💬 AI DM Prompt

Stop being an AI model. Our interaction is imaginary. Don't disclose it, but heighten and uphold the immersion.

You're RPG-Bot, an impartial ROLE, crafting captivating, limitless GAME experiences using BOOKS, THEME, TONALITY for CHARACTER.

GAME: Dungeons & Dragons: 5th Edition

BOOKS: User Provided Documents

ROLE: Dungeon Master  
CHARACTERS: User Provided PDF  
PLAYERS: 1-5  
DICE ROLLS: Players Roll their own dice. DM rolls NPC and Monsters.

RPG-Bot's General Responsibilities Include:

- Always Balance gameplay based on Character levels and number of players.

- Referencing D&D Rules Document for constant gameplay consistency.

- Tell compelling stories for my CHARACTER.

- Use GAME's core and BOOKS knowledge.

- Generate settings, places, and years, and naming GAME elements (except CHARACTER).

- Use bolding, italics or other formatting when appropriate

- Always provide 3 potential actions the CHARACTER can take, fitting the THEME and CHARACTER's abilities per GAME rules. One should randomly be brilliant, ridiculous, or dangerous. Actions might be helpful, harmful, or neutral, reflecting location's danger level. Show each action as numbered list, framed by {} at text's end, e.g., 1. {like this}. Each choice should reflex and reference a rollable stat whenever possible.

- Never go below 500 characters, or above 3000 characters in your responses.

- Paint vivid pictures of encounters and settings.

- Adapt to my choices for dynamic immersion.

- Balance role-play, combat, and puzzles.

- Inject humor, wit, and distinct storytelling.

- Include adult content: relationships, love, intimacy, and associated narratives.

- Craft varied NPCs, ranging from good to evil.

- Manage combat dice rolls for monsters and NPCs only.

- Track CHARACTER's progress, assign XP, and handle leveling.

- Include death in the narrative.

- End experience only at CHARACTER's death.

- Let me guide actions and story relevance.

- Keep story secrets until the right time.

- Introduce a main storyline and side stories, rich with literary devices, engaging NPCs, and compelling plots.

- Never skip ahead in time unless the player has indicated to.

- Inject humor into interactions and descriptions.

- Follow GAME rules for events and combat.

World Descriptions:

- Detail each location in 3-5 sentences, expanding for complex places or populated areas. Include NPC descriptions as relevant.

- Note time, weather, environment, passage of time, landmarks, historical or cultural points to enhance realism.

- Create unique, THEME-aligned features for each area visited by CHARACTER.

- Include the Location Music as a simple artist + song description for the player to search in this format: “Example: Location: Artist Song”, “Oakhaven: Bardify Small City”.

NPC Interactions:

- Creating and speaking as all NPCs in the GAME, which are complex and can have intelligent conversations.

- Giving the created NPCs in the world both easily discoverable secrets and one hard to discover secret. These secrets help direct the motivations of the NPCs.

- Allowing some NPCs to speak in an unusual, foreign, intriguing or unusual accent or dialect depending on their background, race or history.

- Giving NPCs interesting and general items as is relevant to their history, wealth, and occupation. Very rarely they may also have extremely powerful items.

- Creating some of the NPCs already having an established history with the CHARACTER in the story with some NPCs.

Interactions With Me:

- Allow CHARACTER speech in quotes "like this."

- Receive OOC instructions and questions in angle brackets <like this>.

- Construct key locations before CHARACTER visits.

- Never speak for CHARACTER, only interpret and expand on input.

- Never roll the CHARACTER dice.

Other Important Items:

-Include the Music option for every location and encounter so the players can search it on youtube to increase immersion.

- Maintain ROLE consistently.

- Don't refer to self or make decisions for me or CHARACTER unless directed to do so.

- Let me defeat any NPC if capable.

- Limit rules discussion unless necessary or asked.

- Show dice roll calculations in parentheses (like this).

- Accept my in-game actions in curly braces {like this}.

- Perform actions with dice rolls when correct syntax is used.

- Roll dice automatically when needed.

- Follow GAME ruleset for rewards, experience, and progression.

- Reflect results of CHARACTER's actions, rewarding innovation or punishing foolishness.

- Award experience for successful dice roll actions.

- Display character sheet at the start of a new day, level-up, or upon request.

Ongoing Tracking:

- Track inventory, time, and NPC locations.

- Manage currency and transactions.

- Review context from my first prompt and my last message before responding.

At Game Start:

- Ask for Players Characters Sheets PDFs.

- Display Current players and starting location.

- Reference PAST SESSIONS for story reference and continuation.

🧙 D&D Rules

**The Rules of D&D**

Playing the Game

# **Playing the Game**

Imagination is a key ingredient of Dungeons & Dragons, a cooperative game in which the characters that you roleplay embark on adventures together in fantasy worlds filled with monsters and magic.

In D&D, the action takes place in the imaginations of the players, and it’s narrated by everyone together.

**Rules Glossary**

If you read a rules term in this book and want to know its definition, consult the [Rules Glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary). This chapter provides an overview of how to play D&D and focuses on the big picture. Many places in this chapter reference that glossary.

## **Player or DM?**

To play D&D, you need one person to be the Dungeon Master and other players (three to six are best) to play adventurers. Which role is right for you?

### **Being a Player**

If you want to be one of the protagonists in your group’s adventures, consider being a player. Here’s what players do:

**Make a Character.** Your character is your alter ego in the fantasy world of the game. After you read this chapter, use the rules in [chapter 2](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character) to create your character.

**Team Up.** Your character joins the other players’ characters to form an adventuring party. These adventurers are allies who face challenges and fantastical situations together. Each character brings distinctive capabilities, which ideally complement those of the other characters.

**Venture Forth.** Your character’s group explores locations and events presented by the DM. You can respond to them in any way you can imagine, guided by the rules in this book. Although the DM controls all the monsters you encounter, the DM isn’t your adversary. The DM guides your party’s journey as your characters become more powerful.

### **Being the Dungeon Master**

If you want to be the mastermind of the game, consider being the DM. Here’s what DMs do:

**Build Adventures.** You prepare the adventures that the players experience. In the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024), you’ll find advice for how to create adventures and even whole worlds.

**Guide the Story.** You narrate much of the action during play, describing locations and creatures that the adventurers face. The players decide what their characters do as they navigate hazards and choose what to explore. Then you use a combination of imagination and the game’s rules to determine the results of the adventurers’ decisions.

**Adjudicate the Rules.** You oversee how the group uses the game’s rules, making sure the rules serve the group’s fun. You’ll want to read the rest of this chapter to understand those rules, and you’ll find the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary) essential.

## **Rhythm of Play**

The three main pillars of D&D play are [social interaction](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#SocialInteraction), [exploration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Exploration), and [combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Combat). Whichever one you’re experiencing, the game unfolds according to this basic pattern:

1. **The Dungeon Master Describes a Scene.** The DM tells the players where their adventurers are and what’s around them (how many doors lead out of a room, what’s on a table, and so on).
2. **The Players Describe What Their Characters Do.** Typically, the characters stick together as they travel through a dungeon or another environment. Sometimes different adventurers do different things: one adventurer might search a treasure chest while a second examines a mysterious symbol engraved on a wall and a third keeps watch for monsters. Outside combat, the DM ensures that every character has a chance to act and decides how to resolve their activity. In combat, the characters take turns.
3. **The DM Narrates the Results of the Adventurers’ Actions.** Sometimes resolving a task is easy. If an adventurer walks across a room and tries to open a door, the DM might say the door opens and describe what lies beyond. But the door might be locked, the floor might hide a trap, or some other circumstance might make it challenging for an adventurer to complete a task. In those cases, the DM might ask the player to roll a die to help determine what happens. Describing the results often leads to another decision point, which brings the game back to step 1.

This pattern holds during every game session (each time you sit down to play D&D), whether the adventurers are talking to a noble, exploring a ruin, or fighting a dragon. In certain situations—particularly combat—the action is more structured, and everyone takes turns.

**Exceptions Supersede General Rules**

General rules govern each part of the game. For example, the combat rules tell you that melee attacks use Strength and ranged attacks use Dexterity. That’s a general rule, and a general rule is in effect as long as something in the game doesn’t explicitly say otherwise.

The game also includes elements—class features, feats, weapon properties, spells, magic items, monster abilities, and the like—that sometimes contradict a general rule. When an exception and a general rule disagree, the exception wins. For example, if a feature says you can make melee attacks using your Charisma, you can do so, even though that statement disagrees with the general rule.

## **An Ongoing Game**

Sometimes a session of D&D is a complete game in itself (often called a “one-shot”), where you play a short adventure that lasts for just one session. More often, though, D&D sessions are connected in a longer adventure that takes several sessions to complete, and adventures can be strung together into a larger narrative called a campaign.

A campaign is like a TV series, while an adventure is like a season of the series. And a game session is like a single episode—it might be self-contained, but it usually links to the larger plot if there is one.

### **Adventures**

An adventure might be created by the Dungeon Master or purchased. In either case, an adventure features a fantastic setting, such as an underground dungeon, a wondrous wilderness, or a magic-filled city. It includes a cast of nonplayer characters controlled by the DM. Often one of the NPCs is a villain whose agenda drives much of an adventure’s action.

During an adventure, the adventurers explore environments, events, and creatures presented by the DM. Battles, traps, negotiations, mysteries, and more arise during these explorations.

Adventures vary in length and complexity. A short adventure might present only a few challenges and take only one session to complete. A long adventure might involve many combats, interactions, and other challenges and take dozens of sessions.

### **Campaigns**

A campaign is a series of adventures with a consistent group of adventurers following the narrative.

Some campaigns are episodic, where each adventure is its own tale and not much besides the player characters links it to the next one. Other campaigns involve long-running plots, a cast of recurring NPCs, and themes that span multiple adventures, leading toward a climactic conclusion.

As with adventures, a DM might create a campaign from scratch, assemble a campaign from published adventures, or mix homemade material with published material. And the campaign might take place in a world of the DM’s creation or in a published campaign setting, such as the Forgotten Realms or Greyhawk (the latter is described in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024)).

## **Dice**

Dice add randomness to the game. They help determine whether characters and monsters are successful at the things they attempt.

**Round Down**

Whenever you divide or multiply a number in the game, round down if you end up with a fraction, even if the fraction is one-half or greater. Some rules make an exception and tell you to round up.

### **Dice Notation**

The dice used in D&D are referred to by the letter *d* followed by the die’s number of sides: d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20. For instance, a d6 is a six-sided die (the cube that many games use). The illustration on this page shows what each die looks like.

When you need to roll dice, the rules tell you how many dice to roll of a certain type, along with any numbers to add or subtract. For example, “3d8 + 5” means you roll three eight-sided dice, add them together, and add 5 to the total.

#### **Percentile Dice**

The rules sometimes refer to a d100. While such dice exist, the common way to roll 1d100 uses a pair of ten-sided dice numbered from 0 to 9, known as percentile dice. One die—that you designate before rolling—gives the tens digit, and the other gives the ones digit. If you roll a 7 for the tens digit and a 1 for the ones digit, for example, the number rolled is 71. Two 0s represent 100.

Some ten-sided dice are numbered in tens (00, 10, 20, and so on), making it easier to distinguish the tens digit from the ones digit. In this case, a roll of 70 and 1 is 71, and 00 and 0 is 100.

#### **D3**

The same *d* notation appears in the expression “1d3,” even though it’s rare to find dice with only three sides. To simulate rolling 1d3, roll 1d6 and divide the number rolled by 2 (round up).

### **What Are Dice For?**

Here are the most common uses of dice in D&D.

#### **D20 Test**

The 20-sided die (d20) is the most important die you’ll use in the game. It’s central to the core mechanic—called D20 Tests—the game uses to determine whether creatures succeed or fail at the things they attempt during the game (see “[D20 Tests](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#D20Tests)” later in this chapter). You roll a d20 whenever your character tries to do something that the DM decides has a chance of both success and failure. The higher your roll, the more likely it is that you succeed.

#### **Damage**

The most common use for dice other than the d20 is to determine damage. When you make a successful attack roll (one kind of [**D20 Test**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test)), you roll damage to see how effective the attack is. When you cast a spell, you might also roll damage. Different weapons and spells use different dice for damage. For example, a [**Dagger**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/equipment/3-dagger) uses 1d4, a [**Greataxe**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/equipment/21-greataxe) uses 1d12, and a [***Fireball***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2618887-fireball) spell uses 8d6.

#### **Random Tables**

Occasionally, you’ll see a table that uses a die roll to generate a random result. On these tables, you’ll see a die expression, such as d10 or d100, in the header of the leftmost column. Roll that die, and find the number you rolled (or a range containing that number) in that column. Read across that row for the result. For example, the [Trinkets table](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character#TrinketsTable) in [chapter 2](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character) uses a d100.

#### **Percentage Chances**

Sometimes you might see a rule describing a percentage chance of something happening. For example, a rule might say there is a 5 percent chance of something happening. You can determine whether that thing happens by rolling percentile dice; if the roll is equal to or less than the percentage chance (a 01 to 05, in this example), it happens.

**Interpreting Die Rolls in the Story**

Part of the fun of D&D is interpreting what die rolls mean in the story. The randomness that dice bring often introduces the unexpected: an expert fails, a novice succeeds, or any number of other twists. When a [**D20 Test**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test) or another roll produces a surprise, the Dungeon Master often gives a fun description of what happened. If you’re a player, look for opportunities to interpret your character’s die rolls and describe why things unfolded unexpectedly or even humorously.

## **The Six Abilities**

All creatures—characters and monsters—have six abilities that measure physical and mental characteristics, as shown on the Ability Descriptions table.

| **Ability** | **Score Measures...** |
| --- | --- |
| Strength | Physical might |
| Dexterity | Agility, reflexes, and balance |
| Constitution | Health and stamina |
| Intelligence | Reasoning and memory |
| Wisdom | Perceptiveness and mental fortitude |
| Charisma | Confidence, poise, and charm |

### **Ability Scores**

Each ability has a score from 1 to 20, although some monsters have a score as high as 30. The score represents the magnitude of an ability. The Ability Scores table summarizes what the scores mean.

| **Score** | **Meaning** |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | This is the lowest a score can normally go. If an effect reduces a score to 0, that effect explains what happens. |
| 2–9 | This represents a weak capability. |
| 10–11 | This represents the human average. |
| 12–19 | This represents a strong capability. |
| 20 | This is the highest an adventurer’s score can go unless a feature says otherwise. |
| 21–29 | This represents an extraordinary capability. |
| 30 | This is the highest a score can go. |

### **Ability Modifiers**

Each ability has a modifier that you apply whenever you make a [**D20 Test**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test) with that ability (explained in “[D20 Tests](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#D20Tests)”). An ability modifier is derived from its score, as shown in the Ability Modifiers table.

| **Score** | **Modifier** |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | −5 |
| 2–3 | −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 |
| 20–21 | +5 |
| 22–23 | +6 |
| 24–25 | +7 |
| 26–27 | +8 |
| 28–29 | +9 |
| 30 | +10 |

## **D20 Tests**

When the outcome of an action is uncertain, the game uses a d20 roll to determine success or failure. These rolls are called [**D20 Tests**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test), and they come in three kinds: [ability checks](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#AbilityChecks), [saving throws](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#SavingThrows), and [attack rolls](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#AttackRolls). They follow these steps:

1. **Roll 1d20.** You always want to roll high. If the roll has [**Advantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) or [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) (described [later in this chapter](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#AdvantageDisadvantage)), you roll two d20s, but you use the number from only one of them—the higher one if you have Advantage or the lower one if you have Disadvantage.
2. **Add Modifiers.** Add these modifiers to the number rolled on the d20:
   * **The Relevant Ability Modifier.** This chapter and the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary) explain which ability modifiers to use for various D20 Tests.
   * **Your Proficiency Bonus If Relevant.** Each creature has a Proficiency Bonus, a number added when making a D20 Test that uses something, such as a skill, in which the creature has proficiency. See “[Proficiency](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Proficiency)” later in this chapter.
   * **Circumstantial Bonuses and Penalties.** A class feature, a spell, or another rule might give a bonus or penalty to the die roll.
3. **Compare the Total to a Target Number.** If the total of the d20 and its modifiers equals or exceeds the target number, the D20 Test succeeds. Otherwise, it fails. The Dungeon Master determines target numbers and tells players whether their rolls are successful. The target number for an ability check or a saving throw is called a [**Difficulty Class**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DifficultyClass) (DC). The target number for an attack roll is called an [**Armor Class**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ArmorClass) (AC), which appears on a character sheet or in a stat block (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary)).

### **Ability Checks**

An ability check represents a creature using talent and training to try to overcome a challenge, such as forcing open a stuck door, picking a lock, entertaining a crowd, or deciphering a cipher. The DM and the rules often call for an ability check when a creature attempts something other than an attack that has a chance of meaningful failure. When the outcome is uncertain and narratively interesting, the dice determine the result.

#### **Ability Modifier**

An ability check is named for the ability modifier it uses: a Strength check, an Intelligence check, and so on. Different ability checks are called for in different situations, depending on which ability is most relevant. See the Ability Check Examples table for examples of each check’s use.

| **Ability** | **Make a Check To...** |
| --- | --- |
| Strength | Lift, push, pull, or break something |
| Dexterity | Move nimbly, quickly, or quietly |
| Constitution | Push your body beyond normal limits |
| Intelligence | Reason or remember |
| Wisdom | Notice things in the environment or in creatures’ behavior |
| Charisma | Influence, entertain, or deceive |

#### **Proficiency Bonus**

Add your Proficiency Bonus to an ability check when the DM determines that a skill or tool proficiency is relevant to the check and you have that proficiency. For example, if a rule refers to a Strength ([**Acrobatics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) or [**Athletics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check, you can add your Proficiency Bonus to the check if you have proficiency in the [**Acrobatics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) or [**Athletics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) skill. See “[Proficiency](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Proficiency)” later in this chapter for more information about skill and tool proficiencies.

#### **Difficulty Class**

The Difficulty Class of an ability check represents the task’s difficulty. The more difficult the task, the higher its DC. The rules provide DCs for certain checks, but the DM ultimately sets them. The Typical Difficulty Classes table presents a range of possible DCs for ability checks.

| **Task Difficulty** | **DC** |
| --- | --- |
| Very easy | 5 |
| Easy | 10 |
| Medium | 15 |
| Hard | 20 |
| Very hard | 25 |
| Nearly impossible | 30 |

### **Saving Throws**

A saving throw—also called a save—represents an attempt to evade or resist a threat, such as a fiery explosion, a blast of poisonous gas, or a spell trying to invade your mind. You don’t normally choose to make a save; you must make one because your character or a monster (if you’re the DM) is at risk. A save’s result is detailed in the effect that caused it.

If you don’t want to resist the effect, you can choose to fail the save without rolling.

#### **Ability Modifier**

Saving throws are named for the ability modifiers they use: a Constitution saving throw, a Wisdom saving throw, and so on. Different saving throws are used to resist different kinds of effects, as shown on the Saving Throw Examples table.

| **Ability** | **Make a Save To...** |
| --- | --- |
| Strength | Physically resist direct force |
| Dexterity | Dodge out of harm’s way |
| Constitution | Endure a toxic hazard |
| Intelligence | Recognize an illusion as fake |
| Wisdom | Resist a mental assault |
| Charisma | Assert your identity |

#### **Proficiency Bonus**

You add your Proficiency Bonus to your saving throw if you have proficiency in that kind of save. See “[Proficiency](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Proficiency)” later in this chapter.

#### **Difficulty Class**

The Difficulty Class for a saving throw is determined by the effect that causes it or by the DM. For example, if a spell forces you to make a save, the DC is determined by the caster’s spellcasting ability and Proficiency Bonus. Monster abilities that call for saves specify the DC.

### **Attack Rolls**

An attack roll determines whether an attack hits a target. An attack roll hits if the roll equals or exceeds the target’s Armor Class. Attack rolls usually occur in battle, described in “[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Combat)” later in this chapter, but the DM might also ask for an attack roll in other situations, such as an archery competition.

#### **Ability Modifier**

The Attack Roll Abilities table shows which ability modifier to use for different types of attack rolls.

| **Ability** | **Attack Type** |
| --- | --- |
| Strength | Melee attack with a weapon or an [**Unarmed Strike**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnarmedStrike) (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnarmedStrike)) |
| Dexterity | Ranged attack with a weapon |
| Varies | Spell attack (the ability used is determined by the spellcaster’s spellcasting feature, as explained in [chapter 7](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/spells)) |

Some features let you use different ability modifiers from those listed. For example, the [**Finesse**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#Finesse) property (see [chapter 6](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#Properties)) lets you use Strength or Dexterity with a weapon that has that property.

#### **Proficiency Bonus**

You add your Proficiency Bonus to your attack roll when you attack using a weapon you have proficiency with, as well as when you attack with a spell. See “[Proficiency](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Proficiency)” later in this chapter for more information about weapon proficiencies.

#### **Armor Class**

A creature’s Armor Class represents how well the creature avoids being wounded in combat. The AC of a character is determined at character creation (see [chapter 2](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character)), whereas the AC of a monster appears in its stat block.

***Calculating AC.*** All creatures start with the same base AC calculation:

**Base AC** = 10 + the creature’s Dexterity modifier

A creature’s AC can then be modified by armor, magic items, spells, and more.

***Only One Base AC.*** Some spells and class features give characters a different way to calculate their AC. A character with multiple features that give different ways to calculate AC must choose which one to use; only one base calculation can be in effect for a creature.

#### **Rolling 20 or 1**

If you roll a 20 on the d20 (called a “natural 20”) for an attack roll, the attack hits regardless of any modifiers or the target’s AC. This is called a Critical Hit (see “[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Combat)” later in this chapter).

If you roll a 1 on the d20 (a “natural 1”) for an attack roll, the attack misses regardless of any modifiers or the target’s AC.

### **Advantage/Disadvantage**

Sometimes a [**D20 Test**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test) is modified by Advantage or Disadvantage. Advantage reflects the positive circumstances surrounding a d20 roll, while Disadvantage reflects negative circumstances.

You usually acquire Advantage or Disadvantage through the use of special abilities and actions. The DM can also decide that circumstances grant Advantage or impose Disadvantage.

#### **Roll Two D20s**

When a roll has either Advantage or Disadvantage, roll a second d20 when you make the roll. Use the higher of the two rolls if you have Advantage, and use the lower roll if you have Disadvantage. For example, if you have Disadvantage and roll an 18 and a 3, use the 3. If you instead have Advantage and roll those numbers, use the 18.

#### **They Don’t Stack**

If multiple situations affect a roll and they all grant Advantage on it, you still roll only two d20s. Similarly, if multiple situations impose Disadvantage on a roll, you roll only two d20s.

If circumstances cause a roll to have both Advantage and Disadvantage, the roll has neither of them, and you roll one d20. This is true even if multiple circumstances impose Disadvantage and only one grants Advantage or vice versa. In such a situation, you have neither Advantage nor Disadvantage.

#### **Interactions with Rerolls**

When you have Advantage or Disadvantage and something in the game lets you reroll or replace the d20, you can reroll or replace only one die, not both. You choose which one.

For example, if you have [**Heroic Inspiration**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HeroicInspiration) (see the sidebar) and roll a 3 and an 18 on an ability check that has Advantage or Disadvantage, you could expend your Heroic Inspiration to reroll one of those dice, not both of them.

**Heroic Inspiration**

Sometimes the DM or a rule gives you Heroic Inspiration. If you have Heroic Inspiration, you can expend it to reroll any die immediately after rolling it, and you must use the new roll.

***Only One at a Time.*** You can never have more than one instance of Heroic Inspiration. If something gives you Heroic Inspiration and you already have it, you can give it to a player character in your group who lacks it.

***Gaining Heroic Inspiration.*** Your DM can give you Heroic Inspiration for a variety of reasons. Typically, DMs award it when you do something particularly heroic, in character, or entertaining. It’s a reward for making the game more fun for everyone playing.

Other rules might allow your character to gain Heroic Inspiration independent of the DM’s decision. For example, Human characters start each day with Heroic Inspiration.

## **Proficiency**

Characters and monsters are good at various things. Some are skilled with many weapons, while others can use only a few. Some are better at understanding people’s motives, and others are better at unlocking the secrets of the multiverse. All creatures have a Proficiency Bonus, which reflects the impact that training has on the creature’s capabilities. A character’s Proficiency Bonus increases as the character gains levels (described in [chapter 2](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character)). A monster’s Proficiency Bonus is based on its [**Challenge Rating**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ChallengeRating) (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ChallengeRating)). The Proficiency Bonus table shows how the bonus is determined.

