

# General Skills

General skills are abilities that characters can use in the campaign. There are many general skills, but no character will have more than a few of them, so a character's choice of skills will help make him more distinctive and more individually useful in some campaign situations. Using general skills is *optional*. If the CK doesn't want to use them in his or her campaign, they won't be used.

## Beginning Skills

All 1st level characters start with two "blank" skills, often called *slots*. (When a skill is chosen, it stops being a slot.) Characters who have an Intelligence of more than 12 start with more than two skill slots. If the character has an Intelligence of 13-15, he gets 1 additional skill slot; if his Intelligence is 16-17, he gets 2 additional skill slots; and if his Intelligence is 18, he gets 3 additional skill slots. Different things determine which skills are chosen to fill the character's slots. The player may choose some or all of the skills to fill his available skill slots. Or the CK may insist that the player select certain skill choices appropriate for the character background the player has chosen. You gain an additional slot for each additional Character Level you achieve (see Improving Skills and Learning More Skills below).

## How Skills Are Used

Each skill is based on one of the character's ability scores (Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, Constitution, and Charisma). Whenever the CK feels a character's selected skill is appropriate to a game situation, he or she will ask the player to make an ability check for the ability the skill based on. *Example:* If the character is riding a horse and the horse is suddenly spooked and begins rearing, the CK will decide that the character's Riding skill is appropriate to check in this situation. The player will roll 1d20 and adds his Character Level and the skill-related ability bonus (Dexterity in this case), and tries to beat a Challenge Class (or sometimes called *target number*) of 12 if his Dexterity is Prime, or 18 if it is a Non-Prime. If the character is 2<sup>nd</sup> Level and his Dexterity is 15, the player would add 3 to the roll (1 for his Dexterity bonus and 2 for his Character Level). The CK may add additional modifiers to the target number, called Challenge Ratings (CR), to determine the final Challenge Class (CC) needed to succeed. The process is identical to rolling for a Class Ability. However, **skills that mimic Class abilities have an automatic CR of +5**. If you do not have the Skill or Class Ability, the base CR is +10 and you are not allowed to add your Character Level. For example, Tracking skill is used by Rangers as a Class Ability, so any non-Ranger attempting to use his Tracking Skill is at a CR of +5, and anyone without the Tracking Skill attempting to Track is at a CR of +10 and not allowed to add their Character Level. Successfully rolling the skill normally allows the character to accomplish the task he is attempting. For instance, if a character is trying to track an animal through the forest and he successfully makes his Tracking skill check, then he is able to follow the tracks of his prey. Standard Challenge Ratings are -5 for Easy, +/-0 for Normal, +5 for Difficult, +10 for Very Difficult, +15 for Extremely Difficult, and +20 or more for Improbable.

## Skills

The Skills list lists a number of skills appropriate to most C&C® game campaigns. The players and the CK may add skills to this list as the CK sees fit. The CK determines which ability score pertains to each new skill.

### Strength Skills

Intimidation

Muscle

Wrestling

### Intelligence Skills

Alchemy

Alternate Magics

Art (choose type)

Artillery

Craft (choose type)

Disguise

Engineering

Fire-Building

Healing

Hunting

Knowledge (choose type)

Labor

Language (choose type)

Lip Reading

Magical Engineering

Mapping / Cartography

Military Tactics

Mimicry

Nature Lore

Navigation

Planar Geography

Profession (choose type)

Science (choose type)

Shipbuilding

Signaling (choose type)

Snares

Survival (choose terrain)

Tracking

Veterinary Healing

### Wisdom Skills

Animal Training (choose type)

Art (choose type)

Bravery

Caving

Ceremony (choose specific immortal]

Danger Sense

Detect Deception

Gambling

Law and Justice (choose culture)

Mysticism

### Dexterity Skills

Acrobatics —

Alertness

Blind Shooting

Cheating

Escape

Mountaineering

Piloting (choose type)

Quick Draw

Riding (choose type)

Stealth (choose terrain)

### Constitution Skills

Endurance

Food Tasting

### Charisma Skills

Acting

Bargaining

Deception

Leadership

Music (choose type)

Persuasion

Singing

Storytelling

## Skills Descriptions

The skills listed in the Skill List are described here and are arranged alphabetically for your convenience. Roll skill rolls against the ability under which these skills were listed in the table.

