Unearthed Arcana: Quick Characters

Sometimes you need quick characters for a D&D session. Whether you're running an impromptu game with limited time for character creation, you want to get a new player into an established game quickly, or you need a new PC to replace a dead adventurer, these optional rules are for you. These rules can be used instead of the normal process of character creation, replacing the choice and creativity of that process with a series of tables that quickly generate a 1st-level character.

With the exception of backgrounds, these rules focus on the character options available in the *D&D Basic Rules* as a means of keeping things simple.

Alignment

Roll a d6 to determine your character's alignment.

d6	Alignment
1	Lawful good
2	Neutral good
3	Chaotic good
4	Lawful neutral
5	Neutral
6	Chaotic neutral

Background

Backgrounds already make use of random tables to flesh out your character, and are easy to apply. You can roll a d6 to determine your character's background if you're using the *Basic Rules*, or roll a d20 to use the full list of backgrounds from the *Player's Handbook*.

d6	Background (*Basic Rules*)
1	Acolyte
2	Criminal
3	Folk hero
4	Noble
5	Sage
6	Soldier

d20	Background (*Player's Handbook*)
1–2	Acolyte
3	Charlatan
4–5	Criminal
6	Entertainer
7–8	Folk hero
9–10	Guild artisan
11	Hermit
12	Noble
13–14	Outlander
15	Sage
16–17	Sailor
18–19	Soldier
20	Urchin

Alternatively, for players who are comfortable defining a character's personality traits, ideals, bonds, and flaws through roleplaying, the quick character generation process can be made even quicker by foregoing a background, instead rolling for the skill and tool proficiencies normally provided by a background. Roll four times on the following table, rerolling any duplicate results.

d20	Proficiency
1	Acrobatics
2	Animal Handling
3	Arcana
4	Athletics
5	Deception
6	History
7	Insight
8	Intimidation
9	Investigation
10	Medicine
11	Nature
12	Perception
13	Performance
14	Persuasion
15	Religion
16	Sleight of Hand
17	Stealth
18	Survival
19	Carpenter's tools
20	Thieves' tools

In place of a background feature, once during any game session, you can pick a nonplayer character you meet and declare that your character knows that NPC. The relationship is respectful but not necessarily friendly. The DM determines the exact nature of your relationship.

LITERALLY ANY PIECE OF NPC ARTWORK HERE

Class and Abilities

Roll a d6 to determine your class from the following table, which is more likely to generate a fighter or cleric than a rogue or wizard. Especially if you're randomly generatingan entire party, tilting the odds in favor of fighters and clerics can help shore up a group's ability to survive in combat. Alternatively (or if you're generating a single character joining an already balanced party), you can roll a d4 and give each class an equal chance of being generated.

d6	d4	Class
1–2	1	Cleric
3–4	2	Fighter
5	3	Rogue
6	4	Wizard

When determining your ability scores, your choice of class shapes which abilities are of most use to your character. Roll a d6 to determine the ability score array your character uses. Then assign those numbers to your abilities in an order determined by your class.

d6	Ability Score Array
1	18, 14, 12, 8, 8, 6
2	16, 14, 14, 10, 10, 8
3	16, 16, 12, 10, 8, 8
4	16, 12, 12, 12, 10, 8
5	14, 14, 12, 12, 12, 12
6	14, 14, 14, 12, 12, 10

Cleric. Wisdom, Strength, Constitution, Charisma, Dexterity, Intelligence.
Fighter. Strength, Constitution, Dexterity, Wisdom, Intelligence, Charisma.
Rogue. Dexterity, Charisma, Intelligence, Constitution, Strength, Wisdom.
Wizard. Intelligence, Dexterity, Wisdom, Charisma, Constitution, Strength.

For example, a player creating a cleric rolls a 4 for the character's ability score array—16, 12, 12, 12, 10, and 8. Those numbers are assigned in that order to the ability scores listed for clerics, yielding a character with Strength 12, Dexterity 10, Constitution 12, Intelligence 8, Wisdom 16, and Charisma 12.

