

D&D BASICS

ABILITY SCORES

A character's basic abilities are **Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom** and **Charisma**. Each has a **score** between 3 and 20, which translates into a **modifier** of -4 to +5. The modifier is added to the dice result of a roll, making you more or less likely to succeed.

PROFICIENCY BONUS

Characters can have **proficiency** with *skills, tools, weapons, armour, languages* and *saving throws*. If you make a roll involving these, you might add your **proficiency bonus** to represent training or expertise. At level 1 your proficiency bonus is +2.

ROLLING THE DICE

There are three main kinds of dice rolls: **ability checks, attack rolls, and saving throws**. These always use a twenty-sided dice (d20 for short). You usually add a modifier to your roll. If the final result is *equal to or higher* than the **Difficulty Class (DC)** set by the Dungeon Master (DM), or specified by the rules, you succeed. If it's lower, you fail, or maybe succeed with a setback or a cost.

Other dice are mostly rolled to determine **damage, healing** or magical effects.

ADVANTAGE/DISADVANTAGE

If you have **advantage**, roll two d20s and use the best result. If you have **disadvantage**, roll two d20s and use the worst result.

You can't have advantage or disadvantage more than once. If you have both at the same time, they cancel each other out; roll one d20.

FRACTIONS

If a rule says to divide a number, always **round fractions down** to a whole number.

SPECIFIC EXCEPTIONS

If a race, class, equipment, spell or something else specific to your character says something different to the general rules, use the specific rule instead.

Dice, from top to bottom: a d20, d12, d10 (the zero counts as 10), d8, d6 and d4. 6s and 9s are underlined to make them clear.



TYPES OF ROLLS

ABILITY CHECKS

This roll "checks" if you succeed at a task. The DM will tell you the DC and which ability to use, as well as any skill or tool proficiency that applies. e.g. kicking down a door might be a Strength (Athletics) check. Add your **Ability modifier** to the roll, plus your **proficiency bonus** if you have the relevant proficiency.

ATTACK ROLLS

This is an attempt to hit an opponent in combat. The DC for an attack roll is the Armour Class (AC) of your target. Most melee weapons add your **Strength modifier**; most ranged weapons add your **Dexterity modifier**. Add your **proficiency bonus** if you are proficient with the weapon, as determined by your class and possibly your race.

Some spells require a spell attack roll; these add your **spellcasting ability modifier** (determined by your class) and **proficiency bonus**.

If you roll a 1 on the d20 for an attack roll, you always miss. If you roll a 20 on the d20 (a "natural 20"), you always hit, and it's a **critical hit** (or "crit"; see below).

DAMAGE ROLLS

When you **hit** with an attack, you usually make a **damage roll** to see how much damage you dealt. A weapon or spell specifies the number and size of dice to roll, and the *damage type*. Roll all the dice and add the results together.

Weapons also add your **Strength** or **Dexterity modifier** to the damage roll, whichever you used for the attack roll. (Don't add your proficiency bonus.) Spells don't usually add any modifiers.

On a **critical hit**, roll double the normal number of damage dice. (Only add modifiers once.)

On your character sheet, a damage roll is written like this: "**2d6+3 sl**". This means roll two six-sided dice, add their results, then add another 3. The "sl" is shorthand for the damage type - in this case, slashing damage.

Some monsters and characters have **resistance** (take half the damage rolled), **vulnerability** (take double the damage rolled) or even **immunity** (take no damage) to certain damage types.

SAVING THROWS ("SAVES" FOR SHORT)

This is an attempt to avoid or reduce a harmful effect. The source - usually a spell, trap or special attack - will specify which Ability score to use, what the DC is, and what happens if you succeed or fail. Add your **Ability modifier** to the roll, and your **proficiency bonus** if you're proficient in saves for that ability, which is determined by your class.

TIPS FOR ROLLS

REQUIRED LEARNING

The DM may rule some tasks impossible to attempt unless you have a relevant proficiency. For example, you can't pick a lock if you don't have proficiency with Thieves' Tools, or recognise an obscure god's symbol if not proficient in Religion.

ROLLING AGAIN

If you fail a roll, the Dungeon Master decides whether you can try the same thing again; you can't always keep rolling until you get lucky! Don't give up; just try to think of a different way to solve the problem.

HELPING OTHERS

You can assist someone else in a task, giving them advantage on their roll. It has to make sense that you can help them, though, and you may have to have a relevant proficiency.

YOUR CHARACTER SHEET

Take some time to look over your character sheet and learn where everything is. On the standard sheet, abilities, saving throws and skills are on the left; combat information is in the middle column; and special rules from your race, class and background are on the right. If you can cast spells, they usually get a separate sheet.

Bonuses for saving throws, skills, attacks and damage should be written as the final bonus to add to your roll; e.g. if you have a Wisdom modifier of +2 and are proficient in the Perception skill, write +4 in the space next to Perception. **Use a pencil** as these values will change at higher levels!