

D&D 5e

Slot Encumbrance System

BY: BILLY WATFORD

SLOT ENCUMBRANCE SYSTEM

What the slot encumbrance system does in a nutshell is do away with tracking weight for your character in D&D 5e and instead turns everything into an easily managed slot system. Much like video games the slot system simply has heavier, bulkier items take up more slots, the stronger your character is then the more slots are available.

The slot encumbrance system does away with containers all together such as backpacks, pouches and sacks and the system assumes that they are already carried and figured into the weight of the items carried. This system does not track where a item is located on your character. It allows for readied weapons and items which are assumed to be strapped to you or in belt pouches for easy access. (Manipulate Object feature of your characters turn can retrieve one of these.) It also tracks stored items that are considered to be packed away in a backpack or sack or other container of some kind and are not readily available (requiring a action on your turn to retrieve.) And it does all of this while still being overseen by the hard caps which are based on your strength score.

Under this new system it brings more realism to encumbrance in the game without being weighed down by all the math of figuring in pounds and fractions of the default weight system.

You can carry items that fill a number of slots equal to your Strength score x 1.5 (rounded down) without penalty. i.e a Strength score of 12 would have 18 slots available.

If you carry more than your Strength score x 1.5 (rounded down) but less than three times your strength score, you are encumbered—your speed drops by 10 feet. i.e. a 12 Strength gives you 36 slots available. Of course the hearty dwarf ignores this penalty as they are used to carrying heavy loads and their race is more built for it.

If you carry more than three times your Strength score, you are heavily encumbered—your speed drops by 20 feet and you have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that use Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution. While the dwarf still ignores the movement penalties, the other penalties effect the dwarf just like any other race.

You CANNOT at any time carry more than 4.5 times (rounded down) your Strength score plus your Strength modifier. (These limits are doubled for Large creatures and halved for Tiny creatures. Dwarves may ignore penalties to speed.)

- Every 250 coins or gems fill 1 slot. Round up.
- Items outside of the list below that require two hands always fill at least 2 slots.
- If you find a item that is not listed below then you can figure how many slots it will take up by weight. The item fills 1 slot for every 5 pounds. Round up.

ARMOR & SHIELDS:

Armor	Cost	Armor Class (AC)	Strength	Stealth	Encumbrance Slots
Light Armor					
Padded	5 gp	11 + Dex Mod	---	Disadvantage	2
Leather	10 gp	11 + Dex Mod	---	---	2
Studded Leather	45 gp	12 + Dex Mod	---	---	3
Medium Armor					
Hide	10 gp	12 + Dex Mod (Max 2)	---	---	3
Chain Shirt	50 gp	13 + Dex Mod (Max 2)	---	---	4
Scale Mail	50 gp	14 + Dex Mod (Max 2)	---	Disadvantage	9
Breastplate	400 gp	14 + Dex Mod (Max 2)	---	---	4
Half Plate Mail	750 gp	15 + Dex Mod (Max 2)	---	Disadvantage	8
Heavy Armor					
Ring Mail	30 gp	14	---	Disadvantage	8
Chain Mail	75 gp	16	Str 13	Disadvantage	11
Splint Mail	200 gp	17	Str 15	Disadvantage	12
Plate Mail	1,500 gp	18	Str 15	Disadvantage	13
Shield					
Shield	10 gp	+ 2	---	---	2

WEAPONS:

Name	Cost	Damage	Encu. Slots	Properties
Simple Melee Weapons				
Club	1 sp	1d4 bludgeoning	1	Light
Dagger	2 gp	1d4 piercing	1/5	Finesse, Light, thrown (range 20/60)
Greatclub	2 sp	1d8 bludgeoning	2	Two-Handed
Handaxe	5 gp	1d6 slashing	1	Light, thrown (range 20/60)
Javelin	5 sp	1d6 piercing	1	Thrown (range 30/120)
Light Hammer	2 gp	1d4 bludgeoning	1	Light, thrown (range 20/60)
Mace	5 gp	1d6 bludgeoning	1	---
Quarterstaff	2 sp	1d6 bludgeoning	1	Versatile (1d8)
Sickle	1 gp	1d4 slashing	1	Light
Spear	1 gp	1d6 piercing	1	Thrown (range 20/60), versatile (1d8)
Unarmed Strike	---	1 bludgeoning	---	
Simple Ranged Weapons				
Crossbow, Light	25 gp	1d8 piercing	2	Ammunition (range 80/320), loading, two-handed
Dart	5 cp	1d4 piercing	1/20	Finesse, thrown (range 20/60)
Shortbow	25 gp	1d6 piercing	2	Ammunition (range 80/320), two-handed
Sling	1 sp	1d4 bludgeoning	---	Ammunition (range 30/120)
Martial Melee Weapons				
Battleaxe	10 gp	1d8 slashing	1	Versatile (1d10)
Flail	10 gp	1d8 bludgeoning	1	---
Glaive	20 gp	1d10 slashing	2	Heavy, reach, two-handed
Greataxe	30 gp	1d12 slashing	2	Heavy, two-handed
Greatsword	50 gp	2d6 slashing	2	Heavy, two-handed
Halberd	20 gp	1d10 slashing	2	Heavy, reach, two-handed
Lance	10 gp	1d12 piercing	2	Reach, special
Longsword	15 gp	1d8 slashing	1	Versatile (1d10)
Maul	10 gp	2d6 bludgeoning	2	Heavy, two-handed
Morningstar	15 gp	1d8 piercing	1	---
Pike	5 gp	1d10 piercing	4	Heavy, reach, two-handed
Rapier	25 gp	1d8 piercing	1	Finesse
Scimitar	25 gp	1d6 slashing	1	Finesse, light
Shortsword	10 gp	1d6 piercing	1	Finesse, light
Trident	5 gp	1d6 piercing	1	Thrown (range 20/60), versatile (1d8)
War Pick	5 gp	1d8 piercing	1	---
Warhammer	15 gp	1d8 bludgeoning	1	Versatile (1d10)
Whip	2 gp	1d4 slashing	1	Finesse, reach

WEAPONS (CON'T):

Name	Cost	Damage	Encu. Slots	Properties
<i>Martial Ranged Weapons</i>				
Blowgun	10 gp	1 piercing	1/5	Ammunition (range 25/100), loading
Crossbow, hand	75 gp	1d6 piercing	1	Ammunition (range 30/120), light, loading
Crossbow, heavy	50 gp	1d10 piercing	4	Ammunition (range 100/400), heavy, loading, two-handed
Longbow	50 gp	1d8 piercing	2	Ammunition (range 150/600), heavy, two-handed
Net	1 gp	---	1	Special, thrown (range 5/15)
<i>Ammunition</i>				
Arrows (20)	1 gp	---	1	Slots are per 20 (1 minimum)
Blowgun Needles (50)	1 gp	---	1	Slots are per 50 (1 minimum)
Crossbow Bolts (20)	1 gp	---	1	Slots are per 20 (1 minimum)
Sling Bullets (20)	4 cp	---	1	Slots are per 20 (1 minimum)

ADVENTURING GEAR:

Item	Cost	Encumbrance Slots
Abacus	2 gp	1
Acid (Vial)	25 gp	1/5
Alchemist's Fire (Flask)	50 gp	1/5
Antitoxin (Vial)	50 gp	1/5
<i>Arcane Focus</i>		
- Crystal	10 gp	1/5
- Orb	20 gp	1
- Rod	10 gp	1
- Staff	5 gp	1
- Wand	10 gp	1/5
Backpack	2 gp	1
Ball Bearings, Bag	1 gp	1
Bedroll	1 gp	2
Bell	1 gp	---
Blanket	5 sp	1
Block and Tackle	1 gp	1
Book	25 gp	1
Bottle, Glass	2 gp	1
Caltrops, Bag	1 gp	1
Candle	1 cp	---
Chain (10 Feet)	5 gp	2
Chalk (1 Piece)	1 cp	---
Climber's Kit	25 gp	3
Clothes, Common	5 sp	1
Clothes, Costume	5 gp	1
Clothes, Fine	15 gp	2
Clothes, Traveler's	2 gp	1
Crowbar	2 gp	1
<i>Druidic Focus</i>		
- Sprig of Mistletoe	1 gp	---
- Totem	1 gp	---
- Wooden Staff	5 gp	1
- Yew Wand	10 gp	1/5
Fishing Tackle	1 gp	1
Flask or Tankard	2 cp	1/5
Grappling Hook	2 gp	1
Hammer	1 gp	1
Hammer, Sledge	2 gp	2
Healer's Kit	5 gp	1

ADVENTURING GEAR (CON'T):

