



WHICH OVERWATCH HERO SHOULD YOU PLAY?

THE BEGINNER'S GUIDE

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A Beginner's Guide to Overwatch Heroes

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Overwatch is one of the **best shooters out there** — but coming in as a beginner isn't easy. There are tons of playstyles, maps, and teamwork conventions you'll need to get a handle on. But before all that, you'll need to pick an *Overwatch* hero.

And that's easier said than done.

There are 25 *Overwatch* characters, and each of them is unique. Their attacks, abilities, ultimates, roles, and best strategies are highly specific. When you're getting started, having a basic understanding of each hero goes a long way toward picking one that suits you.

How to Choose a Hero

In the beginning, your best bet is to just pick a hero that sounds good to you (we'll go over the best *Overwatch* heroes for beginners below). For your first few matches, you won't know which characters best fit your play style. You'll still be figuring out your play style, in fact, and getting used to the different *Overwatch* roles.

So **pick a character that sounds like fun** and go for it! But don't over-commit to that hero. After a while, start switching it up. Play different roles and heroes within each role. Not only will this help you find the heroes that you like to play, but it will also help you learn the strengths and weaknesses of heroes that you play against.

The arcade modes and skirmishes are a great place to practice with heroes, too. They often aren't as fast-paced as Quick Play, and they'll let you get a feel for how different weapons and abilities work together.

Finally, remember that **team composition matters**. There's a reason that *Overwatch* reminds you when you're missing a defense hero or a tank. **Having a well-balanced team** is important. So when you're considering which hero to choose, take a look at your team and see which roles could use a boost.



Offense Heroes

These *Overwatch* heroes are highly mobile and can dish out a lot of damage. They also tend to be a bit fragile (heroes with low health are deemed “squishy” in *Overwatch* lingo). As an offense (also known as “DPS,” or damage per second) hero, you’ll press the objective and get kills.

Doomfist



The newest hero is all about close-quarters combat. His shotgun-like Hand Cannon and melee attacks do a lot of damage, but getting into the best position can be difficult. His ultimate, Meteor Strike, can clear a lot of space. He also generates a shield when he does damage with abilities, making it imperative that you get into the fray quickly.

Difficulty: Hard.

Play if: You want a melee character unlike any you’ve played before.

Genji



Many beginner *Overwatch* players gravitate toward Genji — and he can be a fearsome adversary in the right hands. His shuriken-throwing and wider-spread alternate fire are great for damaging from a distance, and his ultimate lets him get up close and personal with a sword. One of the skills you'll need to master is his deflect, which sends projectiles flying back from whence they came. That, combined with his staggering agility, is what really sets him apart in the hands of a skilled player.

Difficulty: Hard.

Play if: You prefer lightning-fast movement.

McCree



This old-West-style gunslinger has a powerful revolver that's best used from close-to-mid-range. It's a **hitscan weapon**, making it great for taking down fast-moving targets like Pharah. His secondary fire, Fan the Hammer, unleashes all six bullets at high speed, with a significant accuracy penalty. McCree's ultimate is great for taking down lots of enemies at once, as long as you time it well.

Difficulty: Medium.

Play if: You consider yourself a marksman (or markswoman) but don't want to play a sniper.

Pharah



This rocket soldier's greatest strength lies in her ability to hover high above the battlefield, raining a constant barrage of rockets on the enemy. Pharah is one of the hardest-hitting heroes in the game, but even the splash damage from the rockets doesn't mean it's easy to land a hit. And keep in mind that floating over everyone's head will make you a big target for hitscan heroes like McCree and Solider: 76.

Difficulty: Easy.

Play if: You want to do a lot of damage without having a phenomenal aim.

Reaper



Another character whose cool factor draws in many beginners, Reaper is undeniably stylish. His twin Hellfire shotguns do a ton of damage if you can get in close. Stealthy movement, aided by a teleport ability, are required to use him effectively. If you can spring from the shadows and unleash a barrage, not much will survive — Reaper is great for shredding tanks. And you'll profit from those deaths: 20% of damage dealt is returned as health.

