Combat with Floor Plans

A Basic Fantasy RPG Supplement

Basic Fantasy Website: basicfantasy.org

INTRODUCTION

Whilst the **Basic Fantasy Role-Playing Game** (BFRPG) was not specifically designed for use with floor plans and miniatures, many players use such tools in their games. In particular, floor plans can be a useful aid for visualising combat. They also tend to promote a slightly more tactical style of play. Furthermore, with the increasing availability of virtual tabletop software such as Roll20 and MapTool, it has never been easier to incorporate floor plans into play.

The intention of this supplement is to provide a coherent ruleset for resolving combat in BFRPG using floor plans and miniatures. These guidelines generally follow the rules described in the BFRPG Core Rulebook. However, there are inevitably some slight modifications and extensions of the core rules in the interests of achieving consistent play.

As with any other supplement, treat this document as a set of house rules that can be tailored according to your own preferred playing style.

If you do not already have a copy of the Basic Fantasy RPG rules, please visit the website and download a copy.

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Photo courtesy of Turko from the Dragonsfoot.org forums

WHAT DO I NEED?

Floor Plans

A wide range of floor plan options are available. For example:

- Pre-printed floor plans – these typically depict a particular location (*e.g.* a tavern, a crypt, a wilderness, *etc.*), or come as a set of smaller "tiles" that can be configured to suit. You'll find these at your local/online game store.

- Downloadable floor plans – as above, but for self-printing. DriveThruRPG.com is a good starting point, but there are plenty of other sources available. They can also often be used in conjunction with virtual tabletop software (see below).

- Gridded paper (such as that offered by gamingpaper.com) – exactly as it sounds: rolls of paper, pre-printed with a grid, on to which a combat scene can be drawn. A relatively cheap and very flexible option.

- Write/wipe battle mats (such as those offered by Chessex) – vinyl mats with a pre-printed grid that can be drawn upon with felt tip pens and then wiped clean. Again, very flexible, if a little pricey. However, probably a sound investment if used regularly.

Miniatures

The options for miniatures are similarly wide ranging:

- Specialist 25 mm figures. There are two main varieties – metal (traditionally more detailed) and plastic (usually cheaper). The collection and painting of such figures is a hobby in its own right.

- Cardboard stand-ups.

- Or, really, any other sort of token of an appropriate size. The only requirements are that it should be possible to distinguish between combatants, and that there should be some way of determining the direction in which each combatant is facing.

Virtual Tabletops

As an alternative to physical floor plans and miniatures, virtual tabletop software can be used to depict combat on a computer or tablet. Virtual tabletops are primarily designed for online play, but they can also work well for face-to-face games. Two popular free-to-use systems are Roll20 (www.roll20.net) and MapTool (www.rptools.net).
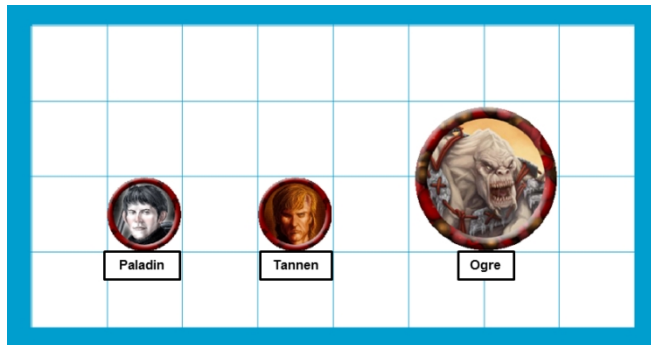

Skirmishing with skeletons: gridded paper floor plans and cardboard stand-up miniatures (top); printed dungeon tiles and plastic 25 mm miniatures (middle); MapTool (bottom).

THE FLOOR PLAN

- Use a square grid.

- Each square represents a 5' x 5' area.
- Small and Medium sized combatants (i.e. up to about human-sized) occupy one square each. Large combatants will generally occupy more than one square - this is discussed in the Special Circumstances section.

