

bunnies & burrows™

Animal Fantasy RPG

Quick Guide

Bunnies & Burrows is an animal fantasy game where players can role-play mongooses living in the natural world, often on the edges of human habitation. You are holding a Quick Guide to B&B, which presents the main elements of the game design in a streamlined form to introduce new players to the game system and convenient for use at conventions and short campaigns.

Your Animal Character

Players in B&B usually elect a rabbit as their player character (PC), but several non-rabbit animal species also are playable. Each PC has eight fixed genetic **Traits** (Strength, Speed, Intelligence, Agility, Constitution, Mysticism, Smell, and Charisma). These traits influence trait **Ratings**, which are modified by experience and directly affect actions in the game. Each trait is associated with a different profession (rabbits listed on left/other animals on right). Choose a name and gender for your character. Every profession is equally appropriate for any gender; there are no gender advantages.

Trait	Profession
Strength (STR)	Fighters/Bandits
Speed (SPD)	Runners/Heralds
Intelligence (INT)	Scouts/Spies
Agility (AGI)	Mavericks/Burglars
Constitution (CON)	Empaths/Guardians
Mysticism (MYS)	Seers/Shamans
Smell (SML)	Herbalists/Traders
Charisma (CHA)	Storytellers/Grifters

Your Base Trait score sets limits in different abilities. A higher Trait score yields a Base Bonus (BB). Experience is reflected in different Levels for each trait. Experience Level plus Base Bonus sets the Rating for each trait. For most purposes, the only values you need to remember are your trait Ratings.

Trait Effects on Abilities

Strength – Primary trait of jumping, carrying heavy objects, and inflicting Damage in combat.

Speed – Primary trait of movement, climbing, swimming, and Defense in combat.

Intelligence – Primary trait of spotting predators, detecting traps, and understanding man-things.

Agility – Primary trait of Attacking in combat, carrying or throwing small items, disarming traps, and using camouflage or disguise.

Constitution – Primary trait of hit points for absorbing damage, healing, and resisting disease or poison.

Mysticism – Primary trait of avoiding paralysis from fear (Shock), sensing danger, feigning disease, and benefitting from visions.

Smell – Primary trait of detecting and identifying food, herbs, and spoor of animals, reading scent marks, and tracking.

Charisma – Primary trait of language, communication, persuasion, and other social interaction.

Playing the Game

Your first impression might be that B&B is all about running away from danger. But it is much more than that.

Rabbits in B&B are inspired by characters in Richard Adams' novel, *Watership Down*. The rabbits in that story cooperate to face predators and hostile warrens (the societies of rabbits). They display courage, fighting prowess, wits, trickery, and ability to recruit allies, including other rabbits and non-rabbit species. They can be paralyzed by fear (called "tharn" in the novel), value prized foods (called "flayrah"), and love a good story.

B&B differs from other fantasy games by having no real weapons or equipment (other than small woven bags to carry small items) and having no magic. They do, however, have knowledge of powerful herbs, which can provide protection, cures, healing, and deal damage. Herbalists are as valuable as magic-users, and Empaths as much as clerics. A clever rabbit can disarm a trap or disguise himself (like B'rer Rabbit), or use tricks to outwit enemies. But even the smartest rabbit has limitations. They find all man-things to be mysterious, and they can only count to four.

Scale & Terrain

Overground maps for adventures generally are drawn to a large scale, with hexes of 5 meters. Burrow systems and maps for conducting combat (**Battleboards**) are generally drawn at a 1-m scale.

Ordinary Activities

Normal rabbit movement involves a walking or hopping pace (termed a "half-bound" gait). Moving steadily with purpose is hard; progress occurs in fits and starts (2-4 hexes per turn) as a group nibbles and tries to stay together. Foraging takes place during movement except when in a hurry. Rabbits remain generally alert for danger, but players can announce **Active Scanning** or **Posting** (standing upright) to look for danger. Players may **Search** for herbs, tracks, or traps. **Grooming** regularly also is a good idea to remove pests (and risk of disease).

If you have a doubt about whether your rabbit character can do something, ask the GM, or just try it!

Dice & Skill Checks

Outcomes of many actions by players are determined by die rolls modified by Trait Ratings. All die rolls can be resolved with six-sided dice (d6). A skill check occurs when a player attempts an action that is not automatic. A skill check succeeds when the die roll (1d6) plus Trait Rating exceeds a difficulty value (DV). DV can be prescribed in the rules or determined by the GM. Most skill checks are public and players can roll their own dice. But GMs should conduct passive checks for spotting or detecting hidden features privately.

Resolving combat involves a variation on skill checks, which is discussed separately.

**Bunnies &
Burrows**

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Pursuit & Combat

In B&B, encounters can involve two distinct phases: Pursuit and Combat. Pursuit generally will take place on the large scale map after PCs are spotted by an enemy (or an enemy is spotted that the PCs want to pursue). When pursuit culminates in an enemy reaching the hex occupied by one or more PCs, action is transferred to a Battleboard for Combat.

Combat Turns

Fighting proceeds in a series of rounds and turns. A combat turn consists of an action and move of a single combatant, including resolution of that action. A combat round includes a turn for each combatant, taken in sequence according to initiative.

Step 1: Combatants are placed on the Battleboard to represent the starting location of each combatant. PCs are placed first, then NPCs and enemy combatants are placed by the GM.

