

Skills: Changes from the Core Rules

- The list of skills has been reduced by merging some skills together and eliminating a few others as follows:
 - Appraise → Knowledge
 - Balance, Escape Artist → Acrobatics (new skill)
 - Climb, Jump, Swim → Athletics (new skill)
 - Concentration, Survival → Endurance (new skill)
 - Decipher Script, Speak Language → Linguistics (new skill)
 - Diplomacy → removed; see note below
 - Disable Device → Tinker
 - Disguise → Bluff
 - Forgery → Craft
 - Hide → Stealth
 - Intimidate → Bluff or Athletics
 - Listen, Spot → Perception
 - Use Rope → Sleight of Hand
 - Open Lock → Tinker
 - Ride → Handle Animal; also many related abilities are realized as feats instead
 - Tumble → removed; these abilities are realized as feats instead
 - Use Magic Device → Tinker

In most cases skills have been merged to make them more balanced. In the past, certain skills (like Spot) are more useful than others (like Use Rope and Forgery).

- Diplomacy has been removed from the game. In practice, this skill served as a barrier to roleplaying. A player whose character has a low Diplomacy modifier is obligated to be quiet in roleplaying encounters to avoid having to use the skill. A player whose character has a high Diplomacy modifier is has an incentive to skip the roleplaying and just make a skill check to avoid the risk of accidentally saying something wrong to the NPC. By removing the skill, all the players at the table can participate in a roleplaying encounter. In cases where the DM wants to quickly resolve an NPC interaction “off camera” she can use the PC's Perform skill as a substitute.

Skills: Changes from the Core Rules (continued)

- Intimidate has been removed for much the same reason as Diplomacy. Bluff or Athletics can be used as a substitute if necessary.
- Skills like Perform, Craft, Profession and Knowledge are no longer a collection of composite skills. Instead, you select a new specialty each time you take a rank in the skill. When you have need of a specialty-based skill, your level of success is dependent upon what specialties you have selected, not what dice you roll. As a result, these skills switch from being “wasted skill ranks” to valuable, colorful aspects of your character's personality.
- All PCs start with extra “Background Ranks” that they they must invest in specialty-based skills. These ranks allow you to support the background that you've written for your character without forcing you to neglect skills you know you'll need during adventuring.
- The idea of passive skill checks has been formalized in this system. Some skills, like Perception and Sense Motive, are now always passive.
- The concepts of skill rank and skill points have been merged together. Ranks only grant a +1 bonus, so, in general, 1st level characters start with lower skill modifiers which makes ability scores matter more at lower levels. This is mitigated by a modification to the concept of skill training (see next bullet)
- All skills can be used untrained. Instead, being trained means that you can treat all d20 rolls with that skill as having a minimum value of 10. This approach is simpler, and rewards players for investing in skills by reducing instances of the situation where the weakling wizard successfully leaps the crevasse but the barbarian fails simply due to the luck of the dice.
- “Taking 10” on a skill has been removed in light of the new concept of skill training.
- Characters that cooperate together on a skill check automatically use the highest roll as the “base roll” and add the other rolls as bonuses (or penalties). This removes the situations where everyone aids the PC with the highest modifier only have that PC roll a natural 1.
- Skill synergies have been removed to reduce complexity and power gaming.
- Aid Another now always uses the highest skill check result as the base and the other rolls as assists. However, it is now possible for an assisting character to apply a penalty instead of a bonus if she gets a low result.
- The class skill lists have been expanded somewhat and provide much less of a barrier. Furthermore, a PC can spend two skill ranks to make any skill permanently a class skill.
- Climbing can be enacted with either Acrobatics or Athletics.
- The Athletics skill is now used for special combat maneuvers like grapple and bull rush (See Special Attacks in Chapter 7: Combat).
- Spellcraft is now a Cha-based skill
- Perform is now a general skill that is broader than just entertainment. Perform now includes your ability to fool others with disguise or deceit and your ability to win the trust of a stranger. Specialties like “Perform(lute)” now fall under the Profession and Knowledge skills.

Skills

You apply the skill ranks you get from your class to give yourself training in various skills that will be useful during the game. The ranks you invest increase the skill modifier (a positive or negative number) that you add to a d20 whenever your character attempts to use one of these skills.

Alternatively, ranks can give you specialized abilities or knowledge.

Available Skills

A complete list of the available skills is in the following table. Class skills are indicated for each class by an 'x' in the table.

