

## 5e to Pathfinder 1e differences

### ACTIONS:

Instead of an action, movement and a bonus action, Pathfinder has six types of actions (standard, move, free, swift, full-round and immediate). On a regular turn, you receive a standard action, a move action, and a swift action, which can be used in any order. There is also a special type of action called the five-foot step.

A standard action is used to do important things like make an attack, cast the average spell (though some spells take longer) or try to do something substantial like pull open a stuck door. A standard action can also be used to do anything that you could do with a move action. This is most commonly used to move your speed (usually 30 or 20 ft) two times in one turn for a total of 60/40 ft.

A move action is generally used to move up to your speed (usually 30 or 20 ft). Other things that can be done with move actions include reloading certain types of weapons, standing up from prone and certain types of buffing abilities like the Slayer's study target. Unlike in 5e, you CANNOT split your movement (move, attack and then move again). You must complete your movement before you can take a standard action, and then you're stuck there until your next turn.

A full-round action costs both your standard and move action. You can still perform free, swift and immediate actions during a full-round action, as well as a five-foot step. The most common type of full-round action is the full attack action, where you make all of the attacks you can. (A standard action only allows one attack, even if you have two weapons. This means that you cannot move a significant distance and still make more than one attack in the same turn.)

A swift action is like a bonus action. You can use one swift action per round. By default, there aren't any swift actions that all characters can use, but certain classes and feats will offer swift actions. Usually they are buffs or behind-the-scenes effects, but it is possible to get swift action attacks and even spells in rare circumstances.

An immediate action is the only action type you can take on another character's turn (though you can combine a free action with an immediate action). An immediate action taken outside of your turn is, effectively, spending your next turn's swift action. As a result, you can only make one immediate action per round (and can't use both it and a swift action).

A free action takes very little time, and includes things like talking, making a Knowledge check to identify a monster, switching from a one-handed to a two-handed grip on your weapon (and back), and activating Barbarian rage. You can do as many free actions in one turn as the GM's patience will allow.

A five-foot step is a special type of movement. It can only be done if you have not and do not move normally in that turn (though other move actions, including getting up from prone, are

permitted). A five-foot step is a single square of movement in any direction, unless you are in difficult terrain. Unlike regular movement, it does not provoke attacks of opportunity. A five-foot step is also the main way you can move and still full attack or do another full-round action.

Pathfinder does not have something called a “reaction,” but it features two similar concepts. Any character armed with a weapon can make an “attack of opportunity” outside of their turn if a foe makes themselves vulnerable (usually by moving away from the attacker or attempting to cast a spell while standing next to them). You can normally make one attack of opportunity per round, but special abilities can give you more. Other “reactions” are covered by immediate actions or by “readying an action,” in which you spend your standard action to declare that you will do something under specific triggering conditions (such as casting a counterspell, or attacking if a foe fails to stand still as ordered).

### NUMBERS:

5e has a design concept called bounded accuracy, which means that attack bonuses and armor classes don’t go up very much, and higher-level monsters are not all that difficult to hit (they just have tons of HP) while lower-level monsters still take a bit of work to put down. Pathfinder does not do that, and AC and (especially) attack modifiers end up much higher. If you focus on a particular skill, that bonus can get *substantially* higher than it can in 5e. Pathfinder is a game that rewards specialization.

Pathfinder does not have a proficiency bonus. Instead, you gain a Base Attack Bonus (BAB) to add to all attack rolls as well as base Saving Throw modifiers from your class, as shown by the chart on your class page. You then add the relevant ability score modifier (Strength/Dexterity/Constitution/Intelligence/Wisdom/ Charisma) and roll your d20.

