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March 29, 2024 (last modified June 24, 2025 at 04:52 pm) Crafting a rich fantasy setting starts with its inhabitants. But what if you're stuck, unable to decide what kind of fantastical heroes (or villains!) will populate your world? Our Fantasy Classes Generator is here to jumpstart your imagination with a click. This clever tool goes beyond the typical fighter-mage-rogue trio, offering a plethora of unique fantasy class ideas to spark your creativity and help you build a truly captivating fantasy world. Our Fantasy Classes Generator will spark your imagination with unique ideas for your next fantasy character: Click the 'Generate' button to get a fantasy class idea. Keep on reading for some tips on creating your own unique fantasy classes. What are Fantasy Classes? Fantasy classes are categories that define a character's abilities and playstyle within a fantasy setting, typically in role-playing games (RPGs) or fictional worlds. They are essentially like character archetypes but with more specific rules and limitations. Here's how most fantasy classes are broken down: Function: Classes help establish a character's strengths, weaknesses, and overall approach to adventuring.Specialisation: Each class focuses on a particular area, like combat, magic, stealth, or support.Progression: Many games allow characters to level up within their class, gaining new skills and abilities as they progress. So, fantasy classes are a way to structure character creation and development within a role-playing game or fantasy world. They provide a framework for players to build unique characters with distinct strengths and weaknesses, making for a more interesting and strategic gameplay experience. The Most Common Fantasy Classes There are three fundamental fantasy classes that act as the foundation for many others: Fighter: The brave warrior, specialising in physical combat. They are the frontline fighters, wielding various weapons and armour to deal heavy damage and soak up enemy attacks.Mage/Wizard: The magical powerhouse, wielding spells and manipulating arcane energy. They can unleash powerful blasts, buff allies, or control the battlefield with elemental magic.Rogue/Thief: The stealthy trickster, skilled in deception and agility. They excel at navigating unseen, picking locks, disarming traps, and dealing quick, lethal blows from the shadows. These core classes often have variations that build upon their core strengths: Fighter variations: Paladin (holy warrior), Barbarian (savage brute), Ranger (skilled tracker and archer)Mage/Wizard variations: Sorcerer (innate magic user), Warlock (gains power from a pact), Druid (nature magic user)Rogue/Thief variations: Bard (skilled in music and deception), Assassin (master of stealth and lethality) These variations, along with entirely new classes, become more common in complex fantasy RPGs. Here are some other frequently encountered classes: Cleric: A divine spellcaster who heals allies, channels holy power, and may even turn undead.Ranger: A wilderness expert who combines combat skills with nature magic and animal companions.Bard: A support class that uses music and storytelling to inspire allies, hinder enemies, and sometimes even cast magic. This list isn't exhaustive, but it gives you a good idea of the most common fantasy classes you'll encounter in RPGs and fantasy fiction. How to Create Unique Fantasy Classes When creating a unique fantasy class system, you should think about the following: Identify a Niche: Start by brainstorming a gap in the typical fantasy party dynamic or a unique power set you find interesting. Is there a cool historical figure or mythological concept you want to translate into a class? Perhaps a subclass focusing on a specific element or a character who manipulates emotions?Define the Role: Will this class be a frontline fighter, a damage dealer, a supporting character, or something else entirely? Consider how they'll complement or challenge the existing class roles.Source of Power: Where does this class get its abilities? Is it magic, raw talent, technology, or a pact with a mysterious entity? This will influence their skills and limitations.Core Mechanics: Develop the core gameplay mechanics that define this class. What kind of weapons or tools do they use? Do they have unique resource management systems, like energy points or limited uses per day?Special Abilities: This is where you get creative! Craft unique skills that set this class apart. Can they manipulate gravity? Do they summon illusions to confuse enemies? Think about both offensive and defensive capabilities.Progression System: How will this class gain power as they level up? Will they unlock new spells, master weapon techniques, or gain access to powerful artefacts?Aesthetics and Lore: Flesh out the visual identity and backstory of this class. Do they wear distinctive armour or wield specific weapons? Is there a code of conduct or a hidden society they belong to?Balance and Playtesting: Once you have a solid concept, consider how this class interacts with others in terms of balance. Will they overpower other characters? Playtest your class with friends or virtually to identify any issues and fine-tune the mechanics.Refine and Iterate: Based on playtesting and feedback, refine your class, adjust abilities, balance power levels, and solidify the concept. This is a flexible framework, so feel free to adapt it to your creative process. Remember, the most interesting classes often combine familiar elements in unexpected ways, so have fun experimenting! Techniques for Creating Fantasy Class Names There are several techniques you can use to create unique names for your fantasy classes. Here are some methods that combine different types of words: . Noun + Noun: This is a classic approach that creates clear and descriptive names. Examples: "StormHerald" (wields weather magic) and "DreamWalker" (travels the dreamscape),. Adjective + Noun: This method emphasises a key characteristic of the class. Examples: "Silversmith" (Creates magical objects from silver) or "EchoAssassin" (sound manipulation to create illusions)Noun + Verb: This approach highlights the action associated with the class. Examples: "Monster Hunter" (tracks and slays beasts), "Shapeshifter" (transforms into different creatures), "War Dancer" (fights with rhythmic chants).Mythological Reference + Noun: Borrowing from myths and legends can add depth and a sense of history. Examples: "Valkyrie Archer" (inspired by warrior maidens), "Siren Songstress" (enchants with song like mythical creatures), "Golem Crafter" (creates living statues).Foreign Language Twist: Using words from other languages can add a touch of mystery and intrigue. For example: "Wu Xing Master" (referencing the five elements in Chinese philosophy), "Druida Céilí" (combining Celtic and Druid for a nature magic user), "Oni Slayer" (Japanese demon slayer). Bonus Tip: Consider using suffixes or prefixes commonly associated with fantasy classes, like "-mancer" (magic user), "-breaker" (destroyer), "-warden" (protector), or "-born" (gifted with a specific ability). Remember, the best names are often short, memorable, and reflect the essence of the class. Combine these techniques, experiment with different word combinations, and don't be afraid to get creative! Fantasy Classes Ideas Here are some ideas for fantasy classes, considering both common archetypes and some more unique concepts: Stormsinger: A bard who uses music to manipulate the weather, summoning storms, calming winds, or even calling down lightning strikes.Dreamwarden: A protector who patrols the dreamscape, fighting off nightmares and guiding lost souls back to the waking world.Stoneweaver: A spellcaster who manipulates earth and rock, creating living golems, shaping the battlefield, and even burrowing through the ground.Plaguedoctor: A healer who specialises in treating deadly diseases, using a mix of alchemical concoctions and surgical techniques.Mirageweaver: A master illusionist who creates realistic illusions that can confuse enemies, distract them, or even create elaborate traps.BeastWhisperer: A master tracker and negotiator who can communicate with animals, calming beasts, forming alliances, and even commanding them in battle.Runecarver: Enchants weapons, armor, and even locations with powerful runes that grant different magical effects.Wardancer: Buffs allies and debuffs enemies through magical dances and rhythmic chants.Chronomancer: A manipulator of time, able to slow enemies, speed up allies, or even see glimpses of the future.Shapeshifter: Can transform into different creatures to scout, infiltrate, or even become powerful beasts in combat. These are just a few ideas to get you started. When creating your own class, consider what kind of role they would fill in a party, what unique abilities they might have, and the source of their power. Summary We hope this Fantasy Classes Generator has ignited your creative spark! What kind of fantastical class ideas did you get? Do you have any dream classes you'd love to see come to life in a game or story? Let us know in the comments below, and we'd love to hear all about your unique fantasy heroes! Skip to main content Reddit and its partners use cookies and similar technologies to provide you with a better experience. By accepting all cookies, you agree to our use of cookies to deliver and maintain our services and site, improve the quality of Reddit, personalize Reddit content and advertising, and measure the effectiveness of advertising. By rejecting non-essential cookies, Reddit may still use certain cookies to ensure the proper functionality of our platform. For more information, please see our Cookie Notice and our Privacy Policy. Classes are an easy way to define a character's role in a game. Whether this is simply a combat role or a signifier of their background by means of some exclusive membership, they are a useful shorthand for us, the players. No matter the setting, tech level, or combat system the game employs, you'll find various archetypes and classes popping up a lot. Sometimes, it's just too hard to stray from the tried and tested classics brought to us by the likes of Dungeons and Dragons, Dragon Quest, and Final Fantasy. Updated August 12, 2023 by Ryan Bamsey: Picking the right classes often makes the difference between success and defeat in a classical RPG. There are quite often a ton to choose from, and once you've played enough games, you'll start to see some familiar patterns emerge. We've added some more classics to the list, one magical and one less so. 14 Soldier Tidus from Final Fantasy 10, Lenneth from Valkyrie Profile, and a Ranger from XCOM Call them what you want to, Soldiers, Fighters, Vagrants - these are your quintessential physical attackers. They'll be good at one thing and one thing only - dishing out the damage. Luckily, they do this quite well and are often an easy go-to in many games. In games with class trees, these may serve as branching points for more physically aligned classes or be your generic class that doesn't have all the bells and whistles of the more interesting, specialized alternatives. Blissey from Pokemon, Snow from Final Fantasy 13, and Galahad from Bravely Default 2 The thing that distinguishes the Knight from the Soldier is its role in battle. Knights are tanks. Usually heavily armored with a ton of hit points and probably some way of drawing attention to themselves. They'll likely be able to deal some mean damage, but their purpose is to serve protection. Sometimes, they'll have specific abilities that draw attention away from their allies and towards themselves, or they may have abilities that reduce damage all-around or even be an off-healer to complement the party's White Mage. As opposed to Knights, who are generally quite slow and tanky, Barbarians eschew defensiveness for pure offense. Often unarmored and classically wielding axes or other massive weapons, they're great sources of damage who may be on the frailer side. A variant of this class is the Berserker. These are very similar to Barbarians but characterised by their heightened levels of aggression. In games