<u>Skill</u>	<u>Bbn</u>	<u>Brd</u>	<u>Clr</u>	<u>Drd</u>	<u>Ftr</u>	<u>Mnk</u>	<u>Pal</u>	<u>Rgr</u>	<u>Rog</u>	<u>Sor</u>	<u>Wiz</u>	<u>Key Ability</u>
Acrobatics	x	x			x	x		x	x			Dex
Athletics	x	x			x	x	x	x	x			Str
Bluff		x							x	x		Cha
Craft	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	N/A
Endurance	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		Con
Gather Information		x							x		x	Cha
Handle Animal	x			x	x		x	x				Cha
Heal			x	x			x	x				Wis
Knowledge	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	N/A
Linguistics		x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x	N/A
Perception	x	x		x		x		x	x			Wis
Perform		x							x			Cha
Profession		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	N/A
Search								x	x			Int
Sense Motive		x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x		Wis
Sleight of Hand		x							x			Dex
Spellcraft		x	x	x			x	x		x	x	Cha
Stealth	x	x		x	x	x		x	x	x		Dex
Tinker									x			Int
<u>Skill</u>	<u>Bbn</u>	<u>Brd</u>	<u>Clr</u>	<u>Drd</u>	<u>Ftr</u>	<u>Mnk</u>	<u>Pal</u>	<u>Rgr</u>	<u>Rog</u>	<u>Sor</u>	<u>Wiz</u>	<u>Key Ability</u>

Acquiring Skills

Each time your character gains a level (including first level) he or she gains a certain number of skill ranks. This number is the sum of your Intelligence modifier and a base number determined by your class. For example, clerics receive 2+Int modifier skill ranks at each level. (See Chapter 3 for the details on each class.)

The skill ranks you acquire must be spent immediately in one of the following ways:

- You may invest one rank into one of your class skills. (See Chapter 3 for a list of class skills for each class.) Each rank you invest grants you a +1 bonus to your skill modifier. You may not invest more ranks in a skill than you have levels. So, for example, a 5th level character may not have more than 5 ranks invested in any one skill.
- You may spend two ranks into a non-class skill to permanently turn it into a class skill. This rank is not invested in the skill. It can not help you meet prerequisites for feats and other features. It does not increase your skill modifier. Once you have purchased a class skill in this manner, you can invest subsequent ranks as normal and the skill is always a class skill for you, even if you take levels in another class.
- You may invest one rank to gain a specialty in a specialty-based skill. There are four specialty-based skills: Craft, Knowledge, Linguistics and Profession. These skills do not have skill modifiers and therefore there is no limit to the number of ranks you can invest in them.

Example: Dirk has a Strength of 16, an Intelligence of 12 and a Charisma of 10. As a fighter, he gains three skill ranks at 1st level. He chooses to invest one rank in the Athletics skill (increasing his skill modifier from +3 to +4). He spends the other two ranks to make Perform a class skill. His Perform skill modifier remains +0. At 2nd level, Dirk takes another level in the fighter class and gains three more skill ranks. He spends one rank to increase his Athletics skill modifier to +5. He invests the other two ranks into his Perform skill which increases his skill modifier to +2. Dirk now has a total of two ranks in the Athletics skill and two ranks in the Perform skill. At 3rd level, Dirk takes a level in the wizard class and gains three more skill ranks. Perform remains a class skill for him because of the investment he made at 1st level. So he can continue to invest ranks in that skill. However, he can not invest a rank into Athletics because that is not a class skill for wizards. However, Dirk could spend two ranks to make Athletics always a class skill just as he did for Perform.

Background Ranks

At first level you receive a number of bonus ranks equal to 3 plus the sum of your Intelligence, Wisdom and Charisma modifiers (minimum: 1). These ranks are in addition to the ranks you receive from your class. However, you may only spend these ranks on specialty-based skills (Craft, Knowledge, Linguistics or Profession). These are called background ranks because they are intended to allow you to provide a foundation for your character's personal history.

For example, Dirk the fighter has 2 background ranks. Dirk's background indicates he has had a career as a caravan guard so, he spends a background rank on Profession to gain a specialty as a caravan guard. He also invests one rank in Knowledge to gain a specialty in local geography.

Should your ability modifiers change at higher levels, they do not retroactively change the background ranks you received at first level.

Using Skills

When your character uses a skill, you make a skill check to see how well he or she does. The higher the result of the skill check, the better. Based on the circumstances, your result must match or beat a particular number for the check to be successful. The harder the task, the higher the number you need to roll.

