

The Shimmering Portals

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The player characters enter from the trap door above the center of the room. If they fall, they take damage from the 10' drop. Otherwise, they can climb down normally. It is a plain stone room, 15'x15', with a stone floor and a stone ceiling. There is a doorway in the center of each of the four walls, with no door but a bluish, shimmering light like reflections on water filling the space.

As soon as the first character touches the floor, the first orcs run in from doorways 1 and 3 (north and south), one from each doorway, swing at the character, and keep running out the opposite doorway.

On the second round, one orc runs in from doorways 2 and 4 (the east and west doors), take a swing at a character, and run out the opposite doorway. All of the orcs are identically dressed, making it difficult to determine how many orcs there actually are, and it should be timed to make it appear, at least initially, that there are only the same two orcs running through dimension doors or similar portals.

This continues, with orcs running in from the north and south on odd-numbered rounds, and from the east and west on even-numbered rounds.

The doorways have force fields on them, and cannot be passed. Dispel magic will take down the specific force field it is cast upon. The orcs move freely due to special amulets they wear. The stone around the doorways is old, and the doorframes have been poorly installed, so it is possible to punch through the wall around the doorways with a moderately challenging, not-too-hard but not-too-easy Strength check.

There are actually a total of 8 orcs. They queue up in the hallway and take turns running through the room. They always follow the pattern as shown in the diagram. It takes one round to run from the doorway they exited to the next doorway they enter. Any individual orc only runs through the room every 4 rounds, giving them two rounds to catch their breath. If the orc ahead of them in the queue has died, they will keep running so there are always orcs entering and exiting the room every round.

In the northwest and southeast corner of the outside hallway stands an orc shaman, who can heal wounded orcs as they pass. Each has a total of three healing spells. Once all of their healing spells have been cast, the orc shamans leave the area via the nearest passageway. After four of the running orcs have been slain, the other four will stop entering the room and will also leave the area.

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