

WELCOME TO DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

DRIVEN BY IMAGINATION, DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is a cooperative game in which the characters you roleplay embark on adventures together in fantasy worlds filled with monsters and magic. This set gives you and up to five of your friends everything you need—besides your imagination and a pencil—to journey in one of those worlds.

WHAT'S IN THIS SET

This set includes the following components:

Rulebook. This rulebook contains all the rules you need to start playing D&D.

Adventure Booklet. The other booklet in this set contains an adventure for you to play. Only the person who's going to run the adventure should read that booklet.

Character Sheets. Five different characters—a cleric, a fighter, a paladin, a rogue, and a wizard—are provided for up to five players to choose from. The characters that your group choose will go on the adventure in the adventure booklet.

Dice. All the dice you need to play are included.

GETTING STARTED

If this is your first time playing D&D, start by reading the rest of this introduction and chapter 1. They tell you the most important rules for play. Visit dnd.wizards.com/starter for additional guidance.

The next step is to decide who is going to run the adventure—that person is called the **Dungeon Master** or **DM**—and who's going to play the adventurers.



BEING A PLAYER

Each player chooses a character, an adventurer who teams up with the other players' adventurers. This set comes with several characters to choose from, each one printed on their own sheet. Take a look at each of the sheets, and choose the character who looks the most fun to play. Whichever characters you and the other players choose, the characters are assumed to be allies as they face the dangers of D&D together. The DM presents exciting challenges, new friends, and handsome rewards to your characters. The DM is not your foe but does present dangers that provide opportunities for your adventurers to shine and then thrive.

The adventure in this set works best for four or five characters, so if you have fewer than four players, we recommend some of you play more than one character.

BEING THE DM

Instead of choosing a character, one participant takes on the role of the DM, the game's lead storyteller and referee. The DM runs the adventure for the characters, who navigate its hazards and decide which paths to explore. The DM describes the locations and creatures that the adventurers face, and the players decide what they want their characters to do. Then the DM, using imagination and the game's rules, determines the results of the adventurers' actions and narrates what they experience. Because the DM can improvise to react to anything the players attempt, D&D is infinitely flexible.

If you decide to be the DM, make sure to familiarize yourself with this rulebook, and read the adventure booklet. You'll then be ready to gather your friends together to play.

RHYTHM OF PLAY

Once the DM is ready to run the adventure and the players have chosen their characters, the group gathers for a session of play. In a typical D&D session, play unfolds in **encounters**—similar to how a movie comprises scenes—and in each encounter, there are chances for the DM to describe creatures and places and for characters to make choices. Here's an example of the start of an encounter:

Dungeon Master (DM): A crumbling castle stands among the trees, the ruins of seven towers jutting up from it like broken teeth. An archway littered with rusted metal gapes open at the top of a short flight of steps. Just inside that opening, you spot two skeletal guards with glowing red eyes.

Phillip (playing Nica, the cleric): Let's send the rogue up ahead to look in and see if there are more than two guards.

Amy (playing Diana, the rogue): OK, I'll sneak up until I can peer in through the entrance.

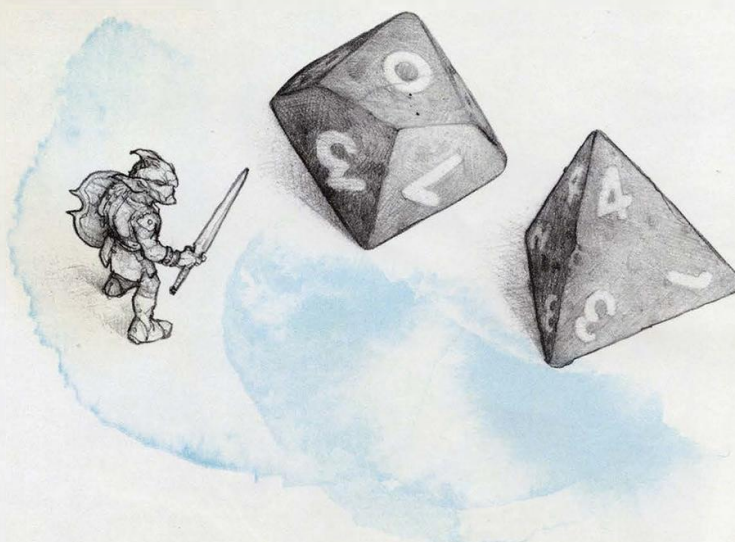
DM: All right, let's see how sneaky you are. Make a Dexterity check.