Circumstances can affect your check. A character who is free to work without distractions can make a careful attempt and avoid simple mistakes. A character who has lots of time can try over and over again, thereby assuring the best outcome. If others help, the character may succeed where otherwise he or she would fail.

Active Skill Checks

An active skill check occurs when a character uses a skill deliberately. For example, a character using the Perform skill is intentionally seeking to entertain or deceive. An active skill check takes into account a character's training (ranks invested), natural talent (ability modifier), and luck (a die roll). It may also take into account other bonuses such as his or her race's knack for doing certain things (racial bonus), training (class bonus), a certain feat the character possesses (example: Skill Focus), or the circumstances of the check (an enthusiastic audience).

To make an active skill check, roll 1d20 and add your character's skill modifier for that skill. The skill modifier incorporates the character's ranks in that skill and the ability modifier for that skill's key ability, plus any other miscellaneous modifiers that may apply. The higher the result, the better. Unlike with attack rolls and saving throws, a natural roll of 20 on the d20 is not an automatic success, and a natural roll of 1 is not an automatic failure.

Skill Training

If a character has invested at least one rank in a skill, then his training and experience usually prevents him from catastrophic failure. If you are making a skill check with a trained skill, you may treat any roll of 9 or less as if you had rolled a 10 on the die.

Passive Skill Checks

In some cases, a character uses a skill automatically. For example, a character would use the Sense Motive skill automatically to determine whether he is being lied to. These uses of a skill are called passive skill checks. Passive skill checks are made the same way as an automatic skill check except that there is no die roll involved. Instead, the skill result is determined based upon whether you are trained in the skill (i.e., have invested at least one rank in it). Characters that are trained have a passive result equal to 10 plus their skill modifier. If the character is not trained in the skill, then the passive skill is equal to the skill modifier.

Active or Passive?

Some skills, like Sense Motive and Perception, are usually used passively. Other skills, like Acrobatics and Sleight of Hand are usually active. Some skills are frequently used both ways. Ultimately, the decision to make a skill active or passive is up to your DM.

In many cases, the best reason for the DM to have a player use a skill passively is to keep a player's knowledge more consistent with the character's knowledge. For example, if Sense Motive were an

active skill, then a player who rolls very low on the d20 for a Sense Motive check will suspect that their character has missed an important insight. Another example is using Perform to create a disguise. If the player rolls low then she knows that her character's disguise is poor even though her player doesn't. In both cases, this conflict between player knowledge and character knowledge can tempt the player to behave contrary to the result of the skill check.

The other common reason to use a skill passively is if it being used defensively against an active skill check. For example, if an NPC tries to fool your character with a half-truth she is making an active Perform check versus your PC's passive Sense Motive.

Specialty-Based Skills

Craft, Knowledge, Linguistics and Profession are specialty based skills. Each time you invest a rank in a specialty-based skill you gain a specialty of your choice that indicates a specific area where you have used that skill in the past. The specialties you select are limited only by your imagination and their appropriateness to the setting. You can not select the same specialty more than once.

You can't make either active or passive skill checks with specialty-based skills. Instead, you make a skill check by asking the DM if your specialty is relevant. For example, Ludwig the Bard is trying to interpret the meaning of sinister frieze he finds carved upon the wall of a dwarven tomb. He notifies the DM of the specialties he has that might be relevant. For example, his specialty in Linguistics (dwarven) might apply. Or perhaps his Craft(stone carving)? Or Knowledge(dwarven culture)?

Any specialty can be used interchangeably in any reasonable context regardless of what skill it is associated with. For example, having Profession(tanner) does not mean you also need to have Knowledge(tanner) to know about the tanning process or Craft(leather) to create a tanned hide.

A given specialty may be very general or quite specific. For example, a character who takes a rank in the Knowledge skill could select a general specialty like: arcana. This might grant a minor boon in a lot of situations. Alternatively, the character may select somewhat less general specialty like: magical creatures. This might earn a moderate boon from time to time. If the character has a moderately specific specialty like: dragons he may gain a large boon on rare occasions. A character who selects a very specific specialty like: red dragons of the southern jungles may gain an automatic success once or twice in his career. Ultimately, the effectiveness of your specialties is up to your DM.

