My First Adventure

A Beginner's Guide to Dungeons & Dragons

For Young Heroes Ages 5-8

*Welcome, brave adventurer! This book will teach you how to play Dungeons & Dragons, a game where you can be a hero, go on quests, and have amazing adventures with your friends!*

# What is Dungeons & Dragons?

Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) is a storytelling game where you and your friends become heroes in a magical world! One person, called the Dungeon Master (or DM), tells the story and describes what happens. Everyone else plays as heroes called characters who go on adventures together.

**Think of it like playing pretend, but with rules and dice to make it fair and exciting!**

## What You Need to Play

* This rulebook
* The adventure storybook
* Character sheets for each player
* Game maps
* Dice (a full set: d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, d20)
* Pencils and erasers
* Your imagination!

# Understanding Your Dice

In D&D, we use special dice with different numbers of sides. Each die has a special name:

| **Die Name** | **What It Does** |
| --- | --- |
| **d4** | A pyramid with 4 sides (1-4). Used for small damage. |
| **d6** | A cube with 6 sides (1-6). Like a regular game die! |
| **d8** | 8 sides (1-8). Used for medium damage. |
| **d10** | 10 sides (1-10 or 0-9). Used for bigger numbers. |
| **d12** | 12 sides (1-12). Used for big damage! |
| **d20** | 20 sides (1-20). The MOST IMPORTANT die! You'll use this a lot! |

**The d20 is Your Friend!**

Most of the time in D&D, you'll roll a d20 (the 20-sided die) to see if your character succeeds at something. Rolling a high number is usually good! Rolling a 20 is the best and means something amazing happens! Rolling a 1 is the worst and means something went wrong.

# Creating Your Hero

Your character is the hero you play in the game! Let's create one together. You'll need a character sheet (included with this game).

## Step 1: Choose Your Species

Your species is what kind of creature you are. Each species has special abilities!

**Human**

Humans are versatile and can be good at anything! They're brave and adaptable.

***Special:*** *Can add +1 to any roll once per adventure*

**Elf**

Elves are graceful and magical. They have pointy ears and can see in the dark!

***Special:*** *Can see in dim light and are good at noticing things*

**Dwarf**

Dwarves are short, strong, and tough. They love mining and building!

***Special:*** *Very tough! Get +2 hit points*

**Gnome**

Gnomes are tiny, clever, and love tinkering with things!

***Special:*** *Can talk to small animals*

**Half-Elf**

Half-elves are part human, part elf! They're friendly and get along with everyone.

***Special:*** *Good at making friends. Animals and creatures like you*

**Halfling**

Halflings are small, cheerful, and very lucky!

***Special:*** *Can re-roll any dice that shows a 1*

## Step 2: Choose Your Class

Your class is your job or what you're good at. Each class plays differently!

**Warrior**

Brave fighters who protect their friends! They wear heavy armor and use swords and shields.

**Weapon:** Sword (does 1d8 damage)

**Hit Points:** 10

**Special Power:** Once per battle, can take a hit for a friend

**Wizard**

Smart magic users who cast spells! They carry a magic wand or staff.

**Weapon:** Magic Staff (does 1d4 damage)

**Hit Points:** 6

**Special Power:** Can cast 3 spells per adventure (see spell list)

**Cleric**

Holy healers who help their friends! They use divine magic.

**Weapon:** Mace (does 1d6 damage)

**Hit Points:** 8

**Special Power:** Can heal a friend for 1d6 hit points, three times per adventure

**Rogue**

Sneaky and quick! They can pick locks, find traps, and move silently.

**Weapon:** Dagger (does 1d4 damage, but +2 from stealth attacks)

**Hit Points:** 7

**Special Power:** Can sneak attack for extra damage once per battle

**Druid**

Nature lovers who can talk to animals and plants!

**Weapon:** Wooden Staff (does 1d6 damage)

**Hit Points:** 7

**Special Power:** Can talk to animals and ask plants for help

**Barbarian**

Wild and strong! They get angry in battle and become super powerful!

