

# Arms and Equipment Guide

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## Introduction

Dungeon Masters of the world, relax!

Until now, you've all had to duck or dodge questions about armor, lengths of swords, and the blades (or lack of them) on pole arms. At best, you've said, "It kinda looks like a . . ." At worst, you've had to go to the library to look up such information.

A few of you are fortunate to be scholars of history and already know the answers to such questions. But for the rest of you, this book contains the information you've been waiting for.

The *Arms and Equipment Guide* is the most complete compilation of information about armor, weapons, and equipment for the AD&D® game to date. It is intended to help both DMs and players to understand and better use the wide variety of equipment available. We've included a plethora of illustrations to make this volume as user-friendly as possible.

**For DMs:** Be aware that the information in this work encompasses a wide variety of equipment suitable for many campaign styles. Don't be afraid to veto certain weapons or armor to suit your own campaign world. The intention of this book is not to provide adventurers with every weapon known to man; it is merely to expand the choices available. Feel free to disallow any items that don't fit the grand scheme of your campaign.

**Historical Accuracy:** Every attempt has been made to ensure that the information

presented here is historically accurate. However, scholars of history often disagree among themselves, resulting in conflicting opinions among resources. If you find that the information in this volume disagrees with what you know of history, consider checking one of the resources listed below. Or chalk it up to a different historian. (If you're convinced we've blundered, we're always happy to hear about it in a letter. Any documentation you can provide would be appreciated.)

**Weapons:** As the longest section in this book, the weapons chapter has some unique features. You'll find comments from seasoned adventurers in *italicized* type. These are intended to offer new ideas for role-playing. You'll also find numerous boxed entries. These boxes contain interesting historical tidbits that might provide role-playing ideas and are just plain fun to read.

With these things in mind, you're ready to go forth and conquer. Here's hoping that the *Arms and Equipment Guide* will help you do it!

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## CHAPTER 1

### Armor

## Padded Armor (AC 8)

**Description:** Padded armor, also referred to as quilted armor, is the simplest form of manmade armor. It consists of two or more layers of spun cloth stuffed with thick batting and quilted together.

Padded armor typically covers the chest and shoulders, but full-length suits are sometimes seen.

**Campaign Use:** Padded armor is mostly found among the poor and unskilled. Only the poorest excuses for armed forces would be caught dead in padded armor. The bulky and restrictive nature of the armor makes it a poor substitute for a stout set of leather (*q.v.*).

Village militias, neophyte bandit packs, urban street gangs, and primitive barbarian hordes are the most common users of padded armor. In short, this includes anyone who cannot afford leather armor (i.e., the truly destitute), cultures without the technology to tan hide (i.e., the truly primitive), or those who have no other option at their time of need (i.e., the truly desperate).

Padded armor can be made by any race or nation. Thus, it is common protection for the poorer classes. Since making a padded suit of armor requires little more than a crude needle and thread, low-level or desperate adventurers in need of additional protection can usually whip up a set of padded armor in less than two days. The durability and level of comfort afforded by the homemade suit naturally varies in direct proportion to the skill of the would-be armorer. For game purposes, several layers of heavy cloth or furs can be considered padded armor for the purposes of determining a character's base armor class.

Padded armor, being little more than multiple layers of clothing, tends to soil and wear out easily. Although newly fashioned sets may sell cheaply, padded armor must be replaced often, even if it is well cared for. Lice, sweat, dirt, fleas, and insects all take their toll.

If the DM judges that a set of padded armor has seen its last days, the armor class of the armor drops one place (AC 9). The armor, now rotted and torn, is little more than bulky clothing. Importantly, heavily soiled armor reduces the wearer's saving throws against disease and disease-causing spells by -2.

Under ideal conditions, a set of padded armor should be replaced monthly. However, when travelling through heavily infested swamps or in monster-laden forests, padded armor may require replacement as often as every few days. On any long journey, spare sets of padded armor should be taken along as if they were spare sets of clothing. Too much frugality before a journey can lead to much discomfort later.

Naturally, those who have no access to better armor try to make the best appearance whenever they can. Nobody wants to appear cheap or desperate, especially when they are. Therefore, decorating one's padded armor is the most common form of "upgrading" the appearance of one's forces. All armies and nations have banners and shields adorned with their own colors, and these colors are often repeated in intricate patterns on their padded armor. This is most often seen when the local king or noble quickly recruits the local farmers' militia to defend his lands or aid him in launching an assault. The wives, sisters, and daughters quickly whip up anything they can to protect their ill-trained husbands, brothers, and sons. The colors of the lord are either quilted into the design of the armor in checkerboard fashion, or painted or dyed onto the hastily prepared

protection.

In similar fashion, the most nefarious of evil knights have been known to use quilted armor to camouflage their own soldiers as peasants of the opposing ranks, taking devious advantage of the militia's known lack of combat training.

This is only one of many reasons why 0-level fighters are neither feared nor respected by the armed forces. Certainly in the case of padded armor, one can tell a knave by his suit.

## Leather Armor (AC 8)

**Description:** Leather armor, despite the popular misconception, is not soft and supple like the leather used to make a ranger's boots or a druid's robe. That kind of leather offers no better protection than common clothing.

Leather armor is actually strong and stiff, having been hardened in boiling oil and then stretched over a wooden or stone model of a man's or woman's chest. The resulting breastplate and shoulder guards are combined with a tunic or kirtle and, in colder climes, leggings of wool or soft leather.

**Campaign Use:** This is the most common form of "modern" armor. The materials (leather and oil) are readily available in all civilized lands. Only the techniques for boiling and shaping the leather is necessary, and this is not a difficult feat for a leatherworker.

This armor is both inexpensive and durable. While the leather is extremely stiff, it is never fashioned into anything larger than a breastplate, which keeps restriction of movement to a minimum. Naturally, this arrangement means leather armor affords no protection to the joints, but this is true of most types of armor, and is a challenge all civilized races have been attempting to overcome since wars began.

In severe combat situations, leather armor may need to be replaced weekly. However, the armor is easily cleaned, reasonably unaffected by weather, and resists all but the severest of abrasions. This means a good set of leather can be worn daily for many months without need for replacement. Many retired warriors and middle-class militia have a set of leather armor stored away that they take out and polish at least annually.

Because raw leather comes from a by-product of medieval daily life (i.e., eating beef and other meats), in civilized societies leather armor is very common. Even rural communities have little trouble manufacturing leather armor for the troops within a few days.

Cows are not the sole source of hide for tanning. Horses, sheep, and camels can be used just as easily. In short, the creature must have a thicker skin than that of a normal man, but not quite as thick as that of an elephant or bear. The skins of these well-protected creatures, when tanned, becomes hide armor (*q.v.*).

Irregular human forces (e.g., militias and levies, freemen, commoners above peasant level, barbarians, light infantry, and marines) are the primary users of leather armor, for the following reasons: A) leather armor is drastically cheaper and more readily available than metal armor; B) the armor can be worn for long periods of time without leading to increased fatigue or disease; C) the method of protection is so simple that many armies

can make new sets of armor from cattle seized in newly raided territories, often scant days before meeting the defenders in battle; and D) they can be stockpiled for years without the excessive maintenance required by metal armors that are prone to rust.

Another benefit of leather armor, much extolled by those of a more disreputable persuasion, is the ease which it can be silenced. While leather armor is not typically noisy, its buckles and fasteners tend to rattle and clink. Unlike metal armor, leather armor is easily muffled by clothing and as such makes little sound during normal movement. Additional layers of clothing further dampen sounds made by the wearer while hiding. More rouges than can be counted owe their lives to muffled leather armor.

The freedom of movement, adequate general protection, lack of noise, high availability, and low price make this the armor of choice for the general human population.

## Studded Leather Armor (AC 7)

**Description:** Studded leather armor has little in common with normal leather armor. While leather armor is a hardened shell, studded leather armor is soft and supple with hundreds of metal rivets affixed. The rivets are so close together that they form a flexible coating of hard metal that turns aside slashing and cutting attacks. The soft leather backing is little more than a means of securing the rivets in place.

**Campaign Use:** Studded leather armor is known as "poor man's mail" because of its metallic components and low price. It is more common among the general population than most people would first believe because, unlike other types of mail armor, studded leather is relatively easy to make.

While a soft leather backing is the most durable and comfortable, any stout cloth can be used as a backing for the rivets. The rivets themselves are also easy to acquire, as everything from nails to pebbles have been substituted at one time or another in times of desperation. In general, as long as the backing is secure and the rivets are hard enough to withstand a glancing blow, the armor so comprised should be considered studded leather for purposes of weight and protection.

Studded leather, like brigandine (described later), is commonly worn by pirates and other seafarers. The protection afforded is better than normal leather armor, which is an important point during sea combat when a shield may not be practical (a shield is useless when climbing or fighting in a ship's rigging).

With regard to swimming, the weight of studded leather is significantly less than metal armor, and the flexibility of the soft leather backing is better for such demanding activity. Indeed, for short times in the water, it is as easy to maneuver in studded leather as it is to move in a normal leather breastplate. Therefore, most sea-going mercenaries and pirates prefer to wear studded leather as their all-purpose armor. Trained marine contingents, however, whose main function is boarding, usually wear normal leather and carry a shield.

Miserly merchants, who shave pieces of gold more than they like to admit, will often buy studded leather to outfit their hired guards. However, these copper-pinchers pay for the protection one way or another, as studded leather tends to wear out rather quickly.

Not only does the soft backing wear out as quickly as thick clothing, but the metal studs can be affixed only by driving them through the leather, considerably weakening the overall strength of the backing. Eventually, the holes open up and the rivets drop out. Studded leather is also prone to the same problems of sweat, grime, and insects as padded armor (*q. v.*).

## Spiked Leather

A variation of studded leather that is sometimes seen among barbarians of northern climes (and, oddly, among some hill giant clans) is spiked leather. Much as it sounds, spiked leather armor is studded leather armor in which the rivets have been augmented by sharp spikes. (Most intelligent beings would be worried about mounting spikes into their armor, just in case they should trip and fall, not to mention the problems packing or storing the armor).

Overbearing and grappling while wearing such armor inflicts additional damage based on the wearer's size. A small creature inflicts 1-2 points of piercing damage, a man-sized creature inflicts 1-3 points, and a large creature inflicts 1-4 points. These values are considered for each individual attack, not for every round that a creature is grappled.

Spiked armor is usually made specially for the wearer and costs about 150% of the price of a normal set of studded leather.

Spiked armor is occasionally used to equip gladiators, pit fighters, and other specialists.

## Hide Armor (AC 6)

**Description:** Hide armor is made from the thick hide of a very large animal (an elephant, for example) or from many layers of normal leather from common animals, like cows.

**Campaign Use:** Hide armor is much too thick, heavy, and inflexible to be used much in the advanced human cultures. Its weight is comparable to chain mail, but its protection is less. However, among the barbaric humanoid masses throughout the dark forests and misty jungles of the world, hide armor is common.

Because of its simple construction, any race with Low Intelligence or better can make suitable hide armor. All that is required is a dead animal and someone to wear its skin. Since no effort to tan the hide is necessary to get basic protection, creatures with a desire for excellent protection at a fair price (i.e., usually free) find hide armor ideal for everyday use. Proper tanning, of course, improves the armor's life (and acceptance in polite society).

The smell of untanned armor, as any ogre can testify, is something a warrior must get used to.

As mentioned in the section on leather armor, the stiffness that results when hide armor dries completely isn't considered a drawback by humanoids. (In fact, without that stiffness, the hide would lose one level of armor class protection.) For only a little bit of work, any humanoid worth his hit dice can start adventuring at AC 6 and begin hunting for a shield.

Ironically, while leather armor may allow greater freedom of movement, durability, and a more pleasant appearance and smell, hide armor is actually two levels of protection better (AC 6 instead of AC 8). It illustrates that humans trust their dexterity and intelligence to aid in avoiding wounds during combat, while less-intelligent humanoids typically rely on reducing the chances of a vital strike with a thicker armor.

Like padded armor, hide armor is often decorated to show tribal allegiances. Commonly, the type of creature used to make the armor is sufficient to denote clan alliance, as with the Hydra clan fire giants or the Black Bear ogres.

Unique to the humanoid races is the habit of affixing some part of one's notable kill to one's hide armor. While this doesn't affect the armor class rating of this armor in any substantial way, it does tend to make one less popular around the civilized campfire but more important around the humanoid or barbarian camp. Importantly, these trophies, which often include such grisly things as skulls, scalps, teeth and claws, are considered a sign of ferocity and ruthlessness and are therefore seen most commonly among high leaders and shamans.

The equivalent of hide armor among humans and demihuman races is layered leather armor, wherein many layers of normal leather armor are bonded to one another to form a heavy, thick plate of protection. This armor is considered hide armor with regard to weight and cost, but does not suffer the problems of odor and disease seen in hide and padded armors.

Few human cultures employ hide armor extensively. Most notably, certain northern barbarian tribes commonly wear thick hide armor. Some of these tribesmen actually believe that the hide armor gives them animal-like strength and powers, and that human armors like chain and plate mail actually rob them of their innate combat instincts. While this may be dismissed as ignorant superstition, there are shamans of the northern wastes who tell great tales of famous suits of hide armor, blessed with the spirits of the animals from which they came.

Whether or not special hide armor exists (like the *White Skin of Umpluutu*, which allows the wearer to *shapechange* into a polar bear) is up to the DM, but hide armor offers unique avenues in a barbarian or primitive campaign.

## Scale Mail (AC 6)

**Description:** This is a coat of soft leather covered with overlapping pieces of metal, much like the scales of a fish. It is just as heavy as chain mail, but offers slightly worse protection. It has no significant advantages over hide or brigandine armor.

