

Fixing Trollskull Manor



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A Waterdeep: Dragon Heist DM's Supplement

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Maps by Hal Howard

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Introduction

Very early in the Waterdeep: Dragon Heist adventure, the characters take possession of a dilapidated and haunted building known as Trollskull Manor and Tavern. The concept of having a home base for the characters in a Waterdeep is fantastic and the fact that they have to work to make it home is even better.

The book provides only the roughest outline of the cost of repairing the building and getting the tavern operational. It's also vague on the details for how to win Lif, the resident ghost over.

In this short supplement, I will provide a few notes that expand on those ideas.

Let me start by explaining the title 'Fixing Trollskull Manor' has two meanings for me. The first is the in world meaning of completing the task of restoring the building and getting the tavern operational. The second is around fixing the architectural flaws in the building map provided in the book.

If you are looking for more comprehensive expansion of Trollskull Alley, then please consider our bestselling supplement [Residents of Trollskull Alley](#) which also include a full set of maps.

If you are looking for a set of full color, architecturally sound maps including rundown, repaired, and fully furnished versions, plus a few notes on repairing and operating the tavern, then you are in the right place and should buy this supplement.

Getting the Tavern Operational

The book suggests the total cost of getting the tavern operational as 1000 gp + 250 gp for various guild fees for both the repairs and getting the tavern operational. It also recommends a time frame of 12 days to complete the repairs.

Let's stick with that total and timeframe for getting the baseline Class I Tavern operational. Expenses are broken into three categories: repairing the building, furnishing the tavern, and staffing and supplies.

Repairing the Building

Costs breakdown as

- 600 gp in building repairs
- 150 gp in guild fees associated with building repairs

Living in the building prior to completing these repairs is hazardous and against city ordinance. If caught, characters could pay fines of 10 gp each for living in a condemned space. Repairs take 10 days.

Furnishing the Tavern

Costs breakdown as follows:

- 200 gp for furniture
- 100 gp for kitchen and bar equipment
- 100 gp for guild certification to operate

Furniture and equipment deliveries, plus guild inspections take 2 days.

Staffing and Supplies

Finally, a minimum of 100 gp is needed to hire and train staff and buy the consumable inventory (food, wine, beer, etc.). Paying the staff and replenishing supplies after opening is included in the operating costs.

Upgrading the Tavern

As noted above, the initial costs cover getting a Class I Tavern operational. The neighbor can support a much posher clientele should the characters choose to invest in upgrading. The tavern is in the North Ward after all and it's surrounded by upper class housing and other businesses the serve the upper crust.

Each upgrade raises the operational cost as well as the potential profits and losses. Cost to upgrade from the prior level, operating costs per tenday, and improvement to chances of success are listed here.

Tavern Class Table

Class	Upgrade Cost	Operating Cost per Tenday	Success Bonus
I	-	60 gp	0
II	200 gp	90 gp	+5
III	300 gp	120 gp	+10
IV	400 gp	150 gp	+15
V	500 gp	200 gp	+15

The tavern can only be upgraded one class each tenday, no matter how much money is spent.

Example: Upgrading the tavern from Class I to Class III would cost a total of 500 gp and take 2 tendays. The business can operate during the upgrade period. During the first tenday of the upgrade process it would still operate at Class I and have a cost basis of 60 gp. During the second tenday it would operate at Class II and have a cost basis of 90 gp. Thereafter, it would operate at Class III and have a cost basis of 120 gp.

Running the Tavern

Rather than using the table in the DMG which does not scale with the size of the business, use the Business Results Table with the operating cost basis per tenday and success modifier from the Tavern Class Table above.

Advertising imparts a bonus of +1 per gp spent each tenday up to a maximum bonus of +15.

Business Results Table

D100 Results for the Tenday

01-10 Loss of 150% of operating cost basis

11-20 Loss of 100% of operating cost basis

21-30 Loss of 50% of operating cost basis

31-40 Loss of 25% of operating cost basis

41-45 Loss of 10% of operating cost basis

46-55 Breakeven

56-65 Gain of 10% of operating cost basis

66-75 Gain of 25% of operating cost basis

76-85 Gain of 50% of operating cost basis

86-95 Gain of 100% of operating cost basis

96+ Gain of 150% of operating cost basis

The way the math of the table works is such that the Class I version of Trollskull Tavern with no advertising would slowly go broke. Spending 5 gp push you closer to break even.

The only way to make money reliably is to upgrade the tavern to increase the success chances and to raise the cost basis enough that advertising money is well spent. For example, upgrading the tavern to Class III adds a success bonus of +10, combining that with 10 gp per tenday in advertising spend would give a total bonus of +20. This eliminates the chances of a catastrophic loss (greater than 100%) and raises the average result to 70.5 for a average gain of 25% on a cost basis of 120 gp (Class III) yielding an average profit of 30 gp per tenday offsetting the advertising cost and yielding a steady profit.

Fame Modifiers

If the characters do something that raising their fame, it can and should have a beneficial effect on their business, but fame is fleeting, so it won't last forever. If it becomes public knowledge that they did something great then assign a bonus of as much as +25 to their running the business roll for the next two tendays and then reduce it by 5 each tenday thereafter until the bonus is eliminated or some your event, good or bad, changes the circumstances.

On the downside, if they do something that casts them in a bad light in minds of the local residents, assign a penalty of up to -25. Infamy doesn't fade as easily as fame, so to eliminate this sort of penalty require that they spend 100 gp in charitable works each tenday to reduce the penalty by 5.

For course doing something fabulous could wipe the slate clean provide a bonus. In general, I would not stack fame bonuses. The group is either famous or infamous, its difficult to be both at once.

Additional Businesses

Trollskull Manor is a big building, so it clearly possible that the group could operate additional businesses in the building. The most obvious would be converting the second floor into an Inn. The large common room and side rooms presented could easily accommodate such a venture while the group used the third floor and attic as a home base. They could also choose to live elsewhere and use all the upper floors as an Inn.

If they do decide to operate an additional business then treat each one separately in terms of rolling it's tenday results, advertising spend, cost basis, etc. Just make logic choices about how much revenue you believe that business would earn on average in a tenday, use that as the cost basis and follow the same principles that are outlined for running the tavern.

Furnishing the Upper Levels

The renovation and improvement cost here should absolutely not include the costs associated with furnishing the upper levels of the building. Those rooms could be furnished at a basic level for as little as 10 gp per room or a character could spent 1000 gp plus on furnishing and appointments for their personal space.

Trollskull Manor: Rundown Version



Trollskull Manor – Restored Version



Trollskull Manor – Furnished Version

