



CH. 1: PLAYING THE GAME

CH. 3: CHARACTER CLASSES

Chapter 2: Creating a Character

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WORLD-TRAVELING EXPLORERS HANK, BOBBY, SHEILA, DIANA, AND PRESTO STAND ON THE THRESHOLD OF THEIR NEXT ADVENTURE

You can make a character for Dungeons & Dragons using the building blocks in this book. Your character is a combination of game statistics, roleplaying hooks, and your imagination. You choose a class (such as [Fighter](#) or [Wizard](#)), a background (such as [Sailor](#) or [Acolyte](#)), and a species (such as [Human](#) or [Elf](#)). You also invent the personality and appearance of your character. Once completed, your character serves as your avatar in the D&D multiverse.

Get Ready

Before you dive into character creation, there are a few things to do to get ready, as explained below.

Talk with Your DM

Start by talking with your Dungeon Master about the type of D&D game they plan to run. If the DM draws inspiration from Greek myth, for example, you might choose a different direction for your character than if the DM is planning for swashbuckling on the high seas. Think about the kind of adventurer you want to play in this game. If you don't know where to begin, look at the character illustrations in this book for inspiration.

SESSION ZERO

Some Dungeon Masters start a campaign with a "session zero," an initial gathering focused on creating characters and setting expectations, including topics to avoid as well as those to embrace. A session zero provides a great opportunity to talk to the other players and the DM and decide whether your characters know one another, how they met, and what sorts of quests the group might undertake together.

Choose a Character Sheet

You'll record the main details of your character on a character sheet. Throughout this chapter, we use the term "character sheet" to mean whatever you use to track your character's details, whether it's a printed character sheet, a digital character sheet like the one on [D&D Beyond](#), or plain paper. Choose whichever style of sheet works for you, and then embark on creating a character!

Create Your Character

Here are the steps to make a character; each step is explored in detail in this chapter:

- 1. Choose a Class.** Every adventurer is a member of a class. A class broadly describes a character's vocation, special talents, and favored tactics.
- 2. Determine Origin.** A character's origin includes two elements: background and species. How did the character spend the years leading up to a life of adventure? Who are the character's ancestors? You can also choose your character's languages.
- 3. Determine Ability Scores.** Much of what your character does in the game depends on the character's six abilities.
- 4. Choose an Alignment.** Alignment is a shorthand for your character's moral compass.
- 5. Fill in Details.** Using the choices you've made, fill in the remaining details on your character sheet.

Step 1: Choose a Class

Choose a class, and write it on your character sheet. The Class Overview table summarizes the classes. See [Chapter 3](#) for the classes' details.

Class Overview

Class	Likes...	Primary Ability	Complexity
Barbarian	Battle	Strength	Average
Bard	Performing	Charisma	High
Cleric	Gods	Wisdom	Average
Druid	Nature	Wisdom	High
Fighter	Weapons	Strength or Dexterity	Low
Monk	Unarmed combat	Dexterity and Wisdom	High
Paladin	Defense	Strength and Charisma	Average
Ranger	Survival	Dexterity and Wisdom	Average

Class	Likes...	Primary Ability	Complexity
Rogue	Stealth	Dexterity	Low
Sorcerer	Power	Charisma	High
Warlock	Occult lore	Charisma	High
Wizard	Spellbooks	Intelligence	Average

A BALANCED PARTY

The classic D&D party comprises a Cleric, Fighter, Rogue, and Wizard. Those four classes have the longest history in the game, but more importantly, they bring a balanced mix of capabilities to adventures. You're welcome to use that party setup or modify it using these guidelines:

Cleric: Replace with Bard or Druid

Fighter: Replace with Barbarian, Monk, Paladin, or Ranger

Rogue: Replace with Bard or Ranger

Wizard: Replace with Bard, Sorcerer, or Warlock

Write Your Level

Write your character's level on your character sheet. Typically, a character starts at level 1 and advances in level by adventuring and gaining **Experience Points** (XP).

Write Your XP. Also record your Experience Points. A level 1 character has 0 XP.

Starting at a Higher Level. Your DM might start you at a higher level. If you start at level 3 or higher, write your chosen subclass on your character sheet.

See the "[Starting at Higher Levels](#)" section later in the chapter for more information.

Note Armor Training

Your class might give you training with certain categories of armor. Note your armor training on your character sheet. Armor training with a kind of armor means you can wear that armor effectively, gaining defensive bonuses from it. The categories of armor are described in [chapter 6](#).

Hold That Thought

You'll fill in more details about your class later. Choosing your class is the most important decision you make in creating a character, and it informs many of the decisions you make in later steps. You'll return to your class's description in [chapter 3](#) several more times before you're done.

Step 2: Determine Origin

Determining your character's origin involves choosing a background, a species, and two languages.

A character's background represents the place and occupation that were most formative for the character. The combination of background, species, and languages provides fertile soil for your imagination as you ponder your character's earliest days.

Choose a Background

Choose your character's background, and write it on your character sheet. You can choose any of the backgrounds detailed in [chapter 4](#), and your DM might offer additional backgrounds as options.

The background you choose influences step 3, when you determine your character's ability scores. If you're having trouble choosing, the Ability Scores and Backgrounds table shows which backgrounds benefit which ability scores. Look for your class's primary ability there.

