

New Haggling Mechanic

In order to make haggling more a test of skill and less of a case of badgering the dm (me) until you get the price you want, I'm introducing a new mechanism for haggling with traders. The mechanic applies to both buying and selling. For explaining the rules, I will focus on buying, but selling is identical, with the exception that the changes are reversed (you decrease the price when buying, increase when selling. You decrease the perceived value when buying; you increase the perceived value when selling)

Haggling uses three main skills; Bluff, Diplomacy and Intimidate, split over three phases; opening gambit, bartering and the hard sell.

Opening gambit

This is where you attempt to bluff the trader into thinking his wares aren't actually worth as much as he thinks they are. You can make a bluff check with a starting DC of 10 + the group's average bluff rounded up. For example if the group average is 2.3, the check will be DC10 + 3, for an average of say 4.3, it would be DC10+5.

You then apply a modifier of +1 to the DC for every 10% you wish to reduce the perceived value. For example, reducing the price by 40% would result in a check of DC10+5 (group average) + 4

Only one player can make a bluff on any given item.

Bartering

Once the opening value of the item has been established, one player can begin to haggle with the trader. This uses Diplomacy and works in a similar way to the Opening Gambit, with a few differences.

Firstly, a player can only make a limited number of haggles, depending on whether or not they made an opening gambit. If they did, they can make up to 3 haggles, with a maximum of 2 failures. If they chose not to bluff at the start, they can make up to 5 haggles with a maximum of 4 failures.

If a player fails a haggle check, they must haggle from a lower percentage before they can begin haggling back up.

The check is a Diplomacy DC10 + group average + discount/10

Hard Sell

Once a final price is established, if the player isn't happy, they can attempt a hard sell to get the price they want using Intimidate. This represents them threatening to take their business elsewhere or spreading bad word of the store, rather than actually threatening the seller. This is a single pass/fail check, with a failure resulting in the player having to accept the original selling price (after the Opening Gambit). The check is Diplomacy DC10 + group average + discount/10 + d4. The d4 represents how vulnerable the seller is to this kind of intimidation. Once a player has made a hard sell, the seller will no longer sell to them and there will be a +5 modifier to all other haggles for the rest of the group, representing the seller being 'annoyed' with the manner of the players.

Scroll down of an example of the mechanic

Example

Raron is trying to get a discount on a magical axe from Mordi the weapons trader. The axe has a listed price of 700GP.

Raron: Hmmm, I believe this axe is actually only worth 420GP (40% opening gambit reduction).
Group Bluff Average rounds to 5, so the check is DC10+5+4
Raron roles a 21 for Bluff, so he passes. Mordi now believes the weapon is only worth 420GP.

Mordi: Hmmm, you might be right, fine, 420GP it is.

R: Well, do you think you could do me a 20% discount?
DC17 Diplomacy, rolls an 18

M: Okay, I can stretch to that.

R: What about stretching to a 40% discount?
DC19, rolls 10

M: Oh gods no, I can't go that low
Raron must start from a lower percentage than the one he just haggled, but equal or higher than his last success.

R: Okay, what about say 30%?
DC18, rolls 20

M: Seems fair enough, I can do 30

R: Okay, well what about 60%?
DC21. Rolls 20, this is Rarons last failure. He must either settle for the last success or hard sell

M: I can no way go that low!

R: Listen my good man, I happen to know a lot of influential dwarves who may, or may not choose to shop here, if you understand me? So are you going to give me that 60, no, 70% discount for my troubles, or am I going to have spread word of your poor customer service?
Intimidate DC10 + 5 +7 +d4 (3) = DC25, rolls 26

M: Okay, okay, I'm sorry; of course you can have a discount, and please tell all your friends.

R: Don't worry, I will.

Specific Circumstances

- 1) A player could potentially try and bluff a seller that the item in question is worthless (100% reduction of starting value. This can be performed once only by one player. Any further attempts to convince a seller of being in possession of worthless items will result in a 90% maximum reduction. If this succeeds, then there are no further phases.
- 2) Attempting to negotiate a 100% discount during the bartering phases. This will only work once for one player and no further bartering takes place.