

Chapter Four

Skills

Athasian characters may develop a wide variety of skills, though some standard skills have changed slightly in order to be better adapted for the Dark Sun

setting. The complete list of skills available to Dark Sun characters is presented on Table 4-1: Skills.

Table 4-1: Skills

Skill	Bbn	Brd	Clr	Drd	Ftr	Gld	Mnk	Psn	Psw	Rgr	Rog	Tmp	Trd	Wld	Wiz	Untrained	Ability
Appraise	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	C	C	cc	cc	Partial	Int
Autohypnosis	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	D	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	No	Wis
Balance	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	C	C	D	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	cc	Yes	Dex ¹
Bargain	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	C	cc	cc	Yes	Cha
Bluff	cc	C	E	cc	cc	cc	cc	D	cc	cc	C	C	C	C	C	Yes	Cha
Climb	C	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	C	D	C	C	C	cc	cc	C	cc	Yes	Str ¹
Concentration	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	C	C	C	cc	cc	C	cc	C	C	Yes	Con
Craft	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	No	Int
Decipher Script	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	C	No	Int
Diplomacy	cc	C	C	cc	cc	cc	C	D	cc	cc	C	C	C	cc	cc	Yes	Cha
Disable Device	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	D	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	No	Int
Disguise	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	D	cc	cc	C	C	C	cc	cc	Yes	Cha
Escape Artist	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	cc	Yes	Dex ¹
Forgery	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	C	C	cc	cc	Yes	Int
Gather Information	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	D	cc	cc	C	C	C	cc	cc	Yes	Cha
Handle Animal	C	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	Partial	Cha
Heal	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	cc	D	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	Yes	Wis
Hide	cc	C	cc	C	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	cc	C	Yes	Dex ¹
Intimidate	C	C	E	cc	C	C	cc	D	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	cc	Yes	Cha
Jump	C	cc	cc	cc	C	C	C	D	cc	C	C	cc	cc	C	cc	Yes	Str ¹
Language	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	C	C	cc	cc	Partial	Int
Listen	C	C	E	C	cc	cc	C	D	cc	C	C	cc	C	C	cc	Yes	Wis
Move Silently	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	Yes	Dex ¹
Open Lock	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	No	Dex
Perform	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	Partial	Cha
Profession	cc	C	C	C	cc	cc	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	C	No	Wis
Psicraft	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	No	Int
Ride	C	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	D	C	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	Yes	Dex
Search	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	C	C	C	cc	cc	Yes	Int
Sense Motive	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	D	cc	cc	C	C	C	C	cc	Yes	Wis
Sleight of Hand	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	No	Dex ¹
Spellcraft	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	No	Int
Spot	cc	C	E	C	cc	cc	C	D	cc	C	C	cc	C	C	cc	Yes	Wis
Survival	C	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	D	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	Yes	Wis
Swim	C	cc	E	C	C	cc	cc	D	C	C	C	cc	cc	C	cc	Partial	Str ²
Tumble	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	cc	No	Dex ¹
Use Magic Device	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	No	Cha
Use Psionic Device	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	D	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	No	Cha
Use Rope	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	Yes	Dex

1 Armor check penalty applies

2 Double armor check penalty applies

D Varies according to discipline (see XpsiHB p.36)

E Varies according to elemental patron (see Chapter 3: Classes)

Knowledge

On Athas, bards are the keepers of ancient secrets, wizards delve in forbidden lore and templars are granted access to all matters of knowledge compiled in the royal libraries.

Knowledge is very important on Athas. In fact, education, reading and writing are severely restricted by the Sorcerer-Kings, and to most, knowledge is hard to come by.

As such, only bards and templars have access to all Knowledge skills. Other classes who usually had access to all knowledge skills have a reduced amount of class knowledge skills, as shown on Table 4-2: Knowledge.

