

SIDEKICKS ESSENTIALS



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The official rules for sidekicks in *Dungeons and Dragons* 5th Edition first appear in appendix A of the *Essentials Kit Rulebook* and are designed to allow the game to be played with as few as two people: the Dungeon Master and a single player. *Sidekicks Essentials* expands these rules and provides additional types of sidekicks and example personalities to round them out.

SUPPLEMENT OVERVIEW

Sidekicks Essentials is divided into three sections:

Playing with Sidekicks. A recap of the official rules for sidekicks is accompanied by additional optional rules for sidekick loyalty, controlling the sidekick, and level advancement.

Sidekick Stat Blocks. A collection of sidekick stat blocks and leveling tables is expanded from the original *Expert*, *Spellcaster*, and *Warrior* to include:

- The *Archer*, who strikes with precision from afar.
- The *Berseker*, a crazed killing machine.
- The *Criminal*, an underworld expert of deception and theft.
- The *Knight*, a bastion of self-sacrifice.
- The *Magician*, an arcane ally.
- The *Medic*, because nobody likes dying alone.
- The *Minstrel*, whose songs hopefully prove to be more useful than they are annoying.

Sidekick Personalities. 11 named companions you can match to a sidekick stat block, each with art, personalities, ideals, bonds, and flaws. All are formatted to be printed matching the handout cards included in the *Essentials Kit* boxed set.

CREDITS

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PLAYING WITH SIDEKICKS

Dolf, the DM: "Let's play D&D at my house Friday starting around 7. I'll order some pizzas."

Ari, who plays Gorn, human fighter: "You have my sword."

Leah who plays Golass, elf ranger: "You have my bow."

Guy, who plays Imlil, dwarf barbarian: "Friday isn't great for me."

Memes spread across the Internet for a reason. A top complaint about the game is organizing a group to actually get together and play. The *D&D Essentials Kit* boxed set, advertised as being for 2-6 players, addresses this difficulty with **sidekicks**.

THE RULES FOR SIDEKICKS

The brilliance of the official rules for sidekicks is simplicity. A sidekick is represented with a stat block, just like any monster or NPC. The sidekick stat block shows the sidekick at 1st level, and is accompanied by a table for adjusting the stat block as the sidekick gains levels. The sidekick is proficient with all equipment mentioned in the stat block. The players and DM can adjust the stat block based on other rules as they see fit. The sidekick becomes a person by giving them a name, race, personality, ideals, bonds, and flaws. The DM decides who controls the sidekick in play.

NEW OPTIONAL RULES

The official rules for sidekicks really are that simple! *Sidekicks Essentials* offers the following additional rules that you may wish to incorporate into your game.

LOYALTY

Another common D&D meme is *"that's what my character would do!"* Consider how a sidekick might react to the choices the player characters make.

Loyalty Score. A sidekick has a loyalty score, which represents their willingness to stick with the adventurers. A sidekick's maximum loyalty score is equal to their level. When a sidekick is first recruited, their loyalty score is equal to the combined Charisma modifier of all members of the adventuring party (minimum 1).

As the sidekick adventures with the party, the loyalty score changes when the following occurs:

- **Gaining a level.** When a sidekick gains a level, their current loyalty score and maximum loyalty score increase by 1.
- **Ideals.** When the characters act in a way that aligns with the sidekick's ideals, the sidekick's loyalty score may increase by 1. If the characters act in a way that conflicts with the sidekick's ideals, the sidekick's loyalty score decreases by 1.
- **Bonds.** If the characters act in a way that violates the sidekick's bonds, the sidekick's loyalty score immediately becomes 0. If the characters help reinforce a sidekick's bonds, the sidekick's loyalty score may increase by 1.
- **Flaws.** Nobody likes having their deficits challenged. If the characters act in a way that enables a sidekick's flaws, their loyalty score may increase by 1.

The dungeon master has the ultimate say over what influences a sidekick's loyalty score. Have the sidekick react appropriately to things that they like or dislike. Winning a sidekick's affections presents interesting roleplaying opportunities for the players.

Lost Loyalty. If a sidekick's loyalty score is reduced to 0 or below, they are no longer loyal to the adventurers. The DM should now control the sidekick (see *controlling a sidekick*). When the sidekick is no longer loyal they act in self interest rather than the best interest of the party, and the sidekick will take the first convenient opportunity to part ways. In extreme cases, the sidekick may even take hostile action against the party members that wronged them.

"The great part about Sidekicks is they inherently do less than PCs and simply exist to aid in overall action economy. They aren't there to overshadow the PC at all."

-Steve Fidler of Vorpal Dice Press

CONTROLLING A SIDEKICK

While the sidekick has a positive loyalty score, allow a player to control the sidekick's actions, both in and out of combat. If more than one player wishes to control the sidekick, choose a way to share that works for your table. One method is to roll for it before rolling initiative for an encounter.

Agency. Allow the player controlling the sidekick to roleplay them in and out of combat, but don't allow the player to violate the sidekick's ideals or bonds without a good reason.

Initiative. If a player is controlling a sidekick, you can have them roll initiative for the sidekick or allow them to choose to have the sidekick take their turn either before or after their PC's turn. If the DM is controlling the sidekick, roll initiative as you would for a monster or NPC.

Award inspiration. As with any character, accurately roleplaying the sidekick's personality, ideals, bonds, and flaws is a great opportunity to award inspiration. The DM can choose to award inspiration to the player, or specifically to the sidekick.

LEVEL ADVANCEMENT

The DM decides a sidekick's starting level. You may wish to start the sidekick at the same level as the PCs or at a lower level. A lower level sidekick feels more like a *sidekick*, and is still of great help simply due to action economy.

