

Bloodstarved - Quick-Start Rules

Version 1.0

<https://bloodstarved.com>

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YOU'RE NOT A MONSTER, YOU'RE A SURVIVOR

Forget the romantic nonsense. This isn't about immortal love or gothic poetry. This is about surviving one more night when every breath could be your last and every sunrise promises oblivion.

Hunger is your constant companion—a parasite that whispers in your skull during quiet moments, screams when you're weak, and never, ever lets up. But you're not some mindless bloodsucker from the bargain bin horror flicks. You're calculated. You feed just enough to keep going. Kill too often, and you become a target. Stay too visible, and you're nothing but ash in the morning breeze. Survival means staying sharp, staying hungry, and never, ever, letting your guard down.

You are the night shift nurse with cold hands creeping down the hospital corridor, cataloging the weakest patients. The anonymous DJ behind mirrored sunglasses, spinning tracks in a darkened club while scanning for tonight's meal. The late-night delivery driver cruising the forgotten streets, memorizing which houses stand empty and which overflow with potential.

Invisible. Deadly. One step ahead. That's you. Your claws rip through flesh like wet paper. Your fangs can drain a life in seconds. But your strongest weapon? The collective disbelief of a society too comfortable to acknowledge the predator in its midst. And how can they kill what they don't believe exists?

Welcome to the shadows.
Welcome to *Bloodstarved*.

CREDITS

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THE BASICS

CORE MECHANICS

As a player, every action you attempt that could result in failure is resolved by testing your attribute stats. For the action to be successful, you must roll *less than or equal to* the stat on a d20.

The attribute stats are: Strength (STR), Dexterity (DEX), Willpower (WIL), Intellect (INT), and Charisma (CHA)

Non-Player Characters (NPCs) don't make tests. Instead, you, the player, must *avoid* their attacks by making a test. The only time an NPC might roll is for damage.

AVOIDING DAMAGE

When any attack or effect could impact you, you'll roll an attribute test to see if you can avoid getting hurt. In some games, this is known as a "Saving Throw." Use the following as a guide. Remember the advice in the Powerful Opponents section below.

ABILITY	SAVE AGAINST
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Strength	Physical harm that <i>cannot</i> be dodged. Falling, etc.
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Dexterity	Physical harm that <i>can</i> be dodged.
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Willpower	Resist holy symbols.
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Intellect	Resist mental attacks. See through deceptions.
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Charisma	Resist charm, persuasion, or intimidation.
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ADVANTAGE & DISADVANTAGE

The Game Master (GM) may decide that a course of action has a higher or lower chance of success. They will ask a player to roll an *additional* d20 when making a test. When rolling with Advantage, use the lower result. When rolling with Disadvantage, use the higher one.

CRITICALS & FUMBLES

Rolling a 1 (**Critical**) signifies an extreme success. Rolling a 20 (**Fumble**) indicates a dismal failure. In both cases, your GM determines the details of the outcome. During combat, if you roll a 1 on an attack, you do double damage. If you roll a 20 when avoiding an attack, you take double damage. Alternatively, you may opt for the weapon's maximum damage. If you are wearing armor, you may choose to have it be destroyed instead.

OPPOSED ROLES

Occasionally, a player may want to test a stat against another player. An example might be if they both race for the same object. In this case, they should make an Opposed Roll. Both players must roll under or equal to their stat as per usual. If only one succeeds, then that person wins. If *both* succeed, whoever rolled *highest* wins. This gives the edge to the character with the higher stat. Note, the players may not necessarily be rolling the same stat. For example, one might roll STR while the other might roll DEX.

GAMEPLAY EXAMPLE

GM: You're outside the Coffin Nail bar. Rayne just slipped inside, but the hulking bouncer stops you with a beefy hand: "Members only."

JORDAN: I slip him a C-note. "Here's our membership fee."

GM: Nice. Okay, the bouncer eyes the bill. Make a Charisma roll.

JORDAN: My charisma is 13 [rolls] I got a 6!

GM: Nice. The bouncer pockets the cash. He grunts at Debs. “She pays too.”