with status effects, expect them to be enthusiastic users of the Berserk status. Imagine a Knight, but then make them holy. That's a Paladin. Paladins are usually identified by their heavy armor, penchant for pointy swords, and a ruthless dedication to lawful good. They may be holy warriors on a crusade or an oathsworn upholder of all that is right. In a fight, Paladins are more likely than mere knights to have a little magic of their own. This is usually of the sacred variety and used for healing and smiting in equal measures. If the setting has undead enemies, expect a Paladin to be able to deal with them easily. Morrigan from Dragon Age Origins, Veronica from Dragon Quest 11, and Vivi from Final Fantasy 9 In settings where magic abounds, you are more than likely going to encounter magical damage dealers. The archetypal examples are the Wizard from Dungeons and Dragons and the Black Mage from Final Fantasy. If there's no magic in the RPG's setting, this class may make use of elemental ammo or some convenient analog. Characters of these classes will usually inflict elemental damage to target weaknesses, probably be a bit squishy in the defense department, and may even be masters of status infliction. They're often on the more fun end of the scale, thanks to the high numbers they can put out, too. Daeran from Pathfinder Wrath of the Righteous, Marle from Chrono Trigger, and Rosa from Final Fantasy 4 Where damage goes, healing follows. White Mages, so named for their darker cousins, are the masters of healing magic/skills/abilities and are crucial to a party setup in many games. Besides their affinity for healing, they'll also probably have some defensive skills to help extend your characters' lives. If they're not actually mages, expect them to be called things like Chemists, Medics, or Herbalists. How necessary they are will depend on the balance of the game at hand - in games like Final Fantasy 14, they are non-negotiable, but in games where you may find alternate sources of healing in items or environmental set pieces, they're less critical. We've had Black Magic, and we've had White Magic, but what do you get when you mix those colors? Well, according to the Final Fantasy series, it's red. Also known sporadically as Sages or just 'spellcasters', these characters will have knowledge and skill in both offensive and supportive magic. This class often trades some potency for its versatility, and will not be able to do a Black Mage's job better than a Black Mage would, and the same with White Mages. That said, they can be incredibly useful additions to your team, especially when party member slots are limited. Sothe from Fire Emblem, Ninjask from Pokemon, Locke from Final Fantasy 6 Sneaky, agile, and probably a bit larcenous. Rogues are another classic staple of RPGs and one of the most prominent back in the day. It was Fighter, Mage, Rogue, and nothing more! These days, Rogues will likely be physical damage dealers with a bit more utility than regular old Soldiers. They may be able to steal items, unlock chests, disarm traps, inflict status ailments (usually some variety of poison), or even sneak past enemies easily. Leliana from Dragon Age, an Archer from Final Fantasy Tactics Advance, and an Outlander from Torchlight 2 Depending on how in-depth the game's class system is, Archers may simply be a sub-type of Rogue. In others, they are a class entirely in themselves – long-range specialists. In games with a modern edge, these warriors will be wielding sniper rifles - in more traditional settings, expect longbows and complicated crossbows. Thanks to their range, Archers are likely to be a bit squishier than other fighters but compensate for that with serious damage and possibly the ability to inflict status ailments, target elemental weaknesses, or even charge up their attacks. In games where elevation might provide a nice strategic advantage, an Archer is your best friend. If the setting at hand has any advanced technology, you can bet there are some engineers milling about, making sure it all works. Sometimes, they may even join your party! As you'd expect, Engineers usually have abilities that deal with technology. They may summon turrets or metal critters, have damage bonuses against mechanical foes, or be able to analyze enemies' health pools and weak points. A typical weapon of choice is the humble gun, even in settings that don't have them commonplace. Character Class design is not only decided by gameplay but also the setting the game takes place. As a result, a pattern occurs in the more commonly used settings for games with character classes, Fantasy, Science Fiction and Modern settings, with Fantasy having their own set of classes while Sci-Fi and Modern settings sharing similar classes due to similar weaponry (namely guns).It should be noted that despite the names, the classes might not always fit their genre. For example Fantasy Character Classes does not cover all fantasy genres, with Urban Fantasy and Science Fantasy usually covering Modern/Sci-Fi Character Classes. Likewise, while Superhero stories tend to take place in modern settings, combat in this genre is linked to superpowers rather than firearms, resulting in classes different from the ones listed in Modern/Sci-Fi Character Classes. A good rule of thumb to decide what category a game would fall under is seeing the standard weapons of frontline classes. Melee weapons implies Fantasy Character Classes, guns fit Modern/Sci-Fi Character Classes, while classes not cleanly fitting in either category imply that the classes listed on these pages do not apply.For a list of recurring setting-free class archetypes, look at Common Character Classes.All six common roles.With Dungeons & Dragons being the Trope Maker of character classes, it is natural that games that share its fantasy genre commonly borrow its classes. While D&D campaigns are usually tied to Medieval European Fantasynote with noticeable exceptions such as Dark Sun or Eberron, the prominence of these classes have made them appear in various other settings, such as ones more inspired by Ancient Greece or Feudal Japan.What classes will appear will vary depending on the complexity of the game. The simpler ones stick to the trio of Fighter, Mage and Rogue. Those with a little more complexity tend to split the spell list between offensive and support magic, the Mage keeping the offensive magic while a fourth class, the Cleric, gets support magic. And some games go further, adding classes such as the Ranger filling the role of archer in contrast to the melee focused Fighter or the Bard whose songs are capable of both buffs and debuffs.The most elaborate class systems tend to have variations of the same class, filling the same gameplay niche but being stronger at one area of their niche than the other. For example, fire mages, weather mages, and mind mages each study at different colleges and wear distinctive costumes, but are none the less, all mages. These classes tend to be grouped together for player convenience. open/close all folders The Fighter: Other Names: Warrior, Knight, Soldier. One of the most basic classes, the Fighter puts emphasis on strength and close quarters combat. Wielding melee weapons, they typically lack range, or have only limited ranged attack options, but they excel at fighting enemies in close range combat, often having high HP, defense, and attack capabilities to aid in this. In a team or party based game they put themselves at risk at the front of the group and take the brunt of the damage meant for their less sturdy comrades. A Fighter's strength is boosted by the wide variety of equipment they can use and they are usually able to equip the widest variety of weaponry and armor, including stuff too heavy for other classes. Due to being simpler to play than other classes, they are often considered good choice for beginners. Variations The Knight: Other Names: Cavalier (when the Cavalier isn't its own separate class), Guardian, Sentinel, Champion. The Knight is considered an upgrade to the basic Fighter. It may be able to wear bigger, heavier armor (including shields) and weaponry, possibly sacrificing speed in favor of more power and defense. The Knight may also gain supportive abilities that help to keep their allies safe, relating to bravery and chivalry. For example; the ability to shield the group from enemy attacks, or otherwise take hits meant for their friends, a "taunt" command that forces foes to direct attacks towards them and away from allies, or the ability to make powerful Counter Attacks against enemies who ignore them. Knights may be able to employ Mounted Combat, if there is no dedicated Cavalier class. The Warrior: Other Names: Brute, Titan, Vanguard, Landsknecht. A more offensively-oriented general upgrade to the basic Fighter, the Warrior trades the Knight's emphasis on defense and support for brute offensive power, favoring large, two-handed weapons that can smash straight through entire swathes of enemies and heavy armor that offsets their lack of a shield, as well as the immense strength required to use both. Warriors range from Unskilled, but Strong brutes to Strong and Skilled veterans, with the latter in particular emphasizing the class's slow, methodical, but devastatingly powerful attacks. The Swashbuckler: Other Names: Fencer, Duelist. A Fighter who tends toward light or no armor and prefers agility, cunning, daring and technical skill to sheer force. Tends to be rogue-like in their trappings (though usually more flamboyant than subtle) and is often used to evoke the Rogue archetype in games where skills and stealth play a small or no role. A likely default class for The Hero, especially in JRPGs and adventure novels after Alexandre Dumas. The Dragon Knight: Other Names: Dragoon note though this term originally meant a soldier who could fight mounted or as infantry. A Fighter who is either descended from, in the employ of, powered by, owns, or specializes in hunting, dragons. A Dragon Knight usually has a variety of abilities that mimic or relate to dragons in some way — Flight or high jumping ability, breathing fire or imbuing it into their attacks, and dealing extra damage to dragons are all common. Some are able to tame or train dragons (typically either big ones large enough to ride on, or smaller species/hatchlings) or even transform into a dragon themselves. They seem to be associated with spears for some reason. The Barbarian: Other Names: Berserker, Savage, Viking. The Barbarian is a breed of Fighter focused more on damage than defense. Note that in systems where Barbarians have normal or greater than normal physical defense compared to other warriors, such as D&D, they will usually have no defense whatsoever against magic. Often characterized by wearing less armor, being less civilized, and being able to fly into a berserker rage that increases damage output or allow them to do more damage based on how hurt they are. The Monster Knight: Related to Dragon Knight and Barbarian above as well as the Beast below, Monster Knight combines the augmented power of a monster/beast and the training and weaponry of a knight. They may also be able to tap on their basic monster instincts to gain more power and ferocity, often at a cost (either endangering you or your allies). Dragon Knight that can turn (whether fully or in part) into dragons overlap with this. In games with multiple playable races, if a Monstrous Humanoid race exists as one of the choices, them taking the Knight class make them this. The Samurai: Generally restricted to Asian settings, but can appear outside them under more generic names like The Swordmaster. Other Names: Yojimbo, Kenseinote introduced as "Kensai" in Dnd 3.5e intended to translate to "Sword Saint", Ronin (In some occasion), Weapon Master, Myrmidon. Samurai wear less armor than regular Fighters, which leads them to have less defensive abilities. In general, they commonly have access to Ki Manipulation, higher damage, and higher speed and mobility, along with abilities related to Counter Attacks, sensing hidden enemies, or acting before their opponents can act. Some Samurai can wield both swords and longbows (and occasionally