You get better at skills by using skill points, which you receive a certain number of every level. (Your class gives you between 2 and 8 per level, and you gain your Intelligence modifier’s number of skill points every level as well.) You can place skill points in any skill you want (except Fly, until you gain the ability to fly), but certain skills called Class Skills will give you a one-time +3 bonus the first time you put a skill point into it. (If you put one skill point in a Class Skill and one in a non-class skill, you will get a +1 bonus in the non-class skill and a +4 one in the Class Skill.) Certain skills cannot be used at all unless you have at least one point in them. Whenever you level up and get skill points, you can put as many points as you have available into a skill as long as the total number of points in that skill is not higher than your character level.

Saving throws are Fortitude (Constitution), Reflex (Dexterity) and Will (Wisdom), adding together your base modifier from your class levels and your ability score modifier and then rolling a d20. There really isn’t such a thing as an “Intelligence saving throw” or the like (though occasionally weird things happen from monster abilities, like a Charisma-based Fortitude save).

Pathfinder has effects that function like advantage/disadvantage (causing someone to roll twice and take either the better or worse result), but they don’t use those terms and such effects are

much, much rarer. Pathfinder is much more likely to give +2 or +4 bonuses to rolls for what would get advantage in 5e.

#### FEATS:

Feats are much, much more common in Pathfinder than in 5e, and there are literally thousands more of them. As a counterpoint, ability score increases are much rarer. A Pathfinder character can increase one ability score by +1 at 4<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> levels. (Magic items that increase your ability scores are very common, though, with a headband or belt to increase an ability score by +2 costing 4,000 gp.)

All Pathfinder characters receive a feat at every single odd level. Some can get additional feats through a variety of means. Half-elves receive the Skill Focus feat for free, while a human can pick any feat as a bonus at Level 1 (allowing them to start with two feats). Many classes provide feats in some way or another – Fighters give a free feat every even level, while a Level 1 Swashbuckler gets the Weapon Finesse feat for free and a Monk gets a feat chosen off of a short list at 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> levels.

#### MULTICLASSING:

Multiclassing in Pathfinder is very easy. Whenever you level up, you can pick any class you qualify for and take a level in it. (There are rarely any non-prestige-class requirements beyond alignment, and that is only for a couple of classes.) This gives you all of the features and abilities of a Level 1 character of that class (including HP, skill points, proficiencies, class skills, saving throw bonuses and base attack bonus), in addition to everything you already had. Your abilities in both your classes still function as if you were a single-classed character of that level, while things that refer to your “character level” instead of “class level” add all of your levels together. (Anything referring to Hit Dice is talking about your character level – some monsters have both racial hit dice and class levels, which are added together for that purpose, but no PC will.)

#### WEAPONS AND SPELLS:

There is no weapon that automatically adds Dexterity to damage, though you can acquire that via feats. Melee attacks normally require the feat Weapon Finesse to add Dexterity to attack rolls. Most ranged attacks apply no ability score modifier to the damage, though thrown weapons add Strength to damage (but are still Dexterity to hit) and composite bows add a certain amount of your Strength modifier to the damage. To be a good archer, you’ll need some Strength in addition to your Dexterity!

Spell heightening is generally not a thing with the exception of metamagic feats. To use metamagic, you must take a specific metamagic feat, such as Empowered Spell. You can then add that to any spell you cast, giving it the feat’s effects, but you must spend a higher-than-normal spell slot to cast it.

Cantrips do not scale with level (though their save DC would get slightly better). There is not much of a difference between a Level 1 Wizard casting Ray of Frost and a Level 20 Wizard casting it.

Magic items are generally more common, but less “special.” Magic item attunement isn’t really a thing.

#### HIT POINTS:

Short rests aren’t a thing. “Hit dice” refers to the source of your total HP value, and is a stand-in for “character level”, but hit dice are not rolled to regain HP. (They may be rolled when you level up to determine the number of hit points gained, or you can take the average of the die – 4 for a d6, 5 for a d8, 6 for a d10 and 7 for a d12.) You automatically recover your level’s worth of HP after 8 hours of rest, and that can be doubled if anyone in the party succeeds at a DC 15 Heal check. Magical healing is more important but also easier to get, especially from items.