Table 4-2: Knowledge

Knowledge	Bbn	Brd	Clr	Drd	Ftr	Gld	Mnk	Psn	Psw	Rgr	Rog	Tmp	Trd	Wld	Wiz	Untrained	Ability
Arcana	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	No	Int
Architecture and Engineering	cc	C	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	Shp	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	No	Int
Bureaucracy	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	C	cc	cc	No	Int
Elements and Paraelements	cc	C	C	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	No	Int
Geography	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	Nmd	cc	C	cc	C	C	cc	C	No	Int
History	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	No	Int
Local	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	C	C	cc	C	Partial	Int
Nature	cc	C	E	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	C	cc	cc	C	No	Int
Nobility	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	C	C	cc	C	No	Int
Planes	cc	C	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	Nmd	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	C	No	Int
Psionics	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	C	C	cc	cc	C	cc	C	cc	No	Int
Warfare	cc	C	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	cc	C	cc	cc	cc	No	Int

Table 4-3: Skill Synergies

Skill	Gives a +2 bonus on...
Appraise	Bargain checks
Bargain	Appraise checks on common items
Bluff	Bargain checks to sell items
Bluff	Diplomacy checks
Bluff	Disguise checks to act in character
Bluff	Intimidate checks
Bluff	Sleight of Hand checks
Craft	Related Appraise checks
Craft	Related Craft checks
Decipher Script	Use Magic Device checks with scrolls
Diplomacy	Bargain checks
Escape Artist	Use Rope checks on bindings
Handle Animal	Ride checks
Handle Animal	Wild Empathy checks (Class feature)
Jump	Tumble checks
Search	Survival checks to track
Sense Motive	Bargain checks to buy items
Sense Motive	Diplomacy
Spellcraft	Use Magic Device checks with scrolls
Survival	Knowledge(nature) checks
Tumble	Balance checks
Tumble	Jump checks
Use Magic Device	Spellcraft checks to decipher scrolls
Use Rope	Climb checks with ropes
Use Rope	Escape Artist checks with ropes

Table 4-4: Knowledge Synergies

Knowledge	Gives a +2 bonus on...
Arcana	Spellcraft checks with arcane magic
Architecture and Engineering	Search checks for secret doors
Bureaucracy	Secular Authority checks made to countermand powers (class feature)
Elements and Paraelements	Spellcraft checks with divine magic
Geography	Survival checks to keep from getting lost
History	Bardic Secrets checks (class feature)
Local	Gather Information checks in the locality
Nature	Survival checks in natural environments
Nobility	Diplomacy checks with nobles
Planes	Turn or Rebuke Undead checks (class feature)
Psionics	Psicraft checks
Warfare	Sense Motive checks to gain a hunch on a commander's tactics or to understand a secret message transmitted during war

Skill Descriptions

All PHB skills are used, with the exceptions, additions and changes detailed below.

Skill Name

Partial: If this notation is included in the skill name line, you can only make partial use of this skill, as detailed in the Untrained section.

Appraise (Int, Partial)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

Special: If you have 5 or more ranks in Appraise, you gain a +2 synergy bonus on Bargain checks. If you have 5 or more ranks in Bargain, you gain a +2 synergy bonus on Appraise checks made with common items.

Bargain (Cha)

You are good at haggling over the price of an item, convincing traders to give you a discount, or selling your wares for a better price.

Check: Bargain checks are made when attempting to buy or sell an item (or group of items). Bargain checks affect the NPC attitude of the target for buying or selling items. NPCs brought to friendly attitude allows you to increase or reduce the price by 10%, or have the target buy the merchandise at 50% cost if she has no use for it. NPCs brought to helpful attitude allows you to increase or reduce the price by 25%, or have the target buy the merchandise at cost if she has no use for it. If the target has ranks in the bargain skill, she may add them to the DC to determine attitude for the bargain check. A typical bargain check requires at least 1 minute.

Special: Note that all Bargain cost adjustment are made according to the offered price. As such, Bargain checks are always made (or initiated) by the participant who is offered the price, and never by the person who offers the price.

If you have 5 or more ranks in Bargain, you gain a +2 synergy bonus on Appraise checks made with common items. If you have 5 or more ranks in Appraise, you gain a +2 synergy bonus on Bargain checks. If you have 5 or more ranks in Bluff, you gain a +2 synergy bonus on Bargain checks made to sell items. If you have 5 or more ranks in Sense Motive, you gain a +2 synergy bonus on Bargain checks made to buy items. If you have 5 or more ranks in Diplomacy, you gain a +2 synergy bonus on Bargain checks. These bonuses stack.

Elves get a +1 bonus to Bargain because they have a keen wit and a subtle tongue. However, note that relationships between most relationships between elves and other humanoids are considered unfriendly.

Bluff (Cha)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

Check: Add *Somatic Concealment*.