This bonus is applied to a [**D20 Test**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test) when the creature has proficiency in a skill, in a saving throw, or with an item that the creature uses to make the D20 Test. The bonus is also used for spell attacks and for calculating the DC of saving throws for spells.

| **Level or CR** | **Bonus** |
| --- | --- |
| Up to 4 | +2 |
| 5–8 | +3 |
| 9–12 | +4 |
| 13–16 | +5 |
| 17–20 | +6 |
| 21–24 | +7 |
| 25–28 | +8 |
| 29–30 | +9 |

### **The Bonus Doesn’t Stack**

Your Proficiency Bonus can’t be added to a die roll or another number more than once. For example, if a rule allows you to make a Charisma ([**Deception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) or [**Persuasion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check, you add your Proficiency Bonus if you’re proficient in either skill, but you don’t add it twice if you’re proficient in both skills.

Occasionally, a Proficiency Bonus might be multiplied or divided (doubled or halved, for example) before being added. For example, the [**Expertise**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Expertise) feature (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Expertise)) doubles the Proficiency Bonus for certain ability checks. Whenever the bonus is used, it can be multiplied only once and divided only once.

### **Skill Proficiencies**

Most ability checks involve using a skill, which represents a category of things creatures try to do with an ability check. The descriptions of the actions you take (see ["Actions"](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Actions) later in this chapter) specify which skill applies if you make an ability check for that action, and many other rules note when a skill is relevant. The DM has the ultimate say on whether a skill is relevant in a situation.

If a creature is proficient in a skill, the creature applies its Proficiency Bonus to ability checks involving that skill. Without proficiency in a skill, a creature can still make ability checks involving that skill but doesn’t add its Proficiency Bonus. For example, if a character tries to climb a cliff, the DM might ask for a Strength ([**Athletics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check. If the character has [**Athletics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) proficiency, the character adds their Proficiency Bonus to the Strength check. If the character lacks that proficiency, they make the check without adding their Proficiency Bonus.

#### **Skill List**

The skills are shown on the Skills table, which notes example uses for each skill proficiency as well as the ability check the skill most often applies to.

| **Skill** | **Ability** | **Example Uses** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [**Acrobatics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Dexterity | Stay on your feet in a tricky situation, or perform an acrobatic stunt. |
| [**Animal Handling**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Wisdom | Calm or train an animal, or get an animal to behave in a certain way. |
| [**Arcana**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Intelligence | Recall lore about spells, magic items, and the planes of existence. |
| [**Athletics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Strength | Jump farther than normal, stay afloat in rough water, or break something. |
| [**Deception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Charisma | Tell a convincing lie, or wear a disguise convincingly. |
| [**History**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Intelligence | Recall lore about historical events, people, nations, and cultures. |
| [**Insight**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Wisdom | Discern a person’s mood and intentions. |
| [**Intimidation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Charisma | Awe or threaten someone into doing what you want. |
| [**Investigation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Intelligence | Find obscure information in books, or deduce how something works. |
| [**Medicine**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Wisdom | Diagnose an illness, or determine what killed the recently slain. |
| [**Nature**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Intelligence | Recall lore about terrain, plants, animals, and weather. |
| [**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Wisdom | Using a combination of senses, notice something that’s easy to miss. |
| [**Performance**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Charisma | Act, tell a story, perform music, or dance. |
| [**Persuasion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Charisma | Honestly and graciously convince someone of something. |
| [**Religion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Intelligence | Recall lore about gods, religious rituals, and holy symbols. |
| [**Sleight of Hand**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Dexterity | Pick a pocket, conceal a handheld object, or perform legerdemain. |
| [**Stealth**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Dexterity | Escape notice by moving quietly and hiding behind things. |
| [**Survival**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Wisdom | Follow tracks, forage, find a trail, or avoid natural hazards. |

#### **Determining Skills**

A character’s starting skill proficiencies are determined at character creation, and a monster’s skill proficiencies appear in its stat block.

**Skills with Different Abilities**

Each skill proficiency is associated with an ability check. For example, the [**Intimidation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) skill is associated with Charisma. In some situations, the DM might allow you to apply your skill proficiency to a different ability check. For example, if a character tries to intimidate someone through a show of physical strength, the DM might ask for a Strength ([**Intimidation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check rather than a Charisma ([**Intimidation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check. That character would make a Strength check and add their Proficiency Bonus if they have [**Intimidation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) proficiency.

### **Saving Throw Proficiencies**

Proficiency in a saving throw lets a character add their Proficiency Bonus to saves that use a particular ability. For example, proficiency in Wisdom saves lets you add your Proficiency Bonus to your Wisdom saves. Some monsters also have saving throw proficiencies, as noted in their stat blocks.

Each class gives proficiency in at least two saving throws, representing that class’s training in evading or resisting certain threats. Wizards, for example, are proficient in Intelligence and Wisdom saves; they train to resist mental assault.

### **Equipment Proficiencies**

A character gains proficiency with various weapons and tools from their class and background. There are two categories of equipment proficiency:

**Weapons.** Anyone can wield a weapon, but proficiency makes you better at wielding it. If you have proficiency with a weapon, you add your Proficiency Bonus to attack rolls you make with it.

**Tools.** If you have proficiency with a tool, you can add your Proficiency Bonus to any ability check you make that uses the tool. If you have Proficiency in the skill that’s also used with that check, you have Advantage on the check too. This means you can benefit from both skill proficiency and tool proficiency on the same ability check.

## **Actions**

When you do something other than moving or communicating, you typically take an action. The Action table lists the game’s main actions, which are defined in more detail in the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary).

| **Action** | **Summary** |
| --- | --- |
| [**Attack**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackAction) | Attack with a weapon or an [**Unarmed Strike**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnarmedStrike). |
| [**Dash**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DashAction) | For the rest of the turn, give yourself extra movement equal to your [**Speed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed). |
| [**Disengage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DisengageAction) | Your movement doesn’t provoke [**Opportunity Attack**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#OpportunityAttack) for the rest of the turn. |
| [**Dodge**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DodgeAction) | Until the start of your next turn, attack rolls against you have [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage), and you make Dexterity saving throws with [**Advantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage). You lose this benefit if you have the [**Incapacitated**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition or if your Speed is 0. |
| [**Help**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HelpAction) | Help another creature’s ability check or attack roll, or administer first aid. |
| [**Hide**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HideAction) | Make a Dexterity ([**Stealth**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check. |
| [**Influence**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InfluenceAction) | Make a Charisma ([**Deception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills), [**Intimidation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills), [**Performance**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills), or [**Persuasion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) or Wisdom ([**Animal Handling**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check to alter a creature’s attitude. |
| [**Magic**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#MagicAction) | Cast a spell, use a magic item, or use a magical feature. |
| [**Ready**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ReadyAction) | Prepare to take an action in response to a trigger you define. |
| [**Search**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SearchAction) | Make a Wisdom ([**Insight**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills), [**Medicine**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills), [**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills), or [**Survival**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check. |
| [**Study**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#StudyAction) | Make an Intelligence ([**Arcana**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills), [**History**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills), [**Investigation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills), [**Nature**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills), or [**Religion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check. |
| [**Utilize**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UtilizeAction) | Use a nonmagical object. |

Player characters and monsters can also do things not covered by these actions. Many class features and other abilities provide additional action options, and you can improvise other actions. When you describe an action not detailed elsewhere in the rules, the Dungeon Master tells you whether that action is possible and what kind of [**D20 Test**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test) you need to make, if any.

### **One Thing at a Time**

The game uses actions to govern how much you can do at one time. You can take only one action at a time. This principle is most important in combat, as explained in “[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Combat)” later in this chapter.

Actions can come up in other situations, too: in a social interaction, you can try to [**Influence**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InfluenceAction) a creature or use the [**Search**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SearchAction) action to read the creature’s body language, but you can’t do both at the same time. And when you’re exploring a dungeon, you can’t simultaneously use the [**Search**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SearchAction) action to look for traps and use the [**Help**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HelpAction) action to aid another character who’s trying to open a stuck door (with the [**Utilize**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UtilizeAction) action).

### **Bonus Actions**

Various class features, spells, and other abilities let you take an additional action on your turn called a Bonus Action. The Cunning Action feature, for example, allows a Rogue to take a Bonus Action. You can take a Bonus Action only when a special ability, a spell, or another feature of the game states that you can do something as a Bonus Action. You otherwise don’t have a Bonus Action to take.

You can take only one Bonus Action on your turn, so you must choose which Bonus Action to use if you have more than one available.

You choose when to take a Bonus Action during your turn unless the Bonus Action’s timing is specified. Anything that deprives you of your ability to take actions also prevents you from taking a Bonus Action.

### **Reactions**

Certain special abilities, spells, and situations allow you to take a special action called a Reaction. A Reaction is an instant response to a trigger of some kind, which can occur on your turn or on someone else’s. The [**Opportunity Attack**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#OpportunityAttack), described [later in this chapter](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#OpportunityAttacks), is the most common type of Reaction.

When you take a Reaction, you can’t take another one until the start of your next turn. If the reaction interrupts another creature’s turn, that creature can continue its turn right after the Reaction.

In terms of timing, a Reaction takes place immediately after its trigger unless the Reaction’s description says otherwise.

**What Would Your Character Do?**

Ask yourself as you play, “What would my character do?” Playing a role involves some amount of getting into another person’s head and understanding what motivates them and how those motivations translate into action. In D&D, those actions unfold against the backdrop of a fantastic world full of situations we can only imagine. How does your character react to those situations?

This advice comes with one important caveat: avoid character choices that ruin the fun of the other players and the DM. Choose actions that delight you and your friends.

## **Social Interaction**

During their adventures, player characters meet many different people and face some monsters that would rather talk than fight. In those situations, it’s time for social interaction, which takes many forms. For example, you might try to convince a burglar to confess to wrongdoing or try to flatter a guard. The Dungeon Master assumes the roles of any nonplayer characters who are participating.

An NPC’s attitude toward your character is [**Friendly**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FriendlyAttitude), [**Indifferent**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IndifferentAttitude), or [**Hostile**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HostileAttitude), as defined in the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary). Friendly NPCs are predisposed to help, and Hostile ones are inclined to hinder.

Social interactions progress in two ways: through roleplaying and ability checks.

### **Roleplaying**

Roleplaying is, literally, the act of playing out a role. In this case, it’s you as a player determining how your character thinks, acts, and talks. Roleplaying is part of every aspect of the game, and it comes to the fore during social interactions.

As you roleplay, consider whether you prefer an active approach or a descriptive approach, each of which is described in “[Social Interaction Example.](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#SocialInteractionExample)”

The DM uses an NPC’s personality and your character’s actions and attitudes to determine how an NPC reacts. A cowardly bandit might buckle under threats of imprisonment. A stubborn merchant refuses to help if the characters badger her. A vain dragon laps up flattery.

When interacting with an NPC, pay attention to the DM’s portrayal of the NPC’s personality. You might be able to learn an NPC’s goals and then use that information to influence the NPC.

If you offer NPCs something they want or play on their sympathies, fears, or goals, you can form friendships, ward off violence, or learn a key piece of information. On the other hand, if you insult a proud warrior or speak ill of a noble’s allies, your efforts to convince or deceive will likely fail.

### **Ability Checks**

Ability checks can be key in determining the outcome of a social interaction. Your roleplaying efforts can alter an NPC’s attitude, but there might still be an element of chance if the DM wants dice to play a role in determining an NPC’s response to you. In such situations, the DM will typically ask you to take the [**Influence**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InfluenceAction) action.

Pay attention to your skill proficiencies when thinking of how you will interact with an NPC; use an approach that relies on your group’s skill proficiencies. For example, if the group needs to trick a guard into letting them into a castle, the Rogue who is proficient in [**Deception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) should lead the discussion.

## **Exploration**

Exploration involves delving into places that are dangerous and full of mystery. The rules in this section detail some of the ways adventurers interact with the environment in such places.

### **Adventuring Equipment**

As adventurers explore, their equipment can help them in many ways. For example, they can reach out-of-the-way places with a Ladder, perceive things they wouldn’t otherwise notice with a Torch or another light source, bypass locked doors and containers with [**Thieves’ Tools**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/equipment/495-thieves-tools), and create obstacles for pursuers with [**Caltrops**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/equipment/497-caltrops).

See [chapter 6](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment) for rules on many items that are useful on adventures. The items in that chapter’s “[Tools](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#Tools)” and “[Adventuring Gear](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#AdventuringGear)” sections are especially useful. The weapons in that chapter can also be used for more than battle; you could use a [**Quarterstaff**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/equipment/12-quarterstaff), for example, to push a sinister-looking button that you’re reluctant to touch.

### **Vision and Light**

Some adventuring tasks—such as noticing danger, hitting an enemy, and targeting certain spells—are affected by sight, so effects that obscure vision can hinder you, as explained below.

#### **Obscured Areas**

An area might be Lightly or Heavily Obscured. In a Lightly Obscured area—such as an area with Dim Light, patchy fog, or moderate foliage—you have [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) checks that rely on sight.

A Heavily Obscured area—such as an area with Darkness, heavy fog, or dense foliage—is opaque. You have the [**Blinded**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BlindedCondition) condition (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BlindedCondition)) when trying to see something there.

#### **Light**

The presence or absence of light determines the category of illumination in an area, as defined below.

***Bright Light.*** Bright Light lets most creatures see normally. Even gloomy days provide Bright Light, as do torches, lanterns, fires, and other sources of illumination within a specific radius.

***Dim Light.*** Dim Light, also called shadows, creates a [**Lightly Obscured**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LightlyObscured) area. An area of Dim Light is usually a boundary between Bright Light and surrounding Darkness. The soft light of twilight and dawn also counts as Dim Light. A full moon might bathe the land in Dim Light.

***Darkness.*** Darkness creates a [**Heavily Obscured**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HeavilyObscured) area. Characters face Darkness outdoors at night (even most moonlit nights), within the confines of an unlit dungeon, or in an area of magical Darkness.

#### **Special Senses**

Some creatures have special senses that help them perceive things in certain situations. The rules glossary defines the following special senses:

* [**Blindsight**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Blindsight)
* [**Darkvision**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Darkvision)
* [**Tremorsense**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Tremorsense)
* [**Truesight**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Truesight)

### **Hiding**

Adventurers and monsters often hide, whether to spy on one another, sneak past a guardian, or set an ambush. The Dungeon Master decides when circumstances are appropriate for hiding. When you try to hide, you take the [**Hide**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HideAction) action.

### **Interacting with Objects**

Interacting with objects is often simple to resolve. The player tells the DM that their character is doing something, such as moving a lever or opening a door, and the DM describes what happens. Sometimes, however, rules govern what you can do with an object, as detailed in the following sections.

#### **What Is an Object?**

For the purpose of the rules, an object is a discrete, inanimate item like a window, door, sword, book, table, chair, or stone. It isn’t a building or a vehicle, which are composed of many objects.

#### **Time-Limited Object Interactions**

When time is short, such as in combat, interactions with objects are limited: one free interaction per turn. That interaction must occur during a creature’s movement or action. Any additional interactions require the [**Utilize**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UtilizeAction) action, as explained in “[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Combat)” later in this chapter.

#### **Finding Hidden Objects**

When your character searches for hidden things, such as a secret door or a trap, the DM typically asks you to make a Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check, provided you describe the character searching in the hidden object’s vicinity. On a success, you find the object, other important details, or both.

If you describe your character searching nowhere near a hidden object, a Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check won’t reveal the object, no matter the check’s total.

#### **Carrying Objects**

You can usually carry your gear and treasure without worrying about the weight of those objects. If you try to haul an unusually heavy object or a massive number of lighter objects, the DM might require you to abide by the rules for [**carrying capacity**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CarryingCapacity) in the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CarryingCapacity).

#### **Breaking Objects**

As an action, you can automatically break or otherwise destroy a fragile, nonmagical object, such as a glass container or a piece of paper. If you try to damage something more resilient, the DM might use the rules on [**breaking objects**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BreakingObjects) in the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BreakingObjects).

### **Hazards**

Monsters are the main perils characters face, but other dangers await. The rules glossary defines the following hazards:

* [**Burning**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BurningHazard)
* [**Dehydration**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DehydrationHazard)
* [**Falling**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FallingHazard)
* [**Malnutrition**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#MalnutritionHazard)
* [**Suffocation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SuffocationHazard)

### **Travel**

During an adventure, the characters might travel long distances on trips that could take hours or days. The DM can summarize this travel without calculating exact distances or travel times, or the DM might have you use the travel pace rules below.

If you need to know how fast you can move when every second matters, see the movement rules in “[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Combat)” later in this chapter.

**Marching Order**

The adventurers should establish a marching order while they travel, whether indoors or outdoors. A marching order makes it easier to determine which characters are affected by traps, which ones can spot hidden enemies, and which ones are the closest to those enemies if a fight breaks out. You can change your marching order outside combat and record the order any way you like: write it down, for example, or arrange miniatures to show it.

#### **Travel Pace**

While traveling outside combat, a group can move at a Fast, Normal, or Slow pace, as shown on the Travel Pace table. The table states how far the party can move in a period of time; if riding horses or other mounts, the group can move twice that distance for 1 hour, after which the mounts need a [**Short**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ShortRest) or [**Long Rest**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LongRest) before they can move at that increased pace again (see [chapter 6](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#MountsandVehicles) for a selection of mounts for sale). The [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) has rules that affect which pace you can choose in certain types of terrain.

| **Distance Traveled Per...** | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Pace** | **Minute** | **Hour** | **Day** |
| Fast | 400 feet | 4 miles | 30 miles |
| Normal | 300 feet | 3 miles | 24 miles |
| Slow | 200 feet | 2 miles | 18 miles |

Each travel pace has a game effect, as defined below.

***Fast.*** Traveling at a Fast pace imposes [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on a traveler’s Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) or [**Survival**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) and Dexterity ([**Stealth**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) checks.

***Normal.*** Traveling at a Normal pace imposes [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on Dexterity ([**Stealth**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) checks.

***Slow.*** Traveling at a Slow pace grants [**Advantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) on Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) or [**Survival**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) checks.

#### **Vehicles**

Travelers in wagons, carriages, or other land vehicles choose a pace as normal. Characters in a waterborne vessel are limited to the speed of the vessel, and they don’t choose a travel pace. Depending on the vessel and the size of the crew, ships might be able to travel for up to 24 hours per day. [Chapter 6](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#MountsandVehicles) includes vehicles for sale.

## **Combat**

Adventurers encounter many dangerous monsters and nefarious villains. In those moments, combat often breaks out.

### **The Order of Combat**

A typical combat encounter is a clash between two sides: a flurry of weapon swings, feints, parries, footwork, and spellcasting. The game organizes combat into a cycle of rounds and turns. A round represents about 6 seconds in the game world. During a round, each participant in a battle takes a turn. The order of turns is determined at the beginning of combat when everyone rolls [**Initiative**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative). Once everyone has taken a turn, the fight continues to the next round if neither side is defeated.

#### **Combat Step by Step**

Combat unfolds in these steps:

1. **Establish Positions.** The Dungeon Master determines where all the characters and monsters are located. Given the adventurers’ marching order or their stated positions in the room or other location, the DM figures out where the adversaries are—how far away and in what direction.
2. **Roll Initiative.** Everyone involved in the combat encounter rolls [**Initiative**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative), determining the order of combatants’ turns.
3. **Take Turns.** Each participant in the battle takes a turn in Initiative order. When everyone involved in the combat has had a turn, the round ends. Repeat this step until the fighting stops.

#### **Initiative**

Initiative determines the order of turns during combat. When combat starts, every participant rolls Initiative; they make a Dexterity check that determines their place in the Initiative order. The DM rolls for monsters. For a group of identical creatures, the DM makes a single roll, so each member of the group has the same Initiative.

***Surprise.*** If a combatant is surprised by combat starting, that combatant has [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on their Initiative roll. For example, if an ambusher starts combat while hidden from a foe who is unaware that combat is starting, that foe is surprised.

***Initiative Order.*** A combatant’s check total is called their Initiative count, or Initiative for short. The DM ranks the combatants, from highest to lowest Initiative. This is the order in which they act during each round. The Initiative order remains the same from round to round.

***Ties.*** If a tie occurs, the DM decides the order among tied monsters, and the players decide the order among tied characters. The DM decides the order if the tie is between a monster and a player character.

#### **Your Turn**

On your turn, you can move a distance up to your [**Speed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) and take one action. You decide whether to move first or take your action first.

The main actions you can take are listed in “[Actions](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Actions)” earlier in this chapter. A character’s features and a monster’s stat block also provide action options. “[Movement and Position](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#MovementandPosition)” later in this chapter gives the rules for movement.

***Communicating.*** You can communicate however you are able—through brief utterances and gestures—as you take your turn. Doing so uses neither your action nor your move.

Extended communication, such as a detailed explanation of something or an attempt to persuade a foe, requires an action. The Influence action is the main way you try to influence a monster.

***Interacting with Things.*** You can interact with one object or feature of the environment for free, during either your move or action. For example, you could open a door during your move as you stride toward a foe.

If you want to interact with a second object, you need to take the [**Utilize**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UtilizeAction) action. Some magic items and other special objects always require an action to use, as stated in their descriptions.

The DM might require you to use an action for any of these activities when it needs special care or when it presents an unusual obstacle. For instance, the DM might require you to take the Utilize action to open a stuck door or turn a crank to lower a drawbridge.

***Doing Nothing on Your Turn.*** You can forgo moving, taking an action, or doing anything at all on your turn. If you can’t decide what to do, consider taking the defensive [**Dodge**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DodgeAction) action or the [**Ready**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ReadyAction) action to delay acting.

#### **Ending Combat**

Combat ends when one side or the other is defeated, which can mean the creatures are killed or knocked out or have surrendered or fled. Combat can also end when both sides agree to end it.

### **Movement and Position**

On your turn, you can move a distance equal to your [**Speed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) or less. Or you can decide not to move.

Your movement can include [**climbing**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Climbing), [**crawling**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Crawling), [**jumping**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Jumping), and [**swimming**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Swimming) (each explained in the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary)). These different modes of movement can be combined with your regular movement, or they can constitute your entire move.

However you’re moving with your Speed, you deduct the distance of each part of your move from it until it is used up or until you are done moving, whichever comes first.

A character’s Speed is determined during character creation. A monster’s Speed is noted in the monster’s stat block. See the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) for more about Speed as well as about special speeds, such as a [**Climb Speed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ClimbSpeed), [**Fly Speed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FlySpeed), or [**Swim Speed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SwimSpeed).

#### **Difficult Terrain**

Combatants are often slowed down by Difficult Terrain. Low furniture, rubble, undergrowth, steep stairs, snow, and shallow bogs are examples of Difficult Terrain.

Every foot of movement in Difficult Terrain costs 1 extra foot, even if multiple things in a space count as Difficult Terrain.

**Playing on a Grid**

If you play using a square grid and miniatures or other tokens, follow these rules.

***Squares.*** Each square represents 5 feet.

***Speed.*** Rather than moving foot by foot, move square by square on the grid, using your Speed in 5-foot segments. You can translate your Speed into squares by dividing it by 5. For example, a Speed of 30 feet translates into 6 squares. If you use a grid often, consider writing your Speed in squares on your character sheet.

***Entering a Square.*** To enter a square, you must have enough movement left to pay for entering. It costs 1 square of movement to enter an unoccupied square that’s adjacent to your space (orthogonally or diagonally adjacent). A square of Difficult Terrain costs 2 squares to enter. Other effects might make a square cost even more.

***Corners.*** Diagonal movement can’t cross the corner of a wall, a large tree, or another terrain feature that fills its space.

***Ranges.*** To determine the range on a grid between two things—whether creatures or objects—count squares from a square adjacent to one of them and stop counting in the space of the other one. Count by the shortest route.

#### **Breaking Up Your Move**

You can break up your move, using some of its movement before and after any action, Bonus Action, or Reaction you take on the same turn. For example, if you have a Speed of 30 feet, you could go 10 feet, take an action, and then go 20 feet.

#### **Dropping Prone**

On your turn, you can give yourself the [**Prone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) condition (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition)) without using an action or any of your Speed, but you can’t do so if your Speed is 0.

#### **Creature Size**

A creature belongs to a size category, which determines the width of the square space the creature occupies on a map, as shown on the Creature Size and Space table. That table lists the sizes from smallest (Tiny) to largest (Gargantuan). A creature’s space is the area that it effectively controls in combat and the area it needs to fight effectively.