spears), but the majority focus on the sword to the exclusion of all other weapons. After the Hero, Samurai are the class most likely to have unique weapons which other classes cannot use. Because Yojimbo are mercenaries, they may be literally able to spend money to deal more damage. The Warlord: Other Names: General, Tactician, Marshal, Commander, Templar. The Warlord is a tactical master. They can hold their own in frontline combat as well as giving out buffs to their underlings and allies, usually by commanding them to superior positions than the ones they would have thought of on their own, and they may have protective auras made of their own charisma to increase a team's effectiveness in battle. Sometimes may be able to summon their own troops, overlapping with Pet Master below. The Cavalier: Other Names: Knightnote Whenever that name isn't taken by the Knight class above, Lancer. The Cavalier fights from the back of a mount, whether a normal horse or something more exotic. Cavaliers have higher movement speed than other Fighters and may be able to charge through groups of enemies or perform Hit-and-Run Tactics. However, they also have more weaknesses: their large size can make them easier to hit or prevent them from travelling through certain terrain, and they may be vulnerable to specialised Anti-Cavalry weapons or attacks which frighten/control animals. Cavaliers with flying mounts also tend to be Fragile Speedsters, presumably because heavy armor would hinder their ability to fly. Sometimes a cavalier's mount can be separately targeted and killed, which either kills the cavalier or turns them into an infantry unit with poorer stats. In games where a lot of fighting takes place indoors, the Cavalier is usually folded into another Fighter class such as Knight or Dragon Knight, and they may be able to switch between infantry and cavalry modes. Mounted archers are comparatively rare, and tend to be closer to Rangers than Fighters.The Mage: Other Names: Magician, Wizard, Caster, Sorcerer, Witch, Warlock, Magi, Magus, Sage. By whatever name you know this class by, you know this class: they primarily use magic powers. In any game with classes, there will always be one that maps to the Mage. These have the widest variety of any set of role-playing classes simply because there are so many varieties of Functional Magic. In a Fantasy Kitchen Sink setting, there can potentially be an infinite number of magic users, so long as there is justification for considering them each their own type. A Mage is usually a Squishy Wizard, going down with only a few hits, with more offense orientated mages being Long Range Fighters to keep themselves safe from attacks. Variations The Blaster: Other names: Evoker, Nuker, Black Mage. A Mage that specializes on offensive spells, differentiating themself from the more support-oriented magic users. May have a few buffing abilities at their disposal, but those are often dedicated to strengthening their own spells. Probably the biggest source of Elemental Powers within a party, with Fire, Ice, Lightning magic at the most basic. The Illusionist: Other Names: Mesmer. A magic-user who casts illusions. Their primary role are to cause distraction and misdirection to enemies. They can also cast the clones of themselves and trick and misdirect the enemies to attack the clones instead. Their abilities are generally given to characters with Psychic powers. The Battle Mage: Other Names: Warmage, Runesmith. An offensively-focused spellcaster who lacks some of the weaknesses of their setting's normal Squishy Wizards - they're tougher and can cast their spells faster or more reliably, in exchange for their arsenal being weaker or limited entirely to offense. Explanations for this can vary from special training, to special equipment, to their magic being somehow "artificial". Usually has at least a mild military theme, being either a soldier (possibly a Super-Soldier) or someone who Had to Be Sharp. Tends to use spells with shorter ranges than other spellcasters, or to simply cast their spells at close range more often. Can sometimes equip better weapons or armor than other mages, in which case they're distinguished from the Magic Knight through poor physical stats or lack of advanced combat skills. Common in Action Games, less so elsewhere. The Necromancer: A magic-user who wields power over the dead, blood, and "death energy". They're usually antagonists, but if Dark Is Not Evil, may be a playable class. Often they employ a Zerg Rush - creating hordes of weak undead and sending them after a problem till it dies. Any other abilities will likely be curses that weaken or sap away strength. Very often also a form of Black Mage, especially if an alternative more versatile battle mage is not available. May or may not overlap with the Theurgist class below. The Wild Mage: Other Names: Wilder, Chaos Mage. A gimmicky high-risk, high-reward class that trades more traditional spell options for raw power, gaining the ability to create random effects and hopefully react to them faster than the enemy can. The Blue Mage: Other Names: Mime, Mimic. A Mage who does not usually rely on standard spells, but instead learns various spells and special abilities from monsters encountered in travel. Often they will need to see the spell or special ability in action, or cast their own unique spell to 'absorb' the ability. Traditionally will develop to be as diverse as the Red Mage, except with unique monster-like abilities to supplement them. The Vancian Mage: Other Names: Wizard, among many others. These casters rely on Rule Magic and study to learn and wield magic, usually taking years, leaving their bodies squishy and out of shape... most of the time. Dusty tomes and candlelit towers are what you should associate with these guys. If there's a distinction between this and the Inherent Gift Mage, it will be that these ones have some kind of limitation — like needing to prepare which spells they'll use ahead of time — in exchange for more versatility if prepared. The Inherent Gift Mage: Other Names: Sorcerer. This magic-user was born with abilities they don't need to study, and can use more readily than other Mages. This is sometimes explained as being descended from a magical creature, other times as being part of Mage Species. They are often much less versatile than other magic-users, being limited to a smaller or much more tightly-themed pool of spells. Commonly, their powers manifest at adolescence. The Theurgist: Other Names: Warlock. The Mage makes a pact with a higher spirit (although not usually a god since those tend to be distinct in fantasy settings), who supplies him with magical powers. This is usually flavored with a Deal with the Devil. While healing class pacts are seen as good, a Mage that makes a pact with an entity that gives them the power to harm or destroy is usually flavored in a darker light — and it may turn out to be with demons or Eldritch Abominations. Thus, this type of magic is usually offensive (in the tactical sense) and nasty and deals heavy area damage and/or multitude of status ailments. The Summoner: Other Names: Conjurer. A higher level in which the caster summons the entity to them to do its bidding. Usually even more dangerous than regular Theurgists. Usually supplemented with some magic of another type. If the summoned entity sticks around for a while to assist the summoner, then they may learn magic that allows them to support it. If the summoned entity simply uses a single powerful attack or ability before vanishing, then the summoner is likely to have weaker abilities of roughly the same type, with the summons themselves serving as a form of Limit Break. When Summoners can have pacts with multiple entities at once, they will often be able to go on sidequests to unlock more summons. The Generalist: Other names: Red Mage. A Mage who does not specialize in one school or tradition and studies the magic of various types. They tend to be rare, and depending on which limitations they have, may be very powerful thanks to their versatility or very weak thanks to their lack of focus. In any case, they usually aren't able to use the more complex spells their specialized brethren use, or at least not nearly as often. Of all the kinds of Mage, they tend to be the most open minded and least prone to think there are Unequal Rites.The Rogue: Other Names: Thief, Assassin, Ninja. Rogues are a diverse class that contains everything from dexterous thieves, to treasure-hunters, to assassins. Masters of stealth and infiltration, Rogues prefer to attack when their opponent is least aware. They are quick but fragile, unable to take heavy damage, and instead rely on their speed to dodge attacks and slip in and out of the shadows to catch their opponent off guard; setting traps and inflicting status effects on foes to give them the edge. Outside of battle Rogues usually have a wide range of helpful utility abilities such as lockpicking to allow them to open locked doors and treasure chests without needing to find/buy keys or the ability to detect and disarm traps. Some can even steal items directly from enemies allowing the player to obtain items that otherwise might be unobtainable. Sometimes Rogues are lumped in with the Ranger class, but more commonly they are differentiated by specializing in melee - particularly with light blades and daggers or ranged attacks using throwing weapons such as knives and shuriken. Variations The Thief: The Thief, when it is a separate class, is a version of the Rogue with lower damage, but the ability to steal items from enemies. Sometimes, this can extend even to intangible items, such as experience points, but more commonly includes rare items that cannot be obtained in any other way. The Assassin: A more offensive Rogue, who sacrifices technical expertise for better stealth and killing abilities. Often have a variety of weakening and poisoning abilities and are able to cripple a foe to leave him open for allies or to let him die from Damage Over Time. The Gambler: The Gambler is a fairly rare variation more often seen in video games than in pen and paper settings. The Gambler is a Rogue who has a set of magical powers that rely more on chance than usual. They may have to draw a card, spin a roulette, roll magical dice, or activate a magical slot machine to get a desired effect which may be positive or negative depending on their luck. Very likely to attack with playing cards in lieu of throwing knives. The Detective: The Detective is an oft-overlooked variant of roguey types. They excel at rooting out hidden secrets and unraveling mysteries. They rely on a sharp eye for detail, but also on a finely honed ability to read the words and deeds of other creatures to determine their true intent. They excel at defeating creatures that hide among and prey upon ordinary folk, and their mastery of lore and sharp eye make them well-equipped to expose and end hidden evils. Undercover cops, private investigators, and spies tend to fall into this category. They're a lot less likely to be criminals, and some magic-using examples may cross over with the Blue-Collar Warlock. The Ninja: Generally, the highest tier of Rogue-type classes. The Ninja is a Rogue who may have a long list of useful skills. Stealth and backstabbing are universal, but beyond that, it gets hazy. Invisibility, smoke techniques that increases evasion, long-range elemental powers, and sometimes special bonuses to combat like dual-wielding. They also tend to excel at throwing items like shurikens, daggers, and kunai. Often a Game-Breaker. May be combined with the Assassin or distinct. The Shadow: Other Names: Nightblade. Occasionally, Rogue-types will specialize in magic or powers that augment their stealth, and when they do, those powers generally feature darkness, shadows or the occult as themes. May be distinct or combined with the Ninja or Assassin. The Bandit: Other Names: Burglar, Thug, Brigand. Close to the Thief, a Bandit is a Rogue whose stealth skills are either downplayed or non-existent. While they have all the standard Rogue abilities, they tend to use them in less subtle ways - instead of unlocking a door they'll kick