Gaining a Level. The easiest way to level sidekicks is to have them gain a level when the PCs do, even if they aren't the same level as the PCs. Alternatively, you can use level advancement based on XP. If you are awarding XP, don't forget to split it with the sidekicks!

Sidekicks Beyond 6th Level. By the time a sidekick reaches 6th level, they are a bit of a hero in their own right! If you choose to continue leveling the sidekick, pick features from relevant classes in the *Player's Handbook* but note that sidekicks intentionally have a weaker progression than player characters.

Any NPC stat block could be played as a sidekick. For higher level characters, the NPCs in appendix B of *Volo's Guide to Monsters* could be a good fit.

SIDEKICK STAT BLOCKS

The following pages contain seven new sidekick types as represented by a stat block and accompanying table for advancing the sidekick in level.

WHY A STAT BLOCK?

The end goal of sidekicks could be accomplished by simply running another character. That's fine, and is an approach parties short of players have taken for decades. The advantage of sidekick rules is in the clarity of who is the hero and who is the henchman.

The final rules for sidekicks evolved a bit from the *Unearthed Arcana* that predates it, but this earlier resource is still worth checking out: <https://dnd.wizards.com/articles/unearthed-arcana/sidekicks>

In this *Unearthed Arcana*, any CR 1 or lower creature or NPC with a stat block can become a sidekick that levels up according to certain rules. Consider adapting the following sidekick types in the same way. Many an adventuring party adopted the lovable goblin Droop in the adventure *Lost Mine of Phandelver*. How great would it be if it turns out that the kazoo he plays turns Droop into a *minstrel*?

While the power level and complexity in the *Unearthed Arcana* is higher than the final official rules, you might also find useful inspiration for taking sidekicks beyond 6th level and creating sidekick types of your own.

CREATING SIDEKICK TYPES

Sidekick stat blocks emulate player character class types and their features but are much less powerful than a PC and advance more slowly. When creating your own sidekick stat blocks and level advancement tables, keep the following principles in mind:

Ability Scores. A sidekick's ability scores are 15, 14, 13, 12, 10, 10. Like the children of *Lake Woebegon*, sidekicks are all above average.

Spellcasting. A sidekick knows far fewer spells and has far fewer spell slots than a PC class.

Class Features. A sidekick has fewer class features than a PC class, and gains abilities more slowly.

THE ARCHER

Crouching low among the brush, a female elf stealthily creeps along the ridgeline above the goblin encampment. She reaches a boulder in the shadow cast by the cavern wall and peers around, now just able to see the goblin chieftain below wildly dancing to ritual drumbeat. She knocks an arrow into her longbow then draws back and fires, knocking a goblet of putrid wine from the chieftain's hand. Quick as a flash, she fires again, this time her arrow landing in the rump of the goblin's pack mule, which bleats loudly and takes off running down the canyon.

The confused and enraged goblin tribe draws weapons and pursues the mule in hopes of finding their unseen attacker. This opening allows the archer's companions to slip into the camp and free the young farm hand the goblins had kidnapped.

Striking from afar with deadly precision, archers utilize stealth and surprise to turn the tide of a battle right from the beginning.

ARCHER

1st-level Medium humanoid

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 13 (2d8+4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
13 (+1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Dex +4

Skills Perception +3, Stealth +4, Survival +3

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, plus one of your choice

Archery Expert. The archer gains a +2 bonus to ranged weapon attacks (this bonus is included in the archer's longbow action)

ACTIONS

Longbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +6 to hit, range 150/600 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

Rapier. Melee Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

ARCHERS BEYOND 1ST LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
2nd	19 (3d8+6)	Stealth Attack. When the archer hits with a ranged weapon attack and has advantage on the attack roll or the target is surprised, the attack does an additional 1d6 damage.
3rd	26 (4d8+8)	Quick Reload. Once on each of their turns when the archer makes a ranged weapon attack, they can make another attack with the same weapon against a different creature that is within 5 feet of the original target.
4th	32 (5d8+10)	Ability Score Improvement. The archer's Dexterity score increases by 2, raising the modifier by 1, so increase the archer's Stealth bonus by 1, and increase the bonus to hit and damage of the archer's weapon attacks by 1.
5th	39 (6d8+12)	Proficiency Bonus. The archer's proficiency bonus increases by 1, so make the following changes in the stat block: increase the bonus in the Saving Throws and Skills entries by 1, and increase the bonuses to hit of the weapon attacks by 1.
6th	45 (7d8+14)	Extra Attack. The archer can attack twice, instead of once, whenever they take the attack action on their turn.

THE BERSERKER

While her party quietly discusses strategy, the burly dwarf's mind wanders. Suddenly, she snaps to attention, grabs her greataxe in both hands, and charges into the gnoll lair while shouting out her own name at the top of her lungs.

By the time her companions have gathered their equipment and wits and join her in the shallow cave, the dwarf is already looting trinkets from the corpses of her fallen foes.

Berserkers don't always go about things with the most care, but they tend to get the job done.

BERSERKERS BEYOND 1ST LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
2nd	25 (3d12+6)	Rage. As a bonus action on their turn, the berserker may enter a rage which lasts until the end of combat. While in a rage, the berserker has +2 to damage with melee attacks and resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage. Once this feature has been used, the berserker must finish a long rest before it can be used again.
3rd	32 (4d12+8)	Reckless Attack. When the berserker makes the first attack on their turn they may choose to do so recklessly. Doing so grants them advantage on all melee attack rolls during this turn, but all attack rolls against the berserker have advantage until the start of their next turn.
4th	40 (5d12+10)	Ability Score Improvement. The berserker's Strength score increases by 2, raising the modifier by 1, so increase the berserker's Athletics bonus by 1, and increase the bonus to hit and damage of the berserker's weapon attacks by 1.
5th	47 (6d12+12)	Proficiency Bonus. The berserker's proficiency bonus increases by 1, so make the following changes in the stat block: increase the bonus in the Saving Throws and Skills entries by 1, and increase the bonuses to hit of the weapon attacks by 1.
6th	53 (7d12+14)	Extra Attack. The berserker can attack twice, instead of once, whenever they take the attack action on their turn.

