PROJECT #62

MAKE A DUNGEONS & DRAGONS MINI YOU



To create a Dungeons & Dragons mini you, you will need:

Pencils

Black fine-tipped pens

Notebook paper

Plain white paper (preferably construction paper thickness). *Cardstock paper also works well if you're using a store-bought base, but not with the DIY bottle top base*

Scissors

Ruler/measuring tape

Glue

Recycled bottle tops around 1 inch in diameter (or you can buy plastic standee bases from your local gaming store)

Colored pens/pencils/crayons/markers

Clear packaging tape

(optional) Materials for decorating your mini's base, such as wrapping paper or clippings from newspapers and magazines; little objects from nature, like pebbles, that can be glued onto the base



Hey there, my name is Ahmond. I spend many hours alone working as a music composer, but guess what? It makes me more grateful for the times I get to hang with others, creating characters and playing games like Dungeons & Dragons.

When I create characters, they can be just like me, or completely different. It's like diving into a magical world where I can explore things that make me feel a little nervous. Imagine a world that's like ours but filled with even more magic!

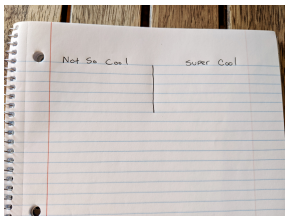
In this project, I'll show you how to turn your fears into strengths by transforming yourself into a powerful D&D character.

By the end of our project, you'll have a miniature standee that you can use to play D&D with your friends, both old and new. But you don't have to play D&D if that's not your thing. Instead, you can carry your mini-character with you, maybe in your OK KIT, as a cool reminder of your strength!

Here is a fun video from NBC that talks about the benefits of playing D&D and how important it is to see ourselves as heroes:

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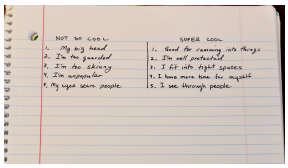


Step 1 of 22

Just like in real life, knowing yourself or your character, including all their strengths and weaknesses, makes playing D&D super fun and exciting!

Set Up Your List: Start by taking a piece of notebook paper and drawing a line right down the middle, creating two columns with space for five lines in each. But if you're in a hurry and can't wait to dive into your adventure, you can just do one or two lines.

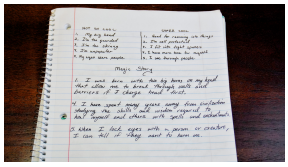
Label Your Columns: At the very top of the left column, write 'Not So Cool,' and on the right side, write 'Super Cool.'



Step 2 of 22

List Your 'Not So Cool' Stuff: In the 'Not So Cool' column, jot down five (or one or two) things about yourself or life that might make you feel not-so-great or a bit scared. But remember, everyone has those moments! It could be things about your body that make you feel unsure, stuff that gives you jitters (like meeting new people), or things that others might tease you about (like a squeaky voice).

Turn Your Weaknesses into Strengths: Now, in the 'Super Cool' column, let's transform those fears and weaknesses into something amazing! For example, if you're feeling anxious about wildfires in your neighborhood, you can write 'Campfires make tasty s'mores' to show how fires can be an enjoyable thing. And that squeaky voice? Well, that's your ticket to hitting all the high notes in your favorite song like a rock star!



Step 3 of 22

Let's transform those secret superpowers into enchanting character stories!

Skip a line and write 'Magical Stories' below your lists. Choose 3 of your favorites (or all of them) from the 'Super Cool' column.

Now we're going to turn each of them into a magical power or story.

Your stories can be short and sweet (just a couple of lines), and they don't all have to be about the same character. Get ready to let your imagination run wild!

Here are a few examples to get your creative juices flowing:

- If you can imagine yourself and your friends having s'mores by the fire, how about being able to breathe fire like a dragon so you never have to bother with matches again?

