

A GUIDE TO CREATING A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS CHARACTER

Created by F. Sinclair, School Librarian, for the D&D activity group. Referenced from the D&D Core Rule Books: *Player's Handbook*, Published by Wizards of the Coast, 2014

Creating your first character might be confusing and take a long time. Each person will develop their own sequence of creating a character and filling in the character sheet.

Unless you have an impeccably good memory, a lot of information should be noted down, from racial traits, class features and how spells work. Learn to use abbreviations (see end of guide) so you can keep the notes shorter.

You will need:

- A blank character sheet (Different styles available from: http://dnd.wizards.com/articles/features/character_sheets)
- Dice d6 / d8
- Pencil & eraser
- Blank, lined, or scrap paper
- *Player's Handbook (PH)*

This guide is based on the character sheet shown at the back of the *Player's Handbook*. A reference (use in library only) is available from the library - just ask!

If you are keen, it is recommended you purchase your own copy of the *Player's Handbook* and a set of d20 dice. Basic rules can be downloaded from the D&D: <http://dnd.wizards.com/dungeons-and-dragons/start-playing>.

1. ROLL ABILITY SCORES

Roll 4d6, six times

Note results on scrap paper. Drop lowest score and add up the three highest scores.

| | | |
|----|---------|----|
| 1. | 4 4 3 2 | 11 |
| 2. | 6 5 4 1 | 15 |
| 3. | 5 3 2 1 | 10 |
| 4. | 6 6 4 2 | 16 |
| 5. | 5 3 2 2 | 10 |
| 6. | 6 5 4 1 | 15 |

If you are rolling your scores, your Dungeon Master (DM) may want to witness it.

Alternatively, use the standard array of 15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 8, or points method as shown on page 13 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Note the scores at the top of the character sheet. You won't need these until you start to fill in the figures once you have chosen your race and class.

2. CHOOSE YOUR RACE & SUBRACE

A DM may specify the type and variety of races you can work with for a particular campaign, however, most often you will get free rein. In school you will select from those that are in the *Player's Handbook*.

Common Races: Dwarf; Elf; Halfling; Human
Uncommon races: Dragonborn; Gnome; Half-Elf; Half-Orc; Tiefling

- Note race & subrace

Halfling Lightfoot
RACE

- Note any **ability score** (inc. subrace) **increases** next to relevant ability score box on sheet. (You will add this/these to the scores when allocating them according to the class you pick.)



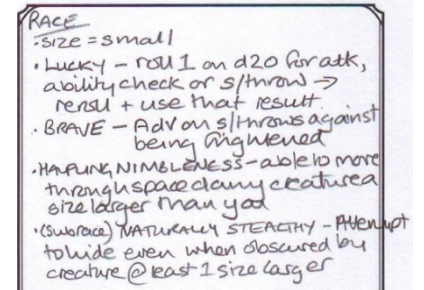
- Note **speed** (This might change later depending on class features.)



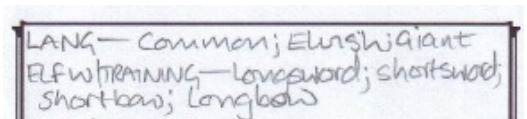
- Describe **physical attribute**: Age, Height, Weight, Eyes, Skin, Hair (On back of sheet - can be done later)

- Choose **alignment** (each race indicates appropriate alignment. Discuss with your DM if you want something different. p122 PH)
- Note other race/subrace **traits** in relevant box. eg. the Halfling's 'Lucky' trait, or the Elf (Dark) 'Drow Magic' trait.

Some race traits may require use of ability modifiers for attacks, saving throws and damage. You can note these once you have determined your class abilities. (see below)



- Note any race/subrace **weapon proficiencies and languages** in the 'Other Proficiencies & Languages' box.

