

Tamed Companions



TAMED COMPANIONS

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TAMED COMPANIONS

Adventurers frequently encounter creatures they may wish to tame for one reason or another. If the adventurer is successful, the creature becomes a companion, and with appropriate training, they can begin developing companion levels.

Taming creatures is no mean feat. It's not quick or easy, nor is it something that will be successful for every creature. In fact, many creatures are impossible to tame, and adventurers will need alternative means if they wish to ally with them.

WHAT CAN BE TAMED?

Not everything can be tamed. At a minimum, a creature must have the following traits to be considered tamable:

- It must have an intelligence score of 6 or lower and cannot be a humanoid, celestial, or fiend.
- It cannot already be another person's companion or have strong, pre-existing loyalties to someone else.
- It cannot be predisposed to extreme aggression and must be capable of recognizing friends from foes. For example, a black pudding could never become a companion because it can't know who its allies are.
- It cannot have a chaotic evil or neutral evil alignment. Most creatures that can become companions are unaligned.
- The creature must have a CR no greater than half the level of the party, with a maximum of 9.

TAMING A CREATURE

CREATURES AMENABLE TO TAMING

Some creatures are more amenable to taming than others. Creatures who are territorial or who have been wounded are typically more challenging to tame, while those who don't aggressively defend their territory and have been treated kindly are easier. Similarly, lawfully inclined creatures will be easier to tame, while chaotically inclined creatures will be extremely difficult to tame. *Animal friendship* and similar spells or class features can make it even easier until the spell's effects wear off.

Taming a creature begins with finding one who may be amenable to taming. This process involves a skill challenge, which determines how difficult it will be to ultimately tame the creature. After the characters complete the skill challenge, the creature may be more or less willing to be around the characters, but it is never loyal enough to put itself in harm's way on their behalf until it is fully tamed.

THE SKILL CHALLENGE

When a character decides to attempt taming a creature, begin a skill challenge (detailed rules and examples can be found in *Lair Magazine #18, June 2022*). One or more additional characters can participate in the skill challenge,

but the character who intends to tame the creature must participate and succeed on at least one check. If the target creature has been engaged in combat, wounded, or is naturally territorial, characters have disadvantage on all checks in the challenge. Once the challenge begins:

- The base DC for these types of skill challenges is 15 + the creature's CR, rounded down.
- Each participating character should roll initiative or otherwise determine in which order they will attempt their checks.
- Typically, these challenges will require 9 successes before 3 failures.
 - Requiring fewer successes may be appropriate for naturally tamable creatures, such as dogs.
 - Requiring more successes may be appropriate for fiercely independent creatures or those exceedingly difficult to tame, such as a white dragon wyrmling.
- The participating characters will proceed in turn order, describing what they are doing to attempt to make the creature more tamable. Each action should correspond to a skill, but no skill may be used twice by the same character or twice in a single round.
- Characters continue making skill attempts until they reach either the required number of successes or 3 failures.

SKILL CHALLENGE OUTCOMES

0 Failures. The start of what may be a long-lasting friendship blossoms. Though the creature is not yet tamed, it is comfortable around the characters and is willing to stay around them. It's now possible to use downtime to attempt to fully tame the creature.

1 Failure. Not all friendships start off easy. There are often hiccups along the way, though they can often be worked past with diligent effort and time. In this case, the creature is willing to stay around the characters, but it still keeps its guard up. Downtime can be used to tame the creature, but the DC of checks during the downtime increases by 1.

2 Failures. Being friendly is sometimes a stretch. Even though people and other creatures might acknowledge some good points to be had by sticking around each other, they still only barely tolerate each other's presence. While the creature will stay near the characters, it only does so with extreme hesitation and reservation. A character may still attempt to use downtime to tame the creature, but the DCs of checks during the downtime are increased by 1, and an additional 100 gp per week is required to attempt the taming.