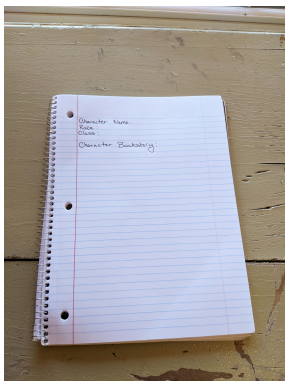
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- And if you can sing super high notes, picture yourself as a magical bard who travels from village to village, using the power of your voice to enchant everyone you meet.



Step 4 of 22

Make a Character Sheet: When you first see a D&D character sheet (see example), it might seem a bit confusing. But don't worry! Right now, we're going to make our own simple character sheet. Later, if you decide to play a game, you can transfer this information to an official D&D character sheet and/or an online profile.



Step 5 of 22

Use a fresh piece of notebook paper to write 'Character Name', 'Species', 'Class', and 'Character Backstory'. You'll want to write them on different lines. You will need to leave the most space for your character's backstory (See Example).



Step 6 of 22

Let's take a few (or all) of those magical stories you wrote and make one character with them.

You can use the lists below to help you get a clearer picture of how your character looks and acts, but remember, you can also create your very own creatures that look and act just the way you want them to!

Here are some ideas to get you started:

Species

- If you like the idea of breathing fire, you might want to be a 'Dragonborn.' Imagine how cool that would be!
- Or, if you're into being short and tough (and good with stone and iron), maybe you'd like to be a 'Dwarf.'
- To find more official D&D species to inspire you, click here

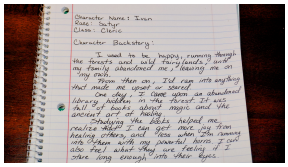
Class

Think about what you'd love to do in your magical adventures!

- If you love music, you could be a 'Bard' who uses tunes to cast magical spells.
- If you want to heal and help others, you might be a 'Cleric' who uses magic for good and serves a higher power.
- If you're all about protecting others up close, a 'Fighter' might be your style.
- To find more official D&D classes, click here

You can mix and match to create your very own unique character. Remember, it's all about having fun and letting your imagination soar!

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Step 7 of 22

Now you can take all the magic stories you created that fit your character and turn them into one story. You will write this in your character backstory section. If you really get on a roll, use more than one page to tell your character's backstory.

I recommend writing the backstory in first-person. Try to describe how they look and sound when they talk. Maybe they don't talk and just grunt. Think about what kind of creature they would be in a fantasy world and what kind of job they would have in it.

In Dungeons and Dragons, 'Species' means what type of creature you are, and 'class' is like your special job or skills. Don't worry, you're the boss of your character, so you can make them as awesome as you want!

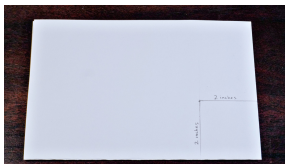


Step 8 of 22

Whenever you're ready, give your character a name.

Names are super important in the world of magic–and in our world too. There are some fairy tale characters like Rumpelstiltskin who prefer their names to remain a secret, or else they will lose their powers.

Maybe you'll decide that only you will know your character's name–and that's OK! When you're feeling a little low or unsure, you can quietly whisper your character's name to yourself or say it in your head. This way, you'll always remember that your hero is shining brightly inside you.



Step 9 of 22

Now that we have our character's story and an idea of how they look, it's time to draw and make a mini cutout of them.

If you don't enjoy drawing, don't worry! You have options. You can print a picture of an inspiring existing character that you found online (Google Drawings is a helpful tool to make sure the size is right), or you can cut an image from a magazine or book.

Grab a plain white piece of paper and fold it in half. I recommend paper as thick as construction paper. Cardstock paper may be too thick (but works well with a store-bought base), and regular paper can be too thin.

On the corner where you folded the paper, use your ruler and pencil to draw a 2-inch horizontal line above the fold. Then, draw a 2-inch vertical line back down to the fold to form a square.



Step 10 of 22

Carefully cut along the lines you drew on your paper. When you're done cutting, your square will be able to unfold into a rectangle.



Step 11 of 22

Let's use a pencil to draw the front of your character. Place their feet by the edge where the fold was made.