**Acrobatics:** The character with this skill can perform impressive acrobatic feats, balance on taut ropes and wires, etc. A successful skill roll is required to perform any acrobatic feat; failure may result in the character falling. A successful roll allows a character to reduce the effective height of a fall by 10'. A CK can give an acrobatic character a +2 to save vs. mechanical traps where agility would help—such as tilting floors and pit traps. Many entertainers, thieves, and nimble warriors have this skill. This skill is not the equal of a mystic's acrobatics ability, but the mystic's special ability can be presumed to include this skill; a mystic does not have to purchase the acrobatics skill.

**Acting:** This is the ability to make one's living as a stage actor, but it also imparts the ability to assume a different personality or to show false emotions. Successful use of this skill allows a character to tell convincing lies over a limited period of time.

**Alchemy:** This skill provides the ability to recognize and identify common alchemical substances, potions, and poisons. Success with this skill will allow a character to create an *antidote potion* for one specific type of poison—if the CK says that this is possible in his campaign.

**Alertness:** Successful uses of this skill allow the character to draw a weapon without losing any time, to avoid the effects of surprise, and to wake up at the slightest out-of-place noise.

**Alternate Magics:** This skill gives a character basic familiarity with magics that are not related to standard spellcasting. It includes knowing many magical abilities of well-known Prime Plane and extraplanar monsters and of Immortal beings. The CK defines what types of knowledge this skill provides in his or her campaign.

**Animal Training** (choose type): The character knows how to raise, train, and care for one type of animal. The animal can be taught some simple tricks or simple orders. A character who wants to train two or more different animal types must choose this skill more than once—Horse Training is one skill, Dog Training is another. However, a horse trainer can train any sort of natural horse or pony and a dog trainer can train any breed of dog. Any culture that features a strong bond with some animal type will have many members with the corresponding Animal Training skill.

**Art:** This is the skill of creating art. There are several different types of Art skill (painting, sculpture, woodcarving, mosaic, etc.). The player must specify one sort of art his character practices; a character can take the skill several times and be proficient in several different forms of art. Art skill can be used to improve the reaction of NPCs to the party; if the artist can present an NPC with a portrait or sculpture of that person (and make his Art roll), the artist receives a +2 to reaction. The player can choose for his character's Art skill to be based on Wisdom instead of Intelligence.

**Artillery:** A character must have this skill if he is to command the crew of a piece of artillery (catapult or trebuchet). He does not have to make his skill roll with each shot; merely knowing the skill is enough. The CK can call on him to make his skill roll each time the character or the crew aims at a new target; the skill allows the character to make all pertinent calculations of trajectory, distance, and throw weight. This skill can alternatively allow the character to oversee the building and repair of all varieties of siege equipment. The character cannot know both how to build and how to effectively operate artillery weapons unless he takes the skill twice.

**Bargaining:** A successful skill roll allows a character to get the best deal available for goods, services, or information. It's not usually possible for a character to bargain someone into giving him very much for nothing.

**Blind Shooting:** This skill is the ability to shoot at a target without being able to see it; it is typically used when the character is in darkness or when the target is outside the range of his sight. The character must be able to hear the target so that its position can be evaluated. If the character makes his skill check, he can then fire at the target; he needs an attack roll to hit the target, but the character doesn't suffer the normal darkness penalties.

**Bravery:** With a successful use of this skill, the character can resist the effects of any magical fear. An NPC using this skill successfully can ignore the results of morale checks or of skills such as Intimidation.

**Caving:** This is an ability to always know where one is while exploring underground caves, cavern complexes, rivers, etc. A character with this skill will automatically know the route he has taken to get where he is (if he was conscious all the time). Many dwarves have this skill. The Caving skill can also be used in a maze. Skill checks are necessary when the character has become disoriented. If he is forced to flee for a long stretch, he must make a skill check to keep from being lost. (Characters without this skill automatically become lost in such a situation.)