**Campaign Use:** Scale mail is an old type of armor, much like splint mail (described later). It never became popular in western medieval culture for very long; its production was found to be too time-consuming and thus less efficient to make in comparison to other armor types. In the AD&D® game context, scale mail is most common in Dark Age periods, in foreign cultures, or in those areas where its materials are unusually plentiful.

Some human cultures, notably those similar to the Byzantines and other eastern and southern kingdoms, did not pursue the evolution of armor made of large plates, but rather



chose to make use of small plates. Where metal is not forged but is instead cut from sheets of malleable metal ores, the technology of scale mail and its successors (splint, brigandine, and banded armor) predominates.

This is not a matter of primitive versus civilized, but rather two separate approaches to the same problem. Where western cultures stress protection, eastern cultures seek to maximize flexibility (and ventilation in the hotter climates).

The scales in scale armor are made smaller in order to make the suit more flexible and comfortable when worn. Indeed, in this respect, scale mail far exceeds either plate or banded mail.

However, all those scales require more maintenance, as the more items attached to an armor's backing, the greater the chance some will fall off. Scale armor not properly maintained loses one level of armor class protection.

Scale mail suffers the same problems of dirt, grime, lice, and odor that studded leather and padded armor suffer.

Scale mail does offer protection as good as that of brigandine for the same price and at a comparable weight. The choice between scale mail and brigandine armor is likely to be determined by the nature of the cultures in the DM's campaign world.

## Sea Elf Scale Mail

The most intricately constructed demihuman scale mail is found in the undersea kingdoms of the sea elves. More as a matter of appearance and ceremony than for additional protection, the sea elves adapted the idea of scale mail to their own peculiar designs. Their armor can be worn underwater, as it is made of metals that do not rust, and the scales are affixed to a backing of eel-skin, which does not disintegrate as leather does in salt water. Brought forth only in times of war or of great ceremony, this expensive armor is worn only by the noble elven elite.

This scale mail is unique among others for its beautiful silver coating. Some armorers wonder whether this coating is silver, platinum, or even mithril. It is generally agreed that the rare scale mail of the sea elves is nearly as valuable as elven chain mail (*q.v.*).

## Coin Armor

A variant of scale mail is armor made with the common coins of the realm. This coin armor is seen only rarely, and then usually among dignitaries and high generals. Each set of armor can stock a large quantity of coins (up to 1,000!). Rarely are they stolen, however, as the people who are rich enough to wear them are also rich enough to see to their personal security.

There are many variations possible, from armor scaled wholly of gold or silver coins to mixed suits wherein the coins themselves are arranged in a personal, family, clan, or other heraldic pattern.

## Brigandine Armor (AC 6)

**Description:** A development of both scale mail and studded leather, brigandine armor is



composed of a layer of small metal plates riveted to an undercoat of soft leather, thick cloth, or coarse canvas. A further overcoat of cloth is applied to the exterior of the suit, making for a layered protection that is lighter than scale mail. An alternative configuration is for the plates to be sandwiched between two layers of soft leather.

**Campaign Use:** Brigandine is a light armor of composite construction, often worn by brigands and other rogues. The armor is essentially a variant of studded leather with an overcoat of cloth. The cloth covering serves both to strengthen the entire framework as well as to make the armor less conspicuous from a distance. Brigandine armor is quieter than chain, splint, or banded mail, but less quiet than studded leather or leather armor.

Brigandine weighs more than hide but less than scale mail. It is generally more flexible than hide, but its three layers make it somewhat stiffer than scale mail.

Brigandine armor is generally the best armor a run-of-the-mill village armorer can make and still get good results. For anything with a higher armor class, a professional master armorer is required. This means that brigandine armor is the highest level of protection afforded many low-level AD&D® game cultures and campaigns.

This represents the limit for the early Middle Ages period AD&D campaign. If a campaign resembles the Dark Ages more than the Age of Chivalry, scale mail and brigandine armor probably represent the pinnacle of personal armor.

Pirates and bandits (i.e., brigands) find that brigandine can be made from anything on hand from sails to canvas sacks, and from coins to brass shavings. Such armor still offers decent protection against most slashing attacks (the most common types encountered in these professions).

As mentioned, brigandine is easier to muffle than most metal armors and mails and thus is the armor of choice among many rogues and the less reputable members of the campaign society.

Rangers often own a set of brigandine as a field combat backup to their normal armor of either studded leather or leather. Poor or novice rangers and warriors might be able to afford or acquire brigandine armor when other armors might not be accessible.

Brigandine armor can also be useful for smugglers, allowing items to be concealed within its multiple layers. Not only coins and precious metals might be concealed, but treasure maps, personal defense traps, and concealed weapons are all possibilities for the clever character. Whether these are actual machinations of devious minds or just rumors spread to discourage personal thievery is a subject of some debate among adventurers and legal authorities.

What is known is that it is possible to conceal such items, either within the padding or by interleaving them with the metal plates. This potential for use (or abuse) of brigandine armor in the campaign should not be overlooked by the DM or player. Secret pockets for use by thieves or prestidigitators might be revealed in the heat of combat, or local authorities may miss a valuable clue the PCs are lucky enough to discover on their own. Much like gnomish workman's leather (described later), an adventurer's set of brigandine may hold many welcome or unwelcome surprises.

## **Chain Mail (AC 5)**

**Description:** Chain mail is made of interlocking metal rings. It is always worn over a layer of padded fabric or soft leather to prevent chafing and lessen the impact of blows.

**Campaign Use:** Chain mail is the standard medium armor in most fantasy campaigns. In many places, it is so common that the price of a good suit of chain mail may actually be cheaper than less sophisticated armors like scale mail and brigandine. This makes the appeal of chain mail armor very high indeed.

Chain mail is only slightly heavier than hide or brigandine armor and much lighter than any of the plate armors. Important to the wearer, however, is the fact that the weight of a suit of chain mail does not rest evenly upon the body. Rather, most of the burden of a chain suit rests upon the shoulders, making chain armor feel heavier than it really is.

In game terms, this means chain mail can be worn for only about a day before the shoulders of even the strongest warriors begin to fatigue. Experienced warriors usually carry a second set of lighter armor (often leather or studded leather) for use when traveling or at night when not on watch.

**Optional Rule:** Prolonged shoulder fatigue from wearing chain mail more than one day at a time affects combat (-2 to hit) and leads to headaches and backaches.

In general, chain mail is worn by mid-level fighters, guardsmen, mercenaries, and men-at-arms with some official capacity. The price of chain mail is equivalent to many years income for most peasants, and is thus out of reach for most common folk. However, some middle-class families have a set or two of heirloom chain mail armor handed down from glorious days past for use in dangerous days to come.

Typically, town guards and noble patrols are bedecked in chain mail armor. It is perfect for short duty tours and gives the noble warrior a great advantage over the local rabble. Just the difference between chain mail and leather armor alone can give the officer a significant advantage over most ruffians. Anyone wearing chain mail armor with any sort of heraldic crest or uniform is usually assumed to be a local official of some kind by the experienced and perceptive traveler.

In general, chain mail is the basis for all of the more advanced and more protective armors found in most AD&D® game campaigns. The potentially low cost of chain mail is a reflection of the fact that many sets of chain mail are bought as a base for banded mail and the more sophisticated plate armors.

Because chain mail armor is not usually worn for long periods at a time, its underlying padding rarely suffers the problems of padded armors. The metal mail, however, will rust if not oiled and scrubbed with a wire brush weekly. After a month of neglect, chain mail armor loses one level of armor class since it is no longer as flexible and links may have begun to rust. (Naturally, this applies only to ferrous armor mail and not to chain mail constructed of non-ferrous metals).

Chain mail is certainly the best armor value for adventurers who cannot yet afford the heavier armors.

## Ring Mail

This form of chain mail is made by sewing large metal rings to a leather or cloth backing. Ring mail has the same role in early-period campaigns that chain mail has in

later ones. In later campaigns, it is more expensive to buy than chain mail, weighs a comparable amount, provides worse protection (AC 7), and suffers all the maintenance problems of padded and studded leather armor. Few human groups, other than town militias and bandit gangs, use ring mail to any significant degree.

## Banded Mail (AC 4)

**Description:** Banded mail armor is made of overlapping horizontal strips of laminated metal sewn over a backing of normal chain mail and soft leather backing. Lamination in this context refers to a process in which many thin sheets of metal are hammered or riveted together to form each individual metal strip.

**Campaign Use:** This type of armor is most commonly worn by eastern warriors and would be as common as plate mail in a culture based on the Turks, for example, late period Mongols, or the Japanese.

In a western campaign, banded mail can be considered to be the precursor of plate armor. Since banded mail inevitably will have gaps between the metal strips, however, the total protection of vital areas is not quite as good as heavier plate armors. The result is the slightly poorer armor class rating of banded mail.

The strength and flexibility of chain mail makes it ideal for protecting the jointed areas where large metal plates are traditionally incapable of providing adequate protection.

One advantage of this metal-and-chain arrangement over chain mail alone is the fact that the construction of banded mail naturally restricts movement of the metal plates across the torso. The beneficial side effect is that the weight of the armor is more evenly distributed on the wearer, making it easier to wear banded mail for longer periods of time.

In game terms, while banded mail does have an overall higher level of protection than normal chain mail, the durability of banded mail, especially at the joints, is about half that of a standard suit of chain. While a fine set of chain armor might last six months or more, a set of banded mail rarely lasts three months, even with constant upkeep.

Much like chain mail, ferrous metal bands are subject to rust. However, since the metal strips found in banded mail are already inflexible and designed to remain that way, the armor class of rusty banded mail is no different from that of a new suit. However, the estimation of one's peers would certainly be diminished, as a well-tended suit of banded mail can gleam most beautifully if cared for properly.

## Splint Mail

Splint mail is a variant of banded mail in which the metal strips are applied vertically to the backing of chain, leather, or cloth rather than horizontally as in banded mail. Since the human body does not swivel in mid-torso as much as it flexes back to front, splint mail is more restrictive in battle.

In game terms, splint mail is to banded mail as scale mail is to brigandine: splint mail is the style of the earlier and less efficient armoring techniques. Much like scale and ring mail (*q.v.*), splint mail will be used by the less advanced cultures and poorer warriors. Its

relatively low street price in a western campaign when compared to banded mail and even chain is due to the fact that few western warriors will even touch a set of splint mail unless they are destitute or desperate.

The protection splint mail affords is equivalent to that of banded mail, but it is much more fatiguing to wear in a lengthy battle. Furthermore, broken splints tend to work inward toward the wearer in the course of a battle. More than a few warriors have found themselves painfully cut across the ribs when broken banded mail would have merely shifted up or down. Maintenance problems for splint mail are otherwise the same as for banded mail.

For characters with a light purse, splint mail can be picked up in seedier armor shops. Its price makes it ideal for adventurers who want the extra bit of protection over chain mail.

## Bronze Plate Mail (AC 4)

**Description:** The softest of the true plate mail armors, bronze plate mail is made of heavy metal plates attached to a layer of brigandine or composite layers of metal scales and leather or padded armor.

**Campaign Use:** Historically, by the time the armorer's craft had advanced to the point that plate mail had become common, steel had replaced bronze as the best metal for constructing armor. Thus, aside from ceremonial armor, most bronze plate mail appears in areas where copper and tin are plentiful and iron is rare. In general, since bronze plate mail is designed to be lighter and more flexible than normal plate mail (*q.v.*), bronze plate armorers use leather and padding under the bronze plates instead of the heavier chain mail. Also, to reduce the overall weight of the armor, there are no bronze plates attached to the moveable joints. A large bronze breastplate and greaves are often the only difference between bronze plate mail and bronze scale or brigandine armor.

Bronze plate offers better protection than normal brigandine or chain mail and a lower price tag than standard plate mail. Since bronze plate is usually backed with stiff layered armor rather than loose chain mail, bronze plate mail isn't as flexible as banded, splint, or plate mail.

Who would use bronze plate mail in a standard campaign, when so many other alternatives exist? Plate mail, as will be discussed later, is a sign of nobility to the general population. What does the lowly peasant or innkeeper know of the advantages and disadvantages of various types of plate mail? Little to be sure. In fact, this armor is one piece of equipment whose price is not determined by its true value in combat but by its perceived value to persons around the wearer.

Any knight worth his salt acquires full plate armor (*q.v.*) as soon as he can, even if it means selling prized items of magic or a stout warhorse. If a knight can scrape up 400 gold pieces but can't get the extra 200 gold pieces to buy a real set of plate, bronze plate is the only real choice open to him.

More than a few low-level adventurers with perhaps a little too much gold to spend and not enough experience or training in such matters often are cheated into buying bronze plate mail that has been painted silver. They immediately lose 200 gold pieces in the deal

by taking home the inferior armor. After even one such sucker-sale, the charlatan salesman skips town for a few weeks or moves to a different part of the city. Naturally, such gullible warriors usually don't discover their mistake until the heat of battle, when a weapon strike that would have bounced off a real set of plate mail dents or cuts through the bogus plate. Caveat emptor!

Not all bronze plate is part of a hoax or scam, however. There are versions of bronze plate used by cultures who for one reason or another haven't learned the fine art of forging iron and steel. There is much precedent for this in history and fantasy, and many advanced cultures have lost the art or never struck the right mix of metals throughout their long history. These cultures may have developed the skill of forging bronze into a high art, making armor that looks like gold but wears like steel.

Note that these types of bronze mail last much longer than the typical medieval forms and may have a backing of solid bronze chain and leather. These suits wear like real plate, and the relative softness of the metal is often worked into a decorative design. Easy to emboss with one's family crest or tribal insignia, well-worked bronze shines like gold and can be polished to the sheen of a mirror. Some tribes have literally won entire battles on the distracting beauty of their exquisite armor alone.