Step 2: Determine the fighting order. The sequence of play is determined by initiative based on SPD Rating (higher goes first). Roll 1d6 to resolve ties. The same sequence holds for the duration of the combat.

Each turn consists of two actions: either attack then move, or move then attack. Attacking twice or moving twice is not allowed, unless permitted by a special ability. Attacks may only occur from an adjacent hex, and two combatants may not occupy the same hex.

Facing and Movement

Facing is significant for both attack and movement. A token or mini has three front faces and three rear faces. Bite and Claw attacks must face front; Kick attacks face rear. Change of facing may be done only during movement.

Movement during combat is limited by available movement points (MP), as determined by SPD Rating +2. Change of facing before moving costs 1 MP to face any direction. Change of facing (one hex side) at the end of movement is free. Open hexes cost 1 MP to enter, but terrain (vegetation, obstacles) may cost more. Single red dashed lines cost 1 additional MP to cross; double red dashed lines cost all remaining MP to cross.

Attack and Defend

Step 3: Each player chooses a combat tactic by placing a marker on the Combat Tactics Card (CTC). Players may converse aloud during this step, representing communication during combat available to all.

Step 4: Each player rolls 2d6 and places one die in the Attack and Defend boxes on the CTC. The player may elect to place the higher die in either attack or defend to reflect his tactical decision in that turn.

Combat Tactics

Kick: directed to rear facing. Core damage + Critical Hit (roll of 6). Option to Push target away one hex or to Hop forward one hex if successful.

Bite: directed only to hex directly in front. Core damage. Option to Hold (extra roll of 5-6) or Vicious Bite (Critical hit on roll of 6).

Claw: directed to any front facing. Increase Attack Score +2; reduce damage -2; Option to Cuff (reducing damage to 1 HP, considered non-hostile), or Vicious Claw (Critical hit on roll of 6).

Dodge: No Attack. Increase Defense Score +2. Option to pause to do something else, such as use an herb or use special ability.

Submit: valid only against other rabbits, which will cease attack. No more combat allowed.

Resolve Attacks

Step 5: Success of a tactic against the selected opponent is determined by comparing the Attack Score (AS=AGI Rating + Attack die) vs the opponent's Defend Score (DS=SPD Rating + Defend die.) Attack is always optional; even if you have indicated an attack tactic on the CTC, you do not have to carry out the attack. But you cannot change tactic.

Step 6: An Attack is successful if the AS equals or exceeds the DS. Remember to add +1 when attacking the rear of an opponent.

Step 7: A successful Attack delivers core damage (STR Rating + 1d6). Some tactics have additional effects or bonus damage.

Herbalism

Use of Herbs

There are herbs to cure, herbs to inflict injury, herbs to bolster or sap abilities, and herbs that serve many other useful functions. In conventional RPGs magic is used to counter powerful enemies and heal wounds. In B&B, herbs are the great equalizer.

How to get Herbs

Herbs can be provided by allies, obtained by barter from NPCs, stolen or taken as spoils of combat from enemies, or found in nature.

- Most scenarios will include a Trader where useful items, including herbs, can be obtained. Traders typically accept prized food as a medium of exchange; some will ask for shiny stones or other baubles (especially Magpies); and a few might have specific requests.
- NPC Herbalists, Shamans, and Seers also may have herbs to trade for favors.
- Players may simply announce their intent to search for herbs. Searching takes 10 minutes. Success depends on a successful SML check. Obviously, Herbalists have an advantage, especially in finding rare herbs.

How to Prepare Herbs

Herbs must be prepared properly before they are "activated" for use. We will adopt a simplified system for herbal preparation.

- First, the herbs must be properly identified. Identification of herbs is based on their odor properties (Source, Clarity, and Quality). Source is quickly recognized (mushroom cap, flower, leaf, fruit, etc.). Clarity and Quality must be identified by SML checks. Again, Herbalists have an advantage in herbal identification.
- Raw herbs (unprepared) are activated by correct preparation, requiring yet another SML check. The DV varies with Clarity: Clear herbs DV=3, Cloudy DV=4, Murky DV=5, Dense DV=6. Failure results in Poisonweed, which can still be used but with unpredictable effects. The strength of a prepared herb will depend in part on the SML Rating of the preparer.

How to Use Herbs

Herbs may be delivered to a target in a number of ways, but only a few methods can be used during Pursuit or Combat.

- **Press:** Any herb can be delivered by pressing it into an open wound. This is the main way herbs can be used in combat.
- **Eat:** Many herbs can be delivered by ingestion, which is a voluntary action by the target. Obviously, if the target is an enemy, some trickery or coercion must be used.
- **Rub or Sprinkle:** Protective herbs often are delivered by rubbing over the fur, which takes the same amount of time as grooming.
- **Contact:** Some of the most powerful herbs merely have to make contact with skin. Nettles and smashed Berries are the most common examples of Contact herbs.
- **Sniff or Breathe:** A few herbs can exert effects simply by inhaling spores or pollen dust. Fine particles can be dispersed in air, affecting an area and not just a single target. Wind direction can affect dispersal, and thus the area of effect.

Effects of Herbs

The effects of herbs are as varied as the number of herbs. Refer to the **Herbal of Black Adder** for a complete description of herbal effects and other properties.