

BASIC D20 FANTASY RACES

If Basic d20 is used for a normal d20 fantasy campaign, some guidance is needed on how to handle ability score bonuses and penalties, racial skill bonuses, bonus racial skill points, bonus racial feats, racial languages, and other racial traits.

ABILITY SCORE BONUSES AND PENALTIES

The GM has two choices with racial bonuses and penalties. He can either use the bonus/penalty as a modifier to the 3d6 roll to determine the character's ability scores or he can allow players to roll 3d6 to determine ability scores normally and then halve the bonuses and penalties before applying. Either method produces the same ability score modifier.

For example, a player is rolling up a dwarf. If the player rolls a '13' on 3d6 to determine Constitution, the player could add two to the roll, making it a '15' and then consult the table. This would give the character a Con +2. He could also keep the '13' which gives him a Con +1. Halving the dwarf's Con bonus and then adding makes the Con +2. As you can see, either method works. Just don't make the mistake of adding the entire, normal bonus after the player has determined an ability score.

However, racial bonuses to ability checks apply directly. Thus, the full +4 for the dwarven stability racial trait applies to any ability checks made when resisting a bull rush or trip attack when standing on firm ground.

RACIAL SKILL BONUSES

Basic d20 uses a broad skill system that groups traditional d20 skills into twelve broad skill areas. Furthermore, it adds four broad skills that define offensive and defensive combat ability (Fight, Shoot, Dodge, and Parry). Finally, the three save bonuses and hit dice are made into four additional broad skills (Fortitude, Reflex, Toughness, and Will). This totals 20 broad skills.

Any bonus to a skill actually becomes a bonus to a specialty skill in Basic d20. For example, dwarves get a +2 racial bonus to Appraise checks that are related to stone or metal items. This translates to a +2 racial bonus to Awareness when appraising stone or metal items (not a blanket +2 bonus to all uses of the Awareness broad skill).

Any bonus to attack rolls applies to the Fight and Shoot broad skills. For example, dwarves have a +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against orcs and goblinoids. This translates to a +1 racial bonus to attack rolls using Fight and Shoot against orcs and goblinoids.

Any dodge bonus is applied to both the Dodge and Parry broad skills. Dwarves get a +4 dodge bonus to AC against monsters of the giant type. This bonus applied to Dodge and Parry when fighting against giant type monsters.

Any hit point bonus is applied directly to the hit point (or vitality point) total. If hit dice are gained, the Toughness skill rank is increased by one for each hit die.

Saving throw bonuses are applied to the appropriate broad skills when making a saving throw under the correct condition. Example: dwarves get a +2 saving throw bonus against poison.

BONUS RACIAL SKILL POINTS

Bonus racial skill points grant the character one additional Power Point during character generation for every 4 extra skill points granted. These extra Power Points cannot be used for the Dodge, Fight, Fortitude, Parry, Reflex, Shoot, Toughness, or Will broad skills.

In fact, for every 4 extra skill points granted due to Intelligence, Basic d20 characters are entitled to gain another Power Point that can only be used for the twelve “allowed” broad skills. Since starting characters get four times their Intelligence bonus in extra skill points according to the SRD, this translates to an extra Power Point per “plus” of your character’s Int at start. For example, if your character has Int +3, then he receives three extra Power Points during character generation that can be used for the twelve “allowed” broad skills (i.e., Athletics, Awareness, Interaction, Knowledge, Languages, Performance, Profession, Science, Technology, Thievery, Vehicles, and Wilderness).

Characters should not have their starting PP reduced due to low Intelligence.

BONUS RACIAL FEATS

Bonus racial feats are granted to the character during character generation. They cannot be “cashed in” for Power Points and used in another fashion.

RACIAL LANGUAGES

“Automatic languages” grant the appropriate number of skill ranks in Languages (one for each language).

Also, characters gain one skill rank in Languages for each “plus” in their Intelligence as well. They can choose one language that they may have been exposed to during their background for each skill rank.

FAVORED CLASSES

Favored classes do not apply in Basic d20. Rejoice.

WHY WAS THIS DOCUMENT NECESSARY?

It may have been a bit confusing to try to use Basic d20 for a fantasy campaign if there were no clear guidelines on how to apply racial traits when using this system. Hopefully, this document provides enough guidance that the GM will know what to do when allowing players to choose fantasy races for their characters.