## Plate Mail (AC 3)

**Description:** Plate mail is a combination of chain or brigandine armor with metal plates covering the vital areas such as the chest, abdomen and groin. Similar in construction to bronze plate mail, true plate mail comprises heavy steel plates riveted to a sturdy backing of chain and leather. These metal plates are often better constructed than those found in bronze plate and banded mails, relying on superior metallurgy and advanced lamination techniques to produce a lightweight steel with excellent combat characteristics.

Brigandine backing for this type of armor is rare, because the stiffness of brigandine armor makes this type of backing an unpopular choice among plate armorers and warriors alike.

For all of these reasons, plate mail protects the human body more effectively than bronze plate mail.

**Campaign Use:** The development of plate mail heralded the beginning of the age of chivalry and knighthood. Associated most often with classic French medieval culture, the names given to the segments of plate mail reveal their French origin to this day.

The most important metal plate on the armor is called the *plastron-de-fer*, or breastplate. It protects the vital chest and abdominal areas from attack. Typically, the shoulders were protected by metal shoulder guards called *epaulieres*. Lower leg protectors, called *greivieres* (or greaves), and metal-plated chain gloves, or *gauntlets*, are also common accessories to a plate mail suit. Any manner of helm is also desirable (see the section on Helms).

Plate mail is the most common form of heavy armor in fantasy campaigns. It provides maximum protection for a fraction of the cost of field or full plate armor, and can take month after month of grueling combat punishment. It is only moderately heavier than banded or chain mail, and because of its custom fitting and sturdy straps, wears easier

than either.

Because the plates are carefully fitted to combine with the chain suit beneath, the layer of leather or padding beneath the chain is often much thinner and more flexible than that found in banded or brigandine armor. Many long years have gone into perfecting the construction of plate mail, which makes even the most basic of suits a wonder of medieval engineering. With regard to cost, the purchaser of a set of plate mail may have to fork out a considerable sum of money compared to banded mail, but no wearer of plate mail doubts for long the value and summary wisdom of his purchase.

Knights, royal guards, and mercenary captains often wear plate mail. Even as a prize of battle, plate mail is infinitely easier to fit to a new owner than either field or full plate armor. Plate mail is the preferred protection of the vast percentage of the world's most experienced warriors, because it is not nearly as cumbersome to don or remove as other heavier types of armor.

It is a matter of pride among many kingdoms that even the slightest improvement to the general plate mail design was quickly attributed to the armorer who invented the alteration and the king whose wisdom it was to accept the change.

As such, most sets of plate mail were constantly upgraded throughout the known world, and now are very similar indeed. In fact, the perfection of the basic plate mail design was so nearly complete that many armorers had already begun devoting most, if not all, of their time and resources to working field and full plate armor with similar care and precision.

Plate mail is the heaviest armor commonly used by adventurers, both as a matter of pride and for the general necessities of daily use and efficiency.

## **Field Plate Armor (AC 2)**

**Description:** Field plate is actually a more commonly used form of full plate armor (described later). It consists of shaped and fitted metal plates riveted and interlocked to cover the entire body. Like plate mail, a set of field plate usually includes gauntlets, boots, and a visored helmet (see Helms). A thick layer of padding must be worn under the armor.

**Campaign Use:** This armor is rarely used, except by noble knights on a military campaign. In theory, the bulk of a set of field plate armor is so evenly distributed over the whole body that the encumbrance rating of field plate compares quite favorably with that of plate mail and banded mail. In practice, the increased protection is paid for with reduced mobility and increased fatigue.

Each suit of this extremely rare and expensive armor is custom-made and fitted for its prospective wearer. Only a master armorer can create field or full plate armor, and only a master armorer can re-size captured pieces of a suit for a new owner. The new owner must be of at least a similar size and build as the previous owner, or the effort required to modify the piece in question exceeds the expense and effort necessary in forging an entire new set.

Aside from its expense, the main disadvantages of field plate armor are the lack of ventilation through the suit, which make moisture and fungus a problem, and the time



required to put it on and take it off. As detailed in the AD&D® 2nd Edition *Player's Handbook*, 1d6+4 rounds are required to dress in field plate armor with outside assistance. Triple that amount of time is required if the wearer is alone. Similarly, it takes 1d4+1 rounds to remove such armor, and half that time (fractions rounded up) if pressed for time or assisted by an attendant (see Full Plate Armor).

Field plate armor is typically used by the high knights of a kingdom, like King Arthur's legendary Knights of the Round Table, for everything except formal ceremonies and triumphant battle celebrations. Full plate armor is reserved for such occasions where style is more important than combat.

Field plate can be fixed much more cheaply and easily than full plate, and is built to withstand the rigors of long-term use and combat. The entire body is encased in metal plates, and even the joints are protected with metal caps and sturdy chain mail. A great helm bearing the emblem of the house or name of a legendary knight is common and is one of the few ways a knight can recognize a friend or foe from a distance.

Field plate, while expensive and painstakingly crafted by master armorers, is normally not adorned with many trappings or embellishments. Since legendary knights make a habit of battling great armies and dragons almost daily, their armor rarely lasts longer than a year without needing to be completely replaced.

A DM may decide that being allowed to wear field or full plate armor is a sign of nobility or knighthood in his campaign. In such campaigns, wealthy warriors had better have a legitimate noble crest or recognized royal patron before parading themselves about town.

**Optional Rule:** This rule may be invoked if a player insists on wearing badly repaired or patchwork plate mail. Following every strong jolt to the wearer, whether from a good hit in battle or a fall from a cliff, the material binding the patchwork plate to the backing (as stated at the time of repair) must make a saving throw versus Crushing Blow. Failure means the plate falls off, while success means the next saving throw is made with a -1 penalty to the roll. Note that this penalty is cumulative, so any patchwork plate is bound to fall apart eventually.

## Full Plate Armor (AC 1)

**Description:** Full plate armor is the best armor a warrior can buy, both in appearance and protection. The perfectly-fitted interlocking plates are specially angled to deflect arrows and blows, and the entire suit is carefully adorned with rich engraving and embossed detail.

**Campaign Use:** Suits of full plate armor are as rare as powerful magical items in most fantasy campaigns. Magical sets of full plate are artifacts to be treasured and hidden away, the objects of glorious quests.

In most campaigns, the number of sets of full plate armor can be counted as easily as the numbers of crown knights who owe their allegiance to the king. In many kingdoms, it is a crime to possess a set of full plate armor without royal permission, as a wise king keeps any armorer capable of such craftsmanship at his beck and call.



Full plate armor is one of the greatest gifts a great lord can bestow upon his followers. It is a prize as coveted for the status it confers as its monetary value. A suit of full plate armor will often be a gift presented to great knights upon great service to the realm, or as an incentive to attract a knight errant of unquestioned prowess to the king's private circle.

In addition, full plate armor is the most technologically advanced armor available in the later medieval and high chivalry settings. The special touches and custom enhancements added by the few living master armorers are what give full plate armor its increased armor class rating over the more traditional forms of field plate. At prices that start at 4,000 gold pieces for a simple, unadorned suit, full plate armor represents the crowning achievement of the armorer's ultimate goal--to forge for man a new skin of steel, as flexible as his own, but as invulnerable as anything in the land.

This increased protection comes only with a price. While full plate armor wears well when correctly fitted, it is cumbersome to don or remove without assistance. Herein enters the attendant.

For most knights, the attendant is a vassal or squire who tends to the knight's every need. He sharpens his lord's sword and brushes his horse. However, the great knight chooses his attendant carefully, for he knows his life may depend on this decision.

Without the assistance of a capable attendant, a knight requires 1d10+10 rounds to don his armor. An attendant cuts this time by half. As most combat veterans know, cutting the average armoring time in half can mean the difference between being at the battle and missing it entirely!

Warriors in a hurry can cut this dressing time by half again. The ramifications of this haste is that a knight and his attendant who are extremely lucky might, at best, be able to get dressed in only 3 rounds (i.e., best roll of 1, add 10 equals 11 rounds; 11 rounds cut in half for attendant's assistance equals 6 rounds; 6 rounds halved again for rushing yields 3 rounds).

However, a knight hurrying in this manner suffers penalties in combat. His straps are not adjusted correctly, meaning his plates are too loose or too tight and will hamper his overall effectiveness in battle. The knight suffers a -1 to all attack rolls and his armor class likewise drops one place, meaning his hasty dressing has given him armor equivalent in protection to that of field plate armor.

If a knight discovers that his loose fittings are causing him to miss his mark or be struck by his enemies too often, he need only spend as many rounds tightening his straps as he neglected by rushing his preparations (twice that if unattended, of course).

**Example:** Sir Hujer rolls a 6 on 1d10 when attempting to don his armor, thus needing 16 rounds. An attendant reduces this to 8 rounds, and rushing reduces this further to 4 rounds. The rushing penalties would be removed if Sir Hujer took 4 rounds (attended) or 8 rounds (unattended) to readjust his armor.

## Gnomish Workman's Leather Armor (AC 7)

**Description:** Gnomish workman's leather armor is a variation of high-quality gnomish leather armor (as described in the Equipment Chapter of *The Complete Fighter's Handbook*). Gnomish workman's leather is adorned with dozens of tiny tool holders and pouches, typically filled with the most bizarre collection of coins, nails, tools, weapons,

widgets, and sprockets ever assembled on one body. For this reason, a set of gnomish workman's leather provides protection identical to studded leather armor.

**Campaign Use:** Typically, gnomish workman's leather is as silent as normal high-quality gnomish leather armor (no Thieving Skill Armor Adjustment). However, this is before a gnomish workman has gotten anywhere near it. As with most things of gnomish design, the whole is a rather sundry compilation of many disjointed parts.

Strange inventions, secret compartments, locked and trapped pockets, and a dizzying array of tool holders and layered item racks are added, modified, moved, and camouflaged almost daily. From week to week, a gnomish workman's armor may change drastically in appearance and function. The armor has a stowage capacity of 10 lbs., up to half of which can be considered hidden.

Importantly, the special benefits of gnomish high-quality leather armor are lost when a gnomish workman begins collecting items to tuck into this leather garb. While a few items on the belt do not significantly ruin this feature of the base armor, enough gadgets to alter the armor class cannot help but clink and bang into each other, crinkle and spill out when the owner bends over, or accidentally drop off or explode in the most heated battle or flight.

Outside of gnomish society, this type of armor has been rarely seen by non-gnomes. Humans and elves rarely steal things they cannot use, unless hired to do so, and dwarves, who might squeeze into a suit if offered, find the concept distasteful and the appearance much too garish for their otherwise stoic tastes. Halflings have displayed a weakness for the many secret compartments found in gnomish workman's leather, and halfling thieves in particular might treasure this type of armor above all else. Indeed, the black market for gnomish workman's leather is rumored to be funded entirely by halfling-run thieves' guilds. This only adds fuel to any fires of discontent between halfling and gnomish clans.

In human settlements and cities, gnomes only don workman's armor when working privately, deep in their secret workshops. Since no one around them either appreciates or respects the trappings of "master craftsmanship," there seems to be little need to flaunt them.

Within the gnomish clan, however, there is a constant competition between all gnomish craftsmen, among both masters and apprentices. In some clans, the competitions have become formalized, with actual categories (most items carried, best personal trap, most secure pouch, nicest appearance, etc.) and prizes (clan contracts or a special badge to be sewn onto the armor). These contests are held on high festival days, much like a merchant's bazaar (just another special guild tradition to confuse the newcomer or overnight visitor).

In the largest of clans, many competing craftsman's guilds might sponsor and support individual designs or candidates. Every craftsman in the hall will spend long nights tinkering with his own armor to emulate or duplicate the desired effect. Those who succeed will claim partial credit for "testing and perfecting" the basic design. Those who fail might offer small sums of gold for the secret of the new invention.

## **Elven Chain Mail (AC 5)**

**Description:** Elven chain mail is the only form of armor made of a legendary elven alloy, a light-weight silvery steel of great strength. Even without enchantment, elven chain mail is typically half the weight of its human-forged counterpart.

**Campaign Use:** The elves guard the secret of making elven chain mail with more ferocity than they protect even their own children. In the entire multimillennia-long history of the elven race, the number of elven armorers who learn the secrets of forging elven steel can be counted on but one hand. Needless to say, these masters of the art tend to be ancient in the extreme, and the choice of an apprentice comes but once every thousand years. This is the highest honor accorded to any single elf, save being chosen by his peers to lead the elven race.

Apprenticeship is not a gift bestowed by the wealthy or powerful, but chosen by magical testing in a secret ceremony. Some outsiders would argue that the training makes the armorer, but tradition holds great sway in elven circles.

Human and dwarven armorers have been able to divine at least some of the secrets of the elven armorers, but not the most important ones. They know, for example, that mithril silver, that part of mithril which gives this purest of metals its glimmer in the moonlight, is somehow alloyed with other materials. The process of alloying has never been duplicated outside of an elven master forge, so most armorers believe some form of magical manipulation is involved in the process somewhere. Furthermore, anyone hoping to forge elven armor must be able to see the magical emanations radiating from it. While this may be done artificially through magic, this task is geared more toward the elves' natural eyesight. Dwarf armorers (described later) work under similar conditions.

Naturally, when one has a thousand years to perfect the skills for one's job, just about anything is within grasp. The dwarves call this an unfair advantage, while the humans don't even bother trying anymore. Life is too short, they feel, to waste time on creating something that would be easier stolen or discovered in a dragon's horde.

Elven chain mail is used by elven troops, both cavalry and infantry. It is common among the grey (faerie) elves and advanced elven cultures, but less common among the high elves. It is extremely rare among the wood elves.

