

## **Unbroken Strategy Guide or How to survive the Dark**

### **Overview**

Welcome to the gloomy catacombs of the Dark – an unforgiving and forsaken place where the events of Unbroken unfold. As you have probably surmised by now it won't be a joyous tale – after all it begins with all your companions dead and you barely hanging on. Now – time to scrape yourself off the cavern floor and get on with the dirty business of avenging the fallen.

Unbroken is a game of careful resource management and taking advantage of every efficiency that presents itself. In order to defeat the four progressively tougher monsters in a game of Unbroken you will need a right number and combination of resources. Your preparation during the Travel phase and the decisions you make – crafting weapons, tricking or fighting, scouting or not – all contribute to you being better or worse at overcoming these obstacles.

This guide will describe the factors you should consider in your journey to help you make the right decisions and defeat the dangers of the Dark.

This guide will start off with general considerations and will proceed to cover each Level (and each potential foe you'd face on that level) in more detail. We will conclude with some strategic advice as it relates to the specific Skills, Conditions, Weapons and Characters.

One thing to keep in mind during your adventures in the Dark – Unbroken is a game you get better at with experience. As you will play you will have improved sense for the flow of the game and the requirements it places on your resources. Your experience fighting specific monsters will also teach you how having (or lacking) certain resources affects your battles – every loss will become a lesson to apply in your future attempts. Persevere and you will be rewarded!

### **General Note:**

This guide will be most helpful to players with a good understanding of the rules of Unbroken. It makes no attempt at teaching the rules, focusing instead of teaching strategy. In fact, it is recommended that you play a few games to become comfortable with the flow of the rules before applying the information from this document.

### **How to consider decisions in Unbroken:**

This was a difficult guide to write because most decisions in Unbroken are influenced simultaneously by so many factors. The character you play, the sequence of encounters you face, the monsters you fight, the resources and skill set at your disposal – all of these will contribute to your decision-making along the game. To be good at surviving you will need to learn how to anticipate how your decisions impact both your immediate next steps and long-term chances of success. This understanding comes with experience – don't over-analyze things starting with your first game.

The advice in this document will focus on each potential circumstance – monster, Level, weapon etc. – and provide advice on what other factors you should be considering in light of that information, as you make your decisions.

You will become better as you learn of the kinds of challenges Unbroken throws at you. Trust the familiarity you will develop with repeated plays as you will internalize many of the points in this guide.

### General strategy – Travel Phase:

Travel phase is your opportunity to build up your resources and prepare yourself for the challenges ahead. Each travel phase you will only have a certain amount of Time, so you must be mindful of that as you stumble around the underground tunnels.

Every Encounter is an opportunity to either gain resources or exchange resources you might need less for the ones you might need more.

### **Resting vs. Resolving Encounters**

Remember – if all Encounter cards you revealed are either something you don't want or can't perform (lacking the necessary resources) – you can usually **Rest** and recover a certain amount of **Small Effort**. It is an attractive option, but keep in mind – Resting is almost always a worse option tactically than resolving the Encounters.

However – Small Effort is a universally useful resource, whereas the usefulness of some of the other resources is more conditional. It depends on the encounters you will face in the future, the monsters you will fight, the Skills you have and other factors. Do you want to spend **Time** to obtain something that might or might not come in handy? Or do you go for a safe bet and Rest? That is the kind of decision that Unbroken forces on you.

Most of the decisions you will be making in Unbroken is balancing **certainty** with **efficiency**. The game usually provides you with a way to be sure of something, but it comes at a cost. You can always decide to go in to a challenge with less information and hope that what you have will be enough – a decision like that is risky but will leave you with more resources to build up your combat prowess.

At the end of the game, your likelihood of victory will be determined by your efficiency – to what extent you were able to use all the resources you acquired. So, try to understand what will be helpful to you and plan accordingly, ignoring the resources that won't aid you in your struggle.

Make sure you **don't over-focus on acquiring non-Effort resources** though. Having enough Small Effort is crucial to staying alive – you don't want to collapse because you spent all your energy crafting a mighty weapon – save some strength for swinging it!