Ability Scores and Backgrounds

Ability	Backgrounds
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Ability	Backgrounds
Strength	Artisan, Entertainer, Farmer, Guard, Noble, Sailor, Soldier
Dexterity	Artisan, Charlataan, Criminal, Entertainer, Guide, Sailor, Scribe, Soldier, Wayfarer
Constitution	Charlataan, Criminal, Farmer, Guide, Hermit, Merchant, Sage, Soldier
Intelligence	Acolyte, Artisan, Criminal, Guard, Merchant, Noble, Sage, Scribe
Wisdom	Acolyte, Farmer, Guard, Guide, Hermit, Sage, Sailor, Scribe, Wayfarer
Charisma	Acolyte, Charlataan, Entertainer, Hermit, Merchant, Noble, Wayfarer

Record Your Feat. A background gives you a feat, which grants your character particular capabilities. Feats are detailed in [chapter 5](#). Write the feat on your character sheet.

Note Proficiencies. Your background gives proficiency in two skills and with one tool. Record this information on your character sheet.

Your class also gives proficiencies. Check your class description in [chapter 3](#) and note the proficiencies on your character sheet.

On the sample character sheet, you can indicate proficiency in skills and saving throws by marking the circle next to them.

The features table in your class description shows your Proficiency Bonus (described in [chapter 1](#)), which is +2 for a level 1 character. Note this number on your character sheet. You'll fill in other numbers connected to these proficiencies in [step 5](#).

Choose Starting Equipment

Your background and class both provide starting equipment. Any coins that you gain at this step can be immediately spent on equipment from [chapter 6](#).

In addition, you can have one trinket at no cost (see the [Trinkets table](#) at the end of this chapter).

Record your chosen equipment on your character sheet. Equipment is described in [chapter 6](#), but for now you can just write it all down and look up the specifics in that chapter later. There's also space on the sample character sheet to note any coins you have left after purchasing your equipment, as well as treasure you acquire on your adventures.



***CONSIDER HOW YOUR CHOICES COMBINE TO SET
YOUR CHARACTER ON THE PATH TO ADVENTURE***

Choose a Species

Choose a species for your character. The following species options are detailed in [chapter 4: Aasimar, Dragonborn, Dwarf, Elf, Gnome, Goliath, Halfling, Human, Orc, and Tiefling](#). Once you've chosen a species, write it on your character sheet. Then record your species' traits.

Your character's **size** and **Speed** are determined by the character's species; record these in the appropriate places on your character sheet as well (you may write just the first letter of your size).

Imagine Your Past and Present

Let your character's background and species inspire how you imagine their past. That past fed into the character's present. With that in mind, consider answers to the following questions as your character:

- Who raised you?
- Who was your dearest childhood friend?
- Did you grow up with a pet?
- Have you fallen in love? If so, with whom?
- Did you join an organization, such as a guild or religion? If so, are you still a member of it?
- What elements of your past inspire you to go on adventures now?

Choose Languages

Your character knows at least three languages: Common plus two languages you roll or choose from the Standard Languages table. Knowledge of a language means your character can communicate in it, read it, and write it. Your class and other features might also give you languages.

The Standard Languages table lists languages that are widespread on D&D worlds. Every player character knows Common, which originated in the planar metropolis of Sigil, the hub of the multiverse. The other standard languages originated with the first members of the most prominent species in the worlds of D&D and have since spread widely.

Standard Languages

1d12	Language	Origin
—	Common	Sigil
1	Common Sign Language	Sigil
2	Draconic	Dragons
3–4	Dwarvish	Dwarves
5–6	Elvish	Elves
7	Giant	Giants
8	Gnomish	Gnomes
9	Goblin	Goblinoids
10–11	Halfling	Halflings
12	Orc	Orcs

The Rare Languages table lists languages that are either secret or derived from other planes of existence and thus less widespread in the worlds of the Material Plane. Some features let a character learn a rare language.

Rare Languages

Language	Origin
Abyssal	Demons of the Abyss
Celestial	Celestials
Deep Speech	Aberrations
Druidic	Druidic circles
Infernal	Devils of the Nine Hells
Primordial*	Elementals
Sylvan	The Feywild
Thieves' Cant	Various criminal guilds
Undercommon	The Underdark

*Primordial includes the Aquan, Auran, Ignan, and Terran dialects. Creatures that know one of these dialects can communicate with those that know a different one.

Step 3: Determine Ability Scores

To determine your character's ability scores, you first generate a set of six numbers using the instructions below and then assign them to your six abilities. [Chapter 1](#) explains what each ability means.

Generate Your Scores

Determine your ability scores by using one of the following three methods. Your DM might prefer you to use a particular one.

Standard Array. Use the following six scores for your abilities: 15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8.

Random Generation. Roll four d6s and record the total of the highest three dice. Do this five more times, so you have six numbers.

Point Cost. You have 27 points to spend on your ability scores. The cost of each score is shown on the Ability Score Point Costs table. For example, a score of 14 costs 7 of your 27 points.

Ability Score Point Costs

Score	Cost
8	0
9	1
10	2
11	3
12	4
13	5
14	7
15	9

Assign Ability Scores

Once you've generated six scores, assign them to Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma, keeping in mind your class's primary ability. Fill in the ability modifiers as well.

If you're using the Standard Array option, consult the Standard Array by Class table for suggestions on where to assign scores for your character's class. The table puts the highest scores in a class's main abilities. If you used a different method to generate the scores, you may still use this table to guide where you place your highest and lowest scores.