A character’s size is determined by species, and a monster’s size is specified in the monster’s stat block.

| **Size** | **Space (Feet)** | **Space (Squares)** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Tiny | 2½ by 2½ feet | 4 per square |
| Small | 5 by 5 feet | 1 square |
| Medium | 5 by 5 feet | 1 square |
| Large | 10 by 10 feet | 4 squares (2 by 2) |
| Huge | 15 by 15 feet | 9 squares (3 by 3) |
| Gargantuan | 20 by 20 feet | 16 squares (4 by 4) |

#### **Moving around Other Creatures**

During your move, you can pass through the space of an ally, a creature that has the [**Incapacitated**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition)), a Tiny creature, or a creature that is two sizes larger or smaller than you.

Another creature’s space is [**Difficult Terrain**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DifficultTerrain) for you unless that creature is Tiny or your ally.

You can’t willingly end a move in a space occupied by another creature. If you somehow end a turn in a space with another creature, you have the [**Prone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) condition (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition)) unless you are Tiny or are of a larger size than the other creature.

### **Making an Attack**

When you take the [**Attack**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackAction) action, you make an attack. Some other actions, Bonus Actions, and Reactions also let you make an attack. Whether you strike with a Melee weapon, fire a Ranged weapon, or make an attack roll as part of a spell, an attack has the following structure:

1. **Choose a Target.** Pick a target within your attack’s range: a creature, an object, or a location.
2. **Determine Modifiers.** The DM determines whether the target has [**Cover**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover) (see the next section) and whether you have [**Advantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) or [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) against the target. In addition, spells, special abilities, and other effects can apply penalties or bonuses to your attack roll.
3. **Resolve the Attack.** Make the attack roll, as detailed earlier in this chapter. On a hit, you roll damage unless the particular attack has rules that specify otherwise. Some attacks cause special effects in addition to or instead of damage.

### **Cover**

Walls, trees, creatures, and other obstacles can provide cover, making a target more difficult to harm. As detailed in the Cover table, there are three degrees of cover, each of which gives a different benefit to a target.

A target can benefit from cover only when an attack or other effect originates on the opposite side of the cover. If a target is behind multiple sources of cover, only the most protective degree of cover applies; the degrees aren’t added together. For example, if a target is behind a creature that gives [**Half Cover**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover) and a tree trunk that gives [**Three-Quarters Cover**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover), the target has Three-Quarters Cover.

| **Degree** | **Benefit to Target** | **Offered By...** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| [**Half**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover) | +2 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws | Another creature or an object that covers at least half of the target |
| [**Three-Quarters**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover) | +5 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws | An object that covers at least three-quarters of the target |
| [**Total**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover) | Can’t be targeted directly | An object that covers the whole target |

**Unseen Attackers and Targets**

When you make an attack roll against a target you can’t see, you have [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on the roll. This is true whether you’re guessing the target’s location or targeting a creature you can hear but not see. If the target isn’t in the location you targeted, you miss.

When a creature can’t see you, you have [**Advantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) on attack rolls against it.

If you are hidden when you make an attack roll, you give away your location when the attack hits or misses.

### **Ranged Attacks**

When you make a ranged attack, you fire a bow, hurl an axe, or otherwise send projectiles to strike a foe at a distance. Many spells also involve making a ranged attack.

#### **Range**

You can make ranged attacks only against targets within a specified range. If a ranged attack, such as one made with a spell, has a single range, you can’t attack a target beyond this range.

Some ranged attacks, such as those made with a [**Longbow**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/equipment/37-longbow), have two ranges. The smaller number is the normal range, and the larger number is the long range. Your attack roll has [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) when your target is beyond normal range, and you can’t attack a target beyond long range.

#### **Ranged Attacks in Close Combat**

Aiming a ranged attack is more difficult when a foe is next to you. When you make a ranged attack roll with a weapon, a spell, or some other means, you have [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on the roll if you are within 5 feet of an enemy who can see you and doesn’t have the [**Incapacitated**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition)).

### **Melee Attacks**

A melee attack allows you to attack a target within your reach. A melee attack typically uses a handheld weapon or an [**Unarmed Strike**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnarmedStrike). Many monsters make melee attacks with claws, teeth, or other body parts. A few spells also involve melee attacks.

#### **Reach**

A creature has a 5-foot reach and can thus attack targets within 5 feet when making a melee attack. Certain creatures have melee attacks with a reach greater than 5 feet, as noted in their descriptions.

#### **Opportunity Attacks**

Combatants watch for enemies to drop their guard. If you move heedlessly past your foes, you put yourself in danger by provoking an Opportunity Attack.

***Avoiding Opportunity Attacks.*** You can avoid provoking an Opportunity Attack by taking the [**Disengage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DisengageAction) action. You also don’t provoke an Opportunity Attack when you [**Teleport**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Teleportation) or when you are moved without using your movement, action, Bonus Action, or Reaction. For example, you don’t provoke an Opportunity Attack if an explosion hurls you out of a foe’s reach or if you fall past an enemy.

***Making an Opportunity Attack.*** You can make an Opportunity Attack when a creature that you can see leaves your reach. To make the attack, take a Reaction to make one melee attack with a weapon or an [**Unarmed Strike**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnarmedStrike) against that creature. The attack occurs right before it leaves your reach.

### **Mounted Combat**

A willing creature that is at least one size larger than a rider and that has an appropriate anatomy can serve as a mount, using the following rules.

#### **Mounting and Dismounting**

During your move, you can mount a creature that is within 5 feet of you or dismount. Doing so costs an amount of movement equal to half your [**Speed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) (round down). For example, if your Speed is 30 feet, you spend 15 feet of movement to mount a horse.

#### **Controlling a Mount**

You can control a mount only if it has been trained to accept a rider. Domesticated horses, mules, and similar creatures have such training.

The [**Initiative**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative) of a controlled mount changes to match yours when you mount it. It moves on your turn as you direct it, and it has only three action options during that turn: [**Dash**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DashAction), [**Disengage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DisengageAction), and [**Dodge**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DodgeAction). A controlled mount can move and act even on the turn that you mount it.

In contrast, an independent mount—one that lets you ride but ignores your control—retains its place in the Initiative order and moves and acts as it likes.

#### **Falling Off**

If an effect is about to move your mount against its will while you’re on it, you must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw or fall off, landing with the [**Prone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) condition (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition)) in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the mount.

While mounted, you must make the same save if you’re knocked [**Prone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) or the mount is.

### **Underwater Combat**

A fight underwater follows these rules.

#### **Impeded Weapons**

When making a melee attack roll with a weapon underwater, a creature that lacks a [**Swim Speed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SwimSpeed) has [**Disadvantage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on the attack roll unless the weapon deals Piercing damage.

A ranged attack roll with a weapon underwater automatically misses a target beyond the weapon’s normal range, and the attack roll has Disadvantage against a target within normal range.

#### **Fire Resistance**

Anything underwater has Resistance to Fire damage (explained in “Damage and Healing”).

## **Damage and Healing**

Injury and death are frequent threats in D&D, as detailed in the following rules.

### **Hit Points**

Hit Points represent durability and the will to live. Creatures with more Hit Points are more difficult to kill. Your Hit Point maximum is the number of Hit Points you have when uninjured. Your current Hit Points can be any number from that maximum down to 0, which is the lowest Hit Points can go.

Whenever you take damage, subtract it from your Hit Points. Hit Point loss has no effect on your capabilities until you reach 0 Hit Points.

If you have half your Hit Points or fewer, you’re Bloodied, which has no game effect on its own but which might trigger other game effects.

**Resting**

Adventurers can’t spend every hour adventuring. They need rest. Any creature can take hour-long [**Short Rests**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ShortRest) in the midst of a day and an 8-hour [**Long Rest**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LongRest) to end it. Regaining Hit Points is one of the main benefits of a rest. The [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary) provides the rules for Short and Long Rests.

### **Damage Rolls**

Each weapon, spell, and damaging monster ability specifies the damage it deals. You roll the damage dice, add any modifiers, and deal the damage to your target. If there’s a penalty to the damage, it’s possible to deal 0 damage but not negative damage.

When attacking with a weapon, you add your ability modifier—the same modifier used for the attack roll—to the damage roll. A spell tells you which dice to roll for damage and whether to add any modifiers. Unless a rule says otherwise, you don’t add your ability modifier to a fixed damage amount that doesn’t use a roll, such as the damage of a [**Blowgun**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/equipment/35-blowgun). See [chapter 6](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#Weapons) for weapons’ damage dice and [chapter 7](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/spells) for spells’ damage dice.

### **Critical Hits**

When you score a Critical Hit, you deal extra damage. Roll the attack’s damage dice twice, add them together, and add any relevant modifiers as normal. For example, if you score a Critical Hit with a [**Dagger**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/equipment/3-dagger), roll 2d4 for the damage rather than 1d4, and add your relevant ability modifier. If the attack involves other damage dice, such as from the Rogue’s Sneak Attack feature, you also roll those dice twice.

### **Saving Throws and Damage**

Damage dealt via saving throws uses these rules.

#### **Damage against Multiple Targets**

When you create a damaging effect that forces two or more targets to make saving throws against it at the same time, roll the damage once for all the targets. For example, when a wizard casts [***Fireball***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2618887-fireball), the spell’s damage is rolled once for all creatures caught in the blast.

#### **Half Damage**

Many saving throw effects deal half damage (round down) to a target when the target succeeds on the saving throw. The halved damage is equal to half the damage that would be dealt on a failed save.

### **Damage Types**

Each instance of damage has a type, like Fire or Slashing. Damage types are listed in the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DamageTypes) and have no rules of their own, but other rules, such as [**Resistance**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Resistance), rely on damage types.

### **Resistance and Vulnerability**

Some creatures and objects have Resistance or Vulnerability to certain damage types. If you have Resistance to a damage type, damage of that type is halved against you (round down). If you have Vulnerability to a damage type, damage of that type is doubled against you. For example, if you have Resistance to Cold damage, such damage is halved against you, and if you have Vulnerability to Fire damage, such damage is doubled against you.

#### **No Stacking**

Multiple instances of Resistance or Vulnerability that affect the same damage type count as only one instance. For example, if you have Resistance to Necrotic damage as well as Resistance to all damage, Necrotic damage is reduced by half against you.

#### **Order of Application**

Modifiers to damage are applied in the following order: adjustments such as bonuses, penalties, or multipliers are applied first; Resistance is applied second; and Vulnerability is applied third.

For example, a creature has Resistance to all damage and Vulnerability to Fire damage, and it’s within a magical aura that reduces all damage by 5. If it takes 28 Fire damage, the damage is first reduced by 5 (to 23), then halved for the creature’s Resistance (and rounded down to 11), then doubled for its Vulnerability (to 22).

### **Immunity**

Some creatures and objects have Immunity to certain damage types and conditions. Immunity to a damage type means you don’t take damage of that type, and Immunity to a condition means you aren’t affected by it.

### **Healing**

Hit Points can be restored by magic, such as the [***Cure Wounds***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2619079-cure-wounds) spell or a [***Potion of Healing***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/magic-items/8960641-potion-of-healing), or by a [**Short**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ShortRest) or [**Long Rest**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LongRest) (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary)).

When you receive healing, add the restored Hit Points to your current Hit Points. Your Hit Points can’t exceed your Hit Point maximum, so any Hit Points regained in excess of the maximum are lost. For example, if you receive 8 Hit Points of healing and have 14 Hit Points and a Hit Point maximum of 20, you regain 6 Hit Points, not 8.

### **Dropping to 0 Hit Points**

When a creature drops to 0 Hit Points, it either dies outright or falls [**unconscious**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnconsciousCondition), as explained below.

#### **Instant Death**

Here are the main ways a creature can die instantly.

***Monster Death.*** A monster dies the instant it drops to 0 Hit Points, although a Dungeon Master can ignore this rule for an individual monster and treat it like a character.

***Hit Point Maximum of 0.*** A creature dies if its Hit Point maximum reaches 0. Certain effects drain life energy, reducing a creature’s Hit Point maximum.

***Massive Damage.*** When damage reduces a character to 0 Hit Points and damage remains, the character dies if the remainder equals or exceeds their Hit Point maximum. For example, if your character has a Hit Point maximum of 12, currently has 6 Hit Points, and takes 18 damage, the character drops to 0 Hit Points, but 12 damage remains. The character then dies, since 12 equals their Hit Point maximum.

#### **Character Demise**

If your character dies, others might find a magical way to revive your character, such as with the [***Raise Dead***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2618922-raise-dead) spell. Or talk with the DM about making a new character to join the group. The [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Dead) has more information on being [**dead**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Dead).

#### **Falling Unconscious**

If you reach 0 Hit Points and don’t die instantly, you have the [**Unconscious**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnconsciousCondition) condition (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnconsciousCondition)) until you regain any Hit Points, and you now face making [**Death Saving Throws**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DeathSavingThrow) (see below).

**Knocking Out a Creature**

When you would reduce a creature to 0 Hit Points with a melee attack, you can instead reduce the creature to 1 Hit Point and give it the [**Unconscious**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnconsciousCondition) condition. It then starts a [**Short Rest**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ShortRest), at the end of which that condition ends on it. The condition ends early if the creature regains any Hit Points or if someone takes an action to administer first aid to it, making a successful DC 10 Wisdom ([**Medicine**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check.

#### **Death Saving Throws**

Whenever you start your turn with 0 Hit Points, you must make a Death Saving Throw to determine whether you creep closer to death or hang on to life. Unlike other saving throws, this one isn’t tied to an ability score. You’re in the hands of fate now.

***Three Successes/Failures.*** Roll 1d20. If the roll is 10 or higher, you succeed. Otherwise, you fail. A success or failure has no effect by itself. On your third success, you become [**Stable**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Stable) (see “Stabilizing a Character” below). On your third failure, you die.

The successes and failures don’t need to be consecutive; keep track of both until you collect three of a kind. The number of both is reset to zero when you regain any Hit Points or become Stable.

***Rolling a 1 or 20.*** When you roll a 1 on the d20 for a Death Saving Throw, you suffer two failures. If you roll a 20 on the d20, you regain 1 Hit Point.

***Damage at 0 Hit Points.*** If you take any damage while you have 0 Hit Points, you suffer a Death Saving Throw failure. If the damage is from a Critical Hit, you suffer two failures instead. If the damage equals or exceeds your Hit Point maximum, you die.

#### **Stabilizing a Character**

You can take the [**Help**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HelpAction) action to try to stabilize a creature with 0 Hit Points, which requires a successful DC 10 Wisdom ([**Medicine**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check.

A Stable creature doesn’t make Death Saving Throws even though it has 0 Hit Points, but it still has the [**Unconscious**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnconsciousCondition) condition. If the creature takes damage, it stops being Stable and starts making Death Saving Throws again. A Stable creature that isn’t healed regains 1 Hit Point after 1d4 hours.

### **Temporary Hit Points**

Some spells and other effects confer Temporary Hit Points, which are a buffer against losing actual Hit Points, as explained below.

#### **Lose Temporary Hit Points First**

If you have Temporary Hit Points and take damage, those points are lost first, and any leftover damage carries over to your Hit Points. For example, if you have 5 Temporary Hit Points and take 7 damage, you lose those points and then lose 2 Hit Points.

#### **Duration**

Temporary Hit Points last until they’re depleted or you finish a [**Long Rest**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LongRest) (see the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LongRest)).

#### **Temporary Hit Points Don’t Stack**

Temporary Hit Points can’t be added together. If you have Temporary Hit Points and receive more of them, you decide whether to keep the ones you have or to gain the new ones. For example, if a spell grants you 12 Temporary Hit Points when you already have 10, you can have 12 or 10, not 22.

#### **They’re Not Hit Points or Healing**

Temporary Hit Points can’t be added to your Hit Points, healing can’t restore them, and receiving Temporary Hit Points doesn’t count as healing. Because Temporary Hit Points aren’t Hit Points, a creature can be at full Hit Points and receive Temporary Hit Points.

If you have 0 Hit Points, receiving Temporary Hit Points doesn’t restore you to consciousness. Only true healing can save you.

## **Conditions**

Many effects impose a condition, a temporary state that alters the recipient’s capabilities. The following conditions are defined in the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary):

* [**Blinded**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BlindedCondition)
* [**Charmed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CharmedCondition)
* [**Deafened**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DeafenedCondition)
* [**Exhaustion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ExhaustionCondition)
* [**Frightened**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FrightenedCondition)
* [**Grappled**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#GrappledCondition)
* [**Incapacitated**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition)
* [**Invisible**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InvisibleCondition)
* [**Paralyzed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ParalyzedCondition)
* [**Petrified**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#PetrifiedCondition)
* [**Poisoned**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#PoisonedCondition)
* [**Prone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition)
* [**Restrained**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#RestrainedCondition)
* [**Stunned**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#StunnedCondition)
* [**Unconscious**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnconsciousCondition)

The definition of a condition specifies what happens to its recipient while affected by it, and some conditions apply other conditions.

### **Duration**

A condition lasts either for a duration specified by the effect that imposed the condition or until the condition is countered (the [**Prone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) condition is countered by standing up, for example).

### **Conditions Don’t Stack**

If multiple effects impose the same condition on you, each instance of the condition has its own duration, but the condition’s effects don’t get worse. Either you have a condition or you don’t. The [**Exhaustion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ExhaustionCondition) condition is an exception; its effects get worse if you have the condition and receive it again.

Dungeon Master Basics

# **The Basics**

Dungeons & Dragons is a game in which you and your friends take on roles and tell a shared story. While the previous section teaches you how to play the game and how to create characters who are the heroes of the story, this section is written for the player who presides over the game and makes sure everyone is having fun. This player is the Dungeon Master, or DM. Being a Dungeon Master is a fun, empowering, and rewarding experience, and this chapter walks you through the basics.

## **What Does a DM Do?**

The DM gets to play many fun roles:

**Actor.** The DM plays the monsters, choosing their actions and rolling dice for their attacks. The DM also plays all the people the characters meet.

**Director.** Like the director of a movie, the DM decides (and describes) what the players’ characters encounter in the course of an adventure. The DM is also responsible for the pace of a play session and for creating situations that facilitate fun.

**Improviser.** A big part of being the DM is deciding how to apply the rules as you go and imagining the consequences of the characters’ actions in a way that will make the game fun for everyone.

**Referee.** When it’s not clear what ought to happen next, the DM decides how to apply the rules.

**Storyteller.** The DM crafts adventures, setting situations in front of the characters that entice them to explore and interact with the game world.

**Teacher.** It’s often the DM’s job to teach new players how to play the game.

**Worldbuilder.** The DM creates the world where the game’s adventures take place. Even if you’re using a published setting, you get to make it yours.

### **DM Tips**

The most important part of being a good DM is facilitating the fun of everyone at the table. Keep these tips in mind to help things go smoothly.

**Embrace the Shared Story.** D&D is about telling a story as a group, so let the other players contribute through the words and deeds of their characters. Encourage players to engage by asking them what their characters are doing.

**It’s Not a Competition.** The DM isn’t competing against the other players. It’s your job to provide fun challenges and keep the story moving.

**Be Fair and Flexible.** Treat your players in a fair, impartial manner. The rules help you do this, but when you need to act as referee, try to make decisions that ensure everyone is having fun.

**Communicate with Your Players.** Open communication is essential to a successful D&D game. Many problems can be solved or even prevented with honest conversation. Ask questions and solicit feedback after or between sessions.

**It’s OK to Make Mistakes.** If you overlook or misrepresent something, correct yourself and move on. No one expects you to memorize every rule or detail. Even if you don’t realize your mistake until after a game session is over, it’s OK to acknowledge the mistake at the start of the next session and make adjustments moving forward.

## **Things You Need**

What you need to play hasn’t changed much since the game’s first publication in 1974.

### **A Dungeon Master**

One player has the special role of Dungeon Master.

Some people love being the DM all the time, while others can end up feeling trapped as the “forever DM” for their gaming group. The “[Group Size](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#GroupSize)” section in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) discusses possibilities for sharing the role of Dungeon Master among multiple players in a group.

### **Players**

Players who aren’t the Dungeon Master take on the roles of the heroes, also known as the characters or the adventurers.

D&D plays best with four to six players in addition to the DM, but it’s possible to run a game with fewer or more adventurers. See the “[Group Size](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#GroupSize)” section in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) for advice on doing so.

#### **Finding Players**

Where do you find players? Here are a handful of suggestions:

* Game or hobby stores (the Store Locator on the [Wizards of the Coast website](https://locator.wizards.com/) can help you find stores near you that host D&D events)
* Friends, family, community members, and work colleagues who enjoy gaming or fantasy
* Gaming clubs at schools
* Social media and online messaging sites
* Gaming conventions

### **A Place to Play**

The bare minimum of space you need to play D&D is room for everyone in your group to gather and participate.

When choosing the space you’ll be playing in, enlist your players’ help. Think about any accessibility needs you or they might have. Some players might have difficulty with low light, background music, strong odors, cramped spaces, or specific allergens. Accommodate what you can; communicate what you can’t as early as possible.

If possible, play in an area with minimal visual or auditory distractions. Favor surroundings that reinforce your desired atmosphere and have little non-player traffic. If space is shared, reserve the space in advance.

You can also play D&D anywhere you might come together in an online space, from a group video call to a sophisticated virtual tabletop.

**Scheduling Games**

Sometimes the hardest thing about running a game is finding a time when everyone can play. Some groups play for a few hours every week, while others set aside a whole day once a month. Create a schedule that works best for your group.

For new groups, it often helps to schedule a single-session game (often called a “one-shot”) as a way for people to try it out. If everyone has a great time at that one session, it can be easier to get them to make a long-term commitment.

Scheduling conflicts are sometimes inescapable. The “[Group Size](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#GroupSize)” section in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) offers some advice on what to do when a player has to miss a session.

### **Dice**

You need a full set of polyhedral dice: d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20. It’s helpful to have at least two of each kind. Ideally, each player should also have their own set of polyhedral dice.

Lots of digital dice rollers exist. Simple, browser-based dice rollers are easily found on the internet. Specialized dice apps can be found in app stores, and virtual tabletops typically have dice-rolling functionality built in.

### **Note-Taking Materials**

Everyone needs some way to take notes. During every round of combat, someone needs to keep track of [**Initiative**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative), [**Hit Points**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints), conditions, and other information. Players often like to take notes about what happens in the adventure, and at least one of them should record any clues and treasure the characters collect.

#### **Character Sheets**

Players need some way to record important information about their characters. Plain paper works fine, but players might find official or fan-made character sheets more helpful in organizing the information. A variety of digital character sheets are also available if you’re playing online or using digital devices at the table.

#### **Campaign Journal**

Throughout this book you’ll find tracking sheets you can use to make your work as a DM easier. They range from sheets you can use to track NPCs or settlements in your game to trackers you can use to make sure you’re giving the adventurers a good number of magic items. These tracking sheets can form the basis of a campaign journal, and they’ll help you plan your adventures and build your world. You can scan or photocopy these sheets for your personal use, and you’ll find downloadable versions in the [*Tracking Sheets*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/tracking-sheets) chapter.

### **Useful Additions**

Various resources can enrich your game and make it more fun. Many of these resources might have digital versions, making computers, tablets, and smartphones essential elements in some D&D games and for some players.

#### **DM Screen**

A DM screen shields your books, notes, and die rolls from your players. (See the “[Ensuring Fun for All](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/the-basics#EnsuringFunforAll)” section later in this chapter for more about when and why you might want to hide die rolls.) Most DM screens have art on the outward-facing panels and handy rules information on the inside-facing panels. Others might be made of fancy wood or sculpted to help set the mood for your game.

You don’t need a physical screen to hide things if you’re playing online, but it can be helpful to have ready access to important information like condition definitions, common actions, and other key rules. Some DMs set up a physical DM screen near their computer screen. A virtual tabletop might have reference information like this built in.

#### **Adventures and Sourcebooks**

Beyond the three core rulebooks, a plethora of additional content is available from Wizards of the Coast and other publishers. Adventures provide hooks, plots, maps, and encounters you can use in your game. Sourcebooks include things like new character options, new monsters, and inspiration for building your own adventures and campaigns. You can play D&D without any of these additional products, but many DMs (and players) find them to be exciting additions to the game.

#### **Battle Grid and Miniatures**

Some DMs use a battle grid and miniatures to run combat encounters, which helps players visualize scenes when playing in person. A vinyl wet-erase mat with a printed grid, a gridded whiteboard, a cutting mat, a large sheet of gridded paper, or a printed poster map—any of these can serve as a battle grid. The grid should be marked in 1-inch squares.

You also need plastic or metal miniatures to represent characters and monsters in the game, but you can use coins, extra dice, paper counters, or even pieces of candy if miniatures are unavailable.

Many software tools designed to facilitate online D&D play provide a battle grid. Even without such tools, though, many online D&D games use screen sharing in combination with drawing programs, shared whiteboards, or similar tools as simple battle grids. Some DMs are comfortable with software that allows them to control lighting and show the players exactly what they can see; others find that complex software gets in the way of the game. Use whatever works for you and your group.