Paladin, a halfling (Small) and Tannen, a human (Medium) occupy one square each. The ogre (Large) occupies 4 squares.
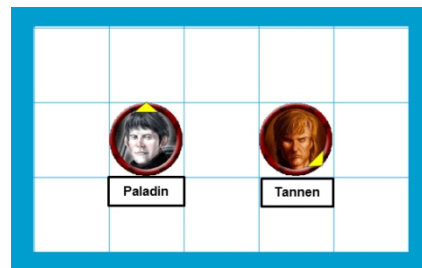
- In general, no more than one combatant may occupy a single given square. There are a few exceptions to this. Wrestling (ENCOUNTER section of the BFRPG Core Rulebook) is one such exception. Combatants may also enter the same square as another dead, unconscious, or otherwise incapacitated and prone combatant. Furthermore, as described in the Movement section, combatants may move through a square that is occupied by an ally.

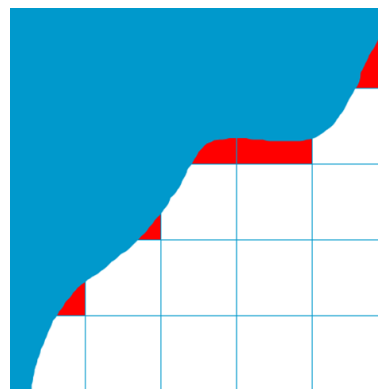*Photo courtesy of Turko from the Dragonsfoot.org forums.*

- Each combatant also has an associated facing, i.e. the direction in which they are looking. This may be towards any one of their eight immediately adjacent squares. If using miniatures, the figure should be turned to face that direction. Virtual tabletop software often has a facility to indicate the facing of a combatant. Facing is important for resolving aspects such as attacks from behind.

Paladin is facing north; Tannen is facing south-east.

- There will be occasions when the available space in a given square is partially restricted by background scenery. Irregular cavern walls tend to do this, as do items of furniture, vegetation, rivers, and other similar features. In general, such squares may only be entered by a combatant if more than half of the square is free of such obstructions. If there is any doubt, the GM makes the final ruling.

Along this section of cave wall, the squares coloured red cannot be entered by a combatant because more than half of their area is covered by the wall.
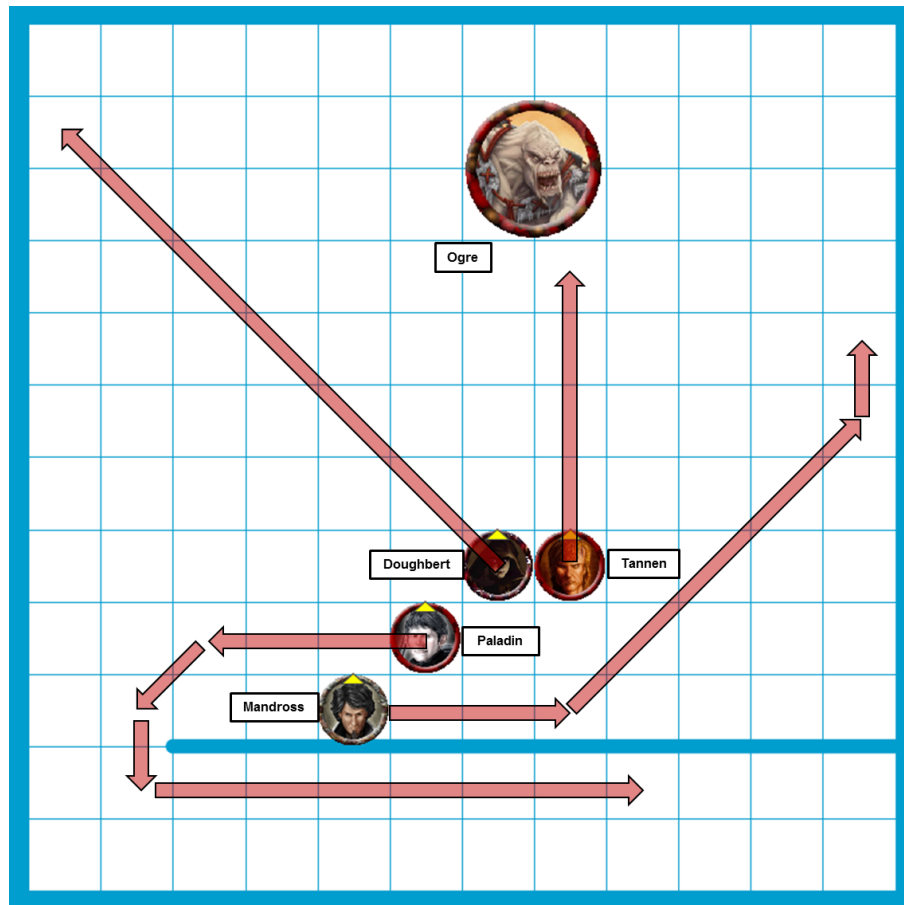
MOVEMENT

- In a given round, each combatant may walk a distance up to their movement rate and then attack.