DEBS: Ugh! Fine. I pay. This better be worth it.

PLAYERS TURN

During your turn, you may move and perform an action. That action could be to attack, use a blood power, look for a clue, speak with an NPC, or anything else you can think of. Interacting with the world is an action. Often, you will test your attributes to determine the outcome.

TIME & TURNS

There are two important types of tracked time: **Moments** (rounds) and **Minutes** (turns). Moments are used during combat and fast-paced scenes of danger. Minutes are used when exploring and adventuring. A GM may advance the clock as needed, substituting Minutes for hours, days, or longer, should the adventure require it.

MOVEMENT & DISTANCE

Rather than track precise numbers, we use four abstract ranges for measuring distances: **Close**, **Nearby**, **Far-Away**, and **Distant**. On their turn, every player can move somewhere Nearby in addition to their action. They can move before, during, or after their action. They can forgo their action and move somewhere Far-Away instead. Moving anywhere Distant takes three turns. This system supports a narrative, ‘theater of the mind’ style of play, and is less concerned about tracking precise distances. If you like, you can use the following as a rule of thumb:

CLOSE	NEARBY	FAR AWAY	DISTANT
0 - 5 FT	5 - 30 FT	30 - 120 FT	> 120 FT
0 - 1.5 M	1.5 - 10 M	10M - 35 M	> 35 M

COMBAT

When a player attacks an NPC, they must roll below their STR stat for a Melee Attack or below their DEX for a Ranged Attack. When an NPC attacks, the player must roll below their DEX to avoid taking damage. If there's any doubt, the GM will decide the stat required for the test.

To make a melee attack, an opponent must be Close. Ranged attacks against Close opponents are possible, but the attacker may suffer a Disadvantage.

INITIATIVE

When combat breaks out, players test their DEX to determine the order in which they act. Those who succeed take their turn before their opponents. They act as a group, deciding their order for actions. Those who fail their DEX tests go after their opponents.

POWERFUL OPPONENTS

When facing NPCs of different levels than you, adjust your stat check rolls as follows:

- When the NPC's level is higher than yours, add +1 to your roll for each level the NPC has above your level.
- When the NPC's level is lower than yours, subtract -1 from your roll for each level the NPC has below your level.

For example, a level 1 player dodging an attack from a level 3 NPC should add +2 to their roll ($3 - 1 = 2$).

ARMOR

Armor provides protection by reducing incoming damage by a limited amount.

ARMOR	DAMAGE REDUCTION
Leather Jacket	1 HP
Motorcycle Armor	2 HP

ARMOR	DAMAGE REDUCTION
Body Armor / Kevlar (no protection from blunt force)	4 HP

MAJOR INJURIES

Optional Rule: If you lose over half of your maximum health points in one blow, you receive a Major Injury.

ROLLINJURY

- 1 **Concussion:** Disadvantage on all INT and WIL tests until healed.
- 2 **Broken Bone:** STR and DEX are reduced by 2 until healed.
- 3 **Nasty Scar:** CHA reduced to 6 until healed.
- 4 **Severed:** Lose a body part (i.e., hand, ear, nose), possibly gaining a disadvantage.

DAMAGE & DYING

It takes more than guns and knives to kill a vampire. In this game, you'll keep track of two kinds of damage: regular damage, tracked by **Health Points (HP)**, and blood damage, tracked in **Blood Wounds**.

If you get reduced to zero HP, you're knocked out and cannot make any actions. When you have received your maximum of Blood Wounds, you have perished.

