

DOWNTIME REFERENCE SHEET

How to Run Downtime

Here is an overview of the process for running downtime as a DM:

1. Offer the players whenever they finish an activity, such as wilderness exploration, a dungeon, etc.
You can also prompt the players for downtime at any time if the characters have employees, a franchise, allies, or are part of an organization that could carry out downtime. If the characters have a business, the Running a Business activity takes place once a month and the number of activities the franchise staff can lead for characters is equal to the franchise level.
2. Ask the players which activities their characters/staff want to do.
3. Players choose one of the listed downtime activities or design their own activity with your help. An activity involves a number of days, probably has a cost in gold, and usually has 1-3 d20 checks to resolve the activity. It is expected that at least 8 hours are spent on the activity for the day to count, but the days do not need to be consecutive.
4. One by one, each player spends the time, spends the gold, and makes the checks.
5. Determine the result on the table specific to the chosen activity. In some cases, a high check result provides superior outcomes, and low checks can fail outright (but the PC still spends gold and time).
6. Determine whether a complication arises and whether a rival is involved by rolling on the complication table for the activity, if it has one. As DM you decide whether complications and rivals play out immediately as a quick scene, as a narrative, or will be revealed over time.

Franchise Rank: Some downtime activities refer to a franchise rank. If you aren't using the franchise rules, you can use the tier of play as they are usually equal. Tier 1 is levels 1-4, Tier 2 is levels 5-10, Tier 3 is levels 11-16, and Tier 4 is levels 17-20. For example, when playing at levels 1-4, you could use a 1 as the franchise rank even if the characters don't have a franchise.

Downtime Sources

Xanathar's Guide to Everything – Chapter 2

Acquisitions Incorporated – Chapter 2

Dungeon Master's Guide – Chapter 6 (though largely obsolete)

Player's Handbook – Chapter 8 (though activities are completely obsolete)

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Downtime Activity	Description	Costs	Benefits	Complications?	Best Source	Outdated Source
Building a Stronghold	Pay money and wait many days based on the type of structure. May require acquiring land. These are simple rules with no growth/development, so consider the Running a Franchise downtime activity and the improved rules for franchises in the Acquisitions Incorporated book.	60-1,200 days and 5k-500k gp cost, depending on structure. May also need land.	Gain a stronghold.	No	DMG / AcqInc	DMG, arguably
Buying a Magic Item	Find a seller of magic items. The check result determines seller quality, dictating a resulting DMG magic item table. 1-4 items are generally available at a cost based on item rarity. Includes wealthy lifestyle.	Min: 1 workweek, 100g.	Find a seller offering one or more magic items for sale.	Yes	XGtE	
Carousing	Make contacts who can spend a favor for you. Choose lower, middle, or upper class carousing. DM can decide upper class is inaccessible. Check determines making 1 hostile contact, no contact, or 1-3 allied contacts. An allied contact performs one favor, then is done.	1 workweek, 10/50/250gp based on social class.	Find 1-3 allied contacts who will perform 1 favor.	Yes	XGtE (Also see AcqInc's Schmoozing)	DMG (Carousing)
Crafting an Item (nonmagical)	Craft magical or non-magical gear. Non-magical: Spend time and gp based on item cost. Multiple characters can work together and weeks need not be consecutive. The item is created at the end of the allotted time. Requires proficiency in relevant tools.	Workweeks = gp cost/50. GP = 1/2 item cost. Proficiency in relevant tools.	1 nonmagical item	Yes	XGtE	PH (Crafting)
Crafting an Item (magical)	Craft magical or non-magical gear. Magical: Items other than potions of healing require a formula and an exotic material. Finding the formula is up to the DM and could require downtime such as Research or Scrutineering. For the material, the rarity of the item dictates the CR of the creature that must be defeated as part of finding the exotic material. The number of workweeks and gp also vary by item rarity. Finally, the character must have an appropriate tool proficiency or proficiency in the Arcana skill. Potions of healing require Herbalism proficiency and time and gp based on the potency of the potion. Success for any magic item is automatic at the end of the process.	Workweeks and gp cost vary by item rarity. Proficiency in tools or Arcana.	1 magical item	Yes	XGtE	DMG (Crafting a Magic Item)