Somatic Concealment: You can make a bluff attempt as part of casting a spell in an attempt to pass the somatic component of your spell as something else. If successful, an observer does not realise that the movements you made are part of the casting of a spell. Note however that you still have to perform the somatic component of your spell and that this check does not grant you the benefits of a Still Spell feat. This Bluff action is part of a standard action spell, but the casting time of a spell is increased to a full round action. This can also be attempted on a full round (or more) action spell, but the casting time of the spell is increased by one full round and observers benefit from a +5 bonus to their Sense Motive checks.

Special: If you have 5 or more ranks in Bluff, you gain a +2 synergy bonus on Bargain checks made to sell items.

Elves get a +1 bonus to Bluff because of their charming demeanor.

Craft (Int, Trained Only)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

Though not exclusive, the list of Craft skills is extended to alchemy, armoringcrafting, armorsmithing, basketweaving, bookbinding, blacksmithing, calligraphy, carpentry, cobbling, fletching, flintknapping, gemcutting, leatherworking, locksmithing, painting, pottery, sculpture, shipmaking, stonemasonry, spellweaving, trapmaking, weaponcrafting, weaponsmithing or weaving.

Check: You can practice your trade and make enough money to survive, earning your check result in bits per week of dedicated work. (Untrained laborers earn an average of 5 bits per week)

To determine time necessary to make an item:

1. Find the base price of the item (as if the item was substitute material). Double this base price if the item is made of metal. Multiply this base price by 100. This value will represent the time factor of the item.

2. Find the DC listed here or have the DM set one.

3. Make a Craft check. If it succeeds, multiply the check result by the DC. Compare the obtained value with the time factor of the item. If the value equals or exceeds the item's time factor, then the item is completed. If the value is below the time factor of the item, then it reflects the progress being made in the crafting of the item and is deducted from the time factor of the item. If the Craft check fails, no progress is made. A Craft check represents a day's work (8 hours).

To determine the cost of making an item:

1. Pay one-third the item's price in raw materials.
2. If you fail a Craft check by 5 or more points, you ruin half the raw materials and you have to pay half the original cost of the raw material to continue crafting.

Item	Craft Skill
Alchemical Item	Alchemy
Armor, shield (metal)	Armorsmithing
Armor, shield (other)	Armorkrafting
Bow, arrow shaft	Fletching
Poison ¹	Alchemy
Trap	Trapmaking
Weapon (head), haft (metal)	Weaponsmithing
Weapon (head) (obsidian, stone)	Flintknapping
Weapon (head), haft (bone or wood)	Weaponcrafting

1: Only characters with the poisonmaking ability may craft poison.

Poisonmaking: A traditional secret of the athasian bards, some characters can use Craft(alchemy) to make poisons. The DC to craft a poison is determined by the following steps:

1. Determine the poison's save DC. It is equal to the base crafting DC of the poison.
2. Determine delivery method.

Poison Delivery Method	Crafting DC
Injury	-5
Inhaled	0
Ingested	0
Contact	+5

3. Determine primary damage.

Poison Damage ¹	Crafting DC
1	+1
1d2	+2
1d3	+3
1d4	+4
1d6	+5
2d4	+6
2d6	+7
3d6	+8
Blindness (1d3 hours)	+6
Blindness (permanent)	+12
Paralysis (2d6 minutes)	+10
Unconsciousness (1d3 hours)	+12

4. Determine secondary damage and onset time, and multiply the damage crafting DC modifier by the onset time multiplier.

Onset Time	Multiplier
1 round	x1
1 minute	x3/4
10 minutes	x2/3
1 hour	x1/2
1 day	x1/2

Unlike most crafts, the cost of raw material for crafting poisons is equal to 1/6th of the poison's price.

Spellweaving: On Athas, wizards learn to use other means to write down their arcane writings, such as special patterns on cloth, symbols or carvings on wood or bone, or even with special knotted ropes. Recording a spell in this fashion has no cost, but has a DC of 15 + the recorded spell's level and requires 2 hours for each level of the spell.

An observer needs to make a Spellcraft or Sense Motive check DC 15 to realise that the pattern is arcane writing. The DC to decipher a spell written down in this fashion is increased to 25 + the spell's level.

Only wizards may use Craft(spellweaving).

Special: The DM may rule that if you have 5 or more ranks in an appropriate Craft skill, you may gain a +2 synergy bonus on another Craft check when crafting a relevant item. (For example, 5 ranks in leatherworking grant you a +2 synergy bonus on Craft(armorkrafting) when crafting a leather armor)

Decipher Script (Int)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

Special: The use of this skill requires the Literacy feat in order to use.

