

Class Construction Engine

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Contents

Foreward.....	2
Method.....	2
A Bit of Prestige.....	4
Closing Thought.....	4
Comparing the Classes.....	5
Class Abilities.....	5

Foreward

What follows is my attempt to create a point-based systems that GM's can use to build fantasy Classes within the framework of the Core Rulebooks. Of course, the existing Classes have more balance to them than previous editions of the game (in my humble opinion), but are somewhat difficult to accurately reconstruct with these rules, due to their inherent imbalances. However, about 7 of the core classes are close to the mark, 3 are somewhat off (about 90% under – probably the 3 weakest within the rules, hmm) and 1 is 13% over (in the long run, it is of the more empowered classes).

This engine was created with as little regard to actual GM play-style and setting dependences as possible. Structured settings, such as high- and low-magic or godless worlds, as well as those with predominant types of terrain will affect the strengths of one or more of the Classes. GM style is a big influence on how Classes match-up. "Monty-Haul" and "Hack-n-Slash" gamemastering redirects the balance of many character types.

With that in mind, the following system should be used to help spingboard and balance any new core Classes that you want to create. Is isn't wholly perfect, but neither am I, and nor is any one game. I would appreciate any positive feedback or suggestions – or even variations that you come up with.

Method

Classes are built with Class Points (or CP). After deconstructing the system, I came up with an average of 250 CP per Class. You can use this as a base when building new Classes, but I suggesting going a little lower (maybe 240 CP) to keep any creations from outshining the core Classes. This number should be your ceiling for CP building when using the charts and tables below.

- Start with 0 CP and determine the Hit Dice for the Class. Add the corresponding CP value.
- Determine which Weapon Proficiencies are available to the class. The CP for weapons are cumulative, so if the Class can use all simple and martial weapons, the 25 is added to the CP. Weapons that are added singularly are worth 1 CP each.
- For Armor Proficiencies, add the CP of all that apply. If the Class has a restriction such as natural materials (Druid) or progressive Armor Class (Monk), use a value of 10 instead.
- For Skill Points, select the CP value according to the base number that applies.
- Determine how many Class Skills are available to the Class and select the appropriate CP value.
- For Alignment, add 0 if the Class has no alignment restrictions. Add a CP value of -5 if it is restricted to an alignment range such as Lawful, Chaotic or no-Lawful. Select -10 instead if it has a singular Alignment requirement.
- For Attack Bonuses, select the appropriate CP value, determined by the Class' attack bonus progression. The Ratings are provided merely as a helpful description.
- For Saves, select the appropriate CP value, determined by the Class' equivalent Save bonuses. Again, the Ratings are just descriptive terms.

Hit Dice	CP
d4	10
d6	20
d8	30
d10	40
d12	50

Weapon Prof	CP
All Simple	10
All Martial	15
Per Individual*	+1

Armor Prof	CP
Light	10
Medium	10
Heavy	10
Shields	5
Special*	10

Skill Points	CP
2	15
4	30
6	45
8	60

Class Skills	CP
6 to 10	10
11 to15	15
16 to 20	20
21 to 25	25
26 to 30	30
31+	35

Alignment	CP
Any	0
Prohibited	-5
Exclusive	-10

Attack Bonuses	Rating	CP
As Barbarian, Fighter, Paladin or Ranger	Good	50
As Cleric, Druid, Rogue, Bard, Monk	Lesser	30
As Wizard or Sorcerer	Poor	10

Saves	Rating	CP
As Barbarian, Ranger, Fighter, Paladin	Durable	15
As Bard	Adroit	25
As Cleric, Druid	Defended	25
As Monk	Ultimate	35
As Rogue	Deft	15
As Sorcerer or Wizard	Willful	15

Add up all the CP values you've been recording so far (if you have been tallying them all along) and subtract them from your ceiling of 240 CP. The number of CP remaining are the points you have left to pick special abilities for your Class – otherwise known as "the Hard Part"

The tables below list basic abilities possessed by one or more of the core Classes, as well as a few "Sample" abilities I threw in. I realize that this can be a daunting and confusing task, so further into this writing are Appendices that compare the classes in point totals and break down the costs of their special abilities. It also can provide you with a way to campaign-tweak an existing class for a custom game world.

General Abilities		CP	Notes
New Use of an Existing Skill		5	A new use of a skill or additional bonus.
One-Time Ability		5	A standard ability giving the class a special one-time bonus or power. This should be no more powerful than a low-level spell effect or +2 bonus.
Enhanced One-Time Ability		10	A more powerful One-Time Ability that confers a few lesser benefits or a moderate spell effect or bonus of up to +4.
Moderate Ability		10	A standard ability (akin to One-Time Ability) that increases one or more times as levels are accrued.
Excellent Ability		15	A more powerful ability that increases one or more times as levels are accrued. Can also represent a Moderate Ability that increases a lot.
Outstanding Ability		20	A very powerful ability that gives the class a distinct superiority that increases one or more times as levels are gained. Can also represent an Excellent Ability that increases a lot.
Acquired Feat		5	Any general feat acquired.
Acquired Mystical Feat		10	Any magical feat acquired.
Minor Code		-10	Fairly easy to follow Code of Conduct
Strict Code		-15	Very restrictive Code of Conduct
Greater Restriction		-10	A prohibition or restriction that detrimentally affects the abilities of the Class
Multiclass Restriction		-10	Prohibits the Class from gaining levels if gaining levels in another Class
Illiteracy		-5	Must spend additional skill points to Read and Write