**Ceremony** (choose specific Immortal): A character with this skill knows how to honor an Immortal through ritual and ceremony; the skill allows a cleric character to perform normal rituals of his clerical order and could even (if the CK allows) permit a character to gain an Immortal's attention (through devout prayer, fasting, sacrifice of possessions, etc.). This skill includes knowing the code of behavior and the rituals pleasing to the Immortal.

**Cheating:** This is the skill of winning at gambling games by cheating—by dealing cards from the bottom of the deck, etc. The cheating character should make his Cheating skill roll; each character he plays with can make one skill roll (Cheating at the normal level, Gambling at a -1 penalty, or a base Intelligence check at a -4 penalty, whichever is best) against the character's cheating roll. If one or more of the other players makes his roll lower than the cheater does, he detects the cheating. This skill is limited to characters of Chaotic alignment.

**Craft** (choose type): The character knows one type of craft; examples include armor-making, bow-making, tattooing, leatherworking, smithing, weapon-making, etc. The character must choose which *one* type of craft the skill pertains to; of course, he can spend more slots and have several types of craft skills. The character can make his living at this profession and, with a successful roll, make expert opinions on subjects pertaining to his skill.

**Danger Sense:** A successful skill roll means that the character can detect an imminent danger. The character will not know the nature or source of the danger. The CK, not the player, makes the skill roll, and he or she should not tell the player that a roll has been made unless the roll is a success (and there is danger present).

**Deceiving:** This is the ability to persuade a listener of the "truth" and sincerity of what the speaker is saying, despite the fact that the skill user is lying through his teeth. Successful use of this skill causes an NPC to believe an untrue statement or to accept a misleading statement as honest and sincere. Failure indicates that the character sounds unconvincing. This skill cannot be used on player characters.

**Detect Deception:** This is the ability to recognize deceptive behavior in an NPC. This does not reveal the truth or falsehood of specific statements, the motivations of the speaker, or the exact nature of the deception. This skill only warns the character to distrust the deceptive NPC. The CK makes the skill roll for the character, informing him of the result. The skill does not work on player characters.

**Disguise:** This is the ability to make a character look like someone else. A successful Disguise check is required for each character or group of characters that the disguised character is trying to fool with his disguise. The target that the disguised character is trying to fool must make a Wisdom roll against the Disguise roll in order to penetrate the disguise.

**Endurance:** This skill gives the character the ability to perform a tiring task for long periods of time. A successful check means that the character is able to run (or perform some demanding task) for an hour without collapsing. The character must make another check each hour he performs the task, with a cumulative penalty of +1 for each extra hour. Once the character has completed his task or fails a skill roll and collapses, he must rest for three times the amount of time he was performing that task.

**Engineering:** This is the skill of planning, designing, and building large constructions such as houses, bridges, dams, and so forth. Unless built under the eye of a trained engineer, a large structure—whether built by manpower and materials or pure magic—will inevitably collapse or suffer some other calamity. Engineering skill can also be used to evaluate constructions the party is passing through or over: what shape they're in, when and by whom they were built, and so on.

**Escape:** The character is often able to get loose when tied or locked up. A successful skill roll means that the character is able to get rid of his ties. Another roll is needed to open a locked door. The CK can apply bonuses and penalties to the check based on the quality of the ropes and knots, the intricacy of the lock, the lack of lockpicking tools, etc.

**Fire-Building:** This is the ability to start a fire without a tinderbox. A character with a tinderbox and this skill is able to start fires automatically (no roll necessary) in ordinary conditions. If the character is trying to build a fire without a tinderbox, he will eventually succeed; he must make a 1d6 roll each round, and on a 1 or 2 he ignites the fire. If the character is trying to build a fire in adverse conditions (during high winds or using wet wood), he must make a skill check with penalties assigned by the CK.

**Food Tasting:** This is the ability to taste food and water to see if they have spoiled. Thus the character can avoid suffering from food poisoning by carefully tasting his food first. This ability will *not* detect poisons added to a dish *unless* the CK determines that the poison has a taste (in which case it may be too late anyway).

**Gambling:** This is the ability to win money in games of skill (competitive card games, for example) and betting. This involves honest games (cheating is covered elsewhere), and a successful check increases the character's chances for winning money at the games.

