

Character Customization

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Published By Throwing Dice Games

Requires the use of the *Dungeons & Dragons*®
Player's Handbook, Third Edition, published
by Wizards of the Coast®, Inc.



The following is an excerpt from Throwing Dice Games' latest release Character Customization. This is taken from Part 4: Prestige Classes. In the sections before this one is a primer on prestige class design. The champion template is one of four templates described. And the Orc Champion is one of the sample prestige classes.

PRESTIGE CLASSES AS TEMPLATES

Monster templates are one of the best things about the system. In fact the idea should have been pushed into more parts of the system. Spells like silent image, minor image, major image, etc should all be template-based. But, that is another book.

Prestige classes should be viewed as templates. Most prestige classes are designed all at once to fulfill a specific niche in a campaign. This is fine when only you and your players will use the class but goes awry when you want to transport the prestige class to someone else's campaign.

Prestige class design should come in two steps. In one step, one designs the mechanics of the class. In the other step, one designs the campaign background of the class. You are free to do these two steps in either order. The important part is to delineate the two tasks. When designing prestige classes for your own campaign you will most likely perform the background step first. But if you want your prestige class to be portable to other campaigns, you should design its mechanics first, independently of your campaign.

To make this easier, the layout of a prestige class description should reflect the two steps. The mechanics portion of the design is listed first as a template. It is followed by the campaign specific background along with other template notes and additional requirements.

THROWING IT ALL AWAY

Not all prestige class concepts make viable templates. While developing a prestige class by separating the game rules from the role-playing aspect makes it easier to balance the class. Sometimes the prestige class template is awkward to work with.

Other times the subject matter of the class does not lend itself to having parameters. In these cases, add the flavor text directly to the template and the result is a normal prestige class description.

PRESTIGE CLASS TEMPLATES

The mechanics of a prestige class are mostly found in these templates. The following section describes the format of each prestige class template that follows.

PRESTIGE CLASS TEMPLATE TITLE

Describe the overall concept of the class here. What niche does it fulfill? Explain why certain classes might be better off using it.

Template Parameters

This section is only necessary for prestige classes that improve a normal ability that can be generalized to a similar ability. Typical template parameters are listed below:

Parameter: Describe what the parameter should contain. Try not to include too many parameters in a template as that can make the write-up awkward. In subsequent sections of the template, refer to the parameter by placing it in brackets: [*Parameter*]. Typical parameters include skills, weapons, terrains, monster types, monster subtypes, spell subtypes, the choice between arcane and divine, etc. Skills are the most frequent template parameters.

Requirements

Describe the requirements of the class. Requirements should be listed in this order. Omit elements that are not needed: Alignment, Ability Scores (in a comma separated list), Base Attack Bonus, Base Saving Throws (list individually), Skills (listed individually indicating the minimum number of ranks needed, not the minimum bonus), Feats (in a comma separated list), Spellcasting, and Special (for anything else).

Requirement: The level/rank of the requirement or a description of it.

Class Features

List the class features. Standard features should be listed first in this order, followed by template specific features: Hit Die, Class Skills, Skill Points at Each Level, Weapon and Armor Proficiency and Spells per Day.

Feature: Each feature should have its own paragraph describing it.

Class Table

The class table describes the class's BAB, saving throws, when it gains features and any other level based changes.

CHAMPION TEMPLATE

Champion is a prestige class template for any race or social group who supports fighting men to defend the group. Elite members of this fighting group can become champions of the group.

A champion's role is somewhat dependent on the group's alignment and views toward fighting.

Template Parameters

The champion template has five parameters:

Inspiration Method: Usually Diplomacy but some groups may favor Intimidating champions. Groups unified by monetary concerns may even favor champions with high Bluff skill.

Required Feats: Two or more feats indicative of the group's overall fighting style.

Bonus Feats: A list of 5 or 6 feats that improve upon the required feats and exemplify the group's fighting style.

Code: This is a list of 2 or 3 things that the champion is obligated to do to retain his status as a champion of the group.

Redemption: A task an ex-champion must accomplish to regain champion status.

Note: "Group" is used to refer to the champion's affiliation. Sometimes it is noted in brackets when used like a parameter. Other times the word group is used without brackets to aid readability.

