

THE
ARCANA CHECK
PRESENTS

In the Darkness

INTUITIVE VISION RULES
FOR D&D 5E



*Deep into that darkness
peering
Long I stood there
wondering, fearing,
Doubting*

Edgar Allen Poe
-The Raven

In The Darkness

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Vision rules in 5e are often time-consuming to implement on the fly. Lights stretch out to x-number of feet in multiple states of brightness, and the areas revealed are changed as people move their characters. This is fantastic for a computer game - or as a feature of certain online tabletop environments - but in person, the distances that characters can see are often best-guessed, ignored completely, or worse, counted out one tile at a time during a disagreement about the rules.

This document tries to make the vision rules more intuitive by removing the need for distance calculations as well as seeking to be more inclusive by having the keyword for detecting creatures and objects being *to sense*.

SENSING CREATURES

Creatures you cannot sense cannot be directly targeted by attacks or abilities. For example, a room full of goblins that you cannot sense cannot be targeted by firebolt, but will still have to make a saving throw against fireball.

There are 3 ways to sense creatures and objects (at least for the purposes of gameplay): seeing, hearing, and intuition

PRIMARY SENSE

One of the three senses is a creature's primary sense. Creatures or objects you detect with your primary sense can be targeted by any applicable spell or ability. If the language of the spell or ability implies that you need to be able to see a creature, you can use that spell or ability on creatures you detect with your primary sense. For example, the acid splash spell specifically targets 1 to 2 creatures that you can see. A creature whose primary sense is hearing can cast this spell on creatures it can hear, even if it is blind.

If you lose the benefits of your primary sense, you can only target creatures and objects that you detect with your other senses.

NON-PRIMARY SENSE

When you sense a creature with a non-primary sense, you can only target that creature with disadvantage.

Seeing

You automatically sense creatures and objects that are not benefiting from full cover. You must be able to draw an unimpeded line from yourself to the creature in order for your character to sense it by seeing.

Creatures cannot bypass being sensed by seeing with stealth; they must have objects between themselves and the seeing creature (but see *darkness levels*.) or else they are automatically detected, regardless of how high they roll.

This is the primary sense for most creatures.

Seeing is affected by darkness levels.

Hearing

You automatically sense creatures that move. You do not need to be able to draw an unimpeded line, as per seeing, but creatures

that do not move are effectively invisible to hearing. Additionally, it's impossible to detect most objects by hearing, unless they move.

Creatures can move without being heard by passing a contested stealth check against a creature's passive perception.

Creatures with *Tremorsense* and *Blindsight* use hearing as their primary sense. If they can hear a creature, they can target that creature with any applicable spell or ability.

Hearing is affected by noise levels.

Intuition

Intuition is a rare sense that few have at all, let alone as a primary sense.

You automatically intuit creatures that you have learned about for meta reasons as a player at the table. If the DM slipped up and revealed that there are goblins in a dark room, you intuit them. If one player learns about a creature and you also learn about the creature, then your character intuits the creature.

Creatures that you can only sense with intuition can be targeted once (at disadvantage, unless intuition is your primary sense!) If the attack or spell misses, they cannot be targeted again until you sense them with seeing or hearing.

Creatures with *Truesight* use intuition as their primary sense. They automatically intuit creatures out to a certain range. If they can intuit a creature, they can target that creature with any applicable spell or ability.

Temporary Primary Senses

A creature might gain a temporary sense from a spell or similar effect; for example, a wizard might gain truesight. That wizard is now "a creature with truesight," as per

above, and uses intuition as her primary sense until the effect ends. This means that the wizard, if blinded, can still sense creatures. A warlock might gain blindsight from exploring a dungeon with his bat familiar; that warlock's primary sense is hearing until he stops sensing the world through his familiar.

BEING ATTACKED BY CREATURES YOU CAN'T SENSE

Creatures (and traps) that you do not sense automatically succeed on attacks against your armor class, and you make saving throws at disadvantage.

Creatures that you only sense with a non-primary sense (including intuition, so players suspicious that their characters are not alone will intuit an otherwise unseen attacker) make attacks against you at advantage.

CONDITIONS

The following conditions have been changed or added to the game to better match these vision rules.

BLINDED

You lose the benefits for seeing. You automatically fail perception checks that rely on seeing.

DEAFENED

You lose the benefits for hearing. You automatically fail perception checks that rely on hearing.

NUMBED

You lose the benefits for intuiting. This condition is unique to this document, and exists for DMs using this ruleset to inhibit intuition through custom homebrew effects.

