# Abstracted Chases – v.1

Chases can create an exciting atmosphere, from pursuers chasing after a thief or a party trying to outrun the zombie horde after them. This system is meant to abstract out chases so that exact distances are less important and doesn't bog down gameplay, instead the focus is on the abilities of the characters.

## Beginning a Chase

A chase requires at least two different parties, the pursuers and the quarry. The DM determines who is being chased and determines the Dexterity modifier of the quarry. This sets the difficulty of the chase. There is no need to determine how far away each side is from each other except under special circumstances, which is covered later.

## Running a Chase

Every participant in a chase gets something that they can do each round. There is not the focus on only taking the Dash action every round, but finding ways of gaining an advantage on a chase.

A chase can be broken down into two parts: the **Quarry Phase** and the **Pursuers Phase**. Each can do something different on their turn as they each have different objectives. The quarry wants to escape, the pursuers want to catch.

Because this is all happening at once, there is no set initiative. The DM simply decides who belongs in which phase. Once that phase comes up, the players can then announce their order in any way they want. They may choose to hold back so that their wizard can cast a spell on them, or want to go first so that they can try and catch the quarry and allow the others to catch up sooner.

### Speed Checks

This is the central mechanic that runs a chase. A Speed Check is used by the pursuers in an attempt to catch up to their quarry. A quarry can directly affect this Speed Check and make it more difficult on their pursuers.

When you make a Speed Check, you must roll a d20. If you roll *under* your Dexterity score, you gain a success. If you roll your *Dexterity score or above* on the d20, you decrease your total by one and fail, the DM then rolls a Setback. The result of a 20 on a d20 is always an automatic failure, and the DM rolls a Setback.

### Success & Failures

Whenever a pursuer makes a success or failure, they adjust their position in the chase. Every time they gain a success, they gain a point and once their total is equal to the Dexterity modifier of their quarry, they catch up and can try and end the chase. Every time fail, they reduce their total, and once they reduce their total below 0, and the negative number equals their proficiency bonus, they lose their quarry and the chase ends for them.

This means that if you have a +2 proficiency bonus and fail your Speed Check and your new total becomes -2, you drop out of the chase. If you Speed Check total is 3, and the Dexterity modifier of your quarry is +3, you catch up to them.

### Setbacks

Anytime a pursuer fails a Speed Check, the DM should roll a Setback or come up with one to fit the situation. Setbacks can cause damage or give a penalty to the character on future rounds. There is a chart on sample Setbacks below.

## Quarry Phase

During the quarry phase, the quarry is assumed to be running and fleeing from their pursuers by any means possible. They can take the normal actions available to them, or attempt to create a distraction. They determine how difficult a chase might become and they can affect the Speed Checks of their pursuers.

## Pursuers Phase

During this phase, pursuers are assumed to be in constant movement. They can take the normal actions available to them and must react to what their quarry throws at them. Regardless of what they do on this turn, at the end of their turn, they must make a Speed Check. If they roll under their Dexterity Score, they make progress on catching up with their quarry, on a failure they fall back.

## Groups in a Chase

If there is more than one in a group of quarry or pursuers, they can choose to remain as a group or separate into individuals. If an individual is not being pursued, they immediately escape from the Chase.

### As the Quarry

As a group, everyone works together to throw off their pursuers though it is easier to follow them. When making their checks to penalize their pursuers, everyone must make the check and the group uses the lowest rolled result.

As individuals, everyone can split off to escape and when they make a check to penalize their pursuers, they only affect those pursuing them.

### As the Pursuer

As a group, everyone must agree who they are chasing after if there is more than one in their quarry. The group then makes a single Speed Check using the lowest Dexterity Score in the party. On a failed check, they all must deal with any Setbacks.

If a group separates into individuals, each individual decides who they pursue and makes their own Speed Check.

## Ending the Chase

A chase ends as soon as the pursuer catches the quarry, or the quarry escapes. In order to end the chase, the pursuer must reduce a quarry's speed to 0 or reduce their hit points to 0, otherwise, the chase continues. A pursuer can only attempt to do this if they have a number of successes equal to the quarry's Dexterity modifier unless they use ranged weapons or spells.

If a chase ends and a fight breaks out, everyone should roll initiative. Those that still have not caught up to the quarry must continue to make progress and must roll their Speed Check at the end of each round that they attempt to move closer to their quarry. Upon their total equaling the quarry's Dexterity modifier, they end their turn within 1d10 times 5 feet of the target or less (their choice).

