

Sample file

Winner of the H.G. Wells Award for  
Best Role Playing Adventure for 1982!

# CITYBOOK™ I

**Butcher, Baker,  
Candlestick Maker**

25  
fully-described business establishments  
for use with any role-playing system  
including over 75 completely developed  
non-player personalities to interact with  
your players' characters in City adventures

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Liz Danforth and Steven S. Crompton*

Produced by



a division of Flying Buffalo Inc.

*CityBook I is one in the Catalyst series of booklets, a line of game master aids for use with any role-playing game. Each book in the series provides a "catalyst to your imagination" – something to give your imagination a boost towards better gaming. Catalyst is Flying Buffalo's trademark name for its entire series of game booklets designed for use with any role-playing game. CityBook is Flying Buffalo's trademark name for those Catalyst game booklets which describe businesses, personalities, and scenarios for city-based play.*

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# Introduction

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**W**elcome to the City! What you now hold in your hands is a new concept in city components for fantasy role-playing gaming. On the pages that follow, you will find 25 *completely-delineated* establishments, compatible with any city, town, or village in *any* game system. Each establishment is completely mapped, described in detail, and populated with colorful NPC personalities to interact with your players. After each description are a number of scenario suggestions centered around the establishment. Your cities need not be mere stop-over points between adventures; with *CityBook 1*, your players can now find fun and excitement even in such mundane activity as buying a loaf of bread or having a battered suit of armor repaired.

While the establishments in *CityBook 1* are described in detail, the choice of business included are those a group of adventurers is most likely to have an immediate interest in. There is an inn for players to spend the night, a tavern where they can pick up rumors between sips of ale, a magic supplies shop for wizards to browse in, a sword-maker and bowyer for fighters, a fine armor-crafter, a stable for boarding or renting horses, a jailhouse for incarcerating the rambunctious or larcenous members of the adventuring party. To avoid any possibility of boredom, there are also a number of specialty shops. There is even a mortuary and cemetery for those unfortunate adventurers who have passed beyond. For the heroes and heroines among the gamers, there are quests aplenty, from hunting snow-bear noses for the local butcher to exorcising a troublesome ghost.

As GM, all you need do is provide specific game statistics for the NPCs and monsters we've described, then give it a dose of your own fertile imagination. The establishments in *CityBook 1* will work equally well in large cities, towns, or villages; some would even fit as isolated stops along a trail. You can link one or more establishments together to broaden the scope of the suggested scenarios, to the point of making one coherent, complete city just with these establishments. We created *CityBook 1* to take out the hard work of designing and running a city-based adventure, so both you and your players can have a more enjoyable gaming session together.

*CityBook 1* is designed as a role-playing aid for fantasy gaming. Therefore, the flavor is basically medieval. However, there is no reason why with a little bit of effort it could not be made suitable for modern-day or futuristic role-playing games. Whatever you choose to do with *CityBook 1*, we hope you will enjoy it and use it often to add excitement to your game play.

— Larry DiTillio

## A Brief Note

*CityBook 1* is not a complete city, nor was that our intention in writing it. If you want to make it the core of a complete city, you will find it an excellent foundation; if you want to add an extra shop when running a city of your own devising, and happen to need one of the businesses listed here, you should be able to do so easily. The primary purpose of this book is to provide a number of modular pieces of cities, from which you can pick and choose what you want to use. If you like this approach, or have some complaints about the systems used or material presented, let us know. We welcome your criticisms and comments. We plan to produce more of these books, and your opinion is important to us. Please write — we can't promise to answer every letter, but we certainly do want to hear from you. Our address is:

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# GM Guidelines

Since *CityBook 1* is a generic role-playing aid, no game-specific statistics for NPC's or monsters have been given. However, as an aid to the GM who must convert our descriptions into game mechanics, we have provided the following guidelines to help you in adapting *CityBook 1* to your favorite game system. Keep in mind, however, that this is now *your* book; if you wish to change anything, go ahead!

## GENERAL ATTRIBUTES

It isn't necessary to give each non-player character in *CityBook* complete attributes such as Power, Luck, Wisdom, and so forth. However, should you choose to do so you will note in the character descriptions such phrases as "very strong," "quick," "stupid," "beautiful," etc. By noting these phrases and reflecting them in the NPC's attributes, you should come out with a fairly accurate set of statistics for the person in question.

## FIGHTING PROWESS

At times, player adventurers will probably get into fights with non-player characters. We have provided a six-level coding system to describe how well a particular *CityBook* NPC can fight. In some cases, the combat ability of an NPC is given in terms of a specific weapon or weapons (e.g. Cleavsom Rumpchunk the Butcher is "good" with a cleaver or butcher knife, but only "average" with anything else). In other cases, the fighting prowess is overall (e.g. Bron Arvo the Armorer is "very good" with any weapon).

There are two ways to randomize for the fighting prowess of an NPC. You can roll 1d6 for category. For example, a player character has just been insulted by some nameless warrior-type in the local tavern. The player draws his sword, determined to battle it out. The GM rolls the warrior-type's prowess on 1d6 and rolls a 5. The player is in trouble! Or, you can roll 1d100 and refer to the percentages given after the descriptions of each code below. These percentages correspond to how that person stacks up in relation to all other fighters in your average world. Therefore, a "poor" fighting prowess would account for about 40% of all fighters met, and an

"excellent" prowess would only fit about 4% of the fighters. If you put a "poor" fighter into your campaign, we expect that 60% of the rest of the fighters in your world will be better.

These are the codes for fighting prowess:

- POOR.** Unfamiliar with combat arts; can be easily wounded or killed. (01 - 40%)
- AVERAGE.** A run-of-the mill type, but certainly no hero. (41 - 59%)
- FAIR.** Better than average and will acquit himself adequately. (60 - 74%)
- GOOD.** Can go one-on-one with seasoned fighters. (75 - 84%)
- VERY GOOD.** This person can cause a lot of trouble in combat! (85 - 95%)
- EXCELLENT.** If blood is spilled, it's not likely to come from this character... (96 - 100%)

## MAGIC ABILITY

To determine the expertise with which an NPC uses magic power, *CityBook 1* employs a six-level system similar to the one for fighting prowess. This is listed in the NPC descriptions as "Magic Ability," and will be followed by a listing of the particular areas the magic-user might be competent in (see "The Eight C's of Magic" below). If an NPC has no Magic Ability listed, then none exists. The codes for Magic Ability are:

- POOR.** A hedge wizard or apprentice. Might very well turn himself into a frog. (01 - 40%)
- AVERAGE.** Competent, but hardly a world-shaker. Only a few spells at his command. (41 - 59%)
- FAIR.** A wider range of spells. Effective, but not powerful. (60 - 74%)
- GOOD.** Knows numerous spells in many categories, and is versatile in their use. (75 - 84%)
- VERY GOOD.** Knows powerful spells in most of the Eight C's. Formidable. (85 - 95%)
- EXCELLENT.** Not a person to cross. Can easily command almost all the known spells, and might be able to turn the party into anchovy paste with a single gesture. (96 - 100%)

Given the diversity of magic systems in fantasy gaming, it is impossible to assign specific spells or powers to any magic-using NPC in *CityBook*. However, spells or powers can be broken down into categories of magic, regardless of what game