Mystical Abilities		CP	Notes
Spell Capability		10	The core ability to cast spells. Needs to be taken for all Classes that use Spell Lists.
Divine Spells	Total of All Spells per Day that can be cast at 20 th level		Add all the numbers up of the Cleric Spells per day that can be used at 20 th level. Does not include bonus spells or benefits from Domain Spells. Does include the requirement of an hour per day of preparation. The same goes for Druid Spells but with some limitations that follow.
Arcane Spells	Total of All Spells per Day that can be cast at 20 th level multiplied by 2		Add all the numbers up of the Arcane Spells per day that can be used at 20 th level and double the total. Includes the hourly memorization of spells beforehand. This method is used for Bards, Sorcerors and Wizards, though some limitations may apply.
Limited Spell List		-10	Applicable if the spells are cast from a smaller, restrictive list.
Fast Casting		10	Spells need not be prepared beforehand.
Spell Substitution		5	Allows a predetermined spells to be cast in place of other spells.
Domain Spells	Total of All Domain Spells per Day that can be cast at 20 th level.		Add all the number of Domain Spells that can be cast at 20 th level. Select one Domain and Diety for the character.
Additional Domain		+5	Per additional Domain of Spells.
Divine Gifts		+5	Per gift bestowed upon the character from a Diety.
Unlimited Arcana		+15	Ability to know an unlimited amount of Arcane Spells. If this ability is not selected, the Class is limited to a finite amount of spells that can be learned.
Delayed Spell Ability		-10	Can be applied if spell casting ability begins at 4 th level. Can be applied with a -20 if it begins at 8 th level instead.

Sample Abilities	CP	Notes
Minor Bonus Spell	5	Ability to cast a 0-1 st level Arcane spell or 1 st level Divine spell 1x/day
Elemental Resistance	5	+2 to saves against a particular elemental effect, such as ice or fire
Fighter Specialization	10	Acquired Specialization Feat. Should cost more since it is normally reserved to Fighters
Armored Casting	10	The ability to cast Arcane spells while in light armor.

A Bit of Prestige

This optional section provides the GM with a way to use this system to build new Prestige Classes.

Quite simply, build it as a class as described above, but with a ceiling of 225 CP. Prestige Classes have a few intrinsic bonuses that shave this down to a smaller number, the core of which is the lack of requirement by level or class.

Keep a couple of things in mind when doing this:

- The Alignment restriction table would be considered a Requirement (see further below).
- The Attack and Save bonus tables would still be used, but they only apply up to 10th level.

Before you move on to figuring up the Special Abilities for the Prestige Class, determine its Requirements. Generally, they have between 40 and 70 points worth. Any of the negative CP Abilities (such as Minor Code, Strict Code, and Greater Restriction) can be applied as Requirements. The following table lists a few more that are common to Prestige Classes:

Restrictions	CP	Notes
Racial Requirement	-10	Only allows membership of a specific race. Crossbreeds can be allowed at the designer's whim.
Attack Bonus Requirement	-5 per +2 bonus	-
Skill Rank Requirement	-5 per +2 ranks	-
Feat Requirement	-5	Per specific Feat required.
Minor Deed	-5	A not-so-hard task needs to be accomplished to join (Kill someone, steal a certain type of item, etc.)
Significant Deed	-10	A substantial task needs to be accomplished to join (Killing an important person, stealing a particular item owned by someone, etc.)
Quest	-15	A small quest needs to be accomplished to join (return what was stolen from me by city x, kill this ferocious creature, etc.)
Heroic Quest	-20	A quest needs to be fulfilled that can only be accomplished by a hero (pick almost any of Hercules' Labors)
Spell Capability	-5	Requires the capability of casting spells, usually at least 1 st level.
Moderate Magic	-10	Requires the character to know how to cast spells of at least 3 rd level of spell ability.
Good Magic	-15	Requires the character to know how to cast spells of at least 5 th level of spell ability.

After determining Restrictions, move on to taking Special Abilities as proscribed for core Classes.

Example Requirements for some Prestige Classes: Arcane Archer 50, Assassin 60, Blackguard 55, Dwarven Defender 45. The last two were rounded down.

Closing Thought

Even with a point system for building classes, a good dose of insight and evaluative judgement on what is and isn't appropriate should apply as a DM.

Comparing the Classes

The chart below breaks down all the class and shows how they would be constructed with this engine...

