Instead of using the effect described in the table, you can put the responsibility of representing a character's lingering injury in the hands of the player. Roll on the Lingering Injuries table as usual, but instead of suffering the effect described for that result, that character gains a new flaw with the same name. It's up to the player to express the lingering injury during play, just like any other flaw, with the potential to gain inspiration when the injury affects the character in a meaningful way.

Massive Damage

This optional rule makes it easier for a creature to be felled by massive damage.

When a creature takes damage from a single source equal to or greater than half its hit point maximum, it must succeed on a DC 15 Constitution saving throw or suffer a random effect determined by a roll on the System Shock table. For example, a creature that has a hit point maximum of 30 must make that Constitution save if it takes 15 damage or more from a single source.

System Shock

d10	Effect
1	The creature drops to 0 hit points.
2–3	The creature drops to 0 hit points but is stable.
4–5	The creature is stunned until the end of its next turn.
6–7	The creature can't take reactions and has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.
8–10	The creature can't take reactions until the end of its next turn.

Morale

Some combatants might run away when a fight turns against them. You can use this optional rule to help determine when monsters and NPCs flee.

A creature might flee under any of the following circumstances:

- The creature is surprised.
- The creature is reduced to half its hit points or fewer for the first time in the battle.
- The creature has no way to harm the opposing side on its turn.

A group of creatures might flee under any of the following circumstances:

- All the creatures in the group are surprised.
- The group's leader is reduced to 0 hit points, incapacitated, taken prisoner, or removed from battle.
- The group is reduced to half its original size with no losses on the opposing side.

To determine whether a creature or group of creatures flees, make a DC 10 Wisdom saving throw for the creature or the group's leader. If the opposition is overwhelming, the saving throw is made with disadvantage, or you can decide that the save fails automatically. If a group's leader can't make the saving throw for whatever reason, have the creature in the group with the next highest Charisma score make the saving throw instead.

On a failed save, the affected creature or group flees by the most expeditious route. If escape is impossible, the creature or group surrenders. If a creature or group that surrenders is attacked by its conquerors, the battle might resume, and it's unlikely that further attempts to flee or surrender will be made.

A failed saving throw isn't always to the adventurers' benefit. For example, an ogre that flees from combat might put the rest of the dungeon on alert or run off with treasure that the characters had hoped to plunder.

Creating a Monster

The *Monster Manual* contains hundreds of ready-to-play monsters, but it doesn't include every monster that you can imagine. Part of the D&D experience is the simple joy of creating new monsters and customizing existing ones, if for no other reason than to surprise and delight your players with something they've never faced before.

The first step in the process is coming up with the concept for your monster. What makes it unique? Where does it live? What role do you want it to serve in your adventure, your campaign, or your world? What does it look like? Does it have any weird abilities? Once you have the answers to these questions, you can start figuring out how to represent your monster in the game.

Modifying a Monster

Once you have an idea for a monster, you'll need statistics to represent it. The first question you should ask yourself is: Can I use statistics that already exist?

A stat block in the *Monster Manual* might make a good starting point for your monster. Imagine, for example, that you want to create an intelligent arboreal predator that hunts elves. There is no such monster in the *Monster Manual*, but the quaggoth is a savage humanoid predator with a climbing speed. You could borrow the quaggoth stat block for your new monster, changing nothing but the creature's name. You can also make minor tweaks, such as replacing the quaggoth's language, Undercommon, with one that's more appropriate, such as Elvish or Sylvan.

Need a fiery phoenix? Take the giant eagle or roc, give it immunity to fire, and allow it to deal fire damage with its attacks. Need a flying monkey? Consider a baboon with wings and a flying speed. Almost any monster you can imagine can be built using one that already exists.

Adapting a stat block is far less time-consuming than creating one from scratch, and there are changes you can make to an existing monster that have no effect on its challenge rating, such as swapping languages, changing its alignment, or adding special senses. However, once you change the creature's offensive or defensive ability, such as its hit points or damage, its challenge rating might need to change, as shown later.

Switching Weapons

If a monster wields a manufactured weapon, you can replace that weapon with a different one. For example, you could replace a hobgoblin's longsword with a halberd. Don't forget to change the damage and the attack's reach where appropriate. Also be aware of the

consequences of switching from a one-handed weapon to a two-handed weapon, or vice versa. For example, a hobgoblin wielding a halberd (a two-handed weapon) loses the benefit of its shield, so its AC decreases by 2.

Adding a Special Trait

Another simple way to customize a monster is to add a special trait. You can add a special trait of your own devising or pick up a special trait from one of the many creatures in the *Monster Manual*. For example, you can create a goblin-spider hybrid by giving the normal goblin the Spider Climb special trait, turn an ordinary troll into a two-headed troll by giving it the Two Heads special trait, or turn an owlbear into a flying owlbear by giving it wings and a giant owl's flying speed.

Creating Quick Monster Stats

If all you need are simple stats for a monster of a particular challenge rating, follow the steps here. If you want to create something more akin to the monster stat blocks in the *Monster Manual*, skip ahead to the "Creating a Monster Stat Block" section.

Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating

		Defensive		Offensive		
CR	Prof. Bonus	Armor Class	Hit Points	Attack Bonus	Damage/ Round	Save DC
0	+2	≤ 13	1–6	≤ +3	0–1	≤ 13
1/8	+2	13	7–35	+3	2–3	13
1/4	+2	13	36–49	+3	4–5	13
1/2	+2	13	50–70	+3	6–8	13
1	+2	13	71–85	+3	9–14	13
2	+2	13	86–100	+3	15–20	13
3	+2	13	101–115	+4	21–26	13
4	+2	14	116–130	+5	27–32	14
5	+3	15	131–145	+6	33–38	15
6	+3	15	146–160	+6	39–44	15
7	+3	15	161–175	+6	45–50	15
8	+3	16	176–190	+7	51–56	16
9	+4	16	191–205	+7	57–62	16
10	+4	17	206–220	+7	63–68	16
11	+4	17	221–235	+8	69–74	17
12	+4	17	236–250	+8	75–80	17
13	+5	18	251–265	+8	81–86	18
14	+5	18	266–280	+8	87–92	18
15	+5	18	281–295	+8	93–98	18
16	+5	18	296–310	+9	99–104	18
17	+6	19	311–325	+10	105–110	19
18	+6	19	326–340	+10	111–116	19
19	+6	19	341–355	+10	117–122	19
20	+6	19	356–400	+10	123–140	19
21	+7	19	401–445	+11	141–158	20
22	+7	19	446–490	+11	159–176	20
23	+7	19	491–535	+11	177–194	20
24	+7	19	536–580	+12	195–212	21
25	+8	19	581–625	+12	213–230	21
26	+8	19	626–670	+12	231–248	21
27	+8	19	671–715	+13	249–266	22
28	+8	19	716–760	+13	267–284	22
29	+9	19	761–805	+13	285–302	22
30	+9	19	806–850	+14	303–320	23

Step 1. Expected Challenge Rating

Pick the expected challenge rating (CR) for your monster. Knowing the monster's expected challenge rating will help you figure out the monster's proficiency bonus and other important combat statistics. Don't worry about getting the challenge rating exactly right; you can make adjustments in later steps.

A single monster with a challenge rating equal to the adventurers' level is, by itself, a fair challenge for a group of four characters. If the monster is meant to be fought in pairs or groups, its expected challenge rating should be lower than the party's level.

Don't fall into the trap of thinking that your monster must have a challenge rating equal to the level of the characters to be a worthy challenge. Keep in mind that monsters with a lower challenge rating can be a threat to higher-level characters when encountered in groups.

Step 2. Basic Statistics

Use the Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table to determine the monster's Armor Class, hit points, attack bonus, and damage output per round based on the challenge rating you chose in step 1.

Step 3. Adjust Statistics

Raise or lower the monster's Armor Class, hit points, attack bonus, damage output per round, and save DC as you see fit, based on whatever concept you have in mind for the monster. For example, if you need a well-armored monster, increase its Armor Class.

Once you've made the desired adjustments, record the monster's statistics. If there are any other statistics you think the monster needs (such as ability scores), follow the appropriate steps under "Creating a Monster Stat Block."

Step 4. Final Challenge Rating

Calculate the monster's final challenge rating, accounting for the adjustments you made in step 3.

Defensive Challenge Rating. Read down the Hit Points column of the Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table until you find your monster's hit points. Then look across and note the challenge rating suggested for a monster with those hit points.

Now look at the Armor Class suggested for a monster of that challenge rating. If your monster's AC is at least two points higher or lower than that number, adjust the challenge rating suggested by its hit points up or down by 1 for every 2 points of difference.

Offensive Challenge Rating. Read down the Damage/Round column of the Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table until you find your monster's damage output per round. Then look across and note the challenge rating suggested for a monster that deals that much damage.

Now look at the attack bonus suggested for a monster of that challenge rating. If your monster's attack bonus is at least two points higher or lower than that number,

adjust the challenge rating suggested by its damage output up or down by 1 for every 2 points of difference.

If the monster relies more on effects with saving throws than on attacks, use the monster's save DC instead of its attack bonus.

If your monster uses different attack bonuses or save DCs, use the ones that will come up the most often.

Average Challenge Rating. The monster's final challenge rating is the average of its defensive and offensive challenge ratings. Round the average up or down to the nearest challenge rating to determine your monster's final challenge rating. For example, if the creature's defensive challenge rating is 2 and its offensive rating is 3, its final rating is 3.

With the final challenge rating, you can determine the monster's proficiency bonus using the Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table. Use the Experience Points by Challenge Rating table to determine how much XP the monster is worth. A monster of challenge rating 0 is worth 0 XP if it poses no threat. Otherwise, it is worth 10 XP.

Creating a monster isn't just a number-crunching exercise. The guidelines in this chapter can help you create monsters, but the only way to know whether a monster is fun is to playtest it. After seeing your monster in action, you might want to adjust the challenge rating up or down based on your experiences.

Experience Points by Challenge Rating

CR	XP	CR	XP
0	0 or 10	14	11,500
1/8	25	15	13,000
1/4	50	16	15,000
1/2	100	17	18,000
1	200	18	20,000
2	450	19	22,000
3	700	20	25,000
4	1,100	21	33,000
5	1,800	22	41,000
6	2,300	23	50,000
7	2,900	24	62,000
8	3,900	25	75,000
9	5,000	26	90,000
10	5,900	27	105,000
11	7,200	28	120,000
12	8,400	29	135,000
13	10,000	30	155,000

Creating a Monster Stat Block

If you want a full monster stat block, use the following method to create your new monster.