BERSERKER

1st-level Medium humanoid

Armor Class 13 (unarmored defense)

Hit Points 17 (2d12+4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str +4, Con +4

Skills Athletics +4, Intimidation +3, Survival +3

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, plus one of your choice

Two-handed Axe Fighting. When the berserker rolls a 1 or 2 on a damage die for an attack they make with their greataxe wielded with two hands, they can reroll the die and must use the new roll, even if the new roll is a 1 or 2.

Two Handaxe Fighting. When the berserker makes a melee or ranged weapon attack with a handaxe in one hand, they can use their bonus action to make a melee or ranged attack with the handaxe they are holding in the other hand. The ability modifier is not added to the damage of this attack.

Unarmored Defense. While the berserker isn't wearing any armor, their Armor Class equals 10 + their Dexterity modifier + their Constitution modifier.

ACTIONS

Greataxe. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12+2) slashing damage.

Handaxe. *Melee or Thrown Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. / range 20/60ft, one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Second Handaxe. *Melee or Thrown Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) piercing damage. This bonus action may only be taken if the berserker used their action to attack with a handaxe using one hand.

THE CRIMINAL

The thin human man smiles broadly as he confidently presents his invitation to the doorman. Between his foppish garb, carefully crafted wax ear tips and expertly applied makeup, he looks every bit a drow elf as every other guest.

Upon examining the watermark, the doorman returns the man's invitation and welcomes him to Jarlaxle's home. The forgery was a complete success.

After mingling for a bit and enjoying some sparkling wine and fresh oysters, the criminal finds an opportunity to slip away unnoticed into a back hallway. He locates a wall safe hidden exactly where his source promised — behind a portrait of beautiful blue eyed human woman with auburn hair.

CRIMINALS BEYOND 1ST LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
2nd	16 (3d8+3)	Fast Hands. The criminal can use a bonus action to make a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check, use thieves' tools to disarm a trap or open a lock, or take the Use an Object action.
3rd	22 (4d8+4)	Second Story Work. Climbing no longer costs the criminal extra movement.
4th	27 (5d8+5)	Ability Score Improvement. The criminal's Dexterity score increases by 2, raising the modifier by 1, so increase the criminal's Acrobatics, Sleight of Hand, and Stealth bonuses by 1, and increase the bonus to hit and damage of the criminal's weapon attacks by 1.
5th	33 (6d8+6)	Proficiency Bonus. The criminal's proficiency bonus increases by 1, so make the following changes in the stat block: increase the bonus in the Saving Throws and Skills entries by 1. Increase the bonuses to hit of the weapon attacks by 1.
6th	38 (7d8+7)	Uncanny Dodge. When an attacker that the criminal can see hits them with an attack, the criminal can use their reaction to halve the attack's damage.

In mere seconds there is the telltale click, and the door to the safe swings open. Inside is the largest black sapphire the man has ever seen.

He stows the gem and his tools in an inner pocket of his suit and returns to the party. After picking up some promising rumors over a fine cigar and a snifter of brandy, he disappears out a back entrance into the night.

It turns out crime pays handsomely.

CRIMINAL

1st-level Medium humanoid

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	15 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex. +4, Int. +3

Skills Acrobatics +4, Deception +4, Intimidation +4, Sleight of Hand +4, Stealth +4,

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, plus one of your choice

Double Daggers. When the criminal makes a melee or ranged weapon attack with a dagger in one hand, they can use their bonus action to make a melee or ranged attack with the dagger they are holding in the other hand. The ability modifier is not added to the damage of this attack.

Criminal Contact. The criminal has a reliable and trustworthy contact who acts as their liaison to a network of other criminals. The criminal knows how to get messages to and from their contact, even over great distances.

Tools. The criminal has a disguise kit, forgery kit, gaming set, poisoners kit, and thieves tools

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Thrown Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. / range 20/60ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4+2) piercing damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Second Dagger. *Melee or Thrown Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. / range 20/60ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage. This bonus action may only be taken if the criminal used their action to attack with a dagger.

THE KNIGHT

As the ogre lunges at the young halfling she was sworn to protect, the gold scaled dragonborn shoves the girl out of the way, taking the full brunt of the giant's swinging club.

Realizing that the two are no match for the raiding party they have stumbled upon, the knight clutches her holy symbol while making a silent prayer to Helm. Then she erupts in a roar more fierce sounding than that of a true dragon. The confused ogres flee, hoping to find easier prey.

The halfling looks up at her protector with wide-eyed admiration. The knight nods back respectfully, the satisfaction of her duty its own reward.

KNIGHT

1st-level Medium humanoid

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 15 (2d10+4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
15 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)

Saving Throws Str. +4, Cha. +3

Skills Athletics +4, Religion +3

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, plus one of your choice

ACTIONS

Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 6 (1d8 +2) slashing damage.

REACTIONS

Noble Sacrifice. When a creature the knight can see targets an ally within 5 feet of them with an attack, the knight can swap places with the ally and become the target of the attack instead.