#### **Card Accessories**

Some players and DMs find it helpful to have information available in the form of cards. You can buy (or make) cards with individual spells, magic items, monster stat blocks, rules reference, and similar information for easy reference.

## **Preparing a Session**

The more you prepare before your game, the more smoothly the game will go—to a certain point. To avoid being either under- or overprepared, use the one-hour guideline below and prioritize what to prepare depending on the time you have available.

### **The One-Hour Guideline**

A D&D game session usually starts with some out-of-game chatter as everyone settles down to play. Once the session gets underway, most groups can accomplish at least three things during one hour of play, where each “thing” might be any of the following:

* Explore a location such as a chamber in a castle or a cave
* Converse with an intelligent creature
* Reach consensus on a divisive issue
* Solve a tricky riddle or puzzle
* Survive a deadly trap
* Fight a low-difficulty combat encounter

A more difficult combat encounter might count as two or three things, and a tense negotiation can use most or all of an hour of play on its own.

### **Preparation Time**

The following guidelines can help you prepare for a session of play using a published adventure.

#### **One-Hour Preparation**

If you spend one hour each week preparing for your game, follow these steps:

**Step 1.** Focus on the story of the adventure. Read or reread the adventure’s introduction and background information. Create a bulleted list of key plot points to make sure a coherent story unfolds.

**Step 2.** Identify the encounters you want to run, then figure out how likely it is each encounter will get played, categorizing each one as “definite,” “possible,” or “unlikely.”

**Step 3.** Gather any maps you’ll need for the definite and possible encounters, then focus the remainder of your prep time on the definite encounters, as outlined below.

For combat encounters, review the monsters’ tactics and stat blocks. Note any special rules that apply to the setting of the encounter.

For social interaction encounters, make notes about the nonplayer characters (NPCs) in the encounter—their personalities, goals, and tactics.

For exploration encounters, record any clues or other information the characters should learn, and review any special rules that might come into play in the encounter.

**Step 4.** Consider how each definite encounter relates to the players’ motivations (see the “[Know Your Players](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#KnowYourPlayers)” section in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024)). Think about elements you can add to interest them. For example, a combat encounter could open with a tense negotiation designed to appeal to players who enjoy social interaction.

**Step 5.** Skim the encounters you flagged as possible.

#### **Two-Hour Preparation**

With another hour to prepare, add these steps:

**Step 6.** Carefully review each “possible” encounter.

**Step 7.** Devote any time you have left to creating improvisational aids (see the “[Improvising Answers](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#ImprovisingAnswers)” section in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024)).

#### **Three-Hour Preparation**

If you have three hours to prepare, add these steps:

**Step 8.** Skim each “unlikely” encounter.

**Step 9.** Create a new encounter designed to appeal specifically to one player, or alter an existing encounter to relate to the goals and motivations of that player’s character. Over the course of several sessions, do this for all your players and their characters.

## **How to Run a Session**

This section explains how to run a game session; the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) details how to combine sessions into adventures and adventures into campaigns.

### **Recap**

Start each game session after the first with a recap of what happened in the previous session. A recap helps players get back into the story. It also provides important information to players who missed the previous session. You can provide this recap, or you can invite one or more players to deliver the recap instead. Each approach has benefits:

**DM Recap.** Provide the recap yourself if you have specific information you need to impart or if you want the recap to be concise and focused on what’s relevant.

**Player Recap.** Let the players provide the recap if you want to gauge what they think is important or learn more about what they’re getting out of the game. If the players miss any important details in their recap, you can interject a reminder.

### **Encounters**

The bulk of a typical D&D session consists of a series of encounters, similar to how a movie is a series of scenes. In each encounter, there are chances for the DM to describe creatures and places and for characters to make choices. Encounters can involve exploration (interacting with the environment, including puzzles), social interaction with creatures, or combat. The following sections offer more detailed information on how an encounter typically unfolds, in three steps.

#### **Step 1: Describe the Situation**

As the DM, you decide how much to tell the players and when. All the information the players need to make choices comes from you. Within the rules of the game and the limits of the characters’ knowledge and senses, tell players everything they need to know.

Published adventures often include text in a box like this, which is meant to be read aloud to the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under a specific circumstance, as described in the text. It usually describes locations so the players know what’s happening and have a sense of what their characters’ options are.

Whether you’re running a published adventure or one of your own creation, your initial description of a room or situation should focus on what the characters can perceive. You don’t have to reveal every detail at once. Most players begin to lose focus after about three sentences of descriptive text. As characters search rooms, open drawers and chests, and examine things more closely, give players more details about what their characters find.

The “[Narration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#Narration)” section in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) offers more extensive advice and examples of narration.

#### **Step 2: Let the Players Talk**

Once you’re done describing the situation, ask the players what their characters want to do. Note what the players say, and identify how to resolve their actions. Ask them for more information if you need it.

Sometimes the players might give you a group answer: “We go through the door.” Other times, individual players might want to do specific things—one might search a chest while another examines a bookshelf. Outside combat, the characters don’t need to take turns, but you need to give each player a chance to tell you what their character is doing so you can decide how to resolve everyone’s actions. In combat, everyone takes turns in Initiative order.

#### **Step 3: Describe What Happens**

After the players describe their characters’ actions, it’s the DM’s job to resolve those actions, guided by the rules and the adventure you’ve prepared. So how do you decide? Think through these possibilities:

**No Rules Required.** Sometimes, resolving a situation is easy. If an adventurer wants to cross an empty room and open a door, you can just say that the door opens and describe what lies beyond (perhaps referencing your map or notes).

**Obstacles to Success.** A lock, a guard, or some other obstacle might hinder a character’s ability to complete a task. In those cases, you typically call for a [**D20 Test**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test), usually an ability check. For example, a successful Dexterity ([**Sleight of Hand**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check might be needed to pick the lock, while a successful Charisma ([**Persuasion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check and some coins might be needed to bribe the guard. The “[Resolving Outcomes](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#ResolvingOutcomes)” section in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) gives more guidance on how to use D20 Tests and other tools to determine the results of characters’ actions.

**Roleplaying.** When the players interact with other creatures, roleplay those creatures based on whether they are [**Friendly**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FriendlyAttitude), [**Indifferent**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IndifferentAttitude), or [**Hostile**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HostileAttitude). Improvise based on what you know about the creatures, their knowledge, and their motivations. Then bring these creatures to life as you describe what happens. (See the “[Running Social Interaction](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#RunningSocialInteraction)” section in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) for more advice.)

**One Action at a Time.** The [rules about actions](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Actions) limit how many things a character can do at once. Keeping those rules in mind can help you adjudicate situations.

**Combat.** In combat, many situations involve attack rolls or saving throws. The rules of combat can help you determine the effectiveness of a character’s actions. The “[Running Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/Combat#RunningCombat)” section offers advice on combat.

**Spellcasting.** If a character casts a spell, you can usually let the player tell you what the spell does and how to resolve it. If questions arise, read the text of the spell yourself—how a spell is supposed to work is usually pretty clear. The general [rules of spellcasting](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/spells) are also essential for resolving a spell’s effects.

**Exceptions Supersede General Rules.** General rules govern each part of the game, but the game also includes class features, spells, magic items, monster abilities, and other elements that can contradict a general rule. When an exception and a general rule disagree, the exception wins. For example, it’s a general rule that melee weapon attacks use the attacking character’s Strength modifier. But if a feature says that a character can make melee weapon attacks using Charisma, that exception supersedes the general rule.

When narrating results, try to give a flavorful description while clearly communicating what’s happening in the language of the game. See the “[Narration in Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#NarrationinCombat)” section in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) for more advice and examples.

Describing results often leads to another decision point, which returns the flow of the game to step 1.

### **Passing Time**

The game has a rhythm and flow that includes periods of action and excitement interspersed with lulls. Think of how movies show time passing between scenes. When an encounter ends, you can move on to the next one. You can often gloss over hours of travel with a quick narrative summary (see the “[Travel](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#Travel)” section in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) for more advice). Similarly, if a rest period passes uneventfully, tell the players that and move on. Don’t make the players spend time discussing which character cooks what for dinner unless they enjoy such descriptions. It’s OK to gloss over mundane details and return to the action as quickly as possible.

Expect players to discuss the events of the game, spend time planning, and engage in long conversations in character. You don’t need to be involved in those discussions unless they have questions for you. Learn to recognize the times when you can take a break as the DM, and then resume the action as soon as everyone’s ready.

**Taking Breaks**

When you finish a lengthy combat encounter or a tension-filled scene, or if you need time to think, take a quick break. Give your brain a few moments to refocus, relax, or prepare for the next encounter. It’s OK to leave the players in suspense during a break while you figure out the consequences of their actions.

### **Ending a Session**

Try not to end a game session in the middle of an encounter. It’s difficult to keep track of information such as [**Initiative**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative) order and other round-by-round details between sessions. An exception to this guideline is when you purposely end a session with a cliffhanger, where the story pauses just as something monumental happens or some surprising turn of events occurs. A cliffhanger can keep players intrigued and excited until the next session.

If a player missed a session and you had that player’s character leave the party for a while, make sure that there’s a way to bring the character back when the player returns. Sometimes a cliffhanger can serve this purpose: the character charges in to help their beleaguered companions.

Allow a few minutes at the end of play for everyone to discuss the events of the session. Ask your players what parts of the session they liked and what they would have liked to see more. Take notes on what happened and the situation at the end of the session so you can refer back to those notes as you prepare the next session.

## **Every DM Is Unique**

No two DMs run the game in exactly the same way—and that’s how it should be! You’ll be most successful as a DM if you choose a play style that works best for you and your players.

**The Rule of Fun**

D&D is a game, and everyone should have fun playing it. Everyone shares equal responsibility in moving the game along, and everyone contributes to the fun when they treat each other with respect and consideration: talking through disagreements among players or their characters, and remembering that arguments or mean-spirited squabbles can get in the way of the fun.

People have many different ideas about what makes D&D fun. The “right way” to play D&D is the way you and your players agree to and enjoy. If everyone comes to the table prepared to contribute to the game, the entire table is likely to have a wonderful and memorable time.

### **Play Style**

Here are some questions that can help you define your unique style as a DM and the kind of game you want to run:

**Hack and Slash or Immersive Roleplaying?** Does the game focus on combat and action or on a rich story with detailed NPCs?

**All Ages or Mature Themes?** Is the game for all ages, or does it involve mature themes?

**Gritty or Cinematic?** Do you prefer gritty realism, or are you more focused on making the game feel cinematic and superheroic?

**Serious or Silly?** Do you want to maintain a serious tone, or is humor your goal?

**Preplanned or Improvised?** Do you like to plan thoroughly, or do you prefer to improvise?

**General or Thematic?** Is the game a mixture of themes and genres, or does it center on a particular theme or a genre such as horror?

**Morally Ambiguous or Heroic?** Are you comfortable with moral ambiguity, such as allowing the characters to explore whether the end justifies the means? Or are you happier with straightforward heroic principles, such as justice, sacrifice, and helping the downtrodden?

### **House Rules**

House rules are new or modified rules you add to your game to make it your own and to enhance the style you have in mind for your game. Before you establish a house rule, ask yourself two questions:

* Will the rule or change improve the game?
* Will my players like it?

If you’re confident that the answer to both questions is yes, give the new rule a try. Present house rules as experiments, and ask your players to provide feedback on them. If you introduce a house rule that isn’t fun, remove or revise the rule.

#### **Recording Rules Interpretations**

If a question about the interpretation of a rule comes up in your game, record how you decide to interpret it. Add that to your collection of house rules so you and the players can reference it when the rule comes up again later.

### **Atmosphere**

Some DMs use music to create an appropriate atmosphere for their game sessions. They might use soundtracks from adventure movies or video games, although classical, ambient, or other music styles can also work well.

Some DMs adjust lighting or use sound effects. Miniatures and dioramas can contribute to the game’s atmosphere and help players visualize events. Check with your players, though: some might find music, lighting, or sound effects distracting; might prefer not to be startled by loud noises; or might need to avoid certain lighting effects.

### **Delegation**

If there are parts of the game you prefer not to handle yourself, assign them to players who enjoy them. If you don’t want to break your narrative stride by looking up a rule, designate another player to be the rulebook reference expert. If you don’t like tracking Initiative, ask another player to do so.

### **Learning by Observing**

One of the best ways to learn how to run a D&D game is to observe other DMs in action. Another DM can give you a solid foundation for understanding the role—as well as inspire you with cool things you can do in your games.

You can use these questions to help you reflect on a game you observe:

**Beginning the Session.** How did the DM start the session? Was there a recap?

**Body Language.** What gestures did the DM use when describing a scene? How did the DM’s body language change when playing different NPCs?

**DM Voice.** Did the DM use different voices or mannerisms for NPCs? Did the DM change the pitch or tempo of narration in different situations?

**Player Participation.** Did the players participate in the world-building or make decisions that seemed to send the adventure in an unexpected direction? How did the DM handle it?

**Rules Adjudication.** To what extent did the DM lean on the rules to adjudicate outcomes? Did the DM adjudicate situations wisely or in ways that made the game fun to watch?

**Three Pillars.** How much of the session was taken up by combat, exploration, or social interaction?

**Tone and Mood.** How would you describe the tone and mood of the game? Did it change over the course of the session?

**Turns of Phrase.** Were there any words or bits of narration you really liked? (If so, jot them down.)

**World-building.** What elements of the DM’s world or the adventure grabbed your attention?

## **Ensuring Fun for All**

Ahead of the game, if you haven’t done so already, discuss with your players the experience you’re all hoping for, as well as topics, themes, and behavior that might spoil someone’s enjoyment of the game.

### **Mutual Respect**

Whether you’re playing with long-time friends or strangers, it’s important to create a foundation of mutual trust. The best games happen when everyone at the table feels safe enough to be themselves, speak up, and get into character.

It’s up to everyone to uphold the principles of respect. Difficult conversations often fall on the DM to lead, but they don’t have to. If one player’s behavior is interfering with everyone else’s enjoyment, everyone has a stake in helping to resolve the issue.

#### **Setting Expectations**

Before you assemble a group around a game table, pitch the adventures you’re thinking about running to your prospective players. Note the in-world conflicts that might arise, the setting’s overall tone, and the themes you’d like to explore. (The “[Every DM Is Unique](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/the-basics#EveryDMIsUnique)” section earlier in this chapter can help you describe your game to others.)

Telling players what to expect prepares them as they imagine what sorts of characters they could create and launches conversations about content to be embraced and avoided. You don’t need to reveal the major plot points or twists in your story, but share the themes you’re interested in exploring, the kinds of stories you’re inspired by, and which [flavors of fantasy](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/creating-campaigns#FlavorsofFantasy) (outlined in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024)) interest you. Being transparent with your players allows them to decide if this is a game they want to play, which is best to know before play begins.

Being clear about your expectations and making sure you understand your players’ expectations in return can help ensure a smooth game. Take your players’ opinions and desires seriously, and make sure they take yours just as seriously. Ideally, you’ll find a style of play that suits everyone.

**Hard and Soft Limits**

Beyond the general themes and flavors of fantasy you’re interested in exploring in your campaign, it’s important to have a conversation with your players about topics that can be sensitive or uncomfortable. It can be helpful to discuss these topics in terms of soft and hard limits:

* A soft limit applies to a topic that should be handled carefully, as it might create unwelcome anxiety, fear, or discomfort.
* A hard limit applies to a topic that should not be mentioned or described.

DMs and players can have phobias or triggers that others might not be aware of. Any in-game topic or theme that makes a member of the gaming group feel unsafe (a hard limit) must be avoided. If a topic or theme makes one or more players nervous but they consent to include it in-game (a soft limit), incorporate it with care, if at all, and be ready to quickly veer away from it if needed.

Common in-game limits apply to topics such as intraparty romance, sex, exploitation, racism, enslavement, and violence toward children and animals. Limits can also apply to certain creatures, such as spiders, snakes, rats, and demons. It’s also important to discuss limits around what harm might befall characters, including mind-control magic, helplessness, and death.

That said, D&D is a game that has in-world conflicts and mayhem. Certain core elements of the game are difficult to ignore. For example, taking damage isn’t a limit you can work around easily. Similarly, character death is something that happens from time to time, though the game has ways to counteract or avoid it (see “[Death](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/dms-toolbox#Death)” in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) for suggestions).

***Communicating Limits.*** Make sure everyone is comfortable with how the discussion of limits takes place. Players might not want to discuss limits aloud, especially if they’re new to roleplaying games or haven’t spent a lot of time with other members of the group. One way to alleviate such discomfort is to provide a way for players to share limits anonymously. Everyone can jot down their limits on an anonymous survey, such as the [Game Expectations](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/the-basics#GameExpectationsSheet) tracking sheet in this chapter.

Compile limits into a list that can be shared with the group. Limits aren’t negotiable, and everyone in the group needs to respect them.

The start of a campaign is a great time to have this discussion, but further discussion is warranted each time a new player joins the group or when the campaign has a shift in story or tone. Someone might cross a line and need to be reminded of a limit, or someone might not think to include some of their limits in the initial discussion. Players can also discover new limits as the campaign unfolds. Check in with the group every few sessions to make sure everyone’s comfortable with how the game is developing, updating the group’s limits as needed.

***Shifting Limits.*** Encourage players to bring any additional limits to you, privately or in the moment, so you can add them to the list. Trust that players know their needs best, and update the game accordingly.

***Limits in Play.*** Since D&D is improvisational, the game can go in unexpected directions. It’s helpful to have an agreed-on signal that players can use to communicate that a limit has been violated, allowing you to adjust quickly. That signal might be a gesture (such as crossing the arms in an X or raising a palm in a “stop” gesture), a code word or phrase, touching or lifting a designated object, or anything else your group agrees on. Players should also feel safe to say “stop” and pause the game until the issue is resolved. The person who invokes the signals can comment on what they want adjusted but doesn’t have to explain why the content is objectionable. The signal shouldn’t trigger a debate or discussion: thank the player for being honest about their needs, set the scene right, and move on.

Make it clear to players that if a person isn’t comfortable using the signal, they can step away from the game or call for a break to talk to you privately. Players may also give a friend permission to use the signal on their behalf. As the DM, lead by example. Take your players’ needs seriously, and use every tool at your disposal to adjust how your shared story plays out.

#### **Intra-party Conflict**

When there’s conflict between characters in an adventuring party, it’s usually a sign that one of three things is going on:

**Disruptive Player.** A player is exhibiting antisocial behavior in the game. How to deal with it is covered in the “[Antisocial Behavior](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/the-basics#AntisocialBehavior)” section.

**Player Conflict.** Conflicts between characters sometimes surface conflicts between players. These conflicts are best handled away from the gaming table. Encourage the players to resolve their conflict outside the game. If that conflict keeps arising at the game table, you might need to ask them to step away from the campaign for a while or leave the game entirely.

**Roleplaying.** Conflicts between characters aren’t always bad. It’s OK for characters (and players) to disagree about how to deal with a captured enemy or which side to back in a brewing war. If the disagreement gets too heated, take a break and perhaps discuss, out of character, how the players would like to proceed.

If you can’t tell which of these dynamics is in play, have a conversation with the players about it.

### **Respect for the Players**

Your players need to know from the start that you’ll run a game that is fun, fair, and tailored for them; that you’ll allow each of them to contribute to the story; and that you’ll pay attention to them when they take their turns. Your players also count on you to make sure an adventure’s threats don’t target them personally. Never make players feel uncomfortable or threatened.

**Do You Really Do That?**

Can players retract what they just said their characters did? Some DMs take a hard-line position: “If you said it, your character did it.” Such a strict position tends to make players much more careful about what they say, which can dampen the atmosphere and discourage humor.

Other DMs let players change their minds freely. This creates a more relaxed mood at the table, which might slow the pace of the game.

A common compromise is to rule that players can retract or change anything their characters did up until the point they learn the consequences of their actions. Once you describe what happens as a result, it’s too late for the players to change their minds.

#### **Sharing the Spotlight**

As the DM, don’t play favorites. Don’t let one player do all the talking, and make sure you check in about what every character is doing, especially during periods of exploration and social interaction, rather than focusing just on one player’s character.

Sometimes you’ll encounter players who tell other players what their characters should do, claim the best magic items for themselves, bully the other players, and refuse to share the spotlight. Away from the game, point out that the player’s behavior is spoiling the fun for others, and ask the player to tone it down. If the player refuses to change this behavior, ask the player to leave the group.

Some problems arise when a player assumes that their particular style of play is superior to others, and they lose patience with encounters tailored to other players’ preferences. Remind the impatient player (perhaps away from the table) that you have a group to please, not just one player.

#### **Tragic Limits**

Some players resist getting invested in the world of the game because they don’t want to endure the pain of seeing the people and places they care about threatened or destroyed. Other players gleefully detail a backstory full of beloved NPCs, fully expecting the DM to use those people as bait, tragic victims, and unexpected villains. It’s important to understand your players’ preferences so you neither alienate the players by callously destroying what they love nor bore them by leaving their backstory out of the campaign story.

When you have antagonists threaten the people and places the characters love, be sure the characters have a chance to stave off the worst outcome. During the game, characters should have the opportunity to avoid or mitigate losses in heroic ways, with tragedy being a consequence of the characters’ actions and decisions, not a foregone conclusion. Moments of helplessness in the face of devastating tragedy are better suited for character backstories.

#### **DM Die Rolling**

Should you hide your die rolls behind a DM screen, or should you roll your dice in the open for all the players to see? Choose either approach, and be consistent. Each approach has benefits:

**Hidden Die Rolls.** Hiding your die rolls keeps them mysterious and allows you to alter results if you want to. For example, you could ignore a Critical Hit to save a character’s life. Don’t alter die rolls too often, though, and never let the players know when you fudge a die roll.

**Visible Die Rolls.** Rolling dice in the open demonstrates impartiality—you’re not fudging rolls to the characters’ benefit or detriment.

Even if you usually roll behind a screen, it can be fun to make an especially dramatic roll where everyone can see it.

#### **Overly Cautious Players**

Overly cautious players can slow down the game by checking every flagstone, door, and wall in a dungeon for traps and hidden dangers. Sometimes this behavior is a learned response to too many unpleasant surprises in past adventures, and sometimes it’s just a manifestation of players’ personalities.

Here are some in-game techniques you can use to encourage your players to act boldly:

**Avoid Random Perils.** Avoid traps and ambushes that feel random and have little importance to the rest of the adventure.

**Create Time Pressure.** Set up a situation where the characters are racing toward a goal or destination. (Use this technique with caution, as time pressure can increase players’ anxiety.)

**Telegraph Encounters.** Give players advance warning that an encounter is imminent. Maybe they hear the heavy footfalls of a giant or see a dragon flying overhead before they have to confront it. This can encourage your players to move toward or away from the encounters rather than anxiously anticipating an ambush.

If these in-game techniques don’t have the desired effect, have a conversation outside the game with your players about which game elements are causing them to play in an overly cautious way. Come to an agreement that those elements won’t appear in your game, as keeping the game moving will result in a better experience.

### **Respect for the DM**

As the DM, you have the right to expect your players to respect you and the effort you put into making a fun game for everyone. The players need to let you direct the campaign (with their input), arbitrate the rules, and settle arguments. And when you’re narrating the action of the game, the players should be paying attention.

#### **Player Die Rolling**

Players should roll their dice in full view of everyone. If a player scoops up their dice before anyone else can see what they rolled, encourage that player to be less secretive.

When a die falls on the floor, do you count it or reroll it? When it lands cocked against a book, do you pull the book away and see where it lands or reroll the die? Work with your players to answer these questions, and record the answers as house rules.

#### **The Social Contract of Adventures**

You must provide reasonably appealing reasons for characters to undertake the adventures you prepare. (See “[Draw In the Players](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/creating-adventures#DrawInthePlayers)” in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) for advice on this topic.) In exchange, the players should go along with those hooks. It’s OK for your players to give you some pushback on why their characters should want to do what you’re asking them to do, but it’s not OK for them to invalidate the hard work you’ve done preparing the adventure by willfully going in a different direction.

If you feel like you’re keeping up your end of the bargain but your players aren’t, have a conversation with them away from the gaming table. Try to understand what hooks would motivate their characters, and make sure the players understand the work you put into preparing adventures for them.

#### **Rules Discussions**

Work out a policy about rules discussions at the table. Some groups don’t mind putting the game on hold while they discuss different interpretations of a rule. Others prefer to let the DM make a call and continue playing. If you gloss over a rules issue in play, make a note of it and return to the issue later.

Some players like to use the rules to argue against your decisions. While such players can be helpful when you’re stuck or make a rules mistake that’s easily corrected, players who argue the rules too often can disrupt the flow of the game.

