

MONSTERS' GUIDE TO COMBAT ENCOUNTERS

*For Dungeon of the Mad Mage
Level 3: Sargauth Level*

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About this Guide

Combat is one of three main pillars of the game, apart from exploration and interaction. And it takes a lot of time to prepare and run good combat encounter. The goal of this guide is to help DMs who are running Waterdeep: Dungeon of the Mad Mage adventure to get better understanding how to run combat encounters, how to make them coherent, memorable and fun!

Preparation process divided into 3 steps:

1. Determining Encounter Difficulty.
2. Determining Surprise.
3. Determining Creatures' Tactics.

First step will give you general understanding about how difficult combat encounter could be for your player characters. Each level of WDMM is designed for PCs of particular level. I use a guideline from Encounter Building section in Xanathar's Guide to Everything (XGE, p. 88) to evaluate how many PCs of corresponding level should be in the party to overcome the encounter. Math is simple. If you have the same number of PCs – it is good fight. If you have more PCs (2/3 of number of PCs is needed) – they will pass it with ease, but it still be challenging. If you have less PCs (3/2 of number of PCs is needed) – encounter will be hard, but still winnable. Also, I put notes about combat difficulty, which I think is important. Depending on this information you can adjust the encounter for your group, skip it entirely or think about possible defeat consequences.

Second step is always up to DM, so you should be prepared in advance. General guidance is written in Player's Handbook (PHB, p. 189). Basically, you should determine who is surprised when the first round of combat begins. To do so, you should know answers for these questions:

Are creatures trying to hide? They roll Stealth.

Are they successful? Compare results to PC's Passive Perception score.

Are PCs trying to hide? They roll Stealth.

Are they successful? Compare results to creatures' Passive Perception score.

Based on the results you will understand who will take actions in the first round of combat and who will not. I also put my notes for the encounters when circumstances may differ from the standard procedure.

Third step will help you to understand how to use creatures in combat. Where should they stand? What course of action will be most efficient and logical depending on the lore? Who do they need to attack? Will they fight to the death? Will they flee or surrender? I also put more detailed explanation on how some creature's abilities and traits work.

Abbreviations and Font Styles

The following abbreviations are used throughout this guide:

PHB = Player's Handbook

MM = Monster Manual

DMG = Dungeon Master's Guide

SCAG = Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide

XGE = Xanathar's Guide to Everything

VGTM = Volo's Guide to Monsters

MTOF = Mordenkainen's Tome of Foes

WDMM = Waterdeep: Dungeon of the Mad Mage

WDH = Waterdeep: Dragon Heist

PC(s) = Player Character(s)

AC = Armor Class

DC = Difficulty Class

CR = Challenge Rating

hp = hit points

gp = gold piece(s)

AoE = Area of Effect

RAW = Rules as Written

The following font styles are used throughout this guide:

Bold style is used for the creatures' names

Italic style is used for the Spells.

Bold Italic style is used for the Abilities and Traits.

Level 3: Sargauth Level

This level is designed for four 7th level PCs. If you have more than four PCs, you can add more creatures to make combat encounters more challenging. If you have less PCs, then you can decrease the number of creatures in combat or use less optimal tactics. All creatures in Encounter Difficulty section are compared to 7th level PCs.

Area 3

Encounter Difficulty

3 **Gricks** (CR 2, MM, p. 173) = 3 PCs

Note. This is easy encounter and you can skip it to save some time.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise. Thanks to **Stone Camouflage** trait, the **Gricks** have advantage on Stealth rolls.

Creatures' Tactics

According to MM, gricks are passive predators who usually hide in stone environment and wait for the prey. They won't communicate, surrender or take captives, but they can try to flee.

The **Gricks** don't work together and attack nearest PC. If several creatures are at the same range, you can roll a die to determine random target.

Note that, **Beak** attack is only available if the **Grick** hits with **Tentacles** attack. Don't forget about their resistance to non-magical weapons.

Area 4a

Encounter Difficulty

3 **Quaggoths** (CR 2, MM, p. 256) = 3 PCs

Note. One of **Quaggoths** tries to flee to [Area 5a](#), so encounter will be easier. Take a look to Overrun optional action (DMG, p. 272) to move through PCs' spaces in narrow tunnel.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

According to MM, quaggoths are savage and brutal creatures. They often serve as slaves of the drow and historically hate surface elves. You can make quaggoths focus on elf or half-elf PCs. Quaggoths can communicate in Undercommon, flee, surrender or take captives.

Use **Multiattack** against less-armored PCs. The **Quaggoths** have trained Athletics skill, so you can try to Shove PC (PHB, p. 195) to get Advantage. Don't forget about **Wounded Fury**, it activates when the **Quaggoth** has 10 hp or fewer.

