

THE OFFICIAL UNBROKEN STRATEGY GUIDE: 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, it won't be a joyous tale. After all, it begins with all your companions dead, and you barely hanging on. Now it's 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, to defeat the four progressively tougher monsters. In a game of Unbroken, you will need the correct amount 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 your being better or worse at overcoming the game's 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.

The guide will begin 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 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 play, you will develop an 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 to your future attempts. Persevere and you will be rewarded!

GENERAL NOTE:

This guide will be most helpful when you have a good understanding of the rules. Play a few games to become comfortable with the flow of the rules. Then you will be able to apply the information in this document.

HOW TO CONSIDER DECISIONS IN UNBROKEN:

This was a difficult guide to write, because most decisions in Unbroken are influenced 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 must contribute to your decision-making in the game. To be good at surviving, you will need to learn to anticipate how your decisions impact both your immediate next steps and your long-term chances of success. We will focus on each potential circumstance—monster, Level, weapon etc.—and provide advice on what other factors you should consider as you make your decisions.

This understanding comes with experience, so don't over-analyze in your first few games. Trust the familiarity you will develop with repeated plays. You will internalize much of the advice in this guide.

GENERAL STRATEGY - TRAVEL PHASE:

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

Every Encounter is an opportunity to gain resources or to exchange resources for more useful ones.

RESTING VS. RESOLVING ENCOUNTERS

Remember: if all the Encounter cards you revealed are something you don't want or can't use (lacking the necessary resources to spend), 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 the least efficient way to resolve Encounters.

However, Small Effort is a universally useful resource, while the usefulness of many other resources is more situational. Do you want to spend Time to obtain something that might not come in handy, or do you go for a safe bet and Rest? You must consider the encounters you will face in the future, the monsters you will fight, the Skills you have, and other factors. That is the kind of decision that Unbroken forces on you.

Most of the decisions you make in Unbroken balance certainty against efficiency. The game usually provides you with a way to be sure of something, but that comes at a cost. The uncertain choice is riskier but may provide 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: how well you used all the resources you acquired. 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-acquire non-Effort resources. 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.

Early on, you have more leeway to acquire resources just for the sake of having them, when it's 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 level-by-level guidance will provide general suggestions for how much Effort you should have to survive each of the four battles. It's up to you to decide how risky you want to be.

GENERAL ACTIONS

There is a default way of changing 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).

But certainty comes at a price, because these Actions offer an inefficient way to spend your Small Effort. Try to find other ways to obtain what you need. If you are in a pinch, do not hesitate to use these.

BE MINDFUL OF TIME

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

Having more encounters is preferable, as each one offers 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 had two encounters with Time of 3.

Your priority, however, should not be to do as many encounters as possible, but the kind of encounters to 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, then gaining more Metal will not help you, and you should not go for Encounters yielding Metal regardless of their Time values. (In contrast, if you are fighting a Basilisk, you will be able to use Metal to avoid being paralyzed, so 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 (the threat of a potential ambush). Under normal circumstances, being ambushed is bad news, and you should avoid it if possible. It's tough to decide whether to take another encounter when you have 2 or 3 time left. To make this decision, consider the following breakdown of Time Values on the Encounter cards 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). Going for an encounter with only 2 Time remaining is risky (only 41% of cards have 1 or less duration).

Of course, all this applies if you are worried about being ambushed. If you Scouted the monster and know that their Ambush effect is missing or of little concern, then take as much time as you can, to get extra resources.

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

COMMITTING TO A 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, but if you can't resolve the next Encounter, you will 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.
- An unlucky high Time Value can force you to be ambushed when you would normally be safe.

Here are some tricks to make Committing less risky:

- Take the risk out by knowing or controlling the next card: Both the Huntress and the Sage allow you to control (or at least know for sure) the next card of the Encounter Deck. 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 can take advantage of whatever the next card's Exchange will require.

ENCOUNTERS: REMOVING CONDITIONS

A few Encounters allow you to "Discard an active condition". This can be potentially powerful, but you must be smart about what is harmful enough to get rid of. For example, getting rid of being Crippled, Afraid or Panicked is very helpful early in Level 3 or 4, but if you're only going to have 1 or 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 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 if you still need to Scout and Craft a weapon this Level, then discarding a Cursed condition is definitely a good idea.

Refer to the Conditions section toward the end of this guide for more detailed advice on when removal is useful.

ENCOUNTERS: GRANTING SKILLS

Skills can offer powerful tactical options, especially against particular opponents or in combination with other abilities. Getting an extra skill is quite powerful, but you have to weigh how long you will be able to benefit from it. If you are getting one early on, it's a pretty good investment. Paying for a new skill when you only have the Level 4 battle left is unlikely to justify the resources spent. Then again, maybe you don't need those resources, and the Skill is potentially more useful. The decision is up to you.

When you have the opportunity to get a new skill during an earlier Level, be judicious about your current resources. You don't want to fall prey to short-term dangers while building yourself up for the future.

WEAPON CRAFTING

Most games in Unbroken are won by a weapon. Wound-inflicting skills are a viable alternative and a supporting option (especially on Levels 1-3), but your most reliable way to hurt monsters is to make something pointy or smashy to use instead of your 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. (You might need some additional planning to acquire Cunning.) 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 to create one.

Factors you should consider as you plan your weapon:

- The kinds of resources available to you are the primary determinant.
- You must craft your weapon and have Effort left to swing it. Estimate how much effort you'll need to bank, to take out the Monster on your current level. Make sure you have that much.
 - 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.
- Make sure you can take full advantage of the weapon you have crafted. Especially on Level 4, some monsters 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, then an Axe (with 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, in order to not waste any Wounds.
- Crafting a Basic weapon is a safe upgrade to your combat ability, considering the resources it requires. Advanced weapons are much costlier to craft. Consider whether you can afford to spend your resources to make one. (The Spear is an exception, a comparatively cheap Advanced weapon, and a marginal upgrade over a Knife.)
- Some monsters (Crazed Survivor and Minotaur) punish you for having a weapon. If you scouted one of these foes, use that information to guide your weapon upgrade choices.
- The level-by-level guidelines will give you some ideas about how to develop your weapon as you progress through the game.

SCOUTING

Knowing the monster that awaits you can provide invaluable information. That knowledge:

- 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.
- Tells you the exact amount of Health and Armor the monster has, allowing you to plan your weapon/Effort configuration with an exact damage output in mind.
- 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).
- Allows you to gauge the danger of the Monster's Ambush effect to let you know how important it is to avoid an ambush.
- Informs your weapon upgrade strategy and 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).

Factors you should consider to plan Scouting:

- Cunning costs resources that could be better put to other uses.
- General level guidelines will tell you how much Scouting makes sense on each level.
- Overall, Scouting is the option for cautious players who want to avoid surprises and plan their strategy. Coming in blind saves resources. Once you learn what potential challenges await you, you will get a sense of whether Scouting's certainty would benefit you, or if you're pretty well set to face most foes.
- Some circumstances encourage Scouting. For example, having the Shadow skill, or having just enough time left for a Scouting action. Having enough Cunning will also determine whether you should Scout or not. If you don't have any, and need to make a Plan action to obtain Cunning, then the benefit you gain from Scouting might come 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. The decision to scout or not depends on circumstances and individual play style.

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 the resources you need. If you are looking for something particular, do not hesitate to Orienteer, to make sure you are not left without a resource crucial to your strategy. Here are some factors for when you'd want to Orienteer:

- You know you will need an advanced weapon, and you are a bit short on metal/wood to craft it
- You are on Level 3 or 4 and are not having any luck finding 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, Combat has less to do with general strategy and more with the 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.
- Normally, 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 convenient way to break Armor, or 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 the previous Level left you with some unfavorable 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 the weapon on which you were counting, or 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 them when possible.
 - 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 here:
 - Wounds inflicted through Skills are not subject to most additional costs applied to attacks. Skill wounds can be a great way to bring down an Imp or a Shaman and ignore that extra Cunning cost.
 - Some skills ignore 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, so that you can stock up on the needed resource.
- Monsters that trigger the Defend effect ignore your next attack. Use your cheapest available attack to remove the Defend effect and minimize the number of resources wasted.
 - Note the DEFEND effects do not apply to wounds dealt through the use of Skills.
- In some cases, it may make sense to skip a turn instead of taking an unfavorable action (most often when you are disarmed; striking a monster with your bare hands is not a very effective way to keep it 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 will be able to restore Effort, upgrade your weapon, or replenish your Food sources gives you valuable information that you can use during the fight to make better decisions.

LEVEL 1

Good news! You are likely to survive this level. The first level is mostly about positioning yourself for long-term success by getting your resource collection off to a good start.

Two monsters on this Level get aggravated if you have certain resources (Food for Hyena and Metal/Wood for Kobold), so be mindful of that. Scouting can help. Otherwise you're putting yourself at a disadvantage.

SHOULD YOU CRAFT A WEAPON? If an opportunity presents itself, try going for a knife. But you will likely need to use Focus to gain the necessary Medium Effort. A club is likely out of the question, as obtaining three units of wood is a tall order in the limited time on this level. A weapon will allow you to defeat the monster using the least amount of effort. Trying to craft a weapon does put you at some risk, but if you manage it, you are in a better position for the longer term.

SHOULD YOU SCOUT? If there is one place where it's ok to skip Scouting, it's Level 1. Scouting may be useful in the following scenarios: You want to know if you need an ability to deal 3 wounds at once (helpful against most monsters, wasted against those with just 2 Health). You want to know if you're ok to hang on to your Food/Metal/Wood without opening yourself up to an extra attack from a Hyena or Kobold. You have exactly 2 Time to spend and don't want to risk another encounter. Or, you get the Shadow skill early on, in which case Scouting is basically free for you.

HOW MUCH EFFORT SHOULD YOU BANK? Generally you want to have no less than 8-9 Small Effort saved up for the first fight (less, if you are getting ready to bust out a power-3 attack using 2 medium efforts). Also, knowing you are facing a weaker monster like Wererat or Gibberling, you can get by with as little as 5-6.

FOOD PLANNING: It is too early for Food to be a major concern. Getting it is fine, as it pays for itself when you eat it, but it has the potential to enrage the Hyena you may face. Starving on Level 1 only costs you 1 Small Effort, so it is a concern that can easily be tolerated.

