

# DUNGEONS & DRAGONS<sup>®</sup>

## DUNGEON DELVE<sup>™</sup>



ROLEPLAYING GAME SUPPLEMENT

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# INTRODUCTION

**THE FIRST** Dungeon Delve appeared at the 1998 GenCon Game Fair. It was created, organized, and run by the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game designers to showcase D&D® and provide a fun, interactive activity that was at least one step above the demos we conducted in years past. It was a new and exciting format, created by the people who knew the game best, and it was the hit of the weekend.

In many ways, that first Dungeon Delve was fairly primitive. But from the opening of the show on Thursday, we knew we had found the crux of a winning formula. With hand-drawn maps, a collection of disparate metal miniatures, and a huge bulletin board on which we could record the progress through the dungeon, it was barely state-of-the-art for the time. We even posted a running list of the honored characters who died trying to defeat the monsters and make it into just one more chamber before their time in the Delve came to an end.

The fans ate it up. We had enormous lines at the Delve that entire weekend. They lined up to get into the available play slots. They lined up to witness the action and see whether Monte Cook or Bruce Cordell or Ed Stark (or whoever else was part of the team at that time) could kill more characters as more and more of the Delve was revealed. They lined up to see the next dungeon details and character names

## DELVE AS DM TRAINING GROUND

Always wanted to try your hand at Dungeon Mastering but didn't want to commit to running an entire adventure? Then the Dungeon Delve product was made just for you! Each set of encounters presents a short, easy-to-run D&D experience. Just select the level of play, turn to the appropriate page, and you're ready to go.

Use the Delve encounters to practice full-scale Dungeon Mastering techniques, including adding campaign elements, storytelling, and roleplaying. Or treat each encounter as a competitive experience—player characters against Dungeon Master—for a fast, exciting experience utilizing the core elements of D&D.



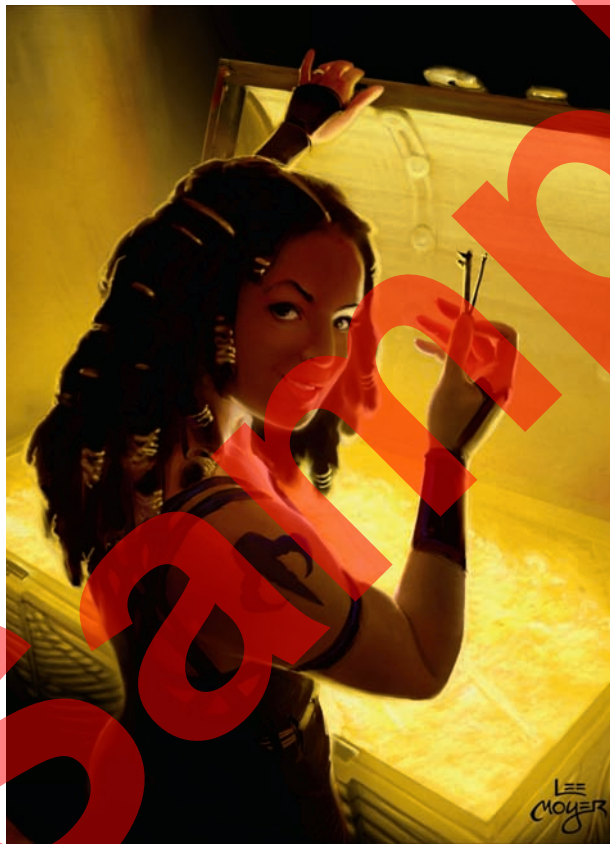


get posted to the bulletin board. How far had they gotten? What had they killed? Who didn't make it out of the last fight?

It was D&D, it was happening in the Wizards booth, and it was exhilarating!

Over the years, we adjusted the formula and expanded play to the point where we needed some great volunteers to help us run the event. Then the RPGA created a satellite Dungeon Delve to run in the RPGA Hall, because demand for the event was that powerful. We started running Delves at other shows, in other venues. Last year, we started the Delve Night program so that retail outlets and other public gaming locations could run D&D Delve events.

With this book, the Dungeon Delve concept finally takes center stage as a core D&D product. It was a long time coming, but we needed that time to test concepts, try out new formats, and eventually get to the point where this product was not only viable, but in many ways necessary to the evolution of the D&D game.



## WHAT IS A DELVE?

For the purpose of this product, a Dungeon Delve is a compact series of encounters appropriate for a specific level of play. This book contains 30 Dungeon Delves, one for each level of play. Each Delve features three encounters, forming a mini-adventure of sorts.

You can use the Delves presented in this product in a number of ways.

First and foremost, each level's worth of encounters can be dropped into any existing campaign with a minimum of fuss and bother. Need a 9th-level encounter for your game tonight? Open up to page 60 and you're ready to go. Use the story elements as they are presented or modify them as necessary to fit your current campaign storyline.

Second, if you aren't currently a Dungeon Master but you've always imagined trying your hand at DMing one day, you can use these Delves to fulfill your DM ambitions. Use them as practice sessions, or incorporate them into your first D&D game adventure. Because they're modular and compact, the Delves make excellent encounters for starting DMs to work with.

Third, you can take a page from our original Dungeon Delve concept and turn D&D into a more competitive experience. Instead of cooperative storytelling and roleplaying, in which the DM takes on a more neutral role and arbiter and narrator, you can use the Delves to test the skill of both players and the DM. It becomes a case of survival of the fittest as adventurers enter dungeons and try to overcome the obstacles set before them. We talk more about this approach below.

Finally, a fourth approach is more player-oriented. Get another member of your regular game group to give your usual DM a break by serving as DM for a Delve Night. This is a great opportunity to let your regular DM play a character, as well as a way to allow others in the group to take on the role of Dungeon Master from time to time. As an aside to your regular campaign, you can use a Delve Night to try out new character concepts and ideas, as well as letting it serve as an outlet for new DMs in your group.