WEAPONS & OTHER DAMAGE

ITEM	DAMAGE	RANGE
Vampire, Unarmed	d4	Close
Human, Unarmed	d2	Close

ITEM	DAMAGE	RANGE
Brass Knuckles	Unarmed damage + 1	Close
Knife	d4	Close, Nearby (throwable)
Sword	d6	Close
Small Club, Baton	d4	Close
Large club, Crowbar	d6	Close
Chain, whip	d4	Close, Nearby
Bow	d6	Close - Far Away
Pistol	d6	Close - Nearby
Rifle	d6	Close - Far Away
Shotgun	d8	Close, Nearby
Grenade, Dynamite Stick	2d10	
Falling	d4 × Story	
Hit by a car	d10	

BLOOD WOUNDS

Sunlight, fire, wooden stakes, and holy symbols inflict blood damage (tracked as Blood Wounds) and can kill vampires. Other methods to destroy a vampire certainly exist, such as decapitation, dynamite blasts, or shoving them into a wood chipper, so use your imagination! Together, the players and the GM should decide what makes the most sense as the game progresses. The following are common forms of blood damage.

SUNLIGHT

LIGHT INTENSITY	BLOOD WOUNDS
Covered (i.e. wrapped in a thick blanket, or wearing a trench coat with SPF 200 Sunblock)	1 BW / 3 Moments
Indirect Sun (shade, fog etc.)	1 BW / Moment
Direct Sun	2 BW / Moment

FIRE

FLAME SOURCE	BLOOD WOUNDS
Torch held against skin	1 BW / 3 Moments
Raging Bonfire	1 BW / Moment
Room on fire, Flamethrower	2 BW / Moment

STAKING

A vampire can be killed by driving a wooden stake through their heart. The stake must be at least as thick as a broomstick. Staking a vampire is difficult and usually only possible while they are sleeping or incapacitated.

HOLY SYMBOLS

Crosses, holy water, and other religious symbols must be wielded by someone who *truly* believes in their faith. This does not necessarily mean a priest, nor must the faith be Christian. Throughout history, most faiths have employed some symbol or rite of protection. The following are some common types of holy symbol damage.

EVENT	BLOOD WOUNDS
Splashed with holy water	Next roll at disadvantage
Submerged in holy water	1 BW / Moment
Cross/holy symbol (medium or larger) held against flesh	Roll at disadvantage

REST & RECOVERY

By sleeping through the day in a coffin, you recover normal and blood damage. Roll your health die. You recover that many health points. You also recover *three* Blood Wounds.

THE BLOOD

As a vampire, you are beholden to the effects of the blood, which bestow upon you great power but also burden you with weaknesses.

POWERS OF THE BLOOD

While each class has its own specific **Blood Powers**, all vampires gain the following innate abilities:

VAMPIRIC HEALING – You can heal one health die of damage. After doing so, make a Hunger Check (see Hunger section).

THRALLS – Feeding a human a few sips of your blood will grant them some vampiric powers. The human will not age and, in fact, will look more youthful. The effect wears off in several days.

NIGHTVISION – In dim light, you can see Nearby objects. Specifically adapted for predation, your vision allows you to make out lines and shapes, but not colors.

TRACKING – You can track a warm-blooded prey that has recently been in the area. To achieve this, make an INT roll.

IMMUNITIES – You are immune to poison, drowning, and asphyxiation.

CURSES OF THE BLOOD

PASSING FOR HUMAN – You cannot eat or drink normal food. Doing so causes 1 HP of damage, and you must make a WIL check or vomit it up. Your body remains at room temperature and feels cold to the touch. Your skin is also noticeably pale.

VISUAL LIKENESS – Vampires do not appear in mirrors or photos. Their voices cannot be recorded on audio. They cannot use most electronics, like phones or face recognition. Automatic doors won't open for them. Hey, no one said it was easy being an undead creature of the night!

SILVER – When pure silver touches your skin, it saps your supernatural powers. Only pure, unalloyed silver has this effect, and there must be enough of it. For example, silver bullets will harm you no more than regular bullets, but being bound in heavy silver chains will prevent you from healing or shapeshifting.

GAMEPLAY CONTINUED

GM: On the inside, The Coffin Nail looks like your typical biker bar: dark, smoky, and reeking of spilled beer.

DEBS: Any sign of Rayne?

GM: Actually, he spots you first—and hurls a beer bottle at Debs! Then, he bolts for the back exit!

DEBS: I dodge!

GM: Make an Agility save.

DEBS: [Rolls] Oh no. It's a 20.

GM: I'm afraid that's a fumble. The bottle smashes against your head, spraying glass and beer.

