

ADVANCED FIGHTING FANTASY



Module
Conversion

v0.5

by
SkinnyOrc



Being a treatise on the use of archaic modules of high adventure within the world of Titan.

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Why Convert D&D Modules to AFF?

Advanced Fighting Fantasy 2nd edition (AFF) is a roleplaying game with sleek mechanics and set in the vibrant fantasy world of Titan. That setting has sweeping scale and impressive detail, albeit concentrated in the pockets described by the various Fighting Fantasy Gamebooks.

What it lacks is a depth of ready to run adventures, a common problem with roleplaying games today. The reality of the industry is that books sellable to each player make more money than those that only sell one copy per playing group like adventure scenarios. Fan produced material can go some way to filling the gap, but not everyone has the time to write, let alone polish it to the point where other people can use it. This is also something of a chicken and egg situation, material is required to attract people to the system but people must be using the system to produce material.

As the game that established the genre, Dungeons & Dragons has a scale that no other RPG can match. Since its heyday of the 1980s there have been literally hundreds of “modules” published, substantial and generally decent quality adventure scenarios. In the decades following there was a move towards fan produced material through Dungeon magazine and although often short and less polished it also has a wealth of great adventures.

With a straight forward way to convert D&D scenarios to AFF this huge stock of material is unlocked. The published modules are available in PDF format for a few dollars each from the D&D Classics section of <http://www.dmsguild.com>. Also if you prefer the original paper in your hands, most modules and issues of Dungeon can be purchased cheaply second hand through the usual online marketplaces.

Why Not Just Play D&D in Titan?

I should start by saying that by D&D I am referring to Basic-Expert-Companion-Master-Immortal Set D&D (BECMI D&D, aka. B/X) and to Advanced D&D 1st and 2nd edition

(AD&D), the twin D&D lines that existed side by side throughout the 80s and 90s. D&D 3rd edition and those that followed are significantly different games.

D&D was incredibly popular in its heyday and its game mechanics have become so familiar to gamers they are often accepted without question. But it should be remembered that D&D's origins are in war gaming and it was effectively a first draft for fantasy roleplaying. As a result a lot of its mechanics do not encourage actual roleplaying or are plain clumsy. I go into more detail in my rant [here](#).

Converting Creatures

The first step to modify a D&D module for use with AFF is to convert the statistics of the opponents. Often AFF has the same creature or one that is very similar, for example Bullywugs and Slykk, in which case the AFF creature can simply be substituted. Otherwise an AFF stat block for the new creature needs to be worked out.

In D&D the Hit Dice (HD) determines a creature's chance to hit, something in AFF measured by SKILL. However it also dictates how much damage they can take, expressed as Hit Points, the equivalent of AFF STAMINA. This means both SKILL and STAMINA can be based on HD as shown in the table below.

Table 1. HD to SKILL

HD	<1	1	2-3	4-5	6-7	8-9	10-11	12-13	14-15	16-17	18-19	20-21	22-24	25+
SKILL	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18

D&D creatures with a plus on the HD roll to hit as the next HD up and this is also applied when converting to SKILL. So a creature with HD 3+2 would be treated as 4 HD, giving it 8 SKILL rather than 7. This is not also added to STAMINA unless the HD plus is at least +4.

This simple conversion will cater for the majority of D&D creatures. However, the dual role of HD in D&D leads to some creatures having high HD simply because they are very large, while in AFF this might mean only moderate SKILL and high STAMINA. A good example of this are dinosaurs, particularly the enormous plant eating sauropods. It is worth noting though that even the gentlest giant will have a reasonable SKILL, multiple attacks and high damage. The tail sweep of a startled Brachiosaurus is going to be hard to avoid and quite capable of knocking an entire party flying.

Where based on its description a creature fits into this category a slightly different system can be used. STAMINA is equal to the creatures HD. SKILL must be judged by the Director but the following can be used as a starting point:

- Enormous placid herbivore – 10
- Enormous aggressive herbivore – 12
- Enormous carnivore - 14
- Enormous monster - 16

Next to convert is D&D Armour Class (AC). Again in D&D AC is representing two things, how easily they can avoid blows (by being fast, small or skilled in combat) and their ability to not be damaged by hits (due to armour and/or a tough hide). AFF clearly separates these concepts, with armour determining how much damage is absorbed while SKILL decides ability to avoid blows.

The table that follows shows how D&D armour translates to AFF armour. AD&D uses some additional types that are excluded for clarity; treat AD&D Leather as Padded Armour, Studded Leather or Ring Mail as Leather Armour, and Splint Mail as Banded Mail. In both D&D and AD&D a shield is equivalent to one row down on the table.