INDIVIDUAL MONSTERS

- GIANT SPIDER

- A tougher monster that can inflict significant damage through Poison.
- Kill it quickly or consider tricking it to avoid a challenging fight early on.
- If you Scout it: Focus on ability to kill it in one strike: most likely by saving up for a Power 3 Wounding attack (will require 2 Medium Efforts if you are using fists). Don't bother to get Food, as the Spider provides one as a Reward.

- GIBBERLING

- A weak monster that you can easily knock off in a round or two. Unless you're playing as the Brawler and can easily use Power Through, there is no reason to rush. The Gibberling's attacks aren't that strong.
- It only has 2 health: using a more powerful attack (inflicting 3 wounds) from a weapon would be a waste.
- The Panicked condition that he imparts is the real threat. Panic will default the number of cards you are revealing next level to 1, forcing you to either settle for suboptimal encounters or to spend Small Effort on Orienteering.
 - **FIGHT IT IF:** You are playing a Sneak and can get some extra card reveals on Level 2. Or, you picked up a variety of resources on Level 1, so that you have more exchange options for the next level, given the smaller number of cards you'll see. Or, you have an abundance of Small Effort to Orienteer a few times on Level 2.

- FERAL HYENA

- A straightforward but powerful monster that places the most pressure on your resources. It's the most likely one to make for a very, very short game.
- Being efficient about dealing the wounds to it is crucial (spending 2 small Efforts on each of its 4 health can sap you of your strength). Having a weapon is both helpful to deal with it quickly (especially if you can muster a Power 3 Wounding Attack) and risky, because you are not likely to have a lot of Small Effort left. However, if you manage to make a weapon and survive the Hyena encounter, you are off to a strong start.

- **IF YOU SCOUT IT:** Make sure you don't run out of Effort too soon and avoid gaining Food. If an opportunity to craft a weapon presents itself (decide whether you want to risk it), you must evaluate a tradeoff: not doing so is safer, but if you craft the weapon, you will be at an advantage for further levels.
- Do not shy away from tricking it if you have the required Food. Otherwise you might be in for a tough challenge right out of the gate.

- **KOBOLD CRAFTER**

- This little critter is tricky. His Combat actions range from harmless (he's 33% likely to miss entirely) to introducing a significant penalty to your Level 2 (being Crippled is no fun).
- He is also jealous of any metal or wood that you might have on you. Having it will make this fight unpleasant. Consider just parting with the materials to trick the Kobold instead.
- Since he conveniently has only 3 Health, he is susceptible to being dispatched in one strike (from a weapon or a powerful Bare Hands attack). If at all possible, try to take him out quickly.
- Having a way to modify the Kobold's combat action rolls (through the Sneak's or Brawler's character abilities) can help you avoid the worst of his attacks.

- **SHRIEKING FUNGUS**

- Unless you get ridiculously unlucky, this abhorrent little thing will not end your journey, but what it can do is alert every single monster in these depths to your presence and unnerve you, putting the rest of your game at a disadvantage.
- **IF YOU SCOUT IT:** Prepare to take it out as quickly as you can, hopefully with a single 3-power wounding attack. The effects its shrieks produce are most unpleasant. You do not want to subject yourself to too many of these, especially since it might heal itself. Use the Focus action and the Encounter cards to get enough Medium Efforts to put it out of its misery quickly.
- Because it puts you at such a disadvantage for the next Level (due to imparting Conditions and making you lose Time), you might have to play Level 2 defensively, Scouting and counting on Trickery rather than fighting the monster.

- **WERERAT**

- Wererat is weak physically but she never misses with her strikes, introducing an interesting decision on how to best deal with her.
- She only has 2 health. Using a more powerful attack (inflicting 3 wounds) from a weapon would be a waste.
- The main danger is the Afraid condition that the sight of her gruesome transformation imparts. Taking away your ability to Rest can be quite dangerous if you get unlucky with Encounter cards, or if you are already low on Small Effort.
- Only fight her if you have a good supply of Small Effort built up. Otherwise you are putting yourself at risk for Level 2, in not being able to Rest. There is no shame in tricking her instead.
- The Huntress should be slightly more comfortable fighting the Wererat, as her Lay of the Land ability gives her more information about upcoming Encounters.

LEVEL 2

The second level is mostly a transition between the preliminary planning nature of Level 1 and the demanding perils of the last two levels. Here you must juggle your priorities and make sure you are setting yourself up for long-term success, while still having what you need to overcome your enemy. You can easily die on Level 2 if you waltz into a fight with an Imp, having no Cunning, or try to take on a Troglodyte or Goblin unprepared to break their armor.

SHOULD YOU CRAFT A WEAPON? Two of the 6 monsters on this level are armored. Breaking an armor without a weapon is extremely costly. Having a weapon in time for Combat is thus very helpful. One of the monsters penalizes you for having a Weapon (Crazed Survivor), so be mindful of that risk. If you don't have a weapon, then plan to Trick the monster (planning for what you'll need ahead of time); or have Skills that inflict wounds.

SHOULD YOU SCOUT? Scouting gets somewhat expensive here, so it's a difficult choice. If you have a weapon and a way to break armor with that weapon, you probably need not Scout. The same applies if you are planning to defeat the monster with wounding Skills. If you went for a greedier strategy and are low on Effort, then Scouting is helpful to tell you exactly what you need to trick the monster. Not being able to Scout on Level 2 is usually not a big deal, so don't feel compelled to do so.

HOW MUCH EFFORT SHOULD YOU BANK? The amount varies a great deal depending on the monster you will fight (which is another argument for Scouting). Normally, you want to have at least 10-12 Small Effort going into this fight. If you have a weapon, you should have resources to perform at least one Armor-breaking attack (unless you know for sure you won't need to). If you are facing a weaker monster like the Imp and can take him out in one strike, then you need less Small Effort and you are much safer, but those with more Health (like the Bear or Abomination) will take more effort to defeat.

FOOD PLANNING: Starvation is still not a serious concern on Level 2. The worst you are looking at under normal circumstances is losing 3 Small Efforts, whereas having just 1 Food leaves you at net zero (you gain 1 Small Effort for eating a Food and then lose it for not eating the second one). Having two Food is a bit of an overly safe play but try to grab one unit along the way. Three out of six monsters on Level 2 provide some Food as a reward, so your chances of getting one are good even without having one before Combat. You should probably focus on: making sure you have enough Effort (including Medium Effort) to quickly dispatch your foe; and looking for materials to make a weapon. If you do end up with 2 Food at the end of this Level, then consider eating only one. That might serve you better in the challenges to come (unless you are low on Small Effort).

INDIVIDUAL MONSTERS:

- ABOMINATION

- By stats alone it is the most formidable monster on this Level, with 6 Health. However, every turn it has a 1 in 3 chance of hurting itself through its Combat Action.
- If you have ways to manipulate the Monster's die rolls (through Sneak or Brawler's character abilities or the Defensive Stance Skill), this fight is a good time to do so!
- **IF YOU SCOUT IT:** You might need a fair bit of Effort to bring it down (especially if only using Power-1 wounds). Make sure you stock up, if you know it's coming up. Alternatively, note that its Ambush is not that deadly if you don't have a weapon, so if you are unarmed, you can probably force an Ambush and benefit from longer preparation.
- It's prone to imparting long-term negative conditions for the next Level. Getting Weakened and/or Cursed might make you play defensively and go for trickery on Level 3.

- **CAVE BEAR**

- This is a straightforward but dangerous opponent because of its bulky 5 Health. Taking it down without a weapon is quite a challenge, so make sure you are prepared. If you have a Knife, try to collect enough resources for an impressive one-hit kill with a 5-Power attack.
 - Its WOUND effects can be serious (especially the #6 Combat roll), so having an Improvised Armor skill would come in quite handy here.
 - Keep in mind that the bear takes one last action after being defeated. Make sure you don't leave yourself exposed to a killing blow.
- It yields lots of Food, likely enough for both this and the next Level.

- **CRAZED SURVIVOR**

- This is one of the foes that would be helpful to Scout ahead on Level 2.
- Having a Basic weapon at the start of this fight disadvantages you and boosts the Survivor's power. If you have a weapon and are low on Effort, consider just Tricking him and bypassing this fight. However, if you have 10-12 Small Effort, you will likely be able to finish him off even with Bare Hands (and reclaim whatever Basic Weapon you choose afterwards).
- **IF YOU SCOUT HIM:** forget about crafting a weapon this Level and concentrate on stockpiling Effort (preferably Medium Effort) to take him out as quickly as possible. You can then get a weapon of choice as a reward.
 - If you already have a Knife when you Scout him, consider pushing ahead to a Spear. It's still inexpensive, and since it's an Advanced weapon, it won't trigger the Survivor's effect. (But neither will you be able to get the Basic weapon as a meaningful reward for beating him).
- Do not let it ambush you! A Crippled condition on Level 3 is a serious detriment.

- **GOBLIN**

- The main challenge against this monster is having to remove his Armor.
 - If you don't have a ready way to do so, consider Trickery to bypass him (especially if still using Bare Hands).
 - If you are armed with a Knife, make sure you have at least one Cunning for the Armor-breaking attack (alternatively: a Medium Effort with a Club)
- His attacks are not particularly dangerous, so it's ok if after breaking his Armor, you take your time going through his Health by dealing 1-Power wounds.
- Note that he provides neither Small Effort nor Food as rewards, so those are both resources you will need to prioritize on Level 3 (but the Metal you get should set you up nicely for some weapon upgrades).

- **IMP**

- This monster can be a pushover or your doom. It all comes down to whether you have Cunning, since all attacks against the Imp have that extra cost.
- **IF YOU SCOUT HIM:** Make sure you have a way to kill him in one hit (that includes having a Cunning). General Actions from the Actions Sheet should prepare you well enough.
 - If you have a Treasure, you might be better off Tricking him, as he gets greedy and powered up by seeing someone with shiny things.
- Whittling down his 2 Health with small attacks is inefficient, as it requires an extra Cunning for each attack.
- If for any reason you are comfortable coming into this fight with no Cunning (e.g., you have the Inventive Skill or another Skill that inflicts wounds and is not subject to the extra Cunning cost), you can let the Imp Ambush you and take full advantage of your extra time on Level 2.