it down, and instead of stealthily pickpocketing their enemies they'll simply walk up and grab things from them. Sometimes they also can intimidate their enemies or are good at destroying structures, as well as whole slew of other "gang" related abilities. Bandits are generally the Mighty Glacier of Rogue classes, having stats more similar to a Fighter (though they may still be a Fragile Speedster compared to non-Rogues). While they display slightly more variation in weapons than standard Rogues, most Bandits still cannot equip heavy armor and are thus not as tough as Fighters. The Pirate: Other Names: Corsair, Privateer, Swashbuckler. A variation of the Rogue. The archetype for a pirate isn't set that hard in stone, but in general, a Pirate will use a combination of weaponry instead of specializing - usually being able to switch freely between pistols and swords. They may also receive bonuses for fighting in water terrain or on ships or be the best class at swimming. May have some aspects of the Bandit, or the Bandit class may be folded into Pirate entirely. When this class specifically represents a pirate captain it sometimes overlaps with Warlord. The Scout: Other Names: Spy, Acrobat, Operative. Another variation on the Rogue, the Scout combines high movement rate with superior sensory and information-gathering skills, and often emphasizes stealth as well. Not guaranteed to be as good at combat as other Rogues; may overlap with the Ranger archetype if they are. May also favour ranged weapons more than other Rogues. Sometimes combined with the Thief and/or Assassin to give them more things to do.The Cleric: Other Names: Priest, Acolyte. A Cleric is usually The Medic — some variation on dedicated healers. Unlike Mage-classes, the Clerics usually draw their powers from either Faith, a god, or some variation of the two. Their magic generally requires them to stick to a certain doctrine to access it, but usually comes with less of a price or chance of backfiring like some Mage classes might experience. Clerics often focus on healing and party buffs, but sometimes they are offensively useful against "unholy" enemies such as demons and undead. As the majority of fantasy games tend to take place in Medieval European Fantasy, clerics tend to have some elements of Christian priests (Catholicism in particular). Cleric-type classes generally have the least amount of variation, simply because healing is so vital and important that distracting a healer generally isn't seen as a good idea. Variations The Healer: Other Names: White Mage. A squishy dedicated healer with little abilities at offense, though their magic may be able to harm specific types of enemies, most commonly demonic entities and the undead. The Battle Priest: Other Names: Crusader, Chaplain. A badass, tough warrior, carrying blessed weapons. This version of the Cleric can dish out melee damage and heal. They tend to be closer to Clerics than Paladins, who tend to be closer to Fighters; although occassionally this is a literal overlap a.k.a hybrid of Fighter and Cleric class. The Druid: Wields power over the natural world, often including the Natural Elements, animals, and plants. Though not as potent at healing as the usual Cleric, they make up for it with elemental offense and the ability to morph into animals. The Shaman: A Cleric linked to spirits rather than gods. Commonly inspired by the Witch Doctor, though other inspirations such as Japanese Onmyōdō are not unheard of. They not only draw their magical abilities from spirits but are commonly able to summon spirits to assist them. The Cultist: The Evil Counterpart of the Cleric, the Cultist worships the local God of Evil or Eldritch Abomination, rather than more benevolent deities. As a result, the powers they gain from their faiths are typically of the shadowy variety, more given to offense, both in terms of offensive buffs and debilitating curses, and outright offensive attacks, although they usually has some healing in their kit, if less than is usually granted to the priest of a more "wholesome" God. The Templar: Other Names: Inquisitor, Zealot. Named after The Knights Templar, the Templar is more of an assassin mixed with a Cleric. The chief role in the story is generally to do the church's dirty work, ferreting out heretics and covering up the great conspiracy. In battle, they may be anything, but tend to be a jack of all trades, weaker than a Paladin, Cleric, or Rogue in their specialties, but able to handle all of their roles to one extent or another. They can also be defined as Mage Killer / The Witch Hunter, especially in settings where the Church is very much at odds with some, if not all, mages. If the Cleric class normally comes with innate restrictions or drawbacks (e.g. must always tell the truth, cannot wear metal armor, must avoid contact with The Dark Side) then a Templar can usually ignore at least some of them.The Ranger: Other Names: Hunter, Archer. Rangers are woodsmen skilled at surviving in the wild. They may be lumped in with Fighters or Rogues (above) but more often than not are a separate tree of classes all their own. Archery is generally their favored skill, although melee combat also has a focus either primarily (In which case they will probably also have a lot of ranged abilities) or as a backup for when enemies get close. Rangers may also be skilled in some form of wilderness or nature magic, and sometimes capable of utilizing their terrain or surroundings to their advantage. They may be very good at fighting a specific type of enemy, and often take on the role of a Hunter of Monsters against such foes. In a setting that allows guns, they will usually appear in the hands of the Ranger. Variations The Sniper Ranger: This version is totally reliant on archery, but usually does higher damage because of it. May have a variety of status-inflicting arrows to slow or otherwise annoy enemies. Keeps to the back of a battle, as they're weak in terms of close combat. The Melee Ranger: Other Names: Headhunter, Predator, Savage. The Ranger that fights from melee range. Makes sense - the word 'Ranger' refers to someone who watches over territory, like a modern day Park Ranger, not from using ranged weapons. Will often be much more heavily associated with hunting and other animalistic thematics, with the association stemming between them and predatory creatures. Often uses a spear, Blade Below the Shoulder, or an axe. Despite primarily being a melee character, will typically still possess a lot of ranged utility, either with a sidearm ranged weapon, or more commonly, by throwing their melee weapon, or by having a dedicated throwing weapon like a bola or chakram. The Bow and Blade Ranger: A version of the Ranger that can handle bladed weapons as well, allowing them to defend themselves against approaching enemies or close in for the kill. The most likely Ranger to overlap with the Fighter archetype, usually the Swashbuckler, or alternatively the Rogue. The Versatile Ranger: The Ranger who is both competent physically and magically, with their spell list including offense and support magic. They likely are capable at the arts of stealth as well. For all their skills however, they will not reach the level of more specialised classes, with their strength rather serving as back up for other party members such as assisting the fighter in combat or providing healing when the Cleric is unavailable. The Beast Master Ranger: Living out in the wilderness is just easier with a loyal dog at your side and a hawk on your arm. This variant employs a number of beasts, and can be as simple as a Houndmaster using two or three dogs, to something more fantastic like a snake charmer or dinosaur rider. Different from the Druid because the Beast Master Ranger is still a martial class who fights alongside his beasts, and either doesn't use magic or only uses minor magic to compliment his weapon(s), and may be limited in the kind of beasts they can use compared to, say, pure Beastmasters (see below). Summoner Ranger: A variant of the Beast Master Ranger that can summon beasts to their side, either with magic, as a familiar, or their connection to nature. Overlaps with the Druid such that they are often the primary guardians of the forest and nature against the encroaching modern civilizations. The Trapper Ranger: Other Names: Sapper. The Trapper is a character who can lay down various traps in an area that the enemy can walk into, making them vulnerable to ambushes or follow-up attacks. Often combined with the Sniper or Beast Master above.The Bard: Other Names: Minstrel, Maestro, Troubadour. The Bard is a class that taps into magic through art, usually by music. The bard's magic tend to focus around status effects, buffing their allies while weakening or disabling their enemies, with some healing magic and occasionally damage spells. Unfortunately, due to status effect magic ending up in the Useless Useful Spell category in some games, bards have gained a reputation as one of the less useful classes, though when status effects are useful, the spells of the Bards can be the difference between a clean victory and a Pyrrhic Victory or worse, a Total Party Kill. Versatility is also a common trait of this class, being more adept with combat than other magic classes, though nowhere near the level of a Fighter and/or having useful skills outside of combat, though not to the degree of Rogues. One area Bards will have an affinity above Rogues (along with other classes), is social skills, having the most affinity with diplomacy with NPCs. Variations The Dancer: Other Names: Gypsy, Wanderer, Trouvere. A rare variation of the Bard, who tend to get the same jokes made, but for dancing instead of music. They tend to do the same things as Bards, too, so perhaps they deserve it. A variant is The Whirling Dervish, who looks to the casual observer like an ordinary dancer but is actually a spinning buzz-saw of slice-and-dice death; she'll give new meaning to Aram Khachaturian's Sabre Dance and have way too much fun doing it. The Jester: Other Names: Clown. A more kooky, comedic take on the bard. The Jester will typically be either a straight-up Joke Character with Cool, but Inefficient abilities that basically only serve as a Self-Imposed Challenge to their player, or they're a Weak, but Skilled Gradual Grinder that combines a peerless ability to Draw Aggro with precise evasion and Status Effects to evolve into a Lethal Joke Character. The Skald: A more "savage" version of the Bard, who charges into battle themselves so that they can write epic stories about how glorious it was afterwards. Tends to be less capable of afflicting status effects than the standard Bard, in favor of being better at frontline combat. They might also have buffs which turn their allies into Glass Cannons, affect larger numbers of allies than a standard Bard, or allow allies to march or fight continuously without rest. Usually acts as a substitute for Bards in whatever culture Barbarians come from, but they can show up in just about any military setting as "morale officers" or similar.Hybrid Classes: Some classes rather than cleanly fitting in one category borrows elements of multiple classes, allowing them to cover the niches of multiple classes, albeit generally not to the level of the more specialized classes they were based on. Hybrid Class Archetypes The Magic Knight: Other Names: Spellblade, Hexblade, Eldritch Knight, Rune Knight. The Magic Knight is a hybrid Fighter/Mage. The key distinction between different versions of this class is how the Fighter and Mage parts are combined: there is a difference between using a sword and magic, and using magic to improve your sword/fighting abilities. Sometimes split into multiple classes based on different kinds of magic or fighting styles - e.g. the same game might have both "Spelldancers" who are highly trained Vancian-Swashbucklers, and "Elemental Blades" who are

