This is a fantasy story.

You are the main character.

Who are you?

What do you do?

This book is a way to answer those two very important questions. It’s a guide to the fascinating races that populate the world of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and the combat-centered classes that define their role as adventurers. It gives you a wide range of options to choose from, along with armor, weapons, and other equipment to outfit your heroic persona.

Read this book from start to finish, or open it to any spot, get pulled in by the exciting illustrations, and start brainstorming from there. The more you read, the more character ideas will spring from your imagination.

Every character is unique. Even when two of them share the same race and class, the decisions they make will take them on an exclusive journey that is yours to tell. DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is all about building memorable characters, and the legends of your grand deeds are about to begin.

Have fun!
HOW TO FILL OUT YOUR CHARACTER SHEET

Ready to build your character? Grab your Player’s Handbook, a blank character sheet, a pencil, and some dice—it’s character creation time! This guide will tell you what each section of your character sheet means, and how to fill it in.
CHARACTER SHEET • FIRST PAGE

NAME Names are important. They create an impression and build expectations. A powerful-sounding name, like “Battlehammer,” tells people you’re a capable warrior, while a name such as “Fenius” can sound mysterious or sly. Silly or serious, bubbly or brutal, whatever you choose, make sure it’s something that exemplifies the key traits of your character.

CLASS AND LEVEL The class you choose for your character is more than a profession—it’s a calling! Your class provides special features that appear on your character sheet.

Beginner adventurers start their journey at Level 1. You can read more about classes in Chapter 3 of the Player’s Handbook, “Classes.” If you’re stuck, look at the “Quick Build” section for the different classes.

RACE Adventurers come in all shapes and sizes in the fantasy world. By choosing a character’s race, you gain a unique appearance and interesting abilities. You can read more about the different races in Chapter 2 of the Player’s Handbook, “Races.”

BACKGROUND Characters are more than their race and class; they’re individuals with their own special stories to be told. You get to decide where your hero comes from and how their experiences have led them to this point.

You can choose a character background in Chapter 4, “Personality and Background,” of your Player’s Handbook.

ALIGNMENT Is your character a thief with a heart of gold, or a law-abiding citizen? A character’s alignment broadly describes your character’s moral and personal attitude. To pick an alignment, go to page 122 of your Player’s Handbook.

PLAYER NAME That’s you! Write your name here to make sure your sheet doesn’t get lost.

EXPERIENCE POINTS Experience points are what allow you to level up. Since your character is just starting out, your character begins their adventure with 0 experience points. But don’t worry—as they complete quests and challenges, they’ll be rewarded with more experience.

See the Character Advancement table on page 15 of your Player’s Handbook.
ABILITY SCORES  Much of what your character does in the game depends on their six main abilities: Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma.  
To read more, see the “Ability Score Summary” chart on page 12 and Chapter 7, “Using Ability Scores,” of your Player’s Handbook.  
To get these numbers, grab four six-sided dice (d6), roll, and drop the lowest number. Add up the remaining three, and jot that number down on some scratch paper. Do this five more times. Then assign these six numbers to the six ability scores however you like!  
Your character’s race will also come with additional bonuses for some of these numbers—make sure to add them. See that small circle under the box? That’s not just decoration—that’s your ability modifier. To determine your ability modifier, use the “Ability Scores and Modifiers” chart on page 13 of your Player’s Handbook.  

SKILLS  Skills are specific capabilities your character has and each skill corresponds with a core ability score. For example, strong characters would be better athletes on the battlefield, while charismatic characters would be better at persuading a foe from attacking in the first place.  
Next to each skill, write down the ability modifier the skill corresponds to. For the full list of corresponding ability scores and skills, check out the “Using Each Ability” section in Chapter 7 of your Player’s Handbook.  

SAVING THROWS  Saving throws, or saves, are a special type of ability check your character makes when trying to resist a spell, trap, poison, disease, or similar threat. To calculate your saving throws, match your ability score modifiers to the corresponding saving throw. Your class will also give you proficiency in a few saving throws—be sure to add your proficiency bonus to those numbers!  
For more information on how these work, check out the “Saving Throws” section in Chapter 7 of your Player’s Handbook.  

PROFICIENCY BONUS  Certain classes and backgrounds give an added boost to certain skills. Your proficiency bonus is a number that tells you just how accomplished your character is with a certain skill.  
Your proficiency bonus is determined by your character’s level. See the Character Advancement table on page 15 and the section “Proficiency Bonus” in Chapter 7 of your Player’s Handbook.  

PASSIVE WISDOM (PERCEPTION)  As your character explores, there’s a chance they will notice something hidden without knowing to look for it. Your character’s Passive Wisdom, or Passive Perception, determines how naturally observant your character is.  
Your Passive Wisdom is 10 + your Perception modifier. (Remember to add your Proficiency bonus if you’re proficient in Perception, too!)
OTHER PROFICIENCIES AND LANGUAGES  When you choose a background, your character will get the additional skill proficiencies and languages a character of that background would have. Perhaps your character spent lots of time studying so hard that they picked up two extra languages, or spent a lot of time fighting to get even tougher.

You’ll find these details in the character background you choose in Chapter 4, “Personality and Background,” of your Player’s Handbook.

EQUIPMENT  Think about what your character brings with them—not only the clothes they wear, the items in their pack, and the weapons they wield, but also the money in their wallets and the mementos they travel with.