- Otherwise, to fight it with no Cunning: prepare to use your General Actions to generate Cunning and hope you have enough Small Effort for this fight. Even if you manage a win this way, the rest of your game will be at a disadvantage, and you will need to catch up.

TROGLODYTE

- Probably the most all-around powerful monster on Level 2 because of her Armor, considerable 4 Health, and fairly powerful attacks.
- **IF YOU SCOUT HER:** forget about longer-term planning. Concentrate your Encounters on getting buffed up for this fight (having a weapon and lots of Effort, especially Medium Effort).
- The rewards you get will set you up long-term, but you need to make sure you can handle this foe.
- Fighting her without a weapon (or a wounding Skill that bypasses Armor) is likely to result in a loss. Be armed and prepared to break Armor (best case: be prepared to deal a 3-power wound after that).
- If you manage to beat her in 2-3 rounds, the significant rewards you receive will put you at an advantage for the rest of the game.

LEVEL 3

Now things are getting interesting! The Level 3 monsters will present you with a real challenge, and many of your games (especially early on as you learn the ropes) will end here. However, if you have been doing well on the previous two levels, and you prepare well this time around, you can still emerge victorious. At this point you are probably armed and have learned a couple of skills, so the game shifts from collecting as much resources as you can, to understanding what you need to use the tools at your disposal, and making sure you are prepared.

SHOULD YOU CRAFT A WEAPON? At this point the question is more “should you stick with your Basic Weapon or upgrade to an Advanced one”. You should only go into Combat with Bare Hands if you are planning to Trick the monster, or you have enough Wounding Skills to require no weapon. (And that’s risky, because one of the monsters on Level 3 makes you “forget” all your skills.) Whether to upgrade to Advanced is mostly determined by resource availability. If you were able to collect a set of Wood/Metal to get you to the Advanced Weapon of choice without losing too much Effort, go for it. You may increase the short-term risk of losing on Level 3, but it will get you in better shape for Level 4. A Basic weapon with a solid pool of Effort to break Armor and deal significant Wounds is also likely to get the job done.

This is also a choice that is determined by your approach to the following Level. Some players may want the certainty of knowing what monsters they will face on Level 3 and Level 4 before committing to an Advanced weapon.

Specific weapons will fit particularly well for some monsters. For example, the Spear’s ability to inflict 2 Wounds with a fairly inexpensive 2 Small Effort attack works wonders against the nimble Gnoll, while the Maul’s superior armor-smashing will give you an edge over the well-protected Hobgoblin. Your Scouting can inform your weapon upgrade path.

SHOULD YOU SCOUT? There are two circumstances that would justify NOT scouting on Level 3: Either you’re doing so poorly that you can’t afford to Scout (and are therefore forced to rely on whatever resources you managed to scrape together), or you are doing so well that you’re confident in your ability to deal with whatever challenge is ahead. If you feel like you are way short on resources (e.g., you only have one Cunning and 10 or less Small Effort), Scouting will likely do more harm than good. If you have a weapon, 12-13 Small Effort, a way to break a unit of armor, and enough resources to deal 4-6 Wounds to a monster, then you can probably be confident in your ability to overcome whatever enemy awaits you and not Scout.

Not Scouting carries some risk. For example, fighting a Bugbear with a Club is ineffective and can result in death. The same is true if facing a Hobgoblin with a Knife. So Scouting should always be considered on this Level.

HOW MUCH EFFORT SHOULD YOU BANK? You should have 12-13 Small Effort and enough resources to break armor and deal 4-6 Wounds [whatever that takes with your current weapon].

FOOD PLANNING: Having spent some time in the underground tunnels by this point, you can no longer ignore Food. Not having any to eat will cost you 6 Small Effort, enough to kill you outright or cripple your chances of long-term victory. The good news is that you get a Food as a reward for 4 out of 6 monsters you fight. However, you should not depend on a battle reward as your sole Food source on this Level. Make sure you have at least one Food by the time you enter Combat. Saving up two Food is efficient and would not be a waste. Going for three is optional; do so if a convenient opportunity presents itself.

Keep in mind that if you plan to Trick the monster for any reason, you cannot count on the Food coming from Rewards and have to prepare whatever rations you will need during the Travel Phase.

INDIVIDUAL MONSTERS:

- BUGBEAR WARLORD

- His 1 Armor / 5 Health might not look like much at first glance, but his Passive ability essentially makes him immune to 1-Power Wounds and significantly reduces the effectiveness of most other Wounding attacks against him, making him a tough opponent.
- It's most effective to take him out with one decisive 5-Wound attack [which is not subject to his wound-reducing ability].
- The Crippled and Amnesia conditions that he can impart can be a significant detriment to your final Level, so having the Resistant skill is helpful in fighting him. The Wrecker skill is also quite helpful, since it might allow you to defeat him in one turn.
- If you scout him, make sure you have a weapon and enough Effort to land a 5-Wound strike. Otherwise you risk dragging the fight out and losing quite a bit of resources in the process.
- If you see that defeating him would take longer than 5 rounds [likely because you'd need to obtain higher-grade Effort through General Actions to actually Wound him], consider Tricking him to avoid falling too far behind.
- Most Advanced weapons are a good match against him, especially the Axe [along with the Effort needed for a 5-Power Wound]. Even a Knife will work, if you can get enough Cunning to break the Armor and land a 5-Power Wound. A Club however, is a poor fit. You'll spend an inordinate amount of Medium Effort [unless you have another way of powering up your attacks like the Brawler's Power Through ability or the Berserk Skill].
- Pay careful attention to his Ambush effect. Normally you will want to have a Large Effort in place for that 5-Power strike. But if your strategy doesn't depend on it, then not having a Large Effort and triggering the Ambush will only cost you 2 Time, possibly a small price, since you will have extra time on this Level to prepare for a tough fight.

- DARK ELF

- This deadly warrior is the bane of adventurers who depend on Skills rather than weapons to defeat opponents. As the Battle starts, she grants you the Amnesia condition that prevents you from using any of your Skills during the fight.
 - If your strategy does rely on Skills, then it might be a good idea to Scout to make sure she is not standing in your way. If she is, aim to Trick her rather than start an unfair fight.

- With weapons, she is not a very dangerous opponent, requiring 2 or 3 rounds to defeat (provided you saved up for an armor break and at least one 3-Power attack).
- Her attacks are very powerful, either dealing significant wounds or imparting unpleasant conditions, so try to defeat her as quickly as you can.
- Do not let her Ambush you. Her Ambush effect gives you two debilitating conditions, all but spelling doom for your next fight.

GNOLL

- Quick and nimble, this enemy dodges the heavier blows, only taking half damage from any strike that would cause 3 or more wounds.
- Any strategy built around defeating a foe quickly with a weapon causing many wounds falls apart against him.
- **IF YOU SCOUT HIM:** Don't craft most advanced weapons. The Axe is a terrible choice against him. Both the Sword and the Maul will be ineffective and, with the amount of resources it takes to craft these, you are not likely to have enough Effort to deal enough wounds.
 - The Spear, however works great. Its 2-Power wounding attack is the most effective way to kill the Gnoll.
 - Basic Weapons are not a bad choice either, but would likely take a while as you resort to 1-Power wounds to whittle down the Gnoll's considerable 8 Health.
- Remember that Wounding Skills are not subject to the same restriction and have full effect. These are also a great way to take down (or at least help take down) the Gnoll.
- If you don't feel you have an effective way to deal with him (Wounding Skills, a Spear or a Club/Knife with at least 2 Medium Efforts) – consider Trickery. It's an expensive option, but you would likely lose more in a long, drawn-out battle.

HOBGOBLIN

- His primary strength is his heavy armor, requiring you to break 3 whole units before you can start wounding him.
- His attacks are not that strong, so you should not worry about the danger that he presents, paying more attention to your own strategy.
- **SKILLS THAT BYPASS ARMOR** are the absolute best match against him. Both Sacrifice and Poison Mastery make very quick work of him. In fact, if you have one of these, you won't care about his Ambush effect and can use the opportunity to pick up some extra resources.
- If you can't bypass his armor, then anything that helps with armor-breaking will come in handy. Advanced weapons usually provide a cheaper way to deal with Armor (especially the Maul, which is the best option here). They are a good fit for this fight.
 - If you have a Basic Weapon and not enough Medium Effort (or Cunning) to break all 3 units of the Hobgoblin's armor, then trick him.
- The Wrecker skill works wonders here, as it allows you to break the Hobgoblin's armor twice as fast (and potentially negates his Defend action).
- If you get Disarmed fighting him, your best bet is to spend the time building up higher-level Effort through actions like Focus. Don't punch an armored monster with your fists.
- Keep in mind that the Armored Condition that you receive as a reward can really help you in the final battle. It's an attractive reward that should be considered for your long-term success.

MINOTAUR

This really tough monster presents a unique challenge.

- On the one hand, he has lots of Health (8) and powerful attacks, so you don't want to take your time fighting him. On the other, he gets enraged by an Advanced weapon, and his attacks become even more devastating if he is powered up in this way.
- Therefore, the best way to beat him is with a Basic Weapon whose attacks are as powerful as possible. The humble Knife is likely the most efficient way to achieve this, if you can combine a 5-Power and a 3-Power attack.
 - Most other combinations will take at least three rounds, unless you can power up your Club strikes to deal 4 Wounds (perhaps through the Brawler's ability or the Berserk Skill).
- Tricking him is impossible, so if you are forced into a fight, use your resources to finish him off as quickly as possible, hoping you have enough stamina to survive his own attacks.
- **IF YOU SCOUT HIM:** Forget about upgrading your weapon to Advanced. Your focus should be on having enough Effort to deal with him quickly using only your Basic weapon. If you already have an advanced weapon, consider downgrading it (if it's a Spear), or biting the bullet and fighting him in his enraged state. He is also one of the two monsters that does not yield a Food as a reward, so you should prioritize finding at least one during Level 3.
- If you become Afraid or Crippled in this battle, you should look for a way to discard that Condition at the start of Level 4.