healing but the support can also reduce or prevent damage, increase their allies damage or provide supplies. The support's lack of combat ability mixed with the aid they give to their team makes them a prime target for enemies, making it key for their allies to protect them. Variations The Medic: Other Names: Doctor, Medtech. Healing on legs, this is the class that everyone else rushes to when they're low on health. When there are other classes capable of healing, the medic will still have special benefits such as healing characters past their max health or being able to revive fallen allies. As the name medic implies, they tend to be linked to medicine, likely with the clothes to signal this. The Buffer: Other Names: Officer. While not the best fighters, buffers help their allies become better fighters. Buffers commonly increase the damage of their allies, sometimes also increasing their defense or speed. Usually buffers are of a profession linked to motivation, such as a commanding officer or a musician. The Supplier: As the firefight goes on, ammunition will eventually run dry but thankfully, the supplier is ready to give rounds so weapons don't run dry. Some suppliers also give armour and/or explosives as well as ammo.The Techie: Other Names: Engineer, Scientist. The class with an affinity with technology, they know what makes machines work and bring this knowledge to the battlefield. Though not usually built for direct combat, they can use their knowledge with technology to help the direct combatants in their team, sometimes finding ways to use tech to damage the enemy without pulling a trigger. Variations The Engineer: The engineer builds machines, usually at a ridiculously short amount of time. The most commonly amounts to being The Turret Master, building sentry guns at key points to slow down the enemy, though other machines are possible such as dispensers to heal and supply allies or teleporters to get across the map faster. The Hacker: Other Names: Netrunner, Decker. Getting into enemy technology and either disabling or turning them against their owners, the hacker. In some games, hackers do not enter the frontline with the rest of their group, either staying at a computer or surfing around Cyberspace. The Mechanic: Other Names: Tinkerer. When technology needs fixing, the mechanic is here for repairs, fixing up equipment, machines or vehicles. In some games, mechanics can also modify technology, either improving it or modifying it to fit the current situation.Rarer Classes: With the vast amount of genres that the "Modern" and "Sci-Fi" labels bring in both the terms of a setting and gameplay, some classes will be less universal than others. However, in what genres these classes do appear in, they are a recurring sight. Rarer Class Archetypes The Mystic: Other Names: Jedi, Adept. Defined not by weaponry or gadgets, the mystic draws upon the special powers they possess. What type of powers they have varies, though usually is either Psychic Powers, Functional Magic or something similar enough to those two powers. Gameplay-wise, their powers usually amount to being able to blast or disable multiple enemies, but being on the fragile side meaning that Shoot the Mage First is a common response to their presense. As their powers are a thing of Speculative Fiction, this class does not appear in more "realistic" settings. The Psion: Other Names: Psychic, Jedi Consular. Utilising telepathy and/or psychokinesis, the psion's mind is literally a powerful weapon, capable of delivering a telekinetic assault with the objects around them, overload the minds of their enemies or shoot out a Psi Blast. They psion may be useful in social situations, picking up valuable information from the thoughts of others or using a Jedi Mind Trick to compel their target to help their objective. Most likely to appear in a science fiction setting, though may appear if the setting is a Fantasy Kitchen Sink. The Mage: Other Names: Witch. With their familiarity of the arcane arts, the mage has spells at the ready that could blast their enemies with Elemental Powers, create illusions to trick their opponents or summon spirits for assistance. Their affinity with the supernatural can be useful thanks to their knowledge of arcane entities along with being able to detect them. Found in Urban Fantasy and Science Fantasy settings. The Adept: Other Names: Jedi Guardian. Channelling their powers within their own bodies, the adept is not only more physically capable than other mystics but potentially more physically capable than any normal person could be. As the adept's power is used intenally rather than effecting their enviornment, they're more likely to attack with weapons or unarmed attacks rather than offensive powers. With the adept not being tied to a specific type of power, this class can easily be fitted into various Sci-Fi and Fantasy settings. The Tank: This class has one job, preventing their allies from getting hit. The Tank is so named for their ability to tank damage, with their offensive ability ranging from nonexistant, making them Stone Walls, to decent, though not at the level of dedicated damage dealers. Mechanically, this class is built for games with the Damager, Healer, Tank triangle, most noticably the Hero Shooter genre. The Shieldbearer: Possessing either a Deflector Shield or Deployable Cover, these guys set up a barrier that protect their allies from projectiles. Usually this barrier will only stop enemy projectiles, with allies being able to fire through the shield, though some barriers stop all projectiles. The barrier is not invincible though, and will break with enough damage. The Bodyguard: To prevent their allies from getting hit, the bodyguard aims to get hit in their place. They do so by making it harder for enemies to escape them in combat or having reaction abilities that make them take the bullet. Naturally as this class takes a lot of hits, they tend to have a lot of health of compensate. The Face: Springing into action when something needs to be solved by diplomacy rather than violence, the Face is The Social Expert of classes. In some games, this class also have contacts to draw upon, using their connections when needed. The Face is designed for games where social interaction with Non Player Characters is important and as such, does not appear in games purely based around combat. The Driver: Other Names: Pilot, Hunter. When you need somebody to operate a vehicle, the Driver is the best choice for the task. What this vehicle is varies, it could be a car, tank, plane, spaceship or Mini-Mecha but whatever it is, the Driver knows how to use it! They are either the only class that can use vehicles or get special bonuses operating them the other classes do not. This class only appears when vehicles are a gameplay feature, with the driver not appearing when all gameplay is on-foot. If you have never played an in-depth tabletop RPG game of something like Dungeons & Dragons, I highly recommend it. Why? Because it allows you to control the tempo of the game and play the way you want to. DnD characters in a fantasy setting can range from your standard human fighter to an Aarakocran bird person. Yes, that’s a real thing. If you are a gamer who loves RPGs, JRPGS, or CRPGS, you probably know some character classes basics. However, where do these classes in Final Fantasy, Baldur’s Gate, and other series come from? If you’re someone who only knows a little about RPG game classes, then we have the ultimate guide to introduce you to your next favorite character class. Let’s get some background on RPG classes, skills, abilities, subclasses, and archetypes. RPG Classes What are the RPG classes? RPG classes are the character frameworks and templates you use when playing a role-playing game. Character classes differentiate characters from one another by wielding different weapons and possessing different skill sets utilized by players. Standard RPG Class Types: Form and Function Whether you are playing something like Final Fantasy X, or World of WarCraft, you have your basic class type. These range from fighters and warriors who specialize in strength and power to wizards and clerics who cast spells. Are you bold and brash? Into heavy combat with swords and axes? Then you might want to be a warrior or barbarian. Or are you someone who likes to hang back and let other players get hit in combat? Cast some spells and invoke religion, and maybe you’d do better as a mage or cleric. Character Class: History The grandfather of them all, Dungeons and Dragons, was the first to introduce character classes. Ever since its inception, Dungeons and Dragons have influenced nearly every RPG class system that has ever existed. The RPG class system may have shifted over time, particularly with the changing of the basic Dungeons and Dragons tabletop RPG rules. Regardless, the main tactics and skills have remained. Different tabletops RPG and evolving forms of gameplay allowed for creating different variations on classes and gameplay. Class Archetypes: Unique Skill Sets & Variations Class archetypes are subclasses for characters. These enhance game classes and add flavor to your playing experience. You could have a ranger who also has a ranger archetype of a beastmaster. These open up new skills and make these standard classes even more unique and fun to play. For example, I play as an elf rogue who has an inquisitive archetype. While I can partake in all sorts of things enjoyed by the rogue classes, I can further enhance a role-playing game by acting like a detective. Sure, I like to act like a thief and use my sword to intimidate, but I also love investigating the game setting. Inquisitive turns my elf rogue into a fast-talking, perceptive investigator. If an enemy doesn’t give men an answer I like, I’m not afraid to shoot an arrow or throw a knife their way. It all depends on how you play the game. On the other hand, you could choose the assassin archetype. You can see how even in one RPG class, changing your archetype can alter the story’s course from game to game. List: Common Character Archetypes Different archetypes allow players to gain useful skills, powers, and abilities at different levels. For example, at level 3, 7, and 15, the arcane archer gets various unique skills. While there are tons of variations to these character archetypes, we’ll list just a few interesting ones to explore. We’ll list their basic makeup, along with unique skill sets. Fighter Archetypes Arcane Archer Arcane archers use their bow proficiency to deal with devastating magical bow damage to anyone in their path. Proficiency in arcane or nature Ability: Magic Arrow, Arcane Shot, Curving Shot, and more Battle Master A battle master learns all the different ways to, well, master battle. Combat Superiority Maneuvers: these enhance attacks Know Your Enemy: this allows the player to learn about an enemy or ally outside of combat. Hitpoints, armor class, and class level are things battle masters can see. Champion Champions are all about physical excellence and devastation. This is the perfect archetype for those who want to deal with raw damage. Improved Critical: This improves your chance at landing a devastating critical blow Remarkable Athlete: You get extreme proficiency bonuses to acrobatics and Survivor: You get an impressive addition to hit points during battle if you’re on death’s doorstep. Knight Knights are chivalrous characters who specialize in combat and protecting allies in the heat of battle. Implacable Mark: When hit, an enemy is marked by you. They’ll get a disadvantage on any attack. Hold the Line: This allows the knight to slow enemies by delivering a decisive blow. Defender’s Blade: This ability will enable knights to strike back with a vengeance. You can get an attack of opportunity twice, as well as getting AC +1 when wearing heavy armor. Samurai Like their real-world counterparts, samurai in RPG games are hardy warriors who will stop at nothing to conquer foes. Fighting Spirit: Gives you an advantage on all attack rolls and adds five extra hit points. Elegant Courtier: This gives players a massive boost to Charisma Rapid Strike: In certain situations, you can attack a target an additional time per turn Rogue Archetypes Assassin Assassins are hired killers, those who deal in death. They can do it for profit or the art of it. Assassinate: You get the element of surprise, as well as advantage on any creature that hasn’t had