



Yeet!



*By Bartholomew Klick
Art by Zach Stoppel*

Rules for Throwing Creatures in D&D 5e

Barbarians throw people, okay? And some of us, well, we need rules for that. This document is for everyone who thought hucking a halfling at a hag was a great idea right up to the moment when it came time to calculate distance and damage.

Below, you'll find a set of easy-to-implement rules for throwing creatures and reasonings for those rules.

Basis: Shove Attack Action

For most cases, the easiest way to model throwing an unwilling creature is the shove attack action. The shove attack action lets a character either knock a creature prone or else push it 5 feet. To do so, the attacker rolls athletics and the defender chooses either athletics or acrobatics to make a contested skill check. If the defender loses, they are shoved.

This means that, without changing the rules-as-written at all, player characters can throw a creature from one five-foot-square into another and deal zero damage.

We can call this reflavored Shove Attack Action the 'Throw-a-Creature' Action and start tinkering with it.

The Throw-a-Creature Attack Action

The Throw-a-Creature action requires a creature to be grappled.

Because this action can potentially do damage while also inflicting status conditions, having it require at least two attack actions is an important part of its balance.

If a grappled creature wins the contested check, that creature resists sufficiently and is not thrown.

Size Categories

5e favors simple game mechanics, so let's model throwing a creature off of size differences. This will make it so that these rules don't feel significantly different from RAW 5e.

When a creature throws another creature, they can throw it an additional 5 feet per size category they are larger than the target. For example, a medium dwarf could throw a small goblin 10 feet.

Some player races have traits that allow them to carry weight as if they were a size category larger than medium (as of this writing, there are no large-sized player races in official sources). This trait also allows creatures to use the Throw-a-Creature-Action as if they were a size category larger than normal.

For example, bugbears can carry items as if they were large creatures, so they can throw medium creatures as if they were large as well. Thus, a medium bugbear throwing the same small goblin could get 15 feet of distance.

A character cannot throw creatures larger than itself.

Distance and Strength Score

For every +1 strength modifier, a creature can throw a creature an additional 5 feet when using the Throw A Creature attack action.

Bart the Barbarian with his +5 strength modifier can throw a medium creature a whopping 25 feet – that's further than he can throw an improvised weapon!

The size difference rules can still mix with this, so if Bart the Barbarian is a Bugbear, he can throw that same creature 30 feet, and can throw a small creature like a goblin 35 feet.

Normal Damage

Throwing a creature 10 feet or more deals the attacker's strength modifier as bludgeoning damage.

A creature thrown any distance beyond 5 feet falls prone, unless they can make a Dexterity saving throw. The DC of the saving throw is 8 + the Strength modifier of the creature that threw it.

A warning. It's tempting to model throw-a-creature damage off of falling damage, but in





the interest of game balance, do not do this. The main problem with using fall damage for throwing-a-creature-damage is that throwing creatures quickly becomes the most efficient martial damage in the game. It can also be tempting for certain types of players to try to tweak fall damage with physics.

In the Thieves Can't office games, we play D&D with a local university's math PhD students, so we can confirm first hand that trying to model this damage off of physics increases the problem of the fall damage's effect on balance, and worse, it takes forever at the table. No one does a physics problem fast enough to not make combat drag on.

Extreme Damage

If a character uses the Throw-a-Creature action to hurl a creature as far as they can, but into an object that will bring the creature to a sudden stop, the creature takes 1d6 damage per size category smaller it is than the character (minimum 1d6). Hurling a creature into walls and other fixtures is not in this way more efficient than damage with weapons.

This damage is not cumulative with falling damage, should any occur.

Using a creature as a ranged weapon

A thrown creature and a creature being targeted both take the damage dealt to the thrown creature. This requires two attack actions, however; the Throw-a-Creature action and the Ranged Weapon Attack action.

Both creatures must pass the above-mentioned Dexterity Saving throw or fall prone.

If the character throwing a creature cannot make two attack actions, then at the DM's discretion, the creature targeted by the ranged weapon attack automatically dodges.

Throwing a Willing Creature

Use the exact same mechanics as above, but mention that the target can choose to fail the associated contested check. A willing creature still takes damage, but does not fall prone.

Credits

Design. Bartholomew Klick

Concept. Bartholomew Klick

Writing. Still Bart

Layout. Bart again.

Art. Zachary Stoppel

Background Image. u/Smyris

Cover Font. Honeymead BB by Blambot

Content Font. Constantia by John Hudson



This content is possible because of our awesome Patrons!

Sign up at patreon.com/thievescant

Read out comics at yesthievescan.com