The introduction to the *Monster Manual* explains all the components of a monster's stat block. Familiarize yourself with that material before you begin. In the course of creating your monster, if you find yourself unable to make a decision, let the examples in the *Monster Manual* guide you.

Once you have a monster concept in mind, follow the steps below.

Step 1. Name

A monster's name should be given as much consideration as any other aspect of the monster, if not more.

Your monster might be based on a real-world creature or a monster from myth, in which case its name might be obvious. If you need to invent a name, keep in mind that the best names either reflect the monster's appearance or nature (such as the mimic and the owlbear) or have a nice ring to them (such as the chuul and the thri-kreen).

Step 2. Size

Make your monster whatever size you want: Tiny, Small, Medium, Large, Huge, or Gargantuan.

A monster's size determines which die is used to calculate its hit points in step 8. Size also determines how much space the monster occupies, as discussed in the *Player's Handbook*.

Step 3. Type

A monster's type provides insight into its origins and nature. The *Monster Manual* describes each monster type. Choose the type that best fits your concept for the monster.

Step 4. Alignment

If your monster has no concept of morals, it is unaligned. Otherwise, it has an alignment appropriate to its nature and moral outlook, as discussed in the *Player's Handbook*.

Step 5. Ability Scores and Modifiers

Monsters, like player characters, have the six ability scores. A monster can't have a score lower than 1 or higher than 30 in any ability.

A monster's score in any ability determines its ability modifier, as shown in the Ability Scores and Modifiers table in the *Player's Handbook*.

If you can't decide what a monster's ability scores should be, look for comparable monsters in the *Monster Manual* and mimic their ability scores. For example, if your monster is roughly as smart as a human commoner, give it an Intelligence of 10 (+0 modifier). If it's as strong as an ogre, give it a Strength of 19 (+4 modifier).

Step 6. Expected Challenge Rating

Choose a challenge rating for your monster. See step 1 under "Creating Quick Monster Stats" for more information. You will use the proficiency bonus in later steps, so jot it down now or remember it.

Step 7. Armor Class

A monster's Armor Class has a direct bearing on its challenge rating, and vice versa. You can determine your monster's Armor Class in one of two ways.

Use the Table. You can choose an appropriate AC based on the monster's expected challenge rating, as shown in the Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table. The table provides the baseline AC for a monster of a specific challenge rating. Feel free to adjust the AC as you see fit. For example, the baseline AC for a

challenge rating 1 monster is 13, but if your monster is well armored, raise its AC accordingly. Don't worry if the monster's AC isn't matching up with the expected challenge rating for the monster. Other factors can affect a monster's challenge rating, as shown in later steps.

Determine an Appropriate AC. Alternatively, you can determine an appropriate AC based on the type of armor the monster wears, its natural armor, or some other Armor Class booster (such as the *mage armor* spell). Again, don't worry if the monster's AC isn't matching up with the expected challenge rating for the monster.

If your monster wears manufactured armor, its Armor Class is based on the type of armor worn (see the *Player's Handbook* for armor types). If the monster carries a shield, apply the shield bonus to its AC as normal.

A monster that doesn't wear armor might have natural armor, in which case it has an AC equal to 10 + its Dexterity modifier + its natural armor bonus. A monster with a thick hide generally has a natural armor bonus of +1 to +3. The bonus can be higher if the creature is exceptionally well armored. A gorgon, for example, is covered in steely plates and has a natural armor bonus of +9.

Step 8. Hit Points

A monster's hit points have a direct bearing on its challenge rating, and vice versa. You can determine your monster's hit points in one of two ways.

Use the Table. You can start with the monster's expected challenge rating and use the Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table to determine an appropriate number of hit points. The table presents a range of hit points for each challenge rating.

Assign Hit Dice. Alternatively, you can assign a number of Hit Dice to a monster, then calculate its average hit points. Don't worry if the hit points aren't matching up with the expected challenge rating for the monster. Other factors can affect a monster's challenge rating, as shown in later steps, and you can always adjust a monster's Hit Dice and hit points later on.

A monster can have as many Hit Dice as you want, but the size of the die used to calculate its hit points depends on the monster's size, as shown in the Hit Dice by Size table. For example, a Medium monster uses d8s for hit points, so a Medium monster with 5 Hit Dice and a Constitution of 13 (+1 modifier) has 5d8 + 5 hit points.

A monster typically has average hit points based on its Hit Dice. For example, a creature with 5d8 + 5 hit points has an average of 27 hit points (5 × 4.5 + 5).

Hit Dice by Size

Monster Size	Hit Die	Average HP per Die
Tiny	d4	2½
Small	d6	3½
Medium	d8	4½
Large	d10	5½
Huge	d12	6½
Gargantuan	d20	10½

Step 9. Damage Vulnerabilities, Resistances, and Immunities

Decide whether your monster has vulnerability, resistance, or immunity to one or more types of damage (see the *Player's Handbook* for descriptions of the various damage types). Assign a vulnerability, resistance, or immunity to a monster only when it's intuitive. For example, it makes sense for a monster made of molten lava to have immunity to fire damage.

