation roll or, more likely, due to events that take place during the journey itself. The DM needs to bear in mind issues arising from exposing player characters to excessive amounts of Constitution damage.

Dehydration

The rules for dehydration are unchanged. At the outset of any journey, the party should ensure that it has sufficient water for the trip. On any day that a member of the group does not receive their required amount of water, they suffer Constitution damage as described in the **Campaign Guide**.

This damage can be reduced, healed, or removed entirely by journey events or the results of a good Arrival roll.

The threat of dehydration is an important aspect of the **Dark Sun** setting and considerations of water remain a part of any journey.

Exposure

The Journey rules already include the risk of characters suffering Constitution damage. An Embarkation roll of 5 applies 1 point per terrain level. Event rolls of 3, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 12 all carry the risk of party members suffering additional Constitution damage.

In contrast, an Embarkation roll of 8 decreases Constitution damage, as do Event rolls of 6, 7, 8, and 9. Nevertheless, the risk of additional Constitution damage when using the Journey rules is real.

For this reason, apply the following modifications to the rules presented in the **Campaign Guide** when using the Journey rules:

- On an Embarkation roll of 4, all heat protection non-weapon proficiency checks suffer a -5 penalty throughout the journey.
- On an Embarkation roll of 8, all heat protection non-weapon proficiency checks receive a +5 bonus throughout the journey.
- Make all heat protection rolls at the times indicated on page 218 of the **Campaign Guide**. However, halve any resulting Constitution damage. So a failed heat protection roll in Hot weather deals 1d2 points of Constitution damage. In Very Hot weather, damage is 1d3, and in Furnace weather it is 1d4. Damage incurred in Inferno temperatures is unchanged.