

WELCOME TO DEATH HOUSE...

...a launch event adventure for *Curse of Strahd*[™]. This adventure is designed for **1st and 2nd level characters**. Players whose characters finish the adventure will reach 3rd level at the end. This adventure can take from 12–16 hours to complete, though the recommended session length is 2 hours. The full for-sale adventure contains additional play beyond this complimentary adventure (see “Additional Play” below).

Playing this adventure in-store as a part of *Curse of Strahd D&D Adventurers League* Launch Event is fun and offers additional benefits to enhance the experience. Players and Dungeon Masters (DMs) can also download and print out the free kit from the Dungeon Masters Guild (www.dmsguild.com). If you received this adventure and aren't currently associated with a store, you can find a nearby store by heading to the [Store and Event Locator](#) and selecting Dungeons & Dragons® from the top menu.

Season Length

The *Curse of Strahd* storyline season runs from Friday, March 4, 2016 through Sunday, June 19, 2016. This edition of the adventure contains enough play for 6 to 8 sessions. If you start the adventure the first week and play the sessions in the recommended 2-hour weekly increments, you will finish this complimentary edition well before the end of the season. You are not limited to running this material only once during that time period. In fact, you can continue to use this until the next Launch Event is available.

BEFORE EACH PLAY SESSION

This adventure is designed for **three to seven 1st or 2nd level characters**, and optimized for five characters. Players that have characters outside of that level range cannot participate in the adventure with those characters. Players with ineligible characters can make a new 1st-level character or use a pre-generated character. Players may play an adventure they previously played or Dungeon

Mastered, but not with the same character (if applicable).

Ensure that each player has an official Adventure Logsheet for their character. The player will fill out the adventure name, session number, date, and your name and DCI number. In addition, the player also fills in the starting values for XP, gold, downtime, renown, and number of permanent magic items. They'll fill in the other values and write notes at the conclusion of the session. Each player is responsible for maintaining an accurate logsheet.

You can do a quick scan of a player's character sheet to ensure that nothing looks out of order. If you see magic items of very high rarities or strange arrays of ability scores, you can ask a player to provide documentation for the irregularities. If they cannot, feel free to restrict item use or ask them to use a standard ability score array. Point the player to the *D&D Adventurers League* Player's Guide for reference.

CHARACTER ADVANCEMENT

In *Death House*, there are specific points in the adventure when characters level up. When you get to the place in the adventure that indicates the adventurers advance to 2nd level, award 300 XP to each character and allow them to level up, as well as take a long rest. When the adventurers complete the adventure, award an addition 600 XP, which will bring them up to 3rd level.

It is important to note that this is different from standard *D&D Adventurers League* XP awards. It is okay if a character doesn't necessarily play in every single session that you go ahead and give them XP anyways. For example, if a character plays in the first 2 sessions, but XP is awarded at the end of session 3, when they return, you can go ahead and award them XP. Likewise, if a character joins the adventure for the first time in a session after the XP has been awarded, then they must wait until the next time XP is awarded in order to receive experience awards. Either way, use your best judgement, and do your best to avoid 'feel-bad' moments.

DUNGEON MASTERING TIPS

As the DM of the session, you have the most important role in facilitating the enjoyment of the game for the players. You help guide the narrative and bring the words on these pages to life. The outcome of a fun game session often creates stories that live well beyond the play at the table. Always follow this golden rule when you DM for a group:

Make decisions and adjudications that enhance the fun of the adventure when possible.

To reinforce this golden rule, keep in mind the following:

- You are empowered to make adjustments to the adventure and make decisions about how the group interacts with the world of this adventure. This is especially important and applicable outside of combat, but feel free to use the guidelines to adjust the adventure in the sidebar for groups that are having too easy or too hard of a time in an adventure.
- Don't make the adventure too easy or too difficult for a group. Never being challenged makes for a boring game, and being overwhelmed makes for a frustrating game. Gauge the experience of the players (not the characters) with the game, try to feel out (or ask) what they like in a game, and attempt to give each of them the experience they're after when they play D&D. Give everyone a chance to shine.
- The focus of *Death House* is exploration, so provide as much detail to the players as possible, and feel free to find ways to enhance the mood of the adventure in a manner that is appropriate to a horror-fantasy setting. Be patient with the players and allow them to look in every nook and cranny. Feel free to surprise them at every turn. It is okay to add elements that you find creepy or disgusting, as long as they enhance the mood without being inappropriate.
- Since the adventure is not conveniently broken up into two-hour sessions, it is up to you as the Dungeon Master to determine good stopping points. It is okay to stop a bit early if you've come to a convenient stopping point. Try not to begin

a new combat too close to your established end time, whatever that may be.

In short, being the DM isn't about following the adventure's text word-for-word; it's about facilitating a fun, challenging game environment for the players. The *Dungeon Master's Guide™* has more information on the art of Dungeon Mastering.

ADDITIONAL PLAY

Once you complete *Death House*, your players have a couple options available to experience more of the *Curse of Strahd* storyline through the *D&D Adventurers League!*

Continue the Adventure. You can continue to play the published adventure, *Curse of Strahd* as an official part of the *D&D Adventurers League*.

- Players will track all rewards earned session to session on their logsheet.
- Apply all other *D&D Adventurers League* rules as presented in the Player's Guide.
- Each character earns 5 downtime days at the end of each game session.

Play D&D Adventurers League. *D&D Adventurers League* adventures are available to select stores and at public play events outside of stores, such as conventions. Each adventure takes approximately 2-4 hours to complete. New adventures for the current season are available monthly, starting in April, 2016.