A failed Sanity save might result in short-term, long-term, or indefinite madness, as described in chapter 8, "Running the Game." Any time a character suffers from long-term or indefinite madness, the character's Sanity is reduced by 1. A *greater restoration* spell can restore Sanity lost in this way, and a character can increase his or her Sanity through level advancement.

ADVENTURING OPTIONS

This section provides options for changing how rests work, as well as for adding unusual things to your campaign, such as modern weapons.

FEAR AND HORROR

The rules for fear and horror can help you sustain an atmosphere of dread in a dark fantasy campaign.

FEAR

When adventurers confront threats they have no hope of overcoming, you can call for them to make a Wisdom saving throw. Set the DC according to the circumstances. A character who fails the save becomes frightened for 1 minute. The character can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of his or her turns, ending the effect on the character on a successful save.

HORROR

Horror involves more than simple fright. It entails revulsion and anguish. Often it arises when adventurers see something completely contrary to the common understanding of what can and should occur in the world, or upon the realization of a dreadful truth.

In such a situation, you can call on characters to make a Charisma saving throw to resist the horror. Set the DC based on the magnitude of the horrific circumstances. On a failed save, a character gains a short-term or long-term form of madness that you choose or determine randomly, as detailed in chapter 8, "Running the Game."

HEALING

These optional rules make it easier or harder for adventurers to recover from injury, either increasing or reducing the amount of time your players can spend adventuring before rest is required.

HEALER'S KIT DEPENDENCY

A character can't spend any Hit Dice after finishing a short rest until someone expends one use of a healer's kit to bandage and treat the character's wounds.

HEALING SURGES

This optional rule allows characters to heal up in the thick of combat and works well for parties that feature few or no characters with healing magic, or for campaigns in which magical healing is rare.

As an action, a character can use a healing surge and spend up to half his or her Hit Dice. For each Hit Die spent in this way, the player rolls the die and adds the character's Constitution modifier. The character regains hit points equal to the total. The player can decide to spend an additional Hit Die after each roll.

A character who uses a healing surge can't do so again until he or she finishes a short or long rest.

Under this optional rule, a character regains all spent Hit Dice at the end of a long rest. With a short rest, a character regains Hit Dice equal to his or her level divided by four (minimum of one die).

For a more superheroic feel, you can let a character use a healing surge as a bonus action, rather than as an action.

Slow Natural Healing

Characters don't regain hit points at the end of a long rest. Instead, a character can spend Hit Dice to heal at the end of a long rest, just as with a short rest.

This optional rule prolongs the amount of time that characters need to recover from their wounds without the benefits of magical healing and works well for grittier, more realistic campaigns.

Rest Variants

The rules for short and long rests presented in chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook* work well for a heroic-style campaign. Characters can go toe-to-toe with deadly foes, take damage to within an inch of their lives, yet still be ready to fight again the next day. If this approach doesn't fit your campaign, consider the following variants.

Epic Heroism

This variant uses a short rest of 5 minutes and a long rest of 1 hour. This change makes combat more routine, since characters can easily recover from every battle. You might want to make combat encounters more difficult to compensate.

Spellcasters using this system can afford to burn through spell slots quickly, especially at higher levels. Consider allowing spellcasters to restore expended spell slots equal to only half their maximum spell slots (rounded down) at the end of a long rest, and to limit spell slots restored to 5th level or lower. Only a full 8-hour rest will allow a spellcaster to restore all spell slots and to regain spell slots of 6th level or higher.

Gritty Realism

This variant uses a short rest of 8 hours and a long rest of 7 days. This puts the brakes on the campaign, requiring the players to carefully judge the benefits and drawbacks of combat. Characters can't afford to engage in too many battles in a row, and all adventuring requires careful planning.

This approach encourages the characters to spend time out of the dungeon. It's a good option for campaigns that emphasize intrigue, politics, and interactions among other NPCs, and in which combat is rare or something to be avoided rather than rushed into.

Firearms

If you want to model the swashbuckling style of *The Three Musketeers* and similar tales, you can introduce gunpowder weapons to your campaign that are associated with the Renaissance. Similarly, in a campaign where a spaceship has crashed or elements of modern-day Earth are present, futuristic or modern firearms might appear. The Firearms table provides examples of firearms from all three of those periods. The modern and futuristic items are priceless.

Proficiency

It's up to you to decide whether a character has proficiency with a firearm. Characters in most D&D worlds wouldn't have such proficiency. During their downtime, characters can use the training rules in the *Player's Handbook* to acquire proficiency, assuming that they have enough ammunition to keep the weapons working while mastering their use.

Properties

Firearms use special ammunition, and some of them have the burst fire or reload property.

