



Building the Battlecaster

As a young fighter in training the prospective battlecaster possessed great intelligence and began incorporating magic study into his daily routine. Gradually, he became something more than a simple warrior but not entirely a wizard. To create this class, consider the rules as they appear in Chapter 3 of the *DMG* to see what they yield:

Race (Table 11): This choice is the simplest: human. Note the 0 multiple beside it.

Combat Value (Table 12): Since the battlecaster should fight like a true warrior, select the warrior option. Note it along with the +2 multiple.

Saving Throw Table (Table 13): The battlecaster should use the wizard table, as it's more advantageous and reflects his study in the arcane lore. Because it already exists for another class, the multiplier is 0.

Hit Dice (Table 14): The battlecaster should be almost as tough as a fighter, so choose 1d8 for Hit Dice at each level. This choice adds a +1 multiple.

Armor Allowed (Table 15): Since casting spells is next to impossible in heavy armor, we'll elect to give this class a limited AC. This choice allows the battlecaster to wear armor of AC 5 (chainmail) or worse and gives a -0.5 multiple.

Weapons Allowed (Table 16): For weapons, the battlecaster is open in his options. He can learn any weapon he desires, just as a normal fighter. This option has a 0 multiple.

Hit Points Beyond 9th Level (Table 17): Since the battlecaster is human, he can advance to any level. So above 9th, let him gain +2 hp/level. This choice makes the class slightly stronger than a mage, but not as tough as a true fighter, and it gives him a multiple of +1. (Note that the April 1995 edition of the *DUNGEON MASTER Guide* mistakenly notes this value as +2.)

Now you have a bare-bones class, with no real special traits. Move on to the optional abilities (Table 18).

Obviously, the battlecaster should have spell-casting capabilities. However, the ability to cast spells from all schools of magic adds +16 to the experience multiple! Assume that the battlecaster's nature would limit him to casting the Invocation/Evocation school, as it affords the most combat-oriented spells. This ability adds only +3 to the experience multiple.

The battlecaster should be able to use magical items usable by warriors and wizards, for a total of +2 to the experience multiple. (That is +1 per class.)

Assuming you use the proficiency system, the battlecaster must buy some slots. Allow two weapon slots and four nonweapon slots upon creation, for a total of a +1.5 multiple.

After looking at the overall class, you can see that a battlecaster will spend much of his time in the study of books, in addition to his warrior skills. Naturally he's not going to be as strong or as tough as a normal fighter. Therefore choose not to allow fighter Constitution or exceptional Strength bonuses.

Whether serving in an army, or just out adventuring, a battlecaster sets himself outside the norms, due to his unique nature. Therefore he would not have any restrictions in alignment or ethos.

With the simple example of the battlecaster, don't worry about any of

the restrictions (**Table 20**). Those can be useful in balancing a class with more optional abilities, but the battlecaster doesn't need them.

Now you have a workable character class. Your worksheet should look something like **Table 1** on this page.

Using the Base Experience Points, you can create your own table for the battlecaster. You may notice that the experience requirements seem too easy, especially when compared to the wizard chart. But think about this: the mage and the specialist can cast from multiple schools, whereas the battlecaster cannot. And when compared to the physical prowess of the fighter, the battlecaster comes up short. That this class straddles the middle-ground of the two class types, without throwing off the balance of the game.

The more abilities you add to a class, the more experience it takes to reach each level. If the requirements are too high, the character advances too slowly. He won't be able to keep up with the other single-class characters, and the multi-class demi-humans will surpass his limited abilities too quickly.

Once you have all of the technical kinks worked out, the final step is to fill out the details. For this you should look to the *Player's Handbook* and write a class description, modeling it after one that exists. At this point you will want to decide what ability requirements the class demands.

For the battlecaster, say that he must be physically able to withstand the stress of combat training (Strength 9), and show a somewhat higher degree of common sense and ingenuity (Intelligence 12). You'll also want to decide any special traits the class has, and whether or not followers are in order at higher levels. Other details will fall into place as you read your model class description.

Our finished text for the battlecaster might look something like this:

Battlecaster

Ability Requirements: Strength 9,
Intelligence 12

Prime Requisites: Strength,
Intelligence

Allowed Races: Human

The battlecaster is a human warrior who has incorporated magical study into his usual martial training. This could be because the battlecaster joined a military group, or perhaps it

Table 1: Battlecaster Worksheet

Class Abilities

Ability	Choice	Multiple
Race	Human	0
Combat Value Used	Warrior	+2.0
Saving Throw Table Used	Wizard	0
Hit Dice Per Level	1d8	+1.0
Armor Allowed	Limited	-0.5
Weapons Allowed	All	0
HP/Level Beyond 9th	+2	+1.0
Optional Abilities	6 proficiency slots	+1.5
	May learn and cast spells	
	From one school of magic	+3.0
	May use magical items allowed to Warriors	+1.0
	May use magical items allowed to Wizards	+1.0
Total Multiple		+10.0

Base Experience Points

Level	Base Experience	Multiplier	Result
2	200	x 10	2,000
3	400	x 10	4,000
4	800	x 10	8,000
5	2,000	x 10	20,000
6	4,000	x 10	40,000
7	8,000	x 10	80,000
8	15,000	x 10	150,000
9	28,000	x 10	280,000
10+	+30,000/additional level	x 10	580,000

is the result of hobby-style study with a wizard mentor. The principal attributes of a battlecaster are Strength and Intelligence. Any member of this class with scores of 16 or better in each of these abilities gains an additional 10% bonus to earned experience.

Battlecasters may be of any alignment. However, if a player selects a military background for his character, Lawful alignment should be seriously considered.

