System Reference Document (SRD) 5 Rules

Basic Rules

The core mechanic of the game is to roll a 20 sided die ("d20"), add relevant modifiers, and compare to a target number to determine success or failure.

Ability Score

Measures of different abilities:

- Strength
- Dexterity
- Constitution
- Intelligence
- Wisdom
- Charisma

Max 20 for characters, 30 for monsters/divines.

(*Intermediate*: Used to calculate Ability Modifiers. Each has associated Skills, e.g. Strength has Athletics.)

ph12,173

Experience Points (XP)

Represent character's experience and determines their Level. Gain for monsters killed, significant actions, etc. See table for when to advance a Level.

ph15

Hit Dice (HD)

Different Classes have different types of Hit Dice (short for Hit Point Dice), e.g. d8, d10, which determines how many Hit Points (HP) they gain between levels (see Hit Points for more details).

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Armor Class (AC)

A measure of how difficult something is to hit, 1-20+. To score a hit must roll a d20 with at least that AC. Better armor gives a higher number. With no armor or shield a character's AC is 10 + their Dexterity Ability Modifier.

Intermediate: You must be Proficient with the type of armor worn to use it without drawback.

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Class

Primary definition of what a character can do - their calling, e.g. Fighter, Druid, Ranger, etc. Affects how they see and interact with the world and other people.

(*Intermediate*: Gives special Features, like Proficiency in different weapons or armor.)

(*Advanced*: Can Multiclass also.)

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Cantrips

Simple magic Spells (level 0) that are retained in memory, not a spellbook. Can be cast without using a spell slot or being prepared in advance.

ph201

Challenge Rating (CR)

A rough measure of how great a threat a monster is - a monster with a challenge rating of 1 should be a worthy challenge for a party of four 1st-level characters.

dmg82

Combat (Basic)

Players and adversaries take turns -

- Choose a target
- Roll d20 for base Attack Roll score
- If score >= target's Armor Class (AC), it's a hit - roll appropriate dice (based on weapon) for Damage Roll
- Rolling a natural 20 is a Critical Hit - always hits - roll for Damage twice and add. A natural 1 is a Critical Miss - always misses.

See also Combat (Intermediate) and Combat (Advanced).

ph189+,194

Race

Establishes fundamental qualities that exist throughout character's life. Determines Hit Dice (HD), additions to Ability Scores, etc. E.g. Human, Elf, Halfling, Dragonborn, Drow.

ph17

Spells

Some Classes have the ability to cast spells - as they reach higher Levels they are able to learn more, and more powerful spells. Wizards record their spells in a Spellbook.

Casting a spell requires Preparation - you can prepare a number of spells equal to your Intelligence Ability Modifier + Wizard Level. Each time you cast a spell you expend a Slot of the spell's level or higher. To regain all spell slots the character can complete a Long Rest.

Some Spells are Rituals and can be cast without preparation. See also Cantrips.

ph114

Hit Points (HP)

Represents health. At first level, Hit Points = max of Hit Dice (HD) + Constitution Modifier (see Ability Modifiers). At subsequent levels, roll Hit Dice (HD) and add that with Constitution Modifier to obtain new HP, OR add half of Hit Dice (HD) max +1 + Constitution Modifier (avoids randomness).

Note: a monster's hit points are usually given as an average and a die expression, e.g. "9 (2d8)".

(*Advanced*: When reach 0 or below HP, can be Dead or Unconscious - dead if get Massive Damage (if remaining damage >= HP max). When Unconscious must make Saving Throws against Death (see ph197))

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Level

Character Levels are based on Experience Points (XP) - as reach higher levels gain more abilities, skills, spells, etc.

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Speed

How far can travel in one combat Round (6 seconds) with short bursts of energy. Normal movement and travel pace is slower.

ph181

Intermediate Rules

Ability Check

Make an Ability Check to test innate talent/training to overcome a challenge. Difficulty of task is the Difficulty Class (DC), 1-20. Very easy 5, Easy 10, etc.

ph174

Advantage / Disadvantage

Sometimes you have a better chance of succeeding at something - this is called having Advantage - e.g. an attack roll made within 5 feet of a Prone creature has Advantage.

If some source gives you Advantage, roll twice and take the higher of the two rolls - if some source gives you Disadvantage, take the lower score.

Can use for Attack Rolls, Ability Checks, Saving Throws in various situations.

ph173

Condition

Alters capabilities in various ways.

- Blinded
- Charmed
- Deafened
- Exhaustion - see here for table
- Frightened
- Grappled
- Incapacitated
- Invisible
- Paralyzed
- Petrified
- Poisoned
- Prone
- Restrained
- Stunned
- Unconscious

ph290

Ability Modifier

Ability Modifiers range from -5 to +10. They are used more often than the raw Ability Scores on which they are based.

