

Proficiency

Characters and monsters are good at various things. Some are skilled with many weapons, while others can use only a few. Some are better at understanding people's motives, and others are better at unlocking the secrets of the multiverse. All creatures have a Proficiency Bonus, which reflects the impact that training has on the creature's capabilities. A character's Proficiency Bonus increases as the character gains levels (described in “Character Creation”). A monster's Proficiency Bonus is based on its Challenge Rating (see “Rules Glossary”). The Proficiency Bonus table shows how the bonus is determined.

This bonus is applied to a D20 Test when the creature has proficiency in a skill, in a saving throw, or with an item that the creature uses to make the D20 Test. The bonus is also used for spell attacks and for calculating the DC of saving throws for spells.

Proficiency Bonus Table

Level or CR	Bonus
Up to 4	+2
5-8	+3
9-12	+4
13-16	+5
17-20	+6
21-24	+7
25-28	+8
29-30	+9

The Bonus Doesn’t Stack

Your Proficiency Bonus can't be added to a die roll or another number more than once. For example, if a rule allows you to make a Charisma (Deception or Persuasion) check, you add your Proficiency Bonus if you're proficient in either skill, but you don't add it twice if you're proficient in both skills.

Occasionally, a Proficiency Bonus might be multiplied or divided (doubled or halved, for example) before being added. For example, the Expertise feature (see “Rules Glossary”) doubles the Proficiency Bonus for certain ability checks. Whenever the bonus is used, it can be multiplied only once and divided only once.

Skill Proficiencies

Most ability checks involve using a skill, which represents a category of things creatures try to do with an ability check. The descriptions of the actions you take (see “Actions” later in “Playing the Game”) specify which skill applies if you make an ability check for that action, and many other rules note when a skill is relevant. The GM has the ultimate say on whether a skill is relevant in a situation.

If a creature is proficient in a skill, the creature applies its Proficiency Bonus to ability checks involving that skill. Without proficiency in a skill, a creature can still make ability checks involving that skill but doesn't add its Proficiency Bonus. For example, if a character tries to climb a cliff, the GM might ask for a Strength (Athletics) check. If the character has Athletics proficiency, the character adds their Proficiency Bonus to the Strength check. If the character lacks that proficiency, they make the check without adding their Proficiency Bonus.

Skill List

The skills are shown on the Skills table, which notes example uses for each skill proficiency as well as the ability check the skill most often applies to.

Skill	Ability	Example Uses
Acrobatics	Dexterity	Stay on your feet in a tricky situation, or perform an acrobatic stunt.
Animal Handling	Wisdom	Calm or train an animal, or get an animal to behave in a certain way.
Arcana	Intelligence	Recall lore about spells, magic items, and the planes of existence.
Athletics	Strength	Jump farther than normal, stay afloat in rough water, or break something.
Deception	Charisma	Tell a convincing lie, or wear a disguise convincingly.
History	Intelligence	Recall lore about historical events, people, nations, and cultures.
Insight	Wisdom	Discern a person’s mood and intentions.

Intimidation	Charisma	Awe or threaten someone into doing what you want.
Investigation	Intelligence	Find obscure information in books, or deduce how something works.
Medicine	Wisdom	Diagnose an illness, or determine what killed the recently slain.
Nature	Intelligence	Recall lore about terrain, plants, animals, and weather.
Perception	Wisdom	Using a combination of senses, notice something that's easy to miss.
Performance	Charisma	Act, tell a story, perform music, or dance.
Persuasion	Charisma	Honestly and graciously convince someone of something.
Religion	Intelligence	Recall lore about gods, religious rituals, and holy symbols.
Sleight of Hand	Dexterity	Pick a pocket, conceal a handheld object, or perform legerdemain.
Stealth	Dexterity	Escape notice by moving quietly and hiding behind things.
Survival	Wisdom	Follow tracks, forage, find a trail, or avoid natural hazards.

Determining Skills

A character's starting skill proficiencies are determined at character creation, and a monster's skill proficiencies appear in its stat block.

Saving Throw Proficiencies

Proficiency in a saving throw lets a character add their Proficiency Bonus to saves that use a particular ability. For example, proficiency in Wisdom saves lets you add your Proficiency Bonus to your Wisdom saves. Some monsters also have saving throw proficiencies, as noted in their stat blocks.

Each class gives proficiency in at least two saving throws, representing that class's training in evading or resisting certain threats. Wizards, for example, are proficient in Intelligence and Wisdom saves; they train to resist mental assault.

Equipment Proficiencies

A character gains proficiency with various weapons and tools from their class and background. There are two categories of equipment proficiency:

Weapons. Anyone can wield a weapon, but proficiency makes you better at wielding it. If you have proficiency with a weapon, you add your Proficiency Bonus to attack rolls you make with it.

Tools. If you have proficiency with a tool, you can add your Proficiency Bonus to any ability check you make that uses the tool. If you have proficiency in the skill that's also used with that check, you have Advantage on the check too. This means you can benefit from both skill proficiency and tool proficiency on the same ability check.

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