Table 2. Armour Types

D&D AC	D&D Armour	AFF Armour	AFF Monster
9	None	None	None
8	Padded Armour	Leather Cuirass	Light
7	Leather Armour	Leather Hauberk	Light
6	Scale Mail	Chainmail Cuirass	Light
5	Chain Mail	Chainmail Hauberk	Medium
4	Banded Mail	Breastplate	Medium
3	Plate Mail	Plate Armour	Heavy
2	Plate & Shield	Plate Armour & Small Shield	Heavy

Where armour is described as being worn use the table to find the AFF equivalent and equip the opponent with this armour. If a shield is carried in addition to armour then add a Small Shield to the AFF armour.

Compare the AC listed for the creature with what it should have based on the D&D armour described. If they do not match, note how many points the difference is. This is the part of its AC due to factors other than worn armour. Add 1 point to SKILL for every 2 points AC difference, rounded down. Note that this does not come with a similar increase in STAMINA.

As an example, if an opponent is described as using chain mail and shield this is an AC of 4. The statistics for the creature give an actual AC of 1, so there is a difference is 3. This means adding 1 point to SKILL. They would also use a Chainmail Hauberk and Small Shield.

Where the creature does not wear armour the process is the same except that judgement is needed to decide which armour type the creature's natural armour is most similar to. The other difference is the AFF Monster armour in the fourth column is used for any AC decided to be due to natural armour.

For example, a Wild Cat has AC 5 but you judge that in terms only of natural armour it has AC 9, the extra 4 points must be due to the animal's reactions and dexterity. Four halved is 2, so this is what is added to SKILL. The Wild Cat's AFF armour type will be None.

Next to look at is number of attacks. The two systems again take quite different approaches, D&D gives one attack per appendage capable of causing damage while AFF looks at how

many opponents the creature can damage in on round. This may sound the same but consider these examples. In D&D a Jaguar has two claws and a bite, while in AFF it has one attack. This is because the Jaguar does not have the reach with its attacks to use them on different opponents in one round. On the other hand a Frost Giant in D&D has one weapon attack, while in AFF it has three attacks, presumably because the weapon is so big it can swing through multiple opponents at a time!

So understanding that AFF attacks are the number of opponents that can be attacked in a round it is fairly easy to judge how many to allocate. If unsure look through Out of the Pit for a similar creature and how many attacks it has.

For damage, where the creature uses a weapon the stats for that weapon in AFF can of course be used. For giant sized versions of weapons add a modifier of +1, +2 or double damage as appropriate.

With other attacks the following table can be consulted for the AFF equivalent to the D&D attack based on its maximum damage. For example an attack causing 3d6 damage has a maximum of 18, which is Large Bite/Claw in AFF.

Table 3. Creature Damage

D&D Max. Damage Total	AFF Equivalent
8 or less	Small bite/claw
9 to 14	Large bite/claw
15 to 21	Very Large bite/claw
22 to 28	Very Large bite/claw with +1 modifier
29 to 35	Very Large bite/claw with +2 modifier
36 and up	Very Large bite/claw with double damage

Where there are multiple attacks that AFF would treat as a single attack, add the maximum damages together. For example 1-4/1-4/1-6 gives 14. This all needs a certain amount of judgement applied so adjust as seems appropriate.

The above conversion system will work well for most D&D creatures but there will always be exceptions. Some that spring to mind are the Tarrasque from the AD&D Monster Manual II and the various Gargantua from the D&D Companion Set. If you want to use these they will need individual treatment.

As an example, Gargantua are existing creature types but twice as big as normal and eight times HD. This gives the Gargantua Troll 51 HD, impossible to convert using this system even with the very large creature rule applied! The HD multiplier seems to be based on the fact that doubling size multiplies volume by eight, but does volume even equal ability to take hits? Assuming you want a twice normal size troll, multiplying HD instead by four gives a Gargantua Troll that can be converted as a very large creature.

Scaling Encounters

In D&D there is an extremely wide range in the fighting power of low and high level characters, and likewise with low and high Hit Dice monsters to match them. A 1st level fighter is only equivalent to a single Orc. Attribute bonuses such as high Strength probably give the fighter the edge but they still are outmatched by two Orcs. At 15th level the fighter can take on a small tribe of forty or so Orcs single handed, although this is partly due to the magical equipment they can be expected to have collected.

An AFF character by contrast has a little more training before they venture out in search of adventure and can comfortably defeat two Orcs at the same time, maybe even three. However even after an impressive career, half a dozen Orcs at the same time would be a dangerous combat. The reason is partly that AFF has outnumbering bonuses but also the experienced AFF character will have far less magical gear to help them.