Standard Array by Class

Class	Str.	Dex.	Con.	Int.	Wis.	Cha.
Barbarian	15	13	14	10	12	8
Bard	8	14	12	13	10	15
Cleric	14	8	13	10	15	12
Druid	8	12	14	13	15	10
Fighter	15	14	13	8	10	12
Monk	12	15	13	10	14	8
Paladin	15	10	13	8	12	14
Ranger	12	15	13	8	14	10
Rogue	12	15	13	14	10	8
Sorcerer	10	13	14	8	12	15
Warlock	8	14	13	12	10	15
Wizard	8	12	13	15	14	10

Adjust Ability Scores

After assigning your ability scores, adjust them according to your background. Your background lists three abilities; increase one of those scores by 2 and a different one by 1, or increase all three by 1. None of these increases can raise a score above 20.

Some players like to increase their class's primary ability, while others prefer to increase a low score.

BACKGROUNDS AND SPECIES FROM OLDER BOOKS

Backgrounds in older D&D books don't include ability score adjustments. If you're using a background from an older book, adjust your ability scores by increasing one score by 2 and a different one by 1, or increase three scores by 1. None of these increases can raise a score above 20.

Similarly, species in older books include ability score increases. If you're using a species from an older book, ignore those increases and use only the ones given by your background.

Also, if the background you choose doesn't provide a feat, you gain an [Origin feat](#) of your choice.

Determine Ability Modifiers

Finally, determine your ability modifiers using the Ability Scores and Modifiers table. Write the modifier next to each of your scores.

Ability Scores and Modifiers

Score	Modifier
3	-4
4–5	-3
6–7	-2
8–9	-1
10–11	+0
12–13	+1
14–15	+2
16–17	+3
18–19	+4
20	+5

Describe Appearance and Personality

Ability scores are an essential part of the rules, but they can be more than that. Once you've assigned your ability scores, give some thought to what those scores might say about your character's appearance and personality. A very strong character with low Charisma might look and behave differently from a charismatic character with low Strength. The following tables of descriptive words give suggestions of how you might describe your character based on having a high or low score in an ability.

Note your character's appearance and personality on your character sheet.

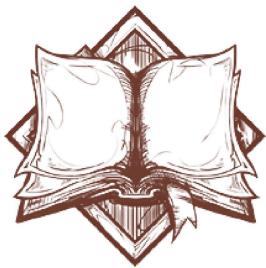
Strength



1d4	High Strength	Low Strength
1	Muscular	Weak
2	Sinewy	Slight
3	Protective	Self-conscious
4	Direct	Indirect

Dexterity

1d4	High Dexterity	Low Dexterity
1	Lithe	Jittery
2	Dynamic	Clumsy

**Constitution****Intelligence****Wisdom****Charisma**

1d4	High Dexterity	Low Dexterity
3	Fidgety	Hesitant
4	Poised	Unsteady

High Constitution**Low Constitution**

1	Energetic	Frail
2	Hale	Squeamish
3	Hearty	Lethargic
4	Stable	Fragile

High Intelligence**Low Intelligence**

1	Decisive	Artless
2	Logical	Illogical
3	Informative	Uninformed
4	Curious	Frivolous

High Wisdom**Low Wisdom**

1	Serene	Rash
2	Considerate	Distracted
3	Attentive	Oblivious
4	Wary	Naive

High Charisma**Low Charisma**

1	Charming	Pedantic
2	Commanding	Humorless
3	Hilarious	Reserved
4	Inspiring	Tactless

Step 4: Choose an Alignment

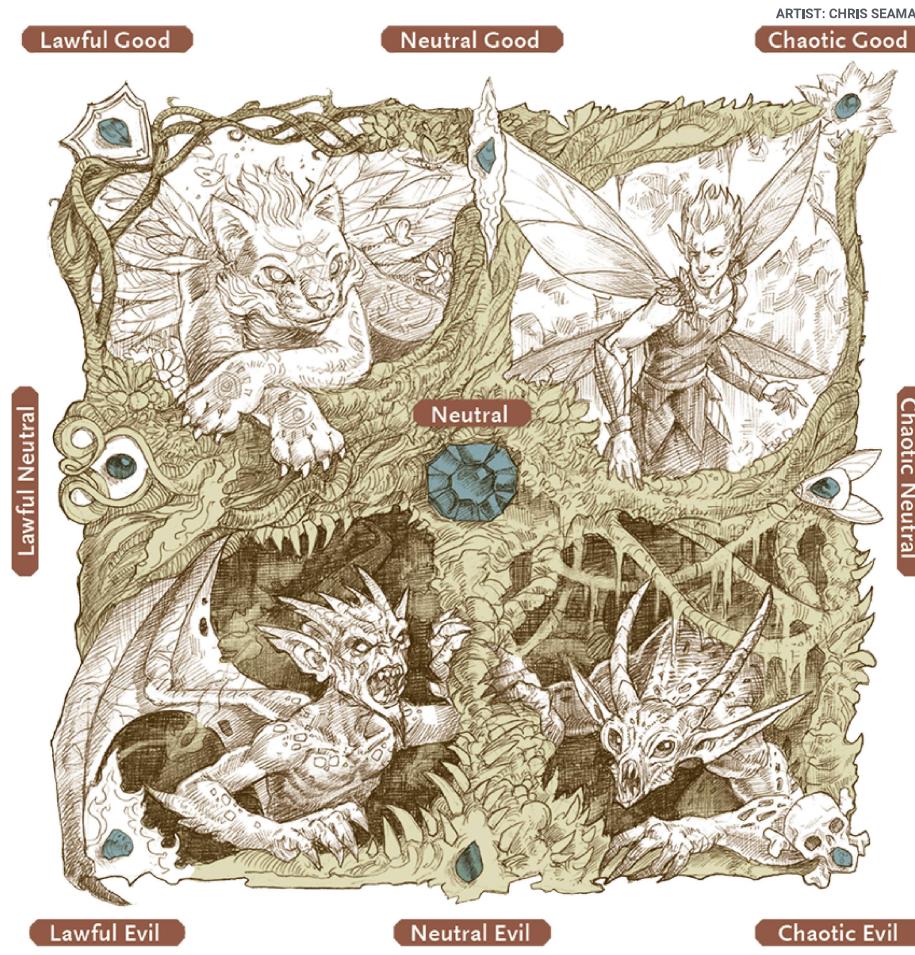
Choose your character's alignment from the options below, and note it on your character sheet.

