Hit Location System for DCC & D20 Games

Ah, creature hit locations; the cause of much merriment, excitement and sheer terror for players of such RPGs as *RuneQuest*, *Warhammer*, *GURPS*, and so on…I can think of no good reason why a similar system should not be brought into d20 games (e.g. *DCC RPG*, *Dungeons & Dragons*, *Pathfinder*). Accordingly, I hereby present the mechanics I tend to use in running my own games:

General Procedure

Step 1: Unless the attacker aims for a specific location, roll 1d30 to find out the body area threatened by the attack and determine its AC.

Step 2: Roll to hit as usual, against the AC indicated in Step 1.

Step 3: On a successful attack, apply its damage to both the location <u>and</u> total hit points of the target.

Step 1

Below is the d30 hit location table for humanoids (see later in this document for other creatures). The *Missile* column covers ranged attacks as well as pertinent spells, surprise attacks and the like.

Players could draw a "balloon man" on their character sheets depicting the locations and their HP.

Table 1: Hit Locations

Melee	Missile	Body Area	Description	HP Multiplier
01	01	Right Foot	Ankle to toes	.10
02-06	02-05	Right Leg	Right leg from hip to ankle	.33
07	06	Left Foot	Ankle to toes	.10
08-12	07-10	Left Leg	Left leg from hip to ankle	.33
13-16	11-15	Abdomen	Hip to just under floating ribs	.33
17	16-21	Chest	Floating ribs to neck & shoulders	.40
18	22	Right Hand	Wrist to fingers	.10
19-22	23-25	Right Arm	Right arm to wrist	.25
23	26	Left Hand	Wrist to fingers	.10
24-27	27-29	Left Arm	Left arm to wrist	.25
28-30	30	Head	Neck & head	.33

Unless aiming for a specific body area (as discussed in **Step 2** below), the AC for a hit location should be determined using common sense and the body coverage of the armor (if any) the target wears. Many armor types mainly protect the torso (chest & abdomen) plus the arms, leaving the hands, head, feet and possibly legs vulnerable – whereas Full Plate and similar can be considered to offer protection to every hit location. I encourage you, gentle reader, to peruse the illustrations in e.g. *Pathfinder*, *D&D 3.x*, *RuneQuest* and/or various web resources in determining a given armor type's coverage. Furthermore, in using the hit location system, wearing a helmet becomes a matter of some importance. Is the helm merely a metal skullcap, or does it have a visor or other features designed to protect the wearer's face? Many d20 sourcebooks, zines and diverse web resources exist discussing the subject.

Anyway, if the hit location rolled is a body area indeed protected by armor, just use the target's AC for hitting purposes as you normally would. But if the d30 roll indicates a location unprotected by armor, its AC equals 10 plus the target's Agility/Dexterity modifier – naturally assuming the target is aware of the incoming attack. If not, treat the AC as 10, and roll on the Missile column.

Step 2

The attacker simply rolls to hit as usual vs. the target's local AC as determined above.

However, if the attacker wants to **aim for a specific hit location**, s/he forgoes the random d30 roll in **Step 1** above, and instead uses the following mechanic: **DCC** – make the attack with *-2d* or treat a successful Mighty Deed as hitting the desired location (Judge discretion); **D&D 5E** – make the attack with *disadvantage*; **D&D 3.x/Pathfinder** – target gets +4 to its AC.

Or something along those lines…you be the Judge/DM/GM! As a general guideline, in *RuneQuest* aiming for a particular hit location halves the attacker's weapon skill. With that in mind, use my suggestions above or come up with your own ruling.

Step 3

Now we get to the meat of the hit location system: local hit points and the effects of their delightful-ly grievous depletion! As you can see from **Table 1**, there are 11 separate hit locations for a human-oid. To calculate how many HP are in each location for a given PC, NPC or other creature in full health, consult the table's rightmost column and do the math, rounding fractions up (to make your life easier, I have already tallied some on **Table 2** below). The local points are <u>always</u> proportionate to the maximum total HP of a creature, i.e. as its total HP go down due to damage, you do <u>not</u> calculate anew the locational values. Repeat: the maximum local hit points of a creature are always a *% of its total **max** HP*, regardless of how many or few total HP the creature may currently have left.

Obviously, as a creature gains more total HP by e.g. levelling up, its location scores increase as well.

Side note: as you perhaps have noticed, the sum of all the local hit points adds up to more than a creature's total HP; this is so that a creature can be disabled or killed by sustaining many small wounds, representing the cumulative effects of blood loss, shock, and so on.

Table 2: Sample location HP values for all creatures

Total HP	.40	.33	.25	.16	.10
1-3	2	1	1	1	1
4-6	3	2	2	1	1
7-9	4	3	3	2	1
10-12	5	4	2	2	1-2
13-15	6	5	4	3	2
16-18	8	6	5	3	2
19-21	9	7	6	4	2-3
22-24	10	8	6	4	3
25-27	11	9	7	5	3
28-30	12	10	8	5	3
37-39	16	13	9	7	4
49-51	21	17	13	9	5-6
58-60	24	20	15	10	6
70-72	29	24	18	12	7-8
79-81	33	27	21	14	8-9
88-90	36	30	23	15	9
100-102	41	34	26	17	10-11

Results of Damage

An individual hit location can take damage beyond its actual hit point score. The severity of the damage has different effects depending on the location. Do not forget to substract the damage from the creature's total HP as well!