## Actions in a Chase

Certain actions have different effects in a chase, all depending on where you are and how close you are. While there are no restricted actions in a chase, from casting spells to firing a weapon and more, they may not be as effective due to where they are in the chase.

Each participant in a chase has an action and a bonus action. It is assumed a participant is using their full movement each round to run after, or from, another.

The following actions work in a slightly different way during a chase.

### Attack Action

Attacks only work if you are in the range of your target. In order to determine if you are in range, compare the number of successes the pursuer has to the Dexterity Modifier of the quarry.

In order to use this chart, subtract the Dexterity Modifier of the Quarry from the number of Successes of the pursuer.

| Total | Range |
|---|---|
| 0 | Melee |
| 1 | ~50 feet |
| 2 | ~150 feet |
| 3 | ~300 feet |

| | |
|---|---|
| 3 | ~300 feet |
| 4 | ~500 feet |
| 5 | ~700 feet |
| 6 | ~900 feet or more |

When an attack is made, certain circumstances may give half, three-quarters, or total cover per the DM's discretion. Crowds are a major factor for chases and may impede attacks.

### Crowds

Attacking in a crowd is very dangerous and bystanders may be struck. After making an attack, the attacker must roll a d20. If there is a thin crowd, they hit a bystander on a 1. If there is a large crowd, they hit a bystander on a 1 or 2. If the crowd is massive, they hit a bystander on a 1, 2, or 3.

A creature can choose to not move and automatically fail their Speed Check at the end of the round, and there is no risk of hitting a bystander as they carefully aim their attacks. A pursuer can attempt a Speed Check if they are able to dash as a bonus action and do so.

### Casting a Spell

If a creature casts a spell, they must be in range of their intended target, per the chart above in the Attack Action section above.

### Movement

If they cast a spell that effects movement, either on them or another, they recipient of the spell gains a boost to their Dexterity Score for the purpose of the end of the round Speed Check, this bonus is equal to the level of the spell cast. This means if a wizard has a speed of 14 and casts *longstrider* on themselves, for the next hour, they have gain a +1 bonus to their Dexterity Score for the Speed Check, meaning that they must roll under their new score of 15 instead of rolling under 14.

### Teleportation

If they cast a spell that teleports them, they automatically gain a number of successes based on the spell used. *Misty step* grants 1 automatic success, *arcane gate* or *dimension door* grants 4 automatic successes, and other spells are based on the DM's discretion. They must still roll their Speed Check at the end of their round.

If the quarry teleports, all pursuers automatically gain a number of failures per the DM's discretion and the spell used.

### Casting on an Opponent

If they cast a spell on a quarry that penalized movement, all pursuers of that quarry gain a bonus to their Dexterity Score. If they cast a spell on a pursuer that penalizes movement, that pursuer gains a penalty to their Dexterity Score.

### Creating a Distraction

The quarry can take this special action. They choose one of their skills that they think is appropriate to the situation, this could be using Athletics to scale a building or Stealth to duck behind a food stall. The quarry rolls their skill check, the total of this check determines the DC that the Pursuers might try to succeed on.

The pursuers must then decide on what skill they would like to use to and then roll their own skill checks. If they meet or exceed the DC of the Quarry's DC, they do not suffer a penalty on their Speed Checks. If they fail the check, they suffer a penalty on their Speed Check equal to the quarry's proficiency bonus. The DM has final say on what skills can be used to create a DC and overcome one.

### Dash

A pursuer or quarry can decide to dash on their turn. If a pursuer does so, they can roll twice on their Speed Check and choose either result. If a quarry takes the dash action, they impose a penalty on to their pursuer's Speed Check equal to half the quarry's proficiency bonus.

### Gaining Exhaustion

A creature can only dash a number of times equal to 3 + their Constitution modifier. Once they run out of available dashes, they can choose to gain a level of exhaustion and gain an additional number of dashes equal to the level of the exhaustion they will suffer. This means that if a creature has one level of exhaustion and wishes to dash again, they can accept a second level of exhaustion and gain two more dashes.

If a creature has two levels, they must roll twice for their Speed Check and take the worst result. If a creature has five levels, they immediately drop out of the chase.