Also, the character gains a +2 synergy bonus to checks made to decipher a message in Draconic, Common or City-State languages if she has 5 ranks in any of these languages. These bonuses stack.

Diplomacy (Cha)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

Special: If you have 5 or more ranks in Diplomacy, you gain a +2 synergy bonus on Bargain checks.

Forgery (Int)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

Special: Note that this skill requires the Literacy feat and an appropriate Language skill check in order to work. The DC of the language test is equivalent to the vocabulary level of the written text.

Gather Information (Cha)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

Check: A check requires that you spend 2d4 bits to buy drinks and make friends. You can choose to spend 2d4 cp instead to offer small bribes as well, granting you a +2 circumstance bonus to your check. You can also choose to spend no money at all, but you receive a -2 circumstance penalty.

Knowledge (Int, Partial)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

- Arcana
- Architecture and engineering
- Bureaucracy
- Elements and paraelements (Elementals)
- Geography
- History
- Local (Select one region. Humanoid and monstrous humanoid)
- Nature (animals, fey, giants, humanoids, monstrous humanoids, plants, vermin)
- Nobility
- Planes (Outsiders, undead)
- Psionics (Psionic beasts)
- Warfare

Knowledge local is actually as subgroup of skills. When you take ranks in Knowledge(local), you must choose the locality of your skill, corresponding to a character region. You may have multiple Knowledge(local) skills, but each skill corresponds to a different character region.

Synergy: If you have 5 ranks or more in Knowledge (Bureaucracy), you gain a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks to countermand Secular Authority.

If you have 5 ranks or more in Knowledge (Elements and paraelements), you gain a +2 bonus on Spellcraft checks made with divine spells.

If you have 5 ranks or more in Knowledge (Bureaucracy), you gain a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks made to countermand Secular Authority.

If you have 5 ranks or more in Knowledge (Planes), you gain a +2 bonus on turn or rebuke checks.

If you have 5 ranks or more in Knowledge (Warfare), you gain a +2 bonus on Sense Motive checks to gain a hunch on a commander's tactics or to understand a secret message transmitted during a war.

Special: Knowledge(local) for your character region is always a class skills for you, no matter what your class is. Also, having 2 ranks in any Knowledge(local) skill grants you access to regional feats from that region, even if it is not your own.

Untrained: Characters with no ranks in any skill may still make Knowledge(local) checks for their character region.

Language (Int, Partial)

As the Craft and Knowledge skills, Language is a group of different skills, each Language skill corresponding to a given language. The list of athasian languages commonly spoken in and around the Tyr Region is as follows:

Language	Typical speakers	Alphabet
Aarakocra ¹	Aarakocras	-
Aquan	Rain and Water clerics	Elemental
Auran	Air and Sun clerics	Elemental
Balican	Balicans	Draconic
Common (Trade Tongue)	Travellers, traders and slaves of the Tyr Region.	Draconic
Draconic (Old Speech)	(normally not spoken) Scriptures, wizards	Draconic
Drajian	Drajians	Drajian
Druidic	Druids, spirits of the land	-
Dwarven	Dwarves	Dwarven
Eldaar	Eldaars	Draconic
Elven	Elves	Elven
Gith	Giths	-
Gulg ²	Gulgs	Draconic
Halfling ¹	Feral and Rhula-thaun halflings	Rhulisti
Ignan	Fire and Magma clerics	Elemental
Kreen	Thri- and Thor-Kreen	Kreen
Kurnish	Kurnish	Draconic
Nibenese	Nibenese	Draconic
Pterran	Pterrans	-
Raamin	Raamins	Draconic
Saragari	Saragari	Saragari
Ssuran	Ssurans	-
Sylvan	Feral halfling hunters	-
Terran	Earth and Silt clerics	Elemental
Tyrian	Tyrians	Draconic
Uriki	Urikites	Uriki

¹ These languages have different dialects for each subrace

² Gulg nobles speak a high dialect which costs 1 rank to learn.

Check: Getting a simple concept (affirmative or negative, stop or go, eat or drink, salutations, etc.) across to a person has a DC of 5, but adding any other concepts which cannot evidently exemplified by signs or movements has a DC of 10. Day-to-day conversations with complete but simple sentences have a DC of 15, while elaborate sentences with complicated vocabulary and grammar have a DC of 20 or more.

