Barbarians throw people, okay? And some of us, well, we need rules for that. This document is for everyone who thought hucking a halfling at a hag was a great idea right up to the moment when it came time to calculate distance and damage.

Below, you'll find a set of easy-to-implement rules for throwing creatures and reasonings for those rules.

Basis: Shove Attack

For most cases, the easiest way to model throwing an unwilling creature is the shove attack. The shove attack lets a character either knock a creature prone or else push it 5 feet. To do so, the attacker rolls athletics and the defender chooses either athletics or acrobatics to make a contested skill check. If the defender loses, they are shoved.

This means that, without changing the rules-as-written at all, player characters can throw a creature from one five-foot-square into another and deal zero damage.

We can call this re-flavored Shove Attack the 'Throw-a-Creature' Attack and start tinkering with it.

The Throw-a-Creature Attack

The Throw-a-Creature attack requires a creature to be grappled.

Because this action can potentially do damage while also inflicting status conditions, having it require at least two attacks is an important part of its balance.

If a grappled creature wins the contested check, that creature resists sufficiently and is not thrown.

Size Categories

5e favors simple game mechanics, so let's model throwing a creature off of size differences. This will make it so that these rules don't feel significantly different from RAW 5e.

When a creature throws another creature, they can throw it an additional 5 feet per size category they are larger than the target. For example, a medium dwarf could throw a small goblin 10 feet.

Some player races have traits that allow them to carry weight as if they were a size category larger than medium (as of this writing, there are no large-sized player races in official sources). This trait also allows creatures to use the Throw-a-Creature attack as if they were a size category larger than normal.

For example, bugbears can carry items as if they were large creatures, so they can throw medium creatures as if they were large as well. Thus, a medium bugbear throwing the same small goblin could get 15 feet of distance.

A character cannot throw creatures larger than itself.

Distance and Strength Score

For every +1 strength modifier, a creature can throw a creature an additional 5 feet when using the Throw A Creature attack.

Bart the Barbarian with his +5 strength modifier can throw a medium creature a whopping 30 feet – that's further than he can throw an improvised weapon!

The size difference rules can still mix with this, so if Bart the Barbarian is a Bugbear, he can throw that same creature 30 feet, and can throw a small creature like a goblin 35 feet.
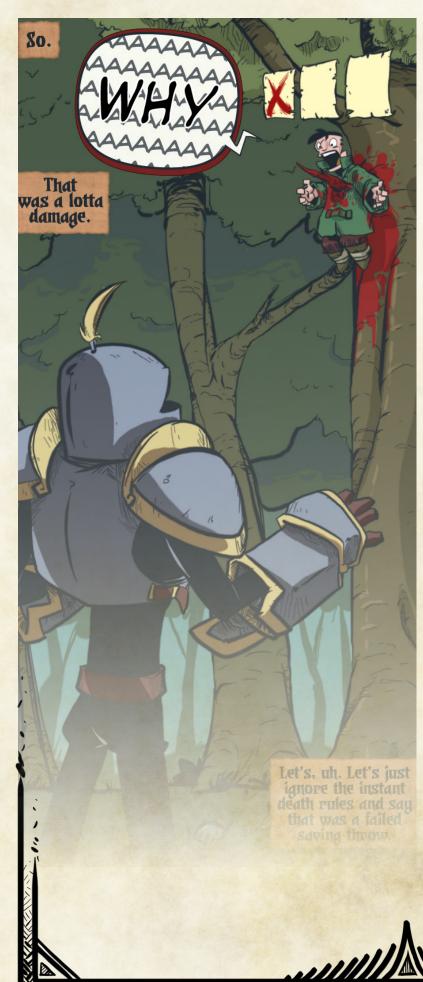
Innate Damage

Throwing a creature 10 feet or more deals the attacker's strength modifier as bludgeoning damage.

A creature thrown any distance beyond 5 feet falls prone, unless they can make a Dexterity saving throw. The DC of the saving throw is 8 + the Strength modifier of the creature that threw it.

A warning. It's tempting to give Throw-a-Creature damage innate fall damage, but in the interest of game balance, do not do this. The

main problem with adding fall damage to throwing-a-creature-damage is that throwing creatures quickly becomes the most efficient martial damage in the game.

Thus, throw-a-creature damage is not cumulative with fall damage, should any occur. If fall damage occurs (because, say, a creature was hurled over a cliff), use whichever dice pool of damage is larger (see Extreme Damage, below).

Extreme Damage

If a character uses the Throw-a-Creature attack to hurl a creature into an object that will bring the creature to a sudden stop, the creature takes 1d6 damage per size category smaller it is than the character (minimum 1d6). Hurling a creature into walls and other fixtures is not in this way more efficient than damage with weapons.

This damage is essentially 'at-will,' for when a player using the Throw-a-Creature attack wants to hurt s

Creative players will find ways to make a case for doing more damage than this, and that's is in the spirit of the game in addition to being good fun. As a DM, though, consider replacing additional damage for conditions like *Unconscious* or *Stunned* as rewards for creative thinking.

Using a creature as a ranged weapon

A thrown creature and a creature being targeted both take the damage dealt to the thrown creature. This requires two attacks, however; the Throw-a-Creature attack and a Ranged Weapon attack.

Both creatures must pass the above-mentioned Dexterity Saving throw or fall prone.

If the character throwing a creature cannot make two attack actions, then at the DM's discretion, the creature targeted by the ranged weapon attack automatically dodges.

Throwing a Willing Creature

Often called a Fastball Special, throwing a willing creature uses the same mechanics as above, except that a willing creature can choose to fail the associated contested check. A willing creature takes the innate damage, but does not fall prone or take the extreme damage.

Without changing any rules-as-written in D&D

5e, thrown creatures can attack creatures they've been tossed at. Players can have their character take the Ready action on their turn, and upon nearing their target, can use their reaction to make an attack.

When a willing creature is the projectile in a ranged weapon attack, and has taken the Ready action, the thrower does **not** need to make a ranged weapon attack to hit a target, as that onus is now on the living projectile. Additionally, the extreme damage that would be done to the target is instead added to the attack of the willing creature.

For example, Bart the Barbarian throws Angela the Halfling Swashbuckler at an ogre. Angela takes 5 damage from Bart's Strength modifier and uses her reaction to attack the ogre. Her attack hits, so she deals the her weapon damage, sneak attack damage, and the extreme damage from the throw in her attack. Because Angela is small and Bart is considered large, the extreme damage is 3d6.

Throwing a Creature Upward

You can throw a creature upward half the distance you can throw them horizontally. Creatures thrown upward are susceptible to fall damage.

Changing Shape After Being Thrown

Druids, wizards, and other shape-shifting allies can create situations where they are a different size upon landing than upon being thrown. The players spent character resources and actions in their action economy to make this attack, so it should be rewarded, but each situation will be unique. As a guideline, if you are rewarding the shenanigans with extra damage, add 1d6 for every resource spent and action taken. Consider non-damage related rewards too; targeted creatures might become restrained, or creatures might be startled and become *surprised* for a round. Let good fun and your most entertaining stream of logic dictate the result.

Credits

Design. Bartholomew Klick
Concept. Bartholomew Klick
Writing. Still Bart
Layout. Bart again.
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Cover Font. Honeymead BB by Blambot
Content Font. Constantia by John Hudson

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