- Alternatively, a combatant may run a distance up to twice their movement rate. In this case, they do not get to attack during that round.

- Each square of movement in a horizontal, vertical or diagonal direction costs 5' of a combatant's total movement allowance.

- Virtual tabletop software often auto-counts movement distances, which can be a useful feature.

- The GM may impose additional movement costs to account for obstacles or difficult terrain. For example, the GM might decide that it costs an extra 5' of movement to cross a small barrier

such as a table, a bench or a relatively low wall. Or the GM might rule that combatants can only move at half their normal rate when climbing steep stairs or wading through water. This is entirely optional and at the discretion of the GM.

- A combatant my move unimpeded through a square that is occupied by an ally. However, they are still subject to any other movement restrictions that might apply.

- As soon as a combatant enters a square that is adjacent to an opponent (horizontally, vertically or diagonally) they are considered to be engaged in melee. This immediately imposes movement restrictions upon them (see the **Melee Combat** section).

- One of the more problematic types of movement to resolve is simultaneous movement when two combatants act on the same initiative. This is discussed in the **Special Circumstances** section.

Armour / Encumbrance	Movement Rate per Round	Examples of Floor Plan Movement
No Armour / Magic Leather Lightly Loaded	40'	Walk up to 8 squares horizontally, vertically or diagonally and then attack Run up to 16 squares horizontally, vertically or diagonally
No Armour / Magic Leather Heavily Loaded Leather Armour / Magic Metal Lightly Loaded	30'	Walk up to 6 squares horizontally, vertically or diagonally and then attack Run up to 12 squares horizontally, vertically or diagonally
Leather Armour / Magic Metal Heavily Loaded Metal Armour Lightly Loaded	20'	Walk up to 4 squares horizontally, vertically or diagonally and then attack Run up to 8 squares horizontally, vertically or diagonally
Metal Armour Heavily Loaded	10'	Walk up to 2 squares horizontally, vertically or diagonally and then attack Run up to 4 squares horizontally, vertically or diagonally

Photo courtesy of Turko from the Dragonsfoot.org forums.

Movement example: Tannen (movement rate 20') walks forward to engage the ogre in melee; he can attack this round with his sword. Doughbert (movement rate 30') walks diagonally; he can attack this round with his short bow. Mandross (movement rate 40') uses a combination of horizontal, vertical and diagonal walking movement; he may also attack this round. Paladin (movement rate 30') runs away; he may move a distance up to twice his normal movement rate (i.e. 60'), but may not attack this round.

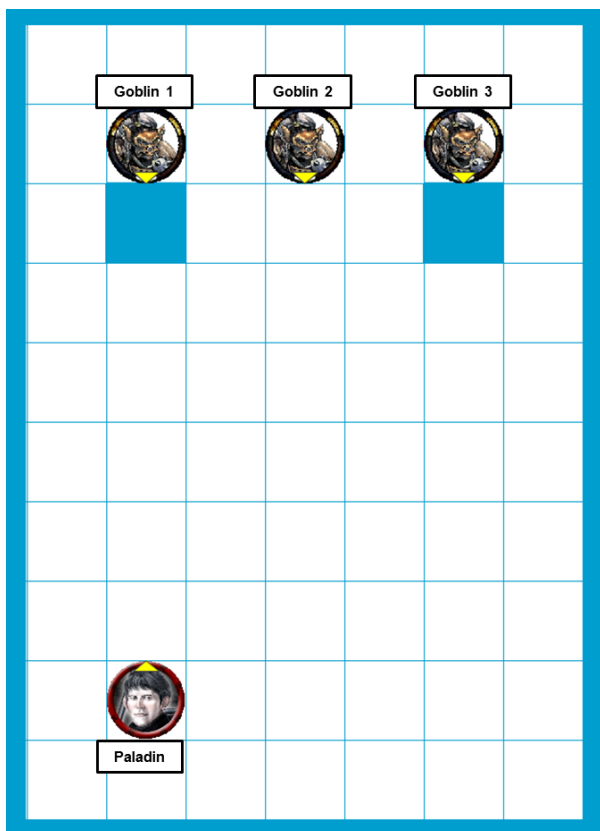*Photo courtesy of Ravendas from the Dragonsfoot.org forums.*

MISSILE FIRE

- For a combatant to be able make a missile attack, two conditions must be fulfilled:

- An opponent must be within range of the missile weapon being used.

