

Pathfinder Advanced Class Guide

Pathfinder advanced class guide is an essential resource for players looking to deepen their understanding of the game's intricate class system and optimize their characters for a variety of playstyles. Whether you're a seasoned adventurer or a newcomer eager to explore the depths of the game's mechanics, mastering advanced classes can significantly enhance your gameplay experience. This guide aims to provide comprehensive insights into the various advanced classes available in Pathfinder, their unique features, and strategic tips to make the most of them.

Understanding the Foundation: Core Classes and the Role of Advanced Classes

Before diving into advanced classes, it's important to understand their place within the Pathfinder system. The core classes—such as Fighter, Rogue, Wizard, and Cleric—form the foundation of most character builds. Advanced classes build upon this foundation, offering specialized abilities, new progression paths, and thematic flavor that allow for more customized and powerful characters.

What Are Advanced Classes?

Advanced classes are prestige classes or specialized archetypes that characters can access once they meet certain prerequisites. They often require characters to have a specific base class level, skill ranks, feats, or other criteria. These classes provide unique abilities, enhanced combat options, and thematic flavor that help characters stand out.

Key Features of Advanced Classes

1. **Prerequisite-Based Access:** Most advanced classes require characters to meet specific prerequisites, such as skill ranks, base attack bonus, or other class features.
2. **Progression and Specialization:** They typically offer a progression path that enhances or specializes existing class features.
3. **Unique Abilities and Powers:** Advanced classes often introduce new combat abilities, magic, or special features that are unavailable to base classes.
4. **Role-Playing Opportunities:** They add depth and flavor, allowing players to craft characters with distinct backgrounds and motivations.

Popular Advanced Classes in Pathfinder

Pathfinder boasts a rich array of advanced classes, each suited to different playstyles and character concepts. Here's an overview of some of the most popular and impactful options.

1. Mystic Theurge

The Mystic Theurge is a prestige class designed for spellcasters who want to combine divine and arcane magic seamlessly.

1. **Prerequisites:** Ability to cast both divine and arcane spells, typically requiring access to at least 2nd-level spells in both domains.
2. **Role:** Hybrid spellcaster capable of wielding powerful magic from both worlds, ideal for versatile magic users.
3. **Key Benefits:** Spellcasting progression in both divine and arcane spell lists, allowing for a broader spell selection.

2. Shadowdancer

Shadowdancer is a popular stealth and illusion-focused advanced class.

1. **Prerequisites:** High Hide and Move Silently skills, along with the ability to summon shadows.
2. **Role:** Stealthy infiltrator or assassin who excels in darkness and shadow-based abilities.
3. **Key Benefits:** Shadow jump, concealment, and shadow illusion abilities that enhance stealth and deception.

3. Dragon Disciple

For players interested in draconic themes and enhanced combat prowess, Dragon Disciple is a compelling choice.

1. **Prerequisites:** High Charisma and the ability to cast spells, usually from the Sorcerer or Wizard classes.
2. **Role:** Frontline melee combatant with draconic powers and spellcasting abilities.
3. **Key Benefits:** Physical enhancements, spellcasting boosts, and dragon-themed abilities like breath weapons.

4. Eldritch Knight

This prestige class is ideal for arcane spellcasters who want to gain martial prowess.

1. **Prerequisites:** Ability to cast 3rd-level spells and proficiency with martial weapons.
2. **Role:** Hybrid fighter and mage, capable of engaging in combat while maintaining spellcasting capabilities.
3. **Key Benefits:** Bonus feats, weapon specialization, and spellcasting progression that supports combat versatility.

Choosing the Right Advanced Class for Your Character

Selecting an advanced class depends heavily on your character concept, desired role in the party, and playstyle preferences. Here are some tips to help you decide:

Consider Your Character's Background and Theme

- Does your character have a mystical or arcane background? The Mystic Theurge or Eldritch Knight may suit.
- Is your character stealthy, shadowy, or sneaky? Shadowdancer or Assassin might be ideal.
- Do you envision a draconic or beast-themed warrior? Dragon Disciple could be a perfect fit.

Assess Your Party Composition and Role

- Are you filling a damage dealer role? Classes like the Dragon Disciple or Fighter variants can excel. - Want to support or control? Consider classes that offer buffing, debuffing, or utility abilities. - Looking to diversify spellcasting? The Mystic Theurge combines both divine and arcane magic.

Evaluate Prerequisites and Feasibility

- Check if your character's current stats and skills meet the prerequisites. - Consider the level progression and whether the advanced class aligns with your campaign's pace.

Strategic Tips for Playing Advanced Classes

Once you've chosen an advanced class, here are some strategies to maximize its potential:

1. **Meet Prerequisites Early:** Focus on skill development and feats early on to qualify as soon as possible.
2. **Optimize Your Feats:** Select feats that complement your class features, such as Weapon Focus, Combat Casting, or Skill Focus.
3. **Balance Combat and Utility:** Leverage your class's unique abilities in both combat scenarios and out-of-combat situations.
4. **Coordinate with Party Members:** Synergize your abilities with teammates for maximum effectiveness, especially if your class offers support or control options.

