

Advanced Dungeons & Dragons[®]

Player's Handbook 2nd Edition Rules Supplement

The
Complete
Wizard's
Handbook



No concept is more fundamental to the ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS 2nd Edition® game than magic. And no character class better personifies the art of magic than its primary practitioner, the wizard. No class is more challenging, few are as elegant, and in the hands of a creative player, none is as fascinating.

The AD&D 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook* and *Dungeon Master's Guide* explained all of the basic information necessary for playing wizard characters. In this book, we'll expand on that information, adding more details and options and offering a few new variations.

For instance, we'll be taking a close look at all the schools of magic, examining their advantages and disadvantages, their requirements and benefits, and the types of characters that are best suited for particular specializations. Since the schools of magic aren't limited to those presented in the *Player's Handbook*, we'll show you how to create your own schools from scratch.

We'll discuss ways to personalize your wizard characters and describe entire campaigns centered on wizardly concerns. If you've been bemoaning the lack of spells for certain specialists, such as diviners and necromancers, worry no more—we've added plenty of new spells just for them.

For the Dungeon Master, we'll offer some tips to help fine-tune his skills as a referee, covering such topics as the adjudication of illusions and how to establish guidelines for magical research. We'll explain how spells are cast underwater and in other planes of existence. And for players and DMs alike, we'll take a close look at combat and how it relates to wizards.

Think of this book as a smorgasbord of ideas. Everything here is optional. Pick and choose whatever's most appealing, make changes to suit your campaign, and experiment with variations of your own design. It's your game and your world—we're here to

help you make it as entertaining as it can be.

Throughout this book, we've used male pronouns as a matter of convenience. This is *not* intended to exclude females—in all cases, read "his" as "his or her," and "he" as "he or she."

For those of you using *The Complete Wizard* in conjunction with the original AD&D game instead of the AD&D 2nd Edition game, this supplement mentions many page numbers from the *Player's Handbook* and the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The page numbers cited refer to the AD&D 2nd Edition books. Those players using the old books will have to ignore these page references, but in most cases, you can find the relevant material by consulting the indexes or contents pages of the original books.



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Chapter 1: Schools of Magic

In this chapter, we'll take a close look at the various schools of magic, analyzing their strengths and weaknesses, examining their spells, and sizing up their specialists. We'll also look at the minor schools and explore the implications of abandoning a school.

The schools of magic add many interesting possibilities to a campaign. But not every wizard is destined to be a specialist, and not every player wants to play a specialist character. So let's begin with a basic question.

To Specialize or Not to Specialize?

The most crucial decision a beginning wizard must make is whether to specialize in a school of magic or instead opt for the life of a mage. Each has its advantages and disadvantages. For instance, the mage has a chance to learn any new spell he encounters, but the specialist's opportunities are more limited—he cannot learn spells from schools that are in opposition to his own. The specialist has stricter racial and ability requirements than the mage, but he also has better saving throw bonuses.

The choice to specialize can have profound effects on a wizard's role in the game, and players should think carefully before committing their characters to a school of magic. Following are a few points to consider.

Ability Scores

A wizard must meet certain ability requirements to become a specialist. For instance, a wizard with a Dexterity of 15 can't become an illusionist. But even if low ability scores haven't eliminated all of the specialization choices, the player should still look at his character's Intelligence score and see how it affects his chance of learning spells.

An Intelligence of 9 means that the character will have a 50 percent chance to learn spells of his speciality based on the normal 35 percent chance to learn a new spell for an Intelligence of 9 (Table 4 on page 16 of the *Player's Handbook*) plus a 15 percent bonus for being a specialist. An Intelligence of 17 means that the character will have a 90 percent chance to learn spells of his specialty (the normal 75 percent chance for an Intelligence of 17 plus a 15 percent bonus for being a specialist). Notice that the 15 percent bonus helps the character with the lower Intelligence more than it does the character with the higher Intelligence; the bonus boosts the Intelligence 9 character's chance from 35 to 50, an increase of more than 40 percent, while the Intelligence 17 character's chance is increased from 75 to 90, which is a boost of only 20 percent.

Clearly, the lower the Intelligence of a wizard, the more specialization helps to increase his chance of learning spells. This is somewhat offset by the specialist's limitations to which spells he can learn (he can't learn spells from oppositional schools), but over the course of a campaign, a low Intelligence wizard stands a good chance of learning more spells by specializing.

1st-Level Bonus Spell

A 1st-level specialist begins with two spells, but a 1st-level mage begins with only one. This difference is inconsequential over the course of a long campaign, but it can be significant if playing a short adventure with low-level characters.

Personality and Background of the Player Character

Some aspect of the player character's personality might suggest whether he's best suited for the life of a mage or that

of a specialist. An impulsive, overeager character might lack the patience for the studious life of a specialist. Conversely, a thoughtful, scholarly character might find the life of a mage too confining. A character who comes from a long line of mages might want to continue the family tradition. A character whose brother was killed by an evil specialist NPC might want to study the same school to prepare himself for a confrontation with the murderer.