Blood drips into your eyes, making it hard to see. Rather than applying double damage, I was thinking you'd take normal damage *and* have disadvantage until you can wipe the blood and pick the glass from your eyes?

DEBS: Sure. You're a dead man, Rayne!

HUNGER

Track your need for blood using a **Hunger Die**. This works like a usage die. Whenever you would test your hunger—for example, after using a Blood Power, healing, or whenever the GM calls for it—make a **Hunger Check** by rolling your current Hunger Die. If you roll 1 or 2, you have failed your Hunger Check. Reduce your Hunger Die to the next lower die in the following chain:

d12 → d10 → d8 → d6 → d4

As your Hunger Die shrinks, your cravings intensify. At **d4**, you are ravenous. If your Hunger Die is reduced below **d4**, you lose control and immediately attempt to feed on the nearest source of blood (the GM may adjust circumstances as needed).

Unless stated otherwise, everyone begins play with a Hunger Die of **d10**. Your hunger die cannot grow higher than a **d12**.

Optional rule: Players using the same power twice in the same scene roll their Hunger Check at a disadvantage. This fosters creative problem-solving and discourages the repetitive use of “power moves,” which can become boring.

HUNGER EFFECTS

If you fail a Hunger Check (rolling a 1–2), after reducing your Hunger Die, you also suffer a **Hunger Effect**. When hunger takes hold of you, your instincts begin to override your will. At this point, your powers may falter, misfire, or behave unpredictably. You and your GM can work together to decide what happens. Ideally, the chosen effect should heighten the tension, complicate the situation, or create a new obstacle to overcome.

HUNGER EFFECT EXAMPLES Trying to heal your broken wrist, you succeed, but the bones fuse improperly, leaving your hand stiff and unusable for some time.

While wall-crawling as a Strigoi, your claws bite too deep, trapping you in the surface until you break free.

As a Vrou using heightened hearing, all sounds become unbearably loud. A simple door slam could deafen you!

IDEAS FOR HUNGER EFFECTS

1. **FRIENDLY FIRE** – You injure yourself or accidentally harm an ally.
2. **COLLATERAL DAMAGE** – You inadvertently cause damage to your surroundings.
3. **FIZZLE** – Your ability is much weaker than intended.
4. **MISFIRE** – Your power works, but not in the way you intended. You expected X but instead you got Y.
5. **OVERLOAD** – Unleash too much power and lose control of it.
6. **CONSPICUOUS** – Your actions attract unwanted attention.
7. **STRESS CASE** – You suffer mental strain, making future actions more difficult.
8. **SENSORY LOSS** – One of your senses is overwhelmed or blacks out—perhaps you can't speak, or you lose your sight or hearing for a while.
9. **DEAD LIMB** – A limb goes numb or seizes up, hampering your mobility or strength.
10. **BRAIN ADDLED** – Your thoughts become muddled, making it difficult to focus or think clearly.

FEEDING

To reduce your Hunger and restore your Hunger Die, you must feed. Each victim has a finite number of dice worth of blood. For each die you drain from them, increase your hunger die by one size. Draining a victim of all of its blood kills them.

You can feed on another vampire. The number of dice worth of blood a vampire has is $1 +$ their level. So, a level two vampire would have three dice worth of blood.

VICTIM	BLOOD UNITS
Multiple small animals	1
Large animal (horse, cow)	2
Human	2
1 Pint of hospital blood	1

VICTIM	BLOOD UNITS
Vampire	1 + their level

FANG POINTS

The GM may, at their own discretion, award Fang Points to player during the game. For example, when a player solves a problem in an interesting way or makes a choice that fits their character, even if it isn't the wisest move. Players can expend a Fang Point to re-roll a single die.

EXPERIENCE & LEVELING UP

You learn through overcoming obstacles, such as surviving a massive threat, completing a quest, or simply living to tell the tale. For every session, quest, or major event you survive, you may gain a level. The GM will decide this at their own discretion.