After you assign your character's ability scores, but before applying any modifiers for your race (see below), you can swap any two scores.

Equipment

Your class also determines your equipment. Select gear from your class's quick equipment choices, except for any of the prebuilt packs such as the explorer's pack or the priest's pack (see below).

Alternatively, you can select one of the following default equipment packages:

- **Cleric:** Mace, scale mail, light crossbow and 20 bolts, shield, holy symbol
- **Fighter:** Chain mail, longsword, shield, light crossbow and 20 bolts
- **Rogue:** Shortsword, shortbow and 20 arrows, leather armor, two daggers, thieves' tools
- **Wizard:** Dagger, component pouch, spellbook

Then select one of the following standard equipment packs for your character:

- Backpack, sack, lantern, 2 oil flasks, tinderbox, 12 pitons, hammer, waterskin, rations (4 days), 5 gp
- Backpack, 2 sacks, 6 torches, 3 oil flasks, tinderbox, 10-foot pole, 50 feet of rope, waterskin, rations (4 days), steel mirror
- Backpack, 4 sacks, holy symbol or thieves' tools, 12 pitons, 50 feet of rope, waterskin, rations (4 days)

All characters also gain a dagger and either a light crossbow and 10 bolts, or a set of 5 javelins.

Cleric Spells

Randomly determining spells can speed up the process of creating a 1st-level cleric.

Cantrips. Roll a d6 three times to determine your cleric cantrips, rerolling any duplicate results.

d6	Cantrip
1	*Guidance*
2	*Light*
3	*Resistance*
4	*Sacred flame*
5	*Spare the dying*
6	*Thaumaturgy*

Spells. Roll a d10 for each cleric spell you can prepare, rerolling any duplicate results.

d10	Spell
1	*Bless*
2	*Command*
3–4	*Cure wounds*
5	*Detect magic*
6	*Guiding bolt*
7	*Healing word*
8	*Inflict wounds*
9	*Sanctuary*
10	*Shield of faith*

Fighter Fighting Style

Roll a d6 to determine your fighting style, and make the indicated adjustments if you selected the default equipment package.

d6	Fighting Style
1	Archery (swap light crossbow and 20 bolts for a longbow and 20 arrows; at your option, also swap chain mail for leather armor)
2	Defense
3	Dueling
4	Great Weapon Fighting (swap longsword and shield for a greataxe)
5	Protection
6	Two-Weapon Fighting (swap longsword for two short swords)

Rogue Proficiencies

Roll a d12 four times to determine your skills, rerolling any duplicate results. In addition, reroll any results that duplicate skills granted by your background.

d12	Skills
1	Acrobatics
2	Athletics
3	Deception
4	Insight
5	Intimidation
6	Investigation
7	Perception
8	Performance
9	Persuasion
10	Sleight of Hand
11–12	Stealth

Wizard Spells

Randomly determining spells can speed up the process of creating a 1st-level wizard.

Cantrips. Roll a d10 three times to determine your wizard cantrips, rerolling any duplicate results.

d10	Cantrip
1	*Acid splash*
2	*Dancing lights*
3	*Fire bolt*
4	*Light*
5	*Mage hand*
6	*Minor illusion*
7	*Poison spray*
8	*Prestidigitation*
9	*Ray of frost*
10	*Shocking grasp*

Spells. Roll a d12 six times to determine the contents of your wizard spellbook, rerolling any duplicate results.

d12	Spell
1	*Burning hands*
2	*Charm person*
3	*Comprehend languages*
4	*Detect magic*
5	*Disguise self*
6	*Identify*
7	*Mage armor*
8	*Magic missile*
9	*Shield*
10	*Silent image*
11	*Sleep*
12	*Thunderwave*

Race

Finally, roll a d12 to determine your character's race. The following table is weighted heavily toward humans, both to reflect typical D&D demographics and to push players toward the easiest option.

d12	Race
1	Hill dwarf
2	Mountain dwarf
3	High elf
4	Wood elf
5	Lightfoot halfling
6	Stout halfling
7–12	Human

ONCE AGAIN VIRTUALLY ANY NPC ARTWORK