KNIGHTS BEYOND 1ST LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
2nd	23 (3d10+6)	Lay on Hands. The knight can use an action to restore a number of hit points equal to 5 x their level. Once they do so they may not use this feature again until they finish a long rest.
3rd	30 (4d10+8)	Rebuke Evil. The knight can use an action to frighten evil-aligned creatures. Each evil creature within 30 feet must succeed on a DC 11 saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute or until it takes damage. While frightened a creature must spend its turn trying to move as far away from the knight as it can. Once the knight uses this feature they cannot do so again until they finish a long rest
4th	38 (5d10+10)	Ability Score Improvement. The knight's Strength score increases by 2, raising the modifier by 1, so increase the knight's Strength Saving throw bonus, Athletics bonus, and bonus to hit and damage of weapon attacks by 1. The DC for the knight's <i>rebuke evil</i> action increases to 12.
5th	45 (6d10+12)	Proficiency Bonus. The knight's proficiency bonus increases by 1, so make the following changes in the stat block: increase the bonus in the Saving Throws and Skills entries by 1 and increase the bonuses to hit of the weapon by 1. The DC for the knight's <i>rebuke evil</i> action increases to 13.
6th	53 (7d10+14)	Extra Attack. The knight can attack twice, instead of once, whenever they take the attack action on their turn.

THE MAGICIAN

As a child, while his brothers and sisters labored meticulously over serious inventions, this gnome put his considerable tinkering talents toward a single purpose: tricks.

He crafted a flower pot that seemed to instantly bloom a daisy; a hat that could produce a rabbit; gloves that concealed coins to be pulled from behind ears. He received quite the whipping after convincing his terrified siblings that he had successfully sawed their youngest sister in half.

When a real wizard who could tap the magic of the weave came through town, stowing away on her carriage was the only logical course of action. The hard apprenticeship that followed led to a life of adventuring.

This flashback, which took place in the space of the half-orc raider's single knockout blow, concluded with a strange thought: he had turned out a bit like his stalwart older brother's worst invention: a glass cannon.

MAGICIAN

1st-level Medium humanoid

Armor Class 11 (unarmored)

Hit Points 9 (2d6+2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Int +4

Skills Arcana +4, Sleight of Hand +3

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common, plus one of your choice

Spellcasting. The magician's spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks).

Cantrips (at will): *acid splash*, *prestidigitation*, *shocking grasp*
1st level (2 slots): *magic missile*

ACTIONS

Quarterstaff. *Melee Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.
Hit: 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage.

MAGICIANS BEYOND 1ST LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
2nd	14 (3d6+3)	Spellcasting. The magician gains one 1st-level spell slot. The magician also learns another 1st-level spell: <i>thunderwave</i> .
3rd	18 (4d6+4)	Ritual Casting. The magician learns the following first level spells and gains the ability to cast them as rituals: <i>comprehend languages</i> , <i>detect magic</i> , and <i>identify</i> .
4th	23 (5d6+5)	Ability Score Improvement. The magician's Intelligence score increases by 2, raising the modifier by 1, so increase the magician's Intelligence Saving throw bonus, Arcana bonus, spell save DC, and bonus to hit of spell attacks by 1. Spellcasting. The magician learns another cantrip: <i>minor illusion</i>
5th	27 (6d6+6)	Proficiency Bonus. The magician's proficiency bonus increases by 1, so make the following changes in the stat block: increase the bonus in the Saving Throws and Skills entries by 1. Increase the bonuses to hit of the weapon and spell attacks by 1, and increase the spell save DC by 1. Spellcasting. The magician gains one 1st-level spell slot and two 2nd-level spell slots. The magician also learns two 2nd-level spells: <i>thunderstep</i> and <i>scorching ray</i> .
6th	32 (7d6+7)	Arcane Recovery. Once per day when the magician finishes a short rest they may regain two 1st-level spell slots or one 2nd-level spell slot.

THE MEDIC

The battle raging all around them, the seasoned human steadies their resolve. They see a brave knight stuck down by two bugbears, who continue advancing as they see the knight fall unconscious.

The shout of a word of prayer to Ilmater rings out, and suddenly the knight rises to her feet. Swinging her greatsword with precision, she cleaves through the backs of the bugbears who had left her for dead. Then the knight looks at the human who revived her and winks. They smile gently back.

When the battle is over, the medic tends to the injured, soothing souls as well as wounds. As the army resumes its patrols, they turn their energy to concocting the elixirs that will revive the soldiers out of their reach.

The medic knows that while the battle may have been won, the war is far from over. It is their solemn vow that it takes as few lives as the gods will allow.

MEDIC

1st-level Medium humanoid

Armor Class 16 (chain shirt, shield)

Hit Points 13 (2d8+4)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+1)	13 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)	10 (+0)

Saving Throws Wis. +4,

Skills Medicine +4, Religion +3, Survival +4

Senses passive Perception 13

Languages Common, plus one of your choice

Spellcasting. The medic spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks).

Cantrips (at will): *spare the dying*, *thaumaturgy*, *toll the dead*
1st level (2 slots): *healing word*

ACTIONS

Mace. *Melee Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target.

Hit: 4 (1d6 +1) bludgeoning damage.