3 Failures. Sometimes, things just don't work out. Loyalty, in this case, is entirely transactional; if a day goes by without food or an injury occurs, it may not be worthwhile staying. The creature isn't yet running from the characters, but it isn't enjoying being around them. A character may attempt taming the creature with downtime, but the DC of checks during the downtime is increased by 1, an additional 100 gp per week is required to attempt the taming, and the character has disadvantage on all checks during that downtime.

TRYING AGAIN

Depending on how successful or unsuccessful the characters are with making a creature amenable to taming, they may wish to become better friends with the creature before attempting the taming. Regardless of the outcome of the previous skill challenge, characters must wait at least one week before attempting the challenge again. When they do repeat the challenge, consider making some or all the following modifications to the challenge, depending on how they treated the creature:

- The characters have advantage on one check per round.
- The DC is lowered by 1 for every attempt that has been made.
- The number of required successes is lowered.

TAMING AS DOWNTIME

Once a creature has become amenable to taming, the next step is to start the challenging road toward taming the creature. Even for the most accessible creatures, this is a long process best done as a downtime activity. It may even require multiple stretches of downtime for more difficult creatures to be successfully tamed.

Resources. Taming a creature requires a number of weeks equal to 2x the creature's CR (minimum 1), which can be done over multiple downtimes if desired. It also requires a 100 gp per week investment. Additionally, characters may invest gold equal to 100x the creature's CR to gain a +1 bonus to their checks while resolving the activity.

Resolution. To conduct a week of taming, the character will need to make 3 dice rolls based on a taming plan the character creates. The plan must include the following elements:

- A research period to understand the creature better. This should be paired with an appropriate skill, such as Intelligence (Arcana) for magical creatures or Wisdom (Animal Handling) for beasts.
- A period of time spent getting the creature to be comfortable around the tamer. Using an appropriate check based on how the character wishes to approach this.
- Finally, the character must spend some time teaching the creature to follow commands effectively. Appropriate skills at this stage include Wisdom (Animal Handling) or Charisma (Persuasion), though others can be substituted.
- This may be a situation to use an alternative or non-standard check, such as Charisma (Animal Handling), as they may better embody what the character is trying to accomplish.

Once the plan has been established, consult the creature taming DCs chart below to determine the appropriate DC for the taming. As always, apply any appropriate modifications, such as increasing the DC based on the previous skill challenge or due to the creature's particular nature. The Taming the Creature chart below lists the potential outcomes of each week spent taming.



CREATURE TAMING DCs

Creature CR	Suggested DC
0-4	DC = 10 + Creature's Challenge Rating (Rounded Up) + Creature's Intelligence Score
5-7	DC = 13 + Creature's Challenge Rating + Creature's Intelligence Score
8-9	DC = 15 + Creature's Challenge Rating + Creature's Intelligence Score

GM Note. This results in a DC range of 11-20 for CR 0-4 creatures, 19-26 for CR 5-7 creatures, and 23-30 for CR 8-9 creatures. These ranges are designed to allow tier 1 characters a moderate to difficult chance to tame a CR 0-4 creature, a tier 2 character a moderate to difficult chance to tame a CR 5-7 creature, and tier 3 characters a moderate to difficult chance to tame a CR 8-10 creature.

TAMING THE CREATURE

Result	Outcome
0 Successes	The week of taming was a failure. No meaningful progress was made; this week of taming must be repeated.
1 Success	The taming was largely unsuccessful, but you think you made some headway. This week of taming must be repeated, but you have advantage on checks made while repeating this week.
2 Successes	Significant progress was made. This week of taming was successful, allowing the creature to advance to the next week of taming. If this was the creature's final week of taming, it now gains its first companion level.
3 Successes	This week was a resounding success, with the beginnings of a deep bond being formed. This week counts as two successful weeks of training, allowing the creature to advance significantly further than it otherwise would have. If the creature had 2 or fewer weeks of taming remaining, it gains its first companion level.

