

CHARACTER CREATION

Your character is a combination of game statistics, roleplaying hooks, and your imagination. You choose a *race* (such as human), a *class* (such as fighter), and other game elements appropriate to the character you have in mind.

CHARACTER CREATION STEPS

Here is a rundown of the steps for making your character. In general, the steps are interchangeable. For example, you can choose feats and trained skills before choosing power, or even after choosing some but not all of your powers.

Choose Class. Your class represents your training or profession, and it is the most important part of your character's capabilities. Your class also determines your *role* in battle (such as defender) and *source* (such as martial) of your power.

Choose Race. Your choice of race offers several advantages.

Determine Ability Scores. Ability scores describe a character's fundamental state of body and mind. A character's race modifies these ability scores, and different classes rely on different ability scores. Your character's ability scores can represent his or her natural aptitude, the results of intense training, or something bestowed upon him or her.

Choose Skills. Skills measure a character's ability to perform adventuring tasks such as jumping across chasms, hiding from observers, and identifying monsters.

Choose Powers. Your choice of class powers defines how your character functions in and out of combat. Each class' powers usually support a couple of different play styles.

Choose Feats. Feats represent natural advantages or special training. You choose at least one feat at 1st level for your character, and might get one or more bonus feats from your race or class selection.

Choose Equipment. Your character begins with 100 gold pieces at 1st level, enough gold to purchase basic gear. As characters adventure, they find magic items that improve their capabilities significantly.

Fill in the Numbers. Calculate your character's hit points, defenses (Armor Class, Fortitude, Reflex, and Will), initiative modifier, attack roll modifiers, damage roll modifiers, and skill check modifiers.

As you make your choices, look ahead to what your character gains at higher levels. The options at higher levels might influence the choices you make, such as choosing to be trained in a skill to be able to choose a power or feat. But don't worry if you're unsure about an option you pick now; you can change your mind later, using the retraining rules.

YOUR CLASS

A wide variety of adventurers delve into forgotten dungeons and ancient ruins. Your class represents your character's vocation, the talents and abilities learned through study and practice, or perhaps bestowed by a blessing or curse.

Your choice of class can also inform your character's personality. A ranger might be a gruff, independent wanderer, while a paladin is typically a kindhearted, heroic figure.

ROLE

Character class determines your character's role – the main job your character does when the adventuring group is in combat. Each class specializes in one of four roles: *controller*, *defender*, *leader*, or *striker*.

Roles mostly serve as handy tools for building adventuring groups. It's a good idea to cover each role with at least one character. If you don't have all roles covered, that's fine; it just means that the group as a whole needs to compensate for the missing function in some manner.

Controller Controllers deal with a large number of enemies at a time. They favor offense over defense, using powers that deal damage to multiple foes at once. They also employ powers that weaken, confuse, or delay their foes.

Defender Defenders have high defenses and hit points, and good close-up offensive capabilities. They are the party's frontline combatants; wherever they're standing, that's where the action is. Defenders have abilities and powers that make it difficult for enemies to move past them or to ignore them in battle.

Leader Leaders inspire, heal, and aid the other characters in an adventuring group. Leaders generally have good defenses, but their strength lies in powers that protect their companions and target specific foes for the party concentrate on.

► Leaders encourage and motivate, but that doesn't mean that they're necessarily a group's spokesperson or commander. Leaders (the role) fulfill their function through their powers and class features; party leaders are born through roleplaying.

Striker Strikers specialize in dealing high amounts of damage, usually to a single target at a time. They have the most concentrated offense of any character. Strikers rely on superior mobility, trickery, or magic to move around tough foes and single out the enemy they want to attack.

POWER SOURCE

Every class relies on a particular source of energy to fuel its powers. For example, a fighter uses strength and willpower, which are hallmarks of the martial power source. A class usually has only one power source, but exceptions exist.

The most common power sources are **ARCANE**, **DIVINE**, **MARTIAL**, and **PRIMAL**, and they are described below. Other power sources exist, including **PSIONIC** and **SHADOW**, as well as **ELEMENTAL**.