MEDICS BEYOND 1ST LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
2nd	14 (3d6+3)	Spellcasting. The medic gains one 1st-level spell slot. The medic also learns another 1st-level spell: <i>goodberry</i> .
3rd	18 (4d6+4)	Potioncraft. The medic can take one full day of uninterrupted work and 25gp worth of ingredients to create one potion of healing.
4th	23 (5d6+5)	Ability Score Improvement. The medic's Wisdom score increases by 2, raising the modifier by 1, so increase the medic's Wisdom Saving Throw bonus, Skill bonuses, spell save DC, and bonus to hit of spell attacks by 1.
5th	27 (6d6+6)	Proficiency Bonus. The medic's proficiency bonus increases by 1, so make the following changes in the stat block: increase the bonus in the Saving Throws and Skills entries by 1. Increase the bonuses to hit of the weapon and spell attacks by 1, and increase the spell save DC by 1. Spellcasting. The medic gains one 1st-level spell slot and two 2nd-level spell slots. The medic also learns two 2nd-level spells: <i>lesser restoration</i> and <i>prayer of healing</i> .
6th	32 (7d6+7)	Blessed Healer. When the medic casts a healing spell on another creature, the medic also regains hit points equal to 2 + the spell's level.

THE MINSTREL

A throng gathers as a flamboyantly dressed young halfling begins tuning his lute. His traveling companions look on, often with shades of embarrassment, as the lad proceeds to recount their trials and tribulations in magical song.

The crowd is enthralled as they hear the tale of how the adventurers vanquished the troll that had been terrorizing their village. The musician isn't shy about embellishing the role his magical songs had in confounding the brute.

MINSTREL

1st-level Medium humanoid

Armor Class 14 (studded leather)

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	15 (+2)

Saving Throws Dex +4, Cha +4

Skills History +3, Performance +4, Persuasion +4

Senses passive Perception 11

Languages Common, plus one of your choice

By Popular Demand. Among friendly humanoids, a minstrel can always find a place to perform songs of their companions' triumphs and misfortunes, earning their party free lodging and food of a modest standard.

ACTIONS

Hand Crossbow. Ranged Weapon Attack: +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. Hit: 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.

Rapier. Melee Attack: +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. Hit: 6 (1d8+2) piercing damage.

Satirical Song. A creature within 60 feet must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or take 1d4 psychic damage and have disadvantage on the next attack roll it takes before the end of its next turn.

REACTIONS

Inspiring Song. When an ally within 60 feet of the minstrel who can hear them makes an ability check, attack roll, or saving throw, the minstrel adds 1d6 to the roll. This ability may only be used twice between each long rest.

At the end of the evening, after the grateful villagers have bought round after round of ale on the account of her heroics, the self-conscious leader of the minstrel's adventuring party isn't even that mad any more that the minstrel sang a verse describing how she had slipped in the mud and sliced her leg on her own handaxe.

MINSTRELS BEYOND 1ST LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
2nd	19 (3d8+6)	Song of Rest. When the minstrel performs soothing music during a short rest, they and any companions regain an extra 1d6 hit points.
3rd	26 (4d8+8)	Distracting Chords. The minstrel may use their <i>Inspiring Song</i> reaction to instead subtract 1d6 from the ability check, attack roll, or saving throw from an enemy within 60 feet who can hear them.
4th	32 (5d8+10)	Ability Score Improvement. The minstrel's Charisma score increases by 2, raising the modifier by 1, so increase the minstrel's Charisma Saving Throw, Performance and Persuasion bonuses by 1, and increase the bonus to hit and damage of the weapon attacks by 1. The DC for the Wisdom save of the minstrel's <i>Satirical Song</i> increases to 13. The minstrel now has three uses of the <i>Inspiring Song</i> or <i>Distracting Chords</i> reaction.
5th	39 (6d8+12)	Proficiency Bonus. The minstrel's proficiency bonus increases by 1, so make the following changes in the stat block: increase the bonus in the Saving Throws and Skills entries by 1. Increase the bonuses to hit of the weapon attacks by 1. The DC for the Wisdom save of the minstrel's <i>Satirical Song</i> increases to 14.
6th	45 (7d8+14)	Potent Satire. The damage from the minstrel's <i>Satirical Song</i> increases to 2d4.

SIDEKICK PERSONALITIES

The following pages contain eleven more individuals for you to turn into sidekicks. While the characters in the *Essentials Kit* are tied to a specific stat block, these characters are free to be matched to any sidekick stat block.

Although the art might make suggestions, these individuals do not have a presumed race or gender.

SIDEKICK CARDS

These sidekicks are formatted to print the same size as the cards included in the *Essentials Kit*. Permission is granted to photocopy or digitally remix for personal use to best suit the game at your table.

CREATING NEW PERSONALITIES

The variety of sidekicks is only limited by your imagination. Choose a sidekick statblock and race. Give the sidekick a quick description (or a detailed backstory!) and assign personality, ideals, bonds, and flaws.

The personality, ideals bonds, and flaws can be of your own creation, or you can choose from or roll on the tables in the *Personality and Background* section of the *Player's Handbook*.

Tip: Have the Players Do It

When your players first acquire a new sidekick, consider having them decide just who their new companion is. If the players determine the sidekick's personality, ideals, bonds, and flaws it will make the sidekick easier to roleplay and give the players a much closer personal attachment to their new companion.



SHAVA CORNROSE

Shava's strict upbringing is evident in what is expected of the behavior of others.

Personality. "You had best mind your manners, or I'll mind them for you."

Ideal. "Respect is a given, not earned. Until you do something to unearn it."

Bond. "Family is where we come from, but also those who have proven themselves worthy."

Flaw. "I'm worried that no matter my successes, I'll never find true love."

• SIDEKICK •



LAMLIS HIGHTONE

Lamlis always has a tame joke ready, and it won't be the first time you've heard it.

Personality. "Did I ever tell you about that time I've told you about dozens of times before?"

Ideal. "You're kind enough to let me be me, the least I can do is let you be you."

Bond. "You protect the people you're with. Everyone knows that."

Flaw. "I'll give you the shirt off my back, even though I know you don't deserve it."