Item	Cost	Encumbrance Slots
<i>Holy Symbol</i>		
- Amulet	5 gp	1/5
- Emblem	5 gp	---
- Reliquary	5 gp	1
Holy Water (Flask)	25 gp	1/5
Hourglass	25 gp	1
Hunting Trap	5 gp	5
Ink (1 ounce bottle)	10 gp	---
Ink Pen	2 cp	---
Jug or Pitcher	2 cp	1
Ladder (10 foot)	1 sp	5
Lamp	5 sp	1
Lantern, Bullseye	10 gp	1
Lantern, Hooded	5 gp	1
Lock	10 gp	1/5
Magnifying Glass	100 gp	1/5
Manacles	2 gp	2
Mess Kit	2 sp	1/5
Mirror, Steel	5 gp	1/5
Oil (Flask)	1 sp	1/5
Paper (one sheet)	2 sp	---
Parchment (one sheet)	1 sp	---
Perfume (Vial)	5 gp	1/5
Pick, Miner's	2 gp	2
Piton	5 cp	1/5
Poison, Basic (Vial)	100 gp	1/5
Pole (10 Foot)	5 cp	2
Pot, Iron	2 gp	2
Ram, Portable	4 gp	7
Rations (1 Day)	5 sp	1/5
Robes	1 gp	1
Rope, hempen (50 foot)	1 gp	2
Rope, Silken (50 foot)	10 gp	1
Scale, Merchant's	5 gp	1
Sealing Wax	5 sp	---
Shovel	2 gp	1
Signal Whistle	5 cp	---
Signet Ring	5 gp	---
Soap	2 cp	---

ADVENTURING GEAR (CON'T):

Item	Cost	Encumbrance Slots
Spellbook	50 gp	1
Spikes, Iron (10)	1 gp	1
Spyglass	1,000 gp	1
Tent, two-person	2 gp	4
Tinderbox	5 sp	1/5
Torch	1 cp	1/5
Vial (Empty)	1 gp	1/5
Waterskin	2 sp	1
Whetstone	1 cp	1/5
<i>Magic Items, Common</i>		
- Potion of Healing	50 gp	1/5
- Potion of Climbing	100 gp	1/5
- Scroll (1 st Level Spell)	50 gp	---
- Scroll (Cantrip)	25 gp	---

CONTAINERS:

Item	Cost	Encu. Slots	Number of Slots Held
Backpack	2 gp	1	Can hold 6 slots of items.
Barrel *	2 gp	14	Can hold 24 slots of items.
Basket	4 sp	1	Can Hold 8 slots of items.
Bucket	5 cp	1	Can Hold 3 slots of items.
Case, map or scroll	1 gp	1/5	Can Hold up to 5 scrolls.
Chest*	5 gp	5	Can Hold up to 60 slots of items.
Spell Component Pouch	25 gp	1	Holds all no costly spell components.
Pouch	5 sp	1/5	Can Hold 2 slots of items.
Sack	1 cp	1/5	Can Hold up to 6 slots of items.

Containers are not used in the slot encumbrance system they are assumed to be on hand and available to the character. I mean what adventurer in their right mind would not have sacks and backpacks available. The above information is for placing items in containers that the party may find. So if they grab a chest, you know how many slots of items it will hold and how many slots it takes up.

TOOLS:

Item	Cost	Encumbrance Slots
Artisan's Tools		
- Alchemist's supplies	50 gp	2
- Brewer's supplies	20 gp	2
- Calligrapher's supplies	10 gp	1
- Carpenter's tools	8 gp	2
- Cartographer's tools	15 gp	2
- Cobbler's tools	5 gp	1
- Cook's utensils	1 gp	2
- Glassblower's tools	30 gp	1
- Jeweler's tools	25 gp	1
- Leatherworker's tools	5 gp	1
- Mason's tools	10 gp	2
- Painter's supplies	10 gp	1
- Potter's tools	10gp	1
- Smith's tools	20 gp	2
- Tinker's tools	50 gp	2
- Weaver's tools	1 gp	1
- Woodcarver's tools	1 gp	1
Disguise Kit	25 gp	1
Forgery Kit	15 gp	1
Gaming Sets		
- Dice Set	1 sp	---
- Dragonchess Set	1 gp	1/5
- Playing Card Set	5 sp	---
- Three-Dragon Ante Set	1 gp	---
Herbalism Kit	5 gp	1
Musical Instruments		
- Bagpipes	30 gp	2
- Drum	6 gp	1
- Dulcimer	25 gp	2
- Flute	2 gp	1
- Lute	35 gp	1
- Lyre	30 gp	1
- Horn	3 gp	1
- Pan Flute	12 gp	1
- Shawm	2 gp	1
- Viol	30 gp	1
Navigator's tools	25 gp	1
Poisoner's kit	50 gp	1
Thieves' tools	25 gp	1
Vehicles (land or water)	*	*

WHAT ABOUT EQUIPMENT PACKS?