ORC BRUTE

- One of the most straightforward yet powerful monsters in the game, the Orc brute packs quite a punch with her twin axes and is very hardy herself with 1 Armor and 7 Health.
- This fight will be too much for many players (especially if they were unlucky, or investing more into long-term planning rather than Combat capacity). The Orc cannot be viewed as a speed bump on the way to Level 4. She is a significant challenge in her own right.
- **IF YOU SCOUT HER:** decide whether you want to take on this challenge (the rewards are plentiful) or whether you'd rather not risk taking serious wounds. You can Trick her, since resources for that can be obtained through the General Actions without much issue.
- Given the lack of diversity in her attacks, an Improvised Armor skill can keep you safe from her most potent strikes and should embolden you to fight her. The Patient Skill is also a great fit here, since reducing her number of attacks is a good thing.
- The Club, Maul and Sword are solid options to fight her. With the Club, you can get by with three Medium Efforts and 2-3 Small Efforts. The Maul and Sword can punch through the Armor rather easily and then have strong attacks to finish off the Orc quickly with 1-2 Medium Effort. The Spear will work well too, although it will take a bit more resources.
- Be mindful that two of the Orc's actions can force you to lose Medium Effort, so if you're counting on that resource and have no way to manipulate the Combat rolls (for example through Sneak's Dodge or Brawler's "I've Seen Worse"), it's a good idea to have an extra Medium Effort.
- Both the Knife and the Axe are poor choices here. The knife will require too much Cunning, while the axe will waste resources to deliver two 5-Power Wounds (a total of 10), where you only need to deal 7.
- **WOUNDING SKILLS** are a good supporting option. You will need to break the armor first and then deal a significant number of Wounds, which can be difficult through Skills alone.

- If you beat the Orc, the reward choice presents an interesting decision. Get the Axe weapon if you currently have a Basic weapon (most likely a Club). You can always downgrade it. If you already have an advanced weapon, you are more likely to benefit from the three units of Metal. But make sure you exchange these for something useful during the next Level!
 - The Metal could be a huge help if the monster you will fight on Level 4 is a Basilisk.
 - The Metal is likely better than the axe if you have Skills that use Metal (Impale, or Improvised Armor).
- You might allow her to Ambush you if you have a way to avoid the Wound effects it powers up (for example through Armored Condition or the Improvised Armor skill). Take the extra time to get ready for this fight.

LEVEL 4

The final challenge of your journey will be the toughest. Trickery is no longer an option, so you will prevail or perish. A lot will depend on your success and efficiency during the first three levels. If you have barely made it out of Level 3, then the challenge might be insurmountable. If you dealt with the previous enemies in a way that did not drain you, and have been building up your skills, weapons and the resources to use these, you will be in a good shape.

Now is the time to make sure that every resource you invest in helps you achieve victory. Any resources that do not contribute should be used as payment for Encounters to obtain something with more utility. Remember, Unbroken is a game of inches, and if you end the game with four units of Wood that you cannot use, well, that may be why you lost. Having more resources at the end of the game will net you a higher score, but this guide is about survival, not scoring points.

Be efficient. Know what to expect and prepare for that.

SHOULD YOU SCOUT? Normally: Yes.

While you are mastering Unbroken, Scouting on Level 4 should be an automatic choice.

The Level 4 monsters provide a variety of challenges. Without knowing what to expect, you can be ill-prepared. Scouting early on provides you with information in time to plan. Scouting tells you which resources should be traded away, and which are important to acquire. Knowing the monster can also inform your decisions about whether to upgrade your weapon and which Skills to pick up during the Travel Phase if possible.

With experience you might feel confident enough to forego scouting and focus your Time, Effort and Cunning on something else. That approach would require very flexible planning and readiness to be undermined by an unlucky opponent choice. This option is best for seasoned players.

Skills that allow you to perform General actions better (Grim Determination, Inventive, Heroic Inspiration) offer you important flexibility during Combat. If you have these (especially Inventive), Scouting becomes less mandatory, because you would be able to respond to the unique demands of each monster "on the fly" without losing too much time in Combat.

You might be desperate, so short on resources that Scouting will definitely leave you short of what you need to win. In this situation as well, it can be fun to hedge your bets and see if you can go in blind with the benefit of saving those resources, and still come out on top.

As mentioned early in the guide, Unbroken is all about balancing certainty with efficiency. Whether to Scout on Level 4 is the ultimate expression of that choice.

SHOULD YOU CRAFT A WEAPON? The decision about upgrading your Basic Weapon, and what to upgrade it to, must be determined by which monster you are fighting. If you have a Club and you know you're going to face a Vampire, then crafting a Maul is a bad idea; you won't benefit from the armor-smashing capacities of that particular weapon. In fact, the Wood it would take to build a Maul would be better spent powering up your attacks against the Vampire. Individual monster advice will have suggestions about which weapons are better against each foe.

Coming in with an Advanced weapon makes it less likely that you will want to change your course (it would be ineffective to downgrade and upgrade to another path). If you already have an Advanced weapon – consider skipping Scouting and just committing to a path you are already locked in to. It's a high-risk strategy that makes you vulnerable to an unlucky monster selection, but it increases the amount of resources you'd have for monsters you are equipped to take on.

In some cases, sticking with a Basic weapon will make sense. For example, the Club is a solid weapon against the Ogre or the Basilisk, while its inability to deliver severe damage makes it a poor option against the Troll or the Wyvern. The Knife will rarely be a good choice for the final fight, but you might find yourself forced to use it (e.g., unable to collect enough resources for an upgrade).

If you have a Basic Weapon, definitely Scout the monster to check whether you need to craft a better one. Going into the last fight with your Bare Hands is likely to get you killed. Level 4 monsters usually have too much Health to be taken out using only Wounding Skills, so these will best be a supporting option. Whichever weapon you settle on, make sure you have the right Effort to swing it several times!

HOW MUCH EFFORT SHOULD YOU BANK? 15-16 Small Effort should make you feel confident going into the fight. Hopefully you have scouted the monster and know how many wounds you need to inflict (and have a way to deal these wounds). If you are going in blind, assume you will need to break through at least 1 unit of armor and deal approximately 12 Wounds. Have the necessary mix of Effort (and possibly Cunning) to inflict that number. Most often this will mean that you should have 1-2 Large Effort and 3-4 Medium Effort in addition to your Small Effort (which should mostly be used to keep you alive).

Of course, Effort might not be the only thing that you'll need. You would benefit from Wood if you're fighting a Vampire, Cunning if you're up against the Shaman or Ogre, Metal if fighting a Basilisk. Some extra Food might be helpful against the Wyvern. Not knowing which monster you're facing might scatter your resource-gathering attention among too many of these possibilities, hence the importance of Scouting on this Level.

FOOD PLANNING: Starvation is a real threat here. During playtesting, about 10% of all Level 4 battles ended with a victory over the monster followed by a hungry death. You might need to eat 4 Food here, but 3 Food is sufficient most of the time. Ending the game with 2 Food is a reasonable price to pay as you will only lose 1 Small Effort that way (gaining 2 from the Food you eat, then losing 3 from the units you lack). Eating only 1 Food results in a significant penalty of 5 Small Effort, while not having any Food at the end of the game will cost you a ruinous 10 Small Effort.

Your plan therefore should be to absolutely have at least one Food, preferably two by the time you engage in the final fight. Remember that there are no rewards on Level 4, so you can't count on a helpful discovery to carry you during the Hunger phase. Having four or more Food is probably overkill, unless you are planning to use it to Wound a monster through a monster-specific effect (like the Wyvern) or through a wounding Skill.

The Huntress really shines here, as she is able to find Food with certainty and reduce the number of Food you are required to eat. All other characters will need some careful planning to make sure their triumph is not short-lived.

INDIVIDUAL MONSTERS:

- **BASILISK**

- A mostly defensive monster that relies on its petrifying gaze (through the Paralyzed condition) to finish off the player. Its armor and damage cap mean that you will not be able to power-attack through him. Dealing with him will require at least 4 rounds, so this will be a battle where long-term resilience is important.
- From the very start of the combat you have a 1 in 3 chance to miss your turn thanks to the Paralyzed Condition. The Basilisk can make these chances even worse, and while rolling 3 or higher (to avoid skipping your turn) is not that hard at the beginning of Combat, in later rounds you might have to roll a less likely 5 or 6 just to act.
- Metal provides an excellent method of ignoring the Basilisk's paralyzing gaze. Best case scenario: you Scouted the Basilisk and stockpiled 3-4 units of Metal to get through this battle. You should think twice before committing this Metal to anything else (like weapon crafting), because having it can mean the difference between victory and defeat.
- If you do want to tempt fate by rolling for Paralysis, it's best to do that early in the fight while the odds are still in your favor. Keep the metal for a later turn, when the number to roll could be higher.
- It's tough to find a good weapon to fight the Basilisk.
 - The Knife is too demanding for consistent wounding and needs Cunning in addition to Effort.
 - The Sword has a solid way to break Armor and a cheap 3-Power attack that would be a good fit, but you need three units of Metal to craft it, which is likely better spent ignoring the Basilisk's gaze.
 - The Axe is an outright bad choice here. It deals powerful 5-Wound attacks, and the Basilisk can only take 4 wounds per round, so you are wasting some of your damage output (and crafting it wastes a lot of metal, too).
 - The Spear is a marginal improvement over the Knife, but it consumes the much-needed Metal in the crafting.
 - That leaves you with the Club and Maul as preferred weapons: the Club is inexpensive and can finish off the Basilisk in 5 turns with an armor break, and 4 swings for 3 Wounds, while the Maul can get the job done 1 turn faster, smashing for 4 Wounds.
 - Both solutions require you to have at least 4-5 Medium Efforts, so make sure you plan appropriately.
- Since the Basilisk is unlikely to deal ruinous amounts of damage to you, this fight demands less Small Effort and you can get by with as little as 12 units (provided you have enough higher-grade Effort to deal the wounds as described above). Don't hesitate to spend it a little more freely during the Travel phase.
- The Wrecker skill is a great way to speed up your progress, and Grim Determination will allow you to exchange Small Effort for Medium on the fly to power up as many significant attacks as you need. The Tinker skill can come in really handy and allow you to use Wood as well as Metal to ignore the gaze. The Awareness skill can also come in handy, as it allows you to ignore the STEAL Combat Actions (the Basilisk has 2 of those on its card).
- A little trick for the Basilisk negates its Ambush effect. You will note that all it does is power up its Paralysis effect. If you are confident in your stockpile of metal to avoid rolling for paralysis at all (usually that would require something like 5 units), you can let yourself be ambushed and not worry about the number of tokens on the Paralyzed condition, because you're not rolling for it at all. This is a good way to have an extra Encounter.