**Healing:** This is the ability to treat wounds and diagnose illnesses among humans and demihumans. A successful skill roll allows a character to restore 1d3 hit points to a wounded character. (A related skill, Veterinary Healing, allows similar treatment of animals and monsters.) This skill *cannot* be used on a wounded character more than once for the same set of wounds. If the character receives new wounds, Healing skill can be applied against the new wounds. The skill is rolled against a set of wounds, not individually against each injury. (The term "set of wounds" usually refers to all the hit points lost by a character in a single combat situation.) If a healer rolls a natural 20 when using this skill, he accidentally *inflicts* 1d3 points of damage to the patient, and he may not treat that set of wounds again. Successful skill rolls allow the healer to diagnose type of illness. In addition, a roll made by 5 or more will allow the character to determine whether an illness is natural or magically induced.

**Hunting:** This is the ability to locate, stalk, and hunt large and small game with the bow, sling, or spear. Successful use of this skill gives the character a +1 to hit with a bow, sling, or spear against an *unaware target in a peaceful outdoor setting*; the skill is not usable in most combat situations. The character can automatically supply himself with food over a long period of time if he is in a fairly fertile area and has a missile weapon, spear, or javelin. In areas not normally rich in game he must make a skill roll and receive penalties to that roll (penalties determined by the CK). If he is trying to supply more than just himself, he must make a skill roll if he is supplying one other person, and he takes a -1 penalty for each additional person after the first he is trying to supply. He must roll each day, and failure indicates that he has not found enough food to feed everyone that day. A character with the Hunting skill forages automatically in fertile areas (even when on the move) and uses his Hunting skill roll to determine how successful he is during full days spent in search of game.

**Intimidation:** This is the ability to bully nonplayer characters into doing what the player character wants them to do. Success means that NPCs are intimidated into doing what the character wants. *This skill cannot be used against PCs.* NPCs who have this skill used upon them are unlikely to ever become friends with the intimidating player character. Use of this skill means that the character is either implicitly or explicitly threatening the target with violence or other dire consequences if the target doesn't comply. For this reason, Intimidation works best against low-level characters. It does not work at all on player characters or on NPCs of 5th level or higher. The CK can also, at his or her option, decide that it does not work on someone who is obviously in a much stronger position than the character using the skill. For example, a king surrounded by elite guards, even if he himself is a 1st level character, is unlikely to feel threatened.

**Knowledge** (choose type): The character is an expert in one field of study such as the culture or geography of an area, history, legends, theology, etc. A character can usually make his living by teaching his skill or acting as an expert on the subject; with a successful roll, he can make expert commentary on information relating to his skill. The character taking this skill must specify what sort of knowledge he is acquiring. A character can select multiple Knowledge skills, using one for each different field of study.

**Labor:** The character is very accomplished at one type of labor such as bricklaying, farming, mining, stonecutting, etc. The character can make his living with the skill. With a successful roll, he can interpret information in light of his occupation. A character must specify which type of labor he knows, and he can select multiple Labor skills to be proficient in many types of jobs.

**Language** (choose type): See "Rule for Languages," later.

**Law and Justice:** This is the knowledge of the laws and judicial system of one culture or country; characters who wish to be a judge or advocate (lawyer) must select this skill. Each empire or nation has its own codes, so characters who wish to be conversant in different nations' codes should choose this skill for each set of laws they wish to study.

**Leadership:** Successful use of this skill adds +1 to the morale of any NPCs under the character's control. It can also be used to convince other NPCs to follow the character's commands. The CK can decide that any NPC who has a good reason not to follow the leader is automatically successful at resisting this skill. Unlike Intimidation, Leadership does not bully, antagonize, or make enemies of the NPCs it is used upon.

**Lip Reading:** To use this skill, the character must be able to see the lips of the target person or creature and understand the language being spoken. A successful check allows a character to "overhear" the conversation; if the lip reader understands the language being spoken, he can understand the speakers' words. The distance to the target and the available light should be taken into account—the CK should apply skill roll penalties for difficult situations.