D&D assumes that player characters aren't of an evil alignment. Check with your DM before making an evil character.

The Nine Alignments

A creature's alignment broadly describes its ethical attitudes and ideals. Alignment is a combination of two factors: one identifies morality (good, evil, or neutral), and the other describes attitudes toward order (lawful, chaotic, or neutral).

The summaries of the alignments below describe the typical behavior of a creature with that alignment; individuals can vary from that behavior.



*ALIGNMENTS MIGHT BE VISUALIZED AS A GRID LIKE THIS—
ALONG WITH CREATURES THAT EMBODY THOSE ALIGNMENTS*

Lawful Good (LG). Lawful Good creatures endeavor to do the right thing as expected by society. Someone who fights injustice and protects the innocent without hesitation is probably Lawful Good.

Neutral Good (NG). Neutral Good creatures do the best they can, working within rules but not feeling bound by them. A kindly person who helps others according to their needs is probably Neutral Good.

Chaotic Good (CG). Chaotic Good creatures act as their conscience directs with little regard for what others expect. A rebel who waylays a cruel baron's tax collectors and uses the stolen money to help the poor is probably Chaotic Good.

Lawful Neutral (LN). Lawful Neutral individuals act in accordance with law, tradition, or personal codes. Someone who follows a disciplined rule of life—and isn't swayed either by the demands of those in need or by the temptations of evil—is probably Lawful Neutral.

Neutral (N). Neutral is the alignment of those who prefer to avoid moral questions and don't take sides, doing what seems best at the time. Someone who's bored by moral debate is probably Neutral.

Chaotic Neutral (CN). Chaotic Neutral creatures follow their whims, valuing their personal freedom above all else. A scoundrel who wanders the land living by their wits is probably Chaotic Neutral.

Lawful Evil (LE). Lawful Evil creatures methodically take what they want within the limits of a code of tradition, loyalty, or order. An aristocrat exploiting citizens while scheming for power is probably Lawful Evil.

Neutral Evil (NE). Neutral Evil is the alignment of those who are untroubled by the harm they cause as they pursue their desires. A criminal who robs and murders as they please is probably Neutral Evil.

Chaotic Evil (CE). Chaotic Evil creatures act with arbitrary violence, spurred by their hatred or bloodlust. A villain pursuing schemes of vengeance and havoc is probably Chaotic Evil.

UNALIGNED CREATURES

Most creatures that lack the capacity for rational thought don't have alignments; they are unaligned. **Sharks** are savage predators, for example, but they aren't evil; they are unaligned.

Alignment and Personality

Alignment can shape a character's personality, goals, and core beliefs. Looking at the two elements of an alignment, you can use the lists below to inspire details of your character's personality.

Personality Traits by Alignment

Alignment	1d4	Associated Trait
Chaotic	1	Boastful
	2	Impulsive
	3	Rebellious
	4	Self-absorbed
Good	1	Compassionate
	2	Helpful
	3	Honest
	4	Kind
Evil	1	Dishonest
	2	Vengeful
	3	Cruel
	4	Greedy
Lawful	1	Cooperative
	2	Loyal
	3	Judgmental
	4	Methodical
Neutral	1	Selfish
	2	Disinterested
	3	Laconic
	4	Pragmatic

Step 5: Fill In Details

Now fill in the rest of your character sheet.

Record Class Features

Look at your class's feature table in [chapter 3](#), and write down the level 1 features. The class features are detailed in that same chapter.

Some class features offer choices. Make sure to read all your features and make any offered choices.

Fill In Numbers

Note these numbers on your character sheet.

Saving Throws. For the saving throws you have proficiency in, add your Proficiency Bonus to the appropriate ability modifier and note the total. Some players also like to note the modifier for saving throws they're not proficient in, which is just the relevant ability modifier.

Skills. For skills you have proficiency in, add your Proficiency Bonus to the ability modifier associated with that skill, and note the total. You might also wish to note the modifier for skills you're not proficient in, which is just the relevant ability modifier.

Passive Perception. Sometimes your DM will determine whether your character notices something without asking you to make a Wisdom (**Perception**) check; the DM uses your Passive Perception instead. Passive Perception is a score that reflects a general awareness of your surroundings when you're not actively looking for something. Use this formula to determine your Passive Perception score:

$$\text{Passive Perception} = 10 + \text{Wisdom} (\text{Perception}) \text{ check modifier}$$

Include all modifiers that apply to your Wisdom (**Perception**) checks. For example, if your character has a Wisdom of 15 and proficiency in the **Perception** skill, you have a Passive Perception of 14 (10 + 2 for your Wisdom modifier + 2 for proficiency).

