

DIM FOREST TERRAIN

Description:

The dim is an impenetrable view from the outside, as the new growth clambers towards the sun. There are bushes, vines, brambles and the young trees fighting a vigorous battle for survival. As one hacks into the undergrowth they will notice that the undergrowth will lessen and the vines grow larger till they push through to the Dim proper.

The darkness will close behind them as they continue into the dim. There the huge trunks of the trees can be seen scattered in the dim light for those whose eyesight allows them to see. The massive vines work their way up tree trunks that a man could not even wrap his arms around. There are sounds of animals, though most come from above.

The Dim Forest terrain can be divided into three categories:

Edge of the forest: this is where the new growth, the vines the brush the brambles grow without the great trees over taking them, though smaller trees are present. This is typically the first 15' into the forest, however it can be shorter or wider in many places.

The twilight of the forest: The trees are beginning to mature. The underbrush is still present is starting to die off. The vines now typically grow up to the canopy for survival. This is typically the 15' to 30' into the forest, though distance can vary, especially where loggers are present.

The Dim: The undergrowth is almost nonexistent due to the lack of light. However, those vines that have grown since it was the edge, still grow up to the canopy and there are lowlight plants and fungi that live in the Dim. This is the remainder, however, there maybe interruptions due to fallen trees, druid groves, forest fires, clear cutting or many other unnamed reasons.

The table below describes in general terms how likely it is that a given square has a terrain element in it.

Dim Forest Terrain Features

	Edge Distance		
	0-15'	15-30'	Inside
Typical trees	30%	20%	10%
Massive trees	—	10%	20%
Light undergrowth	30%	30%	5%
Heavy undergrowth	40%	10%	0%

Trees: The most important terrain element in a forest is the trees, obviously. A creature standing in the same square as a Typical tree or adjacent to a Massive tree gains a +2 bonus to Armor Class and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves (these bonuses don't stack with cover bonuses from other sources). The presence of a tree doesn't otherwise affect a creature's fighting space, because it's assumed that the creature is using the tree to its advantage when it can. The trunk of a typical tree has AC 4, hardness 5, and 150 hp. A DC 15 Climb check is sufficient to climb a tree. Medium and dense forests have massive trees as well. These trees take up an entire square and provide cover to anyone behind them. They have AC 3, hardness 5, and 600 hp. Like their smaller counterparts, it takes a DC 15 Climb check to climb them.

Undergrowth: A space covered with light undergrowth costs 2 squares of movement to move into, and it provides concealment. Undergrowth increases the DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks by 2 because the leaves and branches get in the way. Heavy undergrowth costs 4 squares of movement to move into, and it provides concealment with a 30% miss chance (instead of the usual 20%). It increases the DC of Tumble and Move Silently checks by 5. Heavy undergrowth is easy to hide in, granting a +5 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. Running and charging are impossible. Squares with undergrowth are often clustered together. Undergrowth and trees aren't mutually exclusive; it's common for a 5-foot square to have both a tree and undergrowth.

Forest Canopy: The Dim Forest Canopy is typically between 50' to 90' in height. There are exceptions of course, typically in places commonly housing elven communities. It's common for elves and other forest dwellers to live on raised platforms far above the surface floor. These wooden platforms

generally have rope bridges between them. To get to the treehouses, characters generally ascend the trees' branches (Climb DC 15), use vines (Climb DC 10), use rope ladders (Climb DC 0), or take pulley elevators (which can be made to rise a number of feet equal to a Strength check, made each round as a full-round action). Creatures on platforms or branches in a forest canopy are considered to have cover (+2 bonus to Armor Class and a +1 bonus on Reflex saves) when fighting creatures on the ground, and in medium or dense forests they have concealment (20%) as well. (These bonuses don't stack with cover or concealment bonuses from other sources). Movement in treehouses and platforms is normal. Movement through the Canopy that does not contain built structures is half movement with a climb check of DC 10, unless they have a climb speed.

Forrest Floor Movement:

Once a character has moved into the Dim, movement is typically not restricted. There are the large trunks that take up a 5' square that have to be negotiated around. Also, in the rare areas that have undergrowth, those movement restrictions still apply.