ATTRIBUTES

SUNLIGHT SENSITIVITY

Being in the sunlight is uncomfortable. Areas lit by sunlight are treated as if they were Dark to you. Sources of light do not decrease this darkness level. Overcast conditions lessen the effects to that of the Dim level of darkness.

DARKVISION

Pitch Black conditions are only Dark to you. Dark conditions are only Dim to you. You see normally in dim conditions, except those imposed on you by sunlight.

Areas lit by sunlight are treated as if they were Dim to creatures with Darkvision. Sources of light do not decrease this darkness level. Overcast conditions remove the effects imposed on you by sunlight.

LEVELS OF DARKNESS

The DM decides the darkness level of an area.

MAGICAL DARKNESS

The area affected by magical darkness is treated as if it were pitch black. Additionally, light sources give no benefit within this area.

PITCH BLACK

Creatures no longer gain any benefit from seeing. You automatically fail perception checks that rely on sight.

You additionally have the penalties listed under the Dark and Dim condition.

DARK

Creatures do not need full cover to hide, and are no longer automatically sensed by creatures' sight.

If seeing is your primary sense, or the only way you can sense, you have the following penalties:

You can only see the world in hazy, featureless silhouettes. You suffer a -5 penalty to attacks and perception checks (passive or active). This penalty represents attempting to use other, non-primary senses to make gather and use information from the world around you.

You additionally have the penalties listed under the Dim condition.

DIM

Creatures do not need full cover to hide, and are no longer automatically sensed by creatures' sight.

If seeing is your primary sense, or the only way you can sense, you have the following penalties:

Creatures you attack gain the benefit of partial cover (+2 to AC) against you. This penalty represents attempting to use other, non-primary senses to make gather and use information from the world around you.

Active perception checks are made at disadvantage.

These penalties represent attempting to use other, non-primary senses to make gather and use information from the world around you.

SOURCES OF LIGHT

Spells and objects that create light reduce the level of darkness.

One light source reduces Pitch Black to Dark.

Three light sources reduce Dark to Dim. Five light sources remove all darkness.

LIGHT RADIUS

Areas within a 5-foot circle of a light source do not have a darkness level. Creatures that are in any level of darkness besides magical darkness can see a light source and creatures that are in the light source.

The DM may change this radius based on the size or intensity of the light source.

LEVELS OF NOISE

Darkness and Noise can be thought of as opposites; darkness is the absence of light, but noise is the presence of sound.

The DM decides the noise level of an area.

DEAFENING

You no longer gain any benefit from hearing. You automatically fail perception checks that rely on hearing.

You additionally have the penalties listed under the Loud and Static-filled condition.

LOUD

Sounds are intermingled helter-skelter with other sounds, obscuring their sources and meanings.

Moving does not reveal your location to nearby creatures that can hear.

If hearing is your primary sense, or if hearing is the only way you can sense, you have the following penalties:

You suffer a -5 penalty to attacks and perception checks (passive or active).

These penalties represent attempting to use other, non-primary senses to make gather and use information from the world around you.

You also suffer the penalties listed under *Static-Filled*.

STATIC-FILLED

Moving does not reveal your location to nearby creatures that can hear.

If hearing is your primary sense, or if hearing is the only way you can sense, you have the following penalties:

Creatures you attack gain the benefit of partial cover (+2 to AC) against you.

Active perception checks are made at

disadvantage.

These penalties represent attempting to use other, non-primary senses to make gather and use information from the world around you.

CREATING A BLIND OR DEAF CHARACTER

Players can decide at character creation that they would like to permanently forgo the benefits of any sense.

Players that sacrifice their hearing at character creation can never benefit from this sense. They gain a language that allows them to communicate in perfect silence with creatures they can see. The language is expressive, and other creatures can understand the general idea of what is being said in it. The language is easy to learn, and can be taught to other players and NPCs within 1d20 days, minus the intelligence modifiers of both the instructor and the learner.

Players that sacrifice their seeing at character creation can never benefit from this sense, but gain hearing as their primary sense. Additionally, they can detect objects with their hearing, provided that they or another creature has recently made noise.

VERSION 1.0.0

The Arcana Check uses Semantic Versioning, which has 3 numbers separated by a period. The numbers can be read as: Major.Minor.Patch

Major. A change that alters the entire concept of a document, such as removing or completely changing a feature. First releases begin as 1.0.0.

Minor. A change that adds something about a hack, such as swapping a spell in a spell list, changing the damage of an ability, or adding a new feature.

Patch. A change that addresses typos and exploitable features.

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