**Weapon:** Big Axe (does 1d12 damage)

**Hit Points:** 12

**Special Power:** Can RAGE! Take half damage for 3 turns, once per adventure

**Paladin**

Holy warriors blessed by divine power! They protect their friends and shine with holy light.

**Weapon:** Sword & Holy Shield (does 1d8 damage)

**Hit Points:** 11

**Special Power:** Divine Protection - Once per battle, can protect themselves or a friend from one attack AND force the attacker to target the Paladin next turn instead

**Ranger**

Expert archers and wilderness trackers! They're skilled hunters who notice everything in nature.

**Weapon:** Bow (does 1d8 damage)

**Hit Points:** 9

**Special Power:** Can track enemies - notice hidden enemies and their location once per adventure

## Step 3: Write Down Your Hero's Name

Give your hero a cool name! It can be anything you want. Here are some ideas:

* Brave names: Valor, Thunder, Blaze, Storm
* Nature names: Leaf, River, Cloud, Star
* Fantasy names: Eldrin, Aria, Thorin, Luna
* Fun names: Giggles, Sparkle, Buttons, Whiskers

## Step 4: Fill In Your Character Sheet

Write down all your information on your character sheet:

1. Your name
2. Your species
3. Your class
4. Your hit points
5. Your weapon and its damage
6. Your special powers

# How to Play

## Taking Your Turn

On your turn, you can do TWO things:

* Move: Walk to a new place on the map
* Action: Do something! Like attack, use a spell, help a friend, or search for something

## Rolling to Succeed

When you try to do something tricky, the DM will ask you to roll a d20. Here's how to know if you succeed:

| **What You Roll** | **What Happens** |
| --- | --- |
| **10 or higher** | You succeed! You do what you wanted to do! |
| **15 or higher** | Great success! You do it really well! |
| **20 (natural)** | CRITICAL SUCCESS! Something amazing happens! |
| **9 or lower** | You fail. But that's okay! Try something else! |
| **1 (natural)** | FUMBLE! Something funny or unfortunate happens! |

## Combat (Fighting Bad Guys)

Sometimes you'll need to fight monsters or bad guys. Don't worry - combat in D&D is fun and not scary!

**How Combat Works:**

1. Everyone rolls a d20. Whoever rolls highest goes first!
2. On your turn, you can move AND attack
3. To attack, roll a d20. If you roll 10 or higher, you hit!
4. If you hit, roll your weapon's damage die
5. The bad guy loses that many hit points
6. When the bad guy has 0 hit points, they're defeated!

**What If I Get Hit?**

If a monster hits you, you lose hit points. Don't worry! Your Cleric friend can heal you, or you can drink a healing potion. If you reach 0 hit points, you fall down and need help from a friend to wake up. Your friends can heal you or help you - nobody really dies in this adventure!

## Wizard Spells

If you're playing a Wizard, you can use these spells. Remember, you can only use 3 spells per adventure, so choose wisely!

**Magic Missile**

You shoot glowing darts of magic! Automatically hits for 1d4+1 damage. Never misses!

**Shield**

Creates a shimmering shield around you! Blocks one attack completely.

**Sleep**

Makes enemies sleepy! One small enemy falls asleep and can't fight.

**Light**

Your staff glows bright! Lights up dark places for the whole adventure.

**Mage Hand**

Creates a magical floating hand! Can pick up or move small objects from far away.

# Exploring and Solving Puzzles

Not everything in D&D is about fighting! You'll also explore, talk to creatures, and solve problems.

## Things You Can Do

* **Search:** Look around for clues or hidden things (roll d20)
* **Listen:** Listen carefully for sounds (roll d20)
* **Talk:** Talk to friendly creatures or even enemies!
* **Help:** Help a friend do something tricky (they add +2 to their roll)
* **Think:** Come up with creative solutions! The DM will tell you if it works

**Remember:** There's no wrong way to try something! Tell the DM what you want to do, and they'll help you figure out if you need to roll dice.

# Guide for the Dungeon Master

Welcome, Dungeon Master! Your job is to tell the story, describe what happens, and help the players have fun. Don't worry - it's easier than it sounds!

