

Adventureweek.com - Fantasy Grounds module creation guidelines

Version	Date	Updated By	Notes
1	26 th March 2013	Martin Blake	Initial release
2	31 st March 2013	Martin Blake	Added sections based on forum discussions

This document provides a number of guidelines/recommendations on what should be included in a Fantasy Grounds (FG) adventure module. It is specifically aimed at creating FG modules for Adventureweek.com (AaW) scenarios. The main goal of this document is to aid in creating FG modules that include the key features needed to run a game on the FG VTT and also to ensure that all modules have a uniform feel - even if different people have produced them.

This document assumes that the module being created is for the Pathfinder role-playing game ruleset – it can apply equally to 3.5, except there is no 3.5e creature parser.

The main steps to creating FG modules are:

1. Start a brand new “module making” campaign – use the standard 3.5e ruleset and do not include any extensions in this campaign. It needs to be ensured that the module will work with the base Fantasy Grounds installation. Select the “PFRPG” mode when the campaign loads.
2. Extract any maps and art from the scenario and place these in the campaign \images directory – give them relevant names as these will be the names used by default within the campaign. If there are battle maps, apply a 5 foot grid to the map so this is ready to go and the GM doesn’t have to mess around during the game.
3. Enter the various data needed – story entries, NPCs (use the parser – see below), items, encounter, etc..
4. Build up a layered, link based menu and sub-menu system – with location story entries containing links to maps, NPCs, encounters, etc.. Use the image “push pins” to link story entries to locations on the maps.
5. Do not link to library modules that will not be available to the base FG installation – use copies of information in the new module making campaign itself (if copyright allows) or create AaW specific modules if needed.
6. Use tokens for NPCs/creatures wherever you can. FG comes with some amazing top-down and “pog” tokens for animals, adventurers and monsters. Link to these tokens if there are appropriate tokens, if not use a letter token for creatures. Attach these to the NPC entries in the campaign.
7. Create encounter entries for each possible encounter. Include the NPCs (with their tokens already attached) and pre-place the creature tokens on the relevant map. Doing all of this will aid the GM greatly in initiating combat as the encounter entry will: put all NPC entries on the combat tracker (CT), roll for initiative for the NPCs (if this setting is enabled) and place the tokens on the map – but keep them initially invisible. Also, include the total XP for the

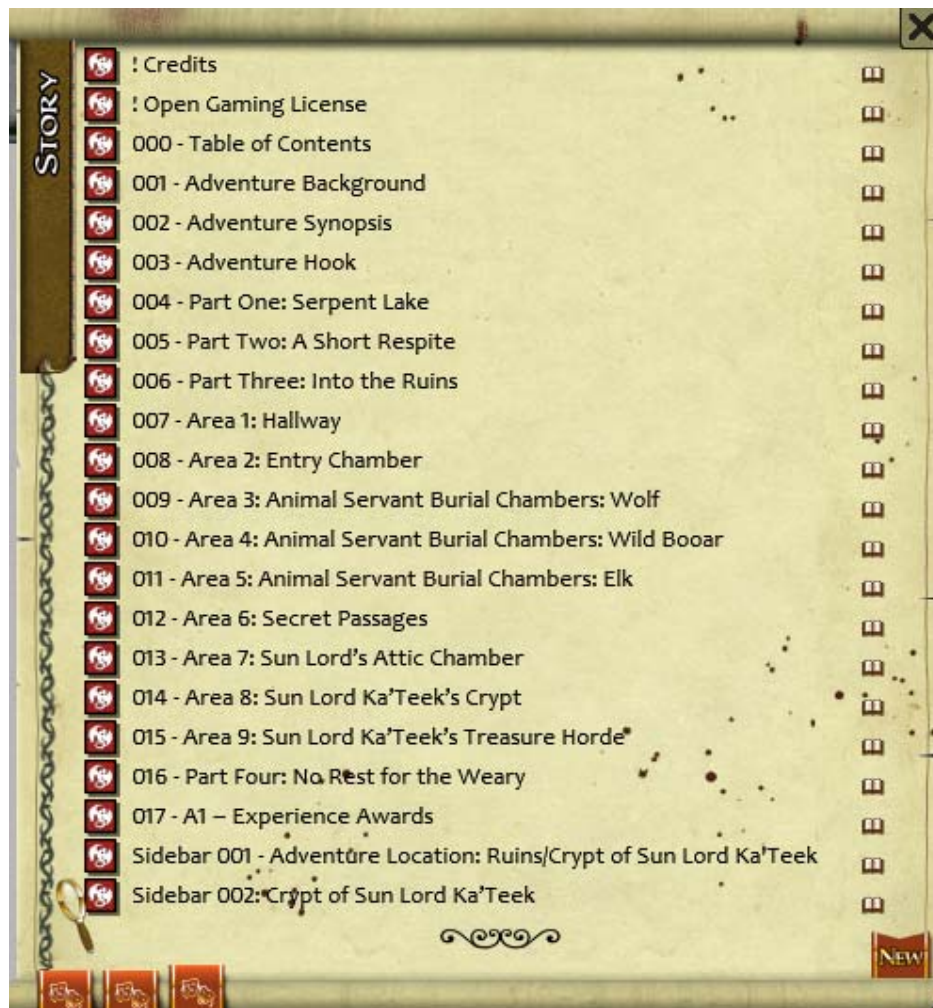
encounter as this will allow the GM to drag the encounter to the party sheet to track and distribute XP automatically.