**Magical Engineering:** This is the ability to recognize the basic principles of some unfamiliar magical devices. It does not include practical training in design or fabrication of magical artifacts. It does allow the character to recognize most *common* magical items with a successful skill roll. It doesn't allow a character to recognize uncommon magical items or to distinguish trapped or *cursed* items from safe ones.

**Mapping** (Cartography): If a character has this skill, he can understand and make maps even if he cannot read and write. The skill allows the character to comprehend simple maps without a skill roll; the character should make skill rolls to interpret or draft complicated layouts or to map an area by memory. A character does not have to have this skill in order to map a dungeon as the characters explore it. A character who can map but not read obviously cannot understand the words on a map.

**Military Tactics:** This skill allows a character to interpret the movement of enemy forces and to move his own forces better. When using this skill, the player (not the character) first examines the situation and decides what he thinks is right—what he thinks the enemy is doing or how he

should set up his units. The CK, not the player, rolls the character's Military Tactics skill. On a successful roll, the CK will truthfully tell the player whether he has calculated correctly; if he has not calculated correctly but the roll was successful, the CK should offer some advice on how the player should set up his forces. If the roll is a failure, the CK should tell the player his character cannot interpret the enemy troop movements well enough to use them to his advantage. The success of the roll determines bonuses or penalties for the troops during mass combat.

**Mimicry:** This is the ability to mimic animal noises and foreign-language accents. This is a very useful skill in the wilderness especially. When characters use recognition codes or signals that imitate the screech of a hoot owl or a noise from some other animal, this skill allows them to mimic those noises convincingly so that enemy listeners are not automatically tipped off that there are spies in the area.

**Mountaineering:** This does not replace a thief's special climbing ability; it is the skill of mountain-climbing with the use of ropes, pitons, and other climbing gear. A character who has Mountaineering skill can use such gear to climb difficult mountain and cliff faces and can rig lines to enable nonclimbers to tackle those faces as well.

**Muscle:** This skill is experience with heavy lifting and hard labor. The character can direct groups of laborers so that their efforts are the most effective possible. This character understands the use of simple machinery such as wedges, pulleys, and levers. With a successful skill check, the character receives a + 2 bonus on Strength rolls for tasks such as opening doors.

**Music** (choose type): This skill allows a character to play one group of related instruments in a skilled manner. The player chooses the group of instruments that his character knows, and the character can take the skill several times in order to know multiple instrument groups. Groups include stringed instruments, brass, percussion, woodwinds, etc. This skill is often taken in conjunction with the Singing skill.

**Mysticism:** This skill, though similar to Ceremony (above), is taken by nonclerics. This skill allows the character to instinctively know the best course of action to please the Immortals in general. A successful skill roll, for example, means that the character recognizes an idol dedicated to an Immortal and that the characters should give it its due respects.

**Nature Lore:** This skill is the knowledge of common plant and animal life forms of one specific terrain: desert, forest, jungle, mountain/hill, open sea, plains, or arctic. The character can gain several Nature Lore skills by spending one skill slot for each different terrain he learns. This skill gives the character knowledge of such things as edible and poisonous plants, healing herbs, and signs of unnatural danger (such as unusual quiet, absence of normal plant or animal life, atypical animal behavior, etc.). When the character uses this skill in his home territory, he receives a - 2 bonus to the die rolled for the skill check. When he uses it in territory very similar to his home, he receives no bonus. The less it resembles his own home territory, the greater the penalty he will receive, up to a +4.

**Navigation:** By taking directions from the position of the sun and the stars (or of whatever atmospheric phenomena are appropriate in your campaign), the character can always know roughly where he is. Successful skill rolls, with positive or negative modifiers for the character's distance from his home territory and familiarity with his surroundings, will tell the character more precisely where he is.

**Persuasion:** This is the ability to persuade NPCs of your character's honesty and sincerity. This isn't a liar's skill; the speaker must believe the truth of what he says. Successful use of the skill means the listener believes what the speaker tells him. It does not mean that the listener will agree to actions proposed by the speaker. The CK can assign modifiers from + 1 to + 8 to the skill roll if the audience is hostile. This is a good skill for diplomats and negotiators to have.