Due to the extensive time battlecasters spend in study, they are somewhat weaker than normal warriors. They use the B-sided die for hit points. Battlecasters are not allowed Warrior Constitution bonuses or exceptional Strength.

Battlecasters are able to learn any weapon of their choice. However, because heavier armor makes it difficult to cast mage spells, battlecasters are limited to wearing armor of AC 5 or worse.

Although a capable warrior, the battlecaster's main focus is combining

the skills of a fighter with the casting of mage spells. To this end, the battlecaster must choose a single school of magic to study. Thereafter he is bound to that school alone, and may not change. The spell limits and progression are limited by Intelligence **Table 4** (*PHB*), and Wizard spell progression **Table 21** (*PHB*). Do not confuse this

Table 2: Battlecaster Experience Levels

Level	XP	HD (d8)
1	0	1
2	2,000	2
3	4,000	3
4	8,000	4
5	20,000	5
6	40,000	6
7	80,000	7
8	150,000	8
9	280,000	9
10+	+300,000/level	*

* +2 hp/additional level

Table 3: Battlecaster Proficiency Slots

Weapon		
Initial	# levels	Penalty
2	3	-2

Nonweapon	
Initial	# levels
4	3

limitation with the abilities of a specialist wizard. Unlike the specialist, a battlecaster gains no bonuses when casting spells from his chosen school, and he cannot learn spells from any other school. However, the battlecaster is able to research new spells in his school but still gains no bonuses. This is all due to the rigors of the rest of the class abilities (i.e., fighting).

A battlecaster uses the combat value of a warrior but makes saving throws as a wizard. He is able to employ magical items usable by warriors and wizards, as long as they meet the limits of the class.

Finally, at 9th level, a battlecaster can attract a following of men-at-arms, in the same manner as a fighter.

Table 4: Battlecaster Elite Unit Followers

Roll Elite Unit	
01-20	Ten 2nd-level half-elf fighter/mages, with <i>scale mail +1</i> , <i>long swords +1</i> , and short bows.
21-45	Five 3rd-level mages, with <i>bracers of defense AC 4</i> , staves, daggers, and darts.
46-65	Ten mounted knights (1st level fighters with field plate, large shield, lance, broadsword, morning star, and heavy warhorse with full barding).
66-99	Five 4th-level battlecasters with <i>chain-mail +2</i> , <i>bastard sword +2</i> , and light warhorse.
00	DM's Option

The DM might wish to modify this chart to suit the campaign.

For this purpose, use the rules listed in the *PHB* for fighters. However, for the Elite Unit roll on the following chart:

Nonweapon Proficiency Groups: Warrior, Wizard, General.

Money: As Warrior.

Notes: Weapon specialization not allowed.

Attacks per Round: Use **Table 15** in the *Player's Handbook*.

The finished battlecaster class is fairly well balanced and playable, and it could be a welcome addition to almost any campaign. Those who feel that the battlecaster is too limited can easily add more abilities, such as extra schools of magic or fighter ability bonuses. Keep in mind the experience costs that come with such additional abilities.

This example was created by generally following the path presented in the rules, without straying much. That is not to say that this is the only way. The AD&D game rules were made to be flexible, changing to suit many styles of play and always leaving room for the creativity of the players and DMs. Perhaps there is some skill you want your new class to have that makes it more unique. This special ability could be as simple as a new proficiency or as interesting as a new granted power. Another new class can provide an example of how to incorporate original abilities into the new classes you create.

Constructing the Street Avenger

Here is the peasant's paladin, the back-alley hero. The street avenger has made it his personal quest to rid his city of violent crime. He uses the criminals' own methods to root them out and destroy them, yet he remains the hero and savior of the helpless victim. Here's how to make this class:

For ability requirements, assume that a street avenger must be stronger than average (Strength 12), somewhat agile (Dexterity 9), and slightly wiser than most (Wisdom 14). A street avenger's alignment should be neutral good. Although a staunch supporter of the law, the street avenger must be willing to bend or break it in order to deliver justice.

The new streetwise proficiency, and the "see criminal" granted power are examples of how a little creativity can enhance the uniqueness of a new class. Streetwise represents the char-

acters affinity with the streets. He can read subtle signs in the behavior of the street's inhabitants. See criminal is a special power that allows the street avenger to learn who is responsible for certain heinous crimes.

The next step is to write a class description. Start with the paladin, ranger, and thief descriptions for examples, as these three share consistent traits with the concept of the street avenger. The new class description might look something like this:

The Street Avenger

Ability Requirements: Strength 12, Dexterity 9, Wisdom 14

Prime Requisites: Strength, Wisdom

Races Allowed: Human

The street avenger is a warrior who seeks to clean the streets of crime. He is a vigilante champion of the weak. He tends to work outside the law, yet he will work with the law if it serves his purposes.

The main attributes of a street avenger are Strength and Wisdom. A good Dexterity is also required. Street avengers are always neutral good and must remain so for their entire career. They fight for justice, but they realize that sometimes laws hinder as much as they protect.

A street avenger with Strength and Wisdom scores of 16 or more gains a 10% bonus to earned experience.

A street avenger can use any weapon; however, he is limited in his choices of armor for the same reasons as a thief. He can wear leather, studded leather, padded leather, or elven chainmail. Like the thief, if he wears anything heavier than leather, his thief skills suffer.

The street avenger fights as a warrior and saves as a rogue. He uses the lo-sided die for Hit Dice up to 9th level; thereafter, he gains 2 hp per level.

The street avenger is attuned to the ways of his city in the same manner as a ranger is to the forest. Even if the optional proficiency system is not otherwise used, the street avenger should have the disguise and streetwise proficiencies.

With streetwise, he can discern certain aspects about his environment. These include detecting a criminal scoping a target, gang movements, and the imminence of a crime