• SIDEKICK •



TIAHO IOSUA

The scar near Iosua's eyepatch isn't the biggest one, just the most visible one.

Personality. "It's hard to make new friends after seeing so many old ones meet violent ends."

Ideal. "I've been given enough orders in my life to know better than to follow all of them."

Bond. "My honor is the one thing I know can never be taken from me."

Flaw. "After all I've seen I've become skittish and too eager to slice first and ask questions later."

• SIDEKICK •



BRUNO ESTES

Bruno always has perfectly spiked hair and gleaming armor. Always.

Personality. "Hey there how *you* doin'?"

Ideal. "Whatever I'm doing isn't half as important as looking cool doing it."

Bond. "I deserve to be famous. It's just a matter of time."

Flaw. "I'll never be able to love anyone else half as much as I love myself."

• SIDEKICK •



MORLAN FLARE

Morlan's physical appearance changes as rapidly as what you hear spoken to others.

Personality. "Hmmm. I wonder what they want to hear."

Ideal. "So long as I keep my story straight, my narrative is just as valid as yours."

Bond. "My father disgraced us, but someday I'll restore the Frost family name."

Flaw. "I just can't help telling the *truth* about everything. There. I said it."

• SIDEKICK •



NILPAT RUKHARZ

Nilpat loves the forest, hates the city, and isn't shy telling you about it.

Personality. "Come now friend, it surely isn't any worse than yesterday."

Ideal. "If we stick our nose in the skunk's den we ought be prepared for its spray."

Bond. "Someday I'll have to face what I ran from. Someday."

Flaw. "Oh my! The titillating pleasures the city presents are simply irresistible, aren't they?"

• SIDEKICK •



THE SHIELD

Sheldon was a knight's shield bearing squire. Sheldon became "Sheld", which became Shield, and the name stuck. The "The" makes it sound classier.

Personality. "That's awesome!"

Ideal. "The gods know best, and I act in their will. So whatever I'm doing is what they want!"

Bond. "I owe my life to the order that took me in."

Flaw. "Taken advantage of? What? You worry too much. No, these good folks know best and just need us to do our part to help."

• SIDEKICK •



LAMLIS HIGHTONE

Lamis always wears a frown and is quick to tell you why you should too.

Personality. "Smile more? Why would I? Thanks not how I feel."

Ideal. "At least people generally get what they have coming to them."

Bond. "...I'll make sure of it."

Flaw. "All these happy looking people. Sometimes I wonder what it's like to be so stupid."

• SIDEKICK •



ADRIE YAELEDRIN

Adrie loves the thrill of the hunt almost as much as the delicious stews that come from its spoils.

Personality. "That's nothing, you should have seen the one that got away!"

Ideal. "Only when you get back out among the beasts does it become apparent how much more civilized their world is than the world of men."

Bond. "I'd love to see your trophies, but can't stomach one you didn't win."

Flaw. "The strong survive, the weak perish."

• SIDEKICK •



ORSIK SILVERAXE

The hair that used to be on Orsik's head has migrated elsewhere. Doff armor together lest you doubt it.

Personality. "I always tell the truth, but no harm in making it more interesting."

Ideal. "We each put in our best, so each share should be the same."

Bond. "The crew you're with brings the ship home to port."

Flaw. "What's the harm in sharing a nip? It's just a wee wager. The lass here seem plenty clean. A little leaf never hurt the halfling."

• SIDEKICK •



BROTTOR DANKIL

Brottor might be the toughest old codger you'll ever meet, and definitely the most kindly.

Personality. "Aw, you remind me of me children when they was yer age."

Ideal. "You gotta let 'em live in order to 'em to learn."

Bond. "The only true way to help the young folk is ta lead by example. I had my years ta figure things out."

Flaw. "Spare the rod and spoil the child! They're only young once after all."

• SIDEKICK •

APPENDIX A: MONSTER SIDEKICKS

CREATING A NEW MONSTER SIDEKICK

Any monster your adventuring party encounters has the potential become a sidekick if the situation warrants. You can create new monster sidekicks by following these general guidelines.

Level. A sidekick should not overshadow player characters of the same level. In general, a monster can be turned into a sidekick matching a general tier of play based on its challenge rating.

SIDEKICK LEVEL RANGE BY CHALLENGE RATING

Challenge Rating	Tier of Play
< 2	Levels 1 – 4
2 – 4	Levels 5 – 10
5 – 6	Levels 11 – 16
7+	Levels 17 – 20

Stat Block and Leveling. As a rule of thumb, the stat block mostly remains the same, but some attributes are removed to bring the sidekick's starting level to the bottom of its tier range. Those attributes are then moved to appropriate level advancements. This may include adjusting an ability score or the monster's proficiency bonus (which is opaquely and not always uniformly) applied to skills and attacks.

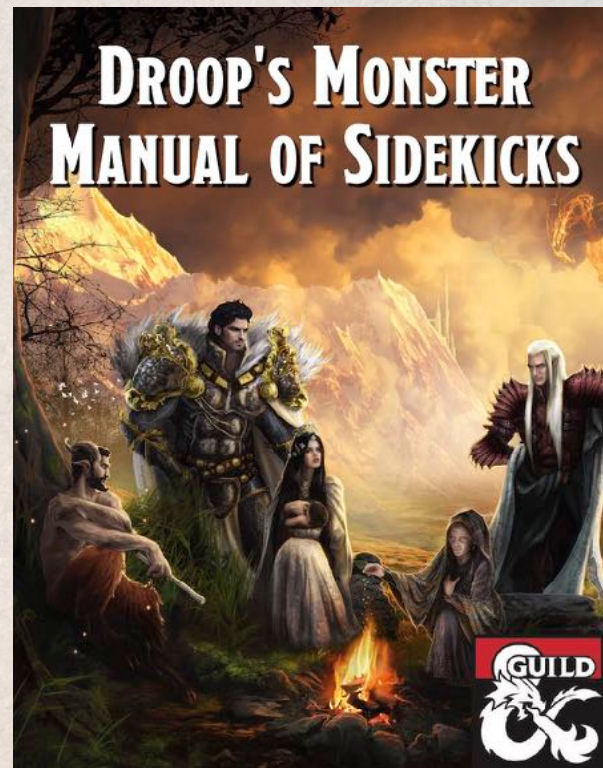
Abilities and Actions. Many monsters have interesting abilities or special actions. These tend to be perfect candidates for the sidekick to gain as it advances in level.