WDMM suggests that at 2nd round of combat the clamor attracts **Phase Spiders** from [Area 4b](#). They can move via Ethereal Plane, ignoring walls, so it will take 2 rounds for them to reach this area. See [Area 4b](#) for **Spiders'** tactics.

Area 4b

Encounter Difficulty

4 **Phase Spiders** (CR 3, MM, p. 334) = 4 PCs

Surprise

The **Spiders** attack from Ethereal Plane, so they can easily surprise PCs if they don't use *See Invisibility* spell or similar ability.

Follow the standard procedure to determine if PCs can surprise these creatures.

Creatures' Tactics

Phase Spiders have pretty high Intelligence score comparing to regular spiders, but they are still monsters. They can't negotiate or surrender but can flee. They don't take captives, but they can preserve paralyzed PCs in web cocoons before they eat them.

Make the **Phase Spiders** emerge from Ethereal Plane next to PC using **Ethereal Jaunt** as Bonus

Action. Use **Bite** to attack. In the next round use **Bite** once again and then **Ethereal Jaunt** to avoid PCs attacks. It is up to DM if the **Phase Spiders** can focus-fire less armored PCs or avoid attacking dwarves, who are resistant to poison.

Area 5a

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Drow Mage** (CR 7, MM, p. 129) = 5 PCs

4 **Quaggoths** (CR 2, MM, p. 256) = 4 PCs

Note. The **Drow Mage** is present only if any of **Quaggoths** managed to reach this area from [Area 4a](#).

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

According to MM and MTOF, drow are selfish, cruel and treacherous creatures, who believe in their supremacy to all others. They especially hate surface elves, so you can focus on elf or half-elf PCs in combat. Drow are intelligent enough to negotiate, flee, surrender or take captives.

See [Area 4a](#) for the information about quaggoths.

The **Drow Mage** and the **Quaggoths** have a poisonous synergy. Put the **Drow Mage** to south-west corner of the room and make him cast **Cloudkill**, targeting all area except his own space. **Quaggoths** are immune to poison damage, so the spell won't harm them. Make **Quaggoths** Grapple PCs inside the spell's AoE or drag them inside if necessary (see Grappling, PHB, p. 195). By RAW Blinded condition doesn't affect ability checks and the **Quaggoths** have solid +5 bonus to Athletics. Next round use Grapple if PC breaks free, or Shove if he or she didn't. Grappled and Prone PC can't stand up until escapes Grapple.

Assume that the **Drow Mage** pre-casted **Mage Armor**. Don't forget to use **Shield** against attacks.

Try to summon **Shadow Demon** next round, it is also immune to Poison damage. **Demon** can't see

in **Cloudkill** AoE, but since there is no lighting, it can Hide as Bonus action to cancel Disadvantage using **Shadow Stealth**.

Don't hesitate to use **Lightning Bolt** if you can target several PCs even if **Quaggoths** are in AoE.

Area 5b

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Giant Spider** (CR 1, MM, p. 328) = 1 PC

4 **Troglodytes** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 290) = 1 PC

Note. The **Troglodytes** flee if they hear sounds of battle. The book suggest that they flee to [Area 6](#), but the door is closed, and it is up to DM if they know how to open it, and if they have any gems. Maybe, there is a typo and they should flee to [Area 5c](#) instead.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Spiders are beasts, so they can communicate with PC under effect of **Speak with Animals** spell or similar ability. They won't surrender or take captives, but they can flee.

Troglodytes are savage and degenerate creatures. They can communicate in their own language, so PCs under effect of **Tongues** spell or some other magic can try to negotiate. Troglodytes adore manufactured weapons and armor. They can flee, surrender or take captives.

The **Spider** probably won't live long enough to harm 7th level PCs. Use **Web** against PCs within reach. Restrained condition (PHB, p. 292) grants Advantage to **Bite** attacks.

The **Troglodytes** are going to flee, but if you make them fight, use **Multiattack** against less-armored PCs. When PCs start turn next to the **Troglodyte**, they must make Constitution save or become poisoned.

Area 5c

Encounter Difficulty

6 **Grimlocks** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 175) = 1 PC

3 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128, with changes) = 1 PC

Note. The **Grimlocks** are blind so it is up to DM how would they recognize that PCs are not their masters. The **Drow** have only 8 hp each and can't escape their cells.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise. Note that the **Grimlocks** have Keen Hearing and Smell trait which grants them +5 to Passive Perception score (see Passive Checks, PHB, p. 175).

Creatures' Tactics

Grimlocks are degenerate blind cannibals who were human long time ago. They can negotiate in Undercommon, flee, surrender or take captives to eat them later.

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow.

Use **Grimlocks' Spiked Bone Club** against nearest PCs.

