

## D&D 3.5 – ABILITIES AND RACES

This is a summary of Chapter 1 (*Abilities*) and Chapter 2 (*Races*) in the *D&D 3.5 Player's Handbook* (PHB). I have compared them with the corresponding chapters in the 3.0 PHB (second printing, with the official errata applied), and highlighted the significant changes in blue text.

### ABILITIES *(Note: Only subsections with changes are noted here.)*

#### Strength (STR) (p. 8)

- Strength measures your character's muscle and physical power.
  - This ability is important for fighters, barbarians, paladins, rangers, and monks because it helps them prevail in combat. Strength also limits the amount of equipment your character can carry (see Chapter 9: Adventuring).
- You apply your character's Strength modifier to:
  - Damage rolls when using a melee weapon or a thrown weapon (including a sling). (*Exceptions:* Off-hand attacks receive only one-half the character's STR modifier bonus, while two-handed attacks receive 1½ times the STR modifier bonus. Strength penalty, but not a bonus, applies to attacks made with a bow that is not a composite bow, or a sling.

### RACES

- *General Notes:*
  - There were no significant changes to the general material at the beginning of the chapter, except that in Table 2-1 (Racial Ability Adjustments) on p. 12, the Gnome entry has changed to reflect the fact that the gnome's favored class is now bard, not illusionist.
  - There were no significant changes to the background information text for the various races (Personality, Physical Description, Relations, etc.), so I omit any further mention of it here.

#### Humans (p. 12)

- *Size:* Medium.
- *Base land speed:* 30 ft.
- 1 extra feat at 1st level.
- 4 extra skill points at 1st level, and 1 extra skill point at each additional level.
- *Automatic language:* Common.
- *Bonus languages:* Any (other than secret languages, like Druidic).
- *Favored class:* Any.

#### Dwarves (p. 14)

- +2 CON, -2 CHA.
- *Size:* Medium.
- *Base land speed:* 20 ft. However, dwarves can move at this speed even when wearing medium or heavy armor or when carrying a medium or heavy load.
- *Darkvision:* Dwarves can see in the dark up to 60 ft.
- *Stonecunning:* This ability grants a dwarf a +2 bonus on Search checks to notice unusual stonework. A dwarf who merely comes within 10 ft. of unusual stonework can make a Search check as if he was actively searching.
  - Unusual stonework includes sliding walls, stonework traps, new construction (even when built to match the old), unsafe stone surfaces, shaky stone ceilings, etc. Something that isn't stone but that is disguised as stone counts as unusual stonework.
  - A dwarf can use the Search skill to find stonework traps as a rogue can.
  - A dwarf can intuit depth, sensing his approximate depth underground as naturally as a human can sense which way is up.
- *Weapon familiarity:* Dwarves may treat dwarven waraxes and dwarven urgroshes as martial rather than exotic weapons.
- *Stability:* A dwarf gains a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing on the ground (but not when climbing, flying, riding, or otherwise not standing firmly on the ground).
- +2 racial bonus on saving throws against poison.
- +2 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.
- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against orcs (including half-orcs) and goblinoids (including goblins, hobgoblins, and bugbears).
- +4 dodge bonus to AC against monsters of the giant type (e.g. ogres, trolls, and hill giants).
  - Any time a creature loses its Dexterity bonus (if any) to AC (e.g. when caught flat-footed), it loses its dodge bonus, too.
- +2 racial bonus on Appraise checks that are related to stone or metal items.
- +2 racial bonus on Craft checks that are related to stone or metal.
- *Automatic languages:* Common and Dwarven.
- *Bonus languages:* Giant, Gnome, Goblin, Orc, Terran, Undercommon.
- *Favored class:* Fighter.

