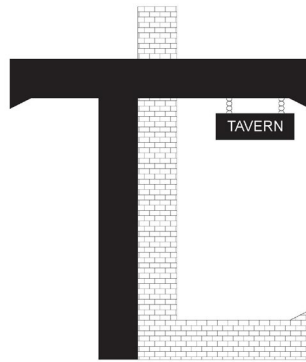




A Tavern Legends Production

## Equipment Quality and Durability

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Mundane gear in the basic rules for Fifth Edition dungeons and dragons seems to have an unnaturally long life; the chainmail you started with at level 1 could very well be the same armor you wear up until high level gameplay despite encounters with well-equipped orcs, dragons, giants, and other threats. The idea behind the supplement would be twofold: not all items are created of the same quality and not all items can withstand the test of time.

The aim is to make mundane, non-magical items take on a personality that can influence the flow of battle or social situations. To achieve this goal, I decided to create a system that will reward players for taking the time to find or commission high quality gear and make the quality of equipment stand out in battle but provide a negative effect for items that have been neglected. A ragged group of bandits or goblins may have noticeably inferior weapons which break in battle, while the elite guards may have beautiful armor that seems to weaken the most lethal of blows. A masterwork item could catch the eye of an influential lord and encourage him to treat a character with respect, but the inferior item will make him think they are not worth his time.

Quality of items is broken in to 5 parts: Pathetic, Inferior, Standard, Fine, Masterwork. Each status has its own effect and some possible traits are provided to help kickstart ideas for flavor and descriptions of a given item. The higher quality items are typically only available to a well-renown crafter with adequate experience and tools.

## Quality

| Item Status       | Description                                                                              | Traits                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Effects                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Feeble</b>     | This item is ragged and ugly. It is most likely to break when it is most needed.         | Noticeably poor quality; a sword could be crooked, cracked and dull with a loose hilt and armor may have missing pieces, be riddled with rust, and provide patchwork protection.                                                                                        | <p>Weapons: Reroll a max damage dice from an attack. Keep the new result even if it is the same.</p> <p>Armor: Enemies can reroll a 1 on damage dice from an attack. Keep the new result even if it is the same.</p> <p>Tools: -1 to relevant skill checks.</p> <p>Disadvantage for social interactions that may be influenced by wealth.</p> <p><i>Fragile*</i></p> <p>Value = base value x 0.40<br/> <i>Ex: Feeble Plate armor would be worth 600 GP</i></p>                                     |
| <b>Inferior</b>   | This item is of lesser quality or has seen considerable use with poor upkeep.            | Has a few flaws but not anything too terrible. A sword could have a chip in the blade or show rust, armor may have a missing strap or be loose in a few areas.                                                                                                          | <p>Disadvantage for social interactions that may be influenced by wealth.</p> <p><i>Weak*</i></p> <p>Value = base value x 0.75<br/> <i>Ex: Inferior Plate armor would be worth 1,125 GP</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Standard</b>   | The typical item you could find in a shop; unremarkable but reliable.                    | Average item. It will do its job but won't draw much attention. Perhaps it will show signs of age, but the effects are purely cosmetic.                                                                                                                                 | <p>The default setting for equipment found in the players handbook.</p> <p>Value = base value x 1<br/> <i>Ex: Standard Plate armor would be worth 1,500 GP</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Fine</b>       | A step above – this item has been well crafted and seems quite sturdy.                   | Well-crafted, this item will have good balance, a sharp edge, or show its high quality in some way. Rarely show signs of age and may include decorations                                                                                                                | <p>Advantage for social interactions that may be influenced by wealth.</p> <p><i>Sturdy*</i></p> <p>Value = base value x 2<br/> <i>Ex: Plate armor would be worth 3,000 GP or as much as a Rare magic item</i></p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Masterwork</b> | A masterpiece in itself; this item is a marvel to behold and exudes wealth and nobility. | A true masterpiece for the type, this item is nearly perfect and will often have beautiful ornamentation to show its exquisite quality. A beautiful longsword that shimmers in the light, adorned with a golden, jewel studded hilt. An Ebony harp with golden strings. | <p>Weapons: Reroll a 1 on damage dice from an attack. Keep the new result even if it is the same.</p> <p>Armor: Enemies must reroll a max damage die from an attack. Keep the new result even if it is the same.</p> <p>Tools: +1 to relevant skill checks.</p> <p>Advantage for social interactions that may be influenced by wealth.</p> <p><i>Enduring*</i></p> <p>Value = base value x 5<br/> <i>Ex: Plate armor would be worth 7,500 GP or as much as a low tier Very Rare magic item</i></p> |