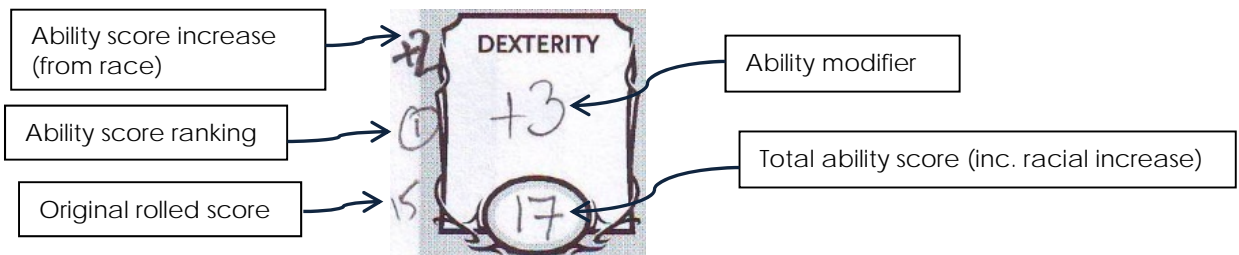


3. CHOOSE CLASS

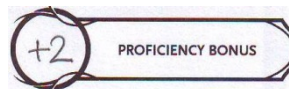
There are twelve classes you can choose from: **Barbarian; Bard; Cleric; Druid; Fighter; Monk; Paladin; Ranger; Rogue; Sorcerer; Warlock; Wizard.**

Read p45 of the *Player's Handbook* to get a short overview. More detail can be found in each class **description** and it is recommended you read these before starting to fill out your character sheet. All information is found in class description unless otherwise stated.

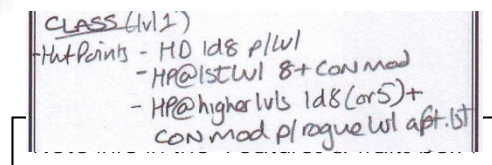
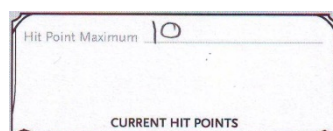
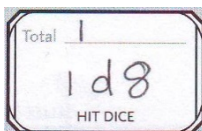
- Determine **ability score ranking** - use the 'Quick Build' section of the class description. Note 1. & 2. Next to appropriate ability score box.
- **Allocate scores** to abilities remembering to add any increases given by race.
- Determine **ability score modifiers**. (See p13 *Player's Handbook*)



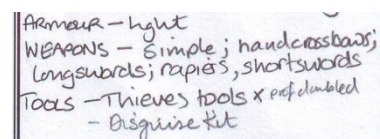
- Note **proficiency bonus**



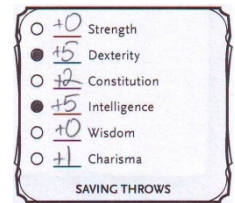
- Note **Hit Dice and Hit Points**



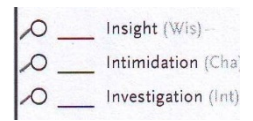
- Note **Armour, Weapon, & Tool Proficiencies** in the 'Other Proficiencies & Languages' box.



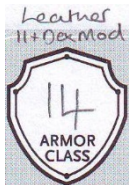
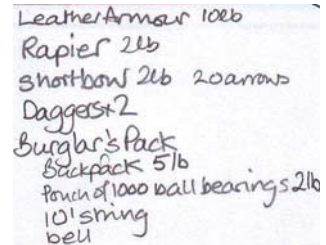
➔ Mark off class saving throws. Add in the relevant ability modifiers at this point. Remember: add proficiency bonus to class saving throws.



➔ Check class skills, but don't choose yet. You need to look at what skills the background gives you. Note down how many you have to choose.

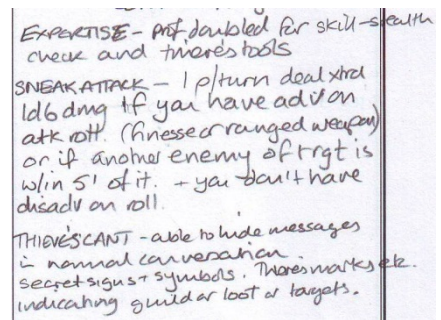


➔ Choose your equipment from the list in the class description. Note them in the 'Equipment' box. (NB. Weight of item can also be noted here.)