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Crime	Commit crime for a chance at earning gp, with a risk of being caught. Character chooses DC 10/15/20/25, then makes three checks. Complete failure carries a fine and jail time. 1 success = not caught and no reward. 2 successes = half payout. 3 successes = full payout.	1 workweek, 25gp or more finding a target.	Between 50-1,000 gp if successful.	Yes	XGtE	
Explore Territory	Explore your surroundings, spending at least 1 workweek and 200 gp. Make a check with a bonus for more time or a franchise position.	Min: 1 workweek, 250 gp.	Learn something of note in the area, which may be beneficial.	Yes	AcqInc	
Franchise Restructuring	Fine-tune your business or operation to lower its costs. First make a check to design the changes, then a check to implement. The checks receive bonuses for more time, gold, and franchise positions. Successes decrease monthly operating costs for 1d4 months.	Min: 2 workweeks and 100 gp per franchise rank	Decrease franchise operating costs by 10-20% for 1d4 months.	Yes	AcqInc	
Gaining Renown	Spend a number of days equal to your current renown times 10, and you gain 1 renown.	Days = current renown x 10	Gain 1 renown	No	DMG	
Gambling	Gamble money! Make 3 checks. Proficiency with a gaming set can replace any 1 of the 3 checks. The DC of each check is random: 5 + 2d10. Can lose 2x stake, lose 1/2 stake, gain 1/2, or gain 2x stake.	1 workweek, stake of between 10gp and 1,000 gp or more.	Gain up to 2x the stake you bet.	Yes	XGtE	
Headquarters Modification	Change an aspect of the business or franchise you run. The aspect is typically one gained with franchise levels. Make a check to draft the modifications, then two checks to make the change. Gain bonuses for hirelings and franchise position.	3 workweeks and 1,000 gp per franchise rank. May require a side trek or specialist labor.	Modify one franchise/business feature.	Yes	AcqInc	
Marketeering	Launch a marketing scheme to decrease monthly business costs. Make three checks representing the marketing plan, gaining bonuses for additional gold or certain franchise positions. The DC is random: 2d10 + 5 for each check. Success lowers operating costs.	Min: 1 workweek, plus 100 gp per franchise rank.	Decrease franchise monthly costs by 25% for up to 2 months.	Yes	AcqInc	

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Performing Sacred Rites	Spend at least 10 days helping a temple. For the next 2d6 days you start the day with Inspiration.	10 days	Gain inspiration for 2d6 days	No	DMG	
Philanthropic Enterprise	Help others or pretend to help others to gain gold or operating cost discounts.	Min: 1 workweek, plus 50 gp per franchise rank.	Gain up to 500 gp or reduce operating costs by 20% for 2 months.	Yes	AcqInc	
Pit Fighting	Box or wrestle for profit. Spend a workweek, then make 3 checks. Any 1 roll can be replaced with an attack roll using the character's choice of weapon. DC of each check is random: 5 + 2d10. May gain nothing or win up to 200 gp.	1 workweek.	Gain 50 - 200gp.	Yes	XGtE	
Relaxation	Spend a week on modest lifestyle, gain advantage on saving throws to overcome diseases or poisons. At the end of the week, end one effect keeping the character from regaining hit points, or restore an ability that has been lowered below normal (as long as this is not caused by an active magical effect with an ongoing duration).	1 workweek, maintain at least modest lifestyle.	Help remove poisons, diseases, hit point maximum limits, ability score loss.	No	XGtE	PH (Recuperating)
Religious Service	Spend a workweek at an allied temple. Make one check, with a total of 11-20 granting one favor and 21 or higher granting two future favors. Characters can have a max of 1+Cha modifier favors at any time.	1 workweek and access to a temple with similar beliefs.	Earn 1-2 future favors, adjudicated by the DM.	Yes	XGtE	
Research	Find lore by spending a workweek and at least 50 gp. Make a check with a +1 bonus for every 50gp spent, up to +6. Access to a library or sages can grant advantage. The check total drives success.	1 workweek, 50 gp+	Learn 1-3 pieces of lore.	Yes	XGtE	PH (Researching)
Running a Franchise	Must be run at the end of each month of game time if using the franchise rules. Percentile dice are rolled, adding in the number of days spent on the activity by the characters or staff. The result increases or decreases that month's base operating costs.	0 or more days.	Could decrease monthly cost by up to 150%.	Yes	AcqInc	DMG (Running a Business, Building a Stronghold)