Since the material is so strong and valuable, in those rare instances when a suit of elven chain mail is damaged to the point of needing repair, the suit is never discarded, but returned to the armorer for repair or replacement.

By the numbers of suits estimated to exist by human military planners and master armorers, best estimates are that it might take upwards of ten years to make just one suit of elven chain. Otherwise, they reason, there would be a lot more of the armor in use by the elves, and many more suits would be found in the lairs and treasure hordes of monsters across the realms.

## **Magical Elven Chain Mail**

Ordinary elven chain mail is rare in the extreme, but magical elven chain is so precious a gift that only a handful of suits have been rumored to exist anywhere but in royal elven hands.

In addition to the normal weight and flexibility advantages of elven chain, magical elven chain mail is so weightless that it can be worn under one's normal clothes. It is so

comfortable and unrestrictive that it can be worn constantly, even while sleeping. Magical elven chain is so soft to the touch that it can be worn without any padding beneath it. This makes magical elven chain the ideal armor for travelers, excluding only the greatest of knights, who by tradition prefer plated armors over all others.

For rogues especially, a set of magical elven chain mail is a more prized possession than even *full plate armor +1*. Adventurers have lost their lives over mere rumors of magical elven chain.

## Drow Chain Mail (AC 4)

**Description:** Drow chain mail is a finely-crafted, satiny black metal mesh that does not encumber its wearer in the least. It is similar, but not identical to, the magical elven chain mail described previously. It is typically fashioned only into tunics, as drow elves share their forest-bound cousins' preference for armor that adequately protects without being overly weighty or restrictive.

**Campaign Use:** Much like their cousins in the sunlight, the drow have invented their own form of special armor.

What is known for certain is that drow chain mail uses adamantite, the strongest metal known, as the principal component of their mystical alloy. It is mined by myriad drow-allied races in great quantities, and the drow war machine is wholly dependent on adamantite-related technologies.

This alloy has special properties due to the peculiar nature of the radiation emanating from the drow homeland, giving even the basest form of the alloy the equivalent of a magical +1. Drow weapons, shields, armor, etc., all begin with a +1 bonus, and based on the alloy, the amount of time spent in the forge, and the secret processes used, it can increase to as much as +5. The alloy does not radiate magic in the traditional way (a *detect magic* spell reveals no trace of magical properties).

Whenever drow-alloyed creations, including armor, are exposed to direct sunlight, their magical bonuses are immediately lost and they begin to utterly and irreversibly decay. This happens even after one short exposure, meaning that even a set of drow armor that is immediately returned to utter darkness or the nearest drow homeland will still decay. Physical decay begins 1d12+8 days after exposure to sunlight. The armor completely falls apart after another 1d12 days have passed.

If extraordinary precautions are taken, an adventurer could theoretically use a set of drow armor, if worn only in the dead of night and returned to complete darkness (e.g., a light-proof chest or vault) before the break of day. However, the armor *must* be returned to the drow homeland once every two weeks to be re-exposed to the radiation. Armor must remain in the homeland two days per day spent above ground. If the armor is not returned to the underdark before two weeks have passed, the magic of the armor is permanently lost. Decay then begins as described above.

The fragments of metal that remain after drow armor deteriorates may be collected and reused for future forgings. However, the metal is nonmagical until the forging process imbues the enchantment.

The surface elves contend that these conditions are poor workmanship on the part of

the drow, but scholars have noted many parallels between elven and drow alloys.

For example, one possibility is that just as the strange magical emanations of the drow homeland aid in the construction of their special adamantite objects, it has been surmised that moonlight, pure and cool, may have something to do with the forging of elven mithril armor. The fact that mithril is as reflective, light, and pure as adamantite is dull, heavy, and dense has not escaped observation.

What is certain about the two magical types of armor is that such parallels cannot be sheer coincidence. Somewhere in the distant past of the two races, when times were better and before the dark elves retreated to the earthen depths, there must have been one common armor technology. The drow took the secrets of forging elven metals with them when they left, but had to discover something to replace both the mithril and moonlight components of the ancient secret art.

What they eventually discovered, perhaps after many centuries of experimentation, was a magical alloy more abundant than mithril, yet not as stable as elven chain.

## Dwarven Plate Mail (AC 2)

**Description:** The forged black iron plate made by the dwarves exclusively for their own warrior leaders is both heavy and unattractive by human and elven standards. However, dwarves have traditionally placed less emphasis on appearance than on personal defense. Dwarven warriors who wear dwarven plate are often called "waddling cauldrons" by their enemies due to the bulk of this armor.

**Campaign Use:** As detailed in both *The Complete Fighter's Handbook* and *The Castle Guide*, high-quality dwarven plate is the boilerplate version of human plate armor. It is 50% heavier than equivalent mails, making a single suit of dwarven-sized plate mail armor weigh approximately the same as a set of human-sized plate mail.

Additionally, the denser armor affords protection equivalent to *plate mail* +1, and the armor itself saves against equipment damage at +6, in addition to any bonuses permitted if the dwarven plate in question is also magically enchanted. Stories about dwarven plate armor withstanding the smelting fires of a red dragon's breath may be boastful exaggeration, but it is an established fact that dwarven plate often survives an attack that its wearer does not.

As mentioned, dwarves prize combat effectiveness over a warrior's appearance. It is therefore very rare for the iron appearance of dwarven plate mail to be adorned in any way.

Much like the elves, dwarves do not make dwarven plate for non-dwarves. Not only is it considered impractical to spend one's time building a suit of armor no dwarf can ever hope to wear (a waste of time), but the dwarves will admit to having no skill in working with the peculiarities of the human body. Dwarves tend to ignore things like flexible joints, as their range of movement is already restricted by nature. An ancient dwarven warrior's saying goes something like "If it doesn't fit, bend it. If it still doesn't fit, break it!" Along those lines, another popular dwarven saying is "Never let your armor impede a good fight."

Dwarven field and full plate armor do not exist. Not only would dwarves look like

miniature iron golems when so protected, but dwarves prefer to let their facial expressions speak for them in combat. The problem of free movement plays a big part in this practical decision as well.

No human has ever managed to convince a group of dwarves to forge a set of full plate armor for them. If such a task were even to get past the bargaining phase, it would quickly become apparent to all concerned that the dwarves have no experience or knowledge of such constructions and lack the motivation to learn it. Dwarves themselves claim they'd rather be "beating their hammers on orc skulls than beating them in the forge."

Curiously, gnomes have offered to give full plate their "best shot" from time to time, but so far, no human has been brave or foolish enough to accept the offer.

Dwarven plate mail lasts longer than its human counterpart. As detailed in *The Complete Fighter's Handbook*, dwarven plate mail can sustain twice as many points of damage as normal plate mail (if the optional armor damage point system presented therein is being used).

## Magical Dwarven Plate Mail

Magical dwarven plate mail is only as encumbering as ordinary plate mail. The enchantment is cumulative with the natural +1 to armor class dwarven plate possesses. Therefore, *dwarven plate mail +1* is actually equivalent to ordinary *plate mail +2* for purposes of armor class (but not saving throws). It may be easier for the DM and player if the base armor class for dwarven plate is remembered to be 1, equivalent to field plate armor for humans.

## Shields (+1 AC)

Shields ordinarily improve a character's armor class by 1 (or more if magical). Shields cannot be used to block attacks from the rear or rear flanks.

## Buckler or Target Shield

A buckler, also known as a target shield, is a small round shield of wood or metal that fastens to the forearm. It can be worn by crossbowmen and archers with no hindrance to their attacks with their chosen weapons.

Because of its small size (approximately 1' in diameter), a buckler protects against one attack per melee round. The user can choose which attack he wishes to use his buckler against, but he must declare this before the attack roll has been made. This increases the defender's armor class only by 1 (more if magical) against that single attack.

**Note:** Bucklers should be treated not as full shields when determining the armor class of the user, but more as a special item that can be called upon to add extra protection for one attack per round.

## Small Shield



A small shield is usually round and is carried on the forearm, gripped with the shield hand. Its light weight as compared to a medium shield permits the user to carry other items in that hand, although he cannot wield or carry another weapon.

A small shield (approximately 2' in diameter) can be used to protect against two frontal attacks of the user's choice. Like the buckler above, the user can choose which attacks to use his shield against, but must decide before the attacks are rolled.

**Note:** Like the buckler, the small shield should be considered a special item used for defense, not as a general addition to frontal armor class.

## Medium Shield

A medium shield is carried in the same manner as a small shield (i.e., on the forearm). Unlike the small shield, however, its weight prevents the character from using his shield hand for anything other than carrying the medium shield. Medium shields are usually made of metal, range from 3'-4' in diameter, and can be of any shape, from round to square to a spread dragon's wings. A typical medieval shield resembles a triangle with one point facing downward.

With a medium shield, a character can defend against any number of frontal or flanking attacks in a given round. In this instance, the character applies the +1 armor class bonus (not including magical bonuses) for the shield to his overall armor class rating, providing he remembers to disregard the shield bonus during the occasional attack from the rear.

## Body Shield

The body shield, also known as the kite or tower shield, is a massive metal or wooden shield reaching nearly from the chin to the toe of the user. It must be firmly fastened to the forearm and the shield hand must firmly grip it at all times. Naturally, this precludes use of the shield hand for anything but holding the body shield in place.

Standing around 6' tall, the body shield provides a great deal of protection to the user, improving the overall armor class of the character by 1 against melee attacks and by 2 against missile attacks. As with all shields, these bonuses apply only against frontal and flanking attacks.

Since the body shield is very heavy, the DM may want to use the optional encumbrance system if he allows its use in the campaign. This will help to prevent overuse of body shields in combat.

## Helms

**Campaign Use:** Helms are part of a warrior's basic protection. Failure to use proper headgear leaves a character open to called shots by opponents or to other disadvantages at the DM's option. All headgear except that which does not cover the ears must be removed when making rolls for listening.

*The Complete Fighter's Handbook* offers an optional rule for Hearing and Vision checks. All helms restrict Hearing and Vision checks to some degree. (A Vision or Hearing check is a 1d20 roll against a character's Intelligence or Wisdom, whichever is



higher. These checks can be used when a character has a chance to hear or see something of importance. This check *isn't* used when characters listen at doors; that has its own check.)

Optionally, great helms and closed-face helmets, when worn with plate armor, gain bonuses against dragon's breath and spells that affect the eyes (see the Equipment section in *The Complete Fighter's Handbook*).

**Helms and Thieves:** Thieves suffer automatic penalties to hearing if a helm is worn. The following descriptions include penalties to Hearing and Vision checks. If these rules are not used, the penalties for Vision checks should be ignored; for Hearing checks, substitute a -5% penalty to the thief's Hear Noise ability for each -1 Hearing check modifier (e.g., a -3 to a Hearing check is a -15% to the thief's Hear Noise roll).

## Cap

A cap is a padded, leather, or steel skullcap worn much like a close-fitted cap, beret, or bonnet. Caps are usually worn with padded armor, leather, studded leather, hide, or any other lightweight protection.

**Vision and Hearing:** -1 penalty to Hearing checks; no penalty to Vision checks.

## Coif

A coif is a padded chain mail hood. It fits snugly around the neck and over the head, except the face. It usually comes with or is built into a suit of chain mail or mail-based armor. Often, a heavily armored knight will wear a chain mail coif under a great helm. This allows him to remove his great helm for a better view of the field while maintaining a fair level of head protection.

**Vision and Hearing:** Identical Vision and Hearing check penalties as those associated with a cap (above). If a great helm is worn, penalties are assigned for the great helm and are not cumulative with those of the coif.

## Open-Face Helmet

This class of open-face helmet, made of reinforced leather or metal, covers most of the head, save the face and neck. These helmets commonly provide protection for the nose (this piece of the helm is called a *nasal*).

Open-face helmets are popular with officers and leaders, and are appropriately worn with medium-weight armors like brigandine and chain mail.

**Vision and Hearing:** -1 penalty to Vision checks; -2 penalty to Hearing checks (such helms cover the ears entirely except for a small hole).

## Closed-Face Helmet

The closed-face helmets are identical to the open-face helmets (above), but include a visored faceplate.

These tend to be worn by officers and sergeants-at-arms. They are most commonly worn with plate mail.

**Vision and Hearing:** When the visor is up, Vision and Hearing check penalties are identical for those of open-face helmets. Otherwise, the visored wearer suffers a -2 penalty to all Vision checks and a -3 penalty to Hearing checks.

## Great Helm

A great helm is any massive metal helm that covers the entire head, including the neck and often the upper shoulders. The only gaps in the protection are found in the narrow slits that allow limited vision, and some small holes to permit breathing. The visor is not normally removable.

It is rare to find a great helm used with armor lighter than banded mail. Great helms are most often found in combination with plate mail or heavier armor.

**Vision and Hearing:** -3 penalty to Vision checks; -4 penalty to Hearing checks.

# CHAPTER 2

## Equipment for Mounts

The following information expands the details found in the *Player's Handbook* with regard to barding, tack, harness, and other items used with horses and mounts. Optional rules are provided to allow the DM to match the armor of mounts and their riders (which can be used to simplify the record keeping when large numbers of mounted troops are encountered). In addition, partial barding is covered in an optional table that allows calculation of a mount's armor class if only partial barding is available.

The information in this section centers on horses, because this type of mount is the most commonly encountered. Much of this material, however, can be easily adapted for other types of mounts. The following sections deal mainly with barding, as this will have the most direct effect on adventuring and combat.

## Barding

Barding refers to armor designed for mounts. Mounts are most commonly horses, but also include the huge beasts that carry fighting platforms into combat (such as elephants with howdahs). The vast majority of mounts will wear no barding at all. Such protection is expensive and time-consuming to construct, tires the mount quickly, and reduces the speed and maneuverability of the mount in combat.