8. Traps: Create Trap entries as NPCs – include effect entries to enable FG automation – be it attack effects or spells. Add attack effects to the trap effect section/s and add any spell effects to the “Spells” tab. Create an encounter for the trap, with a token for placement on the map (easy for the GM to see where the trap is) – then the GM can easily put the trap into the CT, target players, etc.. Once the trap is defeated, the encounter can be dragged to the XP section of the party sheet to distribute XP. See later section in this document for full details on creating a trap.
9. Create treasure parcels to facilitate sharing of the list of loot found by the PCS (right click -> share to show the treasure parcel to the players) and also distribution of coins via the party sheet.
10. Export the campaign to a “host” data module, include a thumbnail of the scenario front page.
11. Close the “module making” campaign and start a new “module test” campaign. Open your newly made module and test it out. If there is need for any changes, go back into your module making campaign, make changes there, export again and test in the module test campaign. Doing it this way will help to ensure that your base, module making campaign is clean (no stray data from testing).
12. Make backups of your module making campaign along the way – make a “zip” copy of the campaign folder. This will allow you to go back to previous versions if you have issues and will also allow you to keep your work in case of issues. I recommend storing these backups on a cloud storage (e.g. DropBox, or similar) so even if your computer crashes, sets on fire, laptop is stolen, etc. you will be able to get your work back.

I’m going to use the two example modules we now have to show what we’re looking for – A0 converted by CJ and A1 converted by Keith. Thanks for doing these conversions – please don’t take any comments regarding them as negative, they are both excellent conversions and I’m just pointing out a few little improvements.

Story entry layout

Ideally, the top level of the story entry should be an ordered list of all of the main entries in the scenario itself (taken from the scenario web page/PDF). An example of this is A1:

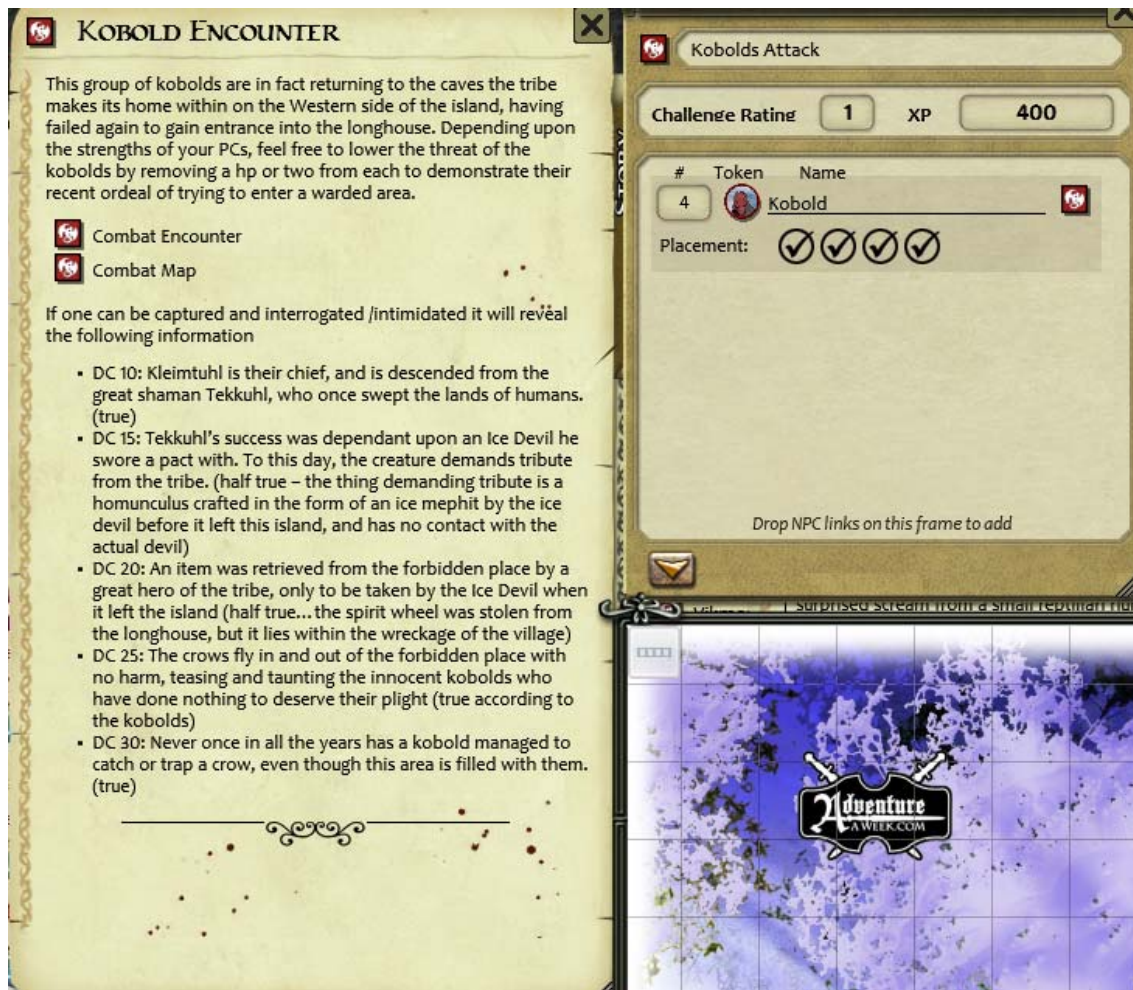


Use numbers at the beginning of each story entry to order the entries.

- Always include a credits section and OGL statement at the top of the list!
- I'd debate as to whether we need a table of contents in this list – this top level list should really be the table of contents. Another could be confusing.
- Order the entries as they appear in the published scenario.
- Within each entry, include links to the previous and next section. This makes it easy for GMs to navigate to other story entries without going back and forwards between the top level list. Here's an example:



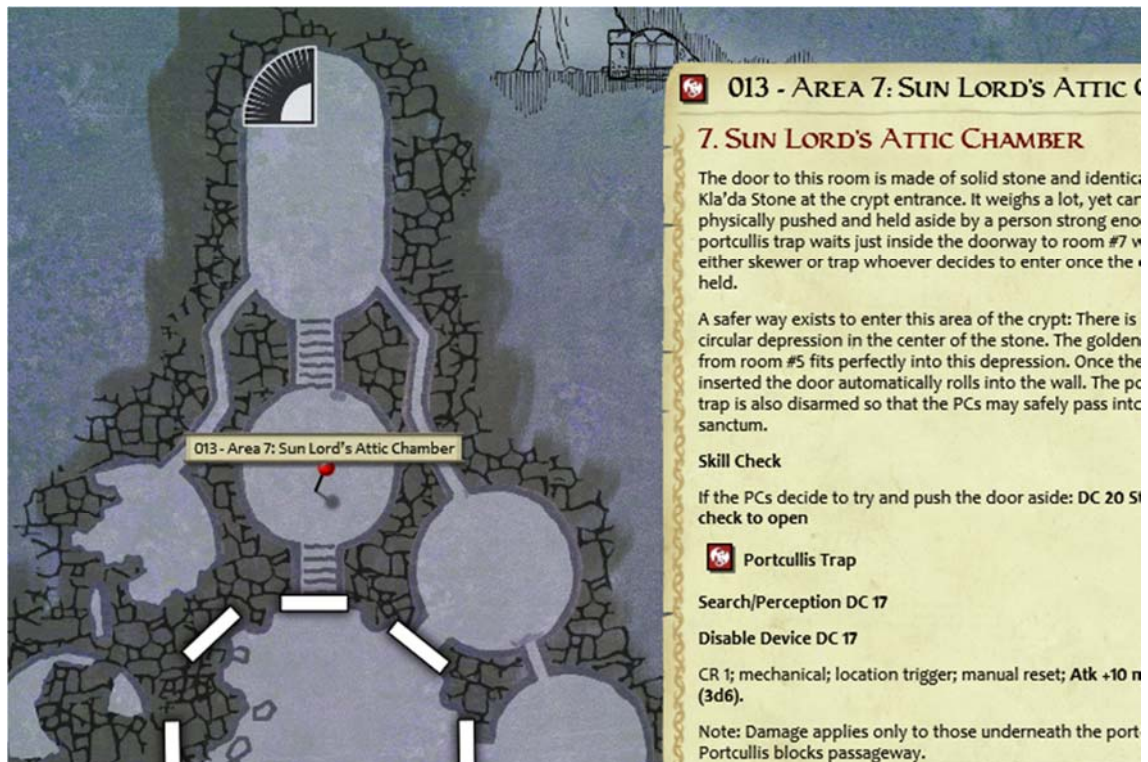
- Then, each entry to do with a location should have a number of links: maps/images, NPCs, encounters, treasure parcels, items, etc. to do with that location. Include box text to read (drag to the chat window) and everything needed at this location – and links to other related items. Here is a good example from A0 – the “Combat Encounter” link brings up the “Kobolds Attack” window, just click the down arrow button at the bottom to put the kobolds on the combat tracker and the map, the “Combat Map” links brings up the map. This will really save the GM lots of time and keep the game moving by allowing a quick transition to combat.



Shortcuts!

This is something that hasn't been done in either of the A0 or A1 modules – unless I've missed them. Shortcuts are links directly on an image/map, they are great for allowing the GM to track areas of interest on a map and quickly bring up the story entry related to that location. These are not visible to the players at all, and so it makes it possible for the GM to run most of a dungeon crawl just off the player's map – with the shortcut links providing the equivalent of traditional location number references.

To use shortcuts they need to be enabled on each map you want to use them on. Right-click and select "Layers" -> Enable Shortcuts. Now you can drag story entries onto the map and they will appear as red pushpins. Here is an example of one added to the player map in A1 – and showing the related story entry that is displayed when the pushpin is pressed. Note: the text shown on the pushpin is not normally visible; it is shown when the GM hovers the mouse over the pushpin.



NPCs

If creatures are used from other OGL modules (Bestiaries 1-3, for example) open that module and drag the entries needed into the NPCs list in your module make campaign – this will allow you to unlock the NPC and add tokens, etc.. It also makes sure that all of the NPC stats are in the FG module and the scenario is not relying on the GM having other library modules to display the data.

If the creatures/NPCs are custom, use the creature parser to create a custom module:

<http://www.fantasygrounds.com/forums/showthread.php?t=15475> Then, open NPC module created and drag the NPCs into the campaign. This is a big time saver on the GMs side.

Always check that any NPCs imported from another module or via the parser have correct data in the FG NPC window.