Running and Charging are allowed if there is more than 10 ft of unobstructed movement for the characters in a straight line.

Other Forest Terrain Elements: Fallen logs generally stand about 3 feet high and provide cover just as low walls do. They cost 5 feet of movement to cross. Forest streams are generally 5 to 10 feet wide and no more than 5 feet deep. Pathways wind through most forests, allowing normal movement and providing neither cover nor concealment. These paths are less common in dense forests, but even unexplored forests will have occasional game trails.

Stealth and Detection in the Dim Forest: In a dense forest it is 2d6x10 feet.

Because any square with undergrowth provides concealment, it's usually easy for a creature to use the Hide skill in the forest canopy. Logs and massive trees provide cover, which also makes hiding possible.

The background noise in the forest makes Listen checks more difficult, increasing the DC of the check by 2 per 10 feet, not 1 (but note that Move Silently is also more difficult in undergrowth by 2 instead of 1).

Light in the Dim

The light in the Dim is greatly reduced due to the canopy of leaves that block the sun. Also the Dim has been shaped by Elven magic over the centuries, making lowlight vision the best to have while within its borders. Therefore, at its brightest, the Dim Forrest requires lowlight vision in order to see without light sources Beyond 30'. From 30' to 60' is considered 20% concealment penalty. The Dim during day is considered Moonlight light. As per the rules, this allows lowlight vision to see without restrictions during the day. Normal obstructions to sight will still prevent seeing, such as trees.

Darkvision functions at normal distance and in black and white. However, Darkvision creates a -5 circumstance bonus to survival checks while in the Dim Forest due to the loss of color. A character may choose to switch between the two as a move action.

Twilight and Dark are the same in the Dim, Dark and normal restrictions on vision apply.

The Table below contains most light sources for easy reference.

Table: Light Sources and Illumination

Object	Bright	Shadowy	Duration
Candle	n/a ¹	5 ft.	1 hr.
Everburning torch	20 ft.	40 ft.	Permanent
Lamp, common	15 ft.	30 ft.	6 hr./pint
Lantern, bullseye ²	60-ft. cone	120-ft. cone	6 hr./pint
Lantern, hooded	30 ft.	60 ft.	6 hr./pint
Sunrod	30 ft.	60 ft.	6 hr.
Torch	20 ft.	40 ft.	1 hr.
Spell	Bright	Shadowy	Duration
<i>Continual flame</i>	20 ft.	40 ft.	Permanent
<i>Dancing lights</i> (torches)	20 ft. (each)	40 ft. (each)	1 min.
<i>Daylight</i>	60 ft.	120 ft.	30 min.
<i>Light</i>	20 ft.	40 ft.	10 min.

¹ A candle does not provide bright illumination, only shadowy illumination.

² A bullseye lantern illuminates a cone, not a radius.

Forest Fires (CR 6)

Most campfire sparks ignite nothing, but if conditions are dry, winds are strong, or the forest floor is dried out and flammable, a forest fire can result. Also, spells that can cause combustion, can also start a forest fire. Lightning strikes (or lightning bolts) often set trees afire and start forest fires in this way. Whatever the cause of the fire, travelers can get caught in the conflagration.

Forrest Fires take awhile to build in strength once the fire is lit. It will double in size every round till it takes up 64 squares (6 rounds if only a 5sq ft is initially lit.)

A forest fire can be spotted from as far away as 2d6x100 feet by a character who makes a Spot check, treating the fire as a Colossal creature (reducing the DC by 16). If all characters fail their Spot checks, the fire moves closer to them. They automatically see it when it closes to half the original distance.

Characters who are blinded or otherwise unable to make Spot checks can feel the heat of the fire (and thus automatically “spot” it) when it is 100 feet away.