Difficulty: Easy.

Play if: You like to sneak around and surprise your opponents with a hail of shotgun pellets.

Soldier: 76



A hitscan pulse rifle, rocket grenades, the ability to sprint, and a little burst of healing. If Soldier: 76 sounds a lot like a character from *Call of Duty*, *Destiny*, or **other first-person shooters**, you're

right on. He's a run-and-gun shooter that excels at mid-range. If you've played a shooter before, he's almost certainly the easiest *Overwatch* hero to start with — but don't underestimate him. He's solid all around, even after you've graduated from beginner level.

Difficulty: Easy.

Play if: You've played other shooters and want an easy introduction to *Overwatch*.

Sombra



Her movement abilities might feel familiar, but where Sombra stands out is with her hacking. She can hack health packs to make them work only for your team, and she can hack opponents so they can't use abilities. It's a great skill, but takes some practice to get used to. If you can use her speed and hacking to get in close, her machine pistol will take down a lot of health very quickly. Map knowledge is key when using Sombra to get the drop on enemies, especially since she can see low-health characters through walls.

Difficulty: Hard.

Play if: You like being sneaky and want to be extremely irritating to the other team.

Tracer



Similar to Sombra, Tracer seeks to get in close and dish out lots of damage with automatic weapons. She's all about taking advantage of movement, either teleporting forward or "rewinding" time to move backwards and gain some health. Her ultimate is a simple sticky bomb, and her pulse pistols are easy to get used to. She's a classic *Overwatch* hero, but her low health means you need to master her movement to stay alive.

Difficulty: Medium.

Play if: You like to move fast and dish out damage before quickly disappearing again.

Defense Heroes

These *Overwatch* characters excel at defending points. That might be a point you're defending, but it could also be one you're attacking and need to hold.

Bastion



A popular beginner *Overwatch* hero, Bastion uses a simple assault rifle as his main weapon. By shifting into Sentry mode, however, he becomes an immobile turret with a massive rotary machine gun that dishes out heaps of damage. Bastion's self-healing is especially useful in this mode, because he makes himself a prime target for damage dealers. Watch out for Genji though, as he can make quick work of you.

Difficulty: Easy.

Play if: You want to be an immobile force of destruction (though I recommend trying to be a bit more strategic about it).

Hanzo



Everyone has guns – wouldn't it be cooler if you could shoot arrows instead? Hanzo thinks so. His standard and scatter arrows are great for long-distance headshots, and the sonic arrow also serves as a radar pulse, marking distant enemies. Oh, and did I mention that his ultimate sends two massive spirit dragons hurtling through walls and enemies? Hanzo can output tons of damage, but accuracy is paramount when using him.

Difficulty: Hard.

Play if: You want to snipe, but not with a sniper rifle (and like big dragons).

Junkrat



Explosions. Lots of explosions. That sums up playing Junkrat. His Frag Launcher shoots bouncing grenades. His remotely detonated Concussion Mines send enemies (and himself) flying. And his RIP-Tire is a fast-moving bomb wheel that can go behind enemy lines and cause mayhem. Junkrat even releases a slew of grenades when he dies. And the best part? None of these explosives can damage him.

Difficulty: Medium.

Play if: You like blowing things up.

Mei



A well-played Mei, though difficult to achieve, is one of the best *Overwatch* heroes for wreaking havoc. Her Endothermic Blaster shoots a stream of supercooled fluid, slowing and eventually freezing enemies in place. This makes them especially vulnerable to her secondary fire, a nasty icicle. She can also create walls of ice that separate or trap the opposing team and encase herself in ice to regain health.

Difficulty: Hard.

Play if: You like to play strategically – or just to freeze people.

Torbjörn



This little guy has a rivet gun that takes a while to get a hang of. Once you've learned the projectile arc, though, long-range headshots become a lot of fun. Torbjörn's signature ability, however, revolves around creating fast-firing turrets. Build, upgrade, repair, and supercharge those turrets, and you'll be taking down enemies left and right.