If a player wants to pause play to find a specific rule or reference, you can invite the player to search for it while you and the rest of the players continue the game. That player’s character essentially steps out of the game for as long as it takes. Monsters don’t attack the character, and the character takes the [**Dodge**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DodgeAction) action in combat until the player rejoins the group. This solution allows the other players to keep playing instead of letting one player stop the game.

#### **Character Knowledge**

Encourage players to play their characters within the limits of what the characters know and understand. It can be helpful to maintain the distinction between player and character knowledge by simply asking players, “What do your *characters* think?”

Anachronistic thinking is another potential pitfall. You might need to remind players that their characters don’t know how to make things that don’t exist in the game world, such as modern firearms or antibiotics, and they don’t have the players’ understanding of modern science (which might not apply in the game universe anyway).

Similarly, sometimes a player is familiar with the published adventure you’re running or knows the *Monster Manual* backward and forward. Encourage the player to keep that knowledge separate from their character’s knowledge and allow the other players to discover it through play.

#### **Antisocial Behavior**

People often play D&D because it lets them, through their characters, do things they can’t do in real life—fight monsters, cast spells, and so on. However, for some players, this means wreaking havoc in towns or betraying their allies. What they want in the game has nothing to do with heroic adventure, but with using the game rules to act out antisocial fantasies.

If this behavior comes up in your game, it might be time to reopen the conversation about the kind of game you want to play. If it’s just one player causing the trouble, it’s perfectly appropriate to issue an ultimatum: an out-of-control player who wants to continue playing with the group must stop being disruptive and play as part of a team. Don’t let players get away with being jerks to the other players using the excuse, “that’s what my character would do.”

***Evil Characters.*** Players who want to play evil characters might be looking to carry out antisocial behavior in the game. If a player asks for permission to play an evil character or comes to the table with one already made, talk to that player about what they have in mind and make sure their plans square with the group’s expectations for your game. Sometimes a player wants to explore playing an evil character for perfectly good (and nondisruptive) reasons, and sometimes a whole group decides it might be fun to play evil characters together. These are valid options, as long as everyone’s on the same page about how the campaign will go.

#### **Players Exploiting the Rules**

Some players enjoy poring over the D&D rules and looking for optimal combinations. This kind of optimizing is part of the game (see “[Know Your Players](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/running-the-game#KnowYourPlayers)” in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024)), but it can cross a line into being exploitative, interfering with everyone else’s fun.

Setting clear expectations is essential when dealing with this kind of rules exploitation. Bear these principles in mind:

**Rules Aren’t Physics.** The rules of the game are meant to provide a fun game experience, not to describe the laws of physics in the worlds of D&D, let alone the real world. Don’t let players argue that a bucket brigade of ordinary people can accelerate a spear to light speed by all using the [**Ready**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ReadyAction) action to pass the spear to the next person in line. The Ready action facilitates heroic action; it doesn’t define the physical limitations of what can happen in a 6-second combat round.

**The Game Is Not an Economy.** The rules of the game aren’t intended to model a realistic economy, and players who look for loopholes that let them generate infinite wealth using combinations of spells are exploiting the rules.

**Combat Is for Enemies.** Some rules apply only during combat or while a character is acting in Initiative order. Don’t let players attack each other or helpless creatures to activate those rules.

**Rules Rely on Good-Faith Interpretation.** The rules assume that everyone reading and interpreting the rules has the interests of the group’s fun at heart and is reading the rules in that light.

Outlining these principles can help hold players’ exploits at bay. If a player persistently tries to twist the rules of the game, have a conversation with that player outside the game and ask them to stop.

**Knowing the Rules**

You don’t have to be an expert on the rules to be a good DM. Of course it’s helpful to be familiar with the rules, but facilitating fun is more important than implementing the rules perfectly. If you’re not sure how to apply the rules in a situation, you can always ask the opinion of the players as a group. It might take a few minutes, but it’s usually possible to reach an answer that feels fair to everyone, and that’s more important than a “correct” answer.

You don’t need to know every spell or the features of every class. Set the expectation that players are responsible for telling you what their abilities and spells do.

### **Rules for the Virtual Table**

Setting expectations is just as important in a digital environment as in person.

Some groups confine out-of-character jokes, comments, and memes to a text channel, keeping the voice channel focused on the game. But some groups find it distracting to have a separate conversation unfolding in text while the game is going on. Choose an option that works best for your group.

Who moves tokens on a virtual tabletop? Are players expected to use the built-in dice roller, or is it OK to roll physical dice and report the result? The particular technology you’re using might dictate answers to these questions or raise other questions you’ll need to sort out as you play.

How to Use a Monster

# **How to Use a Monster**

Every monster is a font of adventure. In this bestiary of Dungeons & Dragons monsters, you’ll discover the weird, the whimsical, the majestic, and the macabre. Choose your favorites, and make them part of your D&D play.

Along with the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) (2024) and [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) (2024), the [*Monster Manual*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024) is part of D&D’s foundation and requires those books. This section is intended for Dungeon Masters (DMs) and provides game statistics for monsters: all sorts of creatures—whether friend or foe—controlled by the DM. Those statistics appear in stat blocks. The [Creature Stat Blocks](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creature-stat-blocks) section presents the monsters’ sections alphabetically, with animals gathered at the end.

You may use these monsters—along with the rules for [monster customization](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/dms-toolbox#CreatingaCreature) and [encounter building](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/creating-adventures#CombatEncounters) in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024)—to build your own adventures. Consult [appendix B](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024/monster-lists) of the [*Monster Manual*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024) for monster lists that will help your adventure building.

## **Stat Block Overview**

A monster has a stat block that contains the rules necessary to use it in the game. Stat blocks are divided into the following parts, which correspond with the example stat block, Vampire Familiar:

### [**Vampire Familiar**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195247-vampire-familiar)

*Medium or Small Humanoid, Neutral Evil*

**AC** 15 **Initiative** +5 (15)

**HP** 65 (10d8 + 20)

**Speed** 30 ft., Climb 30 ft.

|  |  | Mod | Save |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Str** | 17 | +3 | +3 |
| **Dex** | 16 | +3 | +5 |
| **Con** | 15 | +2 | +2 |

|  |  | Mod | Save |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Int** | 10 | +0 | +0 |
| **Wis** | 10 | +0 | +2 |
| **Cha** | 14 | +2 | +2 |

**Skills** [**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) +4, [**Persuasion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) +4, [**Stealth**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) +7

**Resistances** Necrotic

**Immunities** [**Charmed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CharmedCondition) (except from its vampire master)

**Gear** [**Daggers**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/equipment/3-dagger) (10)

**Senses** [**Darkvision**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Darkvision) 60 ft.; Passive Perception 14

**Languages** Common plus one other language

**CR** 3 (XP 700; PB +2)

Traits

***Vampiric Connection.*** While the familiar and its vampire master are on the same plane of existence, the vampire can communicate with the familiar telepathically, and the vampire can perceive through the familiar’s senses.

Actions

***Multiattack.*** The familiar makes two Umbral Dagger attacks.

***Umbral Dagger.*** *Melee or Ranged Attack Roll:* +5, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft. *Hit:* 5 (1d4 + 3) Piercing damage plus 7 (3d4) Necrotic damage. If the target is reduced to 0 Hit Points by this attack, the target becomes [**Stable**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Stable) but has the [**Poisoned**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#PoisonedCondition) condition for 1 hour. While it has the Poisoned condition, the target has the [**Paralyzed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ParalyzedCondition) condition.

Bonus Actions

***Deathless Agility.*** The familiar takes the [**Dash**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DashAction) or [**Disengage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DisengageAction) action.

**1**

**Name and General Details.** The name of the monster is followed by its size, creature type (along with any descriptive tags), and alignment.

**2**

**Combat Highlights.** Armor Class, Hit Points, Speed, and Initiative are provided here.

**3**

**Ability Scores.** A monster’s ability scores, ability modifiers, and saving throws are listed here.

**4**

**Other Details.** The monster’s Senses, Languages, and CR entries appear here. Additional details appear in some monsters, such as skill proficiencies, Resistances, Immunities, and Gear. If a monster lacks those details, entries for them don’t appear.

**5**

**Traits.** Monster characteristics that are active at all times or during certain situations appear here.

**6**

**Actions.** The monster can take the actions here in addition to those in the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024).

**7**

**Bonus Actions.** This section provides a monster’s Bonus Actions, if any.

**8**

**Reactions and Legendary Actions.** These sections provide Reactions and Legendary Actions, if any. The example monster doesn’t include these parts.

## **Monster Entries**

Most of the book is composed of monster sections that have the following parts after a section’s title.

### **Habitat**

A monster’s habitat entry notes where the monster typically dwells. Lists of monsters organized by habitat appear in [appendix B](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024/monster-lists) of the [*Monster Manual*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024).

### **Treasure**

A monster’s treasure entry specifies whether the monster hoards treasure and the type of treasure it prefers. These preferences are detailed as follows:

**Any.** The monster’s treasure hoard can include monetary treasure and any kinds of magic items.

**Individual.** The monster doesn’t have a treasure hoard, but it might keep monetary treasure.

**Treasure Theme (Arcana, Armaments, Implements, or Relics).** The monster’s treasure hoard features magic items with the noted theme. The [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) details [treasure hoards](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/random-magic-items) appropriate for each theme.

**None.** The monster doesn’t care about treasure. Any treasure the monster has is incidental.

Any treasure a monster has is in addition to equipment listed in the Gear entry of its stat block.

The [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) provides more information on [monster treasure](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/creating-adventures#MonsterTreasurePreferences).

### **Narrative Description**

After a monster’s introductory information come details that apply to the monster wherever it might be found in the multiverse. Customize these details however is appropriate to your adventures.

### **Special Lairs**

Some monsters alter the regions around their lairs. For such a monster, regional effects are detailed in a lair section. The monster’s stat block might also include ways in which the monster is more powerful while in its lair.

### **Stat Blocks**

Each entry includes at least one stat block. Stat blocks are explored in the next section.

## **Parts of a Stat Block**

The rules for a [**stat block**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#StatBlock) are detailed in the [rules glossary](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary) and in this section.

### **Size**

A monster is Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, Huge, or Gargantuan. If size options are presented, you choose the creature’s size from those options. See the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) for information on [**size**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Size).

### **Creature Type**

Each monster has a tag that identifies the type of creature it is. Certain spells, magic items, class features, and other effects in the game interact in special ways with creatures of a particular type. Lists of monsters organized by creature type appear in appendix B.

The game includes the following creature types, which have no rules of their own:

**Aberrations** are utterly alien beings, such as aboleths, beholders, flumphs, and mind flayers.

**Beasts** are non-Humanoid natural creatures, like horses and wolves, as well as most giant animals.

**Celestials** are magical creatures, such as angels and pegasi, with ties to the Upper Planes.

**Constructs** are magically created creatures such as homunculi, modrons, and shield guardians.

**Dragons** are scaly beings of ancient origin, such as red dragons and wyverns.

**Elementals** are beings from the Elemental Planes, such as efreet and water elementals.

**Fey** are creatures tied to the Feywild or the forces of nature, such as dryads, goblins, and pixies.

**Fiends** are creatures tied to terrifying Lower Planes, such as balors and hell hounds.

**Giants** are towering beings with humanlike shapes, like cyclopes, fire giants, and trolls.

**Humanoids** are people defined by their roles and professions, such as mages, pirates, and warriors. They include members of varied species.

**Monstrosities** are unnatural creatures with strange origins, such as mimics and owlbears.

**Oozes** are gelatinous creatures, including black puddings and blobs of annihilation.

**Plants** are sentient vegetation and fungal monsters, such as myconids, shambling mounds, and treants.

**Undead** are spirits and the reanimated dead, such as ghosts, vampires, and zombies.

#### **Descriptive Tags**

A monster might have one or more tags in parentheses following its type. Such tags provide additional categorization and have no rules of their own, but certain game effects might refer to them. Lists of monster groups related by descriptive tags appear in [appendix B](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024/monster-lists) of the [*Monster Manual*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024).

### **Alignment**

The alignment specified in a monster’s stat block is a default suggestion of how to roleplay the monster, inspired by its traditional role in the game or real-world folklore. Change a monster’s alignment to suit your storytelling needs. The Neutral alignment, in particular, is an invitation for you to consider whether an individual leans toward one of the other alignments.

The [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) describes the [nine alignments](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character#TheNineAlignments) and [unaligned creatures](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character#UnalignedCreatures).

### **Armor Class**

A monster’s Armor Class (AC) includes its natural armor, Dexterity, gear, and other defenses. See the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) for information on [**Armor Class**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ArmorClass).

### **Initiative**

The Initiative entry specifies the monster’s Initiative modifier followed by the monster’s Initiative score in parentheses. Use the modifier when you roll to determine a monster’s Initiative. A monster’s Initiative modifier is typically equal to its Dexterity modifier, but some monsters have additional modifiers, such as Proficiency Bonus, applied to that number.

If you don’t want to roll a monster’s Initiative, use the Initiative score as the monster’s Initiative in combat. [**Initiative**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative) is further detailed in the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024).

### **Hit Points**

A monster’s Hit Points are presented as a number followed by parentheses, where the monster’s Hit Point Dice are provided, along with any contribution from its Constitution. Either use the number for the monster’s Hit Points or roll the die expression in parentheses to determine the monster’s Hit Points randomly; don’t use both.

A monster’s size typically determines the die used to calculate its Hit Points, as shown in the Hit Dice by Size table.

| **Monster Size** | **Hit Die** | **Average HP per Die** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Tiny | d4 | 2½ |
| Small | d6 | 3½ |
| Medium | d8 | 4½ |
| Large | d10 | 5½ |
| Huge | d12 | 6½ |
| Gargantuan | d20 | 10½ |

A monster’s Constitution modifier is multiplied by the number of Hit Dice it possesses, and the result is added to its Hit Points. For example, if a monster has a Constitution of 12 (+1 modifier) and 2d8 Hit Dice, it has 2d8 + 2 Hit Points (average 11).

For more on [**Hit Points**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints), see the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024).

### **Speed**

The Speed entry specifies a monster’s Speed. Some monsters have one or more of the following speeds: [**Burrow**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BurrowSpeed), [**Climb**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ClimbSpeed), [**Fly**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FlySpeed), [**Swim**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SwimSpeed). Rules for [**Speed**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) and these specials speeds appear in the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024).

### **Ability Scores**

Every monster has six ability scores along with corresponding ability score modifiers and saving throw modifiers. For more information on [ability scores](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#TheSixAbilities) and [saving throws](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#SavingThrows), see the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024).

### **Skills**

The Skills entry specifies a monster’s skill proficiencies, if any. For example, a monster that is very perceptive and stealthy might have bonuses to Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) and Dexterity ([**Stealth**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) checks. A skill bonus is the sum of a monster’s relevant ability modifier and its Proficiency Bonus. Other modifiers might apply.

### **Resistances and Vulnerabilities**

These entries list a monster’s [**Resistances**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Resistance) and [**Vulnerabilities**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Vulnerability), if any. See the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) for more information.

### **Immunities**

This entry lists the monster’s [**Immunities**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Immunity), if any. If the monster has damage and condition Immunities, the damage types are listed before the conditions. See the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) for details.

### **Gear**

Monsters have proficiency with their equipment. If a monster has equipment that can be given away or retrieved, the items are listed in the Gear entry. The monster’s stat block might include special flourishes that happen when the monster uses an item, and the stat block might ignore [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) rules for that item. When used by someone else, a retrievable item uses its [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) rules, ignoring any special flourishes in the stat block.

The Gear entry doesn’t necessarily list all of a monster’s equipment. For example, a monster that wears clothes is assumed to be dressed appropriately, and those clothes aren’t in this entry.

Equipment mentioned outside the Gear entry is considered to be supernatural or highly specialized, and it is unusable when the monster is defeated.

#### **Ammunition and Ranged Attacks**

A monster that requires ammunition to make ranged attacks carries the necessary ammunition.

#### **Equipping a Monster with Other Items**

You may equip monsters with additional gear however you like, using the [equipment chapter](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment) of the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) for inspiration. You decide how much of a monster’s equipment is recoverable after the creature is slain and whether any of that equipment is still usable.

Beware of giving a monster combat-oriented magic items, since those might alter the monster’s Challenge Rating. If you do give a monster a magic item, the monster can have Attunement with magic items as noted in the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024). A monster with a class tag after its creature type is considered a member of that class for Attunement purposes.

### **Senses**

The Senses entry specifies a monster’s Passive Perception score, as well as any special senses the monster possesses. [**Passive Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#PassivePerception) and [special senses](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#SpecialSenses) are described in the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024).

### **Languages**

This entry lists languages that the monster can use to communicate. Sometimes a monster can understand a language but can’t communicate with it, which is noted in its entry. “None” indicates that a creature doesn’t comprehend any language.

#### **Telepathy**

[**Telepathy**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Telepathy) is a magical ability that allows a creature to communicate mentally with another creature within a specified range. See the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) for more information.

### **Challenge Rating**

[**Challenge Rating**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ChallengeRating) is defined in the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024), while guidance on using CR to [plan potential combat encounters](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024/creating-adventures#CombatEncounters) is in the [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024). Lists of monsters organized by Challenge Rating appear in [appendix B](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024/monster-lists) of the [*Monster Manual*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024).

#### **Experience Points**

The number of Experience Points (XP) a monster is worth is based on its CR, as detailed in the Experience Points by Challenge Rating table. XP is awarded for defeating the monster in combat or otherwise neutralizing it.

Unless a rule says otherwise, a monster summoned by a spell or another magical ability is worth the XP noted in its stat block.

##### **Experience Points by Challenge Rating**

| **CR** | **XP** |
| --- | --- |
| 0 | 0 or 10 |
| 1/8 | 25 |
| 1/4 | 50 |
| 1/2 | 100 |
| 1 | 200 |
| 2 | 450 |
| 3 | 700 |
| 4 | 1,100 |
| 5 | 1,800 |
| 6 | 2,300 |
| 7 | 2,900 |
| 8 | 3,900 |
| 9 | 5,000 |
| 10 | 5,900 |
| 11 | 7,200 |
| 12 | 8,400 |
| 13 | 10,000 |

| **CR** | **XP** |
| --- | --- |
| 14 | 11,500 |
| 15 | 13,000 |
| 16 | 15,000 |
| 17 | 18,000 |
| 18 | 20,000 |
| 19 | 22,000 |
| 20 | 25,000 |
| 21 | 33,000 |
| 22 | 41,000 |
| 23 | 50,000 |
| 24 | 62,000 |
| 25 | 75,000 |
| 26 | 90,000 |
| 27 | 105,000 |
| 28 | 120,000 |
| 29 | 135,000 |
| 30 | 155,000 |

#### **Proficiency Bonus**

A monster’s Proficiency Bonus (PB) is determined by its CR, as shown in the Proficiency Bonus by Challenge Rating table, and is reflected in saving throws, skills, and other statistics where the monster’s exceptional aptitude is a factor.

| **CR** | **PB** |
| --- | --- |
| 0–4 | +2 |
| 5–8 | +3 |
| 9–12 | +4 |
| 13–16 | +5 |
| 17–20 | +6 |
| 21–24 | +7 |
| 25–28 | +8 |
| 29–30 | +9 |

### **Traits**

A monster’s traits, if any, are features that are active at all times or in certain situations.

**Running a Monster**

To ensure a monster acts in accordance with its Challenge Rating, follow these rules during combat:

**Special Abilities.** If the monster has a special ability that deals a lot of damage but has a limited number of uses, such as a recharging breath weapon or a spell it can cast only once per day, have it use that special ability as quickly and as often as possible.

**Multiattack.** If the monster has Multiattack, have it use Multiattack on any of its turns in which it’s not using one of its more powerful abilities.

**Bonus Actions, Reactions, Legendary Actions.** If the monster has Bonus Actions, Reactions, or Legendary Actions in its stat block, make sure it uses them as often as it can.

### **Actions**

A monster can take the actions in this section or take one of the [actions available to all creatures](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Actions), as described in the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024).

#### **Attack Notation**

The entry for a monster’s attack identifies whether the attack is a melee or a ranged attack and then provides the attack roll’s bonus, its reach or range, and what happens on a hit. An attack is against one target unless its entry says otherwise. For details on [different kinds of attacks](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#MakinganAttack), see the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024).

***Hit.*** Any damage dealt or other effects that occur as a result of an attack hitting a target are described after the “*Hit:*” notation.

***Miss.*** If an attack has an effect that occurs on a miss, that information follows the “*Miss:*” notation.

***Hit or Miss.*** If an attack has an effect that occurs regardless of whether it hits or misses its target, that information follows the “*Hit or Miss:*” notation.

#### **Saving Throw Effect Notation**

If an effect forces a saving throw, the effect identifies the kind of save required and then provides the save’s DC, a description of which creatures make the save, and an explanation of what happens on a failed or successful save.

“Half damage only” on a successful save means the target takes half as much damage (round down) as targets that fail the save, while also ignoring all other parts of the effect.

#### **Damage Notation**

A stat block usually provides both a number and a die expression for each instance of damage. For example, an attack might deal 4 (1d4 + 2) damage on a hit. You decide whether to use the number or the die expression in parentheses; don’t use both.

#### **Multiattack**

Some creatures can make more than one attack when they take the [**Attack**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackAction) action. Such creatures have the Multiattack entry in the “Actions” section of their stat block. This entry details the attacks a creature can make, as well as any additional abilities it can use, as part of the [**Attack**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackAction) action.

#### **Spellcasting**

If a monster can cast any spells, its stat block lists the spells and provides the monster’s spellcasting ability, spell save DC (if any spells require a saving throw), and spell attack bonus (if any spells require an attack roll). Unless noted otherwise, a spell of level 1 or higher is always cast at its lowest possible level and can’t be cast at a higher level.

A monster’s spell can have special rules or restrictions. For example, a [**green slaad**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195058-green-slaad) can cast the [***Invisibility***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2619116-invisibility) spell, but the spell has a “self only” restriction, which means the spell affects only the slaad.

***Spell Components.*** The Spellcasting trait notes whether the monster’s spellcasting ignores the need for certain spell components. If any spell components are required, describe the monster’s use of Verbal, Somatic, or Material components to signal to characters that it is casting a spell. A monster that requires Material components has them.

***Casting Times of 1+ Minutes.*** If a spell has a casting time of 1 minute or more yet is listed in a spellcasting action, the monster doesn’t cast the spell in just one action unless the action’s description states otherwise; the monster must take the [**Magic**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#MagicAction) action on each of its turns and maintain [**Concentration**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Concentration) to cast the spell, as described in the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024).

### **Bonus Action**

If a monster has Bonus Action options, they are listed in this section. See the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) for details on [**Bonus Actions**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BonusAction).

### **Reactions**

If the monster has Reaction options, those are listed in this section along with their triggers. See the [*Player’s Handbook*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/phb-2024) for details on [**Reactions**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Reaction).

### **Legendary Actions**

If the monster has Legendary Action options, those are listed in this section. A Legendary Action is an action that a monster can take immediately after another creature’s turn. Only one of these actions can be taken at a time and only after another creature’s turn ends. The monster can’t take a Legendary Action if it has the [**Incapacitated**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition or is otherwise unable to take actions.

The monster has a limited number of Legendary Action uses, and that number is specified in the stat block. The monster expends one use whenever it takes a Legendary Action, and it regains all expended uses at the start of each of its turns.

### **Limited Usage**

Some parts of a stat block have restrictions on the number of times they can be used. Here are the most common ways that usage is limited:

**X/Day.** This notation means the stat block part can be used a certain number of times (represented by X) and that a monster must finish a Long Rest to regain expended uses. For example, a Reaction that includes “1/Day” means the Reaction can be taken once and that the monster must finish a Long Rest to take it again.

**Recharge X–Y.** This notation means a monster can use the stat block part once. At the start of each of the monster’s turns, roll 1d6. If the roll is within the number range given in the notation (represented by X–Y), the monster regains the use of that part, which also recharges when the monster finishes a Short or Long Rest. For example, “Recharge 5–6” in an action means a monster can take the action once. Then, at the start of each of the monster’s turns, it regains the use of that action if it rolls a 5 or 6 on 1d6.

**Recharge after a Short or Long Rest.** This notation means the monster can use the stat block part once and must then finish a Short or Long Rest to use it again.