COMPLICATIONS

Whenever a character fails all three checks in a week spent taming a creature, roll on this table for a complication that arises.

d6	Complication
1	The creature becomes agitated due to the taming attempts.
2	A rival adventuring party tries kidnapping the creature to tame themselves.
3	The local guard hears that a dangerous, wild creature is being kept within the city.
4	A nearby lord wishes to obtain the creature for themselves. If money or coercion doesn't work, they're willing to employ other means.
5	The creature accidentally kills a local commoner.
6	The creature escapes captivity and flees to a nearby wilderness, though it is easily tracked.

GM Note. The extremely high DC of particular creatures can make getting enough successes to advance a week of taming extremely difficult, potentially extending the time required to tame the creature significantly. This is by design, as the most powerful creatures are typically the most independent and should be correspondingly difficult to tame.



CREATING AND LEVELING A TAMED COMPANION

Once a creature has been tamed, it gains its first companion level. The tamer can select from the following three companion classes as they see fit: combat companion, mounted companion, or social companion. At the game master's discretion, a tamed companion may be able to gain levels simultaneously as the characters, or it may require a downtime activity to gain a level (see Leveling a Tamed Companion as Downtime below).

When a tamed companion gains a level, it gains 1 additional hit die (as indicated on its stat block) plus hit points equal to the creature's Constitution modifier. It also gains any features granted to it by its companion class. Tamed companions have the following additional rules when leveling:

- A tamed companion can have a maximum companion level equal to 20 minus twice its CR. For example, a CR 6 creature can have a maximum companion level of 8, while a CR 0 creature can reach its 20th companion level.
- The level of the tamer likewise limits the level of their companion. A tamed creature's companion level plus two times its CR can never exceed its tamer's current level. For example, a CR 2 creature tamed by a sixth level character, could have a maximum companion level of 2.
- A tamed companion typically starts with a companion level of 1, regardless of when it was tamed. At the game master's discretion, low CR creatures may start with a higher companion level or advance in level more quickly to catch up to the party's level, but it can never exceed its current level cap.

A tiny companion may choose to use a bonus action to conceal itself on its master. This can be in a pocket, backpack, inside armor, or anywhere else the game master determines is appropriate. While concealed, the companion is blinded and restrained but is considered to be invisible to anyone except its master. The companion may choose to end its concealment using a bonus action.

LEVELING A TAMED COMPANION AS DOWNTIME

Leveling a tamed companion is often an ordeal unto itself and is rarely straightforward. While it might be an easy matter to find a tutor for a human warrior or elven wizard, rarely can one find a tutor or trainer for their giant constrictor snake companion. In this case, it typically falls to the tamer to create a course of training for their companion to gain the new skills it needs.

Resources. Leveling up a companion requires one workweek and gold pieces 100 times the sum of the creature's CR and target companion level. (A CR 0 creature obtaining companion level 5 costs 500 gp, and a CR 7 creature obtaining companion level 3 costs 1000 gp.)

Resolution. Training is more flexible than taming, as there are many ways in which a creature can be given the

training it needs to level up. It will require three rolls of the tamer's choice, but the tamer should justify each skill with an action behind it. The base DC of the checks should be 10 + the creature's CR + the target level. Depending on how reasonable the course of action is, the DC may be raised but should never go below the base DC. Reasonable courses of action may include using Charisma (Persuasion) to find someone to teach the companion, using Intelligence (Arcana) to help the companion identify the best way to enhance its ability to cast spells, or using Wisdom (Animal Handling) to help deepen the bond with the companion. Consult the Training Results table to determine the success of the training.

TRAINING RESULTS

Result	Outcome
0 Successes	Unfortunately, this week of training was beyond the current capabilities of the creature and its tamer, and no new level was attained.
1 Success	This week was extremely challenging, and the creature was not able to gain another companion level. However, a lot was still learned, and the character has advantage on all checks during their next level-up attempt.
2 Successes	The creature was able to complete its week of training, though it wasn't without its hurdles to overcome. The creature is able to gain one companion level.
3 Successes	The training was extraordinarily successful, with the companion learning far more than was expected. If the creature is not at its current level cap, it may level up twice at the game master's discretion. Otherwise, the character is refunded half the gold spent during this downtime.