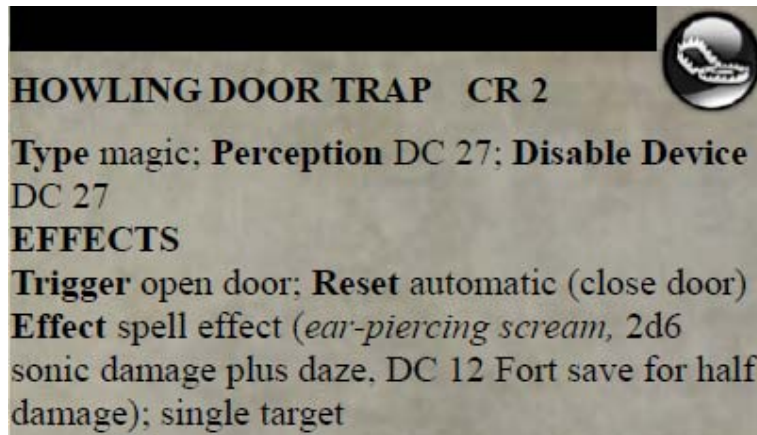
Always add a token to the NPC – you need to have the NPC in the campaign list and unlock the NPC to be able to add a token. At the least use a letter token from the letter token module – but, ideally, find a suitable token in the newly available token modules from Shockbolt. Don't include the actual physical tokens in the module export as this is a violation of their use – just leave them as a link into the reference module; this is done automatically by the system when you drag the token to the NPC.

Traps

Traps should be created similar to an NPC:

- Create a new NPC entry of type “trap”.
- Give it a token – perhaps a “T” letter token (for Trap).
- Enter all of the required information.

Here’s an example from B1:



This should be entered in FG as follows:

Main Tab:



Spell Tab:

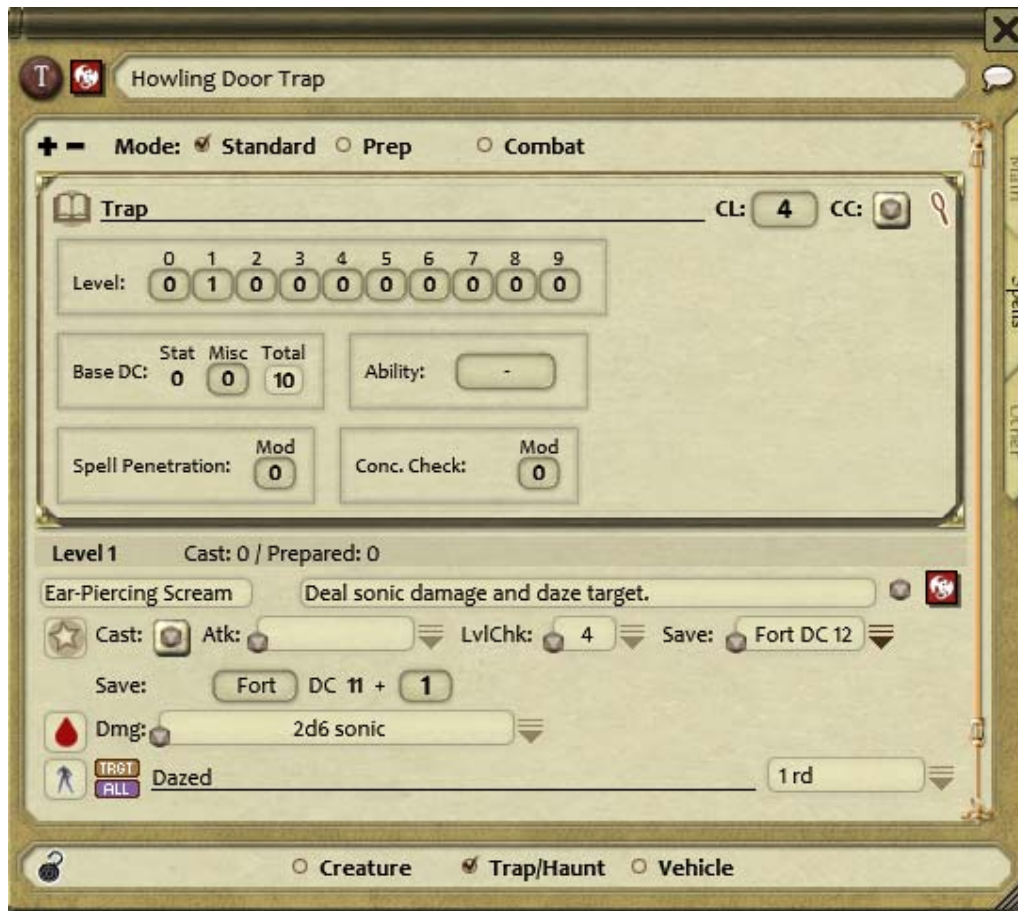
To add the spell effect (Ear Piercing Scream spell), make a new Spell Class and give it a CL of 4 – this is the minimum CL needed to give 2d6 sonic damage (the spell damage is 1d6 per 2 caster levels). Enter “1” in the 1st level spell box (this enables the “Level 1” heading below). Then, open the community PFSRD Complete Paizo Spells module in the library (available from here: <http://www.fantasygrounds.com/forums/attachment.php?attachmentid=2197&d=1323069168>). Search for “ear-piercing” in the all spells entry:



Drag this spell to the “Level 1” heading:





Then expand the spell entry by clicking on the grey die icon on the right of the description to show the details:



Note – initially the save DC is 1 too low, so click the down arrow after the save entry and manually add 1 to the save to make it DC 12. The damage and effect have been parsed by Fantasy Grounds – this won't always happen so you may need to change this yourself.

If the GM needs to see full details of the spell, they can click the link button to the right of the spell description to see:

 **Ear-Piercing Scream** 

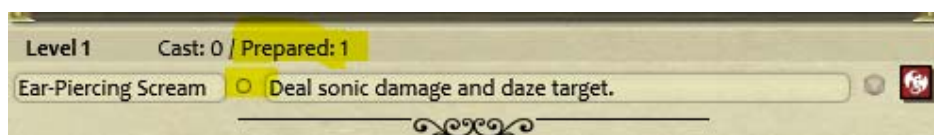
School	evocation[sonic]
Level	bard 1, inquisitor 1, sorcerer/wizard 1, witch 1
Components	V, S
Casting time	1 standard action
Range	close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Effect/target	one creature
Duration	1 round/level; see text
Saving throw	Fortitude partial (see text)
Spell resist.	yes

You unleash a powerful scream, inaudible to all but a single target. The target is dazed for 1 round and takes 1d6 points of sonic damage per two caster levels (maximum 5d6). A successful save negates the daze effect and halves the damage.

Finally, enter “prep” mode so that this spell can be “prepared” and so usable by the trap. Click the “prep” check box and then enable the spell by clicking the greyed-out round check box to the right of the spell name:



Once the spell is “prepared” the circular check box will be darker and you’ll see “Prepared: 1” for level 1:



Now you’re finished, “lock” the trap (click the padlock icon in the bottom left) and the spell entry will be shown ready to use in combat:



If you hadn't "prepared" the spell this entry would appear empty.

Now, you can use the trap spell effect easily – target the PC who sets the trap off (the trap needs to be in the CT to do this – I'll show this next), click the "die" icon to cast the spell and the save will be rolled, then click the damage and effect icons to apply the damage and/or daze effect as necessary.

Non magic traps

These are a lot quicker to enter than spell effect traps. Put the attacks/damage in the Effect and Effect 2 section just like you would an attack:



Then, the GM can target PCs like he would a usual NPC attack, double-click on the “Atk +15” entry to roll the attack and if it hits double-click on the 1d6+6 damage entry to apply damage to targeted PCs.

Trap Encounter

Adding the trap NPC to an encounter entry has a number of benefits:

- The trap can be added to the Combat Tracker with the press of the down arrow – which then allows the GM to easily target a PC and apply the trap effects.
- If the token has been placed on a map during encounter design, the token will appear on the map (hidden from the players) so the GM knows exactly where the trap is.
- If the trap is “defeated” the GM can easily apply XP to the party by dragging the encounter to the XP section of the Party Sheet.

Creating a trap encounter – enter the CR and XP of the trap (XP is based off CR and is detailed in the Experience Point Award table here: <http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd/gamemastering.html>)



Place the trap token on the map if needed by dragging the token to the relevant map – the placement list will show a check mark:



When the GM presses the “Add NPCs to Combat Tracker” down arrow the trap will appear in the CT and the GM can target the PC/s who triggered the trap:




If the trap is defeated, the encounter link can be dragged to the XP section of the party sheet to allow tracking and distribution of XP when the GM decides:

PARTY SHEET

XP Tracker Party

Drop PCs on main tab to add party members.

Encounters				Quests				
Name	Level	XP	Awarded	Name	Type	Level	XP	Awarded
 Trap - Howling Door	2	600	<input type="radio"/>	Decorative flourish				
Decorative flourish				Click button below to add a new quest entry.				

Main
Skills
Inventory
Order
XP