The **Drow's Hand Crossbow** attacks suffer Disadvantage, if target is out of 30 ft. distance. Make the first **Drow** cast *Faerie Fire*, so others will be able to focus on affected target if any. If no PCs failed their save, you can make second or third **Drow** cast this spell again.

Area 5d

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Mage** (CR 6, MM, p. 347, with changes) = 4 PCs

Note. This **Mage** has no arcane focus and can't use spells with material (M) component so combat would be easier.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

As intelligent creature Marta can negotiate, flee, surrender or take captives.

The **Mage** can't cast *Cone of Cold*, *Ice Storm*, *Fly*, *Fireball*, *Suggestion*, *Mage Armor* and *Light*. If fight occurs, it is better for her to cast *Greater Invisibility* and try to flee, using *Misty Step* for additional speed and *Counterspell* or *Shield* for additional defense. It is up to DM if she has pre-casted *Mage Armor*.

Area 6

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Drow Priestess of Lolth** (CR 8, MM, p. 129) = 6 PCs

3 **Giant Spiders** (CR 1, MM, p. 328) = 1 PC

4 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128) = 1 PC

Note. If **Drow Mage** wasn't encountered at [Area 5a](#) he is there also.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow. Female drow always have higher position in drow society than men, and priestesses have the highest influential power.

In the first round of combat you can use following tactics which synergizes abilities of these creatures. Make the **Drow Priestess** cast *Insect Plague* targeting as many PCs as she can. Make **Giant Spiders** try to restrain PCs inside spell's AoE using *Web*. Make the **Drow** try to poison PCs inside spell's AoE using *Hand Crossbow* attacks. Don't forget that if PC fails save against poison for 5 or more, he or she falls Unconscious. If **Drow Mage** is present, make him try to restrain PCs inside the spell AoE casting *Evard's Black Tentacles*.

On the next round **Drow Priestess** tries to summon **Yochlol**. After that, use *Scourge* and

heal allies casting *Mass Cure Wounds* or upcasted *Cure Wounds* if necessary.

The **Yochlol** is very dangerous creature. Don't waste its action on *Dominate Person*, because dominated 7th level PC is much weaker than CR 10 **Yochlol**. Use **Multiattack** against PCs who attack the **Priestess**. Once she is dead, the **Yochlol** disappears.

If **Drow Mage** is present, make him keep the distance and cast *Lightning Bolt* spells using higher level spell slots available. Use his Reaction for the *Counterspell* or *Shield* spells depending on situation.

Put the **Giant Spiders** to the frontline and attack PCs using **Bite**, only if **Web** is not available. Their goal is to disable PCs, not to deal damage.

Make one or two **Drow** cast *Faerie Fire* on several PCs to grant Advantage to other allies. Restrained PCs have Disadvantage on Dexterity saves. Use **Hand Crossbow** attacks until PCs engage in melee.

Area 7c

Encounter Difficulty

4 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128) = 1 PC

Note. Fight in this area will alert creatures at [Area 7d](#) and [Area 7e](#).

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow.

See [Area 6](#) for **Drow's** tactics in combat.

Area 7d

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Drow Elite Warrior** (CR 5, MM, p. 128) = 3 PCs

1 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128) = 1 PC

Note. Fight in [Area 7c](#) will alert these creatures. It will take 1 round for **Drow Elite Warrior** to free the **Drow** and reach [Area 7c](#). The **Drow** won't have 5 minutes to don his chainshirt, so his AC is 12.

Surprise

If these creatures weren't alerted, follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

If these creatures are alerted by sound of battle, make them roll initiative once they hear it. As a DM you can rule that these creatures are surprised.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow.

The **Drow Elite Warrior** is dangerous opponent. Don't waste her action of *Faerie Fire*, let regular **Drow** cast this spell. Use **Multiattack** against less-armored PC, or PC under effect of *Faerie Fire*. All drow should be aware of dwarven resistance to poison and can avoid attacking them.

See [Area 6](#) for **Drow's** tactics in combat.

Area 7e

Encounter Difficulty

2 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128) = 1 PC

Note. Fight in [Area 7c](#) will alert these creatures. It will take 1 round for Ghirith to free Pellanonia and reach [Area 7c](#). Pellanonia won't have 5 minutes to don her Chainshirt, so her AC is 12. As a DM you can decide that she won't join the fight.

Surprise

If these creatures weren't alerted, follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

If these creatures are alerted by sound of battle, make them roll initiative once they hear it. As a DM you can rule that these creatures are surprised.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow.

See [Area 6](#) for **Drow's** tactics in combat.

Area 8b

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Driders** (CR 6, MM, p. 120) = 4 PC

Note. *Silence* spell casted on the **Driders** can stop the fight. Otherwise it will fight to the death because of madness.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

According to the lore, all driders once were promising drow summoned by Lolth to Demonweb Pits for test of faith and strength. They failed the test and were transformed by her to half-spider creatures. They were exiled from drow society to live lonely and miserable life in Underdark. Driders are intelligent and they can negotiate, surrender, flee or take captives.