When a player levels up, their maximum HP increase by rolling the die for their class. You also increase the amount of Blood Wounds you can take by one. Finally, roll a d20 for each Stat. If the result is higher than the current Stat, that Stat increases by one.

GAMEPLAY CONTINUED

GM: You burst through the back door into a fenced back yard. The barbed wire fence looks unclimbable, and Rayne seems to have vanished.

JORDAN: Where could he have gone?

DEBS: Even though I'm partially blinded, can I use my Blood Tracking ability to sense his presence?

GM: Sure. Make a Hunger Check and then an INT roll to see if you can sniff him out.

DEBS: Okay, Hunger die is d6. I got a – [rolls] 3, whew. And I passed my INT check!

GM: Great. Something doesn't add up here. You can sense Rayne's human blood signature – above you. He's on the roof!

JORDAN: How'd he get up there?

DEBS: Let's climb and find out.

GM: You climb the rusty drain pipe and spot Rayne, frantic, at the far edge of the roof. Debs, I'd say your vision is clear by now.

DEBS: “End of the line, Rayne! Who's supplying the tainted blood to the clinic?”

GM: Rayne edges back toward the ledge. “Y-you don't know what you're messing with. The Duchess has eyes everywhere.” He suddenly turns. He's going to jump to the neighboring building.

JORDAN: I dash forward to grab him!

GM: Make a DEX check.

JORDAN: [Rolls]. Argh! Fail.

GM: Before you reach him, he jumps – but doesn't quite make it across. He plummets to the pavement below with a sickening splat.

JORDAN: Damn it! He was our only lead.

DEBS: [Sighs]. I look down and say. “He should've checked the weather forecast tonight. He would've known to expect Rayne-fall.”

JORDAN: [Groans] Let's find out what we can about this Duchess person before daybreak.

CHARACTER CREATION

Download a printable version of the character sheet at <https://bloodstarved.com/downloads>.

1. CHOOSE A CLASS

Pick from one of the four classes: Jiangshi, Strigoi, Vrou, and Adze. The classes represent different personas that vampires often embody in our stories and lore. Your class determines your HP and unique abilities.

2. ROLL YOUR STATS

Generate your ability stats (**STR, DEX, INT, WIL, CHA**) by rolling 3d6. Once all stats are generated, you can make two swaps.

All new characters begin with a capacity of 3 Blood Wounds.

Start your hunger die at d10, unless otherwise stated by the GM.

3. ROLL YOUR HP

Each class has its own health die. Roll yours to determine your max HP. If you are using the optional Major Injuries rule, calculate half of your HP, rounded up. Taking this amount of damage causes a major injury.

4. THINK OF A BACKSTORY

What were you like in life? Who turned you into a vampire, and how old were you then? Perhaps you'd like to pick a role-playing flaw or something you need to achieve? Are you desperately trying to cling to the last shreds of your humanity? Are you out to get revenge on the bloodsucker that turned you into a vampire? Are you obsessed with collecting timeless, historic art? Perhaps you were a corporate middle manager as a human and are now just enjoying being at the top of the food chain?

5. CHOOSE EQUIPMENT

Pick a few personal items. For example, a lucky lighter, a locket with a photo of your true love, or an ivory bracelet made of the fangs from all the vampires you've slain.

CLASSES

> JIANGSHI

Savage warriors and ferocious fighters. You're not to be trifled with, and that's just on your good days.

Starting HP: d8 + 4

Hit Die (HP gained when resting or healing): 1d8

Leveling up: Gain 1d8 HP. When rolling to see if attributes increase, roll twice for STR or DEX.

Special Ability: Due to their ferocity and skill, Jiangshi deal an additional +1 damage on all melee attacks.

BLOOD POWERS

- **Ferocity** – As a bonus action, pick any one of the three effects below. Lasts the length of a fight. These effects do not stack. For example, if you are already using Cat-like, you cannot add Tough Hide, but you can switch from one to another (requires a Hunger Check).
 - **Strength** – Gain +2 STR.
 - **Cat-like** – Gain +2 DEX.
 - **Tough Hide** – Take half damage.
- **Leap** – Jump to a nearby distance, up to two stories in height.