Be flavorful! Look at the monster's descriptive text and investigate historic lore to invent your own abilities. Puns and wordplay are a great way to come up with ideas for abilities to give a bland monster. Player character class abilities, spells, and feats can be good places to find ideas for specific game mechanics.

Personality. A new sidekick you are incorporating into your campaign will likely be NPC monster with a backstory and motivations. Ideals, bonds, and flaws can be of your own invention or chosen from player character backgrounds.

DROOP'S MONSTER MANUAL OF SIDEKICKS

The following four example monster sidekicks are taken from Droop's Monster Manual of Sidekicks, a collection of over fifty monsters turned into playable sidekicks, available on DMsGuild.



<https://www.dmsguild.com/product/297618/Droops-Monster-Manual-of-Sidekicks>

DROOP

Droop was the runt of the litter, and it followed him his entire life.

Personality. "That's cool. You're cool. What do you want me to do? Cool."

Ideal. "If I try hard enough, I'm bound to fit in."

Bond. "Once I find a crew that accepts me, I'll do whatever it takes to stay in their good graces."

Flaw. "Do you have a new best friend yet? I've been looking for someone to push me around."

GOBLIN SIDEKICKS BEYOND 1ST LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
2nd	10 (3d6)	Combat Initiate. The goblin gains proficiency with martial melee weapons, martial ranged weapons, and light armor. If the goblin becomes equipped with better arms or armor, make the appropriate adjustments to the stat block.
3rd	14 (4d6)	Second Strike. When the goblin makes a melee weapon attack, it can use its bonus action to make a second attack with the same weapon at disadvantage.
4th	17 (5d6)	Ability Score Improvement. The goblin's Dexterity score increases to 16 (+3). Useful. The goblin can take the Help action as bonus action.
5th	21 (6d6)	Proficiency Bonus. The goblin's proficiency bonus increases to +3. Medic. The goblin gains proficiency with the healer's kit. When the goblin uses a healer's kit to stabilize a dying creature, that creature also regains 1 hit point.
6th	24 (7d6)	Redirect Attack. When a creature the goblin can see targets it with an attack, the goblin can choose another creature within 5 feet of it. The two swap places, and the chosen creature becomes the target of the attack instead.

GOBLIN SIDEKICK

1st-level Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Armor Class 14 (shield)

Hit Points 7 (2d6)

Speed 30 ft.

Proficiency Bonus +2

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)

Skills Stealth +6

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages Common, Goblin

Nimble Escape. The goblin can take the Disengage or Hide action as a bonus action on each of its turns.

ACTIONS

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4-1) bludgeoning damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6+2) piercing damage.



BULLYWUG SIDEKICK

TORBIT

Torbit made some bad life choices and had to rethink his once-unshakable devotion to his master. Now he's looking for a way to regain his former position within his tribe and is willing to do whatever it takes to get there.



Personality. "If it's worth having, it's worth killing for."

Ideal. "It's a frog-eat-frog world. And that's exactly what I intend to do."

Bond. "I'll work with anyone...as long as it's to my advantage to do so."

Flaw. "I have many flaws; compulsive honesty is not among them."

BULLYWUG SIDEKICKS BEYOND 1ST LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
2nd	15 (3d8+2)	Slippery. The bullywug can use a bonus action to excrete a slimy coating to its skin that confers resistance to attempts to grapple or restrain for 1d4 rounds. Swamp Camouflage. The bullywug has advantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks to attempt to hide in swampy terrain.
3rd	20 (4d8+2)	Thundercroak. The bullywug can produce a painfully loud croaking noise once per day. Each creature within a 15 ft. cube originating with the bullywug must succeed on a Constitution saving throw or be deafened 1 minute.
4th	24 (5d8+2)	Ability Score Improvement. The bullywug's Dexterity score increases to 14 (+2). Produce Toxin. The bullywug can secrete enough toxin once per day to coat a weapon. A creature hit with such a poisoned weapon must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution save or be poisoned for 1 hour.
5th	29 (6d8+2)	Proficiency Bonus. The bullywug's proficiency bonus increases to +3. Amphibian Intimidation. Once per long or short rest, the bullywug can compel up to 20 Tiny or Small amphibians to make a DC 15 Charisma check or obey its commands.
6th	33 (7d8+2)	Swamp Gas. The bullywug can produce a 10 ft. radius cloud of fetid gas that smells like a stagnant swamp. Each creature that begins its turn within the cloud must succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned until the start of its next turn.

BULLYWUG SIDEKICK

1st-level Medium humanoid (bullywug)

Armor Class 15 (hide armor, shield)

Hit Points 11 (2d8+2)

Speed 30 ft.

Proficiency Bonus +2

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	7 (-2)

Skills Stealth +1

Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages Common, Bullywug

Amphibious. The bullywug can breathe air and water.

Speak with Frogs and Toads. The bullywug can communicate simple concepts to frogs and toads when it speaks in Bullywug.

