

Proposed changes to the Experience Point System

- You no longer gain, or need, XP to level. PCs level when the DM decides (which is usually pretty obvious, about once every 10 sessions for us.)
- PCs end up with $5 + 1/2$ lvl Action Points per level. The 5 points are kept track of separately from the others. Action Points can be used as per the rules on the SRD (see below); in general, an Action Point can be spent to add 1-6 points to a d20 roll or break the rules in some small, interesting way. I plan to be flexible with this, and if the PCs have other good ideas on the fly, that's fine. APs usually only apply to one die roll or one action.
- APs other than the 5 automatic ones can be turned in at 1000 xp/AP to form an xp pool. This pool can be used to power xp-draining spells, make magic items, and the like. In order to power such things, one character may donate his xp pool to another character at a conversion rate of 3 per 1. The two (or more) characters must be touching when this occurs.

The supporting character may donate all of the required xp if he has enough APs. Be aware that when making items, the item being made may reflect the supporting character in some way (more relevant for intelligent items, but anything is possible)

Example 1: Dranko and Aravis wish to help Morningstar cast *miracle*. Morningstar spends 3 APs for 3000 xp, and Dranko and Aravis each spend 3 AP to help him; those APs from Dranko and Aravis convert to a pool of 1000 xp each. With 5000 xp to fuel it, the *miracle* goes off.

Example 2: Greywolf wishes to cast *limited wish*. He burns 1 AP, giving him 1000 xp in his xp pool. He uses 300 of that xp to cast the spell, and has 700 xp left over for future powers or item creation.

Example 3: Flicker wants to donate the xp required to make +4 gloves of dexterity. Kibi will make it, but Flicker donates 2 AP. This creates an xp pool of $(2000/3=667)$ xp. The gloves require 640 xp to construct, so Kibi spends no xp and Flicker has a measly 27 xp left over in his pool. It still costs the normal amount of GP to make.

- At the end of a level, all remaining APs and xp pools disappear and are fully renewed. (I expect that folks will use up their remaining APs in the final battles, or make magic items before they train. That's just fine.)
- PCs are responsible for tracking their own APs and xp pools.
- ~~• If a PC dies and is raised, they suffer a negative level from the death until they complete a quest that is mandated by the God whose power raised them. There is no way to circumvent this negative level, other than using magic like true resurrection in the first place. The negative level has physical and spiritual signs, and there may be societal implications to having returned from the dead.~~
- NPCs don't generally get any Action Points. Cohorts get 5 action points: enough to save their butt in times of crisis or pull the fat out of the fryer when really needed, not enough to be cooler than the hero. A player decides when a cohort uses their Action Points, not the DM, and the player is responsible for tracking them.

Metagame Analysis: Action Points

Action points give character the means to affect game play in significant ways, by improving important rolls or unlocking special abilities. Each character has a limited number of action points, and once an action point is spent, it is gone for good. Action points give players some control over poor die rolls. Although this has little effect in an average encounter, it makes it a little more likely that characters will survive extremely challenging encounters and less likely that a single character will fall to what would otherwise be a balanced foe because of bad luck. A reserve of action points lets even careful players expose their characters to more risks, heightening the game's tension and opening the door to even more heroic action. This variant also makes it less likely that an entire adventuring group will fall victim to one powerful effect, such as circle of death or cloudkill.

Action points also make it more likely that the use of a character's most potent abilities will be successful. For example, although its overall effect on an encounter might be minimal, few things frustrate a paladin more than missing with a smite attack—an event that becomes less likely when using action points.

That said, action points can also lead characters to routinely get in over their heads (relying on action points to save themselves), and for GMs to unconsciously increase the difficulty of encounters (since characters are more likely to succeed against foes of equal power). This is as fine as long as the characters have a reserve of such points to spend—but if they run out, encounters that would otherwise be merely challenging can become incredibly deadly. Keep the number of action points available to your characters in mind when designing encounters.

Using Action Points

You can spend 1 action point either to add to a single d20 roll, to take a special action, or to improve the use of a feat.

You can spend 1 action point in a round. If you spend a point to use a special action (see below), you can't spend another one in the same round to improve a die roll, and vice versa.

Add to a Roll

Character Level Action Point Dice Rolled

15th-20th	3d6
21st-25th	4d6

When you spend 1 action point to improve a d20 roll, you add the result of a 1d6 to your d20 roll (including attack rolls, saves, checks, or any other roll of a d20) to help you meet or exceed the target number. You can declare the use of 1 action point to alter a d20 roll after the roll is made, but only before the GM reveals the result of that roll. You can't use an action point to alter the result of a d20 roll when you are taking 10 or taking 20.

Depending on character level (see table), a character might be able to roll more than one d6 when he spends 1 action point. If so, **apply the highest result and disregard the other rolls**. A 15th-level character, for instance, gets to roll 3d6 and take the best result of the three. So, if he rolled a 1, 2, and 4, he would apply the 4 to his d20 roll.

Special Actions

A character can perform certain tasks by spending an action point.

Activate Class Ability: A character can spend 1 action point to gain another use of a class ability that has a limited number of uses per day. For example, a monk might spend an action point to gain another use of her stunning fist ability, or a paladin might spend an action point to make an additional smite attack.

Boost Defense: A character can spend 1 action point as a free action when fighting defensively. This gives him double the normal benefits for fighting defensively for the entire round (+4 dodge bonus to AC; +6 if he has 5 or more ranks in Tumble).

Emulate Feat: At the beginning of a character's turn, he may spend 1 action point as a free action to gain the benefit of a feat he doesn't have. He must meet the prerequisites of the feat. He gains the benefit until the beginning of his next turn.

~~**Extra Attack:** During any round in which a character takes a full attack action, he may spend 1 action point to make an extra attack at his highest base attack bonus. Action points may be used in this way with both melee and ranged attacks.~~

Ignore attack of Opportunity: A character may spend 1 action point to perform an action that would normally draw an attack of opportunity. He must decide whether or not to use this action point before the AoO is resolved.

Improve feat: A character can roughly double the effect of any one feat (other than metamagic feats) that they already possess. Each effect requires a free action to activate and lasts 1 round. Ask Kevin for details.

Spell Boost: A character can spend 1 action point as a free action to increase the effective caster level of one of his spells by 2. He must decide whether or not to spend an action point in this manner before casting the spell.

Spell Recall: Spellcasters who prepare their spells in advance can spend 1 action point to recall any spell just cast. The spell can be cast again later with no effect on other prepared spells. This use of an action point is a free action and can only be done in the same round that the spell is cast. Spontaneous spellcasters such as sorcerers and bards can spend 1 action point to cast a spell without using one of their daily spell slots. This use of an action point is a free action and can only be done as the spell is being cast.

Stable: Any time a character is dying, he can spend 1 action point to become stable at his current hit point total.