In some cases, particularly when using the Craft skill, you may want to know how well a PC has applied a specialty-based skill. In that case, the effectiveness depends upon the number of relevant specialties that you have. These specialties can be drawn from any of the specialty-based skills as long as at least one is from the skill you are using. Thus, a PC who wants to be particularly good at crafting chain mail, might take multiple specialties that focus on the relevant aspects of making chain mail like Profession(armor fitting), Knowledge(alloys) and Craft(wire drawing).

The chart below is meant as a guideline for the DM for determining the quality or success of the application of a specialty-based skill.

Number of Relevant Specialties	Quality
1-2	Poor
3-5	Average
6-9	Good
10-14	Superior

15-20	Masterful*
21+	Supernatural

*An item that is of Masterful quality or better is a masterwork item. See Chapter 6: Equipment.

Difficulty Class (DC)

When making a skill check, you are trying to meet or exceed a certain target number called a Difficulty Class or DC. In some cases, the DC will be the passive skill of another creature. For example, if you are trying to use Stealth to avoid notice, you are trying to beat an opponent's passive Perception. In other cases your DC is set by the DM based upon the nature of the situation. These values can vary tremendously. For low level PCs, a DC 10 is “easy”, a DC 15 is moderate and a DC 20 is “difficult.” Of course, as your PC gains levels many DC 20 checks in some skills will become automatic. In that case, your DM will likely introduce more challenging situations that are beyond the ability of most NPCs.

Trying Again

In general, you can try a skill check again if you fail, and you can keep trying indefinitely. Some skills, however, have consequences of failure that must be taken into account. For most skills, when a character has succeeded once at a given task, additional successes are meaningless.

Critical Success and Critical Failure

Typically, rolling a natural 20 does not result in an automatic success on a skill check. Similarly, rolling a natural 1 is not an automatic failure. In some cases, however, your DM may decide that your exceptional luck (good or ill) is significant so be sure to inform your DM when you roll a natural 20 or natural 1.

Favorable And Unfavorable Conditions

Often situations may make a skill easier or harder to use, resulting in a bonus or penalty to the skill modifier for a skill check or a change to the DC of the skill check. Conditions that affect your character’s ability to perform the skill change the skill modifier. Conditions that modify how well the character has to perform the skill to succeed change the DC. A bonus to the skill modifier and a reduction in the check’s DC have the same result: They create a better chance of success. But they represent different circumstances, and sometimes that difference is important.

Time And Skill Checks

Using a skill might take a few seconds, no time at all or several hours. Many skill uses are standard actions, move actions, swift actions (see Actions in Combat in Chapter 7: Combat). Types of actions define how long activities take to perform within the framework of a combat round (6 seconds) and how movement is treated with respect to the activity. Passive skill checks are instantaneous and represent reactions to an event, or are included as part of an action.

Taking 20

When you have plenty of time, are faced with no threats or distractions, and the skill being attempted

carries no penalties for failure, you can “take 20.” In other words, eventually you will get a 20 on 1d20 if you roll the dice until you get it right. Instead of rolling 1d20 for the skill check, just calculate your result as if you had rolled a 20.

Taking 20 assumes that you fail many times before succeeding. If you attempt to take 20 on a skill that carries penalties for failure, your character would automatically incur those penalties before he or she could complete the task.

You can not take 20 on a passive skill check. You may not use tokens to apply a bonus to a skill check when you are taking 20.

Combining Skill Attempts

At the DM's discretion, two or more characters can cooperate to achieve a greater success on an active skill check. For example, a party may be cooperatively searching a room for a hidden door. When multiple characters are cooperating, they each make a skill check and the highest result is used. For each other character whose result meets or exceeds 15, add +2 to the highest result. For example, if four characters are cooperating on a Search check then they each make an active Search roll. If their individual results are 11, 16, 19 and 21 then the final result of this cooperative check is 25: the highest roll plus 2 for each other character whose result was 15 or higher.

A character's help may actually be harmful. For example, if a cleric is using her Heal skill to aid a wounded comrade, the “assistance” of a fumble fingered warrior with no training could be disastrous. In such cases, apply a -2 penalty for any character who rolls less than 15 on the check.

In some cases cooperative skill checks do not make sense. For example, if the party is using Stealth to sneak up on a sleeping guard each PC should make an individual check.

Cooperation is not always available to an unlimited number of PCs. For example, there may only be room for two people at once to push on a stuck door.

Using Specialties with Cooperative Checks

Your specialties can also serve as a source of circumstance bonuses to an active and passive skill check if the DM rules that it's relevant. General specialties might provide a +1 bonus whereas specific specialties could provide a much larger bonus when they apply. As a rule of thumb, no specialty should provide a circumstance bonus more than once per day.