Historically, barding reached its peak development in the medieval era. After the introduction of gunpowder and the gun, barding quickly degenerated into little more than parade trappings. The development of barding was controlled by two factors: the breeding of horses strong enough to wear the protection and carry an armored rider, and the technical problems of designing such armor to be ever lighter and more flexible than that worn by men without sacrificing protection. In many ways, the development of barding parallels the development of armor for the fighting man.

## Medieval Barding

Most forms of barding, other than padded or quilted cloth, required massively heavy

and powerful mounts. The weight of barding and the man, including his armor and weapons, easily strained even the largest war horses. For this reason, later barding was redesigned using lighter materials such as boiled leather or thick padded cloth. One of the most common historical bardings was made of boiled leather (sometimes more than 2 inches thick), with specially reinforced parts made of steel bands and wooden planks or short strips of thick, hard wood.

Late medieval barding comprised a number of pieces of armor covering different parts of the mount. These included the *chanfron* (for the head and neck), the *crinet* (for the side of the neck), the *cuello* (for the forward chest), the *poitrel* (for the flanks and broad chest), the *flanchards* (covering areas around the saddle), and the *crupper* (for the hindquarters). Barding almost never protected the legs of the mount.

In warmer and more humid climates, full barding is less common than half barding. When used at all, lighter forms are preferred. Half barding usually includes only the chanfron and poitrel (plus the crinet and cuello for plate barding).

## Barding in Campaigns

In the AD&D® game worlds, the use of barding varies by culture and race. Although individual variations are up to the DM (and are encouraged), a few generalizations are useful. Most barding will be used by human forces. Other than humans, elves (and sometimes halflings) will use horse barding. It is rare to see gnomes or dwarves mounted, except as members of adventuring groups. It is much rarer to see them on barded mounts, as they prefer fighting on foot.

Besides horses, war elephants are sometimes outfitted with leather or metal barding. Camel riders tend not to bard their mounts, as the bulky armor makes them more difficult to handle, reduces their carrying capacity severely, and interferes with their ability to survive desert conditions much more so than with horses.

Worgs and war dogs are occasionally barded with leather, though this is rare.

Aerial mounts can be barded with leather or lighter materials.

## Types of Barding

**Full barding:** This is a complete set of horse armor that provides the rated protection when attacked from any side. Note that the term "full plate" is used to denote a new, more advanced type of horse armor, like the fighter's full plate armor.

**Half barding:** The difference between half barding and full barding is that half barding covers only the front and forward sides of the animal. Attacks from the rear or rear flanks use the mount's base armor class.

**Partial Barding:** This is an option that allows the averaging of a mount's armor class if full barding is not available. See Table 4.

Note: All "suits" of barding, including half barding, are complete units; that is, half barding is not achieved by leaving off half a horse's armor. The pieces are made to be used together--they are specially formed, fitted, and balanced to provide a certain level of protection and a certain degree of mobility in a fight. Cobbling together odd or ill-fitting pieces degrades the effect of the whole, to the degree ruled by the Dungeon Master.

In the following section, barding is discussed in order of least protective to most protective. New types of barding are included. Tables summarizing the information can be found on pages 50-51.

## Pieces of Horse Armor

**Chanfron:** This piece of armor covers the mount's head, neck, and mane. In its most primitive form, the chanfron is made of boiled leather. Chanfrons made by humans and dwarves are usually made of iron or steel, while orcs and other humanoid races tend to favor leather and sylvan elves use wood or strong, fibrous plant materials.

**Crinet:** This neckpiece is found only in plate armor. It covers the upper side of the mount's neck and is made of narrow strips of steel articulated with six to eight inches of mail.

**Cuello:** Found only in plate barding, this is armor for the underside of the horse's neck (the throat). It is hung from the crinet with a number of straps and buckles. In more advanced barding, the cuello has fully articulated plates hinged with wide bands of tight chain links.

**Poitrel:** This part of the horse's barding covers its chest and flanks. The poitrel is also known by names such as the *peytrel*, *pectoral*, or *poitrinal*. It covers the front of the chest and sides as far as the saddle. Early poitrels used heavy cloth with scales, rings, or studs; later ones used plates or bands of steel.

**Flanchards:** These are plates of armor for the horse's side, including the area behind the front shoulders, across the saddle length, and ending at the hindquarters, protecting areas not covered by the poitrel or crupper.

**Crupper:** This piece covers the hindquarters of the horse and is sometimes referred to as the *croupiere bacul*. The lightest form of this armor is made of light leather sewn together into small squares, then joined together by straps and stitches. The most advanced cruppers are made of several thick steel bands joined with pieces of chain or mail, bound to the saddle and the flanchards.

## Light Barding

### Padded Barding (AC 6)

This style of quilted barding has only minor protective value, giving the mount an AC bonus of 1. In the standard AD&D® game campaign, padded barding is functionally the same as leather barding and weighs 60 pounds. Padded barding tends to wear out rapidly with use.

Halflings and elves occasionally use this type of armor on their ponies and light horses.

**Half Padded:** Half padded barding gives protection only to the front and front sides of the mount. It is used mainly in poorer or less civilized cultures. In more civilized cultures, parade decorations might be considered half padded. This protection weighs a mere 25

pounds.

### Leather Barding (AC 6)

This barding is the most common type of light barding. Leather barding has most of the characteristics of the leather armor worn by warriors. Among humans, leather barding is used primarily by irregular horsemen and occasional bands of nomads, whose mounts are usually smaller and able to carry less weight than the specially bred mounts of civilized lands. Leather barding weighs 60 pounds.

Halflings and elves tend to use leather on their light mounts. Halfling barding is usually decorated with colorful beads and bits of shells.

Although dwarves and gnomes generally don't use barding, they will occasionally make leather barding to protect pack mules and similar animals.

Humanoids, if they use barding on their mounts at all, often make use of this type.

**Half Leather:** This is leather barding that protects only the front half of the horse. It weighs 30 pounds.

### Medium Barding

#### Scale Barding (AC 5)

Scale barding is an early form of medium protection barding, generally superseded by chain in more advanced regions. It is most common in Dark Ages, eastern, or frontier settings, where it will still be somewhat less common than chain barding in a western medieval setting. Refer to Chapter 1 for more information on the construction and appearance of scale armor. Full scale barding weighs 75 pounds.

**Half Scale:** Half scale barding includes a much lighter mesh of scale and covers only the head and front quarters of the horse. It is the heaviest armor commonly found on a light horse. Half scale weighs only 50 pounds.

Half scale is sometimes used by successful orc and goblin war bands. Other humanoid races may also be found using the barding in their cavalry units.

#### Brigandine Barding (AC 5)

A late period composite armor made from small metal plates sandwiched between layers of leather, brigandine is the most advanced barding that a typical village armorer can make. It is not as encumbering as the more restrictive scale, weighing 70 pounds.

**Half brigandine:** This barding protects the front half of the horse and weighs 45 pounds.

The rogues of the road (including occasional adventurers) tend to use half brigandine because it is light, generally non-encumbering, and easy to care for.

#### Ring Barding (AC 5)

This early form of barding is made of metal rings sewn onto a heavy cloth or leather backing. It is heavier than standard scale barding, and in most campaigns will be used only by those who can't get anything better. (In fact, whether a barding like ring barding actually existed is open to question; it may have been too heavy for the horses of the time.) Ring barding weighs 80 pounds.

**Half Ring:** This is ring barding for the front areas of the horse. It weighs 55 pounds.

## Studded Leather Barding (AC 5)

This early barding is made of layers of soft leather, reinforced with many small metal studs intended to turn aside slashes. In all important respects, it is equal to ring barding and weighs 80 pounds.

**Half Studded Leather:** This barding covers the front of the horse. It weighs 50 pounds.

Humanoids tend to use studded leather barding. In some instances, the studs are long and filed to sharp points. The damage-causing ability of these short spikes is questionable, but they certainly add to the ferocious appearance of a mount.

## Chain Barding (AC 4)

This barding is the standard armor for medium war horses. It is put on in sections, with the main pieces being attached to the saddle or laid over the horse and buckled underneath. A heavy cloth or blanket is placed under the chain to prevent rubbing and abrasions from the barding, which would cause the horse to quickly become fatigued. Only in the cooler climates can a horse wear such armor for long (the horse cannot move all day with the armor on; it must have sufficient rest and free grazing). Chain barding weighs approximately 70 pounds.

Chain barding is used by grey elf medium cavalry companies.

**Half Chain:** This is chain barding covering the front areas of the horse. It weighs 45 pounds.

**Elven chain barding:** This type of barding exists, though it is extremely rare. It has a weight of 25 pounds. Such barding cannot be purchased and is generally unavailable to anyone other than elven nobility.

## Heavy Barding

### Banded Barding (AC 3)

This is similar to chain barding, but is reinforced with horizontal strips of metal. Officers and riders wealthy enough to afford this type of barding are usually the only persons who use it. Only the large war horses can bear its weight. It remains a hybrid form, and the frequency of its appearance depends on the technological level of the campaign. Such armor weighs 85 pounds.

**Half Banded:** This is banded barding covering the front of the horse. It weighs 60 pounds.

### Splint Barding (AC 3)

Splint barding is similar to banded barding. The main difference is that the strips of metal are vertical instead of horizontal. The weight and protective value are the same at 85 pounds and AC 3.

**Half Splint:** This covers only the front half of the horse. Its weight is 60 pounds.

### Plate Barding (AC 2)

This type of barding corresponds to plate mail, and is the standard protection for a fully

armored war horse. Only heavy war horses can bear the weight of this armor and still fight effectively.

This barding includes the chanfron that covers the head, the cuello that guards the neck and mane, the poitrel that covers the forward chest and quarters, the flanchards that protect the side quarters and flanks, and the crupper that defends the rear.

This barding is made of chain mail and small steel plates linked together and hinged with articulated joints. Over this metal and chain rests a thick padded or quilted cloth equipped with metal studs. The complete set weighs about 85 pounds. This is extremely fatiguing to the mount, and usually such armor is put on the horse only when battle is imminent.

Plate barding is used almost exclusively by human heavy cavalry. Elf lords may also have plate armor for their mounts.

Only in very rare instances will an orc, goblin, hobgoblin, or other humanoid have access to such armor. In such cases, usually only the commander or chieftain of the tribe owns such barding, and then only if allied to a ruler or wizard with the ability to construct such armor.

**Half plate:** This gives the horse plate barding protection to its front. It weighs 65 pounds.

### Field Plate Barding (AC 1)

Field plate barding is the heaviest barding normally used in battle. It is rare even in late period campaigns, and should be restricted to nobles, high officers, and unusual individuals. The construction of field plate barding requires a master armorer. The barding must be constructed and fitted to a particular horse. Field plate barding weighs 90 pounds.

**Half Field Plate:** This gives the equivalent of field plate protection to the front of the horse only. This configuration is never encountered, except perhaps as ceremonial armor. It weighs 70 pounds.

### Full Plate Barding (AC 0)

Full plate barding, like full plate armor, is the highest achievement of the best armorers. It is available only in late period campaigns and will be very rare at the best of times; only the most advanced and richest kingdoms can master the techniques of its construction. The services of a master armorer are required. Full plate barding weighs 90 pounds.

**Half Full Plate:** This gives the equivalent of full plate protection to the front of the horse only. Again, this barding, if encountered, is almost certain to be ceremonial armor. It weighs 70 pounds.

## Horse Tack and Harness

### Bit

The bit is the general name for the two principle kinds of equestrian mouthpieces used to control a horse's movement. Each of the two bit types are described below.

**Snaffle:** This bit is composed of a steel rod or bar with two rings at either end. The reins are fastened to these rings. The snaffle is a gentler bit than the curb designs, and is



usually used for riding horses as opposed to war or work horses. The snaffle bit tends to give less control over a spirited mount.

**Curb:** This bit has a plate that is inserted in the mouth of the beast. Short vertical bars are attached to either side of the plate. Each bar has a ring at the top and bottom of the bar. The reins are attached to the two bottom rings, while the two upper rings are connected by a stout strap or chain passing under the jaw of the horse. This allows great physical force to be brought upon the animal, allowing great control over the movement and speed of the horse. The curb bit is much more severe than the snaffle bit and is often used with war horses.

## Bridle

A simple bridle is nothing more than a heavy ring of rope or leather hitched around the mount's lower jaw and used to guide or lead the animal.

There are three basic parts of a bridle: the *bit*, the *headstall*, and the *reins*. The bit was discussed previously. The headstall is the set of straps and cords that secures the bit to the horse's jaw. The reins are the straps that run from the bit around the horse's neck that enable the rider to steer the animal.

**Bridoon:** This is complex bridle with a snaffle bit and wide reins. A bridoon is much more difficult to snare or cut than a normal bridle. It is also more expensive than the standard bridle (150% of bridle cost).

**Cavesson:** A type of bridle used to train and break horses. The cavesson looks much like other bridles except for two extra rings at the base of the bit, where lead ropes can be attached to be held by a trainer or tied to a pole. The horse can then be led easily and slowly broken and trained. The cost is comparable to that of a standard bridle.

## Horseshoes

In the wild, horses wear down their hooves as fast as they grow them. But domesticated horses, with the extra weight of rider and equipment, will wear away hooves much more quickly. Without protection, the horse would quickly become lame and useless.

Metal horseshoes are used to counteract the wear and tear on the mount's hooves. The horseshoe is nothing more than a steel bar hammered into a ``U" shape, then nailed tightly into the hoof of the horse. The nails cause no discomfort to the animal. With horseshoes, the mount can travel farther and faster.