If your character buys an equipment pack then they pay the appropriate cost for the set of items. The items are then put into slots just like as if you had bought the items separately.

HOW MANY ITEMS CAN I HAVE READIED?

(MANIPULATE A ITEM TO GET TO.)

The encumbrance system allows for a character to have up to six weapon slots available to be readied and four item slots which are considered to be items in pouches, etc. Everything beyond that is stored and the character has to use an action to retrieve a item that is not readied. The readied slots for both weapons and armor are hard caps and cannot be expanded.

WHAT ARE ITEMS WITH A SLOT RATIO OF 1/5?

Items with a slot ratio of 1/5 are either really light or small and 5 of such items can be bundled together into one slot. Such as five potions or five daggers or you could have a slot that has five different 1/5 items in it. So you could ready five daggers to throw while only using one ready weapon slot to do it.

WHAT ARE WEALTH SLOTS?

Wealth slots are what your coins currently take up. You figure your wealth slots by a very simple method of one slot for every two hundred and fifty coins or gems you possess. It doesn't matter if the coin is a gold piece or a silver piece, they weigh the same. Your coin purse always takes up a minimum of at least 1 slot even if you have no money. This insures you always have a space to pick up some coin.

WHAT ARE OTHER EQUIPMENT SLOTS?

Other equipment slots are for items that take up zero slots or for items that you own but don't carry around with you. Items such as banked gold, chalk, etc. You simply write the item on the list and either note a location if the item is not carried with you. Items that have no weight are always considered to be at the ready.

WHAT ARE ARMOR AND SHIELD SLOTS?

Armor and shield slots are for armor and shield that is currently being worn or you have readied on your person. Armor and shields can use anywhere between 2 and 15 slots depending on what type of armor as noted in the equipment list. Shields that are not worn on the arm are considered to be readied so they can be doffed or donned with a action.

WHAT ARE READIED WEAPONS SLOTS?

Readied weapons slots are for weapons only, both ranged and melee that is currently being worn or you have readied on your person. The readied weapon slots have a hard cap of six. Wands and other magic items that may offer an attack ability cannot be readied in these slots unless it is a ranged or melee weapon. Wands, scrolls etc must be listed in the readied items slots.

WHAT ARE STORED SLOTS?

Stored slots represent items that are considered to be in a backpack or a sack or container of some kind and are not immediately at the ready. To retrieve a stored item you may use your action on your turn to do so. Items that are stored cannot be retrieved with just the manipulate object feature of your turn.

WHAT ABOUT SPELL COMPONENT POUCHES?

If you are a caster then you will need and often start with a spell component pouch that holds all your non valuable spell components that are needed for casting. By default if you use one of these it takes up one readied item slot and needs to be noted in the readied item slots section of your sheet.

SO WHAT ARE THE HARD LIMITS?

Again, its simple. There are three things that you can be. Either you are Unencumbered, Encumbered, or Heavy Encumbered. So first you have to figure up how many slots your character can carry without a problem. That part is the easiest as it is the same as your strength score x 1.5 (rounded down). So if your character has a strength score of thirteen then you can carry up to fourteen slots of items with no problem.

Not Encumbered

Strength Score = 13 x 1.5. You can carry up to 19 slots of items and be not encumbered.

No Penalty

Now what happens if you go over that number? Well you can carry up to three times your strength score and be considered encumbered. If you are encumbered then your movement is reduced by ten feet per turn and that's it. It just takes you a little bit longer to get somewhere. However if you are a dwarf then you do not suffer this penalty and can still move at normal speed because you are hearty and used to lugging large piles of equipment around. Others might take advantage of this and make you a pack mule.

Encumbered

Strength Score = 13 x 3 You can carry between 20 and 39 slots of items and be encumbered.

Penalty is -10 feet movement speed per turn.

Dwarves ignore this penalty and keep on trucking at normal speed.

Now what if we have been adventuring a minute and your character has some treasure on his back and needs to tote even more stuff? Well you can tote up to 4.5 times your strength score and be heavily encumbered. However your speed drops by 20 feet per turn and you have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that use Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution. I know it is pretty rough but dwarves still move at normal speed but they do suffer all that disadvantage stuff. This is the level you want to try and avoid until the very last part of the dungeon if you can.