Difficulty: Medium.

Play if: You'd rather have a turret do your aiming for you.

Widowmaker



Overwatch's true sniper, Widowmaker is all about long-distance headshots. Her sniper rifle turns into an automatic rifle for close-range combat, but she's best when she's sniping. If you have a great aim and can consistently get headshots on fast-moving targets, Widowmaker will help you become unstoppable. If your aim isn't great, you're going to have a rough time.

Difficulty: Medium.

Play if: **You're a sniper**, through and through.

Tank Heroes

Overwatch's tank heroes do exactly what they sound like — hold the front line, soak up damage, and help their teammates dish out damage.

D.Va



D.Va's mech fires twin shotgun-like fusion cannons, can unleash a barrage of micro missiles, and has a forward-facing shield that stops projectiles. It also has a boost that closes distance fast and can knock enemies off the map. Does it get better than that? Yes, it does. D.Va ejects from her mech when it loses its last shred of health and still has a pistol that she can use until her next mech is ready.

Difficulty: Medium.

Play if: You want to be a mobile tank who can jump into the middle of battles — and not die when you reach zero health.

Orisa



Possibly the most tank-like of the tank heroes, Orisa is slow-moving and hard to kill. She sets up strong shields that soak up huge amounts of damage, can boost her own defense for a few seconds, and lays down a near-constant stream of fusion bullets. Her ultimate amps up the damage of everyone around her, making her a great tool on a large team attack. And her Halt! projectile groups enemies up for another player to take out with their ultimate.

Difficulty: Medium.

Play if: You want to coordinate and buttress the actions of your team, and don't mind moving at glacial speeds.

Reinhardt



He has a giant, rocket-powered hammer. In addition to a ridiculously strong forward shield, he can fire a flaming projectile. This tank also has the ability to rocket forward at high speed, pinning enemies to walls and doing monumental amounts of damage. His ultimate knocks enemies down, leaving them open to hammer strikes. Reinhardt is popular for a reason: his shield can successfully lead a team charge yet he can dish out damage with the best of them. A good Reinhardt will serve as the backbone of a team.

Difficulty: Easy.

Play if: You want to protect your teammates from just about everything (and like the idea of a rocket-powered hammer).

Roadhog



His tag line, "I'm a one-man apocalypse," sums it up. Roadhog's signature ability is the Chain Hook, which grabs a far-away enemy, stuns them, and reels them in for a close-range blast from the Scrap Gun, a shotgun-like cannon. Roadhog's huge health reserves and ability to quickly heal make him remarkably hard to kill. And Whole Hog, his ultimate, turns his Scrap Gun into a full-auto death machine to push enemies off an objective.

Difficulty: Easy.

Play if: You want maximum durability and to infuriate stunned opponents with the Chain Hook.

Winston



Winston's Tesla Cannon is one of the few weapons in *Overwatch* that requires barely any aiming. The beam tracks opponents — so as long as you point it in the right direction, it'll hit. The short range isn't a problem because of Winston's rocket pack, which propels him into the midst of battle. He can then drop a shield to protect himself and his teammates. And when his Primal Rage ultimate kicks in, he goes full King Kong on the opposing team.

Difficulty: Medium.

Play if: You don't like aiming too much or like diving behind enemy lines to kill squishy targets like Tracer and Zenyatta.

Zarya



Her Particle Cannon can do a huge amount of damage — if you manage it correctly. By deploying a shield around Zarya, and another around a teammate, you can convert damage done into power for the gun. With up to 190 damage per second, it can drop another tank in a few seconds. But strategically deploying those shields is crucial, and gives Zarya a steep learning curve.

Difficulty: Hard.

Play if: You want to protect teammates and deal damage at the same time.

Support Heroes

These *Overwatch* heroes exist to help other heroes do what they do best. They're usually healers, but most have other interesting abilities as well. (Don't underestimate Supports; they're crucial to success.)