TRAINING COMPLICATIONS

Sometimes, training doesn't go well, and additional obstacles and challenges arise. Whenever the workweek ends with 1 or fewer successes, roll on the complications table.

d4	Complication
1	A rival attempts to poison the companion during the training to hold back the party.
2	A noteworthy figure hears of the companion and its training and wishes to employ it.
3	A rival adventuring party tries to kidnap the companion, trying to take its power for their own.
4	The training was too intense for the companion, causing it to gain 2 levels of exhaustion at the end of the training period.



COMPANION CLASSES

COMBAT COMPANION

With two daggers drawn, the ape clad in fitted chainmail stands back-to-back with its elven master. Like a tornado of fur and fury, the war badger lunges forward, striking its enemy to the ground. A wolf stands next to its lifelong friend; their mutual scars telling the story of their many battles.

When properly trained, beasts and other animals make ferocious warriors in their own right. With a bond that runs deeper than mere flesh, the beast and its master make for a single fighting unit that is far greater than the sum of its parts; few foes can stand before the might of allies bound by battle for life.

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features
1	+2	Bonus Proficiencies, Creature of War
2	+2	Second Wind (1 use)
3	+2	Armored Ally
4	+2	Ability Score Improvement
5	+3	-
6	+3	Extra Attack (1 extra)
7	+3	Keen Awareness
8	+3	Ability Score Improvement
9	+4	-
10	+4	Action Surge (1 use)
11	+4	Ability Score Improvement
12	+4	Second Wind (2 uses)
13	+5	-
14	+5	Ability Score Improvement
15	+5	Extra Attack (2 extra)
16	+5	Creature of War Improvement
17	+6	Ability Score Improvement
18	+6	-
19	+6	Ability Score Improvement
20	+6	Action Surge (2 uses)

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

1st-level Combat Companion feature

The companion gains proficiency in Strength saving throws if it doesn't already have it.

Additionally, the companion gains proficiency in Athletics and Intimidation.

CREATURE OF WAR

1st-level Combat Companion feature

The companion gains proficiency with simple and martial weapons provided it has the ability to wield them. A companion that does not have hands, for example, cannot fire a crossbow but could potentially grasp a sword or dagger in their jaws to wield that. A companion cannot use a weapon attack as part of its multiattack, unless such a use is part of its multiattack feature.

The companion also selects one fighting style from the options available to the fighter class. It cannot select a fighting style that it is incapable of using.

At 16th level, the companion selects one additional fighting style from the options available to the fighter class. It cannot choose a fighting style it is incapable of using.

SECOND WIND

2nd-level Combat Companion feature

The companion has stamina that goes beyond its untrained counterparts. On its turn, it can use a bonus action to regain hit points equal to 1d10 + its combat companion level. Once it uses this feature, it must finish a short or long rest before it can use it again.

The companion can use this feature twice between rests, starting at 12th level.

ARMORED ALLY

3rd-level Combat Companion feature

The companion gains proficiency with all armor and shields. These typically need to be specially manufactured, as few blacksmiths carry armors designed for non-humanoid creatures.

ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

4th-level Combat Companion feature

At 4th level and again at 8th, 11th, 14th, 17th, and 19th level, the companion increases one ability score of your choice by 2, or the companion increases two ability scores of your choice by 1. The companion can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature, nor is it able to select a feat in place of improving its ability scores.

EXTRA ATTACK

6th-level Combat Companion feature

The companion can attack twice, instead of once, whenever it takes the attack action on its turn.

The number of attacks increases to three when the companion reaches 15th level.

If the companion has the multiattack action, it must choose whether it replaces the multiattack or forgoes this feature.