Standing Leap. The bullywug's long jump is up to 20 feet and its high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The bullywug makes two melee attacks: one with its bite and one with its shortsword.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) bludgeoning damage.

Shortsword. *Melee Attack:* +1 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6+1) piercing damage

HARPY SIDEKICKS BEYOND 6TH LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
7th	41 (8d8+10)	Expertise. The harpy's proficiency bonus is doubled for Charisma (Performance) checks.
8th	49 (9d8+13)	Song of Second Chances (1/day). As a reaction, the harpy can choose to make a creature reroll one attack roll, ability check, or saving throw that it dislikes. The second roll must be used.
9th	56 (10d8+16)	Proficiency Bonus. The harpy's proficiency bonus increases to +4.
10th	64 (11d8+19)	Ability Score Improvement. The harpy's Dexterity score increases to 15 (+2). Song of Repose (1/day). The harpy can sing a soothing song to help revitalize its wounded allies during a short rest. If any friendly creatures who can hear its song regain hit points at the end of the short rest by spending one or more Hit Dice, each of those creatures regains an extra 2d8 hit points.
11th	71 (12d8+22)	Song of Dismissal (1/day). The harpy can sing a disquieting song to attempt to repel up to three interlopers that it can see. If the targeted creatures can hear its song, they must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or move away at their speed. Once per turn they can repeat the saving throw; success ends the effect.



HARPY SIDEKICK

SICORD

Sicord has grown bored, sitting on cliffs, year after year, singing her songs to lure the unwary to her dinner table...as the main course.

Personality. "There must be more to life than this. I need to get out more."

Ideal. "I chatted with a bard once, before I ate him. He was interesting. I think I want to learn to do something besides just charm people."

Bond. "Is it shiny? I must have it!"

Flaw. "I'll never tell my sister harpies, but sometimes I just want a salad."

HARPY SIDEKICK

6th level Medium monstrosity

Armor Class 11

Hit Points 38 (7d8+7)

Speed 20 ft., fly 40 ft.

Proficiency Bonus +3

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	13 (+1)	12 (+1)	7 (-2)	10 (+0)	13 (+1)

Skills Performance +4

Senses Passive Perception 10

Languages Common

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The harpy makes two attacks: one with its claws and one with its club.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (2d4+1) slashing damage.

Club. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 3 (1d4+1) bludgeoning damage.

Luring Song. The harpy sings a magical melody. Every humanoid and giant within 300 feet of the harpy that can hear the song must succeed on a DC 11 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed until the song ends. The harpy must take a bonus action on its subsequent turns to continue singing. It can stop singing at any time. The song ends if the harpy is incapacitated.

While charmed by the harpy, a target is incapacitated and ignores the songs of other harpies. If the charmed target is more than 5 feet away from the harpy, the target must move on its turn toward the harpy by the most direct route, trying to get within 5 feet. It doesn't avoid opportunity attacks, but before moving into damaging terrain, such as lava or a pit, and whenever it takes damage from a source other than the harpy, the target can repeat the saving throw. A charmed target can also repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. If the saving throw is successful, the effect ends on it.

REDCAP SIDEKICK

3rd-level Small fey

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 30 (4d6 +16)

Speed 25 ft.

Proficiency Bonus +2

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	13 (+1)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	9 (-1)

Skills Athletics +6, Perception +3

Senses darkvision, 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages Common, Sylvan

Steeped in Slaughter. The redcap always fights to the death, unless magically compelled to do otherwise. The redcap must soak its hat in fresh blood at least once every three days or the redcap vanishes as if it had never been. If the recap is reduced to 0 hit points it does not fall unconscious, but immediately vanishes in the same way.

Iron Boots. While moving, the redcap has disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks.

Outsize Strength. While grappling, the redcap is considered to be Medium. Also, wielding a heavy weapon doesn't impose disadvantage on its attack roll.

ACTIONS

Wicked Sickle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (2d4+3) bludgeoning damage.

REDCAP SIDEKICK

M'DURHOEBO

This charming fellow was born out of your own bloodlust. I guess you should feel grateful it views you as a role model rather than a potential victim?

Personality. "Enough yapping, roll initiative!"

Ideal. "Death comes for us all. I'm death.

I showed up early."

Bond. "I exist only by spilling fresh blood, and I've grown rather fond of existing."

Flaw. "It feels soooo good to get out of these iron boots after a hard days' murdering. But no one must ever find out how ticklish my feet are."

REDCAP SIDEKICKS BEYOND 3RD LEVEL

Level	Hit Points	New Features
4th	17 (5d6)	Ability Score Improvement. The redcap's Strength score increases to 18 (+4). Wreckful Abandon. The redcap makes all attacks at advantage, causing all attack rolls against the redcap to be at advantage until the start of its next turn.
5th	21 (6d6)	Proficiency Bonus. The redcap's proficiency bonus increases to +3. Extra Attack. The redcap can attack twice, instead of once, whenever it takes the Attack action on its turn.
6th	24 (7d6)	Sickle Sweep. When the recap hits with a <i>wicked sickle</i> attack, it may choose a creature within 5 feet of the target and within its reach and make a single <i>wicked sickle</i> attack against that creature as a bonus action.
7th	28 (8d6)	Ironbound Pursuit. As an action, the redcap moves up to its speed to a creature it can see and kicks with its iron boots. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or take 21 (3d10+5) bludgeoning damage and be knocked prone.
8th	31 (9d6)	Ability Score Improvement. The redcap's Strength score increases to 20 (+5). Extra Attack, Again! The redcap can attack 3 times when it takes the Attack action on its turn.