- The combatant must have a line of sight to their opponent. A combatant has a line of sight if they can draw a straight line from a point in their square into the square of their opponent without passing through an obstruction.

- However, even if the combatant doesn't have a completely clear line of sight, the GM may still allow a missile attack depending on the nature of the obstruction and the amount of cover it provides. Follow the **Cover and Concealment** rules in the ENCOUNTER section of the BFRPG Core Rulebook.
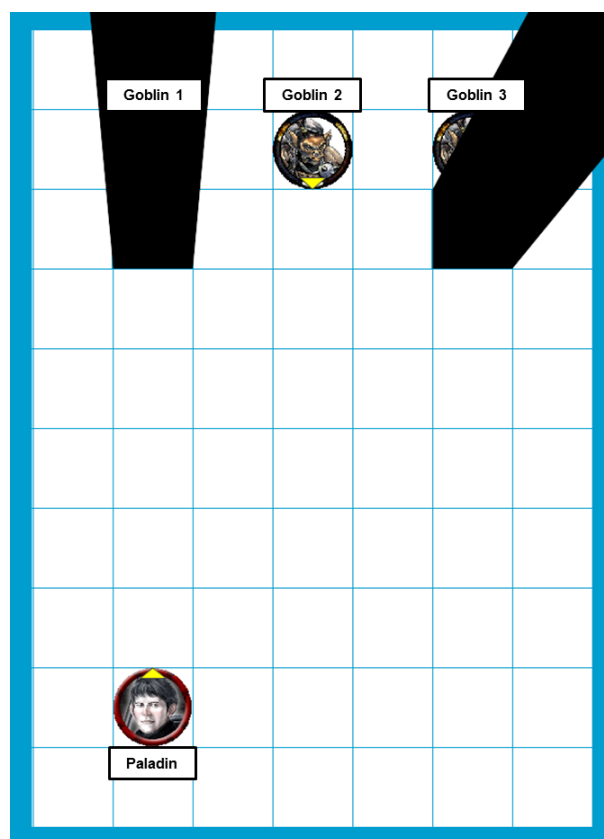
- Missile fire through a square occupied by an ally is allowed at the discretion of the GM. In such circumstances the GM may decide to apply a penalty to the "to hit" roll if it is judged that the presence of the ally makes the shot more difficult (in a similar fashion to the Cover and Concealment rules).

Photo courtesy of Turko from the Dragonsfoot.org forums.

Missile fire example 1: Paladin cannot fire at Goblin 1 – he has no line of sight. Paladin has a clear line of sight to Goblin 2 and can fire normally. Goblin 3 has partial cover - at the GM's discretion Paladin may fire with a suitable penalty.
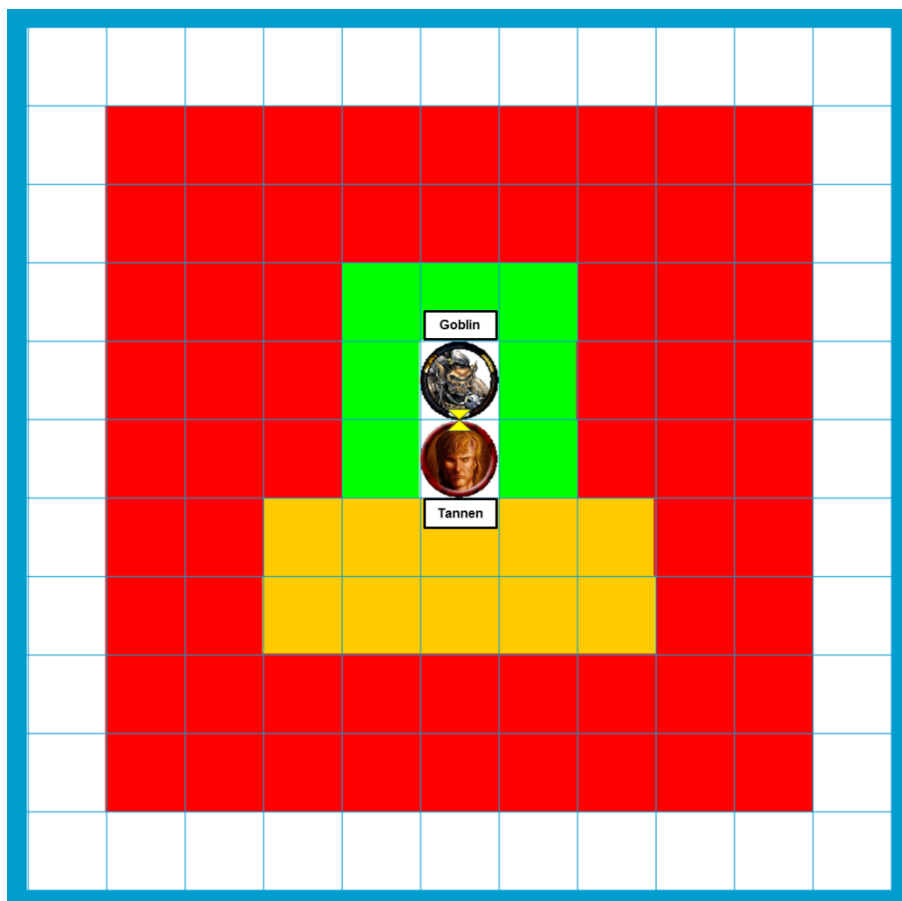