Throwing a horseshoe or getting a stone lodged between the shoe and the hoof are events that need extra attention if the horse is to be kept in good condition.

**Magical Horseshoes:** Any number of different types of magical horseshoes can be added to the game: those that allow unusual speed, the ability to move on water or through the air, those that act as magical weapons, and so forth.

## Saddle

Saddle use is assumed in the Land-based Riding proficiency unless a character is specifically from a culture proficient in riding bareback. Any other character who tries to ride without a saddle is subject to special riding checks at the discretion of the DM. (A general no-saddle penalty of -2 is suggested.)

In a typical campaign, available saddles will be based on types used in the mid-to-late

medieval period.

By this time period, the saddle had evolved through many changes in design. The basic saddle includes the frame (called the *tree*), the front end (called the *pommel*), and the back end (called the *cantle*).

Elven saddles are made of wood and pliable, fibrous plants. Halfling saddles are soft and well cushioned. Gnomish saddles are painted and decorated with thin layers of silver, gold, or semi-precious gems.

Orcs and goblins use saddles that are quite small, with fairly distinct pommels and nearly invisible cantles.

**War Saddle:** The knight's war saddle takes on huge dimensions. They typically exhibit high pommels and cantles, and are often covered with steel or brass plates or are decorated profusely with silver and ivory inlays. These usually have rings and straps for attaching barding and heavy stirrups.

## Saddlebags

Saddlebags rest directly behind the rider, on the rump of the horse. They come in many different sizes and varieties. The most common type is made of leather and has two large packs, one on either side of the horse. Each pack or bag can hold about 3 square feet of material or about 25 pounds of weight (for the large saddlebags). Small saddlebags hold 2 square feet and 15 pounds. Saddlebags may also be made of heavy cloth. Variant saddlebag designs might have anywhere from one to four packs instead of the standard two.

## Saddle Blanket

This is a typically a warm woven blanket laid underneath the saddle, protecting the animal from abrasion and preventing the saddle from shifting. A rider who uses a saddle without a saddle blanket will quickly wear his horse down (and might find himself unceremoniously dumped when the saddle shifts).

Elven and halfling saddle blankets are wonderfully woven and often decorated with colorful tassels or jingling bells.

## Spur

A spur is little more than a small metal attachment to the heel of a boot or shoe. The spur has one to six sharp projections that can be used to jab the horse in the sides, causing the animal to move at a quicker gait.

## Stirrup

A stirrup is a leather strap ending in either a conical shielded foot rest or an iron ring. A stirrup is attached on each side of the saddle by a hook and several ties.

The stirrup has many uses. Its primary function is to expedite the mounting of the beast. The stirrup also helps the rider control the mount and stay on if struck by a forceful blow; stirrups are essential in a jousting match.

Stirrups steady the mounted warrior, allowing greater force to be put behind blows with less chance of falling off the mount. They allow mounted warriors with lances to charge effectively with a leveled lance, a feat nearly impossible without them.

**Optional rule:** Mounted fighters without stirrups who are struck in combat must make

a save vs. paralyzation or fall from the horse.

## Bridle Cutter

A bridle cutter is a sharp, hooked instrument used in battle to cut the reins of an enemy and essentially strip him of his ability to control his mount. These tools look like short, bladed axes with several wicked, angled cuts. Bridle cutters are sometimes used by front line troops who face cavalry. Many bridle cutters find their way into kobold, orc, or goblin brigades and are used as melee weapons rather than to cut reins. A bridle cutter inflicts 1-4 points of damage to small- and medium-sized creatures and 1-3 points of damage to large creatures. Refer to Table 1 on page 50 for other weapon statistics.

**Table 1: Bridle Cutter Wielded as Weapon**

Item	Cost	Weight	Size	Type	Speed Factor	Damage S-M	Damage L
Bridle Cutter	3 gp	4 lbs.	M	S	4	1d4	1d3

**Table 2: Horse Barding**

Warhorse	Padded	Leather	Scale	Chain	Banded	Plate
Light	Yes	Yes	--	--	--	--
Medium	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	--	--
Heavy	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

The *light warhorse* category includes ponies and riding horses (the latter reflects custom and use rather than the ability of the horse to carry actual weight).

*Limits:* A horse can wear half barding one class heavier than its maximum full barding.

Flying creatures are limited to leather and padded barding only.

*Padded* includes quilted armor.

*Scale* includes studded leather, brigandine, and ring mail (weights will differ).

*Banded* includes splint.

**Table 3: Optional Barding Armor Class**

(This can replace the *Creatures with Natural Armor Class* section in Chapter 6 of the *Player's Handbook*.)

Type of Barding	AC Bonus	Maximum AC
Leather (Padded)	+1	4
Scale, Brigandine, Studded, Ring	+2	3
Chain	+3	2
Banded, Splint	+4	1
Plate	+5	0

*AC Bonus* is the amount of protection a type of barding affords. For example, a heavy warhorse (AC 7) in plate barding (+5) has an adjusted AC of 2.

*Maximum AC* is the best AC conferred by non-magical barding of this type. Past this point, the innate toughness of the creature renders this type of barding redundant.

#### Table 4: Optional Partial Barding

The following chart may be used to determine the armor class of partial barding. Bonuses are added to the mount's base AC.

Armor Type	Full Barding	Chanfron/ Poitrel	Cuello/ Crinet	Flanchard/ Crupper
Leather	6	----- (see notes) -----		
Scale	5	----- (see notes) -----		
Chain	4	**	0	**
Banded	3	**	**	**
Plate	2	1 ea.	**	1 ea.
Field Plate	1	1 ea.	**	1 ea.
Full Plate	0	1 ea.	1 ea.	1 ea.

#### Notes:

*Leather:* The only effective combination less than full leather is half leather, which gives protection to the front of the horse only.

*Scale:* Half scale protects the front of the horse only. Any other combination of at least three pieces (except crinet) gives a +1 bonus to armor class.

\*\* Any two pieces give a +1 bonus to AC.

#### Table 5: Additional Barding Types (Combined Table)

Armor Type	AC	Wt	Cost	Time	Half Wt.	Half Cost	Time
Leather	6	60#	150 gp	4	25#	100 gp	2
Padded	6	60#	150 gp	4	25#	100 gp	2
Scale	5	75#	1,000 gp	8	50#	500 gp	6
Brigandine	5	70#	1,000 gp	8	45#	500 gp	6
Ring	5	80#	800 gp	8	55#	400 gp	6
Studded Leather	5	80#	800 gp	8	50#	400 gp	6
Chain	4	70#	500 gp	10	45#	300 gp	8
Banded	3	85#	1,750 gp	14	60#	1,000 gp	12
Splint	3	85#	1,750 gp	14	60#	1,000 gp	12
Plate	2	85#	2,000 gp	16	65#	1,500 gp	14
Field Plate	1	90#	5,000 gp	18	70#	3,000 gp	16
Full Plate	0	90#	8-20,000 gp	20	70#	5-15,000 gp	18

*Half weight* and *half cost* are the weight and cost for half barding.

Time is the time an armorer requires to make the barding (as per *The Complete Fighter's Handbook*). Half barding takes 2 weeks less than full barding.

# CHAPTER 3

## Weapons

One of the most common events in the life of an adventurer, regardless of profession, is the need for armed combat. Some adventurers make a career of hacking and slashing, while others use combat as a last resort, after diplomacy, negotiation, or spellcraft fail.

Fortunately for adventurers, there are as many different types of weapons as there are reasons for using them. This chapter details the vast majority of weapons available to the discerning adventurer. A fair warning, though: a weapon is only as effective as the hero who wields it. Sometimes, a smaller, less lethal-looking weapon may be called for. Most of the entries that follow include commentary from distinguished adventurers. Heed their advice, look over the list carefully, and choose well; your PC's life may depend on it!

**Notes:** During the research into the various weapons, conflicting backgrounds arose for several of the weapons. The terminology and history that follow were chosen for consistency with what has already been established in the AD&D® game universe.

Many references are made to an item known as the Bayeux Tapestry. This is a tapestry that depicts the Battle of Hastings in 1066 AD, in which William the Conqueror led the Normans from the European Continent to England. The Normans defeated the Anglo-Saxons under King Harold. This tapestry has given scholars many clues on how warfare was conducted at that time.

### Arquebus

The arquebus is a musket used by cultures just learning the technology of guns. It is a two-handed weapon, fired like a rifle except that the arms absorb the recoil, not the shoulders, since the weapon does not rest on the latter. The gun is also called a "hackbut."

Years after its development, the term "arquebus" expanded to include handguns of the same era, and eventually the word lost its original meaning and was used instead to describe small handguns used by cavalry. In terms of AD&D® game campaigns, the arquebus refers to the large, two-handed primitive gun with a smooth bore barrel as opposed to a rifled barrel. Hence, the gun is technically not a rifle. This form of arquebus often has a hooklike projection on the underside of its barrel.

The arquebus was developed in order to give the average infantry the use of smoke powder, whose destructive potential is only newly recognized in many areas.

The musket arquebus is loaded by pouring smoke powder from a flask or horn into the muzzle and firmly packing it with a piece of paper. The projectile, an iron ball, is rammed in after this. Once the barrel is ready, the pan is filled with smoke powder, the pan's cover is closed, and a burning slow-match (a piece of cloth or paper rolled into a fuse) is placed in the mechanism called the serpentine (the curved piece of metal where the trigger would someday be on a modern rifle). Pressure on a metal plate releases the serpentine into the pan, and BOOM!

Since this weapon involves smoke powder, DMs may forbid its use. Players should

check with their DM as to whether it is allowed in the campaign.

Smoke powder is considered a magical item. The historical arquebus required two types of gun powder, a finer variety for pan loading and a coarse variety for muzzle loading. Each type was carried in a separate container. If the DM desires, the gunner may require the two different powder types in order to operate the arquebus.

The arquebus is a very dangerous instrument, nearly as dangerous to the user as to the target. In order to reload, the gunner has to hold the smoldering slow-match in his left hand while reloading with his right. A slow-match burns for eight rounds.

An arquebus can be fired only once every three rounds providing the character is not being attacked while loading. Treat the gunner the same as a spellcaster casting a very long spell. When firing an arquebus, all range penalties are doubled.

If an arquebus attack roll is a 1 or 2, the gun backfires, inflicting 1d6 points of damage to the gunner. It is also fouled and cannot be used until cleaned, a process which takes at least 30 minutes (and relative peace).

When an arquebus scores a hit, it does 1-9 points of damage on 1d10. If a 10 is rolled, the die is rolled again and this amount is added to the 10. Each time a 10 is rolled, the die is rolled again and added to the total.

There are no Strength modifiers to an arquebus' damage.

If the arquebus' smoke powder is exposed to water, the powder is ruined.

*"As far as many folk are concerned, smoke powder and magic don't mix! Sure, the arquebus is a newfangled weapon, but not all new things are necessarily better! With an arquebus, the firer has to take time to reload, unless he wants to have someone tag along and supply him with an extra arquebus, already loaded, in order to keep up a steady rate of fire. Oh, certainly that can be done--or the more intelligent adventurer will go out and get himself a long bow which fires arrows quicker than an arquebus can throw shot, and has comparable range! As far as can be determined, the arquebus is good for making gods-awful noise that will either scare the Nine Hells out of any enemy, or possibly anger the target into attacking with even more ferocity."*

*-- Grymwand, Professional Mercenary*

The arquebus gets its name from the German Hakenbuchse, meaning "gun with a hook."

## **Battle Axe**

Contrary to popular artwork, the most common version of the battle axe is a stout pole about four feet in length with a single-edged, trumpet-shaped blade mounted on one end. Battle axes are also called broad axes.

The battle axe is a footman's weapon, giving these soldiers a longer reach and a fighting chance against mounted opponents. Its long handle allows the wielder to put considerable force into his swing. Despite the shaft length, a battle axe is a one-handed weapon.

The typical dwarven battle axe is a double bladed weapon, usually with a spiked top. Dwarves favor these weapons since the long handles compensate somewhat for the shorter dwarven stature, especially against large humanoid opponents. They are often

wielded with two hands. In many dwarven cultures, the battle axe is a symbol of dwarven might.

A thrust with the spiked head of a battle axe inflicts 1d3 hit points of damage.

Dwarves are not the only race that favors the battle axe. Gnolls often are encountered with battle axes. Troglodytes use a stone version of the battle axe, with all of the disadvantages of stone weapons (i.e., prone to chipping and shattering).

Two-handed battle axes have the same statistics as the bardiche. They are called "great axes."

*"Though the battle axe is a one-handed weapon, its longer handle, which gives it good momentum, is not a good horseman's weapon, as the wielder has to put a lot of his weight into the swing, something hard to do from a saddle. It is also useless as a missile weapon. Still, its damage is respectable, and it looks nasty, especially the dwarven styles. A battle axe is good for the foot soldier or adventurer who needs to strike at a large creature or at someone on horseback.*

*"Battle axes are good for their percussive and cutting effects against armor. If adventurers want to use a battle axe and still gain some measure of protection, it is wise to fight alongside a companion who is armed with a sword and shield. The companion acts as the axe-wielder's defense while the latter is busy chopping away. This is a good exercise in teamwork, which may keep both adventurers alive much longer.*

*"As for dwarves, our center of gravity is low enough that we can swing a battle axe and not topple over from the momentum. It is a fine weapon for hewing the legs of a giant out from under him, and it is a weapon that lets us put all of our weight into the swing."*  
*-- Dagalor Goldenbeard, of the Dwarven Clan Goldenbeard*

The battle axe has the distinction of being one of the oldest tools and weapons of man. The first battle axe dates back about 35,000 years, when weaponers began attaching the blade to long wooden handles. The double-bladed battle axe was born in Egypt during the Bronze Age, but the design did not gain widespread acceptance.

