

# Moral: A Tool for the GM

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For reasons unknown to me the authors of the core D20 system removed moral as a factor in combat (at least it wasn't in the index of the PHB, DM's Guide or D20Modern). To me, it seems to be a basic tool for any GM. Of course, many of you (and I include myself) feel that this should be left up to the GM's and Players and their roleplaying decisions. However, how this is handled in your campaign is up to you. I am merely providing a tool for those who prefer a more objective approach or for those who need to be told what to do in every case.

## **When to Make a Moral Check**

Basically, whenever there is a chance for moral to break. If the save fails, the adversary or character is affected as the **FEAR** condition.

For those requiring quantification of that precept I offer these basic guidelines:

1. The leader or object of deference falls in combat.
2. The first time the group is subject to an extraordinary ability or devastating weapon that effects combat negatively.
3. More than half the group has fallen.
4. Conditions on the battlefield change suddenly and drastically in favor of the other group.
5. The individual has lost more than half its hit points.
6. The individual witnesses another of its group killed within a single round of combat.
7. The individual is subject to damage from an extraordinary ability or weapon.
8. The forces being faced appear to be overwhelming.

## **Making the Check**

Preliminary Step: First and foremost you must decide if you are attempting a group or individual moral check.

- A group check uses an average of the entire groups Will save. (Alternatively, if your lazy or in a hurry you could use the group leaders Will save).
- An individual check simply uses the Will save of the individual character. PC's never use the group save method.

The base to save against is **DC15** +/- modifiers using the individuals Will save or the groups Will save average. Feel free to adjust this as you please.

## The Modifiers

All modifiers stack.

- Individual or group has less than human intelligence: DC +5
- Individual or group has human intelligence: DC +0
- Individual or group has substantially greater than human intelligence: DC +5
- Individual or group are long lived: DC +2
- Individual or group are well trained: DC -2
- Individual or group are fanatical: DC -8
- The cause is unimportant: DC +5
- The cause is minor: DC +2
- The cause is of some importance: DC +0
- The cause is worthy and important: DC -2
- The cause must not fail: DC -5
- The leader of a group has fallen: DC +2 (If the object of fanaticism: DC +5)
- Individual has 50% or less hit points remaining: DC +2
- 50% or more of the group has fallen in battle: DC+2
- The individual or group is outnumbered and/or outclassed by 50% or more: DC+5
- Opposing forces have exhibited at least one extraordinary ability or weapon that effects combat negatively: DC +2
- Opposing group cannot be harmed by most or all of the available attack methods of the group: DC +10 or more.
- For each unfavorable combat environmental situation: DC +2
- For each favorable combat environmental situation: DC -2
- Defending home land: DC -2

## Last Minute Advice

Keep in mind a certain race's cultural temperament. If a creature comes from a culture that values bravery in combat despite the odds you should factor this in. If a creature comes from a culture that values the individual or is generally selfish and not selfless, then they are more likely to run from untenable situations.

Most beings are loath to throw their lives away for no gain. Make sure there is some reason for a creature to hang around combat to the bitter end. Just because your players may love cutting down scores of hapless adversaries is no reason to indulge them without reason. If you really feel a need to give your players something to hack down without conscious, your better off creating creatures or races that are absolutely fanatical and xenophobic. Add a cause or reason, and let them carve their way through the masses.