**Rerolling damage dice:** In the case of a masterwork weapon, the weapon will allow you to reroll any damage dice that show up as a one. For example, a maul that rolls two 1s on damage will allow you to reroll both dice one time, keeping the new result even if the die shows 1 again. If you are using a pathetic weapon and roll max damage on a die, then you must reroll it and keep the new result. Using the maul again, if you rolled two 6s on the dice, then you would reroll both and keep the new result. A 6 and a 5 would only reroll one die, the 6. Or, another example is a great axe that rolled a 12 would be forced to reroll and keep the new result, even if the result is another 12. These affects apply to critical hits as well.

Armor has the reverse effect; if you have masterwork armor and an enemy hit you for max damage, they would be forced to reroll the dice that show up as max damage. An enemy that scores a critical hit and got two 12's on their great axe damage dice would be forced to reroll the dice one more time and keep the new results for the critical hit.

**Special Note:** Great weapon master fighting style would combine with masterwork items, so that after you have rolled for that feature you would still be able to add the masterwork effect on. For example, if you were to use a great axe and rolled a 1, then rolled another 1 after the fighting style, you could then rely on masterwork to try one additional time but must keep the new result. However, if you roll a two on the second roll, masterwork will have no effect as it only applies to rolling a one.

The Half Orc trait, Savage Attacks, would also stack with this feature. The additional die rolled from a critical hit would be affected by Masterwork or Inferior quality items.

**Relevant skill checks:** a Masterwork instrument grants +1 performance when used, Masterwork thieves' tools grant +1 to pick a lock, Inferior blacksmith tools grant -1 when crafting, an Inferior spyglass grants -1 perception when observing far off locations. Generally, the tool you pick will determine the relevant skills. This is subject to DM discretion and should be discussed in advance so that both DM and player understand which situations their item will impact.

## Alternatives

If you don't like the idea of a flat bonus for tools or modifying damage for equipment, another choice could be to use a minor property found in the Dungeon Master's Guide, under Treasure (Special Features). I hesitated to add this as a standard property because most of the effects are magical in nature, but some would fit perfectly in to the masterwork quality. Examples of this would be Elven gear weighing half as much or Celestial gear causing fiends to find its presence repulsive.

**Examples of social interactions:** Convincing a guard you are worthy heroes, deceiving an individual that you are part of an elite force here to take their head, performing a ballad for the noble court to gain favor. These are subject to DM discretion and are open to creative interpretations.

\*Refer to durability for more information

## ***Crafting***

The creation of an item will be impacted by the skill check involved when making it. Higher tiers can only be achieved when someone is proficient with crafting tools for the specified item. If the crafter does not get a desirable result, they can attempt to redo the check but are assumed to only get a partial recovery of the materials before doing so. In situations where a material is rare or expensive, it becomes a decision to keep an inferior quality or go back out to gather materials. \*\* (Refer to condition for more information)

| <i>Tier</i>                   | <i>DC</i> |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| Masterwork                    | 30        |
| Fine                          | 22        |
| Standard                      | 15        |
| Inferior                      | 10        |
| Pathetic                      | 7         |
| Partial Recovery of materials | 4         |
| Total Loss of materials       | -         |

Other factors can further impact the check needed to pull off a successful crafting check. Beneficial effects have a diminishing return, while negative ones can have a large impact. Below are some examples, but this list is far from being everything that may alter a skill check. It is recommended that the dungeon master adjust to fit the situation. Note that with these factors, the chance of making a masterwork can improve dramatically.