- The Basilisk's attacks are not particularly deadly and should not be feared. Just watch out that he doesn't STEAL a piece of Metal that you're counting on. Rolling a 6 is an exception, as it results in a nasty significant wound and worsened paralysis. If you have a way to change die rolls, save it for that situation.

OGRE

- The Ogre has the least Health of the Level 4 monsters, but he cannot be taken lightly. Not only does he have the highest armor rating at 3, but he also cannot suffer more than 3 wounds in any given round.
- Any strategy that hinges on rapid dishing out of high-power wounds is a terrible idea here. The Axe is an awful weapon choice for this fight. It only swings for 5 Wounds, and the Ogre cannot take more than 3. The Knife is also bad. While it's cheaper to get rid of the Ogre's Armor using its monster-specific Combat Action (paying a Cunning), its ability to deal a 5-Power wound is nullified, and it is inefficient to deal 3-Power wounds.
- The Sword and Maul are probably the ideal weapons to fight the Ogre. Both are effective at armor-breaking (especially the Maul) and both have a solid 3-Power wounding attack.
- The Spear will work well too, even if it's not as efficient as the options above. The armor breaking is not prohibitive, and the 3- and 2-Power wounding attacks are good enough.
- The Club is subpar because its armor-breaking is fairly expensive (even though its way to inflict wounds would fit pretty well). The biggest negative to using a Club is the risk you take of it being destroyed, as described in the next point:
- It is preferable to have an advanced weapon while fighting the Ogre because of its DESTROY effect that can permanently downgrade the weapon you are using. If you have an advanced weapon and it gets downgraded, you still have a reasonable way to inflict wounds through your Basic one. If, however, all you had is a Basic weapon, you are left with Bare Hands and that will make it tough to finish off the fight (unless you can rely on Skills to inflict wounds).
- Cunning is useful to get rid of the Ogre's Armor. Use this action whenever possible even if your weapon offers a cheap armor-breaking attack. The Effort you save this way might keep you alive, while the Cunning will not have another use for the rest of the game.
- The fight with the Ogre will usually take some time, so you should have a good supply of Small Effort. Aim to have a stockpile of 17-18. You might get lucky if he rolls a 1, missing completely, but don't count on that. The Daring Skill could help you boost your Small Effort reserve.
- Wounding Skills are very effective against the Ogre. In fact, the armor-bypassing skills like Sacrifice or Poison Mastery can allow you to defeat the Ogre without going to the trouble of breaking its chunky armor (if you can stockpile enough Cunning / Treasure). Even if you do end up going for a more traditional, weapon-based strategy, being able to add 2-3 wounds through a Skill would be helpful. Wrecker is a very helpful skill to bust through the Ogre's armor faster and possibly ignore his DEFEND effect.
 - If you have a wounding skill, it might make sense to base your strategy entirely on bringing the Ogre down using that. You can get rid of Armor using Cunning and then inflict the wounds using your Skills. You won't have to worry about the Ogre's Destroy and Defend effects (bringing the total number of his Combat Actions you "ignore" to 3!), but you must have enough resources to pay the 3 Cunning to break its Armor, and enough of the resources required by your wounding skill.

- Keep in mind that outside of Effort, Cunning and resources to power up your Skills, other resources will be of no help whatsoever in this battle. You should look for opportunities to trade these during the Travel phase. If you find yourself with too many useless resources, consider using Orienteering to give yourself more options.

- SHAMAN

- This monster uniquely requires you to pay an extra Cunning cost with every attack. Strategies that depend on many weaker attacks are thus inefficient. Aim to defeat the Shaman in as few rounds as possible.
- The Axe is a great option, with the Sword also being solid. Both allow you to break the Shaman's armor and finish her off in three turns (presuming you can afford the 5-Power wounds). Both Maul and Spear offer ways to deal 5-Power wounds, but these attacks demand a lot of Effort. The Knife already requires Cunning for its armor-breaking and 5-Power attacks, so combining it with the Shaman's special cost is probably prohibitive. Chipping away at the Shaman using the Club will likely take too long and is not recommended.
- Whatever weapon you choose: if you depend on attacks, you will need 3-4 Cunning (you don't want to waste time during Combat exchanging Small Effort to get more). Make sure you are prepared during the Travel phase. One exception is the Inventive skill. It allows you to do this exchange in Combat without losing time.
- One of the Shaman's actions can rob you of a Cunning, so it might be prudent to hold on to a spare.
 - If you are playing the Sage character – make sure you use her Cunning-generating character ability to build a good supply.
- The Survivor skill is helpful here both to help you stock up on high-grade effort during Travel and to protect you against the CONFUSE effect that would make you lose Cunning.
- Shaman's Combat Actions are all over the place. The 1-2 effects are either helpful to the player or do nothing, so there is a chance that you might get off easy. However, pretty much any of the 3-6 effects introduce significant difficulties. You should have some extra resources to soak up these.
 - Combat roll manipulation is important here to have control over the monster's actions. Both Sneak and Brawler with their character abilities, as well as the Defensive Stance skill are good options. You do not want to be at the mercy of the die.
 - If playing the Brawler, consider saving at least a couple of your character ability uses for re-rolls. The difference between a 6 and a 2 on a Combat roll can be huge.
- The Patient skill, normally fairly costly to use, is a great candidate here as it gives you the certainty that you won't lose critical resources, instead paying the easily accessible Small Effort.
- Wounding skills are excellent here because they do not require the additional Cunning to use. These can be great to supplement your weapon-based damage output. If you have these, it's best to use them near end of the fight, because the Shaman's actions may take away the resources you need to inflict wounds with weapon attacks.

- TROLL

- The Troll's attacks are not particularly deadly, but you do need a fair bit of Effort to punch through his chunky Health, especially with his healing / regeneration. The main danger is running out of effort before finishing off the Troll.
- This fight demands inflicting powerful Wounds as quickly as possible, which requires a good Weapon and high-grade Effort.
- 5-Power wounds are particularly attractive here, potentially ending the Combat in 3 turns. If you are not able to finish him off using 5-Power attacks, then have a plan for what kind of attack combination you will need, taking into account his ability to heal one Health each turn.
- Complicating matters, the Troll's actions can drag things out. His Combat Actions 4, 5 and 6 either remove high-grade effort or disarm you, removing your ability to deal high-powered wounds.
- Keeping this in mind, the main goal of your Travel phase will be to stockpile as much high-grade effort as possible. Place special importance on obtaining the Large Effort; the Encounter cards granting it are not common, so try to take advantage of every possibility. The General Actions to obtain Large Effort are not the most efficient, so use these as a supplementary option at best.
- The Axe is an excellent choice here. It deals 5-Power wounds, and it has a couple of ways of delivering this damage, so that you have more flexibility in your effort gathering; both Medium and Large Effort will provide you with a way to victory.
- The rest of the weapons should be evaluated based on the costliness of their 5-Power attack. The Sword is fairly good, the Spear is decent. Both the Maul's and Knife's 5-Power attacks are inefficient, and the Club doesn't have one at all.
- Opportunities to speed up damage output, such as the Berserk skill or the Brawler's Power Through ability should be put to good use against the Troll.
- The Weaponsmith skill would be helpful both in crafting your weapon of choice and in avoiding being disarmed. The Improvised Armor is sure to come in handy, as most of the Troll's effects are WOUND and DAZE.
- The Troll is probably the most straightforward monster you can encounter on Level 4. Just have something heavy to swing at him and lots of Effort, and you should be able to prevail. His own attacks are not that tough, so you can likely dip a little lower than the recommended Small Effort supply for this fight. 12-13 should be enough, provided you have the higher-grade Effort to deal wounds.

- VAMPIRE

- The Vampire's Ambush effect is deadly, so knowing you'd face her, do not take any risks during the Travel Phase.
- The Vampire has a dangerous set of attacks where even the weakest one saps you of your much-needed strength. You must deal with her quickly, which is difficult, since all ways of dealing wounds (including Skills) against her are weakened unless you spend a Wood as an extra cost.

- The extra Wood is a mandatory cost to defeat the Vampire, so you have to hold one back, settling for weaker attacks to soften her up.
- The Spike Thrower is a great skill for this fight, as it is the only way to bypass the Vampire's damage reduction.
- The Club weapon tree is subpar against the Vampire, especially the Maul, as it uses up too much Wood that would be better spent hurting the monster. Most other weapons work well (including the Knife). You just need to plan ahead to have enough Effort to inflict the 13 Wounds required.
- Two of the Vampire's Combat Actions heal her. Plan to deal at least one more Wound than the 13 she starts with.
- Abilities and weapons that are focused on breaking armor will be no help and should not be prioritized.
- Half of the Vampire's monster attacks are WOUND, so either the Improvised Armor or the Armored Condition is a good strategy.
- A single unit of Treasure and/or Cunning is good to have for this fight as it allows you to "pay off" the Vampire's STEAL and CONFUSE Combat Actions that would cost you a significant number of Small Effort otherwise. The Cunning can also help pick up a missing point of Wood if you find yourself short.
- The Weakened condition is a real possibility. Combined with the Vampire's own damage reduction, it can almost negate your damage output. If you get Weakened early in the fight, get rid of it by any means possible (the Resistant skill might come in handy here). The later in the fight you get it, the less threatening it becomes. It's almost preferable in the very late rounds, because you don't suffer any immediate penalties when you gain it, and you might be able to finish the monster off despite the penalties.
- The Brawler with his ability to power up attacks and re-roll some of the worst Combat rolls is a good fit to fight the Vampire. Make sure you have enough Small Effort to use this!
- You will likely need at least 3-4 rounds to finish off the Vampire. Most of her attacks will make you lose 3 Small Efforts, so a healthy pool of Small Effort is required when facing her; you'd need at least 17-18. The problem is that the Vampire places pressure on many other resources, so you might not have the freedom to spend all your time collecting Small Effort. Look for a balance that defeats her quickly, allowing you to get by with less Small Effort to soak up her attacks.

- WYVERN

- This deadly foe has the most Health in the game. It will require lots of damage output to bring down.
- If you Scout it, note that it has no Ambush effect. You should get your Time close to 0, taking advantage of another Encounter. You'll need every scrap of resource you can get your hands on.