Hit Points. Your class and Constitution modifier determine your Hit Point maximum at level 1, as shown on the Level 1 Hit Points by Class table.

Level 1 Hit Points by Class

Class	Hit Point Maximum
Barbarian	12 + Con. modifier
Fighter, Paladin, or Ranger	10 + Con. modifier
Bard, Cleric, Druid, Monk, Rogue, or Warlock	8 + Con. modifier
Sorcerer or Wizard	6 + Con. modifier

The character sheet includes room to note your current Hit Points when you take damage, as well as any **Temporary Hit Points** you might gain. There's also space to track **Death Saving Throws**.

Hit Point Dice. Your class's description tells you the die type of your character's Hit Point Dice (or Hit Dice for short); write this on your character sheet. At level 1, your character has 1 Hit Die. You can spend Hit Dice during a Short Rest to recover Hit Points. Your character sheet also includes space to note how many Hit Dice you've spent.

Initiative. Write your Dexterity modifier in the space for Initiative on your character sheet.

Armor Class. Without armor or a shield, your base **Armor Class** is 10 plus your Dexterity modifier. If your starting equipment includes armor or a Shield (or both), calculate your AC using the rules in [chapter 6](#). A class feature might give you a different way to calculate your AC.

Attacks. In the Weapons & Damage Cantrips section of the character sheet, write your starting weapons. The attack roll bonus for a weapon with which you have proficiency is one of the following unless a weapon's property says otherwise:

$$\text{Melee attack bonus} = \text{Strength modifier} + \text{Proficiency Bonus}$$

$$\text{Ranged attack bonus} = \text{Dexterity modifier} + \text{Proficiency Bonus}$$

Look up the damage and properties of your weapons in [chapter 6](#). You add the same ability modifier you use for attacks with a weapon to your damage rolls with that weapon.

Spellcasting. Note both the saving throw DC for your spells and the attack bonus for attacks you make with them, using these formulas:

$$\text{Spell save DC} = 8 + \text{spellcasting ability modifier} + \text{Proficiency Bonus}$$

$$\text{Spell attack bonus} = \text{spellcasting ability modifier} + \text{Proficiency Bonus}$$

Your spellcasting ability modifier for a spell is determined by whatever feature gives you the ability to cast the spell.

Spell Slots, Cantrips, and Prepared Spells. If your class gives you the Spellcasting or Pact Magic feature, your class features table shows the number of spell slots you have available, how many cantrips you know, and how many spells you can prepare. Choose your cantrips and prepared spells, and...

them—along with your number of spell slots—on your character sheet.

Name Your Character

Choose a name for your character, and write it on your character sheet. The name can be whatever you like. Was it the name of an ancestor? Does it have religious or other significance? Is it a name you chose for yourself?

Create Final Details

As you finish creating your character, consider whether you'd like to make up any other details about the character. Here are the sorts of things you might ask yourself as the character:

- What's your gender?
- What person or people do you care most about?
- What's your deepest fear?
- On your adventures, will you seek knowledge, wealth, glory, enlightenment, justice, mercy, power, or something else?

Level Advancement

ARTIST: CHRIS SEAMAN



ADVENTURING EQUIPMENT IMPROVES AS A CHARACTER PROGRESSES THROUGH THE TIERS OF PLAY

While going on adventures, your character gains experience, represented by **Experience Points** (XP). A character who reaches a specified Experience Point total advances in capability. This advancement is called gaining a **level**.

The Character Advancement table lists the XP you need to advance to a level and the Proficiency Bonus for a character of that level. When your XP total equals or exceeds a number in the Experience Points column, you reach the corresponding level.

Character Advancement

Level	Experience Points	Proficiency Bonus
1	0	+2
2	300	+2
3	900	+2

Level	Experience Points	Proficiency Bonus
4	2,700	+2
5	6,500	+3
6	14,000	+3
7	23,000	+3
8	34,000	+3
9	48,000	+4
10	64,000	+4
11	85,000	+4
12	100,000	+4
13	120,000	+5
14	140,000	+5
15	165,000	+5
16	195,000	+5
17	225,000	+6
18	265,000	+6
19	305,000	+6
20	355,000	+6

Gaining a Level

When you gain a level, follow these steps:

- 1. Choose a Class.** Most characters advance in the same class. However, you might decide to gain a level in another class using the rules in the “Multiclassing” section later in this chapter.
- 2. Adjust Hit Points and Hit Point Dice.** Each time you gain a level, you gain an additional Hit Die. Roll that die, add your Constitution modifier to the roll, and add the total (minimum of 1) to your Hit Point maximum. Instead of rolling, you can use the fixed value shown in the Fixed Hit Points by Class table.