Requirements

To become a champion, characters must meet at least these requirements:

BAB: +5

[Inspiration Method]: 5 ranks

Knowledge (tactics): 2 ranks

Feats: [*Required Feats*]

Part 4: Prestige Classes

Class Features

The champion has the following class features:

Hit Die: d10.

Class Skills: The champion's class skills are as follows:

Ability	Skills
Strength	Climb, Jump, Swim
Dexterity	Balance, Ride
Intelligence	Knowledge (tactics), Knowledge ([group])
Wisdom	Spot,
Charisma	[<i>Inspiration Method</i>]

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A champion is proficient with all simple and martial weapons, light armor, medium armor, and shields.

Restrictions: Champions must follow a code of conduct. Failure to obey these restrictions causes the champion to become an ex-champion. The code of conduct includes: [*Code*].

Leadership (Ex): The champion gains the leadership feat even if he does not meet the requirements. The champion's cohort is always allowed to be no more than one level lower than the champion regardless of the champion's leadership score.

Bonus Feat: The champion gains a feat from the following list at levels 2, 5 and 8: [*Bonus Feats*].

Boost Allies (Ex): The champion may take a standard action, that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, to rally his allies. All combatants who are members of the champion's group who can see or hear the champion's rallying cry gain a +1 morale bonus to all attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws and skill and ability checks. Boost Allies has a maximum range of 20 feet per champion level. The bonus lasts one round per level of the champion. This bonus goes up to +2 at level 7 and +3 at level 10.

Second Cohort (Ex): The champion gains another cohort as he had taken the leadership feat a second time. The second cohort is always allowed to be no more than one level lower the champion's level regardless of the champion's leadership score. The champion's first cohort's level may now be equal to that of the champion's level.

Ex-Champions

Should the champion fall out of favor with his group, he loses access to the leadership feat, second cohort, boost allies ability, and can no longer gain levels in the champion prestige class. Ex-champions who fulfill the [*Redemption*] requirement, regain full access to their champion abilities and may take additional levels in champion.



Table 4-4: Champion Template

Base					
Class	Attack	Fort	Ref	Will	
Level	Bonus	Save	Save	Save	Special
1	+1	+2	+2	+0	Leadership
2	+2	+3	+3	+0	Bonus Feat
3	+3	+3	+3	+1	Boost Allies +1
4	+4	+4	+4	+1	
5	+5	+4	+4	+1	Bonus Feat
6	+6	+5	+5	+2	Second Cohort
7	+7	+5	+5	+2	Boost Allies +2
8	+8	+6	+6	+2	Bonus Feat
9	+9	+6	+6	+3	
10	+10	+7	+7	+3	Boost Allies +3

PRESTIGE CLASSES

These prestige classes are based on the previous templates. The next section describes the layout of prestige classes based on templates followed by some sample prestige classes based on the templates and modifier templates described above.

PRESTIGE CLASS TITLE

Describe the campaign specific background of the prestige class.

Game Rule Information

Template: Indicate which template, and any class modifiers, the class is based on (with any template parameters specified here).

Additional Requirements: List campaign specific requirements for entry into the prestige class here.

Additional/Restricted Class Skills: If necessary, list any changes to the class skill list here.

If there are changes to any of the features, or additional restrictions, add them here. Although major changes are not encouraged here, a template with a broad enough parameter might include a feature here where the character locks the parameter down when he takes his first level of the prestige class. For example, the *weapon* parameter of the ranged thaumaturge template might not be important to a certain prestige class based on it. In this case, you would add a class feature here that would force the character to choose the ranged weapon instead of locking it down like the Arcane Archer prestige class (below) does.

ORC CHAMPION

Charismatic orcs are rare and wondrous people. Without the strength to back up their charisma, they become rogues. Orcs respect fighting ability based on who is standing at the end of a fight. The champion's Boost Allies ability helps increase the number of standing orcs at the end of a fight. This is the sign of a great leader, an orc among orcs.

Game Rule Information

Template: Champion [*Inspiration Method*: Intimidate; Required Feats: *Power Attack*; Bonus Feats: *Bent Charge*, *Great Charge*, *Greater Bull Rush*, *Improved Bull Rush*, *Improved Charge*, *Mighty Sunder*, *Reckless Attack*, *Sunder*; *Code*: That which is good for the tribe must be done unless you can get away with; *Redemption*: Single handedly defeat a known foe of the tribe.]

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