When counting specialties to determine the quality or success of the application of a specialty-based skill, each other PC that has a relevant specialty may contribute it to the effort. Nobody other than the primary skill wielder may count more than one specialty for this purpose.

Ability Checks

Sometimes a character tries to do something to which no specific skill really applies. In these cases, you make an ability check. An ability check is a roll of 1d20 plus the appropriate ability modifier. Essentially, you are making an active, untrained skill check. The DM is encouraged to avoid ability checks if any skill is somewhat applicable. For example, even though using a Strength check to force open a door might seem more sensible, an Athletics check is a better choice because it rewards players who have invested in that skill.

The normal take 20 rules also apply for ability checks. At the DM's discretion, ability checks can be performed cooperatively.

Skill Descriptions

This section describes each of the skills in more detail and provides examples of how these skills are typically used. The following information is given for each skill:

Name and Key Ability: Each section begins with the name of the skill followed by the key ability in parentheses.

Description: This section describes the general purpose of the skill.

Examples: This section gives some examples of how the skill is used. This is by no means a complete list.

Specialties: This specifies whether the skill is specialty-based and, if so, provides some examples.

Time: This is the amount of time that typically transpires for each active use of the skill. This is a guideline and not a rule. In some cases, this time is just a single action (e.g., Acrobatics). In other cases, using the skill may take several days (e.g., Craft). Your DM may also allow you to reduce the time spent if you can achieve a significantly higher DC.

Active or Passive: This specifies whether the skill is typically used actively or passively. A skill that is labeled as active is not necessarily always used this way (or vice versa).

Armor Check Penalty: Armor interferes with the use of some skills. This entry specifies whether you automatically incur a penalty to skill checks with this skill if you are wearing armor. The actual penalty varies depending upon what armor you are wearing (see Armor in Chapter 6: Equipment). In some circumstances, your DM may require an armor check penalty on other skill checks, particularly Athletics and Endurance. In other cases, the DM may choose to remove the penalty due to the circumstances.

Alternative Ability: This describes other abilities that could be used with this skill instead of the given default. To switch to an alternative ability, your character must select the Alternative Ability feat.

Acrobatics (Dex)

Description:

Acrobatics is your character's ability to nimbly overcome an obstacle or react to an unexpected change in terrain. Acrobatics is usually associated with balancing, climbing and acting in tight spaces.

Whenever you take damage from a fall, you can reduce the damage dealt by an amount equal to your passive Acrobatics check divided-by 5.

Climbing can be accomplished with either Acrobatics or Athletics. When climbing, the DC will depend heavily upon the circumstances. The following suggestions are intended as a guideline for the DM:

- DC 0 Climbing a ladder
- DC 5 Climbing a knotted rope.
- DC 10 Climbing a rope
- DC 15 Climbing a rocky wall
- DC 20 Climbing a vertical wall with few handholds
- DC 40 Climbing a smooth vertical surface

DC 50 Climbing an oil-slicked, smooth vertical surface

Examples:

- Walking along a narrow ledge.
- Keeping on your feet on a ship as it rocks in stormy seas.
- Slipping out of the grasp of tentacled monstrosity.
- Charging across an icy surface.

Specialties: no

Time: move action

Active or Passive: active

Armor Check Penalty: yes

Alternative Ability: none

Athletics (str)

Description:

Athletics is your character's ability to overcome obstacles using sheer physical might. Athletics checks are most commonly associated with climbing, jumping and swimming. The Athletics skill is used for many special actions in combat like a bull rush or grapple. See Special Attacks in Chapter 7: Combat.

When jumping across a horizontal distance, treat the character as having traveled a number of squares equal to the check result. If the creature is jumping vertically, the distance is equal to check result divided by five. For both horizontal and vertical jumps, if the character does not have at least two squares of a running start, the distance is halved.

Climbing can be accomplished with either Athletics or Acrobatics. See the Acrobatics skill for a list of suggested DCs.

Examples:

- Climbing out of a pit trap.
- Getting onto a boulder to gain higher ground in combat.
- Push an opponent over a cliff
- Leaping a chasm.
- Swimming to shore in a raging river.

Specialties: no

Time: move action

Active or Passive: active

Armor Check Penalty: yes; also swimming is impossible in heavy armor.

Alternative Ability: none

Bluff (Cha)

Description:

Bluff is used to deceive others in word and deed. It is typically opposed by another creature's passive Sense Motive skill.

