

# Archer's Tower Shield

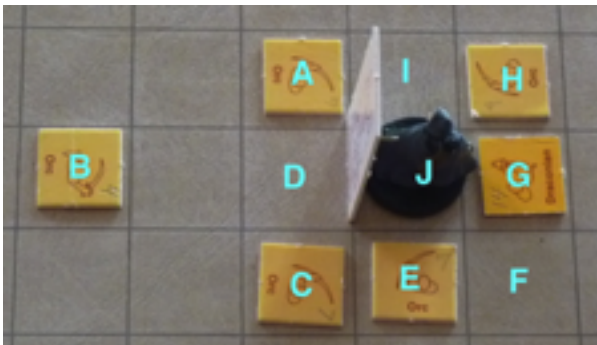
- **Non-Magical item:** A custom made masterwork tower shield. This tower shield is slightly thicker than your typical tower shield, includes a two legged 'kick-stand' and an 'archers-slit' (which can be opened or closed); making it ideal for long range archery attacks (or spell casters). This massive wooden shield is nearly as tall as you are (sized for medium characters) and it's a heavy beast, but in the heat of battle, nothing beats the protection it affords. In most situations, it provides the indicated shield bonus to your AC while carried/used in combat. However, you can also use it provide cover. The shield can be used in three different modes.

- **Standard mode:** If you are moving and/or attacking (in any round initiative round), the shield is not considered to provide cover. In this case it provides an AC bonus (including all applicable penalties) as a shield used in the normal manner. When employing a tower shield (as a shield) in combat, you take a -2 penalty on attack rolls because of the shield's encumbrance - It's a beast!

- When using the shield in standard mode, you cannot use your shield hand for anything other than wielding the shield. When employing a tower shield in combat, you take a -2 penalty on attack rolls because of the shield's encumbrance.

- When using the shield in standard mode, the Max Dex bonus, Armor check penalty and Arcane Spell failure chance all apply.

- **Partial Cover:** In this case, you have deployed the shield as a stationary near-total cover device by kicking out or employing the 'kick stand'. Once the shield is deployed (a standard action) in this manner, you can continue attacking from behind the shield, but you don't need to hold the shield using one of your arms. In this manner, the shield provides partial cover (+4 to AC) without the standard penalties for wielding a shield. There is no max



Dex penalty, no Armor check penalty, no Arcane spell failure chance. The shield functions as stationary partial cover, and you can attack from behind the cover. Keep in mind that you only get the partial cover benefit against a specific set of opponents; opponents who cannot target you without having the cover between them and you.

- To determine whether you have cover from your opponents ranged attacks, choose a corner of your opponents square. If any line from this corner to any corner of your square passes through a square or border that blocks line of effect or provides cover, or through a square occupied by a creature, then you have partial cover (+4 to AC). In this scenario, your

cover from ranged attacks is not total, because you are still attacking opponents. While doing so, it is possible/probable that you will/would partially expose yourself to attack.

- You can't execute an attack of opportunity against an opponent with cover relative to you.

- Cover grants you a +2 bonus on Reflex saves against attacks that originate or burst out from a point on the other side of the cover from you, such as a red dragon's breath weapon or a *lightning bolt*. Note that spread effects (see page 175), such as a *fireball*, can extend around corners and thus negate this cover bonus.

- You can use cover to make a Hide check. Without cover, you usually need concealment to make a Hide check.

- When using the shield in partial cover mode, the Max Dex bonus, Armor check penalty and Arcane Spell failure chance do not apply because you're not actually carrying or holding the shield.

- Any creature with a space larger than 5 feet (1 square) determines cover against melee attacks slightly differently than smaller creatures do. Such a creature can choose any square that it occupies to determine if an opponent has cover against its melee attacks. Similarly, when making a melee attack against such a creature, you can pick any of the squares it occupies to determine if it has cover against you.

- See illustration for additional information:

- Opponents in squares A & C can be attacked with a melee or thrown weapon but they are considered to be under partial cover (they gain a +4 to AC).