Fixed Hit Points by Class

Class	Hit Points per Level
Barbarian	7 + Con. modifier
Fighter, Paladin, or Ranger	6 + Con. modifier
Bard, Cleric, Druid, Monk, Rogue, or Warlock	5 + Con. modifier
Sorcerer or Wizard	4 + Con. modifier

- 3. Record New Class Features.** Look at your class features table in [chapter 3](#), and note the features you gain at your new level in that class. Make any choices offered by a new feature.
- 4. Adjust Proficiency Bonus.** A character’s Proficiency Bonus increases at certain levels, as shown in the [Character Advancement table](#) and your class features table in [chapter 3](#). When your Proficiency Bonus increases, increase all the numbers on your character sheet that include your Proficiency Bonus.
- 5. Adjust Ability Modifiers.** If you choose a feat that increases one or more of your ability scores, your ability modifier also changes if the new score is an even number. When that happens, adjust all the numbers on your character sheet that use that ability modifier. When your Constitution mo

increases by 1, your Hit Point maximum increases by 1 for each level you have attained. For example, if a character reaches level 8 and increases their Constitution score from 17 to 18, the Constitution modifier increases to +4. The character's Hit Point maximum then increases by 8, in addition to the Hit Points gained for reaching level 8.

Tiers of Play

With each new level, characters acquire new capabilities that equip them to handle greater challenges. As characters advance in level, the tone of the game also changes, and the stakes of the campaign get higher. It's helpful to think of a character's (and a campaign's) arc in terms of four tiers of play, describing the journey from a level 1 character just beginning an adventuring career to the epic heights of level 20. These tiers don't have any rules associated with them; they point to the fact that the play experience evolves as characters gain levels.

Tier 1 (Levels 1–4)

In tier 1, characters are apprentice adventurers, though they are already set apart from the broader populace by virtue of their extraordinary abilities. They learn their starting class features and choose a subclass. The threats they face usually pose a danger to local farmsteads or villages.

Tier 2 (Levels 5–10)

In tier 2, characters are full-fledged adventurers. Spellcasters gain iconic spells such as *Fireball*, *Lightning Bolt*, and *Raise Dead*. Most weapon-focused classes gain the ability to make multiple attacks in a round. The characters now face dangers that threaten cities and kingdoms.

Tier 3 (Levels 11–16)

In tier 3, characters have reached a level of power that makes them special among adventurers. At level 11, many spellcasters learn reality-altering spells. Other characters gain features that allow them to make more attacks or to do more impressive things with those attacks. These adventurers often confront threats to whole regions.

Tier 4 (Levels 17–20)

At tier 4, characters achieve the pinnacle of their class features, becoming heroic archetypes. The fate of the world or even the order of the multiverse might hang in the balance during their adventures.

BONUS FEATS AT LEVEL 20

A DM can use feats as a form of advancement after characters reach level 20 to provide greater power to characters who have no more levels to gain. With this approach, each character gains one feat of their choice for every 30,000 XP the character earns above 355,000 XP. *Epic Boon* feats are especially appropriate for these bonus feats, but a player can choose any feat for which their level 20 character qualifies.

Starting at Higher Levels

Your DM might start your group's characters at a level higher than 1. It is particularly recommended to start at level 3 if your group is composed of seasoned D&D players.

Creating Your Character

Creating a higher-level character uses the same character-creation steps outlined in this chapter and the rules for advancing beyond level 1 provided in the "Level Advancement" section. You begin with the minimum amount of XP required to reach your starting level. For example, if the DM starts you at level 10, you have 64,000 XP.

Starting Equipment

The DM decides whether your character starts with more than the standard equipment for a level 1 character, possibly even one or more magic items. The Starting Equipment at Higher Levels table is a guide for the DM.

Also, check with your DM about what equipment is available for you to buy with your starting money. For example, the firearms described in [chapter 6](#) are too expensive for level 1 characters, but they might be available for purchase if your DM allows them.

Starting Equipment at Higher Levels

Starting Level	Equipment and Money	Magic Items
2–4	Normal starting equipment	1 Common
5–10	500 GP plus $1d10 \times 25$ GP plus normal starting equipment	1 Common, 1 Uncommon
11–16	5,000 gp plus $1d10 \times 250$ GP plus normal starting equipment	2 Common, 3 Uncommon, 1 Rare
17–20	20,000 GP plus $1d10 \times 250$ GP plus normal starting equipment	2 Common, 4 Uncommon, 3 Rare, 1 Very Rare

Multiclassing

Multiclassing allows you to gain levels in multiple classes. With this rule, you have the option of gaining a level in a new class whenever you advance in level instead of gaining a level in your current class. Doing so lets you mix the abilities of those classes to realize a character concept that might not be reflected in a single class.

Prerequisites

To qualify for a new class, you must have a score of at least 13 in the primary ability of the new class and your current classes. For example, a Barbarian who decides to multiclass into the Druid class must have Strength and Wisdom scores of 13 or higher, since Strength is the primary ability for Barbarians and Wisdom is the primary ability for Druids.

Experience Points

The Experience Point cost to gain a level is based on your total character level, not your level in a particular class, as shown in the [Character Advancement table](#) in this chapter. For example, if you are a level 6 Cleric / level 1 Fighter, you must gain enough XP to reach level 8 before you can take your second level as a Fighter or your seventh level as a Cleric.

Hit Points and Hit Point Dice

You gain the Hit Points from your new class as described for levels after 1. You gain the level 1 Hit Points for a class only when your total character level is 1.

Add together the Hit Dice granted by all your classes to form your pool of Hit Dice. If these dice are the same die type, you can pool them together. For example, both the Fighter and the Paladin have a d10 Hit Die, so if you are a level 5 Fighter / level 5 Paladin, you have ten d10 Hit Dice. If your classes give you Hit Dice of different types, track them separately. If you are a level 5 Cleric / level 5 Paladin, for example, you have five d8 Hit Dice and five d10 Hit Dice.

