

DelverBash FAQ

We have received a host of e-mails for the bash so far, which is a lot more than we anticipated. We are glad to see such interest in it, though. One of the most common messages we get is, "Why did you do it this way", which has prompted us to put out this FAQ. We don't expect to answer everybody's questions here, but we will cover a majority of them. If you have a question we don't cover, keep the e-mails coming. Also remember that many questions can be answered by reading the PHB/DMG well, and having a good working knowledge of the system.

1. ***How do I go about running a bash?***

This is a broad question, and the answer is a bit long. If you still have questions, just mail them to me.

For big bashes, with more than thirty people, allow about two hours for people to create characters and get them approved. It took two of us two hours to look over about forty characters. As a general rule, the bash lasts about 12 minutes per delver. This estimate is based on 3rd Edition, and the one bash we have run with 4E took 3 hours for 6 people. Get a "wipeboard" if you can, or a sheet of "showerboard", which is identical to "wipeboard", but cheaper. Record everybody's name, starting AC, Starting HP, and visible armor (i.e. heavy, medium, light, or none). This will give the delvers an idea of who they are up against and how they measure up. It also singles out the 'luggage' (*less than great players*).

Once you have the information recorded, break the delvers up into tables of eight or so (*randomly*). This breaks up groups who come in working together. We use battle mats for the boards, but if you want to get fancy, go for it. Just avoid trees, grass, shrubs, houses, water, etc. because delvers can do some weird stuff if you give them the opportunity. The arena has a 100 foot ceiling, and is solid grey stone covering adamantite, with indirect lighting coming from 'everywhere'. The walls are force, impenetrable, and have a climb DC of 50. We put in small rises and craters, with the occasional floor-to-ceiling pillar. Don't put in any terrain you can't make a ruling on later. If you use chasms, know how far a character falls in a round, because it WILL come up.

Once everyone is set up, have everybody roll initiative, and let them go from there. Having one DM per table is good, but because the players will largely police themselves, fewer DMs are okay. The tables will proceed at their own pace, and the DMs are there to resolve issues the players cannot or will not. Unless the players have a solid rule behind them, with backup in print, make a ruling and go on with things. As the bash progresses, combine tables with four or fewer players to keep the action going. The players move over with all of their spells/items still in effect with their durations still running.

As the characters die off and there are fewer tables, you can get creative. If you are running out of time, start screwing with their environment. Make the board smaller to prevent people from running away.

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2. ***Why limit people to just the PHB?***

We limit the selection to just the PHB because not everybody has access to all the source material. If someone pulls a feat out of another 4E book they could have an unfair advantage over someone who doesn't have the same book. Additionally, trying to stay on top of all 4E material and looking for unbalanced combinations, items, or powers is an incredibly time consuming process and we all have full time jobs. We want to keep the playing field as level as possible.

3. ***The (insert class feat/special ability here) of the (insert class here) is useless in a bash! Why don't you give them something to make up for that?***

All of the classes in the PHB get short changed somewhere, be it in Class Features, Spells, Skills, or Feats. All the classes take a bite somewhere. We are working on fixes for some of the classes, but they are all viable in a bash setting.

4. ***Why do I need skills?***

Most skills are not of much use in a bash, but many, such as athletics and acrobatics, will come in very handy in a bash.

5. ***What skills are good to have?***

As mentioned above, acrobatics and athletics are great skills for the bash. Bluff, heal, insight, intimidate, perception, and stealth are all additional skills which may come into play in the bash as well.

6. ***How come my rogue can't hide?***

The environment of the bash makes hiding from someone almost impossible. There are no shadows, and no rough terrain to blend in to. You could 'hide' behind the corner of an obstacle, but when a character rounds the corner, he sees you. The errata for the PHB will see heavy use in regards to the stealth skill.

7. ***What is more important, a good offense, or good defense?***

A good offense is more important every time. With good defense, you can last through most of the bash, but you don't get any kills. In the last hour or so of a bash, we start penalizing everybody if it goes too long. In the last bash, a player made it to the last table of eight with no kills because he stayed in a Cube of Force (Which we have rectified) or on his Flying Carpet, running away from everybody. His strategy worked well until we took away the ability to fly. He died the next round. Find a balance in your offense/defense, and you will come out well.

8. ***What is a good target AC?***

You're looking for something in the 24 to 27 range.

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9. *What is a good 'To Hit' bonus?*

Target for to hit should be around +14 or thereabouts.

10. *Why give 2 short rests between tables?*

This was done to give Warlords and Clerics the opportunity to use healing/inspiring word to recover more hit points if they chose to do so. Also, some rituals are 10 minutes long to cast.

11. *Why should I buy the "bash specific" items?*

This is a personal choice, we have made these items expensive for a reason, and they provide you with an extra edge. These items are indeed nice to have, but their cost could inhibit the purchase of regular items.

12. *I don't agree with the bash master's ruling what can I do?*

The bash master ALWAYS has the final say. When the bash master makes the call, it is time to move on.

13. *If my PC is blocked from someone else's line of sight, why is my "mini" still on the table for all to see?*

We understand that this may be a bit of a frustration, but we have to have the "mini" on the table to track that PC, however, PC's that which to attack another PC they cannot see will NOT be able to target them, so they cannot attack that PC.

14. *Why is Blur banned?*

Due to the nature of Blur granting invisibility beyond 5 squares we have found that this not only extends the time it takes to run a delver bash, it makes it extremely frustrating to all players because most will use the Blur ability to hide and wait, we have stated in the rules that trying to hide and wait or just "wait it out" will NOT be tolerated!