Earlier on you have more room to get resources just for the sake of having them – it is likely they might come in handy later in the game, most likely to pay as a “spend” for an encounter card. However, as you get closer to the final battle on Level 4 – you should only focus on the resources that you know you will need.

The by-level guidance will provide general suggestions for how much Effort you should have to survive each of the four battles. It will be up to you how risky you will want to be in following these.

### **General Actions**

There is a default way of exchanging your Small Effort into some of the other resources through your Actions Sheet. **Focus**, **Inspiration** and **Plan** are all good if you really need these resources (for Scouting, Weapon Crafting or just having these for future encounters).

As always – certainty comes at a price and these Actions offer **an inefficient way** to spend your Small Effort. Try to find other ways of obtaining what you need, but if you are in a pinch – do not hesitate to use these.

### Being mindful of Time

Each Encounter will take a certain amount of Time and you only have so much on every Level.

Having more encounters is preferable as each one offers you an opportunity to obtain additional resources through clever exchanges. For that reason – **shorter encounters are better**. For example, if on Level 1 you have six Encounters each with Time of 1 – you will likely collect more resources (in an absolute sense) than if you'd do two encounters with Time of 3.

Your priority, however, should be not to do as many encounters as possible, but as many encounters that provide the resources that you think you will need. For example, if you know you will be fighting a Troll on Level 4 and you have already built up your Advanced weapon – gaining more Metal will not help you and you should not go for Encounters yielding Metal regardless of their Time values. (to contrast this example – if you are fighting a Basilisk – you will be able to use the Metal to avoid being paralyzed, and it's a resource that you could consider obtaining).

Time becomes an especially important consideration as you are getting close to that **0 on the Time tracker** (bringing closer the threat of potential ambush). Figuring out whether to take another encounter when you have 2 or 3 time left is a tough choice. When making this decision, consider the following breakdown of Time Values in the game:

Time Value	0	1	2	3	4	5
% of Cards	5%	36%	40%	10%	6%	2%

Not getting the Time tracker to 0 is a pretty good bet when you have 3 time remaining (81% of cards have 2 or less duration), while going for an encounter with only 2 Time remaining is taking a chance (41% of cards have 1 or less duration).

Of course, all this only applies if you are concerned about **being ambushed**. If you Scouted the monster and know that their Ambush effect is of little concern to you (or is missing altogether) – you should take advantage of that by taking as much time as you can – it's a good way to get some extra resources.

Under normal circumstances though – being ambushed is bad news and you should avoid it if possible.

Another thing to point out – **0-Time cards can be quite useful**. If you don't like any of the revealed cards – you can always Rest through that 0-Time card, not spend (or gain) anything and reveal new cards during the next Exploration step.

### Committing to Next Encounter

Some cards don't ask you to spend any resources, only to commit to the next card in the Encounter deck. Accepting this risk can be a good way to get more resources without spending much. The next card you reveal you will have to resolve (if able – otherwise you just lose time). This carries some risks:

- If you are not able to resolve the encounter on the card – you are going to lose a certain amount of Time with no benefit to show for it (Resting is not an option).
- The next encounter card may force you to spend resources you actually need.
- If you get unlucky with a high Time Value – it can force you being ambushed when you would normally be safe.

Here are some tricks to make Committing less risky

- Both the Huntress and the Sage have abilities that allow you to control (or at least know for sure) the next card of the Encounter Deck. If you know for a fact that the next card is nothing to be worried about – you take all the risk out.
  - o The Perfect Memory skill also allows you to control the next Encounter card.
- Having lots of time to spend removes the likelihood of you being ambushed. You should be significantly more comfortable Committing to encounters when you have **5 or more Time** remaining.
- Having a variety of resources available increases the likelihood that you will be able to take advantage of whatever the next card's **Exchange** will require.

### Encounter removing conditions

A few Encounters allow you to “Discard an active condition”. This can be a potentially powerful card, but you must be smart about when this would help you most. For example, getting rid of being Crippled, Afraid or Panicked is very helpful early on in Level 3 or 4, but if you're only going to have 1-2 Encounters this Level – it's not worth it.

The Paranoid or Weakened conditions can make a difficult fight almost impossible and are prime candidates for removal. Unless of course your plan is to bypass the Combat altogether through Trickery in which case these wouldn't matter.