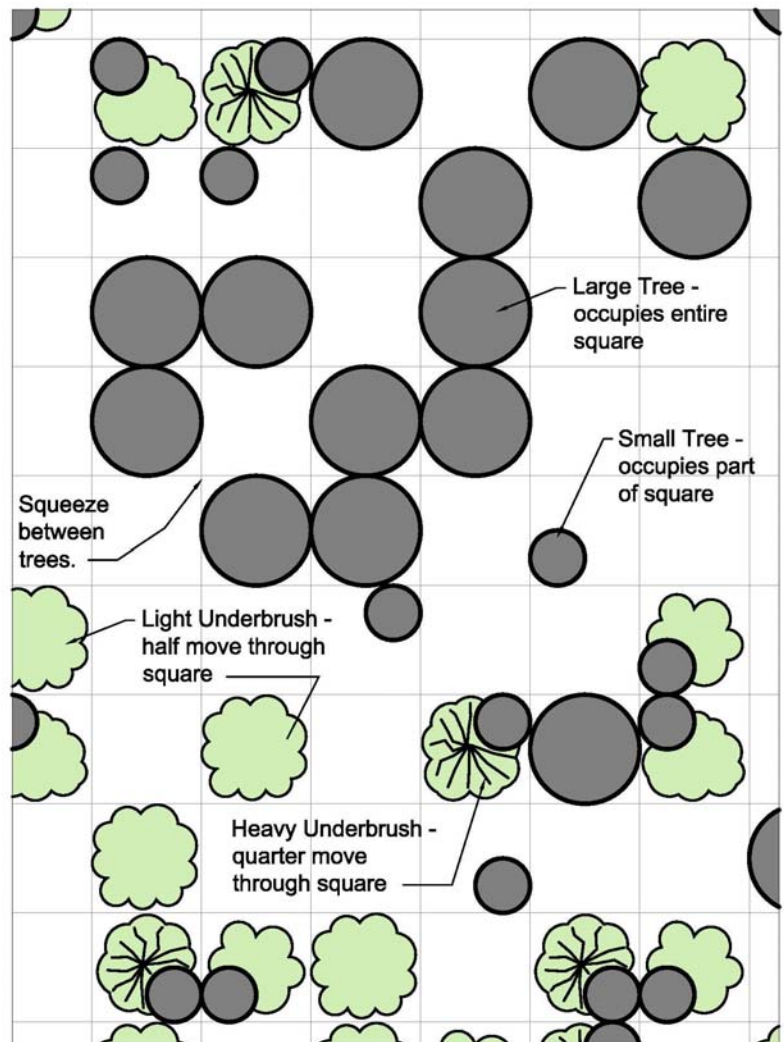
The leading edge of a fire (the downwind side) can advance faster than a human can run (assume 120 feet per round for winds of moderate strength. Halve or double for each wind category difference). Once a particular portion of the forest is ablaze, it remains so for 2d4x10 minutes before dying to a smoking smolder. Characters overtaken by a forest fire may find the leading edge of the fire advancing away from them faster than they can keep up, trapping them deeper and deeper in its grasp.

Within the bounds of a forest fire, a character faces three dangers: heat damage, catching on fire, and smoke inhalation.

Heat Damage: Getting caught within a forest fire is even worse than being exposed to extreme heat (see Heat Dangers). Breathing the air causes a character to take 1d6 points of damage per round (no save). In addition, a character must make a Fortitude save every 5 rounds (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of non-lethal damage. A character who holds his breath can avoid the lethal damage, but not the non-lethal damage. Those wearing heavy clothing or any sort of armor take a -4 penalty on their saving throws. In addition, those wearing metal armor or coming into contact with very hot metal are affected as if by a *heat metal* spell.

Catching on Fire: Characters engulfed in a forest fire are at risk of catching on fire when the leading edge of the fire overtakes them, and are then at risk once per minute thereafter (see Catching on Fire).

Smoke Inhalation: Forest fires naturally produce a great deal of smoke. A character who breathes heavy smoke must make a Fortitude save each round (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round choking and coughing. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of non-lethal damage. Also, smoke obscures vision, providing concealment to characters within it.



A map of a forest floor with a grid overlay. The map features numerous gray circles of varying sizes and green, cloud-like shapes. A text box in the top right corner reads "Map created by Jeff Orsborn". The gray circles are scattered across the grid, with some appearing in clusters. The green shapes are also scattered, with some appearing in clusters. The grid is composed of small squares. The overall layout is a top-down view of a forest floor.