- The Sword is the best weapon against the Wyvern as it's efficient in dealing both high-power and low-power wounds.
 - The Axe is an awkward choice. You can deal 15 wounds fairly quickly, but unless you have an alternative way to inflict the last one (like a Skill, or a way to boost up one of your Axe attacks), you are stuck paying the high cost of Axe attacks, which you are unlikely to be able to afford after three rounds.
 - (if you have a way to boost attack power, for example playing a Brawler, the Axe changes from an awkward choice to a great one).
 - The Spear is fairly good because it offers reasonable damage output and saves your resources to stock up on either high-grade Effort or the Cunning-Food combo that allows wounding the Wyvern.
 - Knife and Club are subpar. They don't deal the high-damage wounds that are needed here, and the Maul is too focused on armor-breaking to be much use. Its 5-Power attack is very expensive.

- Weapon attacks can be tricky, because you want to deal 5-Power attacks, but the Wyvern can make you lose the Large Efforts through two of her six Combat Actions. Your planning to inflict these wounds needs to be flexible, since you might not have the Large Efforts you were planning to use.
 - Skills that allow General Actions in Combat without spending a turn are very useful here: Heroic Perseverance, Grim Determination, and Inventive all help a lot.
 - The Axe benefits from being able to deal 5-Power wounds without using a Large Effort.

- The Poisoned condition starts the Combat with 0 tokens on it, but these tokens can accumulate quickly, and you should have a significant supply of Small Effort to survive the trickling damage that it entails. A stock of 20 Small Effort is justified.
 - Try to use the lack of Ambush to rack up additional Small Effort in an extra Encounter.

- If you Scout the Wyvern you should also try to stock up on Cunning and Food. The Wyvern-specific opportunity to exchange these two resources for 4 Wounds is very effective. If you are daring enough you could kill it using this action alone, saving you a whole lot of resources on weapon upgrades. But that requires a very specific preparation that's tough to pull off.
 - Both the Huntress and Sage, being able to generate Food and Cunning in a controlled manner, are good character choices here. The Hunter can soften the impact of starvation after the fight if you use too much Food.
 - This strategy can quickly be undone by the Wyvern's STEAL Combat Action, so it's best if you have a way to negate it in some way (either die roll manipulation or the Awareness skill).
 - This strategy can leave you short on Food, which is another reason to keep a healthy reserve of Small Effort once you start losing it during the Hunger Step.

SKILLS

Skills are an important part of your strategy, giving you additional options and making you better at things you could already do. Unfortunately, you usually get a Skill (after defeating a monster) when you are least informed about what challenges await you (you don't know which monster you will face next), so you must choose based on limited information.

When choosing a Skill consider two things:

1. Are you going to be able to benefit from it? For example, the Weaponsmith skill is most helpful when you haven't yet crafted any weapons. If you already upgraded to an Advanced weapon, the Skill will not benefit you much, and you should not pick it. Similarly, when picking a Skill that requires you to spend resources to activate its effect (like Vermin Master, Outdoorsman or Improvised Armor), consider whether you have the resource the skill needs. If you do have excess of Food, then Vermin Master would be a great choice. However, if you are short on Food and will need your units to not starve, the skill will not be as useful for you. Some skills (like Daring or Cautious) are good throughout the game. The individual descriptions of skills (below) provide hints on which skills are more beneficial in the earlier/later stages of the game. Also consider whether a new skill will complement the other skills you have.
 - Some skills offer potent combos (like Inventive and Poison Mastery, or Tinker and Improvised Armor). But you should avoid skills whose abilities overlap (like Survivor and Outdoorsman). Consider the Skills already at your disposal when picking new ones.
2. Do you want to cover a weakness, or make yourself even better at something you are already good at? This is a decision that depends on your play style. Normally it pays to broaden your options rather than become better at things you already do well. Being unprepared for a particular challenge can really make you pay, so ensuring you can overcome a range of obstacles will serve you well. For example, if you are playing a Brawler and preparing to upgrade to an Axe for Level 4, you could either pick a Berserk skill to maximize your damage output, or pick up the Inventive skill that would make it easier to get Cunning. The maximum damage option would serve you well for monsters that need to be killed as quickly as possible (like the Wyvern or Vampire), but would be wasted against well-protected foes with a damage cap per round (Ogre or Basilisk). At the same time, the ability to get Cunning cheaper and quicker through the Inventive skill would make it easier for you to Scout and make you well-prepared to face a Shaman (without the need to invest in Cunning prior to the battle).

In rare circumstances, you will be able to pick up a Skill mid-Level through an Encounter card. These opportunities do not come cheap, so think twice whether it's worth the investment. Picking up a Skill after learning what's ahead through Scouting can be a game-changer. If you feel you have the resources to spare, increasing the number of your Skills can be very helpful. But it is still a gamble, since the skills you draw might be not particularly relevant or useful.

If you are on a Level where you plan to Trick a monster (and have the resource to do so), it becomes more attractive to invest in Skills through Encounters. You remove a short-term reliance on resources, and the Skill you gain makes up for not getting one following a battle.

The following section will provide advice on considerations for the individual skills of Unbroken:

AWARENESS – Play this if you like to take risks with the Ambush effect. In some cases taking advantage of a longer Encounter card and then cancelling the Ambush effect can yield a significant positive result for the player. This ability is most powerful combined with Encounter manipulation (via Hunter, Sage or Perfect Memory). The ability to ignore STEAL effects can also come in really handy, as three out of six final Monsters can trigger that effect.

OUTDOORSMAN – A great skill to build up high-grade effort for a later-level Combat (not all that useful during the earlier Levels). Combined with the Huntress' ability to generate Food, it can provide a reliable source of Medium and Large Effort for a final battle. Both of the actions offered by this Skill provide a very efficient exchange and should be used often. Just plan for your upcoming Food Requirement so that using all your Food this way doesn't cause a hungry death.

PERFECT MEMORY – Best if picked up on Level 1 or 2 to get the most out of it. Allows for great control of Encounters you face, especially for classes that have no other way to get it (especially the Brawler). Can be used to great effect to avoid an Ambush by drawing a card with the exact Time Value you need. The main use is to allow exchange of resources you know you won't need for something that will help you.

HEROIC PERSEVERANCE – Great for those who want to have more flexibility during Combat (and possibly avoid the necessity of Scouting). If your strategy focuses on dealing large amounts of wounds (fighting the Minotaur, Bugbear, Wyvern, Troll or Vampire), this is a skill for you.

Grim Determination – Another "on the fly" exchange skill, this one allows you to have an affordable way of getting Medium Efforts, a valuable way to have a reliable supply of this resource in mid- and late-game. Especially helpful if you want to keep a high supply of Small Effort that you can convert to Medium as needed.

INVENTIVE – this skill provides a cheap source of Cunning (although the Sage can get it even cheaper with her ability and should probably avoid this skill). It also allows picking up Cunning without losing a turn in Combat, which is invaluable when fighting monsters that require Cunning to damage them (Gremlin, Shaman, Ogre, Wyvern).

DARING – This skill is basic but effective in supplying you with extra Small Effort when you don't avoid fights. Extra Small Effort is good, but you might easily get enough without this skill. Pick it up if you want to keep your options open. Prioritize it while you're learning the game.

PATIENT – This can be very effective. It provides you with lots of certainty in your planning. It is best used against monsters who have attacks that can be potentially ruinous (Dark Elf, Orc Brute, Shaman, Ogre). Use it if, considering the monster's Combat Actions, you'd rather have the certainty of the cost of this skill, rather than uncertainty in a monster's attack. The benefit may be marginal, but you'll appreciate the peace of mind. Note that you can only use it once per round. After that, the Monster does take its turn.

SURVIVOR – This is a good way to protect yourself from a small number of monster effects that could range from annoying to game-ending, while also giving yourself an additional way to obtain Medium Effort. The ability to manipulate monster rolls as well as a healthy supply of Wood should make this an attractive skill for you. It's a subpar skill if your strategy depends on Wood (e.g. crafting a Maul or fighting a Vampire).

WRECKER – 67% of Level 3 Monsters and 50% of Level 4 monsters are Armored. Having this Skill can give you an extra turn as you break their armor and still inflict some wounds. It's especially effective against monsters who count on armor as their primary defense (Hobgoblin and Ogre). It can also be effective early on, as it makes the otherwise tough fights against the Goblin and Troglodyte much easier. The ability to ignore Defend effects only comes into play rarely but can be a nice boost. The danger here is that the Skill might be wasted if the monsters you fight are not using Armor, so try to guess what you're likely to face when deciding whether to pick up this skill.

SHADOW – A must-have skill for the player who prefers a cautious and informed play style, Shadow makes Scouting significantly more affordable and makes it practically an automatic decision to Scout every Level. The ability to ignore the WARN effects is particularly useful for levels 2 and 3, as monsters on these levels can often cause you to lose precious Time. This skill is particularly useful early in the game. Picking it up only for Level 4 might not be the best investment.

BERSERK – An excellent way to boost up your damage output, something that can be incredibly helpful against some of the more resilient foes you're going to meet (such as the Troll, Minoaur, Vampire or Wyvern). One of the best ways to use this skill is following a high result on Monster's Combat Roll – if the monster already rolled a 6 – your adding of +2 won't make it any worse, and instead you are using the pain you're likely suffering from that roll to fuel a more powerful attack. This is not a skill to be used indiscriminately though – you don't want to voluntarily subject yourself to particularly nasty effects for a small damage increase. This skill is particularly helpful to get later in the game as you are going to be facing tougher monsters.

SACRIFICE – One of the wounding skills that provide the player with non-traditional options in dealing with monsters. For most fights this can serve as a nice damage top-up that allows you to find one of the few productive uses for the Treasure resource. However, there are a couple of scenarios where it can be absolutely devastating. The "bypasses armor" ability means that this skill can absolutely demolish monsters that are dependent on armor for survival (such as the Hobgoblin or Troglodyte). If you somehow manage to stockpile 4 Treasures you can even take out the Ogre using this skill alone! It also comes in handy in dealing with monsters that modify your wounding attacks (either by reducing their effectiveness like the Bugbear or by introducing extra costs like the Shaman or the Gremlin). This Skill is most useful in the early game as its ability to sway the battle in your favour wanes as you get to the final battle, where 2 wounds is not enough to make or break your strategy. When considering this Skill look at how much Treasure you already have – having an existing unit or two should make this skill more attractive.