Heavily Encumbered

Strength Score 13×4.5 You can carry between 40 and 58 slots of items and be heavily encumbered.

Penalty is speed drops by 20 feet per turn and disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that use Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution.

Dwarves ignore the speed penalty but they suffer the other.

HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Just ask your DM and he will be glad to help.

WEALTH

Every 250 coins or gems fill 1 slot. (Round up.)

Gems (_____ gp)

Platinum (× 10 = gp)

Gold (gp)

Electrum (÷ 2 = gp)

Silver (÷ 10 = gp)

Copper (÷ 100 = gp)

Total coins or gems	Item slots				
<table border="1"><tr><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></table> ÷ 250 =				<table border="1"><tr><td></td></tr></table>	

OTHER EQUIPMENT

Non-encumbering items or items that you are not currently carrying and where they are located.

TRACKER

○○○○○ Torches ○○○○○ Oil flasks

Torches burn for 1 hour. Lanterns burn for 6 hours per oil flask.

○○○○○ Rations ○○○○○ Water

You need 1 lb. of food and 1 gallon of water per day (2 gallons if hot). A ½-gallon waterskin fills 1 slot. A 1-gallon jug fills 2 slots.

Ammunition

○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○ ○○○○○

5 daggers, 20 arrows, bolts, darts, or bullets, or 50 needles fill 1 slot.

ARMOR & SHIELD

Type:	Slots:

- Padded / leather armor (2 slots)
- Studded leather / hide (3 slots)
- Chain shirt / breastplate (4 slots)
- Half plate / ring mail (8 slots)
- Scale mail (9 slots)
- Chain mail (11 slots)
- Splint (12 slots)
- Plate (13 slots)
- Shield (2 slots)

READIED ITEMS (MAXIMUM 4 SLOTS)

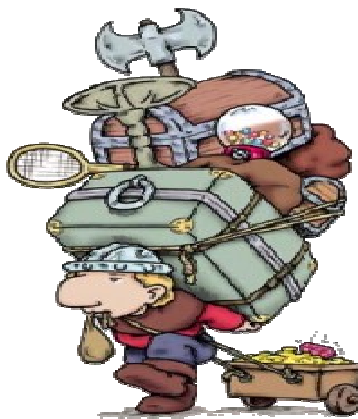
Slots:
1.
2.
3.
4.

Note: If a spell comment pouch is needed by your character then it takes up 1 slot. Readied items are available by using your manipulate object feature of your turn.

READIED WEAPONS (MAXIMUM 6 SLOTS)

Slots:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.

Note: Weapons that you carry beyond this limit can be stored. The weapons above can be pulled using the manipulate option action on your turn. Ammunition for ranged weapons must be included in the above.



STORED GEAR

Slots:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
11.
12.
13.
14.
15.
16.
17.
18.
19.
20.
21.
22.
23.
24.
25.
26.
27.
28.
29.
30.
31.
32.
33.
34.
35.
36.
37.
38.
39.
40.
41.
42.
43.

STORED GEAR (CON'T)

Slots:
44.
45.
46.
47.
48.
49.
50.
51.
52.
53.
54.
55.
56.
57.
58.
59.
60.
61.
62.
63.
64.
65.
66.
67.
68.
69.
70.
71.
72.
73.
74.
75.
76.
77.
78.
79.
80.

Note: Stored items require an action to draw and may not be retrieved with the manipulate object feature on your turn..

TOTALING ENCUMBERANCE

UENCUMBERED
Strength Score x 1.5
(ROUNDED DOWN)

Slots Available

NO penalty

EMCUMBERED
Strength Score x 3

Slots Available

If you carry more than 1.5 x your Strength score (rounded down), you are **encumbered**—your speed drops by 10 feet. Dwarves ignore this penalty

HEAVY ENMCUMBERED
Strength Score x 4.5
(ROUNDED DOWN)

Slots Available

If you carry more than three times your Strength score, you are heavily encumbered—your speed drops by 20 feet and you have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that use Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution. Dwarves ignore the movement penalty only.

You cannot carry more than 4.5 times your Strength score (rounded down). (These limits are doubled for Large creatures and halved for Tiny creatures. Dwarves may ignore penalties to speed.)

WEALTH Slots Used

+

ARMOR & SHIELD
Slots Used

+

READIED ITEMS
Slots Used

+

READIED WEAPONS
Slots Used

+

STORED GEAR
Slots Used

=

TOTAL SLOTS USED

Compare your total slots used above to your encumbrance slots to the left to find out your current state of encumbrance.