You can now note your **Armor Class**, based on the armour you have selected. Use the Armour table on p145 of the *Player's Handbook*.

➔ Note class features, including spellcasting, in the 'Features & traits' box. You get more features at higher levels. There is more space on the back of the sheet, or you can use note paper.



➔ Note your weapons in the 'Attacks & Spellcasting' box. Use the Weapons table on p149 PH. Note name, properties (use abbreviations) and damage.

| NAME | ATK BONUS | DAMAGE/TYPE |
|------------------------------|-----------|----------------|
| Rapier (F) | +5 | 1d8+3 piercing |
| Shortbow 2-h (80/320) | +5 | 1d6+3 piercing |
| Dagger (+2) (X1) (F) (20/60) | +5 | 1d4+3 piercing |

(see SneakAtt →)

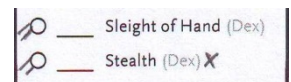
At this point, you can refer back to your ability modifiers to determine attack bonuses and damage. Remember to add your proficiency bonus to relevant ability modifier.

4. CHOOSE BACKGROUND

There are thirteen backgrounds to choose from: **Acolyte**; **Charlatan**; **Criminal**; **Entertainer**; **Folk Hero**; **Guild Artisan**; **Hermit**; **Noble**; **Outlander**; **Sage**; **Sailor**; **Soldier**; **Urchin**

You can use what the 'Quick Build' of each class suggests or choose your own.

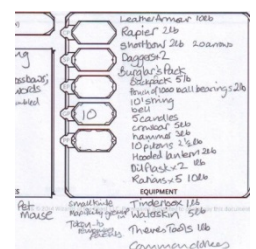
➔ Note skill proficiencies and check them. They might be the same as some of your class skills. Mark them off by putting a check mark next to the skill or colouring in the circle.



➔ Note any further tool proficiencies in the 'Other Proficiencies & Languages' box.

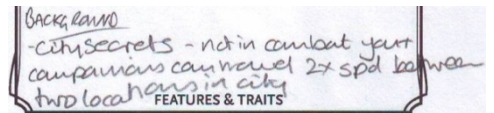
➔ Note any further languages in the 'Other Proficiencies & Languages' box.

➔ Note any further equipment and money available to you based on background in the 'Equipment' box.

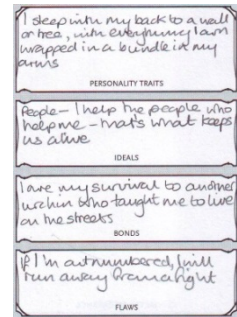


In this example, the list has spilled out of the box. As you level up you will find or buy more equipment. NB. A DM may rule, based on your carrying capacity (p176 PH), that you can't carry everything

- Note any further features in the 'Features & Traits' box. Use the 'Additional Features & Traits' on the back of the sheet if you have run out of space.



- Choose or roll dice for your characteristics: **Personality Trait, Ideal, Bond, and Flaw.**

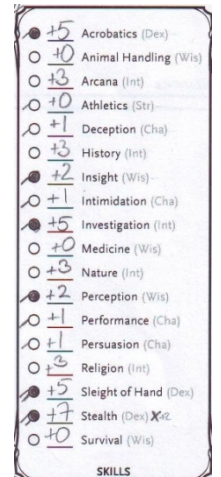


You can now go back and choose the rest of your class skills according to the number the class description tells you to select from your class list. Mark them off - colour in the circle.

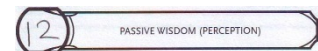
Transfer appropriate ability score modifiers to the skills, remembering to also add your proficiency to any that are marked.

Some class features might double the proficiency for a skill, either permanently or under certain circumstances as described.

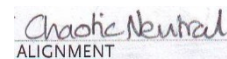
Ensure you have this noted. Eg. Rogue Expertise gives double prof in Stealth checks. Indicated by a little cross and +2, here.



- Fill in your **passive perception** - 10 + Perception skill modifier.



- Choose your **alignment** (p122 PH). Your ideals may indicate this.



- You can now flesh out your character. Use the back of the character sheet to describe their **appearance** and their **backstory**. You might find as a game progresses you will add more details to this.