a turn in combat yet. Infiltration Expertise: You can take time to falsify your identity. This is perfect if you’re trying to infiltrate an organization, crime family, or other tightly guarded groups. Impostor: This allows you to mimic a character in nearly every way. Death Strike: If you strike a character who doesn’t pass a constitution saving throw, they receive double the damage. Inquisitive These rogues love to learn secrets, expose plots, and solve mysteries. Eye and Ear for Deceit: This allows the rogue to determine if someone is lying or spot hidden creatures and objects. Unerring Eye: You are incredibly perceptive, and almost nothing can get past you. Shapechangers, arcane magic, illusions, and more can’t fool you. An eye for Weakness: This gives you insight into the enemy’s weaknesses. Scout Scouts are naturals at scouting territory and living in the wilderness. Survivalist: a considerable boost to nature and survival skills Superior Mobility: Higher walking speed Ambush Master: Using your scouting expertise, you’re able to get an advantage at the beginning of combat. Swashbuckler Swashbucklers are masters of the blade and the arts of charisma. Duelists and pirates are swashbucklers. Master Duelist: Even if you miss an attack, you can roll again with an advantage. You’ll have to have a long rest to do this action again. Fancy Footwork: You strike and slip away from enemies with ease Ranger Archetypes Rangers are masters of the wild, light armor, and bows. Beast Master The beastmaster develops close bonds with beasts. Animal Companion: you bond with a creature from the natural world. Companion’s Bond: Further benefits to the beast you bond with Hunter The hunter focuses on combat. They try to thin the hordes of enemies from afar with bows. Hunter’s Prey: you get an advantage against a specific enemy type. Colossus Slayer for powerful foes, Giant Killer for big foes, and Horde Breaker against multiple creatures per turn. Barbarian Archetypes Barbarians are fearsome warriors that use rage and raw power to defeat foes. Berserker A berserker doubles down on rage and turns it on their foes. Intimidating Presence: This ability allows berserkers to indicate characters and frighten creatures. Frenzy: This allows the berserker to go into a frenzy, enhancing their attack powers Cleric Archetypes Clerics are the medics of the classes. They assist team members during a battle, making sure they’re healed up using religion, magic, and more. Life Clerics dealing in life magic heal the sick. Disciple of Life: More effective healing spells Blessed Healer: Your healing spells cast on you as well as a team member Death Clerics of death deal in negative energy and necromancy. Reaper: This allows the player to learn a variety of necromancy spells Inescapable Destruction: Your destructive death spells are more potent and get through enemy defenses. Mage Archetypes Mages, often cloaked in robes and wielding arcane powers, are a staple in RPGs. Renowned for their vast knowledge and spellcasting abilities, they can unleash devastating spells to decimate foes or weave protective enchantments for allies. While their magical prowess is unmatched, mages are typically fragile, with lower physical defenses. This makes them vulnerable in close combat. Strategically positioning themselves and choosing the right spells are crucial for their survival. Pros and Cons ✔ High magical damage ✔ Versatile spellbook ✔ Crowd control abilities ✘ Low physical defense ✘ Reliant on mana ✘ Often requires careful planning How to Choose Your RPG Class Now that you’re a little more knowledgeable in the art of some RPG classes and archetypes, you can get some friends together on a site like Roll20 and get going. Feel free to experiment with the different classes, subclasses, and archetypes. These add a lot of crucial skills to the game, modifying the way action and battle unfold and changing the basics of the game. Choose which RPG class fits your style, and see how it pans out. You always have a chance to spice things up later with subclasses and archetypes. No matter if you choose a paladin, samurai, ninja, berserker, or summoner, they’re all part of the enormous repertoire of RPG classes. Who Should You Play As? Assassin For those who love strategy and stealth, the Assassin archetype beckons. Dive into the shadows, plan meticulously, and strike with lethal precision. This role is perfect for players who enjoy moral dilemmas and the thrill of the hunt. With the Assassin, every battle becomes a game of cat and mouse, and the satisfaction of a well-executed plan is unparalleled. Embrace the dark allure and become the silent force that shapes the game’s narrative. Inquisitive Ideal for the observant and curious, the Inquisitive excels in detection and deception. Dive deep into mysteries, spot hidden threats, and become the party’s detective. While rich in investigative prowess, its combat abilities might feel underwhelming. The true joy? Unraveling enigmas and seeing through illusions, offering a nuanced, cerebral gameplay experience. Scout For those with a sharp instinct and love for the wild, the Scout is a perfect fit. Excel in stealth, navigate terrains with ease, and always keep your party ahead. Relish in the thrill of ambushing foes, blending into nature, and being the group’s vigilant eyes and ears. Dive into a gameplay filled with strategy and unpredictability. Swashbuckler For those drawn to flair and finesse, Swashbuckler Archetype offers diverse combat styles, from stealthy infiltrators to gun-wielding duelists. Ideal for players seeking a blend of elegance and agility, these archetypes promise dynamic combat experiences. The thrill? Mastering unique abilities, whether it’s throwing daggers with precision, wielding rapiers with grace, or maintaining secret identities, ensuring every battle is both strategic and theatrical. Mage For those who revel in strategy and deception, the Maze archetype is a captivating choice. Perfect for players who enjoy manipulating the battlefield, leading foes into intricate traps, and relishing their disarray. The true joy? Outsmarting opponents with every twist and turn, ensuring a gameplay experience filled with unpredictability and cunning tactics. Dive into the challenge and master the maze. Sources A graduate of Penn State University and a Philadelphia native, Bryan has been a gamer since day one. Using his vast experience of gaming, game culture, and all things tech, Bryan aims to deliver the most up-to-date and captivating game design content to readers. « Dungeons and Dragons and Doors Character classes are archetypes that modify attributes, abilities, and role of a game character. A class typically includes a thematic aspect, for instance a Demon Hunter class, suggests abilities for tracking and fighting demons and implies a world where demons exist and can be hunted. Many RPGs invite you to choose a class before starting the game to determine what abilities are available to you during play. Where Did the Character Class Idea Come From? The answer is always Dungeons and Dragons. However classes do stretch back a little further into D&D’s wargaming roots. Light vs Heavy Infantry, an Archer vs a Pikeman, for wargames these roles are set at the start of the game and the characters in battlefield do not `switch from one class to another. The idea of class also permeates our daily lives, words like class and caste divide humans into types with different social abilities and attributes. A tabletop RPG game is an environment that calls out for the concept of class. Players want their adventurers to have something special and different about them and D&Ds roots meant it was naturally inclined to satisfy this want. A Persistent Trio The first three classes in Original Dungeons and Dragons were: Fighting Man Magic-User Cleric In these early days the phrase “character class” wasn’t used widely instead you’d see just the term class or perhaps character type, character class came later. Fighter Man eventually became Fighter and Magic-User, Mage or Wizard. These three original classes were passed down through generations of game releases. Over 20 years later in 1995, Hexen, a fantasy Doom shooter, was released and gave the player the choice of three classes: As time passes the Thief class becomes a popular replacement for the Cleric. The Cleric was always the odd-ball of the original three and a pure D&D invention. The D&D Origin of Clerics The Cleric is the class that’s most uniquely D&D’s invention. There are few warrior priests or cleric types wandering around the fantasy literature of the day. The class draws on a mix of influences from both Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson, the two main creative forces behind D&D. Below is one part of the origin story for D&D Clerics. Here is how I heard the story from my friend William Crolley, one of Dave Arneson’s original players. Ahem. I was there. In CHAINMAIL there were wizards that functioned as artillery. Then there was Dave Arneson’s first miniatures/roleplaying campaign. Some players were ‘good guys’ and some players were ‘bad guys’ and Dave was the referee. One of the ‘bad guys’ wanted to play a Vampire. He was extremely smart and capable, and as he got more and more experience he got tougher and tougher. This was the early 70s, so the model for ‘vampire’ was Christopher Lee in Hammer films. No deep folklore shit. Well, after a time, nobody could touch Sir Fang. Yes, that was his name. To fix the threatened end of the game they came up with a character that was, at first, a ‘vampire hunter’. Peter Cushing in the same films. As the rough specs were drawn up, comments about the need for healing and for curing disease came up. Ta da, the “priest” was born. Changed later to ‘cleric’. The bit about edged weapons was from Gary’s reading the old stories about Archbishop Turpin (Odo), who wielded a mace because he didn’t want to shed blood (“who lives by the sword dies by the sword”). Hammer Film Productions was a British movie company that made classic monster movies in the 60s and 70s, including a series of Dracula movies. Pictured below is the 1970s Hammer Horror “Taste the Blood of Dracula” where the hero is brandishing a glowing crucifix towards an off-screen vampire. Peter Cushing played the vampire hunter Van Helsing, pictured below, in many Hammer Horror movies about vampires. In these movies, like the books, Van Helsing was a polymath doctor with a knowledge of the occult but he’s only human with no supernatural powers. Dave Arneson built on Van Helsing by adding magical abilities including “Turn Undead”. Turn Undead was the act of brandishing a holy symbol to force undead creatures to shrink back and flee. Gary Gygax further transformed the Cleric class into something-like a Roman-Catholic warrior saint that called on god to grant miracles, chose not to use bladed weapons for religious reasons but was still more martial than the Magic Users of the game. Bishop Odo and Friar Tuck were listed as inspirations for the class by Gygax, as well as Father Shandor from Hammer Horror. Here’s the original description of the Cleric from original D&D. Clerics: Clerics gain some of the advantages from both of the other two classes (Fighting-Men and Magic-Users) in that they have the use of magic armor and all non-edged magic weapons (no arrows!), plus they have numbers of their own spells. In addition, they are able to use more of the magical items than are the Fighting-Men. When Clerics reach the top level (Patriarch) they may opt to build their own stronghold, and when doing so receive help from “above”. […] - Men and Magic Book, Original Dungeons and Dragons Practically the class functions as an additional melee class that can provide healing and support and as a bonus is very effective against undead. For D&D, this class has the most world building built-in. It also make it an excellent example of what a good class should be, it’s not boring and it’s not simple. The Magic User The Magic User is the ranged glass-cannon class. It can dish out a lot of damage but can’t take as much as the other two. The quality of magical powers that Magic User has access is also rather