Because you have a small space to work with, focus on the basic shape of your character instead of trying to create a detailed drawing. If you'd like more help with

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drawing characters, you can check out Jonathan Hill's Project #36 for guidance.

Try your best to include the unique characteristics from your backstory. For instance, in this drawing of a dragonborn bard, I'm sketching them playing a musical instrument and breathing fire to keep their friends warm during an enchanted evening of music around a campfire after a long day of battling mean orcs.

Remember to leave at least 1/8-inch of space at the bottom and around the edges so that your character's feet remain visible when you attach the base and cut the paper in the following steps.



Step 12 of 22

When you're satisfied with your sketch, use your black pen to carefully trace over it.



Step 13 of 22

Now, let's add colors to make your creation come to life!



Step 14 of 22

While the paper is still folded, carefully cut out your character. Be sure not to cut underneath their feet, and try not to cut too close to your image. Leave some space on the edges, and make sure the fold remains attached beneath your character's feet.

Here's a helpful hint that might save you some trouble later:

Keep the cuts around the bottom (feet area) wide so that you have more room to trim and make adjustments later when you are inserting them into your base.

Once you've finished cutting, unfold the paper.



Step 15 of 22

Now you can flip it around and repeat the same steps to create the back of your character.



Step 16 of 22

This next step might seem a bit tricky.

We want to make our character cutouts rainproof and better at standing tall on their base by adding a layer of shipping tape.

If you're in a hurry and using sturdy cardstock paper with a store-bought base, you can simply glue the front and back together to save time.

Unroll the tape, sticky side up, and place it flat on the table. Make sure it's nice and flat because if it's not, it might create bubbles on your character.

Now, carefully lay your character face down on the tape. Try to position it as close to the middle as you can so that there's enough space to cut the tape around all the edges of your character and still have some tape visibly remaining along the edges.

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Step 17 of 22

Keeping all the edges lined up, gently fold your character with the tape on it, and press down firmly to stick the front and back together.

If you notice any bubbles or spots that aren't sealed properly, you can use the side of a pen to roll them out and make sure the edges are well sealed.



Step 18 of 22

Cut the tape around your character, but be sure to leave a little tape along the edges to keep it sealed.



Step 19 of 22

Now, it's time to build a strong base for your hero to make their stand!

If you don't have a store-bought base, don't worry. You can make your own by recycling the top of a bottle or a small container.

I suggest decorating the base with colors or pictures that your character would love. You can cut these from magazines or newspapers. The image of grass goes perfectly with a dragonborn bard's love for the outdoors and playing music by the fire.

I made sure to cut a strip of paper long enough to wrap around the entire bottle top and then sealed it with tape. You can also use glue.

Here's a fun idea: you can glue pieces of objects from nature onto your base to make it even more unique and special.



Step 20 of 22

Gently pinch the bottom of your character to place them in the base.

They should stand up without any additional help. If not, try trimming the sides of the bottom of your character until it can be comfortably inserted into the base and stand tall.

You can also use tape or glue to attach the bottom of your character to the inside edges of the base, but keep in mind that it might make it a bit trickier to remove them and keep them in your OK KIT if you choose to do that. Detach from the base to fit them both in the Kit.

Another way to do this is to have an adult use a knife to carefully cut two slits, each about 1/8-inch deep, on opposite ends of the top. Then, you can insert the bottom of your character into these slits. Remember to keep the bottom sides wide during the trimming steps to pull off this trick.



Step 21 of 22

Choose Your Own Adventure!

Now that you recognize that you're a hero, you can take on anything that comes your way, whether it's in this world or the world of D&D.

From here, you can simply enjoy building a strong bond with the hero inside of you and turn your 'not-so-cool' story into a 'cool story' every day.

You can also share your creation with the rest of the OK You community.

If you would like to continue your adventures in the world of D&D by building your

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character sheet and finding friends to play with, here are some helpful resources:

- Find official D&D **Character Sheets**
- Hero Forge helps you build custom miniature heroes
- Explore adventures and create characters at D&D Beyond
- Play D&D online for free at Roll20

Step 22 of 22

Want to share your D&D mini you in our gallery? We'd love to see it!

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