The amount of pain inflicted by the Cursed condition depends entirely on how likely you are to rely on Actions (vs. Attacks). If Actions are your primary way of inflicting damage, or you still need to Scout and Craft a weapon this Level – discarding a Cursed condition is definitely a good idea.

Be mindful about what is harmful enough to warrant getting rid of.

### Encounters granting Skills

Skills can offer powerful tactical options, especially against particular opponents or in combination with other abilities. Getting an extra one is quite powerful, but you have to weigh how long you will be able to benefit from the Skill. If you are getting one **early on** – you will benefit from it throughout the entire game and it's a pretty good investment. Alternatively – paying for a new skill when you only have Level 4 battle left is unlikely to justify the resources spent. Then again – maybe you don't need the resources that you'd need to spend and then you'd be getting rid of something useless for something potentially useful – the final decision is up to you.

Even when getting a new skill during an earlier Level – be judicious about your current resources – you don't want to fall prey to short-term dangers as you are building yourself up for the future.

### Weapon Crafting

Most games in Unbroken are won using a weapon. Wound-inflicting skills are certainly a viable alternative and supporting option (especially on Levels 1-3), but your most reliable way to hurt monsters is by making something pointy or smashy to use instead of your trusty fists.

Often the kind of resources you are able to get your hands on will determine your initial weapon of choice. The **knife** is easier to craft (only requiring one metal) and has a higher damage output (can inflict wounds up to Power 5), however it requires Cunning in addition to Effort to fully use. The **club** is a less refined weapon and is a definite upgrade from fists but it takes three whole units of wood to fashion, so you might need to be patient before you're able to create one.

Things you should consider as you are planning on a weapon:

- The kinds of resources available to you is really the primary determinant.
- Timing is everything – you do not want to spend all your effort crafting a weapon and then not having enough to swing it. Estimate how much effort you'll need to bank to take out the Monster on your current level and make sure you have that much.
  - o Alternatively – if you know you're too weak to fight – consider scouting and tricking the monster instead to save your strength for the next foe.
  - o Some weapons (the Knife) need Cunning in addition to Effort to make best use of it – this might require some additional planning on your end.
- Make sure you can take full advantage of the weapon you have crafted. Especially on Level 4 there are some monsters that can't sustain more than 3 or 4 wounds per combat round (e.g. Ogre or Basilisk). If you know you will be up against such a foe – an Axe (and its ability to inflict 5 wounds) will be a waste of resources.
- If you know the monster you'll fight (through Scouting) – think about the combination of attacks you'll need to not waste any Wounds.
  - o Some monsters (Crazed Survivor and Minotaur) punish you for having a weapon. If you scouted one of these foes – use this information when considering your weapon upgrade choices.
- Crafting a Basic weapon is a safe bet in terms of an upgrade to your combat ability and the resources it requires. Advanced weapons are much costlier to craft and you should carefully consider whether you can afford to spend your resources making one.
  - o One exception would be the Spear is a comparatively cheap Advanced weapon (and a marginal upgrade over a Knife as result)
- The by-level guidelines will give you some ideas about where your weapon should be as you progress through the game.

## Scouting

- Knowing the monster that awaits you can provide invaluable information.
  - o It gives you information about any conditions that power up monsters (like having a treasure for the Imp or an advanced weapon for the Minotaur) and allows you avoid these.
  - o It tells you exact number of Health and Armor the monster has – this allows you to plan your weapon/Effort configuration with an exact damage output in mind.
  - o It lets you know if you will need any additional resources during the battle (e.g. creative use of Cunning and Food vs. a Wyvern or needing Wood to fight the Vampire).