During the Greco-Roman times, the battle axe was seen as a barbarian weapon used by the Franks, Celts, Lombards, and Vikings.

The earliest modern battle axes were a Danish weapon of the ninth century. These weapons did not have double-bladed heads, but were still two-handed weapons. The Danes often decorated these axe heads with carvings. Some shafts reached six feet in length, which caused great structural strain on the point immediately below the axe-head.

English knights of the 14th century adopted the battle axe as a favored weapon in foot combat. Its long handle afforded a great reach, and allowed for a great amount of force to be focused in the blow.

Naval crews used battle axes as boarding weapons until the tactic of boarding parties became obsolete.

The dwarven battle axe design is based on an actual design by the Swiss, who called their version the mordaxt.

## **Belaying Pin**

Not intended as an actual weapon, the belaying pin is a wooden or metal rod that is inserted in holes bored through a ship's rail. Ship's ropes are secured to these belaying



pins. The pins are usually found in rows, bringing a series of ropes together to one location. The pins may be pulled out and used as a melee weapon, more often than not during boarding actions at sea when no other weapons are in reach.

The pin is a one-handed weapon. If hurled in combat, it is treated as a club.

*"When a bloke is at sea, unarmed and surrounded by degenerate pirates, a belaying pin makes a fine on-the-spot weapon, even though its primary function is to hold rope, not bash heads. No warrior in his right mind would bother to specialize in or stock up on belaying pins!"*

-- Captain Ar, of the Galleon Flameburst

## Blowgun

Blowguns are long, hollow tubes composed of wood or metal, ranging from four to seven feet in length. They are used to fire darts, needles, and pellets. The weapons date back to primitive times, when they were used mostly for hunting.

Blowguns may have had a part in the invention of guns, since the blowgun demonstrated that one end of a tube needs to be closed off in order for the propelling force to shoot the missile in the proper direction.

Tribes still exist, especially primitive peoples in tropical jungle cultures, that use the blowgun. In most cases, these tribes are not advanced in terms of inventions, especially weapons of war. Some tribes use stands to brace their blowguns. If a stand is used, the firer gains a +1 bonus to his attack rolls.

The gripli have been known to use blowguns on rare occasions.

*"Though the blowgun has poor range, it is a quiet weapon which may be fired twice per round. Desperate adventurers who find themselves weaponless may make blowguns out of the local flora, such as reeds, if they are resourceful.*

*"Blowguns can also be used as makeshift breathing tubes if adventurers are crossing or hiding in a body of water.*

*"Being virtually noiseless, the blowgun is a good weapon for use in infiltrating a stronghold. Darts dipped in a sleep drug may knock out sentries quickly, and this may be an ideal arrangement for someone who wishes to avoid causing excessive bloodshed. It is certainly better suited for that sort of work than combat on the field, since the blowgun is a very fragile weapon."*

-- Cedric D'Abalone, Sage

**Blowgun Darts:** The blowgun dart is a small arrow with a wad of cotton or other plant fibers instead of fletching. This allows for a build-up of pressure from the user's wind. The fibers make a better seal in the tube, allowing more force to gather behind it. A blowgun dart is not the same as a regular dart, and the latter cannot be shot out of a blowgun.

**Needles:** Needles are sometimes used to deliver a poison, often a paralytic poison such as curare. Needles do less damage than other blowgun missiles, but this is not a disadvantage, since their function is to carry the poison to the target, not to cause damage.

**Blowgun Pellets:** Most blowgun pellets are of hardened clay, and are used for hunting.

A solid hit from a pellet can stun a small bird.

## Bola

The bola is a missile of prehistoric origins. Currently, it is still used by arctic tribes and by savages who dwell on temperate plains. The main function of the bola is to provide a hunter with a good missile weapon that will catch the prey off guard and entangle it so as to make escape impossible.

The bola is basically a leather strap or straps with weights fastened to the ends, although there are many variations to the design. Arctic bolas are generally used for hunting birds. The bola may have four, six, or ten weights made of walrus ivory or bone. The weights are egg-shaped, spherical, or carved into the likeness of animals. All of the straps or cords join together to make a sort of handle. The thrower grasps the handle, jerks back the strand to straighten them, whirls the bolas over his head, and releases them. Each bola strand is about 28 inches long and each weight is about two inches in diameter.

Two-ball bolas are called somais; triple-ball bolas are achicos.

Temperate plains bolas are usually twice as large and consist of a single leather thong with a leather-covered stone at each end. Often a second cord is fastened in the center of the first cord, with a small weight attached at the end. This weight is held by the thrower. This version of the bola can bring down a man-sized target. When a bola hits, the victim is held fast and must take a round to make a Strength check in order to get free. Failure means the bolas are still holding fast.

If an attacker makes a Called Shot to the target's legs and succeeds, the bolas wrap themselves tightly around the victim's legs and prevent further movement. The target must make a Dexterity check in order not to fall down, incurring a -3 penalty if the victim was moving when the bolas hit.

If the attacker succeeds in a Called Shot to the victim's arms, the bolas wrap themselves tightly around the torso, preventing the victim from using a weapon or employing the protection of his shield until he frees himself. Strength checks are made at -2 penalty due to lack of leverage.

A successful Called Shot to the victim's head wraps the bolas around his neck, strangling him (unless the character is wearing a great helm or closed-face helm). The bolas cause normal damage on the round in which they hit, then an additional 1d3 hit points of strangulation damage every round the bolas are still in place.

*"This is a good weapon to trip someone up, in case ya wanna take an opponent alive. But ya gotta make sure ya got enough room to give the bola a good swing. Bolas only work outside or in huge rooms. They work good if yer on horseback."*  
-- Barkhan, Bounty Hunter

## Bow

In one form or another, bows have been used since the early days of man. They represented a great step in man's ability to cause damage, since the attacker was at a considerable range from the target, not within reach of the enemy's claws or melee

weapons. The first bows were long, slender rods (also called staves) with a string of animal tendon or plant fiber.

### Short Bow

Short bows were the first to be developed, although they were not called such. This is more of a default term that refers to anything which is not a long bow. Short bow staves are about 5 1/2 feet long on the average. As the years passed, attempts were made to increase bow ranges. Bows were either given longer staves or flexibility was increased with no change to the length. The former resulted in what is now called the long bow.

Bows fell into decline with the spread of handguns. It was reasoned that while a wounded or weakened soldier might lack the strength to pull a bow, he could still pull a trigger. In fantasy settings, there is no danger of the bow being replaced so quickly.

Short bows can fire only short bow arrows (identical to flight arrows for game terms).

### Long Bow

The long bow is similar to the short bow, except that the staff is about as high as the archer, usually 6 to 6 1/2 feet. It has better range than the short bow, and can fire both flight and sheaf arrows.

### Composite Bows

Composite bows are long bows or short bows whose staves are made from more than one type of material. This gives greater flexibility, and thus better range. These were developed after the normal long bow.

The second material that makes up a long bow may be anything from another type of wood to bone, sinew, or metal. The different materials are usually glued together.

An adventurer who wishes to gain a damage bonus from high Strength when wielding a bow must purchase specially crafted bows. Such a bow costs the normal price for a bow *plus the normal price again for every bonus point desired*. Thus, a warrior with 17 Strength who wants a long bow (base cost 75 gp) that gives him his +1 bonus to damage rolls would have to pay a total of 150 gp. The same fighter with 18/00 Strength (+6 bonus to damage) would pay 525 gp. These bows can be strung and drawn only by characters of that Strength or higher. Others attempting this must make a successful bend bars/lift gates roll.

Most archers protect their wrists from the snap of the bowstring by fastening a piece of horn, bone, or leather to them. Such an item is known as a bracer.

*"In our times, bows still are preferable to the primitive firearms or even the crossbows offered. A high rate of fire, low noise, and good range make the bow a better choice than the other missile weapons.*

*"Centaur's favor bows, usually composite bows adapted to enable them to take advantage of their Strength. Elves in particular are adept at making and using bows, of both the long and short varieties. Exactly how the elves happen to be so good at archery is up for debate. Some say elves are trained to shoot beginning in childhood. Others say that their skills are no different than those of humans, but the uncanny, keen elven senses enable the fair folk to anticipate the target's location at the time of the arrow's impact.*

*"Whatever the reason, no one argues that the elves exhibit clear evidence of the*

*superiority of the bow as the best missile weapon available to the aspiring adventurer.*

*"Bows are not without their faults. Bowstrings must be kept dry, the staff must not be allowed to crack, and a certain amount of strength is required to string and pull a bow. Still, even a short bow is a good thing to have when a warrior wants to inflict damage on someone from a long distance!"*

*"A short bow can fire only flight arrows, while the long bow can fire any type of arrows. However, the short bow is easier to carry and is good for the fighter who relies primarily on a melee weapon but wishes to have a respectable missile weapon."*

*-- Lady Adriennedar Ironedge, Ranger of Hawkhaven*

Bows were used extensively for war by the Egyptians, Babylonians, Jews, and other peoples of the eastern Mediterranean world. In ancient Greece and Rome, bows were used mainly for hunting.

The Huns were the deadliest archers of all the invading barbarian peoples who attacked Rome. Charlemagne made the bow a mandatory weapon for the "civilized" armies.

At the Battle of Hastings in 1066, many historians claim that the Normans, led by William the Conqueror, beat the enemy by unleashing a rain of arrows on them. Some speculate that Harold died from an arrow through his eye. The bow used was only five feet long.

The English, learning from the lessons of Hastings, continued to refine and adapt their bows, making the staff longer and longer, copying the Welsh long bow. This became known as the English long bow within England.

The long bow proved very effective, especially in the British victories at Crecy and Agincourt. In the former, British archers outshot their Genoese counterparts who were using crossbows. Just as the Italians and French gained reputations as excellent crossbowmen, the English gained a reputation for archery. In the time of Henry VIII, English law required all males to learn the use of a long bow by the time they reached their teens.

European bows were most often made of ash and yew wood. Short bows were called Continental bows, while long bows were sometimes called Welsh bows.

An example of the potency of the long bow can be found in a particular historical incident. An arrow fired by a Welsh bowman is reported to have pierced a knight's leg armor, his leg, the armor on the other side of the leg, the knight's saddle, and to have finally lodged in the horse, pinning the knight to his mount.

Medieval archers did not always use quivers, but rather kept their arrows tied in bunches and secured to their belts by loops. Mounted archers used quivers that were attached to the saddle.

Bows were used as late as 1807, when Russian irregulars harassed Napoleon's armies, and in World War II, when detachments of American archers were used in special actions in Asia.

Even today, certain African pygmy tribes and indigenous folk of the Amazon use bows.

## **Arrows**

In general, arrows range in length from 20 to 40 inches. The feathers, or fletching, of

the arrow consist of two or more feathers set coaxially to the shaft. This gives the arrow its aerodynamic lift. If the feathers are instead set diagonally, the arrows rotates in flight. Goose feathers and parrot feathers are used most often in fletching, though pressed paper and leather are sometimes used.

### **Flight Arrow**

The flight arrow, as its name implies, is built for distance. These are lightweight arrows and are often used for hunting. Most of these arrows are made of ash or birch and are 30 to 40 inches long.

### **Incendiary Arrow**

An incendiary arrow is any arrow type (except bone or stone) with a wad of hemp soaked in a bituminous substance (such as tar) placed just beneath the head. The hemp is lit before the arrow is fired.

In addition to its normal damage, the arrow causes one additional hit point of fire damage on the round of impact unless the target makes a saving throw vs. death magic. At the DM's option, flaming arrows may ignite combustible materials contacting it.

### **Sheaf Arrow**

Sheaf arrows, also known as war arrows, are heavier arrows with less range than flight arrows, but cause more damage. The arrowheads are steel and quite sharp. Sheaf arrows are used in warfare and can be fired only by long bows. These arrows range in length from 20 to 27 inches.

### **Stone Arrow**

Stone arrows are considered flight arrows for game purposes, except that the stone arrowheads cause less damage and have a tendency to shatter if they impact armor or similarly hard surfaces. If a stone arrow hits any object made of metal, stone, or a harder substance, it has a 20% chance of surviving the hit without damage to the arrow. If a die roll does not indicate success, the arrow is still allowed a saving throw vs. crushing blow with a +4 bonus using the figures for Rock Crystal. Failure indicates that the arrow shatters.

Stone arrowheads are almond shaped or rhomboid and are usually made from stone splinters of flint or obsidian.

### **Caltrop**

A caltrop is a metal ball bristling with metal spikes or prongs. When a caltrop is left on the ground, there is always at least one spike standing more or less upright, ready to pierce the foot of the unwary.

In order to be effective, at least 10 caltrops must be dropped in an area of 25 square feet (a 5'x5' square). Each character entering the area must make a saving throw vs. paralyzation. Failure means that the pursuer has stepped on a caltrop, suffering 1d4 hit points of damage. The character will be able to move at only one-half his normal rate until the caltrop is dislodged from his foot. The victim must also make a second saving throw vs. paralyzation, with failure indicating that the character is lame for 24 hours

(unless magically healed), and can move at only one-third his normal movement rate. In any case, the victim must spend one round removing the caltrop from his foot.

If half the number of caltrops are dropped in an area (five in a 25 square foot area), the first save is made with a +4 bonus. For every five *extra* caltrops over the required 10 dropped in a 25 square foot area, the saving throw is made at a -2, up to a maximum penalty of -6. A new saving throw must be made for each five-foot section entered in which caltrops have been dropped.

Characters moving at less than one-third their normal movement rate through an area of caltrops need not make a saving throw. They are moving slowly enough to avoid the caltrops (although they must be able to see the terrain in order to do so).