Damage Equal To or In Excess of Location Hit Points

Leg/foot: The limb becomes useless. The creature falls prone, unable to do anything else this round. It may continue to fight from the ground (with appropriate penalties) in following rounds.

Abdomen: Both legs become useless and the creature falls. It may continue to fight from the ground (with appropriate penalties) in following rounds. If the creature has the means to heal itself with mundane or magical methods, it can do so. The creature loses 1 HP due to blood loss each round in which it fails a DC 10 Fort/Con Save. This loss will stop permanently if the Save check totals at least 20, *or* the creature can elect to be *Heroic* (possibly standing & fighting for the round).

Chest: The creature falls, too hurt to do anything but crawl. It may heal itself. The creature loses 1 HP/round in which it fails a DC 10 Fort/Con Save. This loss will stop permanently if the Save check totals at least 20, *or* the creature can be Heroic (possibly standing & fighting for the round).

Arm/hand: The limb becomes useless. If the creature is holding an item with the limb, it falls unless attached to the arm. The creature can continue to stand & fight with whatever appendages are left.

Head: The creature falls unconscious, losing 1 HP due to blood loss each round in which it fails a DC 10 Fort/Con Save. If the Save check totals at least 20, the creature can battle instinctively for the round – fighting normally, but unable to later remember the fray (gaining no XP from it).

Damage Equals or Exceeds Double Location Hit Points

Limb: A creature cannot take more than twice the hit location damage possible to an arm, hand, leg or foot. At that point the limb becomes severed or irrevocably maimed, and further damage to it simply gets ignored. The creature is in shock and can do little until healed. It may heal itself. The creature loses 1 HP/round due to blood loss. It may be Heroic in a round in which it passes a DC 20 Fort/Con Save.
If the damage was done in one fell swoop by a slashing weapon or a natural weapon such as claws or bite, the limb gets severed. Otherwise it becomes maimed.

Abdomen, **Chest**, **Head**: The creature falls unconscious and loses 1 HP worth of blood each round. It cannot attempt to be Heroic or make saving throws to stop the HP loss.

Special Hit Locations

Because of relative height between combatants (e.g. mounted vs. foot, or large differences in size categories), sometimes you might want to change the hit location rolls to better reflect the situation.

Example 1: A mounted warrior striking downward with a one-handed weapon at a foot soldier would roll 1d14+16 (modify this formula to the dice types you own) for the hit location, to reflect the fact that he can only effectively hit the top half of his target.

Example 2: A Dwarf attacking a giant in melee would roll 1d12 for the hit location, as he probably can only reach the target's legs and feet.

Hit Location Tables For Select Creature Types

Quadruped:

Melee	Missile	Area	HP Mult.
01	01	RH Foot	.10
02-04	02-04	RH Leg	.25
05	05	LH Foot	.10
06-08	06-08	LH Leg	.25
09-11	09-13	Hind Q	.40
12-15	14-19	Fore Q	.40
16	20	RF Foot	.10
17-20	21-23	RF Leg	.25
21	24	LF Foot	.10
22-25	25-27	LF Leg	.25
26-30	28-30	Head	.33

Bipedal Dinosaur:

Melee/Missile	Area	HP Mult.
01-03	Tail	.33
04	R Foot	.16
05-07	R Leg	.33
08	LH Foot	.16
09-11	LH Leg	.33
12-15	Abdomen	.40
16-20	Chest	.40
21	R Claw	.10
22-23	R Arm	.25
24	L Claw	.10
25-26	L Arm	.25
27-30	Head	.33

Ape:

Melee	Missile	Area	HP Mult.
01	01	R Foot	.10
02-05	02-04	R Leg	.25
06	05	L Foot	.10
08-11	06-08	L Leg	.25
12-15	09-14	Abdomen	.33
16	15-19	Chest	.40
17	20	R Hand	.10
19-23	21-24	R Arm	.33
24	25	L Hand	.10
25-29	26-29	L Arm	.33
28-30	30	Head	.33

Dragon:

Melee	Missile	Area	HP Mult.
01-03	01-02	Tail	.25
04	03	RH Foot	.16
05-06	04-05	RH Leg	.33
07	06	LH Foot	.16
08-09	07-08	LH Leg	.33
10-11	09-13	Hind Q	.40
12-14	14-18	Fore Q	.40
15-17	19-20	R Wing	.25
18-20	21-22	L Wing	.25
21	23	RF Foot	.16
22-24	24-25	RF Leg	.33
25	26	LF Foot	.16
26-28	27-28	LF Leg	.33
29-30	29-30	Head	.33

Shark and Whale:

Melee/Missile	Area	HP Mult.
01-05	Tail	.33
06-11	Hindbody	.40
12-17	Forebody	.40
18-20	R Fin	.25
21-23	L Fin	.25
24-30	Head	.33

Giant Insect:

Melee/Missile	Area	HP Mult.
01-02	RH Leg	.16
03-04	LH Leg	.16
05-06	RC Leg	.16
07-08	LC Leg	.16
09-14	Abdomen	.40
15-19	Thorax	.40
20-21	RF Leg	.16
22-23	LF Leg	.16
24-30	Head	.40