Ability Modifier = floor((Ability Score - 10) / 2)

e.g. if Strength = 13 then "Strength Modifier" = +1

ph13,173

Background

Where character came from, how came to be an adventurer, place in the world. Each Background gives a character Proficiency in two Skills and one or more Tools, as well as a package of starting Equipment. Some also allow learning an additional Language.

ph125

Action

Available actions during Combat include:

- Attack
- Cast Spell
- Dash - move at double speed
- Disengage - avoid Opportunity Attacks
- Dodge - any attack against you has disadvantage if you can see them, and make Dexterity Saving Throws with Advantage
- Help - aid someone and they gain Advantage on next Ability Check you're helping them with. or aid in Attack so they gain Advantage.
- Hide - make Dexterity (Stealth) Ability Check to hide
- Ready - lets you act immediately on some trigger before start of your next turn
- Search - make Wisdom (Perception) or Intelligence (Investigation) Ability Check
- Use - if want to use more than one object in your turn
- Other - improvise!

ph192

Difficulty Class (DC)

The difficulty of a task from 1 to 20 - used for Ability Checks, Saving Throws.

Flaw

A vice, compulsion, fear, or weakness - anything someone could exploit to bring you to ruin. What enrages you? What's the one person, concept, or event you are terrified of? What are your vices?

Inspiration

The Dungeon Master can grant Inspiration when a player does something in character, or inspiring. The player can spend it for Advantage on any future roll, or give it to another character.

Proficiency Bonus

Value added to rolls when player is Proficient in a relevant Skill. Based on player's Level - e.g. first level is +2.

Combat (Intermediate)

In addition to Basic rules,

- Add Ability Modifier for attack roll: Strength Modifier for melee weapon, Dexterity for ranged weapon
- Add Proficiency Bonus if Proficient with current weapon
- Determine if have Advantage / Disadvantage for attack - e.g. have Advantage if they can't see you, Disadvantage if they have Cover
- Roll d20 twice if have Advantage or Disadvantage and take best/worst score
- For Ranged attacks - if long range or *any* enemy within 5ft have Disadvantage

- For Damage Roll, add Ability Modifier (same as for Attack Roll)

Exhaustion

Due to starvation etc. Effects are cumulative, e.g. at Exhaustion level 3 levels 1 and 2 apply also. Long Rests reduce Exhaustion level by 1.

Level	Effect
1	Disadvantage on Ability Checks
2	Speed halved
3	Disadvantage on Attack Rolls and Saving Throws
4	Hit Point (HP) maximum halved
5	Speed reduced to 0
6	Death

Damage Type

Types of Damage include

- Acid
- Bludgeoning - e.g. from a mace
- Cold
- Fire
- Force - magic
- Lightning
- Necrotic - withers matter and soul
- Piercing - e.g. teeth
- Poison
- Psychic
- Radiant - fire/spirit
- Slashing - e.g. sword
- Thunder - sound

Can have Resistance to different Damage Types, in which case damage is halved, or Vulnerability where damage is doubled.

Feature

Different Classes have different Features available, and gain more as they advance to higher [[Level| Levels]].

For example, Spellcasting is a Feature of the Wizard class, and at higher levels they gain the Arcane Recovery Feature, which allows them to regain magical energy over Short Rests.

Modifier

See Ability Modifier, e.g. "Intelligence Modifier" is a type of Ability Modifier.

Skill

Each Ability Score covers a set of Skills you can be Proficient in, and referred to like "Strength (Athletics)". For Ability Checks can add your Proficiency Bonus if a Skill is relevant.

Ability	Skills
Strength	Athletics
Constitution	(none)
Dexterity	Acrobatics
	Sleight of Hand
	Stealth
Intelligence	Arcana
	History
	Investigation
	Nature
	Religion
Wisdom	Animal Handling
	Insight
	Medicine
	Perception
	Survival
Charisma	Deception
	Intimidation
	Performance
	Persuasion

ph174

Proficiency

Can have Proficiency in different weapons - during Combat can add Proficiency Bonus to Attack Rolls and Damage Rolls - or for working with certain Tools, etc.

ph173

Searching

Use a Wisdom (Perception) Ability Check to search for hidden things. Must say specifically where searching.

ph178

Saving Throw

Roll d20 to resist spells, traps, poison, disease etc - if >= Difficulty Class (DC) of effect causing it, success.

ph179

Advanced Rules

Alignment

Combination of Morality (Good, Evil, Neutral), and attitudes towards Society and Order (Lawful, Chaotic, or Neutral). E.g. a character or monster can be Lawful Good, Chaotic Evil, etc.

ph122

Carrying Capacity

Amount of weight you can carry = Strength * 15 lbs.