Giving a monster resistances and immunities to three or more damage types (especially bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage) is like giving it extra hit points. However, adventurers have more resources at higher levels to counteract such defenses, making resistances and immunities less relevant at higher levels.

Effective Hit Points. If a monster has resistance or immunity to several damage types—especially bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons—and not all the characters in the party possess the means to counteract that resistance or immunity, you need to take these defenses into account when comparing your monster's hit points to its expected challenge rating. Using the Effective Hit Points Based on Resistances and Immunities table, apply the appropriate multiplier to the monster's hit points to determine its effective hit points for the purpose of gauging its final challenge rating. (The monster's actual hit points shouldn't change.)

For example, a monster with an expected challenge rating of 6, 150 hit points, and resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical weapons effectively has 225 hit points (using the 1.5 multiplier for resistances) for the purpose of gauging its final challenge rating.

Monsters don't normally have vulnerability to more than one or two types of damage. Vulnerabilities don't significantly affect a monster's challenge rating, unless a monster has vulnerabilities to multiple damage types that are prevalent, especially bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing. For such a strange monster, reduce its effective hit points by half. Or even better, eliminate the vulnerabilities and give the brittle monster fewer hit points.

Effective Hit Points Based on Resistances and Immunities

Expected Challenge Rating	HP Multiplier for Resistances	HP Multiplier for Immunities
1–4	× 2	× 2
5–10	× 1.5	× 2
11–16	× 1.25	× 1.5
17 or more	× 1	× 1.25

Step 10. Attack Bonuses

A monster's attack bonuses have a direct bearing on its challenge rating, and vice versa. You can determine a monster's attack bonuses in one of two ways.

Use the Table. You can start with the monster's expected challenge rating and use the Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table to determine an appropriate attack bonus for all the monster's attacks, regardless of its ability scores.

The table provides the baseline attack bonus for each challenge rating. Feel free to adjust the attack bonus as you see fit to match whatever concept you have in mind. For example, the baseline attack bonus for a challenge rating 1 monster is +3, but if your monster needs more accuracy, raise its bonus accordingly. Don't worry if the monster's attack bonus isn't matching up with the expected challenge rating for the monster. Other factors can affect a monster's challenge rating, as shown in later steps.

Calculate Attack Bonuses. Alternatively, you can calculate a monster's attack bonuses the same way players calculate the attack bonuses of a character.

When a monster has an action that requires an attack roll, its attack bonus is equal to its proficiency bonus + its Strength or Dexterity modifier. A monster usually applies its Strength modifier to melee attacks and its Dexterity modifier to ranged attacks, although smaller monsters sometimes use Dexterity for both.

Again, don't worry if the attack bonuses aren't matching up with the expected challenge rating for the monster. You can always adjust a monster's attack bonuses later.

Step 11. Damage

A monster's damage output—the amount of damage it deals every round—has a direct bearing on its challenge rating, and vice versa. You can determine a monster's damage output in one of two ways.

Use the Table. You can start with the monster's expected challenge rating and use the Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table to determine how much damage the monster should deal every round. The table presents a range at each challenge rating. It doesn't matter how this damage is apportioned or distributed; for example, a monster might deal the damage every round with a single attack, or the damage could be split among multiple attacks against one or more foes.

Choose the type of damage based on how you imagine the damage being delivered. For example, if the monster is attacking with razor-sharp claws, the damage it deals is probably slashing damage. If its claws are poisonous, some portion of the damage might be poison damage instead of slashing damage.

If you want the damage output to vary slightly from round to round, you can translate the damage range into a single die expression (for a monster with one attack) or multiple die expressions (for a monster with multiple attacks). For example, a challenge rating 2 monster deals 15–20 damage per round. If you imagine the creature having a Strength of 18 (+4 modifier), you could give it one melee attack that deals 3d8 + 4 (average 17.5) damage, split the damage output into two separate attacks that deal 1d10 + 4 (average 9) damage each, or use any other combination where the average damage output falls within the desired range.

Base the Damage on the Weapon. Alternatively, you can use a die expression to represent the damage that a monster deals with each of its attacks based on whatever weapon it is using.

Don't worry if the damage output isn't matching up with the expected challenge rating for the monster. Other factors can affect a monster's challenge rating, as will be discussed in later steps, and you can always adjust a monster's damage output later on.

Some monsters use natural weapons, such as claws or tail spikes. Others wield manufactured weapons.

If a monster has natural weapons, you decide how much damage it deals with those attacks, as well as the type of damage. See the *Monster Manual* for examples.

If a monster wields a manufactured weapon, it deals damage appropriate to the weapon. For example, a greataxe in the hands of a Medium monster deals 1d12 slashing damage plus the monster's Strength modifier, as is normal for that weapon.

Big monsters typically wield oversized weapons that deal extra dice of damage on a hit. Double the weapon dice if the creature is Large, triple the weapon dice if it's Huge, and quadruple the weapon dice if it's Gargantuan. For example, a Huge giant wielding an appropriately sized greataxe deals 3d12 slashing damage (plus its Strength bonus), instead of the normal 1d12.

A creature has disadvantage on attack rolls with a weapon that is sized for a larger attacker. You can rule that a weapon sized for an attacker two or more sizes larger is too big for the creature to use at all.