## Your Main Jobs

1. **Describe the Scene:** Tell the players what they see, hear, and smell
2. **Ask Questions:** "What do you do?" is the most important question!
3. **Control Monsters:** You play the bad guys and creatures
4. **Make Rulings:** Decide if something works or if they need to roll dice
5. **Have Fun:** Your goal is for everyone to have a good time!

## When to Ask for Dice Rolls

Not everything needs a dice roll! Only ask for rolls when:

* The action is difficult or risky
* Failure would be interesting (not just frustrating)
* The outcome is uncertain

**Don't Ask for Rolls When:**

* It's something easy (like opening an unlocked door)
* It's creative and cool (just let it happen!)
* They've already rolled for this recently

## Describing Results

Make the results of dice rolls exciting! Here are some examples:

**Success (10-14):** *You swing your sword and it hits! Roll for damage!*

**Great Success (15-19):** *Your sword strikes perfectly! You can roll damage, and you also push the goblin backward!*

**Critical Success (20):** *Amazing! Your sword glows with power! Roll double damage!*

**Failure (6-9):** *You swing your sword but the goblin dodges. You'll have to try again!*

**Fumble (1):** *Oh no! You swing so hard you spin around and fall down! You drop your sword (but you can pick it up next turn).*

## Tips for Great DMing

**Say 'Yes, And' More Than 'No'**

When players come up with creative ideas, try to make them work! Instead of "No, you can't do that," try "Yes, but it will be hard - roll a d20!"

**Use Voices and Sounds**

Make funny voices for different characters! Use sound effects ("ROAR!" for dragons, "squeak" for mice). Kids love this!

**Keep Things Moving**

If the kids get stuck, give them hints! "You notice something shiny under the rock..." or "The friendly mouse seems to want to show you something..."

**Let Them Win (Mostly)**

This is their first adventure! Make sure they feel like heroes. If a fight is going badly, maybe the monster runs away, or a friendly NPC helps them.

**Celebrate Their Ideas**

When a player comes up with something clever, make a big deal about it! "That's such a smart idea!" This encourages creativity.

**Take Breaks**

2 hours is a long time for young kids. Take a break in the middle for snacks and bathroom!

## Simplified Monster Stats

Here are some simple monsters you might use. All stats are kept simple for this age group!

| **Monster** | **Hit Points** | **Attack** | **Damage** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Goblin | 5 | Needs 10 | 1d4 |
| Giant Spider | 8 | Needs 11 | 1d6 |
| Skeleton | 6 | Needs 10 | 1d4 |
| Wolf | 8 | Needs 11 | 1d6 |
| Boss Monster | 15 | Needs 12 | 1d8 |

## Handling Difficult Situations

**Player Wants to Do Something Dangerous**

Let them try, but warn them! "That sounds really dangerous! Are you sure?" If they insist, let them roll but maybe lower the consequences.

**Players Are Scared**

Tone it down! Remember, no monsters actually eat the heroes in this adventure. Make it clear they're safe and the monsters are more silly than scary.

**Players Are Stuck**

Give them a helper! Maybe a friendly fairy appears with a hint, or their special abilities suddenly give them an idea.

**One Player Is Dominating**

Ask the quiet players directly: "What does YOUR character do?" or "How does YOUR hero feel about this?"

**Fight Is Too Hard**

Have the monster run away when it gets to low health, or have reinforcements arrive (a friendly knight or animal!)

**Fight Is Too Easy**

Add another monster mid-fight, or have this monster's friend show up!

# Ready to Adventure!

You now know everything you need to play your first D&D adventure! Remember:

* **There's no wrong way to play -** Be creative!
* **Work together -** Help your friends!
* **Have fun! -** That's the most important rule!
* **Be brave! -** Heroes are brave even when scared!
* **Be kind -** To your friends and even to monsters!

**Now grab your dice, choose your character,**

**and get ready for**

**THE DRAGON'S FRIENDS!**

*Your adventure awaits!*