KEEN AWARENESS

7th-level Combat Companion feature

The companion gains proficiency with Perception if it does not already have it and has advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks used to locate a hostile creature. Additionally, the companion cannot be surprised while it is conscious.

ACTION SURGE

10th-level Combat Companion feature

Starting at 10th level, the companion can push itself beyond normal limits for a moment. On its turn, it can take one additional action on top of its regular action and a possible bonus action.

Once it uses this feature, it must finish a long rest before it can use it again. Starting at 20th level, it can use this feature twice before a rest, but only once on the same turn.

MOUNT COMPANION

A warhorse draped in leather bearing the colors of the lord of the land stands bearing its rider at the front of a battle line. As the rider gives an illustrious and awe-inspiring speech to the terrified men standing before him, the warhorse rears and whinnies, prepared to charge the enemy!

Even an untrained mount can provide a rider with immense benefits in battle; its greater speed and strength are often decisive factors. However, with proper training, a mount can carry its rider to victory against odds far worse than its rider could face alone. With that training, the rider flits across the battlefield far faster than they could muster themselves, and their enemies are knocked to the ground by the powerful charge of the unstoppable beast upon which they ride.



Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features
1	+2	Bonus Proficiencies, Mounted Charge
2	+2	Trample (1 use)
3	+2	Armored Mount
4	+2	Ability Score Improvement
5	+3	-
6	+3	Mounted Speed (15 ft.)
7	+3	Prepared for Battle
8	+3	Ability Score Improvement
9	+4	-
10	+4	Trample (2 uses)
11	+4	Powerful Grapple
12	+4	Ability Score Improvement
13	+5	-
14	+5	Mounted Charge Improvement
15	+5	Trample (3 uses)
16	+5	Ability Score Improvement
17	+6	-
18	+6	Ability Score Improvement
19	+6	Mounted Speed (30 ft.)
20	+6	Powerful Grapple Improvement

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

1st-level Mounted Companion feature

The companion gains proficiency with its choice of Dexterity or Constitution saving throws.

Additionally, the companion gains proficiency with the Athletics skill and may add double its proficiency bonus to any checks made with that skill.

MOUNTED CHARGE

1st-level Mounted Companion feature

The companion is able to make an effective charge at the beginning of combat. On the first round of combat, provided neither it nor its rider is surprised, it may take the Dash action as a bonus action. When it does so, it does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Starting at 14th level, the companion also provides half cover to its rider until the end of its next turn when it uses this feature.

TRAMPLE

2nd-level Mounted Companion feature

When the companion takes the dash action and moves in a straight line, it may make a shove attack against any creature of its size or smaller in its path. If it succeeds on the shove, the creature is knocked prone, and the companion treats the space controlled by hostile creatures as normal terrain. If it fails, the companion's movement speed drops to 0 until the start of its next turn. Once it uses this feature, it must finish a short or long rest before it can use it again.

At 10th and 15th level, the companion gains one additional use of this feature.

ARMORED MOUNT

3rd-level Mounted Companion feature

The companion gains proficiency with light and medium armor. This armor typically needs to be custom-made, as armor suited for the movement of a mount is not typically stocked by blacksmiths.

ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

4th-level Mounted Companion feature

At 4th level and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 18th level, the companion increases one ability score of your choice by 2, or the companion increases two ability scores of your choice by 1. The companion can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature, nor is it able to select a feat in place of improving its ability scores.

MOUNTED SPEED

6th-level Mounted Companion feature

The companion's movement speed increases by 15 ft. At 19th-level, this benefit increases to 30 ft.

PREPARED FOR BATTLE

7th-level Mounted Companion feature

The companion has advantage on initiative rolls.

POWERFUL GRAPPLE

11th-level Mounted Companion feature

If the companion's rider has a creature grappled, the companion can take over the grapple as a bonus action. The companion does not suffer movement penalties while grappling a creature 1 size smaller than itself. At 20th level, the companion no longer suffers movement penalties while grappling a creature equal in size to itself.