#### Elves (p. 15)

- +2 DEX, -2 CON.
- *Size:* Medium.
- *Base land speed:* 30 ft.
- Immunity to magic sleep effects, and +2 racial bonus on saving throws against enchantment spells or effects.
- *Low-light vision:* An elf can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. The elf retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- *Weapon proficiency:* Elves receive the Martial Weapon Proficiency feats for the longsword or rapier, rapier, longbow (including composite longbow), and shortbow (including composite shortbow) as bonus feats.
- +2 racial bonus on Listen, Search and Spot checks. An elf who merely comes within 5 ft. of a secret or concealed door is entitled to a Search check to notice it as if actively looking for it.
- *Automatic languages:* Common and Elven.
- *Bonus languages:* Draconic, Gnoll, Gnome, Goblin, Orc, Sylvan.
- *Favored class:* Wizard.

### Gnomes (p. 16)

- +2 CON, -2 STR.
- **Size:** Small.
  - As a Small creature, a gnome gains a +1 size bonus to AC, a +1 size bonus to attack rolls, and a +4 size bonus on Hide checks, but he uses smaller weapons than humans use, and his lifting and carrying limits are three-quarters of those of a Medium character.
- **Base land speed:** 20 ft.
- **Low-light vision:** A gnome can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. The gnome retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- **Weapon familiarity:** Gnomes may treat gnome hooked hammers as martial rather than exotic weapons.
- +2 racial bonus on saving throws against illusions.
- **Add +1 to the DC for all saving throws against illusion spells cast by gnomes.**
  - This adjustment stacks with those from similar effects, such as the Spell Focus feat.
- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids (including goblins, hobgoblins, and bugbears).
- +4 dodge bonus to AC against monsters of the giant type (e.g. ogres, trolls, and hill giants).
  - Any time a creature loses its Dexterity bonus (if any) to AC (e.g. when caught flat-footed), it loses its dodge bonus, too.
- +2 racial bonus on Listen checks.
- +2 racial bonus on **Alchemy Craft** (alchemy) checks.
- **Automatic languages:** Common and Gnome.
  - In addition, a gnome can speak with a burrowing mammal (a badger, fox, rabbit, or the like) – see below.
- **Bonus languages:** Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Goblin, Orc.
- **Spell-like abilities:**
  - 1/day: *speak with animals* (burrowing mammal only; duration 1 minute).
  - (provided the gnome's CHA score is at least 10) 1/day: *dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, *prestidigitation*. Caster level 1st; save DC 10 + gnome's CHA modifier.
- **Favored class:** **Illusionist Bard**.

### Half-Elves (p. 18)

- **Size:** Medium.
- **Base land speed:** 30 ft.
- Immunity to magic sleep effects, and +2 racial bonus on saving throws against enchantment spells or effects.
- **Low-light vision:** A half-elf can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. The half-elf retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- +1 racial bonus on Listen, Search and Spot checks.
- **+2 racial bonus on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks.**
- **Elven Blood:** For all ~~special abilities and effects~~ effects related to race, a half-elf is considered an elf.
- **Automatic languages:** Common and Elven.
- **Bonus languages:** Any (other than secret languages, like Druidic).
- **Favored class:** Any.

### Half-Orcs (p. 18)

- +2 STR, -2 INT, -2 CHA.
- **Size:** Medium.
- **Base land speed:** 30 ft.
- **Darkvision:** Half-orcs can see in the dark up to 60 ft.
- **Orc Blood:** For all effects related to race, a half-orc is considered an orc.
- **Automatic languages:** Common and Orc.
- **Bonus languages:** Draconic, Giant, Gnoll, Goblin, Abyssal.
- **Favored class:** Barbarian.

### Halflings (p. 19)

- +2 DEX, -2 STR.
- **Size:** Small.
  - As a Small creature, a halfling gains a +1 size bonus to AC, a +1 size bonus to attack rolls, and a +4 size bonus on Hide checks, but he uses smaller weapons than humans use, and his lifting and carrying limits are three-quarters of those of a Medium character.
- **Base land speed:** 20 ft.
- +2 racial bonus on Climb, Jump, and Move Silently checks.
- +1 racial bonus on all saving throws.
- +2 morale bonus on saving throws against fear.
  - This bonus stacks with the halfling's +1 bonus on saving throws in general.
- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls with thrown weapons **and slings**.
- +2 racial bonus on Listen checks.
- **Automatic languages:** Common and Halfling.
- **Bonus languages:** Dwarven, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Orc.
- **Favored class:** Rogue.