



PUZZLEBOX'S ONE-PAGE ADVENTURE TIPS

*A QUICK RESOURCE FOR WRITING
EFFICIENT, FLEXIBLE, AND USEFUL
ONE PAGE (FRONT & BACK) ADVENTURE
MODULES FOR ANY TTRPG SYSTEM.*

SAY LESS

- Give the gamemaster only what they need to run the adventure. No more, no less.
 - **Only what's needed:** Write as if the GM is skimming mid-session. Cut fluff.
 - **Skip system basics:** Assume the GM already knows the rules they're running.
 - **Format for speed:** Bullet points, bold headers, icons, or tables > prose.
 - **Chunk information:** Group related details (room + trap + treasure).
 - **Sparks, not scripts:** Offer prompts, not fixed dialogue or outcomes.
 - **Flavor > word count:** A single vivid description can fuel 10 minutes of play.

DON'T REINVENT THE WHEEL (I DIDN'T)

- **Leverage Existing Tools:** Use published stat blocks, rules modules, or common tropes—link/cite where possible.
- **Distill custom content:** If you add a new NPC, trap, or mechanic, keep it simple and show only what's relevant in play.
- **Steal a Structure:** Use established formats for your scaffolding, some options are:
 - **5 Room Dungeon** (Efficiently creates a solid one-shot structure that is sure to be narratively satisfying).
 - **Lazy GM Method** (specifically using the Strong Start + Secrets and Clues adds a ton of info to your one pagers without sacrificing much space).
 - **Use a Limited Encounter Table** (Create a list of 6 possible encounters, roll a die for each scene)

BUILD AROUND A THEME

- Center everything on one gimmick, idea, or mechanic.
- Define your theme: A story hook or fun mechanic that anchors the adventure.
- Everything serves the theme: NPCs, encounters, environments, and treasure should reinforce it.
 - Ex: A murder mystery? Every element should help set it up or push toward solving it.
 - Ex: A “fish out of water” theme? All materials should emphasize the PCs being out of their depth.
 - Ex: A unique mechanic? Put it front and center.
- Trust the GMs
 - They know their table and system. Your job is to provide enough material to spark the fire, it's their job to keep it burning.

QUICK HOOKS

- Keep the hook under three sentences.
- Ensure immediate PC buy-in.
- Ex: PCs don't just meet in a tavern; they already share a goal and face an obstacle to getting it.

TWISTS & ESCALATIONS

- Note what happens in your adventure when things go off the rails.
- Include at least one twist or a small table of possible twists. This boosts replayability and gives the GM confidence to improvise.
- Play with the mechanics your system give you for drama escalation. If your system doesn't have that – use **Danger Clocks** from the game *Blades In The Dark*.

SIDE 1: THE ADVENTURE

On the front of your document, include the name of the adventure, the hook and the narrative contents – this can be scenes, secrets and clues, or any of the other elements discussed above. Try to keep things simple (Say Less) and do not try to include any additional homebrew mechanics or statblocks on this side. This side is just for the adventure itself.

SIDE 2: SUPPLEMENTAL EPHEMERA

This is where you will list off the additional support materials: NPC statblocks, alternate scenes, maps, etc. Remember you are working with limited real estate, so use abbreviated statblocks or links to existing material if you can here (Don't Reinvent The Wheel).

FORMATTING TIPS

- Use 9pt or 10pt font. Titles can be slightly larger (10–11pt) for readability.
 - Canva or Publisher gives you the best layout control. (Word/Docs can work in a pinch, but I think they're clunky for this format.)
 - I work directly in Canva, finding it helps spot spacing issues in real time and adjust text flow.
- Break your big ideas up into sections / boxes.
- Don't be afraid to revise: once you've done a few, you may find you struggle to fill both sides, leaving room to add flavorful detail and your own flair.

FIND ME ELSEWHERE

Gamemaster @ **Puzzlebox Events**: Hosting and running in-person Immersive Party Games.

Gamemaster @ **StartPlaying**: Running TTRPGs.

Mod @ **Doors and Corners**, an Expanse RPG Discord server. (*Ask for the invite link if you are interested.*)