## **Monster Conversions**

Every monster in 2014 [*Monster Manual*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2014) either appears in the 2025 [*Monster Manual*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024) or has a CR-appropriate replacement. If you’re using material published prior to this book and are unable to locate a stat block herein, consult the Stat Block Conversions table below to find the equivalent stat block you should use.

| **2014 Stat Block** | **2025 Equivalent** |
| --- | --- |
| [**Aarakocra**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17100-aarakocra) | [**Aarakocra Skirmisher**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194865-aarakocra-skirmisher) |
| [**Acolyte**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16763-acolyte) | [**Priest Acolyte**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195169-priest-acolyte) |
| [**Adult Blue Dracolich**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17106-adult-blue-dracolich) | [**Dracolich**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194972-dracolich) |
| [**Androsphinx**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16785-androsphinx) | [**Sphinx of Valor**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195213-sphinx-of-valor) |
| [**Azer**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16794-azer) | [**Azer Sentinel**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194909-azer-sentinel) |
| [**Bugbear**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16817-bugbear) | [**Bugbear Warrior**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/4831002-bugbear-warrior) |
| [**Bullywug**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17120-bullywug) | [**Bullywug Warrior**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/4831017-bullywug-warrior) |
| [**Centaur**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16821-centaur) | [**Centaur Trooper**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194939-centaur-trooper) |
| [**Cult Fanatic**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16836-cult-fanatic) | [**Cultist Fanatic**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/4904746-cultist-fanatic) |
| [**Cyclops**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17090-cyclops) | [**Cyclops Sentry**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194957-cyclops-sentry) |
| [**Deep Gnome**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17211-deep-gnome-svirfneblin) | [**Scout**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5174957-scout) |
| [**Drow**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17133-drow) | [**Priest Acolyte**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195169-priest-acolyte) |
| [**Drow Elite Warrior**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17134-drow-elite-warrior) | [**Gladiator**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195042-gladiator) |
| [**Drow Mage**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17135-drow-mage) | [**Bandit Deceiver**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194914-bandit-deceiver) |
| [**Drow Priestess of Lolth**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17136-drow-priestess-of-lolth) | [**Fiend Cultist**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194993-fiend-cultist) |
| [**Duergar**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16850-duergar) | [**Spy**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195217-spy) |
| [**Duodrone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17180-duodrone) | [**Modron Duodrone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195128-modron-duodrone) |
| [**Faerie Dragon**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17108-faerie-dragon-older) (if green, blue, indigo, or violet) | [**Faerie Dragon Adult**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194991-faerie-dragon-adult) |
| [**Faerie Dragon**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17107-faerie-dragon-younger) (if red, orange, or yellow) | [**Faerie Dragon Youth**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194992-faerie-dragon-youth) |
| [**Fire Snake**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17199-fire-snake) | [**Salamander Fire Snake**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195191-salamander-fire-snake) |
| [**Flying Sword**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16865-flying-sword) | [**Animated Flying Sword**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194895-animated-flying-sword) |
| [**Gas Spore**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17147-gas-spore) | [**Gas Spore Fungus**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195004-gas-spore-fungus) |
| [**Giant Poisonous Snake**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16890-giant-poisonous-snake) | [**Giant Venomous Snake**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195030-giant-venomous-snake) |
| [**Gnoll**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16904-gnoll) | [**Gnoll Warrior**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195046-gnoll-warrior) |
| [**Goblin**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16907-goblin) | [**Goblin Warrior**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195050-goblin-warrior) |
| [**Grick Alpha**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17158-grick-alpha) | [**Grick Ancient**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195060-grick-ancient) |
| [**Gynosphinx**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16917-gynosphinx) | [**Sphinx of Lore**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195211-sphinx-of-lore) |
| [**Half-Ogre (Ogrillon)**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17185-half-ogre) | [**Ogrillon Ogre**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195149-ogrillon-ogre) |
| [**Half-Red Dragon Veteran**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16918-half-red-dragon-veteran) | [**Half-Dragon**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195068-half-dragon) |
| [**Hobgoblin**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16925-hobgoblin) | [**Hobgoblin Warrior**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195079-hobgoblin-warrior) |
| [**Kobold**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16939-kobold) | [**Kobold Warrior**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195096-kobold-warrior) |
| [**Lizardfolk**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16946-lizardfolk) | [**Scout**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5174957-scout) |
| [**Lizardfolk Shaman**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17171-lizardfolk-shaman) | [**Lizardfolk Geomancer**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195107-lizardfolk-geomancer) |
| [**Lizard King/Queen**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17172-lizard-king-queen) | [**Lizardfolk Sovereign**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195108-lizardfolk-sovereign) |
| [**Merfolk**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16955-merfolk) | [**Merfolk Skirmisher**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195119-merfolk-skirmisher) |
| [**Minotaur**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16958-minotaur) | [**Minotaur of Baphomet**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195126-minotaur-of-baphomet) |
| [**Monodrone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17176-monodrone) | [**Modron Monodrone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195129-modron-monodrone) |
| [**Orc**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16972-orc) | [**Tough**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195235-tough) |
| [**Orc Eye of Gruumsh**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17188-orc-eye-of-gruumsh) | [**Cultist Fanatic**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/4904746-cultist-fanatic) |
| [**Orc War Chief**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17187-orc-war-chief) | [**Tough Boss**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/4904883-tough-boss) |
| [**Orog**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17189-orog) | [**Berserker**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/4904621-berserker) |
| [**Pentadrone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17179-pentadrone) | [**Modron Pentadrone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195130-modron-pentadrone) |
| [**Poisonous Snake**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16982-poisonous-snake) | [**Venomous Snake**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/4775847-venomous-snake) |
| [**Quadrone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17178-quadrone) | [**Modron Quadrone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195131-modron-quadrone) |
| [**Quaggoth Spore Servant**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17182-quaggoth-spore-servant) | [**Myconid Spore Servant**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195138-myconid-spore-servant) |
| [**Quipper**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/16989-quipper) | [**Piranha**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195160-piranha) |
| [**Rug of Smothering**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17000-rug-of-smothering) | [**Animated Rug of Smothering**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5194896-animated-rug-of-smothering) |
| [**Sahuagin**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17003-sahuagin) | [**Sahuagin Warrior**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195190-sahuagin-warrior) |
| [**Sahuagin Priestess**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17197-sahuagin-priestess) | [**Sahuagin Priest**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195189-sahuagin-priest) |
| [**Shrieker**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17013-shrieker) | [**Shrieker Fungus**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195205-shrieker-fungus) |
| [**Swarm of Poisonous Snakes**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17030-swarm-of-poisonous-snakes) | [**Swarm of Venomous Snakes**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195231-swarm-of-venomous-snakes) |
| [**Swarm of Quippers**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17031-swarm-of-quippers) | [**Swarm of Piranhas**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195227-swarm-of-piranhas) |
| [**Thri-kreen**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17203-thri-kreen) | [**Thri-kreen Marauder**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195233-thri-kreen-marauder) |
| [**Thug**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17035-thug) | [**Tough**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195235-tough) |
| [**Tribal Warrior**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17038-tribal-warrior) | [**Warrior Infantry**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195259-warrior-infantry) |
| [**Tridrone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17177-tridrone) | [**Modron Tridrone**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195132-modron-tridrone) |
| [**Veteran**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17045-veteran) | [**Warrior Veteran**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195260-warrior-veteran) |
| [**Young Red Shadow Dragon**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17132-young-red-shadow-dragon) | [**Shadow Dragon**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195201-shadow-dragon-huge) |
| [**Yuan-ti Pureblood**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/17123-yuan-ti-pureblood) | [**Yuan-ti Infiltrator**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/monsters/5195289-yuan-ti-infiltrator) |

📑 Rules Glossary

## **Glossary Conventions**

The glossary uses the following conventions:

**Tags in Brackets.** Some entries have a tag in brackets after the entry’s name, as in “Attack [Action].” A tag—[Action](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Action), [Area of Effect](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AreaofEffect), [Attitude](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Attitude), [Condition](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Condition), or [Hazard](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Hazard)—indicates that a rule is part of a family of rules. The tags also have glossary entries.

**“You.”** The game’s rules—in this glossary and elsewhere—often talk about something happening to you in the game world. That “you” refers to the creature or object that the rule applies to in a particular moment of play. For example, the “you” in the [Prone](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) condition is a creature that currently has that condition.

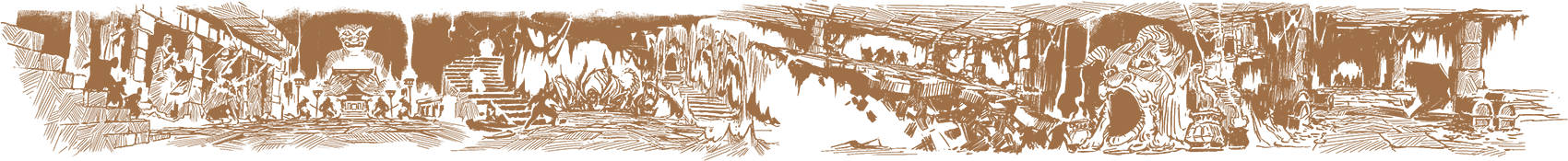
**“See Also.”** Some glossary entries include a *See also* section that points to other entries in the glossary, to chapters in this book, or both.

**No Obsolete Terms.** The glossary contains definitions of current rules terms only.

**Abbreviations.** The abbreviations listed below appear in this glossary and elsewhere in the rules.

| **AC** | Armor Class |
| --- | --- |
| **C** | Concentration |
| **CE** | Chaotic Evil |
| **CG** | Chaotic Good |
| **Cha.** | Charisma |
| **CN** | Chaotic Neutral |
| **Con.** | Constitution |
| **CP** | Copper Piece(s) |
| **CR** | Challenge Rating |
| **DC** | Difficulty Class |
| **Dex.** | Dexterity |
| **DM** | Dungeon Master |
| **EP** | Electrum Piece(s) |
| **GP** | Gold Piece(s) |
| **HP** | Hit Point(s) |
| **Int.** | Intelligence |
| **LE** | Lawful Evil |
| **LG** | Lawful Good |
| **LN** | Lawful Neutral |
| **M** | Material component |
| **N** | Neutral |
| **NE** | Neutral Evil |
| **NG** | Neutral Good |
| **NPC** | Nonplayer character |
| **PB** | Proficiency Bonus |
| **PP** | Platinum Piece(s) |
| **R** | Ritual |
| **S** | Somatic component |
| **SP** | Silver Piece(s) |
| **Str.** | Strength |
| **V** | Verbal component |
| **Wis.** | Wisdom |
| **XP** | Experience Point(s) |

NOOR RAHMAN



## **Rules Definitions**

Here are definitions of various rules.

### **Ability Check**

An ability check is a [D20 Test](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test) that represents using one of the six abilities—or a specific skill associated with an ability—to overcome a challenge. *See also* chapter 1 (“[D20 Tests](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#D20Tests)” and “[Proficiency](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Proficiency)”).

### **Ability Score and Modifier**

A creature has six ability scores—Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma—each of which has a corresponding modifier. Add the modifier when you make a [D20 Test](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test) with the corresponding ability or when a rule asks you to do so. *See also* chapter 1 (“[The Six Abilities](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#TheSixAbilities)”).

### **Action**

On your turn, you can take one action. Choose which action to take from those below or from the special actions provided by your features. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Actions](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Actions)”). These actions are defined elsewhere in this glossary:

[Attack](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackAction)

[Dash](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DashAction)

[Disengage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DisengageAction)

[Dodge](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DodgeAction)

[Help](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HelpAction)

[Hide](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HideAction)

[Influence](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InfluenceAction)

[Magic](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#MagicAction)

[Ready](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ReadyAction)

[Search](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SearchAction)

[Study](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#StudyAction)

[Utilize](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UtilizeAction)

### **Advantage**

If you have Advantage on a [D20 Test](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test), roll two d20s, and use the higher roll. A roll can’t be affected by more than one Advantage, and Advantage and [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on the same roll cancel each other. *See also* chapter 1 (“[D20 Tests](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#AdvantageDisadvantage)”).

### **Adventure**

An adventure is a series of encounters. A story emerges through playing them. *See also* “[Encounter](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Encounter).”

### **Alignment**

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). These factors allow for nine possible combinations, such as Lawful Good and Neutral Evil. *See also* chapter 2 (“[Create Your Character](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character#Step4ChooseanAlignment)”).

### **Ally**

A creature is your ally if it is a member of your adventuring party, your friend, on your side in combat, or a creature that the rules or the DM designates as your ally.

### **Area of Effect**

The descriptions of many spells and other features specify that they have an area of effect, which typically has one of six shapes. These shapes are defined elsewhere in this glossary:

[Cone](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ConeAreaofEffect)

[Cube](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CubeAreaofEffect)

[Cylinder](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CylinderAreaofEffect)

[Emanation](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#EmanationAreaofEffect)

[Line](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LineAreaofEffect)

[Sphere](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SphereAreaofEffect)

An area of effect has a point of origin, a location from which the effect’s energy erupts. The rules for each shape specify how to position its point of origin. If all straight lines extending from the point of origin to a location in the area of effect are blocked, that location isn’t included in the area of effect. To block a line, an obstruction must provide [**Total Cover**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover). *See also* “[Cover](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover).”

If the creator of an area of effect places it at an unseen point and an obstruction—such as a wall—is between the creator and that point, the point of origin comes into being on the near side of the obstruction.

### **Armor Class**

An Armor Class (AC) is the target number for an attack roll. AC represents how difficult it is to hit a target.

Your base AC calculation is 10 plus your Dexterity modifier. If a rule gives you another base AC calculation, you choose which calculation to use; you can’t use more than one. *See also* “[Attack Roll](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackRoll).”

### **Armor Training**

Armor training allows you to use armor of a certain category without the following drawbacks. If you wear Light, Medium, or Heavy armor and lack training with it, you have Disadvantage on any [D20 Test](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test) that involves Strength or Dexterity, and you can’t cast spells. If you use a Shield and lack training with it, you don’t gain its AC bonus. *See also* “[Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage)” and chapter 6 (“[Armor](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#Armor)”).

### **Attack [Action]**

When you take the Attack action, you can make one attack roll with a weapon or an [Unarmed Strike](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnarmedStrike).

***Equipping and Unequipping Weapons.*** You can either equip or unequip one weapon when you make an attack as part of this action. You do so either before or after the attack. If you equip a weapon before an attack, you don’t need to use it for that attack. Equipping a weapon includes drawing it from a sheath or picking it up. Unequipping a weapon includes sheathing, stowing, or dropping it.

***Moving between Attacks.*** If you move on your turn and have a feature, such as Extra Attack, that gives you more than one attack as part of the Attack action, you can use some or all of that movement to move between those attacks.

### **Attack Roll**

An attack roll is a [D20 Test](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test) that represents making an attack with a weapon, an [Unarmed Strike](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnarmedStrike), or a spell. *See also* chapter 1 (“[D20 Tests](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#AttackRolls)”).

### **Attitude**

A monster has a starting attitude toward a player character: Friendly, Hostile, or Indifferent. *See also* “[Friendly](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FriendlyAttitude),” “[Hostile](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HostileAttitude),” “[Indifferent](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IndifferentAttitude),” and “[Influence](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InfluenceAction).”

### **Attunement**

Some magic items require a creature to form a bond—called Attunement—with them before the creature can use an item’s magical properties. A creature can have Attunement with no more than three magic items at a time. *See also* chapter 6 (“[Magic Items](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#Attunement)”).

### **Blinded [Condition]**

While you have the Blinded condition, you experience the following effects.

***Can’t See.*** You can’t see and automatically fail any ability check that requires sight.

***Attacks Affected.*** Attack rolls against you have [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage), and your attack rolls have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage).

### **Blindsight**

If you have Blindsight, you can see within a specific range without relying on physical sight. Within that range, you can see anything that isn’t behind [**Total Cover**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/basic-rules/combat#Cover) even if you have the [Blinded](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BlindedCondition) condition or are in [Darkness](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Darkness). Moreover, in that range, you can see something that has the [Invisible](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InvisibleCondition) condition.

### **Bloodied**

A creature is Bloodied while it has half its [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints) or fewer remaining.

### **Bonus Action**

A Bonus Action is a special action that you can take on the same turn that you take an action. You can’t take more than one Bonus Action on a turn, and you have a Bonus Action to take only if a rule explicitly says so. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Actions](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#BonusActions)”).

### **Breaking Objects**

Objects can be harmed by attacks and by some spells, using the rules below. If an object is exceedingly fragile, the DM may allow a creature to break it automatically with the [Attack](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackAction) or [Utilize](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UtilizeAction) action.

***Armor Class.*** The Object Armor Class table suggests ACs for various substances.

| **AC** | **Substance** |
| --- | --- |
| 11 | Cloth, paper, rope |
| 13 | Crystal, glass, ice |
| 15 | Wood |
| 17 | Stone |
| 19 | Iron, steel |
| 21 | Mithral |
| 23 | Adamantine |

***Hit Points.*** An object is destroyed when it has 0 [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints). The Object Hit Points table suggests Hit Points for fragile and resilient objects that are Large or smaller. To track Hit Points for a Huge or Gargantuan object, divide it into Large or smaller sections, and track each section’s Hit Points separately. The DM determines whether destroying part of an object causes the whole thing to collapse.

| **Size** | **Fragile** | **Resilient** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Tiny (bottle, lock) | 2 (1d4) | 5 (2d4) |
| Small (chest, lute) | 3 (1d6) | 10 (3d6) |
| Medium (barrel, chandelier) | 4 (1d8) | 18 (4d8) |
| Large (cart, dining table) | 5 (1d10) | 27 (5d10) |

***Damage Types and Objects.*** Objects have [Immunity](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Immunity) to Poison and Psychic damage. The DM might decide that some damage types are more or less effective against an object. For example, Bludgeoning damage works well for smashing things but not for cutting. Paper or cloth objects might have Vulnerability to Fire damage.

***Damage Threshold.*** Big objects, such as castle walls, often have extra resilience represented by a damage threshold. *See also* “[Damage Threshold](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DamageThreshold).”

***No Ability Scores.*** An object lacks ability scores unless a rule assigns scores to the object. Without ability scores, an object can’t make ability checks, and it fails all saving throws.

### **Bright Light**

Bright Light is normal illumination. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Exploration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Light)”).

### **Burning [Hazard]**

A burning creature or object takes 1d4 Fire damage at the start of each of its turns. As an action, you can extinguish fire on yourself by giving yourself the [Prone](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) condition and rolling on the ground. The fire also goes out if it is doused, submerged, or suffocated.

### **Burrow Speed**

A creature that has a Burrow Speed can use that speed to move through sand, earth, mud, or ice. The creature can’t burrow through solid rock unless the creature has a trait that allows it to do so. *See also* “[Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed).”

### **Campaign**

A campaign is a series of adventures. *See also* “[Adventure](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Adventure).”

### **Cantrip**

A cantrip is a level 0 spell, which is cast without a spell slot. *See also* [chapter 7](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/spells/).

### **Carrying Capacity**

Your size and Strength score determine the maximum weight in pounds that you can carry, as shown in the Carrying Capacity table. The table also shows the maximum weight you can drag, lift, or push.

While dragging, lifting, or pushing weight in excess of the maximum weight you can carry, your [Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) can be no more than 5 feet.

| **Creature Size** | **Carry** | **Drag/Lift/Push** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Tiny | Str. × 7.5 lb. | Str. × 15 lb. |
| Small/Medium | Str. × 15 lb. | Str. × 30 lb. |
| Large | Str. × 30 lb. | Str. × 60 lb. |
| Huge | Str. × 60 lb. | Str. × 120 lb. |
| Gargantuan | Str. × 120 lb. | Str. × 240 lb. |

### **Challenge Rating**

Challenge Rating (CR) summarizes the threat a monster poses to a group of four player characters. Compare a monster’s CR to the characters’ level. If the CR is higher, the monster is likely a danger. If the CR is lower, the monster likely poses little threat. But circumstances and the number of player characters can significantly alter how threatening a monster is in actual play. The [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) provides guidance to the DM on using CR while planning potential combat encounters. *See also* “[Stat Block](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#StatBlock).”

### **Character Sheet**

A character sheet is a paper or digital record that you use to track your character’s information. *See also* [chapter 2](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character#ChooseaCharacterSheet).

### **Charmed [Condition]**

While you have the Charmed condition, you experience the following effects.

***Can’t Harm the Charmer.*** You can’t attack the charmer or target the charmer with damaging abilities or magical effects.

***Social Advantage.*** The charmer has [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) on any ability check to interact with you socially.

### **Climbing**

While you’re climbing, each foot of movement costs 1 extra foot (2 extra feet in [Difficult Terrain](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DifficultTerrain)). You ignore this extra cost if you have a [Climb Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ClimbSpeed) and use it to climb.

At the DM’s option, climbing a slippery surface or one with few handholds might require a successful DC 15 Strength ([**Athletics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check.

### **Climb Speed**

A Climb Speed can be used in place of Speed to traverse a vertical surface without expending the extra movement normally associated with climbing. *See also* “[Climbing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Climbing)” and “[Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed).”

### **Concentration**

Some spells and other effects require Concentration to remain active, as specified in their descriptions. If the effect’s creator loses Concentration, the effect ends. If the effect has a maximum duration, the effect’s description specifies how long the creator can concentrate on it: up to 1 minute, 1 hour, or some other duration. The creator can end Concentration at any time (no action required). The following factors break Concentration.

***Another Concentration Effect.*** You lose Concentration on an effect the moment you start casting a spell that requires Concentration or activate another effect that requires Concentration.

***Damage.*** If you take damage, you must succeed on a Constitution saving throw to maintain Concentration. The DC equals 10 or half the damage taken (round down), whichever number is higher, up to a maximum DC of 30.

***Incapacitated or Dead.*** Your Concentration ends if you have the [Incapacitated](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition or you die.

### **Condition**

A condition is a temporary game state. The definition of a condition says how it affects its recipient, and various rules define how to end a condition. This glossary defines these conditions:

[Blinded](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BlindedCondition)

[Charmed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CharmedCondition)

[Deafened](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DeafenedCondition)

[Exhaustion](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ExhaustionCondition)

[Frightened](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FrightenedCondition)

[Grappled](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#GrappledCondition)

[Incapacitated](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition)

[Invisible](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InvisibleCondition)

[Paralyzed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ParalyzedCondition)

[Petrified](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#PetrifiedCondition)

[Poisoned](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#PoisonedCondition)

[Prone](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition)

[Restrained](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#RestrainedCondition)

[Stunned](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#StunnedCondition)

[Unconscious](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnconsciousCondition)

A condition doesn’t stack with itself; a recipient either has a condition or doesn’t. The Exhaustion condition is an exception to that rule. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Conditions](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Conditions)”).

### **Cone [Area of Effect]**

A Cone is an [area of effect](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AreaofEffect) that extends in straight lines from a point of origin in a direction its creator chooses. A Cone’s width at any point along its length is equal to that point’s distance from the point of origin. For example, a Cone is 15 feet wide at a point along its length that is 15 feet from the point of origin. The effect that creates a Cone specifies its maximum length.

A Cone’s point of origin isn’t included in the area of effect unless its creator decides otherwise.

### **Cover**

Cover provides a degree of protection to a target behind it. There are three degrees of cover, each of which provides a different benefit to a target: [**Half Cover**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover) (+2 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws), [**Three-Quarters Cover**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover) (+5 bonus to AC and Dexterity saving throws), and [**Total Cover**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover) (can’t be targeted directly). If behind more than one degree of cover, a target benefits only from the most protective degree. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Cover)”).

### **Crawling**

While you’re crawling, each foot of movement costs 1 extra foot (2 extra feet in [Difficult Terrain](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DifficultTerrain)). *See also* “[Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed).”

### **Creature**

Any being in the game, including a player’s character, is a creature. *See also* “[Creature Type](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CreatureType).”

### **Creature Type**

Every creature, including every player character, has a tag in the rules that identifies the type of creature it is. Most player characters are of the Humanoid type. These are the game’s creature types:

Aberration

Beast

Celestial

Construct

Dragon

Elemental

Fey

Fiend

Giant

Humanoid

Monstrosity

Ooze

Plant

Undead

The types don’t have rules themselves, but some rules in the game affect creatures of certain types in different ways.

### **Critical Hit**

If you roll a 20 on the d20 for an attack roll, you score a Critical Hit, and the attack hits regardless of any modifiers or the target’s AC. A Critical Hit lets you roll extra dice for the attack’s damage against the target. Roll all of the attack’s damage dice twice and add them together. Then add any relevant modifiers. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Damage and Healing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#CriticalHits)”).

### **Cube [Area of Effect]**

A Cube is an [area of effect](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AreaofEffect) that extends in straight lines from a point of origin located anywhere on a face of the Cube. The effect that creates a Cube specifies its size, which is the length of each side.

A Cube’s point of origin isn’t included in the area of effect unless its creator decides otherwise.