**Piloting** (choose type): This is the equivalent of the Riding skill but applies to sailing vessels. (It can also apply to large flying vessels such as aerial ships and flying castles, if such things are present in a campaign. The use of magical items such as *flying carpets* and *flying brooms* does not require the Piloting skill.) A character must use a different category of Piloting for each different type of vessel, as defined in the Piloting Skill: Types of Vessels Table. As such, he will need to spend more than one skill to pilot more than one type of vessel.

#### **Piloting Skill: Types of Vessels**

Small Boat: River boat: sailing boat, canoe, ship's lifeboat, raft

Galley: Small galley, large galley, war galley, longship

Water vessels: Large sailing ship, small sailing ship, Troop Transport

Flying vessels: Aerial boat, aerial ship

**Planar Geography:** This skill gives the character a general knowledge of the Prime, inner, outer, Astral, and Ethereal Planes as described by the CK. This skill includes knowledge of techniques of travel among the planes and common inhabitants of known planes.

**Profession:** The character is accomplished at one type of nonlabor profession such as politics, cooking, estate management, horse grooming, scribing (the character must be literate), etc. The character can make his living with his skill, and (with a successful roll) make expert commentary on subjects pertaining to his skill. The player must indicate which specific profession his character knows; a character can buy several different Profession skills.

**Quick Draw:** A successful skill check with this skill allows the character to nock and fire an arrow with a + 2 bonus to individual initiative.

**Riding** (choose type): This skill includes the basic care and feeding of a riding animal and the ability to control it under difficult circumstances. Riding rolls are required if a character is trying to use a weapon from the back of a riding animal; failure means that the mount is moving too much for the character to use the weapon. Each Riding skill allows the character to ride one type of animal; if a character wishes to know how to ride two different types of beasts, he must buy two different Riding skills. Horses constitute one type of animal; giant eagles constitute another. When a character uses his Riding skill on the wrong animal (for example, when a horse rider tries to ride a camel), he suffers a +4 to his Riding rolls. When a character with no Riding skill at all tries to ride an animal, he must make a Dexterity check at a +8 penalty to his die roll. However, a character doesn't have to make the success roll except in difficult situations, such as when the animal is spooked. Otherwise, he can stay on the animal's back without difficulty.

**Science** (choose type): The character is an expert in one branch of scientific study such as astronomy, geology, metallurgy, etc. Characters with this skill can make their living with it, usually as specialists in large cities. The CK should not allow this skill to characters belonging to more primitive cultures, but it is entirely appropriate to characters from highly civilized areas of the world. The player must indicate which branch of science his character has mastered; a character can buy multiple Science skills to know multiple disciplines.

**Shipbuilding:** This is the skill of designing and building ships. It allows a character to supervise the construction of professional-quality ships, whether they are made by muscle or by magic. The Shipbuilding skill will also let characters evaluate the ships they encounter, determine who built them and when, etc.

**Signaling** (choose type): Successful use of this skill allows the character to leave messages that can only be understood by another Signaling specialist of the same culture, trade guild, military force, or "school." For instance, one dwarf character with the Signaling skill could pile rocks into a cluster; it would communicate nothing to most characters, but another dwarf character with Signaling would recognize it as a signal and be able to interpret its meaning. When a character takes a Signaling skill, he must specify the type and culture of signals that he will be studying and he must have the opportunity to learn such signals. Appropriate types of signals include military trumpet signals, naval flag signals, smoke signals, drum signals, etc.

**Singing:** This is the ability to sing in a skilled manner; a character can make his living with this skill and (if he is good enough) can become a famous entertainer or bard.

**Snares:** This is the skill of building traps to capture animals, monsters, and unwanted visitors. A successful skill roll means the trap functions properly. The CK can assign modifiers to the skill roll based on the amount of time the character had to set up the trap, the availability of materials, etc.