Spider Climb trait allows the **Driders** to climb on the ceiling and attack with **Longbow** far from melee reach. It is intelligent enough to focus on less-armored targets with good ranged attacks. Don't waste its action on spells.

This particular **Driders** is mad and you can make it rush into melee and attack with **Longsword**.

Area 9b

Encounter Difficulty

2 **Barlguras** (CR 5, MM, p. 56) = 6 PCs

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

According to the lore, demons are the embodiment of chaos and evil existing only to destroy. They can't truly die on the Material Plane, so they don't surrender or flee. They can communicate via **Telepathy** or in Abyssal language. They don't take captives and show no mercy to fallen enemies.

WDMM suggests that the **Barlguras** pre-cast *Invisibility* before the fight. It will allow them to wait until they reach PCs in melee and surprise them with sudden attack.

Don't waste **Barlgura's** actions on spells in combat. Use **Reckless** at the start of **Barlgura's** turn and **Multiattack** nearest or less-armored PCs. Assume, that the **Barlguras** are able to distinguish plate armor from studded leather, but it is up to DM if they care. You can use **Running Leap** to jump over the front-rank high-AC PCs to find more vulnerable target.

Area 10b

Encounter Difficulty

10 **Grimlocks** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 175) = 1 PC

Note. These creatures fight only in self-defense.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 5c](#).

Area 10c

Encounter Difficulty

3 **Sea Hags** (CR 4, MM, p. 179, see "Hag Covens") = 6 PCs

3 **Giant Crabs** (CR 1/8, MM, p. 324) = 1 PC

Note. These creatures are not going to attack the party without a reason.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Sea hags are evil fey creatures. They are cruel, old and think that they are smarter than any other mortal creature. Hags are making sinister bargains with those who seek their aid. They prefer to attack only when they are overwhelmingly stronger than their opponents, or if they have some unfair advantage. Sea hags especially hates beauty, so you can make them focus on PCs with high Charisma score. As intelligent creatures the hags can negotiate, flee, surrender or take captives.

Giant crabs are beasts, so they can communicate with PC under effect of *Speak with Animals* spell or similar ability. They won't surrender but they can flee.

In order to use coven spells, the **Hags** must be within 30 ft. of each other and all three of them should be alive.

Death Glare is the most powerful attack the **Sea Hags** have. It only works against Frightened opponent, so use it right after other traits, attacks and spells that inflict Frightened condition (PHB, p. 291). Use Bonus Action to end effect of **Illusory Appearance** which will activate **Horrific Appearance** trait. *Eyebite* spell with Panicked effect and *Phantasmal Killer* spell also works.

Don't forget to use *Counterspell* against PCs' spells.

The **Hags** choose which PC the **Giant Crab** should attack. The **Crabs** won't be able to kill 7th level PC, so it is better to Grapple as many of them as possible with **Claw** attacks.

Area 11b

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Dridr** (CR 6, MM, p. 120, see "Dridr Spellcasting") = 4 PCs

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 8b](#) for the information about driders. Since this **Dridr** is divine spellcaster, you can assume that it was priestess of Lolth once, because male drow can never become a priest.

Spider Climb trait allows the **Dridr** to climb on the ceiling and attack with **Longbow** far from melee reach. It is intelligent enough to focus on less-armored targets.

Make the **Dridr** pre-cast *Freedom of Movement* before the fight, if there is a chance.

Use Action for **Multiattack** with **Longbow** and use Bonus Action to cast *Sanctuary* after that every turn. Don't waste its actions on other spells, because most of them are dependent on Concentration which will be hard to keep against multiple PCs' attacks.

Area 12

Encounter Difficulty

3 **Ghosts** (CR 4, MM, p. 147) = 6 PCs

Note. These creatures are not going to attack the party without reason.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Ghosts are the souls of once-living creatures who want to complete some important unresolved task even after their death. They are not inherently evil, so they can negotiate, flee or surrender.

Possession is the most powerful attack the **Ghosts** have. 7th level PCs most probably don't have access to *Dispel Evil and Good* spell and, if there is no Cleric or Paladin with **Turn Undead** in

the party, the only way to end **Possession** is to beat possessed party member to 0 hp. The **Ghost** inside PC's body don't add Proficiency Bonus to attacks and can't use Class Features or cast spells, so it is better to possess weapon dependent PCs.

You can use **Withering Touch** and **Incorporeal Movement** in conjunction. Let the **Ghost** attack PC and move underground right after that. PCs won't be able to attack the **Ghost** during their turn and it will take only 1d10 force damage.

Use **Etherealness** if you decide that it is time to flee. At 7th level PCs can do nothing to the creatures in Ethereal Plane (DMG, p. 48).