SOCIAL COMPANION

A squirrel perks up on the shoulders of a dashing gentleman; as the man speaks, the squirrel twitches its whiskers in the most enchanting fashion. Suddenly, the gentleman's speech turns eloquent, its charm utterly bewitching as he chooses just the right words at just the right moment. If one didn't know any better, they would say the squirrel was reading into the souls of the audience, telling the man exactly what to say next.

Many people have pets. They're among the most common reasons people live with animals, next to using them for labor. However, only a select few can be called social companions. Those that are capable of attaining the skills and traits of such a beast are highly valued, as their potential to sway even the coldest of hearts is rivaled only by the masters who can train them.

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features
1	+2	Bonus Proficiencies, Social Ally
2	+2	Tamed Telepathy
3	+2	Social Caster
4	+2	Ability Score Improvement
5	+3	-
6	+3	Offensive Telepathy
7	+3	Social Casting Improvement
8	+3	Ability Score Improvement
9	+4	-
10	+4	Ability Score Improvement
11	+4	Social Expert
12	+4	Ability Score Improvement
13	+5	-
14	+5	Social Ally Improvement
15	+5	Ability Score Improvement
16	+5	Social Casting Improvement
17	+6	-
18	+6	Ability Score Improvement
19	+6	Social Ally Improvement
20	+6	Social Master

BONUS PROFICIENCIES

1st-level Social Companion feature

The companion gains proficiency with Charisma saving throws and the Performance skill.

SOCIAL ALLY

1st-level Social Companion feature

The companion selects one of deception, intimidation, performance, or persuasion. When its tamer attempts to use the selected skill, the companion may take a special help action to add half its performance modifier rounded down to the roll and the normal benefits provided by the help action. It may use this feature a number of times equal to its proficiency bonus per long rest.

At 14th level, the companion may select one additional skill to use this feature with. At 19th level, the companion can use this feature with all charisma-based skills.

TAMED TELEPATHY

2nd-level Social Companion feature

The companion can communicate telepathically with its tamer. This telepathy cannot be intercepted or heard by magic. Owing to the unique nature of their bond, the companion and its tamer can communicate in this way even while talking or taking other actions.

SOCIAL CASTER

3rd-level Social Companion feature

The companion selects two of the following spells to learn: *guidance*, *mage hand*, *minor illusion*, or *thaumaturgy*. There are no limits on the number of times it may cast the chosen spells.

Beginning at 7th level, it chooses either *charm person* or *silent image*. It can cast its chosen spell up to three times per long rest.

Beginning at 16th level, it also gains the ability to cast *detect thoughts* once per long rest.

It doesn't require material or verbal components to cast any of its spells. Charisma is its spellcasting ability for all its spells.

ABILITY SCORE IMPROVEMENT

4th-level Social Companion feature

At 4th level and again at 8th, 10th, 12th, 15th, and 18th level, the companion increases one ability score of your choice by 2, or the companion increases two ability scores of your choice by 1. The companion can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature, nor is it able to select a feat in place of improving its ability scores.

OFFENSIVE TELEPATHY

6th-level Social Companion feature

The companion can use an action to cause its telepathy to cause a limited invasion of another creature's mind. When it does so, its tamer may use this link to attempt a Charisma (Intimidation) check contested against the target's Wisdom (Insight). If the intimidation is successful, the target has disadvantage on its next attack roll, saving throw, or ability check. This feature cannot benefit from the social ally feature and can only be used a number of times equal to the companion's proficiency bonus per long rest.

SOCIAL EXPERT

7th-level Social Companion feature

The companion now has proficiency with Insight and Perception checks. Additionally, when it is trying to notice something about a humanoid using either skill, it has advantage on the roll.

SOCIAL MASTER

20th-level Social Companion feature

The companion adds double its proficiency bonus to checks using Performance, Insight, and Perception.



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