**Stealth** (choose terrain): This is similar to the thief's Move Silently ability, with some important differences. The character taking the Stealth skill must choose *one* type of terrain in which the skill works from the following list: city/outdoors, indoors/caves, forest/jungle, plains, desert, arctic, and mountains/hills. The skill only works in that type of terrain. (However, the character could conceivably spend seven slots, one for each type of Stealth skill.) City/Outdoors is used in the streets, in trash strewn alleyways, on rooftops, and in similar urban environments. Indoors/Caves is used in dungeons and catacombs, in caverns and caves, and in most enclosed spaces. The other terrain types are self-explanatory. Humans, demihumans, and humanoids can take the Stealth skill. The character will move very quietly in the terrains for which he has the skill. When he is trying to sneak up on someone or when there is a chance that he will be heard, he must make his skill check. If the CK doesn't want him to know that the CK can make the skill check for him.

**Storytelling:** This is the ability to captivate an audience when telling stories. The character can earn his living as a teller of stories; if he also has Knowledge skills of such things as history, he can be a storyteller of history.

**Survival** (choose terrain): This skill allows the character to easily find food (especially vegetables and fruits), shelter, and water in a single type of terrain, selected from one of the following: desert, forest/jungle, mountain/hill, open sea, plains, arctic. Desert Survival doesn't give the character the ability to survive in the forest; he must also take Forest Survival for that. A character with the Survival skill forages automatically in fertile areas, even when on the move. If he is trying to supply more than just himself, he must make a skill check at a + 1 penalty to his die roll for each additional person that he is trying to supply. He must roll each day, and failure indicates that he has not found enough food for everyone he is trying to supply.

**Tracking:** The character can follow tracks. The CK is free to increase or penalize the chance of success depending on the circumstances (age of the tracks, type of terrain, number of tracks being followed, and so forth).

**Veterinary Healing:** This is the same as Healing (above), but this skill pertains to creatures that are neither humans nor demihumans—in other words, nonhumans, monsters, normal animals, and so forth. A character can take this skill in one of two ways: 1) as a General Veterinary Healing skill, which means that he makes his roll with a + 1 penalty for every type of creature he treats; or 2) as a Specialized Veterinary Healing skill that pertains to one class of creatures (for example, equines). The character with a Specialized Veterinary Healing skill takes no penalty when treating the creatures that are his specialty, but he takes a + 2 penalty with all other types of creatures. (A character could take the skill twice, one General and one Specialized; he would have his listed roll for the creatures that were his specialty and only have a + 1 penalty when treating all other creatures.) A character with Veterinary Healing skill trying to treat a human or demihuman rolls at a + 3 penalty.

**Wrestling:** In wrestling combat, a successful roll will give the character a + 1 to his Overbearing or Pummeling attack roll (see the "Unarmed Combat" rules in the C&C PHB). Higher skill scores give higher bonuses, so a character with two slots of Wrestling (sometimes called *Wrestling +1*) would receive a + 2 bonus, and so on.

## Rule for Languages

With the CK's permission, characters can use skill slots to take additional languages. (Additional languages are an Intelligence-based skill.) For each slot spent on a new language, the character can speak the language (not necessarily very well) and can read it (if he is intelligent enough to read his regular languages). Characters still get all the free languages they're entitled to from their Intelligence and racial abilities. Characters have trouble speaking these additional "skill languages." A character speaking a skill language will automatically understand someone speaking slowly and simply. If the character is listening to someone who is excited or using technical speech, he must make his skill roll to understand the language. Failure means he didn't understand what was said. The character speaking a skill language communicates in the same way. When he's struggling to explain something fast, complicated, or technical or when he's flustered or excited, he must make a skill roll to get the idea across.

## Improving Skills

Characters' skills can be increased to higher scores. Simply use more skill choices to improve skill rolls, and the PC will get a +1 to his skill roll for every skill choice added to that skill. A skill choice can be used to either improve an existing skill by one point or to buy a new skill, not both. *Example:* Alaric has only a Charisma of 12, yet he wants to be a natural leader. Instead of using only one skill choice to purchase the Leadership skill, he chooses to use *three* on that skill. The first choice gives him his Leadership skill; he must roll his Charisma check, for all Leadership checks. His two extra skill choices give him an additional + 2 to his rolls (+ 1 for each skill choice spent). His Leadership checks will now be made at a +2 to his die roll.

