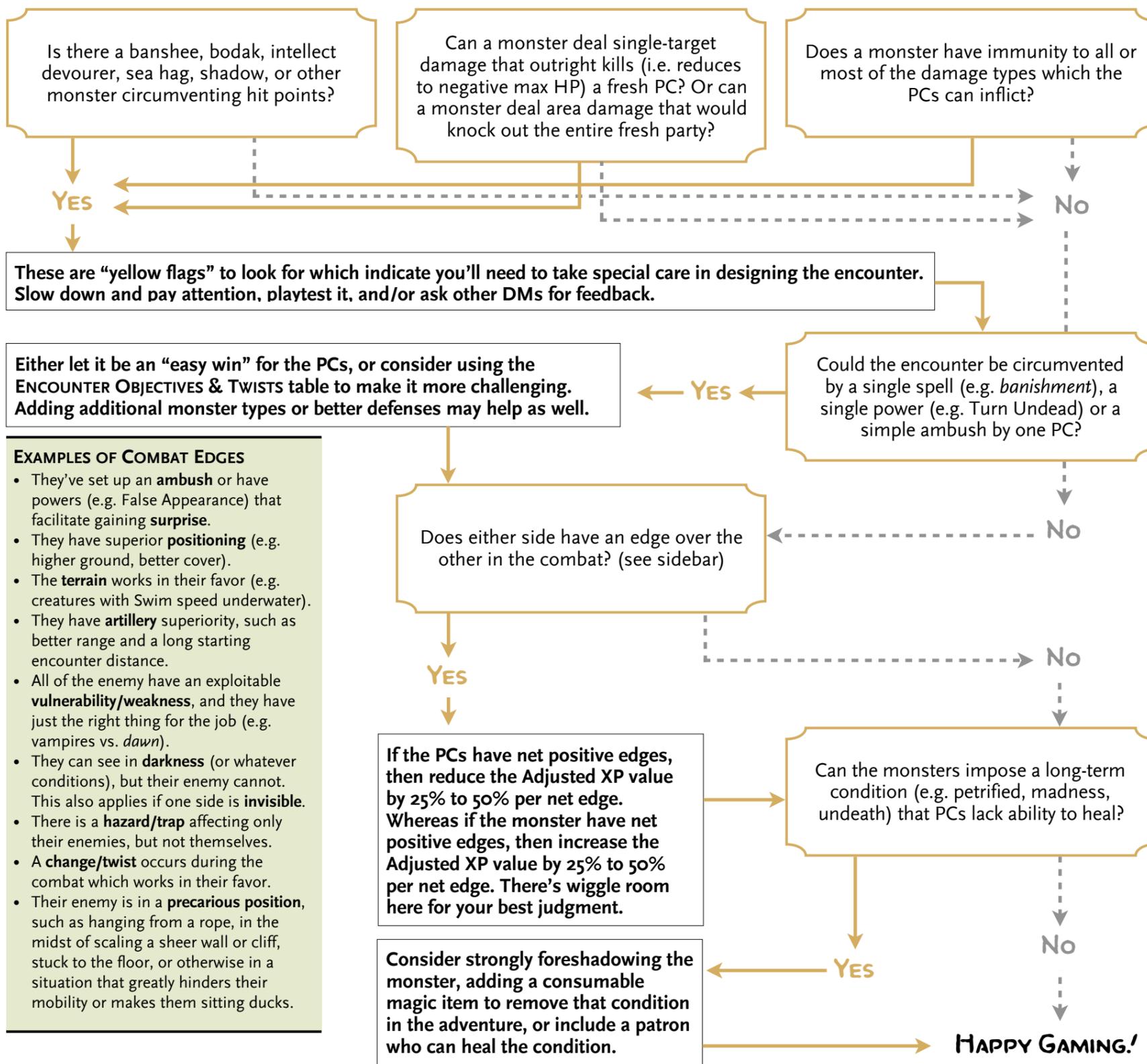


QUICKLEAF'S 5E COMBAT ENCOUNTER CHEAT SHEET

- CONCEPT** Can you distill your encounter to a 1-3 sentence concept? Use the ENCOUNTER OBJECTIVES & TWISTS table to help you out. Consider what's at stake beyond bodily harm: capture? reputation? splitting the party? losing a patron? highlighting a flaw?
- MONSTER SELECTION** Choose monsters with an eye towards the story, the terrain, and synchronicity of monster abilities.
- QUICK CHECK BALANCE** Determine the adjusted XP for your encounter ([Kobold Fight Club Plus](#) or DMG) and make sure it falls below the Adventuring Day XP Budget for the party *and* below the Approx. % Max value.
- DEVISE MONSTER STRATEGY** How do these monsters fight? Keith Ammann's [The Monsters Know](#) is a great resource.
- USE THE FLOWCHART** Follow the flowchart below to avoid most of the usual pitfalls when building encounters.

THE FLOWCHART



EXAMPLES OF COMBAT EDGES

- They've set up an **ambush** or have powers (e.g. False Appearance) that facilitate gaining **surprise**.
- They have superior **positioning** (e.g. higher ground, better cover).
- The **terrain** works in their favor (e.g. creatures with Swim speed underwater).
- They have **artillery** superiority, such as better range and a long starting encounter distance.
- All of the enemy have an exploitable **vulnerability/weakness**, and they have just the right thing for the job (e.g. vampires vs. *dawn*).
- They can see in **darkness** (or whatever conditions), but their enemy cannot. This also applies if one side is **invisible**.
- There is a **hazard/trap** affecting only their enemies, but not themselves.
- A **change/twist** occurs during the combat which works in their favor.
- Their enemy is in a **precarious position**, such as hanging from a rope, in the midst of scaling a sheer wall or cliff, stuck to the floor, or otherwise in a situation that greatly hinders their mobility or makes them sitting ducks.