Proficiency Bonus

Your Proficiency Bonus is based on your total character level, not your level in a particular class, as shown in the [Character Advancement table](#). For example, if you are a level 3 Fighter / level 2 Rogue, you have the Proficiency Bonus of a level 5 character, which is +3.

Proficiencies

When you gain your first level in a class other than your initial class, you gain only some of the new class's starting proficiencies, as detailed in each class's description in [chapter 3](#).

Class Features

When you gain a new level in a class, you get its features for that level. A few features have additional rules when you're multiclassing. Check the information about multiclassing included in each of your classes' descriptions.

Special rules apply to Extra Attack, Spellcasting, and features (such as Unarmored Defense) that give you alternative ways to calculate your Armor Class.

Armor Class

If you have multiple ways to calculate your **Armor Class**, you can benefit from only one at a time. For example, a Monk/Sorcerer with a Monk's Unarmored Defense feature and a Sorcerer's Draconic Resilience feature must choose only one of those features as a way to calculate Armor Class.

Extra Attack

If you gain the Extra Attack feature from more than one class, the features don't stack. You can't make more than two attacks with this feature unless you have a feature that says you can (such as the Fighter's Two Extra Attacks feature).

Similarly, the Warlock's Thirsting Blade invocation, which grants you the Extra Attack feature with your pact weapon, doesn't give you additional attacks if you also have Extra Attack.

Spellcasting

Your capacity for spellcasting depends partly on your combined levels in all your spellcasting classes and partly on your individual levels in those classes. Once you have the Spellcasting feature from more than one class, use the rules below. If you multiclass but have the Spellcasting feature from only one class, follow the rules for that class.

Multiclass Spellcaster: Spell Slots per Spell Level

Level	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	4	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	4	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
6	4	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
7	4	3	3	1	—	—	—	—	—
8	4	3	3	2	—	—	—	—	—
9	4	3	3	3	1	—	—	—	—
10	4	3	3	3	2	—	—	—	—
11	4	3	3	3	2	1	—	—	—
12	4	3	3	3	2	1	—	—	—
13	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	—	—
14	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	—	—
15	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	—
16	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	—
17	4	3	3	3	2	1	1	1	1
18	4	3	3	3	3	1	1	1	1
19	4	3	3	3	3	2	1	1	1
20	4	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	1

Spells Prepared. You determine what spells you can prepare for each class individually, as if you were a single-classed member of that class. If you are a level 4 Ranger / level 3 Sorcerer, for example, you can prepare five level 1 Ranger spells, and you can prepare six Sorcerer spells of level 1 or 2 (as v

four Sorcerer cantrips).

Each spell you prepare is associated with one of your classes, and you use the spellcasting ability of that class when you cast the spell.

ARTIST: CHRIS SEAMAN



*A CHARACTER WITH PALADIN AND WARLOCK LEVELS MIGHT CALL
ON BOTH A MIGHTY OATH AND AN OTHERWORLDLY PATRON*

Cantrips. If a cantrip of yours increases in power at higher levels, the increase is based on your total character level, not your level in a particular class, unless the spell says otherwise.

Spell Slots. You determine your available spell slots by adding together the following:

- All your levels in the Bard, Cleric, Druid, Sorcerer, and Wizard classes
- Half your levels (round up) in the Paladin and Ranger classes
- One third of your Fighter or Rogue levels (round down) if you have the Eldritch Knight or Arcane Trickster subclass.

Then look up this total level in the Level column of the Multiclass Spellcaster table. You use the slots for that level to cast spells of an appropriate level from any class whose Spellcasting feature you have.

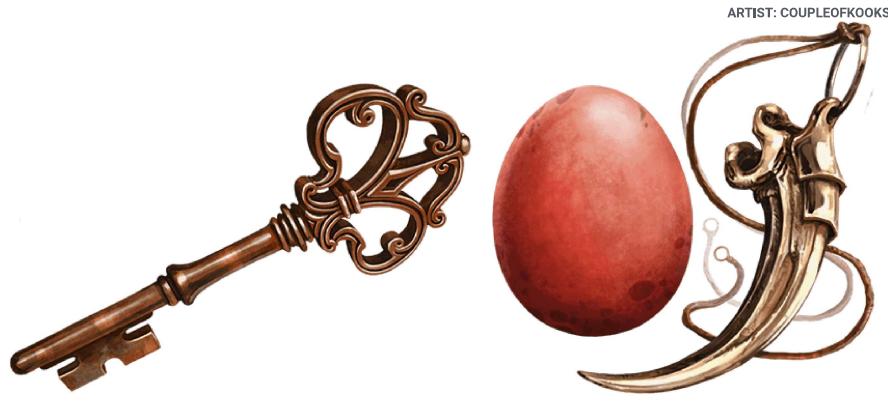
This table might give you spell slots of a higher level than the spells you prepare. You can use those slots but only to cast your lower-level spells. If a lower-level spell that you cast, like *Burning Hands*, has an enhanced effect when cast at a higher level, you can use the enhanced effect as normal.

For example, if you are a level 4 Ranger / level 3 Sorcerer, you count as a level 5 character when determining your spell slots, counting all your levels as a Sorcerer and half your Ranger levels. As shown in the Multiclass Spellcaster table, you have four level 1 spell slots, three level 2 slots, and two level 3 slots. However, you can't prepare any level 3 spells, nor can you prepare any level 2 Ranger spells. You can use the spell slots of those levels to cast the spells you do prepare—and potentially enhance their effects.