Overall Damage Output. To determine a monster's overall damage output, take the average damage it deals with each of its attacks in a round and add them together. If a monster has different attack options, use the monster's most effective attacks to determine its damage output. For example, a fire giant can make two greatsword attacks or one rock attack in a round. The greatsword attacks deal more damage, so that attack routine determines the fire giant's damage output.

If a monster's damage output varies from round to round, calculate its damage output each round for the first three rounds of combat, and take the average. For example, a young white dragon has a multiattack routine (one bite attack and two claw attacks) that deals an average of 37 damage each round, as well as a breath weapon that deals 45 damage, or 90 if it hits two targets (and it probably will). In the first three rounds of combat, the dragon will probably get to use its breath weapon once and its multiattack routine twice, so its average damage output for the first three rounds would be (90 + 37 + 37) ÷ 3, or 54 damage (rounded down).

When calculating a monster's damage output, also account for special off-turn damage-dealing features, such as auras, reactions, legendary actions, or lair actions. For example, a balor's Fire Aura deals 10 fire damage to any creature that hits the balor with a melee attack. The aura also deals 10 fire damage to all creatures within 5 feet of the balor at the start of each of the balor's turns. If you assume that one character in the party is within 5 feet of the balor at all times, hitting it with a melee weapon every round, then the balor's damage output per round increases by 20.

Attack Riders

Many monsters have attacks that do more than deal damage. Some effects that can be added to an attack to give it a flavorful twist include:

- Adding damage of a different type to the attack
- Having the monster grapple the target on a hit
- Allowing the monster to knock the target prone on a hit
- Imposing a condition on the target if the attack hits and the target fails a saving throw

Step 12. Save DCs

A monster might have an attack or some other trait that requires a target to make a saving throw. The save DCs to resist such effects have a direct bearing on the monster's challenge rating, and vice versa. You can determine save DCs in one of two ways.

Use the Table. You can start with the monster's expected challenge rating and use the Monster Statistics by Challenge Rating table to determine an appropriate save DC for any effect that requires a target to make a saving throw.

Calculate the DCs. Alternatively, you can calculate a monster's save DCs as follows: 8 + the monster's proficiency bonus + the monster's relevant ability modifier. You choose the ability that best applies.

For example, if the effect is a poison, the relevant ability is probably the monster's Constitution. If the effect is similar to that of a spell, the relevant ability might be the monster's Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

Don't worry if the save DCs aren't matching up with the expected challenge rating for the monster. Other factors can affect a monster's challenge rating, as shown in later steps, and you can always adjust the save DCs later on.

Step 13. Special Traits, Actions, and Reactions

Some special traits (such as Magic Resistance), special actions (such as Superior Invisibility), and special reactions (such as Parry) can improve a monster's combat effectiveness and potentially increase its challenge rating.

The Monster Features table lists various features that you can plunder from the *Monster Manual*. The table notes which features increase a monster's effective Armor Class, hit points, attack bonus, or damage output for the purpose of determining its challenge rating. (The features don't actually change the monster's statistics.) Features that have no effect on a monster's challenge rating are noted with a dash (—).

When assigning special traits, actions, or reactions to a monster, keep in mind that not all monsters need them. The more you add, the more complex (and harder to run) the monster becomes.

Innate Spellcasting and Spellcasting. The impact that the Innate Spellcasting and Spellcasting special traits have on a monster's challenge rating depends on the spells that the monster can cast. Spells that deal more damage than the monster's normal attack routine and spells that increase the monster's AC or hit points need to be accounted for when determining the monster's final challenge rating. See the "Special Traits" section in the introduction of the *Monster Manual* for more information on these two special traits.

Step 14. Speed

Every monster has a walking speed. (Immobile monsters have a walking speed of 0 feet.) In addition to its walking speed, a monster might have one or more other speeds, including a burrowing, climbing, flying, or swimming speed.

Flying Monster. Increase the monster's effective Armor Class by 2 (not its actual AC) if it can fly and deal damage at range and if its expected challenge rating is 10 or lower (higher-level characters have a greater ability to deal with flying creatures).

Step 15. Saving Throw Bonuses

If you want a monster to be unusually resistant to certain kinds of effects, you can give it a bonus to saving throws tied to a particular ability.

A saving throw bonus is best used to counteract a low ability score. For example, an undead monster with a low Wisdom score might need a Wisdom saving throw bonus to account for the fact that it's more difficult to charm, frighten, or turn than its Wisdom would indicate.

A saving throw bonus is equal to the monster's proficiency bonus + the monster's relevant ability modifier.

A monster with three or more saving throw bonuses has a significant defensive advantage, so its effective AC (not its actual AC) should be raised when determining its challenge rating. If it has three or four bonuses, increase its effective AC by 2. If it has five or more bonuses, increase its effective AC by 4.

Step 16. Final Challenge Rating

At this point, you have all the statistical information you need to calculate the monster's final challenge rating. This step is identical to step 4 under "Creating Quick Monster Stats." Calculate the monster's defensive challenge rating and its offensive challenge rating, then take the average to get its final challenge rating.

Step 17. Skill Bonuses

If you want a monster to be proficient in a skill, you can give it a bonus equal to its proficiency bonus on ability checks related to that skill. For example, a monster with sharp senses might have a bonus on Wisdom (Perception) checks, while a duplicitous monster might have a bonus on Charisma (Deception) checks.