Ammunition. The ammunition of a firearm is destroyed upon use. Renaissance and modern firearms use bullets. Futuristic firearms are powered by a special type of ammunition called energy cells. An energy cell contains enough power for all the shots its firearm can make.

Burst Fire. A weapon that has the burst fire property can make a normal single-target attack, or it can spray a 10-foot-cube area within normal range with shots. Each creature in the area must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or take the weapon's normal damage. This action uses ten pieces of ammunition.

Reload. A limited number of shots can be made with a weapon that has the reload property. A character must then reload it using an action or a bonus action (the character's choice).

Explosives

A campaign might include explosives from the Renaissance or the modern world (the latter are priceless), as presented in the Explosives table.

Bomb

As an action, a character can light this bomb and throw it at a point up to 60 feet away. Each creature within 5 feet of that point must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 3d6 fire damage.

Gunpowder

Gunpowder is chiefly used to propel a bullet out of the barrel of a pistol or rifle, or it is formed into a bomb. Gunpowder is sold in small wooden kegs and in water-resistant powder horns.

Setting fire to a container full of gunpowder can cause it to explode, dealing fire damage to creatures within 10 feet of it (3d6 for a powder horn, 7d6 for a keg). A successful DC 12 Dexterity saving throw halves the damage. Setting fire to an ounce of gunpowder causes it to flare for 1 round, shedding bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet.

Dynamite

As an action, a creature can light a stick of dynamite and throw it at a point up to 60 feet away. Each creature within 5 feet of that point must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 3d6 bludgeoning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

A character can bind sticks of dynamite together so they explode at the same time. Each additional stick increases the damage by 1d6 (to a maximum of 10d6) and the burst radius by 5 feet (to a maximum of 20 feet).

Dynamite can be rigged with a longer fuse to explode after a set amount of time, usually 1 to 6 rounds. Roll initiative for the dynamite. After the set number of rounds goes by, the dynamite explodes on that initiative.

GRENADES

As an action, a character can throw a grenade at a point up to 60 feet away. With a grenade launcher, the character can propel the grenade up to 120 feet away.

Each creature within 20 feet of an exploding **fragmentation grenade** must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 5d6 piercing damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

One round after a **smoke grenade** lands, it emits a cloud of smoke that creates a heavily obscured area in a 20-foot radius. A moderate wind (at least 10 miles per hour) disperses the smoke in 4 rounds; a strong wind (20 or more miles per hour) disperses it in 1 round.

FIGURING OUT ALIEN TECHNOLOGY

Int. Check Total	Result
9 or lower	One failure; one charge or use is wasted, if applicable; character has disadvantage on next check
10–14	One failure
15–19	One success
20 or higher	One success; character has advantage on next check

FIREARMS

Renaissance Item	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
Martial Ranged Weapons				
Pistol	250 gp	1d10 piercing	3 lb.	Ammunition (range 30/90), loading
Musket	500 gp	1d12 piercing	10 lb.	Ammunition (range 40/120), loading, two-handed
Ammunition				
Bullets (10)	3 gp	—	2 lb.	—

Modern Item	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
Martial Ranged Weapons				
Pistol, automatic	—	2d6 piercing	3 lb.	Ammunition (range 50/150), reload (15 shots)
Revolver	—	2d8 piercing	3 lb.	Ammunition (range 40/120), reload (6 shots)
Rifle, hunting	—	2d10 piercing	8 lb.	Ammunition (range 80/240), reload (5 shots), two-handed
Rifle, automatic	—	2d8 piercing	8 lb.	Ammunition (range 80/240), burst fire, reload (30 shots), two-handed
Shotgun	—	2d8 piercing	7 lb.	Ammunition (range 30/90), reload (2 shots), two-handed
Ammunition				
Bullets (10)	—	—	1 lb.	—

Futuristic Item	Cost	Damage	Weight	Properties
Martial Ranged Weapons				
Laser pistol	—	3d6 radiant	2 lb.	Ammunition (range 40/120), reload (50 shots)
Antimatter rifle	—	6d8 necrotic	10 lb.	Ammunition (range 120/360), reload (2 shots), two-handed
Laser rifle	—	3d8 radiant	7 lb.	Ammunition (range 100/300), reload (30 shots), two-handed
Ammunition				
Energy cell	—	—	5 oz.	—

ALIEN TECHNOLOGY

When adventurers find a piece of technology that isn't from their world or time period, the players might understand what the object is, but the characters rarely will. To simulate a character's ignorance about the technology, have the character make a series of Intelligence checks to figure it out.

To determine how the technology works, a character must succeed on a number of Intelligence checks based on the complexity of the item: two successes for a simple item (such as a cigarette lighter, calculator, or revolver) and four successes for a complex item (such as a computer, chainsaw, or hovercraft). Then consult the Figuring Out Alien Technology table. Consider making the item break if a character fails four or more times before taking a long rest.