Advanced Class Progression and Multiclassing

Many players choose to multiclass to combine the strengths of multiple advanced classes or base classes. For instance: - Combining a Fighter with a Dragon Disciple for both durability and offensive power. - Blending a Rogue with Shadowdancer for stealth and trapfinding. - Mixing a Wizard with Mystic Theurge for extensive spellcasting versatility. However, keep in mind that multiclassing can delay access to higher-level class features, so plan your progression carefully.

Conclusion: Mastering the Art of Advanced Classes in Pathfinder

A well-chosen advanced class can transform a standard character into a versatile, powerful, and thematically rich adventurer. By understanding the prerequisites, strengths, and roles of each class, you can craft a character that not only performs effectively in combat but also enriches your storytelling experience. Remember to consider your campaign's context, your party's composition, and your personal playstyle when selecting an advanced class. With strategic planning and thoughtful execution, mastering advanced classes in Pathfinder will elevate your gameplay and open up new avenues for creative character development. Whether you aim to be a shadowy assassin, a draconic warrior, or a spellcasting hybrid, this guide provides the foundation to make informed decisions and excel in your adventures. Happy gaming!

Pathfinder Advanced Class Guide: An In-Depth Exploration of Class Options and Strategies The Pathfinder role-playing game has garnered a massive following since its inception, thanks to its rich mechanics, expansive lore, and flexible character customization. Among the many facets that make

Pathfinder a compelling experience are the advanced classes—specialized subclasses that allow players to tailor their characters with unique abilities, thematic flavor, and tactical options. This article provides a comprehensive Pathfinder advanced class guide, examining the core concepts, individual classes, strategic considerations, and practical advice for players seeking to deepen their gameplay experience.

Understanding the Role of Advanced Classes in Pathfinder

Before delving into specific classes, it's essential to grasp the foundational role that advanced classes play within Pathfinder. Unlike base classes—such as Fighter, Wizard, or Rogue—advanced classes often represent specialized paths that characters can pursue after establishing their initial class. They typically offer:

- Thematic specialization: Advanced classes often embody specific archetypes or thematic niches, such as a stealthy assassin or a divine agent.
- Unique abilities: Gaining access to class features not available in the base classes, including new combat options, spellcasting abilities, or skill proficiencies.
- Progression flexibility: Allowing characters to evolve into more nuanced roles, often with prerequisites that encourage character development and story integration.
- Tactical diversity: Enabling players to craft multi-faceted characters capable of filling multiple roles within a party.

In Pathfinder, advanced classes can be a powerful tool for players who wish to customize their characters beyond traditional archetypes, with some classes being more combat-oriented, others more skill-based, and yet others offering unique magical or divine powers.

Core Advanced Classes in Pathfinder

The Pathfinder core rulebooks and supplements introduce a variety of advanced classes, each with distinct flavor and mechanics. Below is a detailed overview of some of the most prominent and versatile options.

1. Alchemist

Overview: The Alchemist is a master of chemical concoctions, brews, and explosive devices. Combining alchemy with combat prowess, the class excels at supporting allies and dealing damage. Key Features:

- Access to a vast array of extract spells, which function similarly to spells but are prepared and consumed.
- Bombs and mutagens as signature combat options.
- Crafting abilities that enable the creation of powerful alchemical items.

Playstyle: Versatile—can be a damage dealer, a support caster, or a hybrid, depending on the chosen discoveries and extracts.

2. Cavalier

Overview: A noble knight and mounted combatant, the Cavalier emphasizes loyalty, honor, and martial prowess. Key Features:

- Mounted combat specialization with abilities like Ride-by Attack.
- A martial mount that can be trained and customized.
- Defensive and offensive combat feats tailored for mounted combat.

Playstyle: Ideal for players who enjoy tactical positioning and leading charges.

3. Inquisitor

Overview: An inquisitor combines divine powers with investigative skills, specializing in hunting down

enemies and rooting out secrets. Key Features: - Spells that focus on detection, deception, and suppression. - Unique domain powers and inquisitions that grant thematic abilities. - Access to teamwork feats and skill feats. Playstyle: A hybrid of divine spellcasting and skilled investigator—great for stealth, reconnaissance, and support.

4. Oracle

Overview: The Oracle is a divine caster with a mysterious curse that grants powerful but unpredictable abilities. Key Features: - Spells and revelations that can alter the course of combat. - Curses that influence gameplay and role-playing. - Flexibility in spell selection and class features. Playstyle: A mystical class that combines divine magic with narrative depth.

5. Swashbuckler

Overview: An agile combatant who emphasizes dexterity and finesse, often engaging enemies with precise strikes and evasive maneuvers. Key Features: - Panache points that fuel special combat abilities. - Evasion, dodging, and mobility feats. - Stylish flair that influences both role-playing and mechanics. Playstyle: Perfect for players who enjoy daring combat and quick, elegant tactics.

Strategic Considerations When Choosing an Advanced Class

Selecting the right advanced class depends heavily on your character concept, party composition, and campaign setting. Here are some factors to consider:

Role within the Party

- Are you filling a damage dealer, controller, healer, or support role? - Do you prefer to be in the front lines or operate from the shadows?