You can double the proficiency bonus to account for heightened mastery. For example, a doppelganger is so good at deceiving others that its bonus on Charisma (Deception) checks is equal to double its proficiency bonus + its Charisma modifier.

Skill bonuses have no bearing on a monster's challenge rating.

Step 18. Condition Immunities

A monster can be immune to one or more debilitating conditions, and these immunities have no bearing on its challenge rating. For descriptions of the various conditions, see appendix A of the *Player's Handbook*.

As with damage immunities, condition immunities should be intuitive and logical. For example, it makes sense that a stone golem can't be poisoned, since it's a construct without a nervous system or internal organs.

Step 19. Senses

A monster might have one or more of the following special senses, which are described in the *Monster Manual*: blindsight, darkvision, tremorsense, and truesight. Whether the monster has special senses or not has no bearing on its challenge rating.

Passive Perception Score. All monsters have a passive Wisdom (Perception) score, which is most often used to determine whether a monster detects approaching or hidden enemies. A monster's passive Wisdom (Perception) score is 10 + its Wisdom modifier. If the monster has proficiency in the Perception skill, its score is 10 + its Wisdom (Perception) bonus.

Step 20. Languages

Whether a monster can speak a language has no bearing on its challenge rating.

A monster can master as many spoken languages as you want, although few monsters know more than one or two, and many monsters (beasts in particular) have no spoken language whatsoever. A monster that lacks the ability to speak might still understand a language.

Telepathy. Whether or not a monster has telepathy has no bearing on its challenge rating. For more information on telepathy, see the *Monster Manual*.

NPC Stat Blocks

Appendix B of the *Monster Manual* contains stat blocks for common NPC archetypes such as bandits and guards, as well as tips for customizing them. Those tips include adding racial traits from the *Player's Handbook*, equipping NPCs with magic items, and swapping armor, weapons, and spells.

Monster Features

Name	Example Monster	Effect on Challenge Rating
Aggressive	Orc	Increase the monster's effective per-round damage output by 2.
Ambusher	Doppelganger	Increase the monster's effective attack bonus by 1.
Amorphous	Black pudding	—
Amphibious	Kuo-toa	—
Angelic Weapons	Deva	Increase the monster's effective per-round damage by the amount noted in the trait.
Antimagic Susceptibility	Flying sword	—
Avoidance	Demilich	Increase the monster's effective AC by 1.
Blind Senses	Grimlock	—
Blood Frenzy	Sahuagin	Increase the monster's effective attack bonus by 4.
Breath Weapon	Ancient black dragon	For the purpose of determining effective damage output, assume the breath weapon hits two targets, and that each target fails its saving throw.
Brute	Bugbear	Increase the monster's effective per-round damage by the amount noted in the trait.
Chameleon Skin	Troglodyte	—
Change Shape	Ancient brass dragon	—
Charge	Centaur	Increase the monster's damage on one attack by the amount noted in the trait.
Charm	Vampire	—
Constrict	Constrictor snake	Increase the monster's effective AC by 1.
Damage Absorption	Flesh golem	—
Damage Transfer	Darkmantle	Double the monster's effective hit points. Add one-third of the monster's hit points to its per-round damage.
Death Burst	Magmin	Increase the monster's effective damage output for 1 round by the amount noted in the trait, and assume it affects two creatures.
Devil Sight	Barbed devil	—
Dive	Aarakocra	Increase the monster's effective damage on one attack by the amount noted in the trait.
Echolocation	Hook horror	—
Elemental Body	Azer	Increase the monster's effective per-round damage by the amount noted in the trait.
Enlarge	Duergar	Increase the monster's effective per-round damage by the amount noted in the trait.
Etherealness	Night hag	—
False Appearance	Gargoyle	—
Fey Ancestry	Drow	—
Fiendish Blessing	Cambion	Apply the monster's Charisma modifier to its actual AC.
Flyby	Peryton	—
Frightful Presence	Ancient black dragon	Increase the monster's effective hit points by 25% if the monster is meant to face characters of 10th level or lower.
Grappler	Mimic	—
Hold Breath	Lizardfolk	—
Horrifying Visage	Banshee	See Frightful Presence.
Illumination	Flameskull	—
Illusory Appearance	Green hag	—
Immutable Form	Iron golem	—
Incorporeal Movement	Ghost	—
Innate Spellcasting	Djinni	See step 13 under "Creating a Monster Stat Block."
Inscrutable	Androsphinx	—
Invisibility	Imp	—
Keen Senses	Hell hound	—
Labyrinthine Recall	Minotaur	—
Leadership	Hobgoblin captain	—
Legendary Resistance	Ancient black dragon	Each per-day use of this trait increases the monster's effective hit points based on the expected challenge rating: 1–4, 10 hp; 5–10, 20 hp; 11 or higher, 30 hp.
Life Drain	Wight	—