different than the Cleric. Below is quote that expresses the different sources of magical power quite nicely Cultures of the Mediterranean world appear to have made the distinction between theurgic and natural magic a long time ago and stuck with it for quite a while. Magic tended to be understood as falling into two classes: (a) magic that you did with the assistance of gods or spirits and (b) magic you did by manipulating the forces of the universe through an occult understanding of its natural laws. The magic system used in D&D - spellbooks, memorisation, spells being used and resting to recover spells are inspired by the system from Jack Vance’s Dying Earth series of novels. Magic-Users may arm themselves with daggers only. Original D&D rules are quite open to interpretation but for this article it’s enough to acknowledge that classes are being used to both restrict and enable what a character can do as they play the game. The Fighting Man The title “Fighting Man” is more fun than fighter or warrior. For D&D this would have covered everything from knights to Conan-style barbarians. Fighting men can use all weapons, including magic weapons and wear armor. However they cannot cast spells. They get higher starting hit points. The Roads We’ve Taken Hundreds of CRPGs releases since the 1970s have played with the concept class. Let’s take at some innovations. Strict or Loose D&D started with strict character classes. You make your choice and you’re given an ability space to grow into. There’s no flitting between classes. A loose class system is one where you might choose a starting class but you are not locked into certain abilities, any ability or spell is available to you through gameplay. Dark Souls is a recent CRPG that has a loose class system, you choose a class but it only impacts starting equipment and stats, you can find any of that starting equipment in the game and you’re free to modify your stats as you wish as you level up. Daggerfall and many of the other Elder Scrolls game employ similar loose systems. The Elder Scrolls progression mechanic tends to follow the pattern “the more you do an action the better you get”, so if you want to increase your magic you cast spells, if you want to get better at jumping you jump more. Ultima Online also used a similar system. Then there are shades of grey. Later versions of D&D allowed for subclasses, you take 5 levels as a Fighter, then 1 as a Wizard and so on. These still retained some of strict features - after getting to level 5 as a Fighter, taking the next level as a Wizard means you’re only a level 1 Wizard and gain access to abilities at that level. Levels in D&D are capped so you cannot access every ability and spell. Class Progression Games like Final Fantasy tactics allow players to gain levels in different classes and those levels can then be used to grant access to “higher level” classes. In this game the classes are called “jobs”. It’s not that unusual a system many games have class progression; seeing a player proceed through warrior classes, to knight classes, to sword master and so on. Each class grant different benefits and makes for a power curve that stretches a bit further for longer games. Here’s the job map for the first Final Fantasy Tactics game: As you can see it’s quite complicated and accessing each those classes has certain requirements. Party vs the Solo Adventurer Strict class systems work best with a party of characters. The first CRPG, pedit5, was based on D&D but was singleplayer and therefore it removed the classes entirely and allowed players to access the abilities of all the D&D classes. In a single player game you choose your class at the start and then you don’t have a chance to see what any of the other classes were like unless you start a new game. This means there’s potentially a lot of developer effort going into making game content that few people experience. In the tabletop world it’s common knowledge that a human fighter is the most popular character class for people to play. That is why many single character games don’t have a strict class system. Single player class games work best when you’ll replay the game a lot i.e. something like a Roguelike. In a party of character system then choosing the classes of your parties is choosing the skills and abilities the party as a group is going to have. This mix of classes can change as you find more characters and adds an additional layer of strategy when considering who to take on an adventure. A mix of classes also gives combat more tactical depth; each character had strengths and weaknesses. Classes Aren’t Uniform There are other things about types of classes that are interesting. A warrior class is something that that character conceivably self-earns, they fight, they get strong thus they are on the path of the warrior. Whereas other classes are more of a gift outside of the work of the character. The Cleric derives power from the their god and if they anger that god their powers might disappear. This is similar for the Warlock,introduced in later editions of D&D, they have a pact with some powerful entity and if they stick to the laws of the pact they have powers, if they break the pact those powers are stripped. Paladins are somewhere in-between they have power from their god but also a degree of self-earned martial prowess. When designing classes this distinction between powers given and powers earned is one to consider. A similar thought is the class of a Knight. What does it mean to be a level 0 knight? Are you just some guy on the street who’s a bit strong with knightly ambitions? It might be better to have a system of titles, a little like Final Fantasy Tactics jobs, where you’re on the knight track but you don’t earn the official Knight title until you reach a certain number of levels and before that you’re a Squire or Cup Holder or something. When To Use Classes The highest law of the land is you should use classes if you think they’re cool. If you’re making a party game then you’ll want a way to distinguish the party members, a class system is one possible solution. And if you’re making a D&D inspired RPG then adding classes is a no-brainer. These are pros of adding a class system to your game: Encourages roleplay and buttresses playstyle. If a player likes playing a wizard, or a thief, or a warrior they’ll appreciated being given the option to choose what they enjoy. Classes provide structure to your game design. Player characters have a class but they can also be used by NPCs and enemies so that way they’re a useful to define encounters and balance combat. They can help with world-building for instance the Star Wars 1987 had “character templates” like Gambler, Failed Jedi, Retired Imperial Captain and so on. These choices are giving player a taste of the world and it’s possibilities even before play starts. These are the cons They may restrict playstyle. If you’re playing a warrior you’ll never get to use any of those cool spells you find. For a single player game you may be making a lot of content that is seen by few players. Like almost everything in CRPG classes are an abstraction. People in the real world don’t have classes, they have roles or jobs and they’re not as completely defining. This might an abstraction you don’t want to add to your game. I hope that’s given you a better feeling for how classes can be used in games and if it’s a system that fits your vision. Related Articles « Dungeons and Dragons and Doors Skip to content Quotes • Headscratchers • Playing With • Useful Notes • Analysis • Image Links • Haiku • Laconic The oldest type of Game System was mostly used in Speculative Fiction Medieval European Fantasy settings that were heavily based on the works of JRR Tolkien, Jack Vance, and the 1930s Conan the Barbarian pulps. Dungeons and Dragons, easily the most successful early RPG, is the Trope Codifier. A class is one of the most important choices a player can make, although many game systems allow players to dual-class in some way, or may have a more flexible class system. A class determines the character's available pool of abilities, statistical skills, and possibly even their origin, education, and home area. Sometimes, a player will be able to start as a more general class ("my character is a wizard") and specialize into a more specific class ("my character is a fire wizard"). The opposite may also happen if a character is multiclass. This page aims to highlight the most common character combat classes in a medieval fantasy setting - both electronic and pen and paper. Many of these may be Prestige Classes. See also Common Character Classes, An Adventurer Is You, Class and Level System, Square Race Round Class, Modern Day Sci Fi RPG Class Equivalents The Fighter Classes: Other Names: Warrior, Soldier. In any game with classes, one of them will always map to the Fighter. The Fighter is the tank of a group and the most basic and broad class, usually recommended for beginners. The fighter is basically, the strong guy with heavy armor, a large melee weapon, and possibly a shield or second melee weapon. Compared to the other classes, Fighters tend to be powerful but slow. Variations include: The Barbarian: Other Names: Berserker. The Barbarian is a breed of Fighter focused more on damage than defense. Note that in systems where Barbarians have normal or greater than normal physical defense compared to other warriors, such as D&D, they will usually have no defense whatsoever against magic. Often characterized by wearing less armor, being less civilized, and being able to fly into a berserker rage that increases damage output or allow them to do more damage based on how hurt they are. The Knight: Other Names: Cavalier. The Knight is often depicted as a more experienced Fighter. He typically wears better armor, and may be more defensive, as well as being able to employ mounted combat on a steed. In a Lions and Tigers and Humans, Oh My! setting, he may be a horse himself. The Swashbuckler: A fighter who tends toward light or no armor and prefers agility, cunning, daring and technical skill to sheer force. Tends to be rogue-like in his or her trappings (though usually more flamboyant than subtle) and is often used to evoke the Rogue archetype in games where skills and stealth play a small or no role. A likely default class for The Hero, especially in JRPGs and adventure novels after Alexandre Dumas. The Paladin: The Paladin is a Fighter with a side of Healer, using White Magic to be more defensive; their devotion to their God or Deity gives them various prayers, healing abilities and spells that protect themselves and others. Naturally, they tend to fall under Magic Knight. They are also quite good at laying the smite down on undead, demons and other evil supernatural creatures. However, they may have behavioral limits: some rulesets impose varying penalties on taking actions that stray too far from Lawful Good, which can lead to weakening of abilities, loss of abilities or sometimes even being kicked out of the "Paladin" class entirely. The Dark Knight: Other Names: Blackguard, Antipaladin, Death Knight. The Death Knight class is the opposite number of the Paladin, possessing offensive and often necromantic or dark-magic oriented abilities that deal large amounts of damage to enemies, although often with a price. They generally do not suffer the behavioral limitations of Paladins. Does not, usually, have the ability to breathe in space. The Dragon Knight: Other Names: Dragoon. A Fighter who either is in the employ of, powered by, owns, or who specializes in hunting, dragons. A Dragon Knight usually has a variety of extra abilities that mimic or relate to dragons in some way — flight or high jumping ability, fire breath, and dealing extra damage to dragons are all common. In many lucky circumstances, they may own a dragon as a pet (either a big one large enough to ride on, or a smaller one). They seems to be associated with spears for some reason. The Samurai: Other Names: Yojimbo, Kensai, Weapon Master. Samurai wear less armor than regular Fighters, which leads them with less defensive abilities. In general, they commonly have access to Ki Attacks, higher damage, and