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Schmoozing	You develop contacts who can help your organization. You spend at least a workweek and gold based on the social class of the target. Make a check, gaining a bonus for relevant background or franchise position.	1 workweek or more, 10 gp per franchise rank or more (depending on target social class)	Gain a contact, perhaps with a favor.	Yes	AcqInc	
Scribing a Spell Scroll	Scribe a scroll by spending time and gp based on the spell level. Success is automatic. The spell must be known or prepared and the character must be proficient in Arcana and provide any material components.	Time and cost based on spell level.	Scribe a scroll with one spell.	Yes	XGtE	DMG (Crafting a Magic Item)
Scrutineering	Learn important information, by any means necessary. May require spending some resources initially, then at least 1 workweek plus 100 gp per franchise rank. Make a check with an applicable skill, with a bonus for spending additional gold or having an appropriate franchise position. Learn from 1-3 pieces of lore.	Min: 1 workweek, 100 gp per franchise rank.	Learn 1-3 pieces of lore.	Yes	AcqInc	PH (Researching). Can replace XGtE's Research in some cases.
Selling a Magic Item	Find a buyer by spending 1 workweek and 25 gp. Make a check to determine the quality of the offer, which is from 50% to 150% of the base price based on rarity.	1 workweek, 25 gp.	Sell item, earning from 50-100% of cost (based on rarity)	Yes	XGtE	DMG (Selling Magic Items)
Shady Business Practice	You commit a crime or engage in a questionable activity. Make three relevant ability checks against a random DC of 2d10 + 5. You can gain gold based on the franchise rank and a minor or major benefit determined by the DM.	Min: 2 workweeks, 50 gp per franchise rank.	Gain up to 150 gp per franchise rank and a major benefit selected by the DM.	Yes	AcqInc	
Sowing Rumors	Spread rumors to sway opinion, up or down, regarding a specific individual. Requires 2d6-6d6 days depending on size of the location, plus 1gp per day. Attempt a check to move the community's prevailing attitude toward the subject one step up or down towards friendly or hostile.	2d6-6d6 days depending on community size, 1gp per day.	Change prevailing community attitude one step.	No	DMG, but consider AcqInc (Marketeering, Shady Business Practice)	

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Team Building	Your party or franchise tries to become a better team. All participants spend at least a workweek, and the event requires between 50-250 gp per franchise rank. Participants bond over a negative backstory quality. Success grants advantage on future downtime checks, and can provide a teambuilding memory that can be used as a bonus action to enhance an ability for a short time.	Min: 1 workweek, 50-250 gp per franchise rank.	Gain advantage on a future downtime check, plus up to 2 team memories.	Yes	AcqInc	
Training	Receive training in a language or tool.	Time = 10 workweeks - Int modifier. Cost = 25 gp.	Gain 1 language or tool proficiency.	Yes	XGtE	PH (Training)
Training to Gain Levels	Variant. When a character gains the XP to level, this variant rule requires characters to train before they gain the new level. The number of days increases by character level, as does the cost. Lacks flavor.	Spend days and gp based on new level.	Required to level up.	No	DMG (optional rule)	
Work	Get a temporary job. Spend a week and make one ability check based on the task. Gain a lifestyle based on the result and at the highest success also gain 25 gp.	1 workweek.	From poor lifestyle to comfortable plus 25 gp.	Yes	XGtE	PH (Practicing a Profession)