Amy: Using my Stealth proficiency, right?

DM: You bet.

Amy (rolling a d20): Diana's pretty sneaky—that's a 17.

DM: There's no sign the skeletal guards spot you, and you don't notice any others.



In that example, three main steps are present, and those steps occur in every D&D encounter, whether it's a peaceful encounter or a fight:

- 1: The DM describes the environment.** The DM tells the players where their adventurers are and what's around them, presenting the basic scope of options (how many doors lead out of a room, what's on a table, who's in the tavern, and so on).
- 2: The players decide what their characters do.** A character's sheet contains various things that the character can do. When deciding what your character does, you may choose something on the sheet, or you may make something up. Whatever you decide, describe the intended action to the DM and the other players. Sometimes all the characters do the same thing, and other times, different adventurers do different things; one adventurer might search a treasure chest while a second examines a symbol engraved on a wall, for example. Outside combat, the characters don't need to take turns, but the DM listens to every player and decides how to resolve those actions. In combat, everyone takes turns in order, as explained in the "Combat" section (page 9). Either way, the DM tells you what happens next.
- 3: The DM narrates the results of the action.** Sometimes, resolving a task is easy. If an adventurer wants to walk across a room and open a door, the DM might just say that the door opens and describe what lies beyond. But the door might be locked, the floor might hide a deadly trap, or some other circumstance might make it challenging for an adventurer to complete a task. In those cases, the DM checks to see if there are relevant rules—on a character sheet, in this rulebook, or in the adventure—and then decides what happens, often relying on the roll of a die to determine the results of an action. Describing the results often leads to another decision point, which brings the flow of the game right back to step 1.

GAME DICE

The game uses dice with different numbers of sides. In these rules, the different dice are referred to by the letter *d* followed by the number of sides: **d4**, **d6**, **d8**, **d10** (with 0 standing for 10), **d12**, and **d20**. For instance, a d6 is a six-sided die.

When you need to roll dice, the rules tell you how many dice to roll of a certain type, as well as what modifiers (positive or negative) to add. For example, "3d8 + 5" means you roll an eight-sided die three times, add the rolls together, and add 5 to the total.

Percentile dice, or **d100**, work differently. You generate a number between 1 and 100 by rolling a ten-sided die twice. The first roll gives the tens digit, and the second roll gives the ones digit. For example, if you roll a 7 and a 1, the number rolled is 71, and if you roll a 0 and a 5, the number rolled is 5. Two 0s represent 100.

TERMS TO REMEMBER

adventure. An adventure is a series of encounters that help tell a story and present the players' characters with important choices.

character sheet. A character sheet is a piece of paper or digital record that bears a character's game statistics.

creature. Any living being in the game, including a player's character, is a creature. Each creature belongs to a type: Aberration, Beast, Celestial, Construct, Dragon, Elemental, Fey, Fiend, Giant, Humanoid, Monstrosity, Ooze, Plant, or Undead. Some rules in the game affect creatures of certain types in different ways. For example, the text of the *cure wounds* spell specifies that the spell doesn't work on a creature that has the Undead type.

dungeon. A dungeon is any indoor adventure location, whether underground, in a castle, or in a city.

encounter. An encounter is a scene in an adventure, incorporating a fantasy location and often friends or foes.

monster. A creature controlled by the DM is a monster, even if the creature is benevolent. A monster with a personal name is sometimes called an NPC (nonplayer character), especially if it isn't combative.

object. An object is a nonliving, distinct thing. Composite things, like buildings, comprise more than one object.

player character. A player character—"character" for short—is an adventurer controlled by a player.

stat block. A stat block contains the game statistics of a monster. It's effectively the monster's character sheet.

WHAT'S NEXT?

If you'd like to delve deeper into D&D, check out the fifth edition *Player's Handbook*, *Monster Manual*, and *Dungeon Master's Guide*. These advanced rulebooks introduce you to the vast multiverse of D&D and invite you to create characters and worlds within it.