If the quarry suffers two levels, their pursuers roll twice for their Speed Check and take the better result. While at five levels, they immediately come to a stop.

### Grapple

One way to end a chase is for the pursuer to grab on to the quarry, though you must be within range of them. Once the quarry is stopped, combat might break out or something else might happen. If the pursuer fails the check to hold on to the quarry, the pursuer must succeed on Speed Check at the end of the round in order to keep pace with their quarry.

## Extreme Distances

If the quarry and the pursuers start a chase at extreme distances, like 100 feet or more away from each other, the pursuers automatically suffer a number of failures per the DM's discretion.

## Fast Movement

If a creature has increased movement, they gain a bonus to their Dexterity Score of +1 per 10 feet above the base speed of 30 feet on their Speed Checks.

## Setbacks

The DM can choose one of the following, roll for it randomly, or come up with their own to best fit the situation during the chase. The DCs are not set, the DM can either choose their own, or can randomly determine it by rolling 1d10 + 10.

Some setbacks can be overcome using different skill checks or saving throws than written, a player can offer their own idea on how they overcome the setback, and per the DM's discretion, roll a skill or saving throw of their choice.

## Credit

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## Setback Chart

| 1d20 | Setback |
|------|---------|
| 1 | A cart suddenly rolls in front of you. You must make an Athletics or Acrobatics check (your choice) or take 2d6 bludgeoning damage as you barrel into it. |
| 2 | You mistook someone in the crowd for your quarry. You must succeed on an Insight check or take a 1d4 penalty on your next Speed Check. |
| 3 | Your quarry runs into a crowd of people. You must succeed on a Perception check or lost sight of them and take a 1d4 penalty on your next Speed Check. |
| 4 | Your quarry has quickly paid a thug to block your progress. You must succeed on an Athletics or Acrobatics check or be knocked prone and must roll twice on their next Speed Check and take the worst result. |
| 5 | The previous night of drinking at the bar has caught up with you. You must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or begin throwing up. You are poisoned until the end of your next turn. |
| 6 | The city guards have noticed you running and assume you have committed a crime. You must either stop, per their commands, and explain the situation or they'll start chasing you! If you choose to stop, you must spend your action next turn attempting to make a Persuasion check to explain the situation. |
| 7 | As you sprint, you can feel a sudden twist in your leg as you pull a muscle. You must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or lose one use of your Dash for this chase. |
| 8 | You ran down an alley and hit diverging paths. You must make a Survival check to choose the right one or suffer 1d4 penalty on your next Speed Check. |
| 9 | A group of thugs allied to your quarry sees you running and takes a swing with their clubs. Make a Dexterity saving throw, on a fail you take 2d6 bludgeoning damage. |
| 10 | You are in a part of the city you don't recognize, you must succeed on a History check to recall any maps you might have seen of the area or take a 1d4 penalty to your next Speed Check. |
| 11 | The smell of rotting fish whaffs from the docks and almost makes you gag. You must make a Constitution saving throw or become poisoned until the end of your next turn. |
| 12 | Your boots are more worn out than you thought. You must make a Dexterity saving throw as they fall off your feet or you lose one use of your Dash for this chase. |
| 13 | A shady merchant is attempting to sell you genuine merchandise at unbelievable prices. You can barrel through them with an Athletics check or scare them off with an Intimidation check. On a failed check, they slow you down and distract you from your quarry, you suffer a 1d4 penalty on your next Speed Check. |
| 14 | You startled a pack of dogs and you must make an Animal Handling check or on your next Speed Check you must roll twice and take the worst result as the dogs begin chasing you. |
| 15 | Your quarry disappeared behind several buildings, you must make a Perception check or take a 1d4 penalty on your next Speed Check. |
| 16 | The ground is wet from the rain last night, make an Acrobatics check or fall prone and roll twice on your next Speed Check, taking the worst result. |
| 17 | You must make a Dexterity saving throw or slam into a sharp corner and take 1d6 bludgeoning damage. |
| 18 | You are more out of shape than you thought, make a Strength saving throw or lose one use of your Dash. |
| 19 | You were distracted by an attractive or odd-looking person as you ran down a street, losing sight of your quarry. Make a Perception check or lose one use of your Dash for this chase. |
| 20 | You thought you saw a shortcut, but it ended up taking longer than you thought. Make a Survival or History check to get yourself back on track or gain an automatic failure. |