Name	Example Monster	Effect on Challenge Rating
Light Sensitivity	Shadow demon	—
Magic Resistance	Balor	Increase the monster's effective AC by 2.
Magic Weapons	Balor	—
Martial Advantage	Hobgoblin	Increase the effective damage of one attack per round by the amount gained from this trait.
Mimicry	Kenku	—
Nimble Escape	Goblin	Increase the monster's effective AC and effective attack bonus by 4 (assuming the monster hides every round).
Otherworldly Perception	Kuo-toa	—
Pack Tactics	Kobold	Increase the monster's effective attack bonus by 1.
Parry	Hobgoblin warlord	Increase the monster's effective AC by 1.
Possession	Ghost	Double the monster's effective hit points.
Pounce	Tiger	Increase the monster's effective damage for 1 round by the amount it deals with the bonus action gained from this trait.
Psychic Defense	Githzerai monk	Apply the monster's Wisdom modifier to its actual AC if the monster isn't wearing armor or wielding a shield.
Rampage	Gnoll	Increase the monster's effective per-round damage by 2.
Reactive	Marilith	—
Read Thoughts	Doppelganger	—
Reckless	Minotaur	—
Redirect Attack	Goblin boss	—
Reel	Roper	—
Regeneration	Troll	Increase the monster's effective hit points by 3 × the number of hit points the monster regenerates each round.
Rejuvenation	Lich	—
Relentless	Wereboar	Increase the monster's effective hit points based on the expected challenge rating: 1–4, 7 hp; 5–10, 14 hp; 11–16, 21 hp; 17 or higher, 28 hp.
Shadow Stealth	Shadow demon	Increase the monster's effective AC by 4.
Shapechanger	Wererat	—
Siege Monster	Earth elemental	—
Slippery	Kuo-toa	—
Spellcasting	Lich	See step 13 under "Creating a Monster Stat Block."
Spider Climb	Ettercap	—
Standing Leap	Bullywug	—
Steadfast	Bearded devil	—
Stench	Troglodyte	Increase the monster's effective AC by 1.
Sunlight Sensitivity	Kobold	—
Superior Invisibility	Faerie dragon	Increase the monster's effective AC by 2.
Sure-Footed	Dao	—
Surprise Attack	Bugbear	Increase the monster's effective damage for 1 round by the amount noted in the trait.
Swallow	Behir	Assume the monster swallows one creature and deals 2 rounds of acid damage to it.
Teleport	Balor	—
Terrain Camouflage	Bullywug	—
Tunneler	Umber hulk	—
Turn Immunity	Revenant	—
Turn Resistance	Lich	—
Two Heads	Ettin	—
Undead Fortitude	Zombie	Increase the monster's effective hit points based on the expected challenge rating: 1–4, 7 hp; 5–10, 14 hp; 11–16, 21 hp; 17 or higher, 28 hp.
Web	Giant spider	Increase the monster's effective AC by 1.
Web Sense	Giant spider	—
Web Walker	Giant spider	—
Wounded Fury	Quaggoth	Increase the monster's damage for 1 round by the amount noted in the trait.

If you want to take an NPC stat block and adapt it for a specific monster race, apply the ability modifiers and add the features listed in the NPC Features table. If the NPC's AC, hit points, attack bonus, or damage changes, recalculate its challenge rating.

Creating NPCs from Scratch

If you need completely new statistics for an NPC, you have two options:

- You can create an NPC stat block (similar to the ones in the *Monster Manual*) as you would a monster stat block, as discussed in the previous section.
- You can build the NPC as you would a player character, as discussed in the *Player's Handbook*.

If you decide to build an NPC the same way you build a player character, you can skip choosing a background and instead pick two skill proficiencies for the NPC.