Horriifying Visage doesn't look like very effective attack, but it can bring some roleplay opportunities.

Area 13b

Encounter Difficulty

4 **Minotaur Skeletons** (CR 2, MM, p. 273) = four 7th level PCs

or

7 **Shadows** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 269) = less than two 7th level PCs

or

4 **Will-o-Wisps** (CR 2, MM, p. 301) = four 7th level PCs

Note. These random encounters may take place, if PCs killed tiefling skeleton and got its gondola.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Skeletons are driven by necromantic energy that compels them to kill living creatures. They won't negotiate, flee, surrender or take captives.

The **Minotaur Skeletons** most probably won't have enough space to use **Charge**, so use **Greataxe** against nearest PCs. The gondola can hold up to seven medium creatures and it is up to

DM what consequences will face the party if the **Minotaurs** climb on it. You can also make them attack the gondola.

Shadows feed on living creature's vitality. They prefer to attack good creatures, so you can make them focus on good aligned PCs. Shadows can't negotiate or surrender, but they can flee.

If the party don't use light source, make the **Shadow** use **Shadow Stealth** as Bonus Action before **Strength Drain** attack. It is optimal to focus-fire PCs one by one, but it is very dangerous for PCs with low Strength score.

Will-o'-wisps are the souls of evil creatures. They feed on despair and fear. According to MM, they rarely speak, and they are intelligent enough to flee. They won't take captives or surrender.

Use **Invisibility** before the fight. **Will-o'-Wisps** have +9 to Dexterity (Stealth) checks so they can surprise the party. Use **Shock** as an Action, and if PC is down, use **Consume Life** as a Bonus Action. You can make **Will-o'-wisps** use **Incorporeal Movement** to move through the gondola to hide from PCs' attacks underwater.

Area 14c

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Big Xorn** (CR 8, MM, p. 304, with changes) = 6 PCs

Surprise

The **Xorn** is sleeping so it won't surprise PCs.

Follow the standard procedure to determine if PCs can surprise the **Xorn**. Note that, at the first round of combat encounter surprised **Xorn** can still be asleep (at least until its first turn starts, but it is up to DM) which means that it is Unconscious (PHB, p. 272). All attacks will have Advantage and all hits from 5 ft. become Critical hits. Also, the **Xorn** will fail all Strength and Dexterity saves automatically.

Creatures' Tactics

Xorn are bizarre creatures native to Elemental Plane of Earth. They find precious metals and gems by scent and eat it. They are not inherently evil and can negotiate in Primordial (Terran), flee or surrender. Xorn are unable to consume organic material so they don't have reasons to take captives or finish off fallen PCs.

According to WDMM, the **Big Xorn** came to this room by its own will. Its **Borrow** speed and **Earth Glide** don't allow to move through worked stone and it can't enter via doors. Assume that some parts of the walls or the floor in this area are broken.

Treasure Sense allows the **Xorn** to pinpoint precious metals or gems. You can make it use **Multiattack** against PCs with largest amount of money.

Area 16a

Encounter Difficulty

2 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128) = 1 PC

Note. Fight in this area alerts creatures from [Area 16b](#).

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow.

See [Area 6](#) for **Drow's** tactics in combat.

Area 16b

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Drow Elite Warrior** (CR 5, MM, p. 128) = 3 PCs

2 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128) = 1 PC

Note. Fight in this area alerts creatures from [Area 16a](#).

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow.

See [Area 7d](#) for **Drow Elite Warrior's** tactics.

See [Area 6](#) for **Drow's** tactics in combat.

Area 17a

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Hobgoblin Captain** (CR 3, MM, p. 186) = 1 PC

11 **Hobgoblins** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 186) = 2 PCs

Note. These creatures are not going to attack the party without reason.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Hobgoblins are the race of disciplined warriors with strong code of honor. Their society focused on conquest and war. According to VGTM, all goblinoids believe that their god Maglubiyet is the only true god. You can make hobgoblins focus on clerics and paladins in combat. Hobgoblins can negotiate and take captives but would prefer glorious death rather than flee or surrender.

The **Hobgoblin Captain** should start the combat with **Leadership**. On the next rounds make him use **Multiattack** with **Greatsword** against PC within 5 ft. of one of his allies with benefit of **Martial Advantage**.

The **Hobgoblin's Longbow** and **Longsword** attacks are identical, so you can put half of them to the frontline and make another half attack from the distance. **Martial Advantage** works with any weapon attacks, but when the **Hobgoblins** attack with **Longbow** their AC is 16.

Area 17b

Encounter Difficulty

6 **Bugbears** (CR 1, MM, p. 33) = 2 PCs

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Fight for bugbears is kind of religious service. They fight ferociously, they love the slaughter and retreat is a big shame for them, but still an option. They also can negotiate in Common and Goblin languages and take captives. Bugbears are goblinoids so they hate servants of other gods. You can make them focus on clerics and paladins in combat.