Access to Mentors

Does the wizard character have easy access to a mentor of his preferred school? Is the mentor in ill health, is his city under siege, or is his future otherwise in question? Although there are ways to learn spells without a mentor (or magic academy), the wizard may want to think carefully before committing to a specialization if he can't depend on the availability of his mentor (or academy) for consultation and further training.

Party Composition

If the character's party already includes one or more mages, the wizard might choose a specialization to give the party a wider variety of character types. If the party is small, it might be less risky to become a mage so that the character has access to spells of all the schools. Are there other player-character wizards with spell books they'd be willing to share? Would a specialist or a mage have a better chance of learning those spells? (If one PC wizard is a conjurer, his spell book probably won't be useful to a PC wizard who wants to be a diviner.)

Player Preference

A player might want to run a wizard of a particular specialty just because



he's never tried it before, and that's as good a reason as any to choose a specialist over a mage.

Chance to Learn Spells

Consider the opportunities that mages and specialists have to learn new spells, perhaps the most compelling difference between them. As illustration, compare a mage with an Intelligence of 9 and an illusionist with an Intelligence of 9. The mage has a 35 percent chance of learning each new spell he encounters, regardless of its school. The illusionist has a 50 percent chance of learning illusionist spells, a 20 percent chance of learning alteration, divination, enchantment/charm, and conjuration/summoning spells (this percentage reflects the 15 percent penalty for learning spells from other schools). The illusionist has no chance of learning spells from the schools of invocation/evocation, abjuration, or necromancy, since these schools are in opposition to the school of illusion.

Assume that in a typical adventure, the mage and the illusionist each have the opportunity to learn 16 new spells from discovered spell books, NPC wizards, and other sources. Also assume that of these 16 spells, two are from each of the eight schools. The mage has a 35 percent chance of learning each of these spells, meaning that he is likely to learn five or six of them. The illusionist is denied the chance to learn six of them (from the oppositional schools); he has a 50 percent chance of learning two of them (meaning he is likely to learn one of the two), and a 20 percent chance of learning eight of them (meaning he is likely to learn two spells). In this example, the mage learns six spells, while the illusionist learns only three.

It doesn't improve for specialists with higher Intelligence scores; at Intelligence 16, for instance, a mage will learn

about 12 of the 16 spells, while the illusionist will learn approximately eight of them.

Of course, the specialist receives a bonus spell when he advances a level, and the differences are less severe for certain specialties (diviners, for instance, are denied access to only one school). But over the course of a typical campaign, a mage will likely learn far more spells than a specialist.

Short Adventure vs. Long Campaign

Since there is no meaningful difference between a mage and a specialist in their abilities to cast the spells they know, wouldn't the wise player always choose to play a mage? Not necessarily. In the long run, the specialist's experience bonus, saving throw bonuses, and acquired powers (see the listings in the school descriptions below) make him a far more formidable opponent than the mage. Additionally, the limits on the number of spells a wizard can use and know mean that the specialist will eventually catch up to the mage in these areas.

One guideline for deciding between a mage and a specialist might be to consider a mage if playing a short adventure. But for a lengthy campaign, a specialist is probably the best bet; not only will he prove to be a more effective party member, but a character with focused goals and aptitudes will be more interesting to play.

About the Schools

Following are details about specialists for each school of magic. Each includes the following information:

Description: This section explains the general effects created by spells from the school, along with how the magical energy is channelled.

Specialist Name: The common name

for a specialist of this school.

Allowed Races: Only humans, gnomes, elves, and half-elves can be specialists, and not all races are able to specialize in every school. This entry indicates which races are eligible to specialize in a particular school.

Ability Requirements: Though all schools require a minimum Intelligence of 9, each has an additional minimum requirement in another ability and is listed here.

Saving Throw Modifiers: Because of their familiarity with the arcane arts, specialists are able to resist the effects of certain forms of magic. Additionally, their opponents are less able to resist certain spells cast by specialists rather than non-specialists. These are listed here.

Bonus Spells and Acquired Powers: These are the special abilities and extra spells that specialists automatically receive when they reach high levels. (The use of acquired powers is an option only; at the DM's discretion, he can eliminate them from his campaign, or even develop others for high-level specialists.)

Oppositional Schools: The specialist is unable to learn spells from these schools. He is also forbidden to use magical items that duplicate the effects of schools in opposition to his own school.

Spell Analysis: This section discusses the spells available to the school, including their general types and their overall usefulness to the wizard. For convenience, spells are divided into three categories: Low (1st-3rd level), Medium (4th-6th level), and High (7th-9th level). The most versatile and powerful spells are designated as the "Most Desirable" for each of these categories.

Ethos: This section details the wizard's relationship to society, his goals and values, his overall philosophy, how he spends his time, and his likely role in an adventuring party. Since certain