- Figure J (the character 'behind' the shield) is protected from melee attacks from figures A & C (he/she gains a +4 to AC). The square labelled D can be attacked by figure J, provided figure J has a spear-like weapon, a fired weapon (such as a crossbow) or a bow and the 'archers-slit' is open (a standard action). *Keep in mind that using a bow while enemies are adjacent provokes an attack of opportunity.*

# Archer's Tower Shield

- A figure in square D, could not be attacked with a sword, a sling, or a weapon which needs to be 'swung' to attack (only weapons with a 'P' damage type (there are a few exceptions (see Blunt arrow) may be used).
  - A figure in square D can attack figure J with a spear-like weapon, a fired weapon (such as a crossbow) or a bow and the 'archers-slit' is open. An opponent in square D would not be able to attack with a sword, sling or weapon that needs to be 'swung' to attack (only weapons with a 'P' damage type could be used).
  - Melee and thrown weapon attacks can be made against visible (line of sight) opponents (such as figure B (provided the 'archer-slit' is open), provided you have line of effect to the opponent. This is the scenario where an archer with partial-cover excels.
  - Figure J is protected from opponents subject to cover, when they use missile and fired weapons beyond 5'. In this scenario, figure J has a +8 to AC.
- These examples do not constitute all possible scenarios for 'Partial Cover'. Other scenarios would need to be adjudicated by a DM after taking these principles and examples into account.

- **Total Cover:** Only applicable against ranged attacks or an opponent in position D (see illustration). For total cover, you must give up your attacks. You can simply stand in place and hide behind the shield without moving or attacking. In this case you are considered to have total cover against attacks that are subject to cover. You cannot be attacked, nor can you attack.
- To determine whether you have cover from your opponents attacks, choose a corner of your opponents square. If any line from this corner to any corner of your square passes through a square or border that blocks line of effect or provides cover, or through a square occupied by a creature, then you have total cover. An opponent cannot attack a target that has total cover. In this scenario, your cover from ranged attacks is total, because you are not attacking opponents. It is highly unlikely that you will/would expose yourself to attack.
- You can't execute an attack of opportunity against an opponent with cover relative to you.
- Cover grants you a +2 bonus on Reflex saves against attacks that originate or burst out from a point on the other side of the cover from you, such as a red dragon's breath weapon or a *lightning bolt*. Note that spread effects (see page 175), such as a *fireball*, can extend around corners and thus negate this cover bonus.
- You can use cover to make a Hide check. Without cover, you usually need concealment to make a Hide check.
- When using the shield in partial cover mode, the Max Dex bonus, Armor check penalty and Arcane Spell failure chance do not apply because you're not actually carrying or holding the shield.
- Any creature with a space larger than 5 feet (1 square) determines cover against melee attacks slightly differently than smaller creatures do. Such a creature can choose any square that it occupies to determine if an opponent has cover against its melee attacks. Similarly, when making a melee attack against such a creature, you can pick any of the squares it occupies to determine if it has cover against you.
- **Regardless of mode:** The shield does not, provide cover against targeted spells (regardless of the mode used); a spellcaster can cast a spell on you by targeting the shield you are holding.
- You cannot bash with a tower shield (it's too heavy and unwieldy).
- Equipping/picking up or readying a shield is a move action.
- Loosing a shield (removing it from the arm and dropping it) is a move action.
- Deploying the Archer's Tower Shield/setting it up as a barrier/cover device is a standard action.
- Opening or closing the 'archers-slit' is a standard action.

## - **Tower Shield stats** (see PH123):

- Shield, tower (masterwork): Armor/shield bonus: +4\*; Maximum dex bonus: +2; Armor check penalty: -9; Arcane spell failure chance: 50%; Speed: -; Weight: 55lb; Cost: 500gp. Crafting: A character who succeeds on a DC 30 Craft (Metal) check can construct an "Archer's Tower Shield" for 500gp (or 400gp without the 'Archers-slit'). A +5 to the check may be added if the crafter is Dwarven/Gnomish or assisted by a Dwarf or Gnome.

Copyright: This item created/authored by Robert Vaessen of "Rob's World!" in April of 2015. Item was created to be D&D 3.5 compatible. All D&D rules references used are copyright by Wizards of the Coast.