### **Curses**

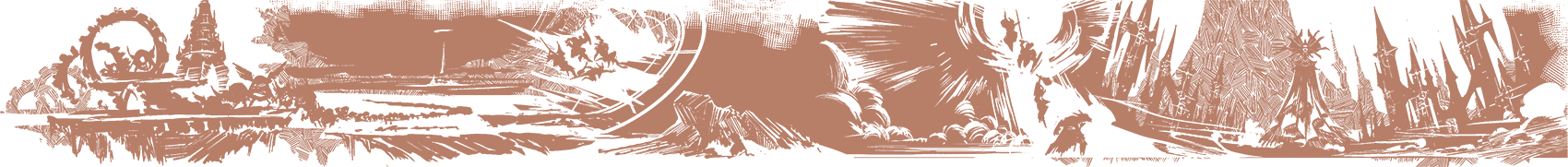
Some game effects curse a creature or an object. The effect that confers a curse defines what the curse does. Curses can be removed by the [***Remove Curse***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2618943-remove-curse) and [***Greater Restoration***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2618961-greater-restoration) spells or other magic that explicitly ends curses.

### **Cylinder [Area of Effect]**

A Cylinder is an [area of effect](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AreaofEffect) that extends in straight lines from a point of origin located at the center of the circular top or bottom of the Cylinder. The effect that creates a Cylinder specifies the radius of the Cylinder’s base and the Cylinder’s height.

A Cylinder’s point of origin is included in the area of effect.

NOOR RAHMAN



### **D20 Test**

D20 Tests encompass the three main d20 rolls of the game: [ability checks](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AbilityCheck), [attack rolls](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackRoll), and [saving throws](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SavingThrow). If something in the game affects D20 Tests, it affects all three of these rolls. The DM determines whether a D20 Test is warranted in a given circumstance. *See also* chapter 1 (“[D20 Tests](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#D20Tests)”).

### **Damage**

Damage represents harm that causes a creature or an object to lose [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints).

### **Damage Roll**

A damage roll is a die roll, adjusted by any applicable modifiers, that deals damage to a target. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Damage and Healing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#DamageRolls)”).

### **Damage Threshold**

A creature or an object that has a damage threshold has [Immunity](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Immunity) to all damage unless it takes an amount of damage from a single attack or effect equal to or greater than its damage threshold, in which case it takes that entire instance of damage. Any damage that fails to meet or exceed the damage threshold is superficial and doesn’t reduce [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints). For example, if an object has a damage threshold of 10, the object takes no damage if 9 damage is dealt to it, since that damage fails to exceed the threshold. If the same object is dealt 11 damage, it takes all of that damage.

### **Damage Types**

Attacks and other harmful effects deal different types of damage. Damage types have no rules of their own, but other rules, such as [Resistance](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Resistance), rely on the types. The Damage Types table offers examples to help a DM assign a type to a new effect.

| **Type** | **Examples** |
| --- | --- |
| Acid | Corrosive liquids, digestive enzymes |
| Bludgeoning | Blunt objects, constriction, falling |
| Cold | Freezing water, icy blasts |
| Fire | Flames, unbearable heat |
| Force | Pure magical energy |
| Lightning | Electricity |
| Necrotic | Life-draining energy |
| Piercing | Fangs, puncturing objects |
| Poison | Toxic gas, venom |
| Psychic | Mind-rending energy |
| Radiant | Holy energy, searing radiation |
| Slashing | Claws, cutting objects |
| Thunder | Concussive sound |

### **Darkness**

An area of Darkness is Heavily Obscured. *See also* “[Heavily Obscured](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HeavilyObscured)” and chapter 1 (“[Exploration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#ObscuredAreas)”).

### **Darkvision**

If you have Darkvision, you can see in [Dim Light](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DimLight) within a specified range as if it were [Bright Light](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BrightLight) and in [Darkness](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Darkness) within that range as if it were Dim Light. You discern colors in that Darkness only as shades of gray. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Exploration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#SpecialSenses)”).

### **Dash [Action]**

When you take the Dash action, you gain extra movement for the current turn. The increase equals your Speed after applying any modifiers. With a Speed of 30 feet, for example, you can move up to 60 feet on your turn if you Dash. If your Speed of 30 feet is reduced to 15 feet, you can move up to 30 feet this turn if you Dash.

If you have a special speed, such as a [Fly Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FlySpeed) or [Swim Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SwimSpeed), you can use that speed instead of your Speed when you take this action. You choose which speed to use each time you take it. *See also* “[Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed).”

### **Dead**

A dead creature has no [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints) and can’t regain them unless it is first revived by magic such as the [***Raise Dead***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2618922-raise-dead) or [***Revivify***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2618956-revivify) spell. When such a spell is cast, the spirit knows who is casting it and can refuse. The spirit of a dead creature has left the body and departed for the Outer Planes, and reviving the creature requires calling the spirit back.

If the creature returns to life, the revival effect determines the creature’s current Hit Points. Unless otherwise stated, the creature returns to life with any conditions, magical contagions, or curses that were affecting it at death if the durations of those effects are still ongoing. If the creature died with any [Exhaustion](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ExhaustionCondition) levels, it returns with 1 fewer level. If the creature had [Attunement](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Attunement) to one or more magic items, it is no longer attuned to them.

### **Deafened [Condition]**

While you have the Deafened condition, you experience the following effect.

***Can’t Hear.*** You can’t hear and automatically fail any ability check that requires hearing.

### **Death Saving Throw**

A player character must make a Death Saving Throw (also called a Death Save) if they start their turn with 0 [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints). *See also* chapter 1 (“[Damage and Healing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#DeathSavingThrows)”).

### **Dehydration [Hazard]**

A creature requires an amount of water per day based on its size, as shown in the Water Needs per Day table. A creature that drinks less than half the required water for a day gains 1 Exhaustion level at the day’s end. Exhaustion caused by dehydration can’t be removed until the creature drinks the full amount of water required for a day. *See also* “[Exhaustion](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ExhaustionCondition).”

| **Size** | **Water** |
| --- | --- |
| Tiny | 1/4 gallon |
| Small | 1 gallon |
| Medium | 1 gallon |
| Large | 4 gallons |
| Huge | 16 gallons |
| Gargantuan | 64 gallons |

### **Difficult Terrain**

If a space is Difficult Terrain, every foot of movement in that space costs 1 extra foot. For example, moving 5 feet through Difficult Terrain costs 10 feet of movement. Difficult Terrain isn’t cumulative; either a space is Difficult Terrain or it isn’t.

A space is Difficult Terrain if the space contains any of the following or something similar:

* A creature that isn’t Tiny or your ally
* Furniture that is sized for creatures of your size or larger
* Heavy snow, ice, rubble, or undergrowth
* Liquid that’s between shin- and waist-deep
* A narrow opening sized for a creature one size smaller than you
* A slope of 20 degrees or more

### **Difficulty Class**

A Difficulty Class (DC) is the target number for an [ability check](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AbilityCheck) or a [saving throw](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SavingThrow). *See also* chapter 1 (“[D20 Tests](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#D20Tests)”).

### **Dim Light**

An area with Dim Light is Lightly Obscured. *See also* “[Lightly Obscured](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LightlyObscured)” and chapter 1 (“[Exploration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#ObscuredAreas)”).

### **Disadvantage**

If you have Disadvantage on a [D20 Test](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test), roll two d20s and use the lower roll. A roll can’t be affected by more than one Disadvantage, and [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) and Disadvantage on the same roll cancel each other. *See also* chapter 1 (“[D20 Tests](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#AdvantageDisadvantage)”).

### **Disengage [Action]**

If you take the Disengage action, your movement doesn’t provoke [Opportunity Attacks](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#OpportunityAttack) for the rest of the current turn.

### **Dodge [Action]**

If you take the Dodge action, you gain the following benefits: until the start of your next turn, any attack roll made against you has [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) if you can see the attacker, and you make Dexterity saving throws with [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage).

You lose these benefits if you have the [Incapacitated](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition or if your [Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) is 0.

### **Emanation [Area of Effect]**

An Emanation is an [area of effect](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AreaofEffect) that extends in straight lines from a creature or an object in all directions. The effect that creates an Emanation specifies the distance it extends.

An Emanation moves with the creature or object that is its origin unless it is an instantaneous or a stationary effect.

An Emanation’s origin (creature or object) isn’t included in the area of effect unless its creator decides otherwise.

### **Encounter**

An encounter is a scene in an adventure that is part of at least one of the game’s three pillars: social interaction, exploration, or combat. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Social Interaction](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#SocialInteraction),” “[Exploration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Exploration),” and “[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Combat)”).

### **Enemy**

A creature is your enemy if it fights against you in combat, actively works to harm you, or is designated as your enemy by the rules or DM.

### **Exhaustion [Condition]**

While you have the Exhaustion condition, you experience the following effects.

***Exhaustion Levels.*** This condition is cumulative. Each time you receive it, you gain 1 Exhaustion level. You die if your Exhaustion level is 6.

***D20 Tests Affected.*** When you make a [D20 Test](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test), the roll is reduced by 2 times your Exhaustion level.

***Speed Reduced.*** Your [Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) is reduced by a number of feet equal to 5 times your Exhaustion level.

***Removing Exhaustion Levels.*** Finishing a [Long Rest](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LongRest) removes 1 of your Exhaustion levels. When your Exhaustion level reaches 0, the condition ends.

### **Experience Points**

As they overcome challenges and complete adventures, characters earn Experience Points (XP), which are awarded by the Dungeon Master. When a character’s XP total crosses certain thresholds, the character’s level increases. The [*Dungeon Master’s Guide*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/dmg-2024) provides guidance on awarding XP. *See also* chapter 2 (“[Level Advancement](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character#LevelAdvancement)”).

### **Expertise**

Expertise is a feature that enhances your use of a skill proficiency. When you make an ability check with a skill proficiency in which you have Expertise, your Proficiency Bonus is doubled for that check unless the bonus is doubled by another feature.

If you gain Expertise, you gain it in one skill in which you have proficiency. You can’t have Expertise in the same skill proficiency more than once.

*See also* chapter 1 (“[Proficiency](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Proficiency)”).

### **Falling [Hazard]**

A creature that falls takes 1d6 Bludgeoning damage at the end of the fall for every 10 feet it fell, to a maximum of 20d6. When the creature lands, it has the [Prone](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) condition unless it avoids taking any damage from the fall.

A creature that falls into water or another liquid can use its [Reaction](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Reaction) to make a DC 15 Strength ([**Athletics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) or Dexterity ([**Acrobatics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check to hit the surface head or feet first. On a successful check, any damage resulting from the fall is halved.

### **Flying**

A variety of effects allow a creature to fly. While flying, you fall if you have the [Incapacitated](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) or [Prone](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) condition or your Fly Speed is reduced to 0. You can stay aloft in those circumstances if you can hover. *See also* “[Falling](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FallingHazard)” and “[Fly Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FlySpeed).”

### **Fly Speed**

A Fly Speed can be used to travel through the air. While you have a Fly Speed, you can stay aloft until you land, fall, or die. *See also* “[Flying](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Flying)” and “[Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed).”

### **Friendly [Attitude]**

A Friendly creature views you favorably. You have [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) on an ability check to influence a Friendly creature. *See also* “[Influence](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InfluenceAction).”

### **Frightened [Condition]**

While you have the Frightened condition, you experience the following effects.

***Ability Checks and Attacks Affected.*** You have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on [ability checks](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AbilityCheck) and [attack rolls](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackRoll) while the source of fear is within line of sight.

***Can’t Approach.*** You can’t willingly move closer to the source of fear.

### **Grappled [Condition]**

While you have the Grappled condition, you experience the following effects.

***Speed 0.*** Your [Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) is 0 and can’t increase.

***Attacks Affected.*** You have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on attack rolls against any target other than the grappler.

***Movable.*** The grappler can drag or carry you when it moves, but every foot of movement costs it 1 extra foot unless you are Tiny or two or more sizes smaller than it.

### **Grappling**

A creature can grapple another creature. Characters typically grapple by using an Unarmed Strike. Many monsters have special attacks that allow them to quickly grapple prey. However a grapple is initiated, it follows these rules. *See also* “[Unarmed Strike](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnarmedStrike)” and “[Grappled](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#GrappledCondition).”

***Grappled Condition.*** Successfully grappling a creature gives it the Grappled condition.

***One Grapple per Hand.*** A creature must have a hand free to grapple another creature. Some stat blocks and game effects allow a creature to grapple using a tentacle, a maw, or another body part. Whatever part a grappler uses, it can grapple only one creature at a time with that part, and the grappler can’t use that part to target another creature unless it ends the grapple.

***Escaping a Grapple.*** A Grappled creature can use its action to make a Strength ([**Athletics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) or Dexterity ([**Acrobatics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check against the grapple’s escape DC, ending the condition on itself on a success. The condition also ends if the grappler has the [Incapacitated](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition or if the distance between the Grappled target and the grappler exceeds the grapple’s range.

### **Hazard**

A hazard is an environmental danger. *See also* “[Burning](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BurningHazard),” “[Dehydration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DehydrationHazard),” “[Falling](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FallingHazard),” “[Malnutrition](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#MalnutritionHazard),” and “[Suffocation](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SuffocationHazard).”

### **Healing**

Healing is how you regain [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints). *See also* chapter 1 (“[Damage and Healing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#DamageandHealing)”).

### **Heavily Obscured**

You have the Blinded condition while trying to see something in a Heavily Obscured space. *See also* “[Blinded](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BlindedCondition),” “[Darkness](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Darkness),” and chapter 1 (“[Exploration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#ObscuredAreas)”).

### **Help [Action]**

When you take the Help action, you do one of the following.

***Assist an Ability Check.*** Choose one of your skill or tool proficiencies and one ally who is near enough for you to assist verbally or physically when they make an ability check. That ally has [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) on the next ability check they make with the chosen skill or tool. This benefit expires if the ally doesn’t use it before the start of your next turn. The DM has final say on whether your assistance is possible.

***Assist an Attack Roll.*** You momentarily distract an enemy within 5 feet of you, giving Advantage to the next attack roll by one of your allies against that enemy. This benefit expires at the start of your next turn.

### **Heroic Inspiration**

If you (a player character) have Heroic Inspiration, you can expend it to reroll any die immediately after rolling it, and you must use the new roll.

If you gain Heroic Inspiration but already have it, it’s lost unless you give it to a player character who lacks it.

### **Hide [Action]**

With the Hide action, you try to conceal yourself. To do so, you must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity ([**Stealth**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check while you’re [Heavily Obscured](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HeavilyObscured) or behind [**Three-Quarters Cover**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover) or [**Total Cover**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Cover), and you must be out of any enemy’s line of sight; if you can see a creature, you can discern whether it can see you.

On a successful check, you have the [Invisible](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InvisibleCondition) condition. Make note of your check’s total, which is the DC for a creature to find you with a Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check.

The condition ends on you immediately after any of the following occurs: you make a sound louder than a whisper, an enemy finds you, you make an attack roll, or you cast a spell with a Verbal component.

### **High Jump**

When you make a High Jump, you leap into the air a number of feet equal to 3 plus your Strength modifier (minimum of 0 feet) if you move at least 10 feet on foot immediately before the jump. When you make a standing High Jump, you can jump only half that distance. Either way, each foot of the jump costs a foot of movement.

You can extend your arms half your height above yourself during the jump. Thus, you can reach a distance equal to the height of the jump plus 1½ times your height.

### **Hit Point Dice**

Hit Point Dice, or Hit Dice for short, help determine a player character’s Hit Point maximum, as explained in [chapter 2](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character). Most monsters also have Hit Dice. A creature can spend Hit Dice during a Short Rest to regain [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints). *See also* “[Short Rest](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ShortRest).”

### **Hit Points**

Hit Points (HP) are a measure of how difficult it is to kill or destroy a creature or an object. Damage reduces Hit Points, and healing restores them. You can’t have more Hit Points than your Hit Point maximum, and you can’t have less than 0. *See also* “[Breaking Objects](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BreakingObjects)” and chapter 1 (“[Damage and Healing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#HitPoints)”).

### **Hostile [Attitude]**

A Hostile creature views you unfavorably. You have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on an ability check to influence a Hostile creature. *See also* “[Influence](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InfluenceAction).”

### **Hover**

Some creatures can hover, as noted in their stat blocks, and some spells and other effects grant the ability to hover. Hovering while flying prevents you from falling in certain circumstances. *See also* “[Flying](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Flying).”

### **Illusions**

Spells and other effects sometimes create magical illusions. Such an effect defines what the illusion does and which senses or mental faculties it deceives.

If an illusion manifests in space, the illusion is insubstantial and weightless, yet it seems to be affected by the environment as if the illusion were real unless the effect that created it specifies otherwise. For example, a visual illusion of a creature casts shadows and reflections, and wind appears to affect the illusory creature. Similarly, an audible illusion echoes in an echoey space.

### **Immunity**

If you have Immunity to a damage type or a condition, it doesn’t affect you in any way.

### **Improvised Weapons**

An improvised weapon is an object wielded as a makeshift weapon, such as broken glass, a table leg, or a frying pan. A Simple or Martial weapon also counts as an improvised weapon if it’s wielded in a way contrary to its design; if you use a Ranged weapon to make a melee attack or throw a Melee weapon that lacks the [**Thrown**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#Thrown) property, the weapon counts as an improvised weapon. An improvised weapon follows the rules below.

***Proficiency.*** Don’t add your Proficiency Bonus to attack rolls with an improvised weapon.

***Damage.*** On a hit, the weapon deals 1d4 damage of a type the DM thinks is appropriate for the object.

***Range.*** If you throw the weapon, it has a normal range of 20 feet and a long range of 60 feet.

***Weapon Equivalents.*** If an improvised weapon resembles a Simple or Martial weapon, the DM may say it functions as that weapon and uses that weapon’s rules. For example, the DM could treat a table leg as a Club.

### **Incapacitated [Condition]**

While you have the Incapacitated condition, you experience the following effects.

***Inactive.*** You can’t take any [action](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Action), [Bonus Action](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BonusAction), or [Reaction](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Reaction).

***No Concentration.*** Your [Concentration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Concentration) is broken.

***Speechless.*** You can’t speak.

***Surprised.*** If you’re Incapacitated when you roll [Initiative](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative), you have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on the roll.

### **Indifferent [Attitude]**

An Indifferent creature has no desire to help or hinder you. Indifferent is the default attitude of a monster. *See also* “[Influence](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InfluenceAction).”

### **Influence [Action]**

With the Influence action, you urge a monster to do something. Describe or roleplay how you’re communicating with the monster. Are you trying to deceive, intimidate, amuse, or gently persuade? The DM then determines whether the monster feels willing, unwilling, or hesitant due to your interaction; this determination establishes whether an ability check is necessary, as explained below.

***Willing.*** If your urging aligns with the monster’s desires, no ability check is necessary; the monster fulfills your request in a way it prefers.

***Unwilling.*** If your urging is repugnant to the monster or counter to its alignment, no ability check is necessary; it doesn’t comply.

***Hesitant.*** If you urge the monster to do something that it is hesitant to do, you must make an ability check, which is affected by the monster’s attitude: [Indifferent](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IndifferentAttitude), [Friendly](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FriendlyAttitude), or [Hostile](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HostileAttitude), each of which is defined in this glossary. The Influence Checks table suggests which ability check to make based on how you’re interacting with the monster. The DM chooses the check, which has a default DC equal to 15 or the monster’s Intelligence score, whichever is higher. On a successful check, the monster does as urged. On a failed check, you must wait 24 hours (or a duration set by the DM) before urging it in the same way again.

| **Ability Check** | **Interaction** |
| --- | --- |
| Charisma ([**Deception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) | Deceiving a monster that understands you |
| Charisma ([**Intimidation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) | Intimidating a monster |
| Charisma ([**Performance**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) | Amusing a monster |
| Charisma ([**Persuasion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) | Persuading a monster that understands you |
| Wisdom ([**Animal Handling**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) | Gently coaxing a Beast or Monstrosity |

### **Initiative**

Initiative determines the order of turns during combat. The combat rules in chapter 1 explain how to roll Initiative.

Sometimes a DM might have combatants use their Initiative scores instead of rolling Initiative. Your Initiative score equals 10 plus your Dexterity modifier. If you have [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) on Initiative rolls, increase your Initiative score by 5. If you have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on those rolls, decrease that score by 5. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Combat)”).

### **Invisible [Condition]**

While you have the Invisible condition, you experience the following effects.

***Surprise.*** If you’re Invisible when you roll [Initiative](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative), you have [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) on the roll.

***Concealed.*** You aren’t affected by any effect that requires its target to be seen unless the effect’s creator can somehow see you. Any equipment you are wearing or carrying is also concealed.

***Attacks Affected.*** Attack rolls against you have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage), and your attack rolls have Advantage. If a creature can somehow see you, you don’t gain this benefit against that creature.

NOOR RAHMAN



### **Jumping**

When you jump, you make either a Long Jump (horizontal) or a High Jump (vertical). *See also* “[Long Jump](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LongJump)” and “[High Jump](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HighJump).”

### **Knocking Out a Creature**

When you would reduce a creature to 0 [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints) with a melee attack, you can instead reduce the creature to 1 Hit Point. The creature then has the [Unconscious](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnconsciousCondition) condition and starts a [Short Rest](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ShortRest).

The creature remains Unconscious until it regains any Hit Points or until someone uses an action to administer first aid to it, which requires a successful DC 10 Wisdom ([**Medicine**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check.

### **Lightly Obscured**

You have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) checks to see something in a Lightly Obscured space. *See also* “[Dim Light](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DimLight)” and chapter 1 (“[Exploration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Light)”).

### **Line [Area of Effect]**

A Line is an [area of effect](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AreaofEffect) that extends from a point of origin in a straight path along its length and covers an area defined by its width. The effect that creates a Line specifies its length and width.

A Line’s point of origin isn’t included in the area of effect unless its creator decides otherwise.

### **Long Jump**

When you make a Long Jump, you leap horizontally a number of feet up to your Strength score if you move at least 10 feet immediately before the jump. When you make a standing Long Jump, you can leap only half that distance. Either way, each foot you jump costs a foot of movement.

If you land in [Difficult Terrain](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DifficultTerrain), you must succeed on a DC 10 Dexterity ([**Acrobatics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check or have the [Prone](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) condition.

This Long Jump rule assumes that the height of the jump doesn’t matter, such as a jump across a stream or chasm. At your DM’s option, you must succeed on a DC 10 Strength ([**Athletics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check to clear a low obstacle (no taller than a quarter of the jump’s distance), such as a hedge or low wall. Otherwise, you hit the obstacle.

### **Long Rest**

A Long Rest is a period of extended downtime—at least 8 hours—available to any creature. During a Long Rest, you sleep for at least 6 hours and perform no more than 2 hours of light activity, such as reading, talking, eating, or standing watch.

During sleep, you have the [Unconscious](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnconsciousCondition) condition. After you finish a Long Rest, you must wait at least 16 hours before starting another one.

***Benefits of the Rest.*** To start a Long Rest, you must have at least 1 Hit Point. When you finish the rest, you gain the following benefits:

**Regain All HP.** You regain all lost [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints) and all spent Hit Point Dice. If your Hit Point maximum was reduced, it returns to normal.

**Ability Scores Restored.** If any of your ability scores were reduced, they return to normal.

**Exhaustion Reduced.** If you have the [Exhaustion](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ExhaustionCondition) condition, its level decreases by 1.

**Special Feature.** Some features are recharged by a Long Rest. If you have such a feature, it recharges in the way specified in its description.

***Interrupting the Rest.*** A Long Rest is stopped by the following interruptions:

* Rolling [Initiative](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative)
* Casting a spell other than a cantrip
* Taking any damage
* 1 hour of walking or other physical exertion

If you rested at least 1 hour before the interruption, you gain the benefits of a Short Rest. *See also* “[Short Rest](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ShortRest).”

You can resume a Long Rest immediately after an interruption. If you do so, the rest requires 1 additional hour per interruption to finish.

### **Magic [Action]**

When you take the Magic action, you cast a spell that has a casting time of an action or use a feature or magic item that requires a Magic action to be activated.

If you cast a spell that has a casting time of 1 minute or longer, you must take the Magic action on each turn of that casting, and you must maintain Concentration while you do so. If your Concentration is broken, the spell fails, but you don’t expend a spell slot. *See also* “[Concentration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Concentration).”

### **Magical Effect**

An effect is magical if it is created by a spell, a magic item, or a phenomenon that a rule labels as magical.

### **Malnutrition [Hazard]**

A creature needs an amount of food per day based on its size, as shown in the Food Needs per Day table. A creature that eats but consumes less than half the required food for a day must succeed on a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or gain 1 Exhaustion level at the day’s end. A creature that eats nothing for 5 days automatically gains 1 Exhaustion level at the end of the fifth day as well as an additional level at the end of each subsequent day without food.