If you set up successful ambush, don't forget about **Bugbears' Surprise Attack** trait. Use *Morningstar* to attack less-armored PCs.

Area 17c

Encounter Difficulty

2 **Goblins** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 344) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Goblins are the race of small and tyrannical slavers. According to VGTM, all goblinoids believe that their god Maglubiyet is the only true god and they hate servants of other gods. You can make them focus on paladin or cleric PCs in combat. Goblins are able to negotiate in Common and Goblin, flee, surrender and take captives.

The best solution for the **Goblins** is flee and raise alarm.

If you want them fight, make the **Goblins** use their *Shortbow* attacks against less-armored PCs. Note that, without shields **Goblins' AC** is 13.

If you decide that there are some places where the **Goblins** can hide to get Advantage, they can do it as Bonus Action because of *Nimble Escape* trait. If PCs approach to melee range, use Disengage as Bonus Action to run away and attack with *Shortbow* after that.

Area 17d

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Beholder Zombie** (CR 5, MM, p. 316, with changes) = 3 PCs

3 **Gas Spores** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 138) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Zombies are mindless servants. They won't communicate, flee, surrender or take captives. They don't use any kind of tactics and attacks nearest PCs.

Gas spores are plants, so they won't flee, surrender or take captives. PC under effect of *Speak with Plants* spell can communicate with them.

According to WDMM the **Beholder Zombie** uses its action to move the **Gas Spores** closer to PCs. If there are no **Spores**, it uses random *Eye Ray* against random target within reach. Roll d4 to determine which ray it uses. Don't forget about *Undead Fortitude* if the **Beholder** gets killing blow.

The **Gas Spores' Death Burst** trait has deadly consequences. Don't forget to explain that PC became Poisoned (PHB, p. 291) after half of infection time is passed. *Lesser Restoration* spell or paladin's *Lay on Hands* class feature should help.

Area 17e

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Otyugh** (CR 5, MM, p. 248) = 3 PCs

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Otyugh eats and devours everything it can catch. Sometimes it works as garbage disposals for sentient creatures. Otyugh has its own language so PC can communicate with it under effect of *Tongues* spell or similar magic. It won't surrender or take captives but can flee.

The **Otyugh** has *Multiattack* which includes one *Bite* attack and two *Tentacle* attacks. *Tentacle* inflicts Grappled and Restrained conditions on hit, so it is better to use it first, and than use *Bite* with Advantage.

Tentacle Slam is interesting to describe but not very effective. Stunned condition (PHB, p. 292) grants Advantage to **Otyugh's** attacks and it already have it against Restrained PCs. Cancelling PCs' actions makes encounter longer. And it deals less damage than *Multiattack*.

Area 19

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Chimera** (CR 6, MM, p. 39) = 4 PCs

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

First chimeras were created by Prince of Demons named Demogorgon. According to MM, chimera can be placated with food and treasure, but it can't speak, and goat stubbornness compels it to fight to the death.

If the **Chimera** uses *Multiattack* it can replace *Bite* or *Horns* attack with *Fire Breath*. *Bite* deals a bit more damage than *Horns*, so it is better to replace *Horns* with it.

Note that, ceiling is only 15 ft. high, so even though the **Chimera** has fly speed, it won't be able to stay in the air out of melee reach because it is Large creature.

Area 20

Encounter Difficulty

9 **Giant Spiders** (CR 1, MM, p. 328) = 3 PCs

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 5b](#).

Area 20a

Encounter Difficulty

3 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

The best solution for these **Drow** is flee and raise alarm.

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow.

See [Area 6](#) for **Drow's** tactics in combat.

Area 20b

Encounter Difficulty

2 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

The best solution for these **Drow** is flee and raise alarm.

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow.

See [Area 6](#) for **Drow's** tactics in combat.

Area 20c

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Quaggoth Thonot** (CR 3, MM, p. 256, with changes) = 1 PC

3 **Quaggoths** (CR 2, MM, p. 256) = 2 PCs

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 4a](#) for the information about quaggoths.

Make the **Quaggoth Thonot** cast *Mirror Image* at the start of the combat. It is very effective defensive spell. Make it cast *Heat Metal* against PC wearing metal armor next round. Since PC can't drop armor, he or she will suffer Disadvantage to attacks and ability checks until the spell ends. Use Bonus Action on subsequent turns to deal additional damage with *Heat Metal* and use Action for **Multiattack**.

Area 20g

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Drow Elite Warrior** (CR 5, MM, p. 128) = 3 PCs

6 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow.

See [Area 7d](#) for **Drow Elite Warrior's** tactics.

See [Area 6](#) for **Drow's** tactics in combat.