| <i>Suggested Factors</i>                                         | <i>Effect on Skill</i> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Unusual or unfamiliar materials                                  | -4                     |
| Mastered a material                                              | +2                     |
| Exposed to the elements while working and consistent bad weather | -2                     |
| Low quality forge and anvil                                      | -4                     |
| Exceptional workshop                                             | +2                     |
| Schematics for an item are present                               | +2                     |
| No idea how to craft the desired item                            | -4                     |
| Skilled helper/Many Skilled helpers                              | +1/+2                  |

A craftsman who is unfamiliar with a material, doesn't know how to make it in the first place, and is working with subpar equipment will have a difficult time crafting the desired item, let alone a masterwork piece. The cumulative impact of these would result in a -12 to any check they make, meaning that unless they are exceptionally skilled or naturally talented they will end up with a best result being an 8, just enough to make a pathetic specimen. An example of this situation would be when a rural village blacksmith is given adamantium to craft a battle-axe without any blueprints.

By contrast, the smith in her wondrous workshop is familiar with all manners of material and excels at adamantium crafting with several talented helpers on hand. She may even have some schematics, blueprint or previous works to reference in the creation of a new item. The cumulative effect would be a +8 for the same attempt to craft, meaning that unless she lacks the necessary tools, she will at least succeed in creating an inferior quality item. (+2 prof +2 str +8 effects +1 on die = 11 to craft)

When crafting an item, the quality is independent of the condition. To determine the condition, there are 2 approaches:

1. Assume the item is Fair with no check
2. Roll for the result. Use the repair table and add +5 bonus to whatever is rolled, representing the fact that the item is brand new. Do not count the "Same craftsmen" bonus.

There is one exception; Masterwork items are in Good condition at a minimum. A check the results in lower is automatically counted as Good. However, this exception does not count when repairing a Masterwork item.

## ***Durability***

Normally adventurers will take care of their equipment needs with no real consequence, but sometimes they must undergo harrowing conditions which can put considerable stress on their possessions. Charging into the heart of a volcano would likely burn robes and leather, while a long sea voyage could wreak havoc on metal armor from the salt water encouraging rust to form. In these situations, it is better to do these checks as a cumulative effect based on time rather than doing it every turn. Examples of this could be for every hour spent in the volcano or every day spent at sea.

There are stages of damage to items and each stage has its properties. The quality of the item will further influence how likely it is to take damage and how much damage it can take before breaking.

## Condition

| Item Status     | Description                                                                                                                                   | Value                                                              | Properties                                                                                                                                                    |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Pristine</b> | That “new car smell.” An item will rarely see this state ever again unless it is left in the hands of a talented craftsman.                   | 90% of base value when selling.<br>125% of base value when buying. | 10% chance of degrading (moving down). Must be handled by a talented worker to achieve this tier. High skills checks will craft or repair to this state.      |
| <b>Good</b>     | This item has been well maintained, even if it has seen considerable use.                                                                     | 75% sell / 110% buy                                                | 15% chance of degrading<br>Must be handled by a proficient worker to achieve this tier. Medium to High skills checks will craft or repair to this state.      |
| <b>Fair</b>     | The standard level of equipment. Maintenance is just enough to prevent detrimental effects from setting in.                                   | 50% sell / 100% buy                                                | 20% chance of degrading<br>Must be handled by a proficient worker to achieve this tier. Low to Medium skills checks will craft or repair to this state.       |
| <b>Damaged</b>  | The item has been affected by use. Signs of damage will become visible; a chip on the blade, a frayed bow string, a crack in the shield, etc. | 25% sell / 90% buy                                                 | 25% chance of degrading<br>Once at this stage, anyone who has basic knowledge of maintenance can perform light repairs on the item.                           |
| <b>Impaired</b> | The damage to the item has become cumbersome. It is in an obvious state of disrepair and looms dangerously close to breaking.                 | 10% sell / 75% buy                                                 | 30% chance of degrading<br>Once at this stage, basic repairs cannot improve the item condition. Tools and time are required to bring it back from this state. |
| <b>Broken</b>   | The cumulative damage to the item has caused it to fail. It can no longer be used until a craftsman has taken the time to rebuild the item.   | Worth scraps                                                       | 0% chance of doing anything                                                                                                                                   |

**Degrading:** Also known as moving down the condition list. While using an item and the result of a die roll is a natural 1 or a total of 1, then the item is subjected to a chance of degrading. Roll percentile dice. If this result is above the threshold for degrading, then the item is unaffected. If its below, the item will shift down the chart one condition; from *Pristine* to *Good*, or *Damaged* to *Impaired*. Armor behaves opposite of this; if the enemy rolls a natural 20 or a critical hit by other means (Champion archetype feature allows 19-20 for example), then the armor is subjected to a chance of degrading. Percentile rules follow as normal.