NPC Features

Race	Ability Modifiers	Features
Aarakocra	+2 Dex, +2 Wis	Dive Attack; talon attack action; speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft.; speaks Auran
Bullywug	−2 Int, −2 Cha	Amphibious, Speak with Frogs and Toads, Swamp Camouflage, Standing Leap; speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.; speaks Bullywug
Dragonborn*	+2 Str, +1 Cha	Breath Weapon (use challenge rating instead of level to determine damage), Damage Resistance, Draconic Ancestry; speaks Common and Draconic
Drow*	+2 Dex, +1 Cha	Fey Ancestry, Innate Spellcasting feature of the drow, Sunlight Sensitivity; darkvision 120 ft.; speaks Elvish and Undercommon
Dwarf*	+2 Str or Wis, +2 Con	Dwarven Resilience, Stonecunning; speed 25 ft.; darkvision 60 ft.; speaks Common and Dwarvish
Elf*	+2 Dex, +1 Int or Wis	Fey Ancestry, Trance; darkvision 60 ft.; proficiency in the Perception skill; speaks Common and Elvish
Gnoll	+2 Str, −2 Int	Rampage; darkvision 60 ft.
Gnome*	+2 Int, +2 Dex or Con	Gnome Cunning; Small size; speed 25 ft.; darkvision 60 ft.; speaks Common and Gnomish
Gnome, deep	+1 Str, +2 Dex	Gnome Cunning, Innate Spellcasting, Stone Camouflage; Small size; speed 20 ft.; darkvision 120 ft.; speaks Gnomish, Terran, and Undercommon
Goblin	−2 Str, +2 Dex	Nimble Escape; Small size; darkvision 60 ft.; speaks Common and Goblin
Grimlock	+2 Str, −2 Cha	Blind Senses, Keen Hearing and Smell, Stone Camouflage; can't be blinded; blindsight 30 ft., or 10 ft. while deafened (blind beyond this radius); speaks Undercommon
Half-elf*	+1 Dex, +1 Int, +2 Cha	Fey Ancestry; darkvision 60 ft.; proficiency in two skills; speaks Common and Elvish
Half-orc*	+2 Str, +1 Con	Relentless Endurance; darkvision 60 ft.; proficiency in the Intimidation skill; speaks Common and Orc
Halfling*	+2 Dex, +1 Con or Cha	Brave, Halfling Nimbleness, Lucky; Small size; speed 25 ft.; speaks Common and Halfling
Hobgoblin	None	Martial Advantage; darkvision 60 ft.; speaks Common and Goblin
Kenku	+2 Dex	Ambusher, Mimicry; understands Auran and Common but speaks only through the use of its Mimicry trait
Kobold	−4 Str, +2 Dex	Pack Tactics, Sunlight Sensitivity; Small size; darkvision 60 ft.; speaks Common and Draconic
Kuo-toa	None	Amphibious, Otherworldly Perception, Slippery, Sunlight Sensitivity; speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; darkvision 120 ft.; speaks Undercommon
Lizardfolk	+2 Str, −2 Int	Hold Breath (15 min.); +3 natural armor bonus to AC; speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; speaks Draconic
Merfolk	None	Amphibious; speed 10 ft., swim 40 ft.; speaks Aquan and Common
Orc	+2 Str, −2 Int	Aggressive; darkvision 60 ft.; speaks Common and Orc
Skeleton	+2 Dex, −4 Int, −4 Cha	Vulnerable to bludgeoning damage; immune to poison damage and exhaustion; can't be poisoned; darkvision 60 ft.; can't speak but understands the languages it knew in life
Tiefling*	+1 Int, +2 Cha	Infernal Legacy (use challenge rating instead of level to determine spells), resistance to fire damage; darkvision 60 ft.; speaks Common and Infernal
Troglodyte	+2 Str, +2 Con, −4 Int, −4 Cha	Chameleon Skin, Stench, Sunlight Sensitivity; +1 natural armor bonus to AC; darkvision 60 ft.; speaks Troglodyte
Zombie	+1 Str, +2 Con, −6 Int, −4 Wis, −4 Cha	Undead Fortitude; immune to poison damage; can't be poisoned; darkvision 60 ft.; can't speak but understands the languages it knew in life

* See the *Player's Handbook* for descriptions of this race's features, none of which alter the NPC's challenge rating.

The NPC Features table summarizes the ability modifiers and features of various nonhuman races, as well as various creatures from the *Monster Manual* with a challenge rating lower than 1. Apply these modifiers and add these features to the NPC's stat block, then determine the NPC's challenge rating just as you would for a monster. Features that can affect a monster's challenge rating are listed in the Monster Features table. The NPC's proficiency bonus is determined by its level, just like a character, rather than by its challenge rating.

If the monster you want to use isn't listed on the table, use the process described below under "Monsters with Classes."

Monsters with Classes

You can use the rules in chapter 3 of the *Player's Handbook* to give class levels to a monster. For example, you can turn an ordinary werewolf into a werewolf with four levels of the barbarian class (such a monster would be expressed as "Werewolf, 4th-level barbarian").

Start with the monster's stat block. The monster gains all the class features for every class level you add, with the following exceptions:

- The monster doesn't gain the starting equipment of the added class.
- For each class level you add, the monster gains one Hit Die of its normal type (based on its size), ignoring the class's Hit Die progression.
- The monster's proficiency bonus is based on its challenge rating, not its class levels.

Once you finish adding class levels to a monster, feel free to tweak its ability scores as you see fit (for example, raising the monster's Intelligence score so that the monster is a more effective wizard), and make whatever other adjustments are needed. You'll need to recalculate its challenge rating as though you had designed the monster from scratch.

Depending on the monster and the number of class levels you add to it, its challenge rating might change very little or increase dramatically. For example, a werewolf that gains four barbarian levels is a much greater threat than it was before. In contrast, the hit points, spells, and other class features that an ancient red dragon gains from five levels of wizard don't increase its challenge rating.

Creating a Spell

When creating a new spell, use existing spells as guidelines. Here are some things to consider:

- If a spell is so good that a caster would want to use it all the time, it might be too powerful for its level.
- A long duration or large area can make up for a lesser effect, depending on the spell.
- Avoid spells that have very limited use, such as one that works only against good dragons. Though such a spell could exist in the world, few characters will bother to learn or prepare it unless they know in advance that doing so will be worthwhile.
- Make sure the spell fits with the identity of the class. Wizards and sorcerers don't typically have access to healing spells, for example, and adding a healing spell to the wizard class list would step on the cleric's turf.

Spell Damage

For any spell that deals damage, use the Spell Damage table to determine approximately how much damage is appropriate given the spell's level. The table assumes the spell deals half damage on a successful saving throw or a missed attack. If your spell doesn't deal damage on a successful save, you can increase the damage by 25 percent.

You can use different damage dice than the ones in the table, provided that the average result is about the same. Doing so can add a little variety to the spell. For example, you could change a cantrip's damage from 1d10 (average 5.5) to 2d4 (average 5), reducing the maximum damage and making an average result more likely.