- It allows you to gage the danger of the Monster's Ambush effect to let you know how important it is to avoid an ambush.
- It informs your weapon upgrade strategy as well as lets you know how much Food you should be saving up (in some cases knowing that the Monster will provide Food as a reward takes away the pressure to find it during the Travel phase).
- At the same time Cunning costs resources and these are limited and could be better put to other uses.
- General level guidelines will let you know how much Scouting makes sense on each level.
- Overall – Scouting is the option for the cautious players who want to avoid surprises and plan their strategy.
  - Coming in blind allows you an opportunity to save up more resources and once you will learn what potential challenges could await you – you will get a sense on whether certainty would benefit you or you're pretty well set up to face off against most foes.
- Some circumstances encourage Scouting -for example having the Shadow skill or having just enough time left to fit in a Scouting action. Having enough Cunning will also determine whether you should Scout or not – if you don't have any and need to use a Plan action to obtain Cunning – the benefit you gain might be coming at too high a price.
- If you do decide to Scout – do it early in the Level (especially on Levels 3 and 4) – so that you have as much Time as possible to use the information you obtain to prepare for an upcoming challenge.
- There is no right or wrong way to do this – decision to scout or not depends on circumstances and individual playstyle.

### **Orienteering**

The "Orienteer" Travel Action will not come into play often but it's an option available to you, so keep it in mind. Allowing you to look at more Encounter cards during Exploration reduces your reliance on luck to find resources you need. If you are looking for something particular – do not hesitate to use it to make sure you are not left without a resource crucial to your strategy. Here are some examples for when you'd want to Orienteer:

- You know you will need an advanced weapon and you are just a bit short on metal / wood to craft it
- You are on Level 3 and 4 and are not having any luck finding any Food
- You have a wounding skill that requires a certain resource and want to make sure you can use it during the upcoming Combat

### **General Strategy - Combat Phase**

- For the most part considerations have less to do with general strategy and more with individual monsters you face – this guide will provide a monster-by-monster list of suggestions.
- Normally you should try to end the fight as quickly as possible – every turn the monster takes has the potential to reduce your resource supply.

- Under normal circumstances fighting a monster and receiving the rewards for beating it is preferable to tricking it. However, in some cases fighting would put you at a disadvantage (e.g. you have to fight the Hobgoblin without a ready way to break Armor, a Bugbear with no way to inflict heavy wounds or an Imp with no easy access to Cunning). If you see that you are ill-equipped to fight a monster (or simply don't have enough Effort to bring it down without collapsing yourself) – consider **trickery** instead, if you have what it takes.
- Trickery is also an attractive option if previous Level left you with some unfavourable conditions like being Weakened, Cursed or Paranoid. Avoiding the fight helps you avoid feeling their full implications.
- Certain character abilities and skills will allow you to **modify the monsters' combat rolls**. This can be very helpful if a given effect really ruins your plans (e.g. a monster attack permanently downgrades your weapon on which you were counting, an action that heals the monster ruins your careful planning on how to deal just the right number of wounds or the monster causes you to lose whatever little Food you had to survive on). You will need to judge which of these combat actions are particularly unpleasant for you and use your abilities to avoid these when possible.
  - o Certain skills allow you to ignore some types of monster attacks. If you can modify a monster's Combat roll to land on an effect you can ignore – do it!
- Some Skills allow for an alternative way to deal wounds, using resources other than Effort to achieve this grisly purpose. There are a couple of important considerations there:
  - o Wounds inflicted through Skills are **not subject to most additional costs applied to attacks**. It can be a great way to bring down an Imp or a Shaman when you can ignore that extra Cunning cost.
  - o Some skills **bypass Armor** (e.g. Poison Mastery or Sacrifice). Using these can be devastating against monsters that rely on Armor such as the Goblin, Troglodyte, Hobgoblin or Ogre. Scouting ahead allows you to know which monster you will face and stock up on the needed resource.
- Monsters that trigger the Defend effect ignore your next attack. If that happens – go for your cheapest available attack to remove the Defend effect to minimize the number of resources wasted.
  - o Note the DEFEND effects do not apply to wounds dealt through use of Skills.
- In some cases, it may make sense to skip a turn instead of taking an unfavourable action (most often when you are disarmed – striking a monster with your bare hands is not a very effective way to keeping them occupied). Either skip a turn or do something else with it (e.g. transforming Small Effort into a Medium through Focus).
- Always check the monster's **Reward** to see how that impacts your future game plan (should you survive of course). Knowing that you get to restore Effort, upgrade your weapon or replenish your Food sources all gives you valuable information that you can use during the fight to make better decisions.