Inspired by the Jiāngshī, a Chinese leaping corpse from folklore that can absorb the life-force or qi of human prey. These vampires embody the mythical creature's predatory essence. Pronounced 'jong-shee'.

> STRIGOI

Fiend. Phantom. The stuff of nightmares. These are words used to describe you. You do not mind—the more frightened the victim, the sweeter the blood.

Starting HP: d6 + 4

Hit Die (HP gained when resting or healing): 1d6

Leveling up: Gain 1d6 HP. When rolling to see if attributes increase, roll twice for either DEX or WIL.

BLOOD POWERS

- **Transfix** – Using your gaze, paralyze a nearby human victim with fright or awe. On a successful **WIL** check, they cannot move or act for 3 Moments.
- **Cloaked in Shadow** – Remain undetectable to anyone except other Strigoi. Speaking or any sudden moves (attacking, running, etc.) will end this effect. There must be at least some cover or shadow in which to hide.
- **Not Quite Dead** – If reduced to zero HP, a successful **WIL** check gives you a second wind. Instead of being Knocked Out, you have 1 HP. This only works once per night.
- **Cling to Walls** – Crawl up walls and cling to ceilings for up to one minute.

Rooted in Romanian mythology, these vampires mirror the legendary Strigoi's ability to become invisible and draw vitality from their victims' blood. Pronounced 'strij-goy'.

> VROU

Beastial hunters with sharpened senses. You patiently stalk your prey, waiting for just the right moment...

Starting HP: d6 + 4

Hit Die (HP gained when resting or healing): 1d6

Leveling up: Gain 1d6 HP. When rolling to see if attributes increase. Roll twice for either **INT** or **DEX**.

Special Ability: When tracking warm-blooded prey, Vrou roll their **INT** check with advantage.

BLOOD POWERS

- **Keen Sense** – Magnify one sense (e.g. sight, hearing, smell, etc.) the length of a scene.
- **Shape-shift** – Turn into a common nocturnal animal, like a bat, owl, or wolf. Transforming takes a Minute. No Hunger Check required to return to human form.
- **Claws** – Grow long talon-like claws. Add 2 damage to your unarmed attacks. Lasts the length of a fight.

- **Command Animal** – Give a command to one medium or large animal, or a flock of small animals. The command must be within reason. If it will harm the animal, make an INT roll. If an animal is likely in the area, you may be able to summon them.
- **Levitate** – Float through the air at walking speed for one Minute.

A portmanteau combining the Greek Vrykolákas and Norse Draugr mythologies, inheriting aspects from both. Pronounced ‘vrow’ (rhymes with “brow”).

> ADZE

Beguilers, tempters and charmers. Rather than stalking, you prefer that your prey come to you, willingly or not.

Starting HP: d6 + 4

Hit Die (HP gained when resting or healing): 1d6

Leveling up: Gain 1d6 HP. When rolling to see if attributes increase, roll twice for either **CHA** or **WIL**.

BLOOD POWERS

- **Drain** – Sap a nearby NPC’s physical abilities for the length of the fight (or one Minute if outside of combat). You gain +2 to your **STR** and **DEX**. Other players gain a +1 to **STR** and **DEX** checks against your victim. Not stackable, meaning you cannot Drain someone multiple times at once.
- **Dominate Mind** – Upon a successful **CHA** roll, command a nearby victim to perform one action. The action must be reasonable (i.e., they won’t knowingly harm themselves).
- **Hypnotize** – Upon a successful **CHA** roll, send a nearby victim into a trancelike state for a Minute, forcing them to respond truthfully to your questions and simple commands. They will wake up if startled. Unlike Dominate Mind, Hypnotize may only be used outside of combat.
- **Misfortune** – Give someone “bad luck.” Your target must be nearby. Something unfortunate will happen to them (at the

GM's discretion), and players gain advantage on any ability rolls against them for the next round.

Inspired by the Adze, the vampiric creature from Ewe folklore of Ghana and Togo, which has the power to possess humans and bring bad luck to the families of their victims. Pronounced 'adz'.