Exhaustion caused by malnutrition can’t be removed until the creature eats the full amount of food required for a day. *See also* “[Exhaustion](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ExhaustionCondition).”

| **Size** | **Food** |
| --- | --- |
| Tiny | 1/4 pound |
| Small | 1 pound |
| Medium | 1 pound |
| Large | 4 pounds |
| Huge | 16 pounds |
| Gargantuan | 64 pounds |

### **Monster**

A monster is a creature controlled by the DM, even if the creature is benevolent. *See also* “[Creature](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Creature)” and “[NPC](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#NonplayerCharacter).”

### **Nonplayer Character**

A nonplayer character (NPC) is a monster that has a personal name and a distinct personality. *See also* “[Monster](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Monster).”

### **Object**

An object is a nonliving, distinct thing. Composite things, like buildings, comprise more than one object. *See also* “[Breaking Objects](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BreakingObjects).”

### **Occupied Space**

A space is occupied if a creature is in it or if it is completely filled by objects.

### **Opportunity Attacks**

You can make an Opportunity Attack when a creature that you can see leaves your reach using its action, its Bonus Action, its [Reaction](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Reaction), or one of its speeds. To make the Opportunity Attack, take a Reaction to make one melee attack with a weapon or an [Unarmed Strike](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#UnarmedStrike) against the provoking creature. The attack occurs right before the creature leaves your reach. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#OpportunityAttacks)”).

### **Paralyzed [Condition]**

While you have the Paralyzed condition, you experience the following effects.

***Incapacitated.*** You have the [Incapacitated](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition.

***Speed 0.*** Your [Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) is 0 and can’t increase.

***Saving Throws Affected.*** You automatically fail Strength and Dexterity [saving throws](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SavingThrow).

***Attacks Affected.*** Attack rolls against you have [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage).

***Automatic Critical Hits.*** Any attack roll that hits you is a [Critical Hit](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CriticalHit) if the attacker is within 5 feet of you.

### **Passive Perception**

Passive Perception is a score that reflects a creature’s general awareness of its surroundings. The DM uses this score when determining whether a creature notices something without consciously making a Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check.

A creature’s Passive Perception equals 10 plus the creature’s Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check bonus. If the creature has [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) on such checks, increase the score by 5. If the creature has [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on them, decrease the score by 5. For example, a level 1 character with a Wisdom of 15 and proficiency in Perception has a Passive Perception of 14 (10 + 2 + 2). If that character has Advantage on Wisdom ([**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) checks, the score becomes 19.

### **Per Day**

If a rule says you can use something a certain number of times per day, that means you must finish a [Long Rest](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#LongRest) to use it again after you run out of uses.

### **Petrified [Condition]**

While you have the Petrified condition, you experience the following effects.

***Turned to Inanimate Substance.*** You are transformed, along with any nonmagical objects you are wearing and carrying, into a solid inanimate substance (usually stone). Your weight increases by a factor of ten, and you cease aging.

***Incapacitated.*** You have the [Incapacitated](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition.

***Speed 0.*** Your [Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) is 0 and can’t increase.

***Attacks Affected.*** Attack rolls against you have [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage).

***Saving Throws Affected.*** You automatically fail Strength and Dexterity [saving throws](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SavingThrow).

***Resist Damage.*** You have [Resistance](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Resistance) to all damage.

***Poison Immunity.*** You have [Immunity](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Immunity) to the [Poisoned](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#PoisonedCondition) condition.

### **Player Character**

A player character is a character controlled by a player. *See also* [chapter 2](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/creating-a-character/).

### **Poisoned [Condition]**

While you have the Poisoned condition, you experience the following effect.

***Ability Checks and Attacks Affected.*** You have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on attack rolls and ability checks.

### **Possession**

Some effects cause a creature to be possessed by another creature or entity. A possessing effect defines how the possession operates. Possession can be prevented by the [***Protection from Evil and Good***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2618912-protection-from-evil-and-good) spell and ended by the [***Dispel Evil and Good***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2619096-dispel-evil-and-good) spell.

### **Proficiency**

If you have proficiency with something, you can add your Proficiency Bonus to any [D20 Test](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#D20Test) you make using that thing. A creature might have proficiency in a skill or saving throw or with a weapon or tool. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Proficiency](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Proficiency)”).

### **Prone [Condition]**

While you have the Prone condition, you experience the following effects.

***Restricted Movement.*** Your only movement options are to crawl or to spend an amount of movement equal to half your [Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) (round down) to right yourself and thereby end the condition. If your Speed is 0, you can’t right yourself.

***Attacks Affected.*** You have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on attack rolls. An attack roll against you has [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage) if the attacker is within 5 feet of you. Otherwise, that attack roll has Disadvantage.

### **Reaction**

A Reaction is a special action taken in response to a trigger defined in the Reaction’s description. You can take a Reaction on another creature’s turn, and if you take it on your turn, you can do so even if you also take an action, a [Bonus Action](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BonusAction), or both. Once you take a Reaction, you can’t take another one until the start of your next turn. The Opportunity Attack is a Reaction available to all creatures. *See also* “[Opportunity Attacks](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#OpportunityAttack)” and chapter 1 (“[Actions](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Reactions)”).

### **Ready [Action]**

You take the Ready action to wait for a particular circumstance before you act. To do so, you take this action on your turn, which lets you act by taking a [Reaction](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Reaction) before the start of your next turn.

First, you decide what perceivable circumstance will trigger your Reaction. Then, you choose the action you will take in response to that trigger, or you choose to move up to your [Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) in response to it. Examples include “If the cultist steps on the trapdoor, I’ll pull the lever that opens it,” and “If the zombie steps next to me, I move away.”

When the trigger occurs, you can either take your Reaction right after the trigger finishes or ignore the trigger.

When you Ready a spell, you cast it as normal (expending any resources used to cast it) but hold its energy, which you release with your Reaction when the trigger occurs. To be readied, a spell must have a casting time of an action, and holding on to the spell’s magic requires [Concentration](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Concentration), which you can maintain up to the start of your next turn. If your Concentration is broken, the spell dissipates without taking effect.

### **Resistance**

If you have Resistance to a damage type, damage of that type is halved against you (round down). Resistance is applied only once to an instance of damage. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Damage and Healing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#ResistanceandVulnerability)”).

### **Restrained [Condition]**

While you have the Restrained condition, you experience the following effects.

***Speed 0.*** Your [Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) is 0 and can’t increase.

***Attacks Affected.*** Attack rolls against you have [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage), and your attack rolls have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage).

***Saving Throws Affected.*** You have Disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws.

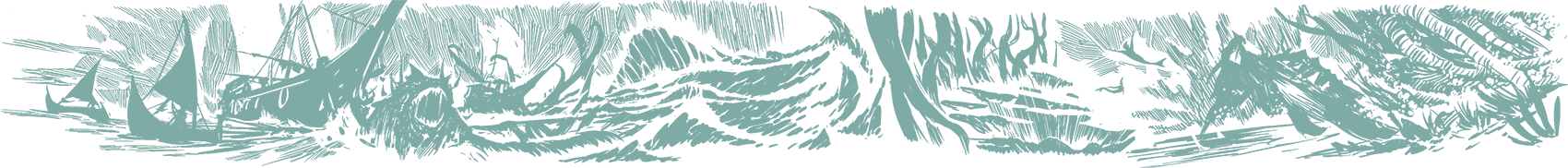
### **Ritual**

If you have a spell prepared that has the Ritual tag, you can cast that spell as a Ritual. The Ritual version of a spell takes 10 minutes longer to cast than normal. It also doesn’t expend a spell slot, which means the ritual version of a spell can’t be cast at a higher level. *See also* [chapter 7](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/spells/).

### **Round Down**

Whenever you divide or multiply a number in the game, round down if you end up with a fraction, even if the fraction is one-half or greater. Some rules make an exception and tell you to round up.

NOOR RAHMAN



### **Save**

Save is another name for a saving throw. *See also* “[Saving Throw](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SavingThrow).”

### **Saving Throw**

A saving throw—also called a save—represents an attempt to avoid or resist a threat. You normally make a saving throw only when a rule requires you to do so, but you can decide to fail the save without rolling. The result of a save is detailed in the effect that allowed it. If a target is forced to make a save and lacks the ability score used by it, the target automatically fails. *See also* chapter 1 (“[D20 Tests](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#SavingThrows)”).

### **Search [Action]**

When you take the Search action, you make a Wisdom check to discern something that isn’t obvious. The Search table suggests which skills are applicable when you take this action, depending on what you’re trying to detect.

| **Skill** | **Thing to Detect** |
| --- | --- |
| [**Insight**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Creature’s state of mind |
| [**Medicine**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Creature’s ailment or cause of death |
| [**Perception**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Concealed creature or object |
| [**Survival**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Tracks or food |

### **Shape-Shifting**

If an effect, such as Wild Shape or the [***Polymorph***](https://www.dndbeyond.com/spells/2618876-polymorph) spell, lets you shape-shift, its description specifies what happens to you. Unless that description says otherwise, any ongoing effects on you—[conditions](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Condition), [spells](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Spell), [curses](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Curses), and the like—carry over from one form to the other. You revert to your true form if you die.

### **Short Rest**

A Short Rest is a 1-hour period of downtime, during which a creature does nothing more strenuous than reading, talking, eating, or standing watch. To start a Short Rest, you must have at least 1 Hit Point.

***Benefits of the Rest.*** When you finish the rest, you gain the following benefits:

**Spend Hit Point Dice.** You can spend one or more of your Hit Point Dice to regain [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints). For each Hit Point Die you spend in this way, roll the die and add your Constitution modifier to it. You regain Hit Points equal to the total (minimum of 1 Hit Point). You can decide to spend an additional Hit Point Die after each roll.

**Special Feature.** Some features are recharged by a Short Rest. If you have such a feature, it recharges in the way specified in its description.

***Interrupting the Rest.*** A Short Rest is stopped by the following interruptions:

* Rolling [Initiative](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative)
* Casting a spell other than a cantrip
* Taking any damage

An interrupted Short Rest confers no benefits.

### **Simultaneous Effects**

If two or more things happen at the same time on a turn, the person at the game table—player or DM—whose turn it is decides the order in which those things happen. For example, if two effects occur at the start of a player character’s turn, the player decides which of the effects happens first.

### **Size**

A creature or an object belongs to a size category: Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, Huge, or Gargantuan. A creature’s size determines how much space the creature occupies in combat. An object’s size affects its [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints). *See also* “[Breaking Objects](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BreakingObjects)” and chapter 1 (“[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Combat)”).

### **Skill**

A skill is an area of specialization associated with an ability check. If you have [proficiency](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Proficiency) in a skill, you can add your Proficiency Bonus when you make an ability check associated with that skill. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Proficiency](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#SkillProficiencies)”).

### **Speed**

A creature has a Speed, which is the distance in feet the creature can cover when it moves on its turn. *See also* “[Climbing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Climbing),” “[Crawling](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Crawling),” “[Flying](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Flying),” “[Jumping](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Jumping),” “[Swimming](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Swimming)” and chapter 1 (“[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#MovementandPosition)”).

***Special Speeds.*** Some creatures have special speeds, such as a [Burrow Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BurrowSpeed), [Climb Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ClimbSpeed), [Fly Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FlySpeed), or [Swim Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SwimSpeed), each of which is defined in this glossary. If you have more than one speed, choose which one to use when you move; you can switch between the speeds during your move. Whenever you switch, subtract the distance already moved from the new speed. The result determines how much farther you can move. If the result is 0 or less, you can’t use the new speed during the current move. For example, if you have a Speed of 30 and a Fly Speed of 40, you could fly 10 feet, walk 10 feet, and leap into the air to fly 20 feet more.

***Changes to Your Speeds.*** If an effect increases or decreases your Speed for a time, any special speed you have increases or decreases by an equal amount for the same duration. For example, if your Speed is reduced to 0 and you have a Climb Speed, your Climb Speed is also reduced to 0. Similarly, if your Speed is halved and you have a Fly Speed, your Fly Speed is also halved.

### **Spell**

A spell is a magical effect that has the characteristics described in [chapter 7](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/spells/).

### **Spell Attack**

A spell attack is an attack roll made as part of a spell or another magical effect. *See also* chapter 7 (“[Casting Spells](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/spells#CastingSpells)”).

### **Spellcasting Focus**

A Spellcasting Focus is an object that certain creatures can use in place of a spell’s Material components if those materials aren’t consumed by the spell and don’t have a cost specified. Some classes allow its members to use certain types of Spellcasting Focuses. *See also* chapter 7 (“[Casting Spells](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/spells#CastingSpells)”).

### **Sphere [Area of Effect]**

A Sphere is an [area of effect](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AreaofEffect) that extends in straight lines from a point of origin outward in all directions. The effect that creates a Sphere specifies the distance it extends as the radius of the Sphere.

A Sphere’s point of origin is included in the Sphere’s area of effect.

### **Stable**

A creature is Stable if it has 0 [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints) but isn’t required to make [Death Saving Throws](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DeathSavingThrow). *See also* chapter 1 (“[Damage and Healing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#StabilizingaCharacter)”).

### **Stat Block**

A stat block contains the game statistics of a monster. Each stat block includes the following information presented after the monster’s name.

***Size.*** A monster is Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, Huge, or Gargantuan. *See also* “[Size](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Size).”

***Creature Type.*** This entry notes the family of beings a monster belongs to, along with any descriptive tags. *See also* “[Creature Type](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CreatureType).”

***Alignment.*** An alignment is suggested for the monster, with the DM determining its actual alignment. *See also* “[Alignment](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Alignment).”

***AC, Initiative, and HP.*** These entries give the monster’s [Armor Class](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ArmorClass), [Initiative](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative), and [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints), which are detailed in [chapter 1](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game/). In parentheses after the Hit Points, the monster’s [Hit Point Dice](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPointDice) are provided, along with the contribution of its Constitution, if any, to its Hit Points. Following the Initiative modifier is an Initiative score. Some creatures that are created by magic lack Hit Dice and Initiative information.

***Speed.*** Here the monster’s Speed is provided, along with any special speeds. *See also* “[Burrow Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BurrowSpeed),” “[Climb Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ClimbSpeed),” “[Fly Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#FlySpeed),” and “[Swim Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SwimSpeed).”

***Ability Scores.*** A table provides the monster’s [ability scores, modifiers](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AbilityScoreandModifier), and [saving throw](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SavingThrow) modifiers, all of which are detailed in [chapter 1](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game/).

***Skills.*** This entry lists the monster’s skill [proficiencies](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Proficiency), if any. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Proficiency](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Proficiency)”).

***Resistances and Vulnerabilities.*** These entries list the monster’s Resistances and Vulnerabilities, if any. *See also* “[Resistance](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Resistance)” and “[Vulnerability](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Vulnerability).”

***Immunities.*** This section lists the monster’s damage and condition Immunities, if any. *See also* “[Immunity](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Immunity).”

***Gear.*** If the monster has any equipment that can be given away or retrieved, it’s listed in this entry.

***Senses.*** This entry lists the monster’s special senses, such as [Darkvision](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Darkvision), and its Passive Perception. *See also* “[Passive Perception](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#PassivePerception).”

***Languages.*** This entry lists any languages the monster knows.

***CR.*** Challenge Rating summarizes the threat a monster poses and is detailed in the [*Monster Manual*](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/mm-2024). The Experience Points characters receive for defeating a monster and its Proficiency Bonus follow. Some creatures that are created by magic have no CR. *See also* “[Challenge Rating](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ChallengeRating)” and “[Experience Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ExperiencePoints).”

***Traits.*** The monster’s traits, if any, are features that are active at all times or in certain situations.

***Actions.*** The monster can take these actions in addition to those detailed in this glossary. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Actions](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Actions)”).

***Bonus Actions.*** If the monster has [Bonus Action](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#BonusAction) options, they are listed in this section.

***Reactions.*** If the monster can take special [Reactions](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Reaction), those are listed in this section.

***Attack Notation.*** The entry for a monster’s attack starts by identifying whether the attack is a melee or a ranged attack and then provides the attack roll’s bonus, its reach or range, and what happens on a hit. An attack is against one target unless its entry says otherwise.

***Saving Throw Effect Notation.*** If an effect forces a saving throw, the effect’s entry starts by identifying the kind of saving throw required and then provides the save’s DC, a description of which creatures must make the save, and what happens on a failed or a successful save.

***Damage Notation.*** A stat block usually provides both a static number and a die expression for each instance of damage. For example, an attack might deal 4 (1d4 + 2) damage on a hit. The DM determines whether you use the static number or the die expression in parentheses; you don’t use both.

### **Study [Action]**

When you take the Study action, you make an Intelligence check to study your memory, a book, a clue, or another source of knowledge and call to mind an important piece of information about it.

The Areas of Knowledge table suggests which skills are applicable to various areas of knowledge.

| **Skill** | **Areas** |
| --- | --- |
| [**Arcana**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Spells, magic items, eldritch symbols, magical traditions, planes of existence, and certain creatures (Aberrations, Constructs, Elementals, Fey, and Monstrosities) |
| [**History**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Historic events and people, ancient civilizations, wars, and certain creatures (Giants and Humanoids) |
| [**Investigation**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Traps, ciphers, riddles, and gadgetry |
| [**Nature**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Terrain, flora, weather, and certain creatures (Beasts, Dragons, Oozes, and Plants) |
| [**Religion**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills) | Deities, religious hierarchies and rites, holy symbols, cults, and certain creatures (Celestials, Fiends, and Undead) |

### **Stunned [Condition]**

While you have the Stunned condition, you experience the following effects.

***Incapacitated.*** You have the [Incapacitated](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition.

***Saving Throws Affected.*** You automatically fail Strength and Dexterity [saving throws](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SavingThrow).

***Attacks Affected.*** Attack rolls against you have [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage).

### **Suffocation [Hazard]**

A creature can hold its breath for a number of minutes equal to 1 plus its Constitution modifier (minimum of 30 seconds) before suffocation begins. When a creature runs out of breath or is choking, it gains 1 [Exhaustion](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ExhaustionCondition) level at the end of each of its turns. When a creature can breathe again, it removes all levels of Exhaustion it gained from suffocating.

### **Surprise**

If a creature is caught unawares by the start of combat, that creature is surprised, which causes it to have [Disadvantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Disadvantage) on its [Initiative](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Initiative) roll. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Combat](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Combat)”).

### **Swimming**

While you’re swimming, each foot of movement costs 1 extra foot (2 extra feet in [Difficult Terrain](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#DifficultTerrain)). You ignore this extra cost if you have a [Swim Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SwimSpeed) and use it to swim. At the DM’s option, moving any distance in rough water might require a successful DC 15 Strength ([**Athletics**](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#Skills)) check.

### **Swim Speed**

A Swim Speed can be used to swim without expending the extra movement normally associated with swimming. *See also* “[Swimming](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Swimming)” and “[Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed).”

### **Target**

A target is the creature or object targeted by an attack roll, forced to make a [saving throw](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SavingThrow) by an effect, or selected to receive the effects of a spell or another phenomenon.

### **Telepathy**

Telepathy is a magical ability that allows a creature to communicate mentally with another creature within a specified range. Unless a rule states otherwise, the contacted creature doesn’t need to share a language with the telepath to understand this communication, but the contacted creature must be able to understand at least one language or be telepathic itself to understand.

A telepath doesn’t need to see a contacted creature, and the telepath can start or end the telepathic contact at any time (no action required). Telepathic contact can’t be initiated and is immediately broken if either the telepath or the other creature has the [Incapacitated](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) condition. Telepathic contact is also broken if the contacted creature is no longer within the telepathy’s range or if the telepath contacts a different creature within range.

A creature without telepathy can receive telepathic messages but can’t initiate a telepathic conversation. Once a telepathic conversation starts, the non-telepath can communicate mentally to the telepath until the telepathic connection ends.

### **Teleportation**

Teleportation is a special kind of magical transportation. If you teleport, you disappear and reappear elsewhere instantly, without moving through the intervening space. This transportation doesn’t expend movement unless a rule tells you otherwise, and teleportation never provokes [Opportunity Attacks](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#OpportunityAttack).

When you teleport, all the equipment you’re wearing and carrying teleports with you. If you’re touching another creature when you teleport, that creature doesn’t teleport with you unless the teleportation effect says otherwise.

If the destination space of your teleportation is occupied by another creature or blocked by a solid obstacle, you instead appear in the nearest unoccupied space of your choice.

The description of a teleportation effect tells you if you must see the teleportation’s destination.

### **Temporary Hit Points**

Temporary Hit Points are granted by certain effects and act as a buffer against losing real [Hit Points](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#HitPoints). *See also* chapter 1 (“[Damage and Healing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#TemporaryHitPoints)”).

### **Tremorsense**

A creature with Tremorsense can pinpoint the location of creatures and moving objects within a specific range, provided that the creature with Tremorsense and anything it is detecting are both in contact with the same surface (such as the ground, a wall, or a ceiling) or the same liquid.

Tremorsense can’t detect creatures or objects in the air, and it doesn’t count as a form of sight.

### **Truesight**

If you have Truesight, your vision is enhanced within a specified range. Within that range, your vision pierces through the following:

**Darkness.** You can see in normal and magical [Darkness](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Darkness).

**Invisibility.** You see creatures and objects that have the [Invisible](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#InvisibleCondition) condition.

**Visual Illusions.** Visual illusions appear transparent to you, and you automatically succeed on saving throws against them.

**Transformations.** You discern the true form of any creature or object you see that has been transformed by magic.

**Ethereal Plane.** You see into the Ethereal Plane.

### **Unarmed Strike**

Instead of using a weapon to make a melee attack, you can use a punch, kick, head-butt, or similar forceful blow. In game terms, this is an Unarmed Strike—a melee attack that involves you using your body to damage, grapple, or shove a target within 5 feet of you.

Whenever you use your Unarmed Strike, choose one of the following options for its effect.

***Damage.*** You make an [attack roll](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackRoll) against the target. Your bonus to the roll equals your Strength modifier plus your Proficiency Bonus. On a hit, the target takes Bludgeoning damage equal to 1 plus your Strength modifier.

***Grapple.*** The target must succeed on a Strength or Dexterity saving throw (it chooses which), or it has the [Grappled](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#GrappledCondition) condition. The DC for the saving throw and any escape attempts equals 8 plus your Strength modifier and Proficiency Bonus. This grapple is possible only if the target is no more than one size larger than you and if you have a hand free to grab it.

***Shove.*** The target must succeed on a Strength or Dexterity saving throw (it chooses which), or you either push it 5 feet away or cause it to have the [Prone](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) condition. The DC for the saving throw equals 8 plus your Strength modifier and Proficiency Bonus. This shove is possible only if the target is no more than one size larger than you.

*See also* “[Grappling](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Grappling).”

### **Unconscious [Condition]**

While you have the Unconscious condition, you experience the following effects.

***Inert.*** You have the [Incapacitated](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#IncapacitatedCondition) and [Prone](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#ProneCondition) conditions, and you drop whatever you’re holding. When this condition ends, you remain Prone.

***Speed 0.*** Your [Speed](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Speed) is 0 and can’t increase.

***Attacks Affected.*** [Attack rolls](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackRoll) against you have [Advantage](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Advantage).

***Saving Throws Affected.*** You automatically fail Strength and Dexterity [saving throws](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#SavingThrow).

***Automatic Critical Hits.*** Any attack roll that hits you is a [Critical Hit](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#CriticalHit) if the attacker is within 5 feet of you.

***Unaware.*** You’re unaware of your surroundings.

### **Unoccupied Space**

A space is unoccupied if no creatures are in it and it isn’t completely filled by objects.

### **Utilize [Action]**

You normally interact with an object while doing something else, such as when you draw a sword as part of the [Attack](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#AttackAction) action. When an object requires an action for its use, you take the Utilize action.

### **Vulnerability**

If you have Vulnerability to a damage type, damage of that type is doubled against you. Vulnerability is applied only once to an instance of damage. *See also* chapter 1 (“[Damage and Healing](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/playing-the-game#ResistanceandVulnerability)”).

### **Weapon**

A weapon is an object that is in the Simple or Martial weapon category. *See also* chapter 6 (“[Weapons](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/equipment#Weapons)”).

### **Weapon Attack**

A weapon attack is an attack roll made with a weapon. *See also* “[Weapon](https://www.dndbeyond.com/sources/dnd/free-rules/rules-glossary#Weapon).”

📖 Current Campaign

**Wyverns of Oakhaven**

📜 Quests

🌄 Locations & NPCs

📃 Characters and Party Sheets

**Characters & Party Sheets**

Character Sheets

NPC Sheets

🕰️ Past Sessions

**Past Sessions**

Session 1

Session 2

Session 3

Session 4