	HD	Weapon Prof	Armor Prof	Skill Pts/ Level	Class Skills	Align	Attack Bonuses	Saves	SUBtotal	Special Abilities	TOTAL
Barbarian	50	25	25	30	10	0	50	15	205	40	245
Bard	20	11	25	30	30	-5	30	25	166	110	276
Cleric	30	10	35	15	10	0	30	25	155	85	240
Druid	30	9	10	30	15	-5	30	25	144	106	250
Fighter	40	25	35	15	10	0	50	15	190	55	245
Monk	30	12	10	30	15	-5	30	35	157	130	287
Paladin	40	25	35	15	10	-10	50	15	180	77	257
Ranger	40	25	25	30	20	0	50	15	205	32	237
Rogue	20	16	10	60	35	0	30	15	186	65	251
Sorcerer	10	10	0	15	10	0	10	15	70	145	215
Wizard	10	5	0	15	10	0	10	15	65	170	235
										Average	~250

Class Abilities

Barbarian Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Barbarian Rage	15	Excellent Ability
Fast Movement	5	One-Time Ability (conditional)
Uncanny Dodge	15	Excellent Ability
Damage Reduction	10	Moderate Ability
Illiteracy	-5	Illiteracy
Bard Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Spell Capability	10	Spell Capability
Arcane Spells	70	Arcane Spells
No Memorization	10	Fast Casting
Bard Spell List	-10	Limited Spell List
Bardic Music	20	Outstanding Ability
Bardic Knowledge	10	Moderate Ability
Cleric Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Spell Capability	10	Spell Capability
Divine Spells	41	Divine Spells
Domain Spells	9	Domain Spells
Additional Domain	5	Additional Domain
Divine Gifts (2)	10	Divine Gifts
Spell Substitution	5	Spell Substitution
Turn Undead	15	Excellent Ability
Code of Conduct	-10	Code of Conduct
Druid Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Spell Capability	10	Spell Capability
Divine Spells	51	Divine Spells (equivalent)
Limited Spell List	-10	Limited Spell List
Druid Language	5	One-Time Ability
Nature Sense	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Animal Companion	5	One-Time Ability
Woodland Stride	5	One-Time Ability

Druid Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Trackless Step	5	One-Time Ability
Resist Nature's Lure	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Wild Shape	20	Outstanding Ability
Venom Immunity	5	One-Time Ability
A Thousand Faces	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Timeless Body	5	One-Time Ability
Armor and Weapon Prohibition affects Magic	-15	Greater Restriction (multiple)
Reverance of Nature	-10	Lesser Code

Fighter Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Feat Bonus (11)	55	Acquired feat (multiple)

Monk Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Unarmed Strike (includes Flurry of Blows)	15	Excellent Ability
Stunning Attack	10	Moderate Ability
Evasion (including Improved)	15	Excellent Ability
Deflect Arrows	5	Acquired Feat
Fast Movement	10	Moderate Ability (conditional)
Still Mind	5	One-Time Ability
Slow Fall	5	Moderate Ability (but very limited in usefulness)
Purity of Body	5	One-Time Ability
Improved Trip	5	Acquired Feat
Wholeness of Body	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Leap of Clouds	5	One-Time Ability
Ki Strike	10	Moderate Ability
Diamond Body	5	One-Time Ability
Abundant Step	5	One-Time Ability (reduced)
Diamond Soul	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Quivering Palm	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Timeless Body	5	One-Time Ability
Tongue of the Sun and Moon	5	One-Time Ability
Empty Body	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Perfect Self	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Wearing Armor affects all Abilities	-20	Greater Restriction (massive)
Multiclass Restriction	-10	Multiclass Restriction

Paladin Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Detect Evil at will	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Divine Grace	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Lay on Hands	10	Moderate Ability
Divine Health	5	One-Time Ability
Aura of Courage	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Smite Evil	10	Moderate Ability
Remove Disease	10	Moderate Ability
Turn Undead	10	Moderate Ability (limited)
Spell Capability	10	Spell Capability
Divine Spells	12	Divine Spells (equivalent)
Spells Begin at 4 th level	-10	Delayed Spell Ability
Special Mount	15	Excellent Ability

Paladin Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Code of Honor	-15	Strict Code
Multiclass Restriction	-10	Multiclass Restriction
Ranger Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Spell Capability	10	Spell Capability
Divine Spells	12	Divine Spells (equivalent)
Limited Spell List	-10	Limited Spell List
Spells Begin at 4 th level	-10	Delayed Spell Ability
Track	5	Acquired Feat
Favored Enemy	15	Excellent Ability
Ranger Two Weapon Technique	10	Acquired Feat (2)
Rogue Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Sneak Attack	15	Excellent Ability
Traps	5	New Use of an Existing Skill
Evasion	10	Enhanced One-Time Ability
Uncanny Dodge	15	Excellent Ability
Special Abilities (4)	20	Acquired Feat (basically)
Sorcerer Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Spell Capability	10	Spell Capability
Arcane Spells	120	Arcane Spells
Limited Spell List	-10	Limited Spell List
No Memorization	10	Fast Casting
Familiar	15	Excellent Ability
Wizard Abilities	CP	Equivalent
Spell Capability	10	Spell Capability
Arcane Spells	80	Arcane Spells
Known Unlimited Spells	15	Unlimited Arcana
Bonus Feats (4)	40	Acquired Mystical Feat
Familiar	15	Excellent Ability
Scribe Scroll	10	Acquired Mystical Feat

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