Missile fire example 2: The same situation as Example 1, but with MapTool's "fog-of-war" functionality activated. The areas shaded black are those that Paladin cannot see because of the cover. This can be a useful feature for determining line of sight.
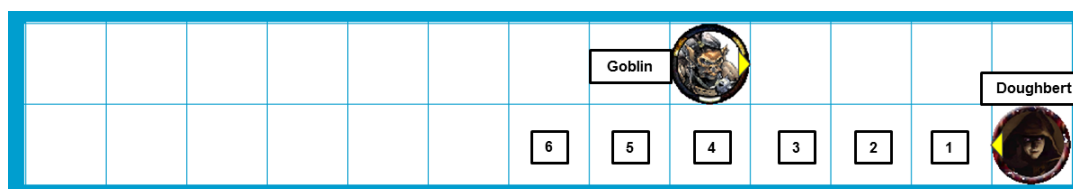
MELEE COMBAT

- As soon as two opposing combatants become adjacent to one another (horizontally, vertically or diagonally) they are considered to be engaged in melee. This immediately imposes movement restrictions upon them.

- When it is their turn to attack, a melee combatant may (in this order):

  1. Move up to half their normal movement rate, _provided that this doesn't take them out of melee with any of their opponents_. Their opponent(s) is/are free to change their facing(s) to track this movement provided that they are aware of the combatant. If the combatant _does_ wish to move out of melee with any of their opponents, refer to the rules on **Fighting Withdrawals** and **Fleeing** below.

  2. Make one change of facing (i.e. turn to face any given direction).

  3. Attack any opponent who is in one of the five squares in front of them or to the side of them. A combatant may not attack an opponent who is in one of the three squares behind them.

- If a combatant wishes to disengage from melee, they have two options: either a Fighting Withdrawal or Fleeing. Only the latter puts the combatant at risk of a **Parting Shot** (see below).

- A Fighting Withdrawal allows a combatant to back away from melee at up to half their normal movement rate. A combatant may still attack as normal after performing a Fighting Withdrawal if there is an opponent in range.

- If a combatant simply moves out of a square that is adjacent to an opponent without performing a Fighting Withdrawal (i.e. at normal walking or running speed), then this is classed as Fleeing and the combatant exposes themselves to a Parting Shot. This allows their opponent to make an immediate attack at +2 "to hit" in accordance with the **Defensive Movement** rules in the ENCOUNTER section of the BFRPG Core Rulebook. This Parting Shot is in addition to any action a combatant has already made or is yet to make in a given round. A combatant may only make one Parting Shot against a given opponent in a given round.

Photo courtesy of Ravendas from the Dragonsfoot.org forums.

Melee example 1: Tannen (movement rate 20') is engaged in melee with a goblin. He may move to any of the green squares (10', half his movement rate), make one change of facing and then attack. In this case, the goblin may also adjust its facing to track Tannen's movement. Alternatively, Tannen may make a fighting withdrawal (again, 10', half his movement rate) and move to any of the orange squares. If he moves to any of the red squares (20', his full movement rate, or further if he is running) he will be Fleeing and will be subject to a Parting Shot from the goblin.