Pact Magic. If you have the Pact Magic feature from the Warlock class and the Spellcasting feature, you can use the spell slots you gain from Pact Magic to cast spells you have prepared from classes with the Spellcasting feature, and you can use the spell slots you gain from the Spellcasting feature to cast Warlock spells you have prepared.

Trinkets

When you make your character, you can roll once on the Trinkets table to gain a Tiny trinket, a simple item lightly touched by mystery. The DM might also use this table. It can help stock a room in a dungeon or fill a creature's pockets.



Trinkets

1d100	Trinket
01	A mummified goblin hand
02	A crystal that faintly glows in moonlight
03	A gold coin minted in an unknown land
04	A diary written in a language you don't know
05	A brass ring that never tarnishes
06	An old chess piece made from glass
07	A pair of knucklebone dice, each with a skull symbol on the side that would normally show six pips
08	A small idol depicting a nightmarish creature that gives you unsettling dreams when you sleep near it
09	A lock of someone's hair
10	The deed for a parcel of land in a realm unknown to you
11	A 1-ounce block made from an unknown material
12	A small cloth doll skewered with needles
13	A tooth from an unknown beast
14	An enormous scale, perhaps from a dragon
15	A bright-green feather
16	An old divination card bearing your likeness
17	A glass orb filled with moving smoke

1d100	Trinket
18	A 1-pound egg with a bright-red shell
19	A pipe that blows bubbles
20	A glass jar containing a bit of flesh floating in pickling fluid
21	A gnome-crafted music box that plays a song you dimly remember from your childhood
22	A wooden statuette of a smug halfling
23	A brass orb etched with strange runes
24	A multicolored stone disk
25	A silver icon of a raven
26	A bag containing forty-seven teeth, one of which is rotten
27	A shard of obsidian that always feels warm to the touch
28	A dragon's talon strung on a leather necklace
29	A pair of old socks
30	A blank book whose pages refuse to hold ink, chalk, graphite, or any other marking
31	A silver badge that is a five-pointed star
32	A knife that belonged to a relative
33	A glass vial filled with nail clippings
34	A rectangular metal device with two tiny metal cups on one end that throws sparks when wet
35	A white, sequined glove sized for a human
36	A vest with one hundred tiny pockets
37	A weightless stone
38	A sketch of a goblin
39	An empty glass vial that smells of perfume
40	A gemstone that looks like a lump of coal when examined by anyone but you
41	A scrap of cloth from an old banner
42	A rank insignia from a lost legionnaire
43	A silver bell without a clapper
44	A mechanical canary inside a lamp
45	A miniature chest carved to look like it has numerous feet on the bottom
46	A dead sprite inside a clear glass bottle
47	A metal can that has no opening but sounds as if it is filled with liquid, sand, spiders, or broken glass (your choice)
48	A glass orb filled with water, in which swims a clockwork goldfish
49	A silver spoon with an <i>M</i> engraved on the handle
50	A whistle made from gold-colored wood
51	A dead scarab beetle the size of your hand
52	Two toy soldiers, one missing a head
53	A small box filled with different-sized buttons
54	A candle that can't be lit
55	A miniature cage with no door
56	An old key
57	An indecipherable treasure map

1d100	Trinket
58	A hilt from a broken sword
59	A rabbit's foot
60	A glass eye
61	A cameo of a hideous person
62	A silver skull the size of a coin
63	An alabaster mask
64	A cone of sticky black incense that stinks
65	A nightcap that gives you pleasant dreams when you wear it
66	A single caltrop made from bone
67	A gold monocle frame without the lens
68	A 1-inch cube, each side a different color
69	A crystal doorknob
70	A packet filled with pink dust
71	A fragment of a beautiful song, written as musical notes on two pieces of parchment
72	A silver teardrop earring containing a real teardrop
73	An eggshell painted with scenes of misery in disturbing detail
74	A fan that, when unfolded, shows a sleepy cat
75	A set of bone pipes
76	A four-leaf clover pressed inside a book discussing manners and etiquette
77	A sheet of parchment upon which is drawn a mechanical contraption
78	An ornate scabbard that fits no blade you have found
79	An invitation to a party where a murder happened
80	A bronze pentacle with an etching of a rat's head in its center
81	A purple handkerchief embroidered with the name of an archmage
82	Half a floor plan for a temple, a castle, or another structure
83	A bit of folded cloth that, when unfolded, turns into a stylish cap
84	A receipt of deposit at a bank in a far-off city
85	A diary with seven missing pages
86	An empty silver snuffbox bearing the inscription "dreams" on its lid
87	An iron holy symbol devoted to an unknown god
88	A book about a legendary hero's rise and fall, with the last chapter missing
89	A vial of dragon blood
90	An ancient arrow of elven design
91	A needle that never bends
92	An ornate brooch of dwarven design
93	An empty wine bottle bearing a pretty label that says, "The Wizard of Wines Winery, Red Dragon Crush, 331422-W"
94	A mosaic tile with a multicolored, glazed surface
95	A petrified mouse
96	A black pirate flag adorned with a dragon's skull and crossbones
97	A tiny mechanical crab or spider that moves about when it's not being observed

1d100	Trinket
98	A glass jar containing lard with a label that reads, "Griffon Grease"
99	A wooden box with a ceramic bottom that holds a living worm with a head on each end of its body
00	A metal urn containing the ashes of a hero

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