higher speed and mobility. Generally restricted to Asian settings. Because Yojimbo are mercenaries, they may be literally able to spend money to deal more damage. Warlord: Other Names: General, Tactician, Marshal. The Warlord is a tactical master. He can hold his own in frontline combat as well as giving out buffs to his underlings and allies, usually by commanding them to superior positions than the ones they would have thought of on their own, and he may have protective auras made of his own charisma to increase a team's effectiveness in battle. The Magician Classes: Other Names: Mage, Wizard, Sorcerer, Witch, Warlock, Magi, Magus, Sage. By whatever name you know this class by, you know this class. In any game with classes, there will always be one that maps to the Magician. These have the widest variety of any set of role-playing classes simply because there are so many varieties of Functional Magic. In a Fantasy Kitchen Sink setting, there can potentially be an infinite number of magic users, so long as there is justification for considering them each their own type. A Magician is usually a Glass Cannon, blasting away at long range, but easily taken down at close range. Variations include: The Inherent Gift Magician: Other Names: Sorcerer. This magic-user was born with abilities they don't need to study, and can use more readily than other magicians. This is sometimes explained as being descended from a magical creature, other times as being part of a Witch Species. However, they are often much less versatile than other magic-users, being limited to a smaller or much more tightly-themed pool of spells. Commonly, their powers manifest at adolescence. The Theurgist Magician: Other Names: Warlock. The Magician makes a pact with a higher spirit (although not usually a god since those tend to be distinct in fantasy settings), who supplies him with magical powers. This is usually flavored with a Deal with the Devil. While healing class pacts are seen as good, a magician that makes a pact with an entity that gives them the power to harm or destroy is usually flavored in a darker light - and it may turn out to be with demons or Eldritch Abominations. Thus, this type of magic is usually heavily offensive and nasty. The Vancian Magician: Other Names: All of them. These casters rely on Rule Magic and study to learn and wield magic, usually taking years, leaving their bodies squishy and out of shape... most of the time. Dusty tomes and candlelit towers are what you should associate with these guys. If there's a distinction between this and the Inherent Gift Magician, it will be that these ones have some kind of limitation — like needing to prepare which spells they'll use ahead of time — in exchange for more versatility if prepared. The Red Mage: A magician who does not specialize in one school or tradition and studies the magic of various types. They tend to be rare, and depending on which limitations they have, may be very powerful thanks to their versatility or very weak thanks to their lack of focus. Of all the kinds of magician, they tend to be the most open minded and least prone to think there are Un-Equal Rites. The Necromantic Magician: A magic-user who wields power over the dead, blood, and "death energy". They're usually antagonists, but if Dark Is Not Evil, may be a playable class. Often they employ a Zerg Rush - creating hordes of weak undead and sending them after a problem till it dies. Any other abilities will likely be curses that weaken or sap away strength. The Illusionist Magician: A magic-user who casts illusions. Generally considered weak, with no real damage output, and has been phased out of most settings - their abilities are generally given to characters with Psychic powers and Bards. The Nature Magician: Wields power over the natural world, often including elements, animals, and plants. The Elemental Magician: A specialized Magician who can only use Elemental Powers in some way. They may be able to use all the elements, or may specialize in one or two. Often, they are the key to winning Elemental Rock-Paper-Scissors in their setting. The Druid Magician: A jack of all trades nature magician. They often have a mix of elemental offense, healing, and the ability to morph into animals or elemental spirits to become melee fighters. To further the overlap with the Cleric classes, is often a worshiper of nature. The Shamanic Magician: A nature magician with a Summoner twist. This class generally revolves around bargaining with spirits and such. The Rogue Classes: Other Names: See below. Rogues are usually dexterous thieves or treasure-hunters who are experts in stealth, infiltration, lockpicking, traps and the disarming thereof, sneak attacks, and attacking from the rear. In almost any game with classes, there will be that maps to the Rogue. They are often lumped in with Ranger-type characters, but more commonly specialize in melee - particularly with light blades and daggers. They tend to be quick but fragile, limited to light armor, but deal a lot of damage when allowed to do so. Variations include: The Thief: The Thief, when it is a separate class, is a version of the Rogue with lower damage, but the ability to steal items from enemies. Sometimes, this can extend even to intangible items, such as experience points, but more commonly includes rare items that cannot be obtained in any other way. The Assassin: A more offensive-rogue, who sacrifices technical expertise for better stealth and killing abilities. Often have a variety of weakening and poisoning abilities and are able to cripple a foe to leave him open for allies or to let him die from damage over time. The Gambler: The Gambler is a fairly rare variation more often seen in video games than in pen and paper settings. The Gambler is a rogue who has a set of magical powers that rely more on chance than usual. They may have to draw a card, spin a roulette, roll magical dice, or activate a magical slot machine to get a desired effect which may be positive or negative depending on their luck. Very likely to attack with playing cards in lieu of throwing knives. The Ninja: Generally, the highest tier of Rogue-type classes. The Ninja is a rogue who may have a long list of useful skills. Stealth and backstabbing are universal, but beyond that, it gets hazy. Invisibility, smoke techniques that increases evasion, long-range elemental powers, and sometimes special bonuses to combat like dual-wielding. They also tend to excel at throwing items like shurikens, daggers, and kunai. Often a Game Breaker. May be combined with the Assassin or distinct. The Shadow: Occasionally, Rogue-types will specialize in magic or powers that augment their stealth, and when they do, those powers generally feature darkness, shadows or the occult as themes. May be distinct or combined with the Ninja or Assassin. The Pirate: Other Names: Corsair, Privateer, Swashbuckler. Currently a rare variation of the Rogue, but gaining popularity thanks to memetic mutation. The archetype for pirate hasn't really yet set that hard in stone, but in general, a Pirate will use a combination of weaponry instead of specializing - usually being able to switch freely between pistols and swords. The Scout: Other Names: The Operative. Another rare variation on the Rogue, the Scout combines high movement rate with superior sensory and information-gathering skills, and often emphasizes stealth as well. Not guaranteed to be as good at combat as other Rogues; may overlap with the Ranger archetype if they are. The Cleric Classes: A Cleric is usually The Medic — some variation on dedicated healers. Unlike Magician-classes, the Clerics usually draw their powers from either Faith, a god, or some variation of the two. Their magic generally requires them to stick to a certain doctrine to access it, but usually comes with less of a price or chance of backfiring like some Magician classes might experience. Clerics often focus on healing and party buffs, but sometimes they are offensively useful against "unholy" enemies such as demons and undead. Often draw their powers from Crystal Dragon Jesus and may be suspiciously Catholic for a fantasy setting. Cleric-type classes generally have the least amount of variation, simply because healing is so vital and important that distracting a healer generally isn't seen as a good idea. Variations include: The Priest: Other Names: Healer, White Mage. A squishy dedicated healer with little abilities at offense aside from specific types of enemies, most commonly demonic entities and the undead. The Battle Priest: A badass, tough warrior, carrying blessed weapons. This version of the Cleric can dish out melee damage and heal. They tend to be closer to Clerics than Paladins, who tend to be closer to Fighters. The Witch Doctor: A version of the cleric flavored for a more shamanic, nature-worshiping culture as opposed to the generally Monotheistic religion most Cleric-using settings use. May be slightly more magically offensive and overlap with the Shaman (see above). The Templar: Other Names: Inquisitor. Named after the Knights Templar, the Templar is more of an assassin mixed with a Cleric. The chief role in the story is generally to do the church's dirty work, ferreting out heretics and covering up the great conspiracy. In battle, they may be anything, but tend to be a jack of all trades, weaker than a Paladin, Cleric, or Rogue in their specialties, but able to handle all of their roles to one extent or another. The Ranger Classes: Other Names: Hunter. Rangers are woodsman skilled at surviving in the wild. They may be lumped in with Fighters or Rogues (above) but more often than not are a separate tree of classes all their own. Archery is generally their favored skill, although most can fall back on swordplay if necessary. Rangers may also be skilled in some form of wilderness or nature magic. They may be very good at fighting a specific type of enemy, and often take on the role of The Hunter against such foes. Rarely, a Ranger may have access to guns as well as bows. The Sniper Ranger: This version is totally reliant on archery, but usually does higher damage because of it. May have a variety of status-inflicting arrows to slow or otherwise annoy enemies. Keeps to the back of a battle. The Bow and Blade Ranger: A version of the ranger that can handle bladed weapons as well, allowing them to defend themselves against approaching enemies or close in for the kill. The most likely Ranger to overlap with the Fighter archetype. The Beastmaster Ranger: This class specializes in either taking temporary or permanent control of wild animals, and then allowing their pet to rush to the front lines while they support with healing and long-range attacks. The Dual Wielding Ranger: The Dual Wielding Ranger most famously represented by the famed Drow ranger Drizzt Do'Urden, who uses two melee weapons, though it does predate him by quite some time. Very common in Dungeons and Dragons-based material, but less so elsewhere. The Trapper Ranger: The Trapper is a character who can lay down various traps in an area that the enemy can walk into, making them vulnerable to ambushes or follow-up attacks. The Magical Ranger: A version of the ranger who can uses enchanted or Trick Arrow to take advantage of Elemental Rock-Paper-Scissors, or slow down and disable enemies with "net arrows" or "freezing arrows" and the like. Rarer Class Archetypes: The following character classes appear often but non consistently, depending on the type of world the author is attempting to create. In general, they are often seen as clashing with science fiction or with a European medieval setting in some way (but so do the Samurai and Ninja, above). The Hero: Some games will have a separate class for The Hero. The Red Mage, Jack of All Stats, and Magic Knight are usually all qualities of this class. They tend to have access to the Infinity+1 Sword and can use the ultimate magic. It's usually part of a Five-Man Band with Magician, Cleric, Knight, and Blackbelt/Monk. The Hero may not be able to change from this class. If there is a Job System and any character can use this class, it will probably be hard to get, and if it's not available for