Area 20i

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Drow** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 128) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

The best solution for this **Drow** is flee and raise alarm.

See [Area 5a](#) for some lore about drow.

See [Area 6](#) for **Drow's** tactics in combat.

Area 20k

Encounter Difficulty

3 **Grimlocks** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 175) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 5c](#).

Area 21a

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Oni** (CR 7, MM, p. 239) = 5 PCs

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Oni, also known as ogre mages, are cunning and cruel creatures. They can negotiate, flee, surrender or take captives. They covet magic items, so you can make them focus on PCs who have it.

Cone of Cold is very good AoE spell, especially in small areas with narrow passages and no place to hide. If combat occurs, make the **Oni** use this spell targeting as many PCs as possible.

Fly speed and *Glaive* attack with 10 ft. Reach allows the **Oni** to stay in the air out of melee reach and hit-and-run without getting opportunity attacks. The **Oni** is smart enough to focus on weakest targets and ignore melee dependent PCs.

According to WDMM the **Oni** meets PCs in hobgoblin form, which is Medium, so his *Glaive* attacks deals significantly less damage. It is better to use *Change Shape* before combat.

Use *Invisibility* and fly away if you want to make the **Oni** flee. Alternatively, you can decide that there are small passages in the ceiling which allow the **Oni** to flee under effect of *Gaseous Form* spell.

Area 21c

Encounter Difficulty

2 **Bugbears** (CR 1, MM, p. 33) = 1 PC

1 **Hobgoblin** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 186) = 1 PC

6 **Goblins** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 165) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17b](#) for the information about **Bugbears**.

See [Area 17a](#) for the information about **Hobgoblins**.

See [Area 17c](#) for the information about **Goblins**.

Area 21d

Encounter Difficulty

2 **Hobgoblins** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 186) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17a](#) for the information about **Hobgoblins**.

Area 21e

Encounter Difficulty

5 **Hobgoblins** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 186) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17a](#) for the information about **Hobgoblins**.

Area 21f

Encounter Difficulty

5 **Intellect Devourers** (CR 2, MM, p. 191) = 5 PCs

1 **Goblin Boss** (CR 1, MM, p. 166) = 1 PC

2 **Goblins** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 165) = 1 PC

Surprise

It is impossible for PCs to surprise these creatures because of **Intellect Devourer's Detect Sentience** ability.

Follow the standard procedure to determine if these creatures can surprise PCs.

Creatures' Tactics

There is not so much information about Intellect Devourer's tactics from the lore point of view. Apart of Monster Manual, you can find some additional information about this creature in published books (WDH, p. 212 and VGTM, p. 77) but there are no clues of how it fights. Intellect devourers have alien intelligence, so it is up to DM if they will negotiate, flee, surrender or take captives.

While inside the **Goblins** or the **Goblin Boss**, the **Intellect Devourer** can't use its own attacks. It teleports outside once the host is dead.

Intellect Devourer's Multiattack includes **Devour Intellect** action. From mechanical perspective it is represented just as Intellect saving throw and it is up to you how to describe this attack to your players. It may look as telepathic blast or some kind of hypnosis. **Devour Intellect** may inflict almost permanent Stunned condition (PHB, p. 292) because 7th level PCs usually don't have access to *Greater Restoration* spell. It is especially dangerous for PCs with low Intelligence score.

Stunned condition includes Incapacitated condition and allows the **Devourer** to use **Body Theft** next round, after successful **Devour Intellect**. If PC will die because of **Body Thief** ability *Revivify* and even *Raise Dead* spells will not work, since they don't restore any missing body parts. The easiest way to bring PC back to life is *Resurrection* spell which is available for bards and clerics at level 13 earliest. Note, that **Body Theft** can be performed even in one round, if several **Devourers** focus on one target.

Goblin Boss fights better in melee, because of **Multiattack**.

Nimble Escape trait allows using Disengage as Bonus action, so you can make the **Goblin Bosses** focus on less-armored PCs without getting opportunity attacks from front-liners.

Use **Redirect Attack** as Reaction to split some damage with other **Goblins**.

See [Area 17c](#) for the information about **Goblins**.

Area 21g

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Mind Flayer** (CR 7, MM, p. 221) = 5 PCs

Note. The **Mind Flayer** can telepathically summon its thralls from [Area 21f](#). It will take 1-2 rounds for them to reach this area.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

Mind flayers are psionic tyrants and slavers who devour brains of intelligent creatures. They are very smart and can negotiate, flee, surrender or take captives.

The **Mind Flayer** can cast *Levitate* at-will, so you can make it pre-casted all the time in order to have an option to fly away out of melee reach, if combat occurs.

Mind Blast is a good starter, because it damages and disables PCs within good AoE. Note, that it inflicts Stunned condition which allows the **Intellect Devourers**, if they present in this encounter, to use **Body Theft** ability. See [Area 21f](#) for more information about these creatures.