You can make a Language check to get your message across to another person or to understand a received message, in either spoken or written form. The target also makes a Language check against the same DC to see if she understands the message. If one of the participants fails her Language check, she can only communicate or understand the concepts which are associated with a lower DC (as detailed before), which can result in a misunderstanding.

A character using a dialect of a language can use this dialect to communicate with those who speak another dialect of the same language, but at a -5 competence penalty.

Also, the Aarakocran, Kreen, Pterran and Ssuran languages confer a -5 competence penalty to members of other races who speak in that language. They may still understand those languages at no penalty.

Finally, the Sylvan language is impossible for non-speakers to understand. You cannot make untrained language checks in this language. Also, untrained

listeners who do not see the speaker must make a Sense Motive check DC 15 to realise that it is a language, and not simply animal noises.

Special: A character who is trained in a Language (at least one rank) may always take 10 on those checks when not distracted or otherwise stressed.

Characters with 5 ranks or more in Language(draconic) or in any language derived from the draconic language (any City-State and common) are granted a +2 synergy bonus when making a Language or Decipher Script check in any of these languages. These bonuses stack.

Also, characters need to have the appropriate Literacy feat in order to be able to read or write a message. Note that a character can write in any language she knows using any alphabet, though using unnatural combination results in a -2 circumstance penalty to checks made to write or read the message.

Characters who have the literacy feat but do not know a given alphabet may choose to buy 1 skill rank in the appropriate language skill for that purpose. (This skill rank grants no bonus to the language skill itself)

Finally, you receive a +8 racial bonus on any native language you possess, and are considered trained in those languages.

Untrained: Characters with no ranks in a Language skill can make untrained skill checks, but only to communicate or understand basic concepts with a successful check against DC 10.

Perform (Cha)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

Check: Money made by Perform checks are in cp instead of gp, in bits instead of sp, and in nothing instead of cp (which means a DC 10 check does not grant any money to a performer).

Special: Note that a wizard casting in public places to entertain the masses will not provide the same entertainment described in the *PHB*.

Profession (Wis)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

Athasian professions might be different from the standard D&D professions, though the standard list can be used as well, as it is not exclusive.

Check: As the Craft skill, money earned with a Profession check equal your check result in bits for each week of dedicated work.

Also, each time the situation warrants it, you may make a Profession check against a DC of 15 in order to gain a +2 synergy bonus to any skills related to your profession for as long as you perform that task. For example, a character with Profession(guard) may make a Profession check when guarding a campsite. If

successful, the character gains a +2 synergy bonus on all Listen and Spot checks made during her watch.

You can take 10 on Profession checks when not pressed or otherwise stressed.

Special: Untrained laborers earn an average of 5 bits per week.

Survival (Wis)

As *PHB*, except as follows:

Check: The different terrains of Athas do not allow characters to survive as easily in the wilderness. As such, the terrain influences the character's ability to forage and hunt. Note that foraging is impossible on the Obsidian Plain or the Silt Sea.

Hunting: Survival can be used by hunters to find prey. As the wildlife of Athas is considerably more dangerous than most other D&D setting, hunting is never a standard part of foraging. Instead, the character can make a hunting check against the DC set by the terrain. A success means that she has an encounter with one or more creatures of animal type, determined by the wilderness encounter table of the appropriate terrain type. A hunting check requires up to 4 hours, or 1d4 hours when successful. You may hunt while traveling, but your overland movement is halved during that time.

The DCs for foraging (getting along in the wild) and for hunting are determined by terrain type.

Terrain	DC	Foraging Supplies
Forest, mud flat, savanna, swamp, verdant belt	10	1 person/+2 to DC
Mountain, scrub plain	15	1 person/+3 to DC
Boulder field, rocky badland	20	1 person/+4 to DC
Salt flat, sandy waste, stony barren	25	1 person/+5 to DC
Obsidian plain, silt sea	-	-

Retry: A hunting check cannot be retried for a given 4 hours period if failed, but the skill can be used any number of times each day, no matter if the checks are successful or not.

Special: A character with the Track feat receives a +2 competence bonus to Survival checks for hunting. Additionally, the character can make a tracking check to be informed of the kind of creature she is hunting before the encounter actually takes place. If successful, she can choose not to hunt a particular prey.

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