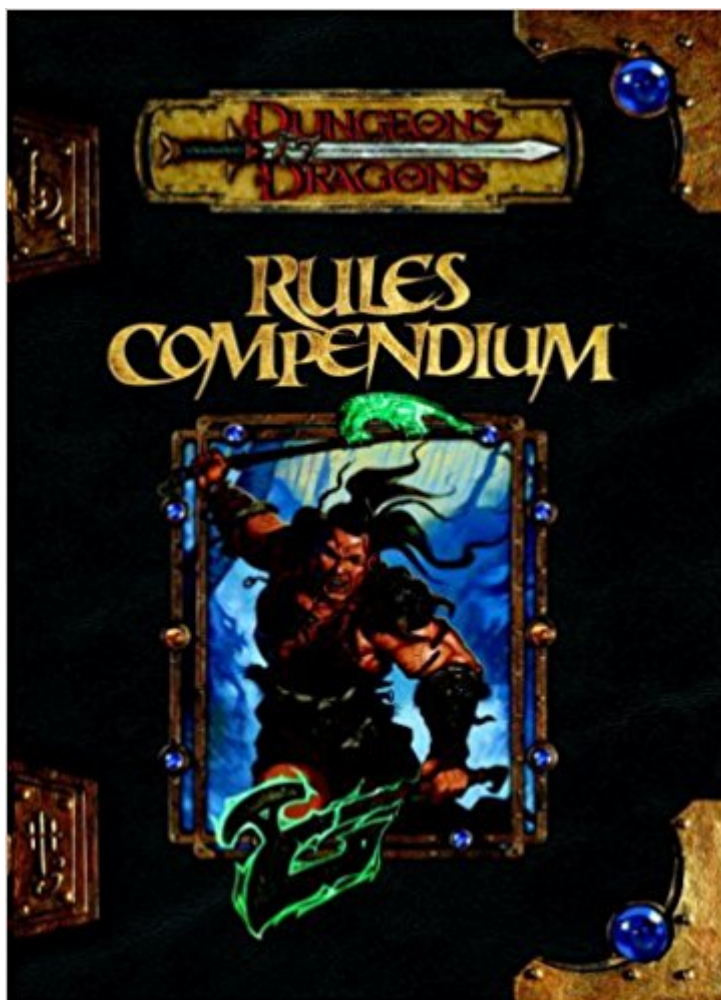


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Rules Compendium (Dungeons & Dragons D20 3.5 Fantasy Roleplaying)



Synopsis

The definitive reference guide of Dungeons & Dragons(R) core rules. Tired of hauling all of your D&D rules supplements to the gaming table? Having trouble finding the rule you need? The Rules Compendium supplement takes all of the game's most important rules and presents them in a single comprehensive, easy-to-reference volume for players and Dungeon Masters. In addition to presenting the rules of the game, the Rules Compendium incorporates official errata as well as behind-the-scenes designer and developer commentary explaining how the rules system has evolved and why certain rules work the way they do.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

CHRIS SIMS is an associate editor who works in Roleplaying Games R&D at Wizards of the Coast, Inc. His previous design credits include the Secrets of Sarlona(TM) supplement for the Eberron(R) campaign setting.

"All the Rules of the Game... In one Awesome Book" is the back cover's tagline. It is not. The list of official rules it doesn't include could be a compendium in itself-- No "Races of" books, no "Complete" books, no "Heroes of" books, no "Tome of" books ad infinitum. The Rules Compendium is a collection of some of the SRD rules (mainly from players handbook) that the developers thought were important, sorted alphabetically. You won't find even many of the rules in the DMG such as wealth by settlement size or creating magical items. Some rules from players handbook were apparently thought too trivial to include such as rules for using profession skills and the clarification-worthy crafting rules. It DOES include all the combat-specific special actions such as bull

rushing, grappling and fighting defensively. It has a whopping 9 pages devoted to movement. It has everything you'd need for an encounter plus some extras like the rules for dealing with the environment from Sandstorm, Stormwrack and FrostBurn. Expectations aside, I love the format. The rules each have their own page and are well organized. The layout is clean and free of clutter. There's no more decorative border and the page has an open feel which makes the original core books look cramped by comparison. Provided the rule you want is in here, lookup is a snap. My hope is that this will be the concept going forward in 4.0. There's some designer commentary in the sidebar that ranges from somewhat insightful commentary on design to amusing recounts of play testing. I'm a fairly avid reader of the "behind the curtain" sidebars and found these to be more personal than informative. Sometimes the text is obviously there to fill in the white space-- it's unobtrusive and keeps a page devoted to say... the Feint action from otherwise looking completely barren. One thing you will find from all the previous rule books is familiar art work. Most, if not all, of it is recycled but I smiled several times seeing some of my favorite artists best work. I particularly love J. Jarvis's sword wielding velociraptor on pg 151. In sum, the claims on the back cover that this will relieve you from "...hauling all your books to the gaming table" is patently false. Even if it had all of the PHB rules in it, you'd still need the PHB for spells and class info. And if you're running the game, add in the Monster Manual and DMG. And anything else that contains a non-core class, feat, spell, item, monster, skill, skill trick or prestige class. DMs and players who haven't completely memorized the rules for movement and combat (but know them all by name) should find the layout and index helpful in looking up the finer points of grappling or breaking objects. I can think of several combats where this book might have expedited a rules check. But if anything, its usefulness will make it one MORE book you bring to the table rather than any less.

I picked up the D&D Rules Compendium (ordered fairly cheaply from). This is by far the best rules-related purchase I've made in a while for D&D. Wizards took all of the various core rules introduced throughout 3 and 3.5 books over the past 7 years and organized them alphabetically by topic with extra clarification, simplified explanations, and side comments from the rule designers. Topics like the Bull Rush and Charge combat actions each get a full page of explanation and clarification -- without adding complexity. Grappling, of course, gets 2 pages :) The book focuses only on the core mechanics and does not include spells, class descriptions, equipment descriptions, magic item creation, feats, skills, etc. This is perfectly fine with me since many of those topics are not the kind of thing I, as a DM, necessarily need at hand. It's possible that a DM will get much more use out of this book than a player. By having it on hand during game play, finding obscure or seldom

used rules is much easier. So far I've only noticed one design choice that seems slightly inconsistent. Most topics get their own entry in the book, but all of the movement related topics, like flying, running, and overland movement, are grouped under a single Movement topic. Fortunately, there is a detailed topic index at the front of the book (which should have been at the *back* of the book, that's where an index belongs, but this is a minor quibble). This book would make a great electronic download in searchable format, like a self-contained wiki. In fact, if it had been a free resource on the new Wizards D&D/Gleemax community site, they might have bought themselves back a little love from those of us who think next year's 4th edition D&D is about 5 years premature. At least all of the artwork from the book is available for download here: [...] including some of the movement explanation diagrams. Overall, I'm really pleased with this product. No, it won't replace a single book I've already bought, but it's great to have the critical core rules compiled in one place cleanly, clearly and (almost) consistently.

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