## Learning More Skills

Your character can choose to purchase more skills or improve existing ones. All characters get a new skill slot every experience level. The CK can simply assume that your character is meeting with a teacher who can instruct him in the skill, or the CK can introduce an NPC who is the character's teacher. Unlike the situation with weapon mastery, the character never has to roll anything to acquire the skill. If the CK says the skill is available to player characters and if the PC has an empty skill slot and access to a teacher, he can take the skill. Important CK's Note: Intelligent monsters, such as orcs and giants, can also have general skills. The CK may prefer only to give skills to monsters that have distinctive personalities and roles within a campaign.

## Skills and the CK

It's the responsibility of the CK to see to it that players don't abuse these skills and achieve results totally inappropriate to their use in the campaign. It's also the responsibility of the CK to reward characters who use their skills cleverly and in the context of the adventure. The CK decides when a character can try his skill roll, and the CK also decides what sort of effect the skill can have in a situation. The CK shouldn't make the characters roll over and over for the same task, only at critical points in play.

### Positive and Negative Modifiers

When the character is using a skill, the CK may wish to assign positive or negative modifiers to make the character's roll easier or harder. These modifiers are based on circumstances. Circumstances that make a job slightly more difficult warrant a +1 to +5 modifier. Those that make the job substantially more difficult warrant a +6 to +10 modifier. Those that make the job very hard—such as not being able to see,

working on the rolling deck of a ship during a severe storm, and so forth—can warrant penalties of +11 to +15, or even +20. On the other hand, circumstances that make the job easier—such as having all the materials needed, having lots of time, and so forth—warrant positive benefits a: the same scale. The character always has a chance of success, however bad the odds, as long as the CK says it's remotely possible to succeed. A natural roll of 20 on 1d20 is an automatic success, just as a roll of 1 is an automatic failure.

### **Time Use**

When it's important to know, the CK decides how much time each use of a skill represents. The time it takes to look at the stars and make a basic Navigation roll might be about a minute; the time it takes to make a superior spear, both head and shaft, will be a few days; and the time it takes to make a Tracking roll to recognize what sort of creature left the prints before a character may only be a second or two.

### **Taking 10 / 20**

The CK can allow the players to "take 10", that is, instead of rolling the d20, they simply act as if the d20 had rolled a 10. To take 10, if the CK allows it, takes a full round up to a full minute of concentration as the CK determines. And even when you "take 10", there is no guarantee of success as the CK may have assigned a CR higher than is possible to achieve with just taking 10. The same rule applies to taking 20, but in order to take 20, it requires at a minimum of two minutes to an hour as the CK determines of uninterrupted concentration.

### **Using Skills Together**

Often, when the character's skill roll has failed, all the other characters with the same skill will say, "He failed?! Let me make my skill roll!" This isn't a good thing to do. If the CK lets everyone make a skill roll for the same task when someone has failed, one character will eventually succeed; it's therefore pointless to have a skills system since every task will be "automatically" (that is, "eventually") successful. The CK should usually decide that the circumstances that led one character to fail will make all the others fail. For example, a character tracking his prey fails his roll and loses the track. The CK decides that it's because the creature went to the trees, a rainfall obliterated the tracks, or whatever, *there are no tracks to find*. Therefore, the other characters can't make their own Tracking skill rolls here, except to confirm the fact that there are no tracks. However, sometimes it's reasonable for characters to use their skills together to solve a task. For example, when two healers are trying to diagnose a disease, two can be better than one. The characters can choose which of them is the chief problem-solver for this situation (usually the PC with the highest skill), and that PC and the others with the same skill all make their skill rolls. The CK uses the roll of the chief problemsolver and gives him a +1 modifier to his roll for every one of his friends who made the roll and a -1 modifier for every one who failed it. The chief problem-solver can never receive more than a +3 bonus this way, but there is no limit to the penalty he can receive if his allies all roll badly.

### **Using Skills Against Each Other**

Sometimes situations will come up where two skills are in conflict. A character with Deception can try to fast-talk a character with Detect Deception, or two Bargaining characters can haggle. When the CK sees this situation occur, he can have both parties roll their appropriate skills. The character with the lowest successful roll wins the contest. When a tied roll occurs, the CK has to analyze the situation; he may have them reroll for a clear decision or he may decide that the situation is unchanged.