You are *encumbered* if carry over 5x Strength - Speed drops by 10 feet; you're *heavily encumbered* over 10x Strength - speed drops by 20ft and have disadvantage on ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws that use Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution.

ph176

Downtime

Between adventures - must spend money each day for Lifestyle Expenses. Can Craft items, work at a Profession to earn money, Rest to recover from poisons, do Research to find information, Train to learn new Language or Tool Skill.

ph187

Bond

A connection to people, places, and events in the world. They tie you to things in your background, inspire you to heroism, drive motivations and goals.

Whom do you care about? What is most treasured possession? Create one for your character. Can gain new bonds over adventures.

ph124

Cover

Can Hide behind things during Combat. Half Cover gives +2 Armor Class (AC). Three quarters gives +5, and with total cover can't be attacked except by certain spells.

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Crafting

Can Craft adventuring equipment, works of art. Must be Proficient with Tools related to object and have access to materials. For each day spent crafting can make market value up to 5gp, with cost of half that - e.g. plate armor (1500gp) takes 300 days to craft alone, though others can help out to reduce time.

ph187

Food / Water

Need one pound food and one gallon water/day, two gallons if hot. Below this suffer increasing levels of Exhaustion (see table in PH).

ph185

Bonus Action

An additional Action you take on your Combat turn depending on various Class features, spells, or other abilities - e.g. a Rogue can do an additional Action due to their Cunning Action feature.

ph189

Combat (Advanced)

In addition to Basic and Intermediate rules,

- Establish physical positions and roll Initiative to determine turn order (including adversaries) = d20 + Dexterity Ability Modifier
- Make sure weapon is within range - melee attacks (e.g. with sword) should be within 5ft, ranged attacks (e.g. crossbow) should be in range of weapon (normal or long range)
- If no weapon can use fists etc - on hit do Bludgeon Damage of 1+Strength Ability Modifier
- Can move a distance up to your Speed AND take one Action. Can break up movement around action. Difficult Terrain or Obstructions takes up extra foot per foot moved.
- Can talk/gesture and interact with one object for free (e.g. drawing a sword)
- Take one Bonus Action if allowed
- Each complete round lasts 6 seconds in the game world.

ph189+,194

Hiding

Make a Dexterity (Stealth) Ability Check when attempting to hide from enemies etc.

ph177

Feat

Represents a talent or area of expertise - embodies training, experience, and abilities. Can choose to add a Feat instead of increasing Ability Scores when advancing a Level. Can gain Advantage, Proficiency in different Skills, etc. E.g. Alert, Dual Wielder, Healer, Mage Slayer.

ph165

Language

Default language is given by Race, can learn others - see Training.

ph123

Passive Checks

For hiding, exploration - to check for traps, secrets, etc. No die roll - for score just use 10 + all modifiers relevant to check, with +5 if have Advantage, -5 if Disadvantage.

ph175

Subrace

Some Races have Subraces available, e.g. Hill Dwarfs vs Mountain Dwarfs.

ph17

Training

Can train to learn new Language, tool Skill Proficiency - must find instructor. Training lasts 250 days and costs 1gp per day.

ph187

Ideal

Something that drives your character. What principals will you never betray? Why would you make sacrifices? What guides your goals and ambitions? What single thing do you strive for? Backgrounds give some suggestions.

ph124

Personality Trait

Something interesting and fun about a character - their likes, past accomplishments, what they dislike or fear, self-attitude, mannerisms, pet peeves, quotes, etc. Each character gets two. Look at highest and lowest Ability Scores for some ideas - Backgrounds also give some suggestions.

ph123

Tools

Tools can be used to craft or repair items, pick a lock, forge a document, etc. Artisan tools include woodworking, leatherworking, thieves' tools.

Your Race, Class, Background, or Feats give you Proficiency with certain Tools - and if you are Proficient you can add your Proficiency Bonus to any Ability Checks you make with them, e.g. when picking a lock or disarming a trap.

ph154

Initiative

Determines order of turns taken in Combat (Advanced).

ph189

Multiclassing

Can gain Levels in multiple Classes - choose which to advance in when gain a Level. Your character Level is the sum of your different Levels.

ph163

Resting

Resting can restore your character's health.

Short Rests need at least an hour - can roll Hit Dice (HD) x your Level - add that plus your Constitution Modifier to your Hit Points (HP).

Long Rests need at least 8 hours, and restore all Hit Points (HP).

Optionally, both require use of one Healer's Kit first.

Long Rests also restore all Spells.

You can use Downtime between adventures to recover from debilitating Injury, Disease, or Poison. After 3 days of Downtime can make Difficulty Class (DC) 15 Constitution Saving Throw - on success gain Advantage on Saving Throws against one Disease or Poison.

ph186-7

Travel

Can travel at normal, fast, or slow pace (table ph182). Can only do half speed in Difficult Terrain.