Dominare Monster is very powerful 8th level spell, but don't forget that using it will break Concentration on *Levitate*. The **Mind Flayer** is smart enough to use this spell against weapon-dependent PCs, rather than spellcasters.

Tentacles and **Extract Brain** attacks work in conjunction. Successful **Tentacles** attack inflicts

Grappled condition automatically and if PC fails saving throw it also inflicts Stunned condition. Stunned condition includes Incapacitated condition which allows to use **Extract Brain**. Note, that **Intellect Devourers**, if they were summoned, can use **Body Theft** against Stunned PCs.

If PC will die because of **Body Thief** or **Extract Brain** abilities neither *Revivify* nor *Raise Dead* spells won't work, since they don't restore any missing body parts. The easiest way to bring PC back to life is *Resurrection* spell which is available for bards and clerics at level 13 earliest.

Area 21h

Encounter Difficulty

12 **Goblins** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 165) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17c](#) for the information about **Goblins**.

Area 21j

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Hobgoblin** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 186) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17a](#) for the information about **Hobgoblins**.

Area 21k

Encounter Difficulty

2 **Hobgoblin Captains** (CR 3, MM, p. 186) = 2 PCs

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17a](#) for the information about **Hobgoblin Captains**.

Area 21m

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Mage** (CR 6, MM, p. 347, with changes) = 4 PCs

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

As intelligent creature Preeta can negotiate, flee, surrender or take captives.

Start the fight with *Greater Invisibility*. It will protect the **Mage** from lot of spells that require seeing and give Disadvantage to attacks against her.

Use **Paralyzing Ray** as Bonus action every turn before casting spells. **Fear Ray** is not that powerful and don't have synergy with **Mage's** spells.

Cast *Fireball* with 5th level slot targeting as much PCs within its AoE as you can. Fire spreads around corners, so you can catch some PCs in corridor. Note, that Paralyzed condition (PHB, p. 291) makes PCs automatically fail Dexterity save.

Assume that *Mage Armor* was pre-casted before the encounter. Use **Mage's** reaction to cast *Shield* against attacks, or *Counterspell* against harmful spells. If PC missed the **Mage** right before her turn, and Reaction is still available, use **Paralyzing Ray**.

Area 21n

Encounter Difficulty

1 **Hobgoblin Warlord** (CR 6, MM, p. 187, with changes) = 4 PCs

1 **Hobgoblin Captain** (CR 3, MM, p. 186) = 1 PC

1 **Intellect Devourer** (CR 2, MM, p. 191) = 1 PC

2 **Bugbears** (CR 1, MM, p. 33) = 1 PC

6 **Hobgoblins** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 186) = 1 PC

2 **Worgs** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 341) = 1 PC

6 **Goblins** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 165) = 1 PC

Note. One **Bugbear** is controlled by **Intellect Devourer** and it is up to DM, if it will participate in the fight.

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

This **Hobgoblin Warlord** is Blinded (PHB, p. 290). All attacks against him have Advantage and all his attack has Disadvantage. He also can't use **Leadership** and **Parry**, because they require seeing. Even though, his AC is great, his attacks have double Proficiency bonus, and after successful **Shield Bash** he can attack Prone PC (PHB, p. 292) using **Longsword** without Disadvantage. It is better to attack PC adjacent to an ally to get benefit of **Martial Advantage**.

See [Area 21f](#) for the information about **Intellect Devourers**.

See [Area 17b](#) for the information about **Bugbears**.

See [Area 17a](#) for the information about **Hobgoblins** and **Hobgoblin Captains**.

The **Worgs' Bite** attack can knock PCs Prone (PHB, p. 292) and grant Advantage to melee attacks of their allies. Make all creatures with strong melee attacks focus on Prone PCs, if they have such a chance.

See [Area 17c](#) for the information about **Goblins**.

Area 21o

Encounter Difficulty

2 **Goblin Bosses** (CR 1, MM, p. 166) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 21f](#).

Area 21q

Encounter Difficulty

9 **Zombies** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 315) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17d](#) for the information about zombies.

Use **Slam** against nearest PCs. Roll a die, if several PCs are within same reach, to determine random target.

Area 21s

Encounter Difficulty

2 **Hobgoblins** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 186) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17a](#).

Area 21t

Encounter Difficulty

3 **Goblins** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 165) = 11 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17c](#).

Area 22

Encounter Difficulty

3 **Goblins** (CR 1/4, MM, p. 165) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17c](#).

Area 23a

Encounter Difficulty

5 **Hobgoblins** (CR 1/2, MM, p. 186) = 1 PC

Surprise

Follow the standard procedure to determine surprise.

Creatures' Tactics

See [Area 17a](#).