Character Theme and Story

- Does the class's flavor align with your character's background and personality? - Are you interested in a particular lore or thematic element (e.g., divine power, alchemy, martial prowess)?

Mechanical Synergy

- How does the advanced class complement your base class and other party members? - Are you aiming for multiclass synergy or a dedicated single-class path?

Campaign Style and Challenges

- Will the campaign involve heavy combat, social intrigue, or exploration? - Does the advanced class provide tools suited for these challenges?

Advanced Classes and Multiclassing Strategies

One of Pathfinder's strengths is its flexibility in multiclassing. Combining advanced classes with base classes or other advanced classes can create powerful or thematically rich characters.

Popular Multiclass Combinations

- Alchemist / Fighter: A durable damage dealer with explosive options. - Inquisitor / Cleric: A divine investigator with battlefield versatility. - Swashbuckler / Rogue: An agile, sneaky duelist with high mobility. - Oracle / Bard: A divine caster with support and curse abilities.

Synergy Tips - Focus on complementary class features; for example, combining a Swashbuckler's finesse with a Fighter's weapon training. - Be mindful of attribute requirements and prerequisites. - Use feats and traits to smooth multiclass transitions.

Practical Advice for Maximizing Advanced Class Benefits

To extract maximum value from your advanced class choice, consider the following guidelines:

Plan Your Progression

- Decide early whether you want to focus solely on the advanced class or combine it with other classes. - Map out your level progression to unlock key class features smoothly.

Optimize Feats and Equipment

- Select feats that enhance your class features (e.g., Weapon Focus, Combat Expertise). - Invest in gear that complements your abilities—such as magic items that boost your spellcasting or combat prowess.

Incorporate Role-Playing Elements

- Use the thematic aspects of your advanced class to enrich your character's backstory. - Engage with the campaign's

narrative to unlock class abilities tied to story events.

Stay Flexible

- Be willing to adapt your build as the campaign progresses. - Experiment with different discoveries, feats, and tactics to find what works best.

Conclusion: The Value of Advanced Classes in Pathfinder

The Pathfinder advanced class guide reveals a landscape of options that empower players to craft highly specialized, flavorful, and effective characters. Whether you gravitate toward martial mastery, divine magic, alchemical ingenuity, or dexterous finesse, advanced classes expand your strategic toolkit and deepen your role-playing experience. By understanding each class's mechanics, thematic flavor, and strategic niche, players can make informed choices that enhance both gameplay and storytelling. When combined with thoughtful multiclassing, gear selection, and role-playing, advanced classes transform the game from a collection of mechanics into a vibrant tapestry of character stories and tactical mastery. Ultimately, the key to leveraging advanced classes lies in aligning your character's journey with your personal style and the campaign's demands. With this comprehensive guide, players are better equipped to navigate the complex yet rewarding world of Pathfinder advanced classes, unlocking their full potential and enriching their adventures. This concludes our detailed exploration of the Pathfinder advanced class landscape. Whether you are a new player or a seasoned veteran, embracing these options can elevate your game and deepen your engagement with the rich,

tactical universe of Pathfinder.

Questions & Answers About pathfinder advanced class guide

No	Question	Answer
1	What is the purpose of the Pathfinder Advanced Class Guide?	The Pathfinder Advanced Class Guide introduces new archetypes, classes, and options to expand character customization and deepen gameplay for players and GMs alike.
2	Which new classes are introduced in the Pathfinder Advanced Class Guide?	The guide introduces several new classes including the alchemist, cavalier, inquisitor, oracle, and witch, each adding unique abilities and playstyles.
3	How does the Alchemist class differ from other classes?	The alchemist specializes in crafting potions, bombs, and mutagens, functioning as a versatile damage dealer or support character with a focus on chemical and alchemical abilities.
4	Are there new archetypes available in the Advanced Class Guide?	Yes, the guide offers numerous archetypes across existing classes, allowing players to customize their characters further and tailor their playstyle.
5	Can I multiclass with classes from the Advanced Class Guide?	Absolutely, the new classes and archetypes are designed to be compatible with multiclassing, providing even more options for character development.
6	What are some popular archetypes introduced in the guide?	Popular archetypes include the Investigator (from the alchemist), the Swashbuckler (from the cavalier), and the Shaman (from the oracle), each offering unique thematic and mechanical options.
7	Is the Advanced Class Guide suitable for new players?	While it offers rich options for experienced players, it can also be suitable for new players who want to explore a broader range of character customization with guidance.
8	How does the guide support character synergy and party balance?	The guide introduces classes and archetypes that complement various party roles, enhancing teamwork and strategic diversity in campaigns.
9	Where can I find official rules and content for the Pathfinder Advanced Class Guide?	Official content is available through Paizo's published books, PDFs, and licensed digital platforms, providing comprehensive rules, archetypes, and character options.

Pathfinder, advanced classes, class guide, character build, class progression, class options, class features, class customization, class strategies, class mechanics