Arcane Drawing on magical energy that permeates the cosmos, the arcane power source can be used for a variety of effects, from gouts of flames to flight to invisibility. Each arcane class represents a different tradition of arcane study. Arcane powers are called *spells*.

Divine Divine magic comes from the gods, who grant power to their devotees. Divine magic excels at healing, protection, and smiting the enemies of its wielder. Divine powers are called *prayers*.

Martial Martial powers are not magic, although some martial powers are well beyond the capabilities of ordinary mortals. Training and dedication allow martial characters use their own strength, skill and willpower to vanquish their enemies. Martial powers are called *exploits*.

Primal Primal magic draws on the spirits that pervade the world. Some primal powers are more overtly magical than others, but they all evoke the primal spirits. Some characters channel primal spirits through their bodies to transform themselves and empower their physical attacks. Others evoke primal spirits to create external effects, including terrain effects, localized storms, or temporary manifestations of the spirits. Primal powers are called *evocations*.

YOUR RACE

Humans are the most common folk in the Dungeons & Dragons world, but they share the civilized realm with a number of other races. Each race has innate strengths that make it more suited to particular classes. However, you can create any combination you like. Sometimes, playing against a stereotype is a fun way to create a memorable character.

Many different intelligent creatures also populate the world, creatures such as dragons, mind flayers, and demons. These aren't races you play; they are enemies and allies you might encounter.

RACIAL UTILITY POWERS

Most races provide a list of racial utility powers. When your character gains a class utility power of a given level, you can choose a racial utility power instead. Some of these utility powers have a power source keyword; you can choose such powers even if your class does not draw from that power source, and your class does not count as that power source if you select one.

YOUR ABILITY SCORES

Six abilities provide a quick description of a character's physical and mental characteristics: Strength, Constitution, Dexterity, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. Is a character muscle-bound and insightful? Brilliant and charming? Nimble and hardy? Ability scores define these qualities – a character's strengths as well as weaknesses.

Each of a character's abilities has a score, a number that measures the might of that ability. A character who has Strength 16 is much stronger than a character who has Strength 6. A score of 10 or 11 is the ordinary human average, but adventurers and most monsters are a cut above average in most abilities. As adventurers advance in level, their ability scores also improve. Each ability represents a different aspect of a

DM Note. At 1st level, your character should aim to have at least an ability score of 16 in the ability he or she uses to make attacks.

character. Strength, Constitution, and Dexterity are physical abilities, and Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma are mental abilities. You should also consider if your abilities are the reason your character became the class he or she is, or if he or she has the abilities as a result of his or her class.

After you have generated your ability scores, you can calculate the modifier for each by subtracting 10 and dividing by 2 (rounded down).

STRENGTH (STR)

Strength measures physical power. The ability score is important for many adventurers who fight hand-to-hand.

- The default *melee basic attack* is based on Strength.
- Strength is the key ability for Athletics skill checks.
- An adventurer's Strength modifier contributes to Fortitude, unless his or her Constitution modifier is higher.

CONSTITUTION (CON)

Constitution presents health, stamina, and vital force. All adventurers benefit from a high Constitution score.

- At 1st level, an adventurer's Constitution score is added to his or her hit points.
- The number of healing surges that an adventurer can use each day is influenced by his or her Constitution modifier.
- Constitution is the key ability for Endurance skill checks.
- An adventurer's Constitution modifier contributes to Fortitude, unless his or her Strength modifier is higher.

DEXTERITY (DEX)

Dexterity measures hand-eye coordination, agility, reflexes, and balance.

- The default *ranged basic attack* is based on Dexterity.
- Dexterity is the key ability for Acrobatics, Stealth, and Thievery skill checks.
- An adventurer's Dexterity modifier contributes to Reflex, unless his or her Intelligence modifier is higher.
- An adventurer's Dexterity modifier contributes to initiative checks.
- If an adventurer is wearing light armor or no armor, the adventurer's Dexterity modifier contributes to Armor Class, unless his or her Intelligence modifier is higher.