Melee example 2: Doughbert (movement 30') wants to move west past the goblin. He may move 5' or 10' into squares 1 and 2 and then, if he wishes, make a missile attack. Alternatively, he may move 15' or 25' into squares 3 or 4 and make a melee attack on the goblin (it costs him 25' feet to move to square 4 because in-melee movement – from square 3 to square 4 - is at half the normal rate, i.e. it costs 10' to move one square). To reach square 5 will cost him 35' of movement – this means he must run, and so he will not be able to make a melee attack this round. If he runs to square 6 or beyond, he will be leaving melee and will be subject to a parting shot.
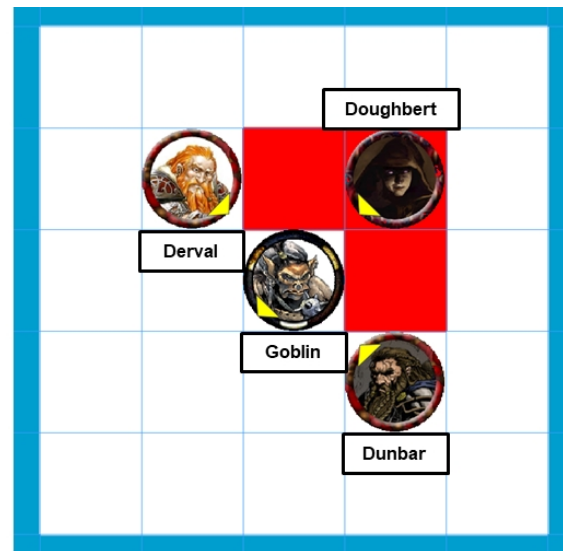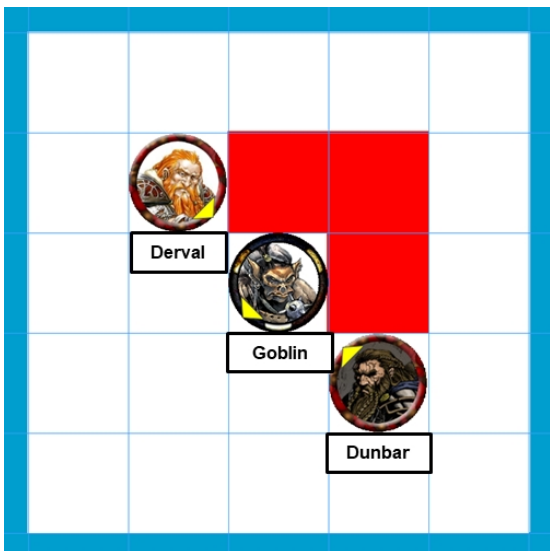
SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

Attacks From Behind

- An **Attack From Behind** is an attack performed from one of the squares to the rear of a combatant. A Small or Medium combatant has three such squares for melee purposes (more, obviously, for missile attacks). Larger combatants will have a higher number of rear squares.

- There are two types of Attack from Behind – those that occur in ordinary combat, and the special **Sneak Attack** of Thieves.

- For ordinary combat, an Attack from Behind an opponent usually receives a +2 Attack Bonus as described in the ENCOUNTER section of the BFRPG Core Rulebook.

- In general, if a defender is aware of all of his opponents, then it takes at least three attackers to leverage a situation in which one of them can perform an Attack from Behind. If there are fewer attackers then it will always be possible for the defender to adjust their facing such that no opponent is to their rear.

- If, for whatever reason, a defender is not aware of one of his opponents (e.g. through invisibility, or some sort of distraction), then the GM may rule that an Attack from Behind is possible with fewer than three attackers. The same principle applies to a Thief's Sneak Attack

(CHARACTERS section of the BFRPG Core Rulebook). Generally speaking, only one such attack can be performed on the same opponent in any given combat.

Simultaneous Movement

- **Simultaneous movement**, i.e. when two or more combatants act on the same initiative score, can be somewhat problematic to resolve using floor plans.

- One approach, and that adopted by Later Editions of the genre, is to remove altogether the possibility of two combatants acting simultaneously. A larger initiative die (e.g. a d20) will reduce the probability of simultaneous actions occurring. Further tie-breakers (e.g. highest Dexterity or further tie-break rolls) can be employed to ensure that each combatant has their own unique position in the combat order. Do bear in mind though that such an approach does have wider consequences for the ruleset. For example, spell disruption (SPELLS section of the BFRPG Core Rulebook) is one aspect that relies on simultaneous actions.