5. SPELLCASTING

If you have a race and/or have a class that can cast spells, you will need an extra sheet to record spells. The 'Quick Build' section of some class descriptions suggests spells you can take if you are a spellcaster, otherwise you can choose your own according to the class lists in Chapter 11, Spells, in the PH, p 207.

Some subraces have an innate spellcasting ability to cast cantrips or spells: **High Elf; Dark Elf; Forest Gnome; Tiefling**

Spellcasters at 1st level: **Bard; Cleric; Druid; Sorcerer; Warlock (Pact Magic); Wizard**

Gain spellcasting at higher levels: **Fighter (Eldritch Knight archetype) Lvl 3; Paladin Lvl 2; Ranger Lvl 2; Rogue (Arcane Trickster) Lvl 3**

'Special' Spellcasting: **Monk Lvl 3** (depends on Monastic tradition chosen) - uses Ki points to gain access to some spells as indicated in the class description.

Spellcasters either know their spells or have to prepare their spells. Prepared spells can be changed at the end of a long rest. Each class has a list of spells (p207-11 PH).

- **Bard** (p52 PH)—Known; CHA; Spellcasting focus = musical instrument (p154 PH)
- **Cleric** (p58 PH)—Prepared; WIS; Spellcasting focus = Holy symbol (p150, 151 PH)
- **Druid** (p66 PH)—Prepared; WIS; Spellcasting focus = Druidic focus (p150, 151 PH)
- **Paladin** (p84 PH)—@Lvl 2; Prepared; WIS; Spellcasting focus = Holy Symbol
- **Ranger** (p91 PH)—@Lvl 2; Known; WIS
- **Rogue (Arcane Trickster)** (p98 PH)—Lvl 3; Known; INT
- **Sorcerer** (p101 PH)—Known; CHA; Spellcasting focus = Arcane focus (p150, 151 PH)
- **Warlock** (p107 PH)—Known; CHA; Spellcasting focus = Arcane focus
- **Wizard** (p114 PH)—Prepared - from spellbook (p114 PH); INT; Spellcasting focus = Arcane focus; Learn two new spells, add to spellbook each level up; If you find a new spell whilst adventuring, you can copy it to your spellbook. It takes 2hrs and costs 50gp.

For further information about spellcasting read the Chapters 10 & 11 in the *Player's Handbook* or the 'Spellcasting' section of the Quick reference Guide available in the library

Make sure you read the spellcasting section of your chosen class carefully.

- ➔ Note your **Spell save DC** and your **Spell attack modifier**.
- ➔ Choose your **cantrips** from the class spell list (or use the 'Quick Build' options).
- ➔ Note how many spells you **know** or can **prepare**.
- ➔ Choose your spells from your class list and note them on the spell sheet.
- ➔ Any straightforward attack cantrips can be placed in the 'Attacks & Spellcasting' box.
- ➔ You will need to note down how each spell and cantrip works, including attack and damage. Write them on paper, use note cards or a notebook. There are D&D Spell apps available for mobile phones which are useful.

NB. In the game, it is important you have spell information immediately to hand. A DM may not wait for you to find the spell info as play has to keep moving.

Finally... Have fun! Enjoy your character. Keep practising. Always have a back-up character.

Some Suggested Abbreviations

| | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Adv = advantage | hp = hit points | prof = proficiency |
| Disadv = disadvantage | lvl = level | s/throw = saving throw |
| Atk = attack | mod = modifier | spd = speed |
| dmg = damage | p/lvl = per level | tgt = target |
| HD = Hit dice | p/turn = per turn | w/in = within |

Weapon properties (have a bearing on how weapons can be used)

(f) = finesse

(v) = versatile (can use 2-handed, thus increasing damage)

(l) = light (can wield two light weapons, and get bonus attack (no modifier to damage) with second weapon)

(h) = heavy (Small creatures use it with disadvantage)

(lo) = loading (can only fire 1 piece of ammo)

(t) = thrown (weapon can be thrown)

20/60 = normal range / long range (roll atk with disadvantage)