Examples:

- Lying to others
- Feinting in combat
- Crafting a believable disguise and playing the part well (passive)
- Make a path through a crowd of panicked onlookers by pretending to be an authority

Specialties: no

Time: varies

Active or Passive: varies, but usually active

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: Wis

Craft

Description:

Craft is a measure of a character's practical ability with the art of creation and creative expression. If nothing is created by an endeavor, it probably falls under the heading of a Profession skill.

Each specialty in the craft skill is something you can create. For example, a specialty in armorsmithing means you can craft armor. You are always automatically successful at crafting armor assuming you have the proper tools and raw materials for doing so.

If you try to create something you don't have a specialty in, you can still make the attempt. In this case, your DM may call for a Tinker check to successfully create a crude item. The DC of the check will depend upon the item you are creating.

Examples:

- Crafting a suit of armor for an individual
- Blowing glass vials for potions.
- Sculpting the likeness of a famous king
- Distilling a poison from raw ingredients.

Specialties: yes

Examples of general specialties for the craft skill: alchemy, bowyer, carpentry, cooking, fletcher,

forgery, glassblowing, metalsmithing, painting, pottery, scribe, sculpture, seamster, tailoring, weaving and whittling. Since you can not really gain a new craft overnight, your DM may restrict your access to general specialties until a length of time has elapsed.

Example of somewhat more specific specialties for the metalsmithing specialty: blacksmithing, weaponsmithing, armorsmithing and goldsmithing.

Examples of very specific specialties for the metalsmithing specialty: basket hilts, enamel inlays, barbed armor spikes.

Time: Standard action or longer

Crafting typically takes a long time, possibly days or even weeks or months.

Endurance (Con)

Description:

This skill represents a character's ability to resist pain and overcome physical hardship.

Examples:

- Cross a desert in the middle of the day without becoming fatigued.
- Maintain your grip when injured while climbing a cliff.
- Remaining silent when you sustain an injury to avoid alerting nearby guards.

Specialties: no

Time: standard action or longer

Active or Passive: varies

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: none

Gather Information (Cha)

Description:

This skill is a measure of your ability to acquire knowledge that you currently lack. In most cases a character will use the Gather Information skill to make contact with NPCs in a city to find someone who can help. Characters with ranks in this skill may have contacts in several cities, may be talented at finding facts in a library or scriptorium, may be a member of a respected organization that guarantees the cooperation of local authorities or they may just good at using their charm to win the trust of a stranger. A successful gather information check doesn't necessarily reveal the desired answer, but it's certain to at least yield a clue that help the PCs along.

Examples:

- Research the likely location of a long lost tomb.
- Find out what the local gossip is.

- Make contact with a member of the local thieves' guild.

Specialties: no

Time: Hours

Active or Passive: active

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: Int

Handle Animal (Cha)

Description:

This skill is a measure of your ability to intuitively understand the thoughts and intentions of an animal and also to convey your thoughts and intentions to those animals. This skill can also be used in training animals and rearing captive wild animals. In a sense, Handle Animal is like Bluff, Perform and Sense Motive all rolled up in one...but only when dealing with animals and vermin.

Examples:

- Convince an angry bear that you are not a threat.
- Guide your mount through a hazardous area.
- Train a dog to attack on your command.
- Infer the intention of a bull moose based upon its body language.

Specialties: no

Time: standard action or longer

Active or Passive: active

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: Int

Heal (Wis)

Description:

This skill represents a character's ability to aid and accelerate the natural healing process of living creatures. It also reflects a character's knowledge of anatomy. Some typical uses of the skill include:

First Aid (DC varies) – You can stabilize a dying character with a Heal check. The DC of this check is equal to the character's negative hit point total. For example, a DC 18 Heal check is required to stabilize a character with -18 hit points. A stabilized character becomes **conscious** and **disabled** rather than **dying** (see Injury and Death in Chapter 7: Combat).

Long-Term Care (DC 15) – Providing long-term care means treating a wounded person over a longer period of time. The wounded person recovers ability score damage at twice the normal rate: 2 points per night of rest (8 hours) for each affected ability score or 4 points per day (24 hours) for each affected ability score. You can tend as many as six patients at a time. You need a few items and supplies

(bandages, salves, and so on) that are easy to come by in settled lands. Giving long-term care counts as light activity for the healer. You cannot give long-term care to yourself.