The result of this wide range in D&D is that adventure modules vary enormously in the challenge they offer. Low level modules will be too easy, even for beginning AFF characters, while high level modules will be too difficult. These differences may be adjusted for by changing the number of creatures encountered.

Adjusting number encountered for the level of the module and experience of the party is the most challenging part of converting a module. The difficulty is that in D&D a single 4 HD creature is about the same as four 1 HD creatures, while after conversion, encounters with one or two large creatures will be relatively easy while those with more numerous weak creatures become dangerous.

The table below provides some guidelines on how much creature numbers should be adjusted, based on their attack strength relative to that of the warriors in the party. Most encounters should fall into the E (easy) and N (normal) categories, with perhaps a few in the D (dangerous) category. In general, encounters with a single creature will not be challenging in AFF2 unless it is very powerful.

Table 4. Encounter Scaling

Chrs. to Mons. Ratio	Attack Strength Difference										
	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
4 to 1	VE	VE	VE	VE	VE	VE	VE	VE	E	N	N
3 to 1	VE	VE	VE	VE	VE	VE	E	N	N	D	VD
2 to 1	VE	VE	VE	VE	E	N	N	D	VD	VD	VD
1 to 1	VE	E	N	N	D	VD	VD	VD	VD	VD	VD
1 to 2	N	N	D	VD							
1 to 3	D	VD									

You will not want to adjust every encounter, perhaps the creatures are friendly or non-combatant, or it might just not make sense for the story. Consider each on a case by case basis.

It is much easier to scale an adventure already in AFF2 format for use by a larger or smaller party. AFF scales for numbers linearly, so if the party is 50% larger than the intended party size the encounters should be with 50% more creatures.

Converting Opposing Characters

Antagonists, villains, call them what you will, many adventures will have at least one enemy to face who is an opposing character rather than a monster. For convenience these are referred to as an OC, along the same lines as the shorthand PC and NPC.

In order to provide a challenge, OCs in D&D will often be of a higher “level” than the PCs, sometimes enough so they can give the entire party a fight single handed. They are also generally written up more like a character, perhaps even with a full set of statistics and equipment list.

Following the monster conversion system with OCs, those from low level D&D modules would be too weak and being individuals it is impossible to adjust for this with number appearing. What is more, the outnumbering penalties in AFF make fighting a group alone dangerous even if they are more skilled. This is perfectly realistic but presents a problem for converting the module.

AFF characters have Weapon Special Skills in addition to SKILL, together referred to as Attack Strength or AS. Assuming the OC is written up as a character and not as a monster it will have skills assigned. The following provides a rule of thumb for the difference between the AS of the OC and of the PCs able to attack it, given the number of those PCs. If the OC has allies with them these engage some of the PCs, reducing how strong the OC needs to be for a reasonable challenge. This is often the better option. Fighting with two weapons via the Ambidextrous Talent is also very useful to reduce outnumbering penalties, but only highly skilled warriors would be capable of it.

Table 5. Opposing Characters

PCs Attacking	OC Attack Strength	OS AS Ambidextrous
2	+1	-1
3	+3	+1
4	+5	+2
5	+7	+3
6	+8	+4

Wizards are particularly vulnerable to being quickly overwhelmed due to their low AS and lack of armour. It is recommended they have bodyguards of some sort to prevent them being engaged in melee immediately. These need to have sufficient attacks to engage all the PCs or be sufficiently large to block the way. If the adventure requires them to be encountered alone

have them flee to where they can make a stand. However, keep in mind the guards should not take too many rounds to dispose of as a Wizards spells are also potent.

The type of armour used can be converted with the same table as for monsters, and other equipment replaced with the AFF equivalent. Magical items should be treated as per Converting Magical Items below. OCs in D&D often possess a lot of such items and it is advisable at least half of them are removed, although this can include replacing them with Superior Items.

Care should be taken by the Director to run OCs as intelligently as they believe the character is capable of acting. Magical items should be used where it would give an advantage to do so, do not avoid using limited use items so the players can use them later! Also, unless they have a reason to fight to the death most will either flee or surrender as soon as they realise they are outmatched.

Converting Treasure

As a rule of thumb the value of each treasure in a D&D module can be divided by 20 to bring it in line with AFF treasure. For those used to the huge and often uncarryable quantities of treasure in D&D this may seem stingy, but players soon adjust to it and the end result is much more believable.

Also in AFF it is common that some of the treasure is in the form of valuable goods, rather than just coins, gems and jewellery. This is a nice touch of realism and offers some interesting decisions on what to take and what to leave as goods are often bulkier. My “AFF Treasure” [article](#) provides more detailed tables for rolling the type of treasure found. Additional wealth to this might be found but either be very bulky or even impossible to move, such as large statues and items of furniture. This is a good way to enhance the appearance of wealth in the location without providing more of it to the characters.