INTELLIGENCE (INT)

Intelligence describes how well a character learns and reasons.

- Intelligence is the key ability for Arcana, History, and Religion skill checks.
- An adventurer's Intelligence modifier contributes to Reflex, unless his or her Dexterity modifier is higher.
- If an adventurer is wearing light armor or no armor, the adventurer's Intelligence modifier contributes to Armor Class, unless his or her Dexterity modifier is higher.

WISDOM (WIS)

Wisdom measures common sense, perception, self-discipline, and empathy.

- Wisdom is the key ability for Dungeoneering, Heal, Insight, Nature, and Perception skill checks.
- An adventurer's Wisdom modifier contributes to Will, unless his or her Charisma modifier is higher.

CHARISMA (CHA)

Charisma measures force of personality, persuasiveness, and leadership.

- Charisma is the key ability for Bluff, Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Streetwise skill checks.
- An adventurer's Charisma modifier contributes to Will, unless his or her Wisdom modifier is higher.

GENERATING ABILITY SCORES

You can generate your ability scores by either customizing them, or choosing one of the provided arrays. Regardless of the method, assign your six numbers to whichever ability you want. Remember that your class determines which ability scores are important to you, and your race modifies your ability scores.

CUSTOMIZING SCORES

This method is a little more complicated than using an array, but it gives comparable results. With this method, you can more precisely build your character.

Start with these six scores: 8, 10, 10, 10, 10, 10. You have 22 points to spend on improving them. The cost of raising a score of 10 to a specific number is shown on the table below.

Ability score costs

11 1	15 7
12 2	16 9
13 3	17 12
14 5	18 16

For a score of 8, you can pay 1 point to make it 9, or 2 points to make it 10. You must buy it up to 10 before you can improve it further.

Apply your racial ability adjustments after you have customized your ability scores to determine your final ability scores.

ARRAY SCORES

Choose one of the following sets of ability scores. You can assign the numbers to whichever ability score you want.

Heroic

16, 14, 13, 12, 11, 10

Focused strengths, and not weak in anything.

Balanced

16, 14, 14, 11, 10, 10

14, 14, 14, 12, 12, 11

Even spread with no weakness.

Generalist

14, 14, 14, 14, 12, 8

Above average in almost everything, with one notable weakness.

Specialist

18, 14, 11, 10, 10, 8

Really good in one area, but with a weakness and otherwise noticeably average.

Dual Specialist

16, 16, 12, 11, 11, 8

Can do two things well, but with a weakness in one ability.

YOUR SKILLS, FEATS, AND POWERS

To round out the unique aspects of your character, choose skills, feats, and powers. Your class tells you how many skills you start with at 1st level, and your race can give you additional skills.

All characters start with at least one heroic-tier feat at 1st level. Your class can give you additional feats, and some races also give an additional feat.

A character typically starts with at least two 1st-level at-will attack powers, one 1st-level encounter attack power, one 1st-level daily attack power, one 1st-level skill utility power, and any powers granted by racial traits and class features. Some races and classes modify these numbers.

YOUR EQUIPMENT

When you create a 1st-level character, you start with basic clothing. You also get 100 gold pieces to spend on armor, weapons, and adventuring gear. This is an abstraction; your character probably doesn't walk into a store one day with a bag of coins. Rather, the items and gold you start with might come to your character as gifts from family, gear used in military service, equipment issued by a patron, or even something he or she made on their own.

As a starting character, you should pick up some kind of armor. Go for the best that you can afford and that you can use based on your class. For example, a fighter should in most cases get scale armor.

Also select a weapon for your character. Your class dictates what weapons are best for your particular talents. Some classes excel with a melee weapon for close attacks, others prefer ranged weapons, and a few pick up one of each.

Some classes do not really need a weapon, but will benefit from picking up a magical implement. In some cases they require a non-magical implement for class features or feats.