- An alternative approach is to allow all the combatants that act on the same initiative score to alternately move 5' at a time, starting with the combatant(s) with the highest movement score. When a given combatant runs out of movement they stop; others continue moving until they also run out of movement.

Attacking from behind example: Based on its current facing, the goblin's rear squares are shown in red. With only two assailants (left), it will always be possible for the goblin to adjust its facing such that none of the attackers are behind it (assuming the goblin is aware of these attackers). However, with three assailants (right), the goblin will leave itself open to at least one attack from behind (in this case, Doughbert is the lucky fellow).

Large Combatants

- The following table provides some suggested sizes for larger combatants that occupy more than one square of the floor plan.

- Four "large" size classifications have been used:

    1. Large (L), four squares (2 x 2).

    2. Huge (H), nine squares (3 x 3).

    3. Gargantuan (G), sixteen squares (4 x 4).

    4. Colossal (C), thirty-six squares (6 x 6).

- In general, the size classifications have been taken from the monster descriptions in the BFRPG Core Rulebook and/or the d20 System Reference Document. However, a GM shouldn't feel constrained by these suggested sizes and should alter them to suit a given in-game situation or the figures/tokens that happen to be available.

- If a monster from the BFRPG Core Rulebook isn't listed below, it can be assumed to be Small or Medium (i.e. it occupies just one 5' x 5' square).

- For some monsters, the concept of 'size' has little meaning. This includes some swarms (e.g. bats) and amorphous creatures (e.g. green slimes).

Monster	Size	Squares
Antelope	L	2 x 2
Basilisk	L	2 x 2
Bat, Giant	L	2 x 2
Bear, Cave/Grizzly/Polar	L	2 x 2
Caecilia, Giant	H	3 x 3
Centaur	L	2 x 2
Chimera	L	2 x 2
Crocodile, Normal/Large	L	2 x 2
Crocodile, Giant	H	3 x 3
Dinosaur, Pteranodon	L	2 x 2
Dinosaur, Stegosaurus	H	3 x 3
Dinosaur, Triceratops	H	3 x 3
Dinosaur, Tyranosaurus Rex	H	3 x 3
Djinni	L	2 x 2
Dragon	L/H/G/C (See Note)	
Eagle, Giant	L	2 x 2
Efreeti	L	2 x 2
Elemental (from staff)	L	2 x 2
Elemental (from device/spell)	H	3 x 3
Elephant	H	3 x 3
Fish, Giant Barracuda, Huge	L	2 x 2
Fish, Giant Barracuda. Giant	H	3 x 3
Fish, Giant Sea Bass	H	3 x 3
Fish, Giant Catfish	H	3 x 3

Monster	Size	Squares
Gelatinous Cube	L	2 x 2
Giant, Cloud/Storm	H	3 x 3
Giant, Cyclops/Fire/Frost/Hill/Stone	L	2 x 2
Golem (all except Wood(M))	L	2 x 2
Gorgon	L	2 x 2
Gray Ooze	L	2 x 2
Griffon	L	2 x 2
Hangman Tree	L	2 x 2
Hippogriff	L	2 x 2
Hydra	H	3 x 3
Hyenodon	L	3 x 2
Insect Swarm	L	2 x 2
Invisible Stalker	L	2 x 2
Lizard, Giant Horned Chameleon	L	2 x 2
Lizard, Giant Tuatara	L	2 x 2
Manticore	L	2 x 2
Ochre Jelly	L	2 x 2
Octopus, Giant	L	2 x 2
Ogre	L	2 x 2
Owlbear	L	2 x 2
Pegasus	L	2 x 2
Purple Worm	G	4 x 4
Rhinoceros	L	2 x 2
Roc, Normal	L	2 x 2
Roc, Large/Giant	H	3 x 3
Salamander	L	2 x 2
Sea Serpent	H	3 x 3
Shark, all types	L	2 x 2
Snake, Giant Rattlesnake	L	2 x 2
Squid, Giant	H	3 x 3
Titanothere	L	2 x 2
Treant	H	3 x 3
Troll	L	2 x 2
Unicorn (and Alicorn)	L	2 x 2
Whale, Killer	H	3 x 3
Whale, Narwhal	L	2 x 2
Whale, Sperm	G	4 x 4
Wolf, Dire	L	2 x 2
Wyvern	L	2 x 2

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INTRODUCTION

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