

Rules Changes



The two rules modifications on this page are strictly NOT BTB. These are Demon Idol changes. I assure you that you can ignore this page and the game will play very enjoyably. We recommend these two changes, though.

“What! I thought this was by-the-book AD&D!” – You, maybe

These two changes are stylistic and minor, and have essentially no mechanical effect on game interactions. And you can ignore them if you want.

Change #1: Players can read the books

Players are free to read any of the AD&D rulebooks without penalty, at any time, including all the monster books.

Reasoning

The DMG's preface¹⁾ is wildly entertaining but the suggested retribution for players reading the DMG just doesn't translate to the way we play. We highly value system mastery, and do not shun players for learning more about the game.

Change #2: Sex-based ability score caps

When differences are listed based on sex, all classed characters use the highest ability score maximums. No ability scores are adjusted for classed characters based on sex.

Reasoning

The only interactions we have found with these rules are the *girdle of femininity/masculinity*, UA cleric and magic-user level limits for dark elves, and a few other minor cases²⁾. We don't feel these interactions make the sex-based ability score caps worth keeping because the gameplay they produce is only minorly interesting compared to the massive tradeoff of caps for players desiring to play a female character. AD&D is a game about pros and cons which produce interesting, meaningful decisions. With BTB sex-based ability score caps, the decision to play a female character is just basically the wrong decision.

Finally, the PHB's preface nearly suggests that the inclusion of the ability score limitations by sex should have been removed before publication. PHB 6 reads:

You will find no pretentious dictums herein, no baseless limits arbitrarily placed on female strength

or male charisma, no ponderous combat systems for greater “realism”, there isn’t a hint of a spell point system whose record keeping would warm the heart of a monomaniacal statistics lover, or anything else of the sort.

PHB 15 goes on to place limits on female strength, but no limits on male charisma. Seems whacked out to us.

It could be well argued that the author felt the female strength limit was not “baseless” or “arbitrary”, but in the end, there is no downside for men and AD&D is about upsides and downsides, so we throw the rule out.

1)

DMG 7-8.

2)

Mostly UA racial and nonhuman deity stuff.

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