Treat Wound (DC 15) – Some types of wounds have specific effects on a character. For example, a creature wounded by stepping on a caltrop moves at one-half normal speed. A successful DC 15 Heal check removes this movement penalty.

Treat Poison (DC varies) – To treat poison means to tend a single character who has been poisoned and who is going to take more damage from the poison. The DC of the check depends upon the type of poison. It is possible to treat yourself for poison.

Treat Disease (DC varies) – To treat disease means to tend a single character who has contracted a disease. The DC of the check depends upon the type of disease. Treating the disease typically takes at least 24 hours. It is possible to treat yourself for a disease.

Saving Throw (DC 15) – You can always grant a saving throw to an ally as a swift action. When you do so, your ally receives a bonus to the roll equal to your passive Heal skill divided by 10. See Saving Throws in Chapter 7: Combat for more information about saving throws.

Specialties: no

Time: standard action or longer

Active or Passive: active

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: Int

Knowledge

Description:

Knowledge represents the results of schooling, self study and general life experience.

Examples:

- Identify a creature based upon its appearance.
- Guess the function of a strange mechanical device.
- Recognize the nature of a magical effect.

Specialties: yes

Examples of general specialties for the knowledge skill: arcana, architecture, cultures, engineering, dungeoneering, geography, history, nature, religion.

Example of somewhat more specific specialties for the nature specialty: flora, fauna, geology.

Examples of specific specialties for the nature specialty: breeds of dogs, owlbears, edible plants.

Time: A swift action or less

Linguistics

Description:

Linguistics is a character's ability to use languages both known and unknown. By default, all characters can speak Common and perhaps other languages due to their race or class. This skill can be used to add additional languages. This skill also grants you literacy in a language. It is possible to be literate in a language and not be able to speak it (and vice versa).

Skilled linguists can also extract meaning from ancient, magical or unknown languages and even ciphered text and puzzles. The table below shows all the languages that are available by default. Your DM may alter this list to fit the world that your character resides in. Some languages are unavailable until you have a certain minimum number of ranks in the Linguistics skill. Since acquiring a new language takes time, your DM may restrict you from adding additional specialties until a certain time has elapsed.

Language	Minimum Ranks	Typical Speakers
Abyssal	8	Demons
Celestial	8	Celestials
Common	0	Humans, halflings, half-elves, half-orcs
Draconic	0	Kobolds, troglodytes, lizardfolk, dragons
Druidic	-	Druids (only)
Dwarven	0	Dwarves
Elemental	4	Elemental outsiders
Elven	0	Elves
Giant	0	Giants, ogres
Gnome	0	Gnomes
Goblin	0	Goblinoids
Gnoll	0	Gnolls
Halfling	0	Halflings
Infernal	8	Devils
Orc	0	Orcs
Sylvan	4	Faerie
Undercommon	0	Denizens of the underdark

Examples:

- Write a letter to an elven ambassador in his native tongue.
- Decipher an ancient inscription on the door of a tomb.
- Understand the encrypted passages in a stolen spellbook.

Specialties: yes

Each time you take a rank in the Linguistics skill, you may choose one of the following specialties:

- Add a new language that you can speak. This does not mean that you are literate in that language.
- Add a new language that you can read and write. This does not mean that you can speak the language effectively.
- Add some other specialty of your choice. For example, you could add a specialty in decoding ciphers. More specific specialties might allow you to learn particular dialects or subcultural forms of written communication.

Time: standard action or longer

Perception (Wis)

Description:

This skill is a measure of your character's awareness of the world around him.

Examples:

- Hear someone sneaking up behind you
- Spot a secret door
- Smell a distant campfire
- Taste a subtle poison
- Notice the faintest breeze from a passageway

Specialties: no

Time: N/A; this skill is never used actively. If you are actively attempting to detect something, use the Search skill.

Active or Passive: passive

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: Int

Perform (Cha)

Description:

This skill measures your character's ability to entertain or inspire others. Bards, in particular, make frequent use of this skill.

Examples:

- Use antics to capture the attention of a guard while allies sneak past him.
- Earn extra coin by playing music in a tavern.

Specialties: no

A character who has a knack for a particular type of performance like poetry or wind instruments should have relevant specialties in the Profession skill like Profession(poet) or Profession(flautist).

Time: varies

Active or Passive: active

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: Dex

Profession

Description:

Profession is a measure of a character's ability to provide a valuable service to others.

Examples:

- Act as a bouncer for a local tavern.
- Write a letter dictated by a noble.
- Protect a flock of goats from natural hazards.