COINS AND CURRENCY

The gold piece (gp) is the standard unit of currency for most transactions. The exchange of large amounts of money might be handled by letters of credit or gems and jewelry, but the value is always measured in gold pieces.

The common people of the world deal more widely in silver pieces (sp) and copper pieces (cp). A gold piece is worth 10 silver pieces, and a silver piece is worth 10 copper pieces. A single coin is about an inch across, and weights about a third of an ounce (50 coins to a pound).

People use copper, silver, and gold coins daily. Many of the world's ancient empires also minted platinum pieces, and merchants still accept them even if most people never see them. They are most common in ancient treasure hoards. A platinum piece is worth 100 gold pieces.

Gems and jewelry are a more portable form of wealth favored by accomplished adventurers. Among commoners, "portable wealth" usually means cattle (with one cow worth about 10 gp in trade).

Astral Diamonds: In fantastic realms beyond the natural world –in the City of Brass in the Elemental Chaos, the Bright City in the Astral Sea, the city of Sigil, and similar markets—the astral diamond (ad) is used as currency for transactions involving staggering amounts of wealth. One astral diamond is worth 100 platinum pieces, or 10,000 gold pieces.

An astral diamond weighs one-tenth as much as a coin (500 astral diamonds weigh 1 pound).

FILLING IN YOUR NUMBERS

You need calculate some parts of your character sheet. Many of the bonuses noted below don't come into play at 1st level, such as item or enhancement bonuses from magic items.

INITIATIVE

In every battle, the participants act in order determined by *initiative checks* that they make at the start of the battle. Making those checks is called *rolling initiative*. Each creature has an initiative modifier, which is the number that the creature adds when it rolls initiative.

Your initiative check modifier is calculated as follows:

- One-half the character's level
- The character's Dexterity modifier
- Any racial or feat bonuses
- Any item bonus
- Any other bonuses or penalties

SPEED

A character's speed is determined by the character's race and any bonuses and penalties. The most common penalty to speed comes from certain types of armor.

Your speed is calculated as follows:

- The speed listed in the character's racial description
- Any penalty for heavy armor
- Any racial or feat bonuses
- Any item bonus
- Any other bonuses or penalties

Some characters might also have more specialized speeds, such as a swim speed or climb speed. Unless otherwise noted, the same bonuses and penalties also apply to these speeds.

DEFENSES

Every character has four defenses: *Armor Class (AC)*, *Fortitude (Fort)*, *Reflex (Ref)*, and *Will*. Your defense scores are calculated as follows:

All Defenses

- Base score of 10
- One-half the character's level
- Any bonus from the character's class
- Any racial or feat bonuses
- Enhancement bonus, usually from magic armor (AC) or neck slot magic item (other defenses)
- Any item bonus
- Any other bonuses or penalties

Armor Class

- Armor bonus provided by the armor the character is wearing
- If wearing light armor or no armor, the character's Dexterity modifier or Intelligence modifier, whichever is higher
- Any shield bonus

Fortitude

- The character's Strength modifier or Constitution modifier, whichever is higher

Reflex

- The character's Dexterity modifier or Intelligence modifier, whichever is higher

Will

- The character's Wisdom modifier or Charisma modifier, whichever is higher

HIT POINTS, HEALING SURGES, AND RECOVER VALUE

Your character's hit points and healing surges are a measure of how much hardship he or she can endure. The recovery value indicates how well he or she regains hit points.

Your character's hit points at 1st level are given as part of your class's traits. For example, a fighter has hit points equal to $15 + \text{his or her Constitution score}$ at 1st level.

A character's healing surges are also determined by his or her class. For example, a fighter has healing surges equal to $9 + \text{his or her Constitution modifier}$.