Your starting equipment is determined by your character’s class and background. See Chapter 3, “Classes,” and Chapter 4, “Personality and Background,” in your Player’s Handbook.

ARMOR CLASS  Your armor class (AC) represents how well your character avoids getting hurt in battle. The higher the AC, the harder they are to hit. Without a shield or armor, your character’s AC is 10 + their Dexterity modifier.

If your character wears armor, carries a shield, or both, you can calculate your AC using the “Armor” chart on page 145 of your Player’s Handbook.

INITIATIVE  Initiative is how fast your character springs to action in battle. This number is the same as your Dexterity modifier.

SPEED  Speed is how fast you can travel while adventuring. Are you a dwarf with short legs? You’ll take a little longer to catch up with taller humans and elves. Your speed is determined by your race. To determine your character’s speed, see Chapter 2, “Races,” of your Player’s Handbook.

HIT POINTS AND HIT DICE  Hit points and hit dice determine how tough your character is in combat and other dangerous situations. The number of hit points and hit dice you have is determined by your character’s class and level. See the “Class Feature” section for your character’s class in your Player’s Handbook.

DEATH SAVES  If your character reaches 0 hit points, they fall unconscious and begin making rolls called “death saves.” Three successes, and you’re back in the fight! Three failures . . . well, looks like it’s time to make a new character.

INSPIRATION  Leave this blank. Certain characters and your Dungeon Master can grant you inspiration—a free re-do roll.
ATTACKS AND SPELLCASTING  Your character is in the middle of a brawl—how do they fight back? Look no further than your attacks and spells. The kinds of attacks your character can carry out depend on the weapons you have and the spells you are trained in. Each weapon you have will detail how easily you’ll be able to land a hit, and how much damage you are able to inflict. Go through the “Weapons” section in Chapter 5 of your Player’s Handbook to find these numbers. If your character is able to cast spells, you can list your spells here, too.

For example, every character has the same starting attack: an Unarmed Strike, which can be a punch, headbutt, kick, elbow strike, or even a smack with your character’s tail. The Attack Bonus for an Unarmed Strike is your Proficiency Bonus + your Strength modifier. If you successfully hit an Unarmed Strike, the damage you deal is the same number as $1 +$ your Strength modifier, and the type of damage is “Bludgeoning.”

PERSONALITY TRAITS, IDEALS, BONDS, AND FLAWS  You know what your character can do with weapons and spells—but what kind of person are they deep down? Figuring out your character’s personality will help you bring them to life as you play the game. For more ideas, read Chapter 4, “Personality and Background,” in your Player’s Handbook.

FEATURES AND TRAITS  Your character’s class and race will give them abilities that only that kind of character would have. These will be listed in the “Class Features” section of your character’s class and the “Traits” section of your character’s race, in Chapters 2 and 3 of your Player’s Handbook.
CHARACTER APPEARANCE  You can decide if your character is young or old, as well as the color of their skin, hair, and eyes. Speaking of hair—how much of it do they have and how short or long do they keep it? Do they have any tattoos, scars, or other markings? Close your eyes and imagine how your character might look. You can even use this space to draw a picture!

CHARACTER BACKSTORY  Based on the details of first page of your character sheet—race, class, background, alignment—think of what your character’s story has been up to this point. Where did they grow up? Who raised them? What led them to an adventurous life? Let your imagination run wild!

Give your character a big goal to accomplish or a faraway place to visit, and you’ll see how easy it can be to build a story around their adventures.

ALLIES AND ORGANIZATIONS  In an adventuring world, it’s important to have friends who will always have your back. Perhaps your character joined an organization that treated them like family, or had a wise teacher who taught them everything they know. Who are these people? Write them here. If you’re stuck, your very first allies are your fellow party members!

ADDITIONAL FEATURES AND TRAITS  Perhaps there are parts of your character’s personality that haven’t come up on the sheet yet. This is where you can add more detail! Think about the things that make your character unique. Do they speak with an accent or have a stutter? Do they have odd hobbies, like collecting blue buttons or reading obscure histories? Are they shy or the life of the party?

TREASURE  Use this section to write down all the loot you collect during your adventures. Score!
CLASS FLOWCHART

Choosing a character class can be difficult, so here's a little chart you can use to help you decide.

DO YOU PREFER LIFE IN THE CITY, OR DO YOU LIVE OUTDOORS IN THE WILD?

CITY

Do you see yourself as someone strong in battle or quick?

QUICK

Do you charge directly into battle or use stealth to hide and then strike from the shadows?

NO

CHARGE

YOU MIGHT BE A GOOD FIGHTER

YOU MIGHT BE A GOOD ROGUE

STRONG

Do you serve a higher cause and always follow the law?

YES

YOU MIGHT BE A GOOD PALADIN

OUTDOORS

Do you see yourself as someone angry in battle or more calm?

ANGRY

Do you launch a head-on assault in battle, or are you more strategic in order to keep your opponent off guard?

STRATEGIC

YOU MIGHT BE A GOOD BARBARIAN

YOU MIGHT BE A GOOD RANGER

CALM

Do you enjoy being in nature and with animals, or do you prefer to be alone with your thoughts?

NATURE

ALONE

YOU MIGHT BE A GOOD MONK

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Dice Guide

D4

D6

D8

D10

D12

D20