Ana



Ever wanted to shoot your teammates? With Ana, you can. Her Biotic Rifle rounds damage enemies and heal teammates. Biotic Grenades do the same. And her Sleep Dart knocks enemies out, leaving them vulnerable (and likely full of rage). Ana's ultimate, Nano Boost, gives a teammate a big damage buff. If you have solid sniping chops, Ana is a fun and unique choice.

Difficulty: Hard.

Play if: You're a great sniper, but want more versatility than Widowmaker.

Lúcio



Lúcio is a DJ whose weapon and special powers are music-based. If that isn't enough to get you to play him, the fact that he has an area-based heal and speed boost probably will be. All you need to do is be near your team and they'll get the benefits of your healing powers. The secondary Sonic Amplifier shot pushes enemies back, which is great for knocking foes off ledges. And his ultimate gives teammates shields.

If you're a beginner to *Overwatch's* Support characters, its tough to beat Lúcio. Learning to switch between his healing and speed boosts is key to mastering him.

Difficulty: Medium.

Play if: You're new to Support and want to heal a lot of teammates at once.

Mercy



Oh, Mercy. If you've played *Overwatch*, you know her. She's one of the game's most-loved and hated heroes. Her no-aim-needed healing and damage boosting can single-handedly change the course of a battle in both casual and **competitive play**. And one of her abilities is to revive a dead teammate, obviating the need for them to sprint back to the battle. Is she overpowered? No. Will people complain about her all day long? Yes.

Difficulty: Easy.

Play if: You want a powerful healer that can also effectively deal damage through other players. And love to revive people.

Symmetra



Only want to aim occasionally? Pick Symmetra for your Support. Her Photon Projector follows enemies, but can also fire energy balls. The primary fire does more damage the longer it's connected to an enemy, and ramps up quickly. She can also deploy small turrets that damage and slow enemies.

Her ultimate lets you pick between two abilities. You can deploy a teleporter, helping teammates get back into the battle in a flash. Or, drop a shield generator to add some extra protection to allies who stay near it. Notably, Symmetra is the only Support hero who can't heal teammates.

Difficulty: Medium.

Play if: You want to have a subtle, but strong, effect on the game.

Zenyatta



Orb of Destruction is an accurate **long-distance weapon**, making Zenyatta a solid candidate for support by itself. The fact that he can heal a teammate and increase the damage taken by an opponent makes him even better. And his ultimate turns him into an invincible, mega-healing machine. The learning curve is a bit steep, but when you're at the top, you'll love it. Just be aware that he's extremely fragile and slow.

Difficulty: Hard.

Play if: You want to heal and deal damage in equal amounts.

The Best Overwatch Heroes for Beginners

If you're still not sure who to try first, here are a few suggestions for *Overwatch* beginner heroes:

For offense, choose Soldier: 76. His weapons, abilities, and controls are easy to get the hang of, and he's a solid, dependable character at many levels of play.

For defense, choose Bastion. You'll need to think a bit about positioning when you go into Sentry mode, but beyond that you pretty much just hold the trigger down.

For tanks, choose Roadhog. It takes a while to get the hang of the Chain Hook, but a large health pool, quick self-healing, and a shotgun-style cannon make him accessible.

For support, choose Mercy. You can heal and provide damage boosts constantly, as well as revive dead teammates. Stay out of the line of fire, and you'll be fine.

Which Overwatch Hero Will You Pick?

With 25 unique *Overwatch* heroes, you'll be able to find a character that fits your play style. It's just a matter of getting started.

A piece of advice: **play all the heroes**, even ones who aren't your type. You'll be surprised to find that you like some of the heroes you didn't expect, and you'll get good insight into how to play against other heroes. Plus, since *Overwatch* lets you change your hero anytime, having some other options at the ready can help turn the tide of a fight.

Which *Overwatch* heroes do you tend to play? Which do you think are best for beginners? Share your thoughts in [the comment section](#)!

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