A character who has seen an item used or has operated a similar item has advantage on Intelligence checks made to figure out its use.

EXPLOSIVES

Renaissance Item	Cost	Weight
Bomb	150 gp	1 lb.
Gunpowder, keg	250 gp	20 lb.
Gunpowder, powder horn	35 gp	2 lb.

Modern Item	Cost	Weight
Dynamite (stick)	—	1 lb.
Grenade, fragmentation	—	1 lb.
Grenade, smoke	—	2 lb.
Grenade launcher	—	7 lb.

PLOT POINTS

Plot points allow players to change the course of the campaign, introduce plot complications, alter the world, and even assume the role of the DM. If your first reaction to reading this optional rule is to worry that your players might abuse it, it's probably not for you.

USING PLOT POINTS

Each player starts with 1 plot point. During a session, a player can spend that point for one effect. The effect depends on your group's approach to this optional rule. Three options are presented below.

A player can spend no more than 1 plot point per session. You can increase this limit if you like, especially if you want the players to drive more of the story. Once every player at the table has spent a plot point, they each gain 1 plot point.

OPTION 1: WHAT A TWIST!

A player who spends a plot point gets to add some element to the setting or situation that the group (including you) must accept as true. For example, a player can spend a plot point and state that his or her character has found a secret door, an NPC appears, or a monster turns out to be a long-lost ally polymorphed into a horrid beast.

A player who wants to spend a plot point in this way should take a minute to discuss his or her idea with everyone else at the table and get feedback before settling on a plot development.

OPTION 2: THE PLOT THICKENS

Whenever a player spends a plot point, the player to his or her right must add a complication to the scene. For example, if the player who spends the plot point decides that her character has found a secret door, the player to the right might state that opening the door triggers a magical trap that teleports the party to another part of the dungeon.

OPTION 3: THE GODS MUST BE CRAZY

With this approach, there is no permanent DM. Everyone makes a character, and one person starts as the DM and runs the game as normal. That person's character becomes an NPC who can tag along with the group or remain on the sidelines, as the group wishes.

At any time, a player can spend a plot point to become the DM. That player's character becomes an NPC, and play continues. It's probably not a good idea to swap roles in the middle of combat, but it can happen if your group allows time for the new DM to settle into his or her role and pick up where the previous DM left off.

Using plot points in this way can make for an exciting campaign as each new DM steers the game in unexpected directions. This approach is also a great way for would-be DMs to try running a game in small, controlled doses.

In a campaign that uses plot points this way, everyone should come to the table with a bit of material prepared or specific encounters in mind. A player who isn't prepared or who doesn't feel like DMing can choose to not spend a plot point that session.

For this approach to work, it's a good idea to establish some shared assumptions about the campaign so that DMs aren't duplicating efforts or trampling on each other's plans.

COMBAT OPTIONS

The options in this section provide alternative ways to handle combat. The main risk of adding some of these rules is slowing down play.

INITIATIVE VARIANTS

This section offers different ways to handle initiative.

INITIATIVE SCORE

With this optional rule, creature don't roll initiative at the start of combat. Instead, each creature has an initiative score, which is a passive Dexterity check: 10 + Dexterity modifier.

By cutting down on die rolls, math done on the fly, and the process of asking for and recording totals, you can speed your game up considerably—at the cost of an initiative order that is often predictable.

SIDE INITIATIVE

Recording initiative for each PC and monster, arranging everyone in the correct order, and remembering where you are in the list can bog the game down. If you want quicker combats, at the risk of those combats becoming unbalanced, try using the side initiative rule.

Under this variant, the players roll a d20 for their initiative as a group, or side. You also roll a d20. Neither roll receives any modifiers. Whoever rolls highest wins initiative. In case of a tie, keep rerolling until the tie is broken.

When it's a side's turn, the members of that side can act in any order they choose. Once everyone on the side has taken a turn, the other side goes. A round ends when both sides have completed their turns.

If more than two sides take part in a battle, each side rolls for initiative. Sides act from the highest roll to lowest. Combat continues in the initiative order until the battle is complete.

This variant encourages teamwork and makes your life as a DM easier, since you can more easily coordinate monsters. On the downside, the side that wins initiative can gang up on enemies and take them out before they have a chance to act.

SPEED FACTOR

Some DMs find the regular progression of initiative too predictable and prone to abuse. Players can use their knowledge of the initiative order to influence their decisions. For example, a badly wounded fighter might charge a troll because he knows that the cleric goes before the monster and can heal him.

Speed factor is an option for initiative that introduces more uncertainty into combat, at the cost of speed of play. Under this variant, the participants in a battle roll initiative each round. Before rolling, each character or monster must choose an action.