CAUTIOUS – In a bit of a departure for the thematic description for this skill – it actually introduces more of a gambling approach if you use it. Having more Time is a fantastic advantage – think of all the extra resources you'd be able to get! But the Afraid condition is not to be taken lightly – without the opportunity to Rest some of that Time might be wasted with no benefit. Attractiveness of this skill should be judged by the variety of resources you have at your disposal. If you have several different resources – you are going to be more likely to be able to take advantage of Encounters along the way (since Resting isn't an option). If, however, your current pool is made up only of Small Effort – avoid this skill. If you do end up using it – the extra time is beneficial throughout the duration of the game, just make sure you minimize the "useless" encounters – perhaps by using the Orienteer action to have more options to pick from.

TINKER – This skill can either be extremely helpful or a complete dud, depending on your strategy and enemies you'll face. Clearly its main advantage is flexibility in collecting Wood and Metal and using them as you'd like. This is very helpful for weapon crafting, so this skill is probably more attractive early on, before all the crafting is done. It can also be powerful in combination with other skills that depend on Wood or Metal – all of Improvised Armor, Spike Thrower and Impale benefit greatly from being combined with Tinker. Finally – it can really help you be confident going into Level 4 fight without scouting – having Tinker means that your Metal/Wood can be equally useful for fighting both the Vampire and Basilisk. However, if you are faced with the option to gain this skill late in the game when your weapon is already crafted and you don't foresee other use for either Metal or Wood – it's likely safe to skip this one.

VERMIN MASTER – Another way to deal wounds without the use of weapons, this is a good skill if you find yourself with Food to spare. Particularly effective for the Huntress (whose character ability can reliably yield Food). Keep in mind that dealing Wounds this way bypasses attack-modifying effects such as those from Gnoll or Bugbear. It's a great way to support your damage output throughout the game, but you have to be mindful to not use up all of your Food this way and face starvation!

RESISTANT – Conditions can introduce a serious obstacle for your long-term success, and this skill offers a good way to avoid the worst of it, even scoring you some extra Small Effort in the process. Before using it, make sure that the reduced Combat Roll result won't be too punishing for you. This skill is more helpful early in the game as the Level 4 monsters have practically no condition-imparting Combat Actions and you'd be better off picking something else.

IMPALE – Another wounding skill, this one uses Metal and has a higher potential damage output than either Sacrifice or Vermin Master. The balance here is whether this metal would be better spent crafting a weapon that would allow you to deal these wounds using more conventional methods in longer-term. It can be equally useful early and late game where early in the game it would serve as more of a supportive option, while in the late game you'd need to commit to it as your primary way of dealing wounds (in which case you should still have some way of breaking armor). Clearly if you go with this skill – prioritize Encounter cards that yield Metal.

IMPROVISED ARMOR – This skill is an excellent way to broaden the usability of the resources at your disposal. Either Wood or Metal can be used to negate a Wound or Daze effect, which can sometimes mean the difference between victory and defeat (if you need a high-grade Effort to finish off the monster). It also takes off the pressure to find other uses for Metal and Wood you have collected through your travels. Each ignored Wound or Daze effect means saving at least a couple of Small Effort units and best of all – you can control when you use or not use this skill. While generally this is a useful skill and is a nice safety net to have – you can get caught without having enough Wood or Metal to pay for it or depending on it too much and not having enough materials to craft weapons. Additionally – if you have plenty of Small Effort – you might be more comfortable with losing it than with looking for Wood or Metal to block the attacks. Grab this if you're heading into later levels and have some resources to pay for it that you don't need for something else.

WEAPONSMITH – This skill is best picked up right before you start upgrading your weapon. Each unit of Time you save thanks to using this can mean an additional Encounter resulting in more resources for you to use. The immunity to the DISARM effect can also come in handy – while it is not a prevalent effect, it does appear on 5 monsters on Levels 2-4. It means that if your strategy hinges on a weapon and ability to use it – this is a helpful skill to have as it will help you both craft one and not lose it to a bad roll. Make sure you pick this one up early in the game to get the most out of it – picking it up toward Level 4 or after you already have an Advanced weapon won't do you much good.

STOIC – The simple benefit provided by this Skill should not be underestimated. Having to eat one less Food on Level 4 can save you up to 4 Small Efforts and generally relieve lots of pressure you might otherwise feel to find a Food, meaning you can spend your resources pumping up high-grade Effort instead. Obviously if you already have lots of Food (or if playing the Huntress who can do something similar through her character ability) – skip this skill. Otherwise its utility remains relevant through the entirety of the game.

SPIKE THROWER – Wood is generally easier to come by than Metal in Unbroken, so the wounding skill using it is slightly less effective. However, given the fact that you can easily stockpile 3-4 units of Wood, especially on later levels – this Skill does offer a reliable way of dealing medium amounts of damage (6-8). Its weakness is that it takes a while so while this is a pretty good choice against monsters that don't have very powerful attacks (like the Gnoll) – it might be suboptimal against enemies that you want to finish off as quickly as possible. Having said that – Skill-based wounding options are always good to supplement your main weapon, especially if you have a bit of a Wood stockpile. The skill works equally well throughout the game and it feels especially cool to finish off the Vampire using this one (both thematically and mechanically).

POISON MASTERY – Is a skill that demands significant investment of resources but offers great damage output. A 5-Power Wound is enough to take out many Level 2 and 3 monsters in one turn, ignoring their armor at that, so foes like Hobgoblin or Bugbear really hate this one. It works best on earlier levels because of its ability to get things done without resorting to breaking armor at all. On Level 4 it serves as a strong supporting damage option for monsters with no armor and a subpar one where Armor is present. Requiring lots of Cunning is a tough requirement in itself – Cunning is a useful resource that you're likely going to need for other things (Scouting is a great example). Clearly if you have a reliable way to generate Cunning (for example through Inventive Skill or the Sage's character ability, though it will come with reduced damage output) – these make this skill more attractive. This is a strong mid-game skill being too costly for the early game and not able to carry your strategy on its own in the final battle.

COUNTERATTACK – Is an excellent way to supplement your damage-dealing ability by making the monsters pay for their own attacks they land. WOUND is the most prevalent effect in the game with monsters of Levels 3 and 4 having on average 2-3 Combat actions resulting in this. Yes, suffering these effects brings you closer to defeat, but being able to also make progress to defeating monsters while they wound you is a great help to your own damage-dealing efforts. Grab this Skill as early as possible for maximum payoff. Just be mindful that using it to full effect will require a healthy supply of Effort – make sure you don't run out!

MOSS EATER – This skill may seem unimpressive at first, but consider the flexibility it provides. Food becomes a significant requirement on the later Levels and being able to sub in Wood instead really frees up your options of what to collect. This becomes especially important if you have alternative uses for Food such as the Vermin Master skill, or you are about to fight the Wyvern (with its monster-specific way of dealing damage through a combination of Food and Wood). This skill can also broaden your Trickery options during Levels 2 and 3. Best if taken mid-game, consider this skill if you're feeling comfortable with your combat prowess and want your survivability to be less dependent on Food.

DEFENSIVE STANCE – Fittingly a skill for the calculating and savvy warrior. Taking a penalty to your wounding attack on a regular basis is unlikely to be beneficial every turn, but if you apply this Skill selectively, it can be very helpful. Look for opportunities where you have some excess damage to burn. For example, a monster has 5 Health, and you can deal with it using 3-Power wounding attacks. One point of damage would be wasted anyway, so you may be better off "spending" it to impose a penalty to the monster's Combat roll. Low rolls always have less serious consequences (they are sometimes even harmful to the monster), and higher rolls are usually more painful, so that -2 to the roll can really make a difference. Useful throughout the game, this skill should be considered by players who prefer a more tactical approach to Combat, are wielding fairly flexible weapons, and have the Effort to pay for a variety of attacks.

CONDITIONS

Conditions can be imparted in two ways: immediately in Combat, affecting you for the duration of the fight, or "for the next Level." The implications of picking up a condition in the middle of combat are covered under individual monster descriptions (based on which monster is likely to inflict which condition). Getting conditions for an entire Level gives you more choice in how you will manage them, so this section focuses on those situations.

Consider the following, if you start a Level with the Condition:

WEAKENED - Most likely you will get this condition for 3rd Level. Many of the monsters on Level 3 require you to inflict high-powered wounds to finish the fight quickly without losing too much, so this is a significant impediment. If you receive this condition for Level 3, then Scout the monster and plan to use Trickery. That is likely to be best, unless you are so confident in your Combat prowess that you think you can take the monster down even with the Wound penalty.

PARANOID - This Condition will increase the Health of the next Monster you fight by 2. On earlier Levels that might make the Monster too powerful, and you should aim to trick it instead. If you get this Condition for Level 4, when trickery is no longer an option: Use an Encounter to discard Paranoid if you can. Otherwise, know that the challenge ahead just got that much greater and try to prepare to meet it.

CURSED - This is a tough condition to handle, as it has potential to wreck both your short- and long-term planning. It is very rare, but you may get it for Level 3. If that happens: try to structure your strategy so that it doesn't depend on any Actions. That can be difficult because so many of the game's aspects are Action-based, including Scouting, Weapon Crafting and even Orienteering. The most efficient way to deal with it is to focus on your current weapon (hopefully it's not Bare Hands), and just stock up on as much Effort as you can to survive the fight. Alternatively, bite the bullet, pay the extra cost for the Scouting (to make sure you have the right resources), and Trick the monster, leaving all your general actions until the final Level (it will make more sense to delay a weapon upgrade until then anyway).

AMNESIA - You are most likely to obtain this condition for the final Level. If that happens, your strategy will depend on how attached you are to your Skills. If these are important, and if you find the right Encounter, you might want to pay the lofty cost of discarding it. (You might even use Orienteer to increase the chances of seeing the right Encounter.) Otherwise, forget your skills (literally!) and focus on what you are limited to, most likely using your Weapon to inflict wounds.