ADVENTURING DAY XP BUDGET

Lvl	Adjusted XP per Day per Character	Approx. % Max	Lvl	Adjusted XP per Day per Character	Approx. % Max
1	300	25%	11	10,500	100%
2	600	30%	12	11,500	100%
3	1,200	35%	13	13,500	100%
4	1,700	40%	14	15,000	100%
5	3,500	50%	15	18,000	100%
6	4,000	50%	16	20,000	100%
7	5,000	70%	17	25,000	100%+
8	6,000	70%	18	27,000	100%+
9	7,500	80%	19	30,000	100%+
10	9,000	80%	20	40,000	100%+

"Approx % Max" indicates about what percentage of the Daily XP Budget you can throw in a single encounter before becoming too much for the PCs. For a smaller group or inexperienced players, err on the side of caution.

ENCOUNTER GOALS & TWISTS

dzo	Goals	Twists
1	Defend the innocent	Players don't control rest
2	Stop the ritual	Monster retreat to (trapped) lair
3	Encourage enemy defection or identify a defector	PCs' goal changes mid-combat due to new revelations
4	Break their morale	Monsters' goal changes
5	The floor is lava	Ruthlessly target downed PCs
6	Hold the line	PCs are separated or distant
7	Prevent enemy's return	Hazard or trap activates
8	Mêlée à trois	Third party enters the fray
9	Prove your worth	Monster reinforcements
10	McGuffin hot potato	Tie-in to one of the PC's stories
11	Plant evidence/tracker	Unique magical conditions
12	Get them to see reason	Monsters aren't what they appear
13	Prevent alarm	Threaten to raise alarm
14	Solve the puzzle	Monstrous rivalry
15	Protect the VIP	Dramatic terrain change
16	Capture the flag	Golden opportunity for special power of a PC to be used
17	King of the hill	Tempting loot in risky situation
18	Espionage/recon	Foreshadows a looming threat or major plot twist
19	Sabotage/destroy the object	We cannot defeat it! Flee you fools!
20	Roll twice and combine	An extra goal such as "and don't get caught" or "and keep one alive"