“AFF Treasure” also points out that unintelligent creatures are only likely to have treasure on the remains of past victims. You may wish to remove treasure from some encounters because it doesn't seem to fit where it's found, it can always be added back in somewhere else (still with its value reduced to one twentieth of course).

Converting Magical Items

Magical items are rarer in AFF than in D&D, and permanent magical items rarer still. D&D magic items should not be replaced with AFF equivalents on a one to one basis, about half should be removed, or in the case of weapons and armour swapped with non-magical equipment.

Magical weapons and armour may be replaced by non-magical items of superior workmanship (see Superior Equipment below). Potions can be swapped for AFF equivalents, but also new potions allowed based on the D&D potion. Most D&D scrolls are Spell Scrolls,

allowing a number of extra spells a wizard can cast without using their own energies, while AFF scrolls have one effect and can be used by anyone. For these pick one of the spells and that is the effect the scroll has when read. The effect does not need to be equivalent to an AFF spell and can be used by non-wizards as usual. For rings, wands, staves, rods and miscellaneous items consider if they can be turned into limited use Trinkets, either existing AFF items or new ones based on the D&D item.

Permanent magical items should only be included on the rare occasions where it suits your campaign for them to fall into the PCs' hands. An alternative are Trinket versions of AFF Enchanted Items, for example a Sword of Slaying with a command word inscribed on it allowing three uses.

If you want new magical items a great source of ideas is the D&D accessory AC4, The Book of Marvellous Magic. The best of what is to be found there are suited to enchanted items or even artefacts. Many of the rest work well as trinkets by making them single use or otherwise limited, and some are odd enough for curiosities.

Superior Equipment

Non-magical weapons and armour of superior workmanship are useful as a better class of equipment without making magic items commonplace. This was a concept put forward by [Stuart Lloyd](#). Superior equipment cost is twice normal with a minimum of 20gp. I suggest that superior weapons are +1 to the damage roll and superior armour is +1 to the armour roll. To make room for this the magical Sword of Sharpness is +1 to the damage roll result (not to the roll) and Armour of Protections is +1 to the armour roll result.

Okay So Which Modules?

The short answer to this is of course any module you like the look of, but I can offer a few recommendations.

A number of D&D modules are probably too high-magic for AFF, meaning they require magic to be too common place and mundane. D&D settings varied widely in this respect, with the Mystara (originally Known World) setting of BECMI (B/X) D&D probably the most high-magic. Increasingly as that setting developed, magic was used as a sort of every day technology. However the degree this affected the modules differed so each should be looked at on its own merits. Some D&D adventures involve travelling to other worlds but this does have some precedent in AFF.

Also some Companion set and most Master set modules had themes which may not fit your AFF campaign anyway, such as ruling dominions and dealing with the immortals or their representatives. Nonetheless, if you like the story, with a little more work any module can be adapted.

It is probably true the conversion system works best with modules around 4th to 8th level as these need the least change to creature numbers. Expert Set and most AD&D modules fall into this range. Low level modules (Basic set and some AD&D) will tend to end up with large numbers of weak creatures, although this can also be fun. On the other hand high level modules will result in a lot of encounters with one or two strong creatures. You may wish to manually amend some of the encounters to get a more even balance.

Scenario Tips

When using any published adventure it is always a good idea to rearrange the odd thing just in case a less scrupulous player has realised which it is and is reading ahead. Of course these adventures are all rather old, which depending on the age of your players may mean either they read them decades ago, or quite possibly have never even heard of them. But anyway, it probably is best to not make it obvious which module you are using and it never hurts to have a few surprises in store.

D&D modules often had excellent illustrations and maps. At the time these were only appreciated by the Dungeons Master, but with modern digital reproduction it is easy to make player handouts of them. Anything that helps the players visualise the adventure will add to their enjoyment of it.

It is worth noting that it does not have to be a problem for some encounters to be too hard for the characters, in fact it is both realistic and keeps the players on their toes. The trick is to make sure the players have the opportunity, and understand they have the choice, to not confront everything head on. Skirting around it, finding creative ways to gain advantage or simply running away are all good alternatives.

If the encounter is particularly dangerous perhaps the characters should see it before they are seen (assuming they are taking due care) so they have a chance to make a plan. Also if the players are used to everything they encounter being within their capabilities from other games then it would be a good idea to first have a conversation with them first to make it clear what to expect.

As with everything in roleplaying games, adventure scenarios are very much down to the personal preferences of yourself and your players. If you are all enjoying it then that is what counts.