Deadlier Dungeons

Hit Points

Characters under the standard d20 system are durable as hell! At high levels they can fall off tall cliffs and walk away or shrug off damage equivalent to grenade or even (in some settings) an antimatter rifle.

For those preferring something a little more lethal, the Deadlier Dungeons system outlined here may be the perfect solution. Under this system hit points start out at a reasonable level early in the character's life and increase only gradually as their adventuring continues.

The following equation (rounded down) determines each character's hit point total:

Hit Points = 5 + Con. Mod. + (Maximized Hit Dice × HP size multiplier)

Hit Point size multipliers are given in the following table:

Character Size	Hit Point Size Multiplier
Fine	0.1
Diminutive	0.1
Tiny	0.1
Small	0.1
Medium	0.1
Large	0.2
Huge	0.3
Gargantuan	0.4
Colossal	0.5

The Toughness feat may still be acquired under the Deadlier Dungeons system, contributing directly to a character's hit point total.

Progressive Injury Damage Track

In standard d20 games there are two states a damaged character is likely to be in: Ok and Dying. If they happen to end up at exactly 0 hit points they will be Injured or Staggered, but this is a rare occurrence..

The system described here uses a damage track to provide a more graded progression of consequences for taking damage.

The Damage Track looks something like this:

Damage Track										Consequences	
										Normal	- No additional limitations.
										Fatigued	- Apply a -2 penalty to Str. And Dex. rolls.
										Sickened	- Additional -2 penalty to all rolls.
										Staggered	- Partial action per round only.
										Dying	- Unconscious. Take 1 damage/round.
										Dead	- Soul departed. Unhealable.

Creation
To create a damage track representing your character's bodily integrity take your effective hit points and use them to calculate which boxes are available on the Damage Track as follows:

Start from the top down filling the first <u>column</u> of the Damage Track with hit points. When the first column is filled start filling the one to the right of it from the top down. Proceed in this matter to the third column, etc. until all the hit points have been used up.

Shade in all the boxes not covered by hit points.

Filling
When your character takes non-lethal damage start marking a "/" in each box of the first <u>row</u> of the damage track for each point of damage taken. When the first row is filled start filling the second row. When that's filled start on the third row, etc.

If you take lethal damage use "X" marks to fill the boxes instead of "/" marks. If a character has both types of damage you will need to use a combination of both sorts of marks. The effects of non-lethal damage are always felt before the effects of lethal damage. To indicate this always over-write non-lethal damage with lethal and then mark the displaced non-lethal damage at the bottom of the chart.

If a character has all their boxes filled any additional damage they take (whether lethal or non-lethal) converts non-lethal damage boxes to lethal damage on a 1-for-1 basis.

Consequences
The consequences a character has from taking lethal damage correspond to the highest row of the damage track that is not entirely filled.

Non-lethal has the same consequences except that damage in the "Dying" or "Dead" rows merely indicates a loss of consciousness. No additional hit points are lost and the character is not dead in these states unless they spaces become filled with lethal damage at a later time.

Creation Example

Vargol is a Snerf

Snerfs are Large creatures so he has a 0.2 Hit Point Size Multiplier.

He's been around for awhile and has acquired five levels of Barbarian class (5d12) and 2 levels of Wizard class (2d4).

His Constitution is 10 giving him a Con. Modifier of +0

His hit points are calculated as:

Hit Points = 5 + Con. Mod. + (Maximized Hit Dice × HP size multiplier)
Hit Points = 5 + 0 + ((12+12+12+12+12+4+4) × 0.2)
Hit Points = 5 + 0 + (68 × 0.2)
Hit Points = 5 + 0 + 13.6
Hit Points = 18.6 (rounded to 18)

He uses these points to lay out the damage track as follows:

Damage Track										Consequences	
1	6	11								**Normal**	- No additional limitations.
2	7	12								**Fatigued**	- Apply a -2 penalty to Str. And Dex. rolls.
3	8	13								**Sickened**	- Additional -2 penalty to all rolls.
4	9									**Staggered**	- Partial action per round only.
5	10									**Dying**	- Unconscious. Take 1 damage/round.
										Dead	- Soul departed. Unhealable.

Which becomes:

Damage Track										Consequences	
			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Normal**	- No additional limitations.
			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Fatigued**	- Apply a -2 penalty to Str. And Dex. rolls.
			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Sickened**	- Additional -2 penalty to all rolls.
		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Staggered**	- Partial action per round only.
		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Dying**	- Unconscious. Take 1 damage/round.
▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Dead**	- Soul departed. Unhealable.

Taking Damage Example

When Vargol takes damage his track begins to get crossed off as follows:

Round 1: Vargol gets pummeled with fists for 2 point of non-lethal damage. This is marked off on his chart starting in the upper left hand corner and going across as below:

Damage Track											Consequences	
/	/		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Normal**	- No additional limitations.
			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Fatigued**	- Apply a -2 penalty to Str. And Dex. rolls.
			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Sickened**	- Additional -2 penalty to all rolls.
		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Staggered**	- Partial action per round only.
		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Dying**	- Unconscious. Take 1 damage/round.
▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Dead**	- Soul departed. Unhealable.

Because the damage is in his "Normal" damage level he suffers no penalties for accruing it.

Round 2: Vargol gets pummeled again receiving another points of non-lethal damage. The chart again records this filling out the first row and continuing to the second:

Damage Track											Consequences	
/	/	/	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Normal**	- No additional limitations.
/			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Fatigued**	- Apply a -2 penalty to Str. And Dex. rolls.
			▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Sickened**	- Additional -2 penalty to all rolls.
		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Staggered**	- Partial action per round only.
		▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Dying**	- Unconscious. Take 1 damage/round.
▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	▓	**Dead**	- Soul departed. Unhealable.

Because he has a point of damage in his "Fatigued" row Vargol now suffers from that condition.

Round 3: Now a guard with a short sword has rushed up and is carving into Vargol. He does 4 points of lethal damage. The lethal damage is recorded at the top of the chart and the non-lethal is shifted down the chart:

Damage Track											Consequences	
x	x	x									**Normal**	- No additional limitations.
x	/	/									**Fatigued**	- Apply a -2 penalty to Str. And Dex. rolls.
/	/										**Sickened**	- Additional -2 penalty to all rolls.
											Staggered	- Partial action per round only.
											Dying	- Unconscious. Take 1 damage/round.
											Dead	- Soul departed. Unhealable.

Vargol has 2 points of damage in his "Sickened" row, so he suffers both penalties for being Fatigued and Sickened.

Round 4: A sorcerer casts a magic missile at Vargol. It does yet another 4 points of lethal damage:

Damage Track											Consequences	
x	x	x									**Normal**	- No additional limitations.
x	x	x									**Fatigued**	- Apply a -2 penalty to Str. And Dex. rolls.
x	x	/									**Sickened**	- Additional -2 penalty to all rolls.
/	/										**Staggered**	- Partial action per round only.
/											**Dying**	- Unconscious. Take 1 damage/round.
											Dead	- Soul departed. Unhealable.

Because Vargol how has points in his "Dying" row, he is unconscious. Fortunately for him the damage is non-lethal so he does not take the 1 point of damage per round.

However, if his Dying row was entirely filled with lethal damage marks he would automatically be Dead.