Specialties: yes

Examples of general specialties for the profession skill: animal tender, bodyguard, caravan guard, cook, grave robber, housekeeper, hunter, miner, scribe, scribe and soldier. Since you can not really gain a new profession overnight, your DM may restrict your access to general specialties until a length of time has elapsed.

Examples of somewhat more specific specialties for the soldier specialty: siege engineer, archer, scout.

Examples of very specific specialties for the soldier specialty: knowledge of specific maneuvers or weapons.

Time: minutes or longer

Search (Int)

Description:

This skill is a measure of your character's ability to locate a concealed creature or object. Search is very much like an active version of the Perception skill and does not always apply to sight.

Examples:

- Listen for creatures behind a door
- Find a secret door
- Find a hidden picture in a mural
- Detect the ingredients of a stew you are eating

Specialties: no

Time: 1 minute to search one square, or roughly 24 square feet

Active or Passive: active, if you find you want to use this skill passively you should probably be using the Perception skill instead.

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: Wis

Sense Motive (Wis)

Description:

Sense motive measures your ability to avoid being bluffed. You can also use this skill to determine when “something is up” (that is, something odd is going on) or to assess someone’s trustworthiness.

Examples:

- Notice that a speaker is nervous or distracted.
- Observe an unusual pattern in local guard patrols.
- Detect that someone's behavior is being magically influenced.
- Recognize an innuendo.

Specialties: no

Time: N/A; this skill is always used passively

Active or Passive: passive

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: Int

Sleight of Hand (Dex)

Description:

Sleight of Hand is a measure of a character's ability to perform tasks requiring quick, coordinated use of her hands .

Examples:

- Pick someone's pocket without being observed.
- Quickly hide a small object on your person.
- Bind someone's hands with a rope.

Specialties: no

Time: standard action

Active or Passive: active

Armor Check Penalty: yes

Alternative Ability: none

Spellcraft (Cha)

Description:

Spellcraft is your ability to detect and manipulate magic. Spellcraft allows you to sense what spell is being cast by another or detect the presence of magic in the area.

Detecting magic is a passive use of the Spellcraft skill. However, to detect that an object or creature is magical you must make physical contact with it. Spellcraft does not allow you to perceive a magical trap or find a magic item simply because you are in the same room with it.

You can concentrate upon a magical item that you are holding to learn something of its properties (an active skill check). The difficulty of identifying a magical item varies depending upon the item. The following table is meant as a guideline for the DM.

Spellcraft DC	Active or Passive	Task
10+spell level	Passive	Identify a spell as it is being cast.
15+spell level	Active	Determine the areas of mastery required for the spells used in the creation of a single magical item you are touching.
15+spell level	Passive	Identify a spell that's already in place and in effect. You must be able to see or detect the effects of the spell.
20+spell level	Passive	After having a spell targeted on you, determine what that spell was.
15+spell level	Active	Identify the spell stored in a potion or scroll
20+spell level	Active	Identify the spells in a wand, rod, staff or similar charged item.
30 or higher	Active	Identify properties of a magic item and, possibly, how to activate it. The amount of information you gain may be complete or limited depending on the nature of the item.

Examples:

- Detect that a sword you are holding is enchanted and possibly learn the nature of its enchantment.
- Identify what spells an enemy is casting.
- Notice that the area around you is infused with a magical aura.

Specialties: no

Time: 1 minute

Active or Passive: varies

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: Int

Stealth (Dex)

Description:

Stealth is your ability to pass undetected. When using Stealth you are usually attempting to beat the passive Perception of one or more observers.

To use the Stealth skill you must have either cover or concealment (see Cover and Concealment in Chapter 7: Combat) with respect to the creatures you are hiding from. In some cases your DM may rule that if you approach from behind a creature that you effectively have concealment.

Examples:

- Secure a good hiding place for an ambush.
- Sneak up behind a guard in the dark.
- Throw off a pack of wolves who are tracking you.

Specialties: no

Time: move action

Active or Passive: active

Armor Check Penalty: yes

Alternative Ability: Int

Tinker (Int)

Description:

This skill represents a character's intuitive ability to build, disable or manipulate a mechanical or magical device.

Examples:

- Open the lock on chest of treasure.
- Deactivate a magic missile trap.
- Activate an ancient arcane machine whose purpose is unknown.

Specialties: no

Time: standard action or longer

Active or Passive: active

Armor Check Penalty: no

Alternative Ability: Dex