The threshold for the shift is based on quality and current condition. If there is a 10% chance of degrading, a roll of 10 or lower will cause it to degrade by one tier. A 25% chance would do so if you roll a 25 or lower.

**Quality Matters:** The quality of the item will determine how much damage it can take before it ultimately becomes useless and requires a skilled worker to sit down and spend time repairing the item. These tiers could also work as enchantments or magical effects. In these instances, it is important to emphasize the thematic reasoning: A shield could be enchanted by a wizard to be *sturdy*, glowing with arcane runes and providing an unusual amount of protection. The dragon's breath is searing hot and does a tremendous amount of fire damage to a rouge wearing leather armor, making her armor burnt and *weak*.

*Fragile:* 15% *more* chance of taking damage

*Weak:* 5% *more* chance of taking damage

*Sturdy:* 5% *less* chance of taking damage

*Enduring:* 10% *less* chance of taking damage, minimum of 1% chance. Item can also ignore being reduced by one tier. This effect will not take place again until the item is repaired during a long rest, making it a (near) once per day ability.

If we take a few of the qualities and match them with conditions, these are some of the examples:

**Masterwork** longsword in **Good** condition = 5% chance of degrading, but it will ignore the first time it is degraded to a lower condition (assuming this ability has not already been used).

**Pathetic** spear in **Fair** condition = 35% chance of degrading

**Standard** hand axe in **Fair** condition = 20% chance of degrading

**Inferior** longbow in **Pristine** condition = 15% chance of degrading

**Masterwork** longsword in **Pristine** condition = 1% chance of degrading, but it will ignore the first time it is degraded to a lower condition (assuming this ability has not already been used). Masterwork items are truly exceptional if they are found in a pristine state and could possibly never degrade if an individual is lucky enough.

## **Repairing**

To bring an item back from a lower condition tier involves sitting down and spending time actively trying to repair the item. The condition of the item provides some insight into the intensity needed for repairs. The success of the repairs can be impacted by many factors, similar to crafting but with some notable differences.

| <i>Tier to Repair to</i>                                         | <i>DC</i>              |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| Pristine                                                         | 25                     |
| Good                                                             | 18                     |
| Fair                                                             | 12                     |
| Damaged                                                          | 8                      |
| Item quality is reduced by one level permanently                 | 5                      |
| Item quality is reduced by two levels permanently                | -                      |
| <i>Suggested Factors</i>                                         | <i>Effect on Skill</i> |
| Unusual or unfamiliar materials                                  | -4                     |
| Mastered a material                                              | +2                     |
| Exposed to the elements while working and consistent bad weather | -2                     |
| Low quality equipment and workspace                              | -4                     |
| Exceptional workshop                                             | +2                     |
| Schematics for an item are present                               | +2                     |
| No idea how to repair the desired item                           | -4                     |
| Skilled helper/Many skilled helpers                              | +1/+2                  |
| Same craftsman who made it                                       | +5                     |

Let's use the adamantium battle-axe again; if the rural village blacksmith were to attempt repairs, he could be looking at -12 penalty to the check because he never sees the material, he may have low quality equipment, and doesn't know how to repair it in the first place. If he's also stuck working on his outdoor forge in freezing temperatures, this could drop down to a -14. Suddenly, entrusting your Masterwork item to this man is not a good idea; unless he has some skill, the item will almost surely suffer a drop off in quality.

If we visit the wondrous workshop instead, especially if the smithies there were the ones who created the item and have many talented craftsmen, then the bonuses could add up to a +13, ensuring that the masterwork item will never leave the shop below a Fair condition with a reasonable chance of leaving in a Pristine condition.