AFRAID - This is one of the more common Conditions. You are most likely to have it for Level 2, but you can also obtain it on Levels 3 and 4, from fighting Monsters and the Cautious skill. Being Afraid takes away your ability to Rest during the Exploration Step, which can be a tough obstacle because Resting is a reliable way to benefit from useless Encounters, letting you get the universally useful Small Effort. You must take steps to ensure you can benefit from Encounters (being able to pay their Costs). You will need to have a variety of different resources available, so that no matter what the Encounter requires, you have it on hand. Another approach is to increase the number of Encounter cards you are choosing from, or to know what you'll need ahead of time. Huntress and Sneak have character abilities to help with that. The Orienteer action can help you increase the number of cards. A General Action to get a Medium Effort or a Cunning is usually a good idea when you're Afraid, in order to give you more variety of resources. There is rarely enough pain to justify paying to discard this Condition, but if you can discard it very early on Level 3 or 4, the peace of mind is likely worth it.

CRIPPLED – Spending 1 extra Time per Encounter sounds like a minor impediment, but it quickly adds up. Level 4, for example, will normally have about 10 encounters, but if you are Crippled, you will likely manage only 7. You are likely to be Crippled on either Level 4 or 2. Paying for an Encounter to discard the Condition makes sense in the first half of Level 4, but probably not on Level 2. If you do go through the Level Crippled, then one of the main maxims of Unbroken gets turned on its head: Shorter Encounters are now worse. Increasing a Time 1 encounter duration by 1 doubles it, while an Encounter that originally took 5 time now takes 6, a marginal increase. Keep this in mind as you make decisions during the Travel phase. Having a series of quick-duration Encounters might usually be a great idea, but not while each of these takes more out of you.

PANICKED – Reduces the number of cards you reveal every Encounter by 1, which normally will mean you are only looking at one card. This means that unless you have a way to increase the number of cards you draw (like the Sneak's Take a Peek ability), you will likely have little choice. That will most likely mean you will be more reliant on the Rest option. It's fine on earlier Levels (you will often find yourself Panicked on Level 2), but if you enter Level 4 with this condition, you might max out your Small Effort early and then have no way to benefit from further cards. On Level 4, it makes sense to pay to get rid of this Condition if you can, during the first three Explorations. Otherwise, consider paying for Orienteering to not be limited to a single card. If playing the Huntress, use the Lay of the Land ability generously. The information it gives you can let you know whether you're better off Orienteering, or whether the cards coming up will benefit you. Generally, this Condition hurts you most when you are hunting for a particular resource (e.g., a missing piece for crafting a Weapon, or extra Cunning to wound the Shaman). These situations call for Orienteering (even normally; but especially when Panicked).

PARALYZED – This Condition only affects the battle with the Basilisk. See the Basilisk's individual section. Poisoned – This Condition only affects the battles with the Spider and the Wyvern. See their individual sections.

ARMORED – This is a rare positive Condition that you can get from defeating the Hobgoblin or from an Encounter card. It allows you to ignore up to two Wound effects, which can save you as much as 6 Small Effort. Keep in mind that unlike all other Conditions, you don't need to discard Armored at the end of a Level. If you have to choose whether to obtain this Condition or not, try to use your knowledge of the Monster ahead. If WOUND effects form at least half of their Combat Actions, it's probably a good idea to have this extra defense. Otherwise, it might be wasted. Refer to individual monster descriptions. These often hint at whether having this Condition would be helpful or not. If you can get armored from defeating the Hobgoblin in Level 3 it will likely serve you well for the final Level.

CHARACTERS

You must constantly look for good opportunities to productively use your character abilities. Ending the Level with unused ability uses means you have wasted a resource at your disposal, lowering your chance of success. These individual descriptions provide useful suggestions:

THE BRAWLER CHARACTER – This is perhaps the most straightforward option because the character abilities (unsurprisingly) are focused around Combat. That's both a strength and a weakness, because the Brawlers have nothing to help them prepare for Combat more effectively. When it comes to brute force, they are certainly unmatched. The Just a Scratch ability is the easiest to use. The Wound Effects are plentiful, and they often inflict 2 or more Small Efforts. Using this ability is not as dramatic as the other two, so it should be used when you know you won't need the higher-impact benefits the others offer.

Being able to inflict an extra Wound can mean finishing a fight much sooner, so always consider whether Power Through is the right option. As you calculate your plan for dealing Wounds to a monster, this ability may be the kicker that gets you to the finish line. It can be very helpful against monsters that require killing as soon as possible, or those with generous amounts of Health (Minotaur, Wyvern, Troll, Vampire). Knowing that you are NOT going to rely on powering up your attacks is just as helpful because it tells you that you can save the ability uses for other purposes.

I'VE SEEN WORSE is the most potent and the most unreliable ability the Brawler has. Sometimes a monster's action can completely ruin your strategy (the Ogre destroying the weapon you're counting on, or Shaman robbing you of the Cunning you need to land a final blow). In these situations, an opportunity to re-roll the Monster's Combat Roll can be priceless. Once the Combat starts, look over the potential Combat actions of a monster. If any of these seem like you really have to avoid it, make sure you are holding back at least one use of I've Seen Worse.

You can think of the Brawler's abilities as a cascading priority – save a certain amount for your planned Power Through uses, hold back some for I've Seen Worse if there are effects you'd really like to avoid, and feel free to use the rest to save some Effort through Just a Scratch.

THE SNEAK CHARACTER – fittingly, rewards a cautious, calculated-risk approach to playing. None of his abilities are flashy, but they can be used easily and provide tangible benefits, especially in situations that other characters might find problematic.

Perhaps the most powerful one is expanding the Skill choice to 3 cards instead of 2. Having a Skill that really benefits you can be a huge difference. A 50% increase in the number of cards you pick from is significant. Always hold back one use of Flexible to pick from 3 Skills, unless you are planning to trick the monster (in which case you won't be getting a Skill anyway).

The Dodge ability costs you a Small Effort (and subjects you to the next lower Combat Action), so it's not a free pass by any means. But even knowing that, it's great to avoid a game-ending Combat Action from the Monster. Dodge also has the benefit of perfect control over the new result, which can be helpful; in some cases you will really prefer a specific result, perhaps because your Skill allows you to ignore it. If you Scout the monster during the Travel phase, scan its Combat Actions to see if any of these would warrant Dodging. If that's the case, it's a good idea to save at least one use for such an emergency.

All the other uses of the Sneak's character abilities should be saved for Take a Peek. It's a great way to increase the number of Encounter cards you are looking at, increasing the usefulness of resources you collect during the Travel phase.

HUNTRESS / HUNTER – This character requires finesse to use effectively, but her Food abilities greatly increase your chances of not succumbing to starvation.

Subsist reduces the amount of Food you need to eat by 1 after finishing a Level. That can save you as much as 4 Small Effort on the final Level. Keeping at least one use to the very end of the round will make sense (unless you are comfortable for Food).

The Scavenge ability enables a very effective exchange of Small Effort for Food. Use it if you have some way to make efficient use of the resource (e.g. Vermin Master skill, the Wyvern's special ability or preparing for a Trickery effect that requires a Food). Being able to spend Food on Encounters, knowing that you can easily replenish your supply, opens other options for you. Generally, consider using this ability at the very start of Levels 2-4 to get some Food (if you don't have any otherwise). That way, if you need it for an Encounter, you'll have some!

LAY OF THE LANDS provides invaluable information on what's ahead in the Encounter deck, normally previewing all the cards for the next two Explorations, plus an additional one (2 + 2 + 1 cards). If any of these cards requires a resource that you don't have (but can obtain through a General Action), you can ensure that a helpful Encounter gets used. You might be able to plan ahead, knowing that a Treasure you'll obtain will get the Cunning you need on the 5th card. If you know what's coming up, and one of the cards requires you to Commit, Lay of the Land can tell you whether Committing is worthwhile. Finally, Lay of the Land can be very helpful toward the end of the Level as your Time gets close to 0. Knowing the exact Time Values of cards coming up allows you to have as many Encounters as possible without triggering an Ambush. Make sure you use the Lay of the Land as much as possible, whenever you don't absolutely need one of the other abilities.

THE SAGE CHARACTER - The wise Sage possesses deep knowledge of the underworld that can aid you to outsmart its denizens and stay alive.

Cunning has lots of uses in the game: Scouting, Trickery, special Monster actions and some Skills rely on it. Waiting to be able to "find" cunning through Encounters can make you too reliant on the luck of the draw, but the Sage doesn't have this problem. Use their Tome Knowledge ability to reliably and cheaply generate Cunning. This makes the Sage more able to Scout, and because the exchange rate is so favorable, you will likely have a few extra Small Effort left for fighting off your enemies!

The Memorize ability comes into play when you reveal Encounter cards and more than one are very helpful to you. Normally, you'd need to discard one, but Memorize allows you to place one of the unselected cards right back on top of the Encounter deck and see it next. This is a great way to make effective exchanges and get as many needed resources as possible. You can even count on a resource you are getting in the current Exploration to pay for the one that you know you will Encounter next! Do not hesitate to use this ability. It's a great way to spend a character ability charge.

Finally, the Dangerous Idea is a tricky option. More Time is always welcome. An extra Encounter may give you a much-needed edge or provide an opportunity to exchange a useless piece of Wood for some much needed high-grade Effort. But it's unreliable, and it becomes more so on the higher Levels. Using it is recommended on Levels 1 and 2 (as your chances to gain Time are very good), dubious on Level 3, and reserved for desperation on Level 4. (Alternatively, if you do not see other productive uses of your character abilities, you might as well take your chances). Make sure you do not use this ability when you only have 1 Time remaining. Rolling a 1 and triggering an Ambush is the last thing you want to happen!

My overall advice is to start a Level by planning ahead and generating as much Cunning as you think you'll need, using your Tome Knowledge. Then go through about half of the Level, keeping back uses to trigger Memorize if you see a card that's too good to miss. When the Level is close to being over (but not too close!), use any unspent character ability charges on Dangerous Idea to (hopefully) get some extra time.

CONCLUSION

I hope this guide will help you understand the mechanics of Unbroken and the strategies that lead to victory. None of these are foolproof. Lots can and will change during a game, but the principles should help you. I look forward to hearing your feedback on this guide. Help me keep making it better in the future!

Most of all, I look forward to new strategies and tactics, as you folks enjoy the game and discover creative tricks and combinations of your own.

If you have any feedback or suggestions that you'd like to share, please e-mail me at altema.games@gmail.com or post your thoughts on BoardGameGeek. I look forward to hearing from you!

Enjoy surviving in Unbroken and remember to #MakeThemPay!

- Artem Safarov, Game Designer.
Special thanks to Tobias Robison for his skillful and attentive editorial pass on this guide.