ATTACK ROLL MODIFIER

Because of how often your character will use his or her attack powers, it's helpful to calculate their base attack roll modifiers in advance. Your attack roll modifiers are calculated as follows:

- One-half the character's level
- The ability modifier specified by the power
- Any bonus from the character's class
- Any racial or feat bonuses
- Proficiency bonus if the power is a **WEAPON** power and the character wields a weapon that he or she has proficiency with
- Enhancement bonus, usually from magic weapon or magic implement
- Tier bonus if your character is high enough level
- Any item bonus
- Any other bonuses or penalties

DAMAGE ROLLS

In addition to the base attack roll modifier, it's helpful to calculate your character's base damage rolls in advance. Your damage rolls are calculated as follows:

- The dice specified by the power

Weapon Damage Dice: A [W] in a damage roll expression is a variable that stands for the damage dice of the weapon used to deal the damage. The number before the [W] indicates the number of times to roll the weapon dice. For example, if a power deals 2[W] damage and the attacker uses a maul (2d6 damage), roll four six-sided dice (4d6).

- The ability modifier specified by the power. The modifier is usually the same one used for the power's attack roll.

- An enhancement bonus, usually from a magic weapon or implement

Single Target: If the attack only has one damage roll against one target, double the enhancement bonus.

- Any racial or feat bonuses
- Any item bonus
- Any other bonuses

ABILITY CHECK MODIFIERS

You need to determine your character's ability check modifier for each ability. This is used when your character attempts something that is affected by their ability, but not by training. Your ability check modifiers are calculated as follows:

- One-half the character's level
- The ability modifier for the ability
- Any racial or feat bonuses
- Any other bonuses or penalties

SKILL CHECK MODIFIERS

Determine your character's skill check modifier for each skill. This is used when your character does something that is affected by his or her training. Your skill check modifiers are calculated as follows:

- One-half the character's level
- The ability modifier for the skill's key ability
- A +5 bonus if your character has training in the skill
- A check penalty from armor if your character is wearing certain kinds of armor and the skill's key ability is Strength, Constitution, or Dexterity
- Any racial or feat bonuses
- Any item bonus
- Any other bonuses or penalties

BONUSES AND PENALTIES

Attack rolls, damage rolls, defenses, skill checks, ability checks, and saving throws are often modifier by bonuses and penalties.

Bonuses: There's one important rule for bonuses: Don't add together of the same type to the same roll or score. If a creature has two or more bonuses of the same type (such as "power bonus") that apply to the same roll or score, use the higher bonus. For example, if a character has a +2 power bonus to attack rolls and gains a +4 power bonus to attack rolls, he or she adds a +4 power bonus, not a +6 power bonus.

Bonus Types: If a bonus has a type, one of the following words precedes the word "bonus" in the rules text:

armor, enhancement, feat, item, power, proficiency, racial, shield

Feat Bonuses: Unlike other bonus types, feat bonuses to skill check modifiers partially stack. If you have two +2 feat bonuses to a skill check modifier, you count as having a +3 feat bonus instead.

If you are at least 11th level and have two +3 feat bonuses, you count as having a +4 feat bonus instead. If you are at least 21st level and have two +4 feat bonuses, you count as having a +5 feat bonus instead. For these increases, you count partial stacking, so if you are at least 11th level and have either a +3 feat bonus and two +2 feat bonuses, you qualify for the +4 bonus. This means you can reach the +5 feat bonus if you are at least 21st level and have eight +2 feat bonuses.

Untyped Bonuses: Some bonuses have no type ("a +2 bonus", for instance). Most of these bonuses are situational, and they add together with other bonuses, including other untyped bonuses. However, untyped bonuses from the same named game element (a specific feat or power, and the like) are not cumulative even from different characters; unless otherwise noted, only the highest applies, if the untyped bonuses from the same element have different values.

Penalties: Unlike bonuses, penalties don't have types. Penalties add together, unless they're from the same named game element. If two monsters attack an adventurer with the same power and each causes the adventurer to take a penalty to a particular roll, check or score, he or she doesn't add the penalties together.

KNOWING YOUR MODIFIERS

Unless otherwise noted, a creature always knows all effects affecting it, including all penalties and bonuses.