## Cestus

The cestus is a leather glove that has spikes and razor edges on the back and across the knuckles. Other forms of cesti are loaded with lead or other heavy filler in order to give a punch more force. The weapon is mainly used as a gladiator weapon in the arenas of sport.

The damage caused by the cestus (1d4 vs. small and medium creatures; 1d3 to large) replaces the damage caused by a punch. Although this may seem to be a disadvantage, remember that punching damage is temporary while damage from the cestus is permanent until healed. There is no proficiency in the cestus, though a warrior can spend a proficiency slot and specialize in it.

*"A cestus isn't a true weapon of battle. It's just a cruel way to add damage to a fighter's punch. A cestus is a good weapon only if you like to punch opponents.*

*"But since most combatants inside and outside the arena have missile weapons, spells, long melee weapons such as spears, polearms, and swords, or benefits due to size, a fighter using a cestus may find himself badly chewed up, if not dead, before closing in enough to use the weapon. And using a cestus in tavern brawls will probably accomplish little more than calling the city guard's wrath on the owner of the cestus.*

*"The cestus is just a dramatic device meant to draw blood and make a contest look more terrible. Few monsters will care about the drama produced by a cestus if the glove is used in real combat."*

*-- Tisha, Swordswoman Extraordinary*

## Club

Most clubs are stout, hardwood sticks, narrow at the grip and wider at the end. This simple weapon has been used since mankind first began using tools. Anyone can find a good stout piece of wood and swing it; hence the club's widespread use.

The club is the ancestor of the mace, since warriors eventually fitted their clubs with spikes and metal heads in order to increase their deadliness.

As centuries passed, cultures began embracing civilization and advanced technology. They looked down on the club as a primitive tool and a barbarian weapon. Peasants often arm themselves with clubs, sometimes adapting them by adding iron spikes, resulting in the morningstar.



Centaurs are often seen wielding clubs, since sylvan settings have ample wood for fashioning such weapons. Ogres also use clubs, since the weapon does not require brains to use or make.

*"Despite the lowly status of the club, it is a useful proficiency. A stout tree branch, a wooden chair leg, or a metal rod all may be considered clubs, and all can be found most anywhere. When an adventurer is without a weapon, knowing how to wield a common stick may save his life.*

*"Clubs are common among adventurers. City guards who do not intend to shed blood use clubs in law enforcement, thieves who wish merely to steal a purse carry them, and humble peasants or street urchins who cannot afford a sword may wield a stout piece of wood. If anyone anticipates a life filled with tavern brawls, proficiency with the club is a must.*

*"Druids favor clubs, since they can cast shillelagh spells on the wood. Carrying a weapon made of wood, an organic, natural material, is preferable to using iron, since many self-respecting druids will use metal weapons only as a last resort."*  
-- Archdruid Heather Rose

The versatility of the club is shown in the Bayeux Tapestry, which depicts squads of Saxons wielding clubs as both melee weapons and missile weapons. Some cultures decorate their clubs or even carve the club heads into representations of the creatures they expect to hunt.

## **Crossbow, Light and Heavy**

A crossbow is a bow mounted crosswise on a wooden or metal shaft, the latter called a tiller. The bow is usually made of ash or yew. The crossbow fires a quarrel (also called a bolt).

Crossbows are loaded by pulling the string back until it locks onto a nut fitted on the tiller. A man's strength is enough to pull the bow to the locking position, although heavier crossbows with more powerful bows require a mechanical aid. The most effective of these devices is the windlass, a series of pulleys and crank handles fitted at the crossbow's stock. For crossbows that do not have the windlass, a stirrup is fitted on the front of the crossbow. When resetting the bow, the firer places his foot in the stirrup in order to keep the bow off the ground while he is pulling the string up to the locking position.

The main differences between the light and heavy crossbows are the size of the quarrel and the presence of a stirrup, which is found only on the heavy crossbow. Heavy and light crossbows are more correctly referred to as two-foot and one-foot crossbows, respectively. This term refers to the length of the quarrels.

The one-foot crossbow is made with a steel tiller and is quite rugged. It may be easily concealed beneath flowing garments such as cloaks or robes. It is frowned upon by the more lawful, civilized cities.

Although bows cannot be used underwater, the crossbow can, since the tension produced by the weapon overcomes the water resistance. Underwater races such as the locathah, mermen, and tritons use crossbows of both heavy and light varieties.

## Crossbow, Hand

This deadly little bow is a pistol-sized weapon made with a steel tiller. It is more easily concealed than the light crossbow and its use is considered unethical in civilized society. Hand crossbows have a reloading mechanism built into the tiller.

*"Apparently, the drow couldn't care less about the hand crossbow's reputation, since they favor this weapon in all encounters. Derro also use hand crossbows, probably a habit they picked up from their fellow subterranean dwellers, the drow.*

*"Of all the crossbows, light crossbows were the first to be developed. Their rate of fire and range are their main advantages. But damage potential is less than that of a bow and arrow.*

*"Heavy crossbows have better range and damage potential, but they can fire only once every other round. If a warrior does not kill his opponent with the first shot, he may not get another chance.*

*"It would be foolish to dismiss the crossbow completely. Heavy and light crossbows have better ranges than their respective bow counterparts, the long and short bows. The best tactic when using a crossbow is to assemble a line of people, all armed with these weapons, who unleash a devastating volley at an enemy.*

*"Hand crossbows are easily concealed, have an adequate rate of fire, and good range for such a small weapon. On the other hand, damage potential is worse than that of a dagger, and the weapon may be banned in some lawful kingdoms or cities. Some societies, such as the drow, place poison on their bolts in order to immobilize an opponent."*

*-- Emryl Aelorthas, Professional Bowyer*

## Quarrels

Quarrels or bolts are the ammunition fired by crossbows regardless of the weapon's size. Crossbows are rated as one-footers or two-footers, according to the bolt's length. Quarrels are shaped like arrows, but the shafts are shorter and thicker. The quarrel heads used for warfare are conical or pyramid-shaped iron heads.

European crossbows have existed since the 4th century AD and at first were used primarily for hunting. By 1000 AD, crossbows had been adopted for warfare. Use began to wane upon the advent of the English long bow, for despite the fact that the crossbow was a more powerful weapon with better range and was easier to use in close quarters, the rate of fire of a bow was a huge psychological advantage. The most talented makers and users of the crossbow were the Italians, whose Genoese mercenary crossbowmen were the best in the world.

Although heavy and light crossbows enjoyed a favorable reputation among military commanders, these weapons suffered a bad reputation. The crossbow was so lethal that Pope Innocent II banned its use in 1139 AD. The edict was later changed, however, so that Crusaders could use it against Moslems.

Light crossbows were considered unethical weapons, and were often banned between the 16th and 18th centuries. The light crossbow was primarily used as a hunting weapon.

The crossbow was originally developed in China, culminating in a sturdy, reliable

model during the Han Dynasty, circa 206 BC. This particular crossbow model, some scholars believe, was seen as early as about 36 BC by about 100 Roman soldiers who were taken prisoner in Central Asia. Such experiences or the trade routes that eventually opened passed the concept of the crossbow from East to West.

Initially, the European crossbow was made with a wooden stave. This construction, however, does not give optimum power to the bolt's flight. By the end of the 11th century, it is believed that many crossbow staves were made of composite construction, usually horn and sinew in conjunction with wood (usually yew). This method of crossbowmaking came from the Saracens, and the Saracen influence in southern Europe explains why the area became well known for crossbow manufacturing and use.

## Dagger

The typical dagger has a pointed, usually double-edged blade, as opposed to a knife, which has a single edge and is a bit shorter than the dagger.

The dagger is one of man's oldest weapons. The first daggers were most likely hand-held spearheads used by cavemen, made of bone or stone. Bone daggers are made from the bones of large animals such as reindeer and bison, with one end sharpened and the handle carved to resemble the animal from which the bones came. Such daggers are relatively fragile, and stone replaced bone when early man discovered how to work with stone.

Stone daggers are more difficult to make due to the composition of stone. Most stone daggers are made of flint, a hard stone that can be worked easily. The flint is chipped until the proper shape is achieved, usually that of a broad leaf, then it is sometimes lashed to a wooden handle. This sort of stone dagger has a major weak point: the place where the blade is attached to the handle. Primitive tribes know that the best stone dagger is made from a single piece of stone with the dagger's handle consisting of a straight section of stone. The handle is then wrapped in hide for a good grip. The average stone dagger measures 12 inches long.

When man began working with copper and bronze, the technique of making a dagger's handle and blade from a single piece of material remained. Blade lengths increased up to 24 inches long, and when the length exceeded this, a new weapon, the short sword, was born.

Some weaponsmiths have turned dagger making into an art form, decorating the handles, crossguards, and even the blades, with beautiful carvings. Some daggers are decorated with carved scenes derived from a culture's mythology.

With the advent of swords, the dagger was relegated to the role of back-up weapon. In fact, the average Roman soldier did not carry a dagger, but his Teutonic barbarian enemy used them. As the barbarian's influence swept over Europe, the dagger was given new life.

Daggers with steel blades became necessary in order to penetrate armor. Although knights carried daggers, they were considered a weapon of last resort.

The modern handshake derives from a habit used by bodyguards. They would take the hand of anyone visiting the king and shake his arm, hoping to dislodge any dagger concealed in the visitor's sleeve.

## Dagger, Dirk

A dirk has qualities of both the dagger and the knife. While useful as a weapon, it was designed for a variety of uses. It is a version of the ballock knife (or "kidney dagger"). The dirk has two round, symmetrical globes at the base of the handle, where the handle meets the blade. The grip itself emerges from between the globes and is flared at the top. The blade is often made from a large shard of a sword blade. The dirk is a single-edged, grooved weapon with a back edge near the point. It usually features a decorative notch at the base.

Most dirks have a special scabbard that has two small pockets in the front, one for a knife and one for a fork, used by warriors in the field as an early mess kit.

The dirk is a Scottish weapon, carried by Highlanders, making its appearance in the late 17th century. The grip is usually leather, ivy root, or ivory. In the 18th century, the dirk was sometimes mounted in silver or gold. Though normally considered a civilian weapon, the dirk was produced as a military blade when Scottish men were incorporated into Britain's regular army.

*"A dagger is great because it's easy to conceal, it's good in close-fighting or as a backup weapon, and its shape allows it to be hurled. It has only a few problems--it's a short weapon, with neither the reach nor the damage potential of a sword.*

*"A dagger makes a handy tool as well. Soldiers and adventurers use their daggers as eating utensils. Owning a sharp blade that is easily carried makes life easier (just try drawing a long sword to cut some bread or a piece of rope!).*

*"My favorite advantage of a dagger is that when you rely on stealth, you can use a dagger to dispatch a foe and draw less attention than resorting to a sword, in which case you might as well yell out your intentions. This is one reason why those of us who attack our enemies indirectly savor the dagger and usually carry at least two."*

*-- Jasmine, Halfling Thief*

## Dagger, Parrying

This specialized type of dagger is used in conjunction with a sword. It is used to catch or break an opponent's sword. Some versions of this dagger are equipped with spring blades that split into three blades at the push of a button. When such a dagger is employed in this fashion, it cannot be thrown successfully.

Most parrying daggers have long, straight or curved quillons, and a tough side ring that extends perpendicular to the blade in order to protect the user's fingers.

Unlike the main-gauche, the parrying dagger is made for a specific purpose, to deflect or break an opponent's weapon. The main-gauche, while also good for parrying, is less of a weapon-breaker.

## Dart

The dart is a small, easily concealable missile weapon that is thrown rather than fired from a bow or other launcher.

Darts are known to exist among advanced caveman tribes. These darts are usually

small, wooden shafts fitted with a head of bone or stone.

In modern cultures, darts have leaf or arrow-shaped heads and stabilizers on the shaft's butt end, much like miniature arrows.

Many cultures use darts for sport, hunting, and warfare on land and sea. Lizard men use barbed darts.

*"Darts are small, easy to hide, and have a good rate of fire. Range is slightly better than a dagger, but darts cause less damage. Darts may be smeared with various toxins to make them more effective. It makes sense to fire darts at their maximum rate (three per round), which not only gives the thrower three chances of hitting, but also offsets the low damage potential by offering the possibility of multiple hits.*

*"A dart is a good weapon to throw at a spellcaster. As long as one dart hits a spellcaster, the latter's spell is ruined, regardless of the damage caused. Of course, this is why many spellcasters carry darts. Most are nimble enough to use them effectively, and if they are unable to cast a spell but see an enemy spellcaster about to cast, a dart can ruin the spell. It helps to be a sharp-eyed, quick-thinking, nimble, handsome fellow such as myself."*

*-- Malraz Alizar the Magnificent, Illusionist Without Peer*

## **Flail**

The flail is a sturdy wooden handle attached to an iron rod, a wooden rod with spikes, or a spiked iron ball. Between the handle and its implement is either a hinge or chain link. The weapon was originally used as a tool for threshing grain. Whether a flail is used by a foot soldier or a horseman, the principle is the same.

Rumors tell that the flinds' flindbars are in fact a variation of the flail. This has not been substantiated, and the flinds have no wish to cooperate in the research.

### **Footman's Flail**

The footman's flail has a handle approximately four feet in length. It otherwise conforms to the above description.

### **Horseman's Flail**

The horseman's version of the flail has a two-foot-long handle. The horseman already has a good positional advantage, sitting atop a horse, and consequently does not need the greater reach afforded by the long handle of the footman's flail. This is a one-handed weapon.

*"In the adventurer's world, a flail can be used by warriors or priests, especially if the latter is not allowed edged weapons. The footman's flail causes more damage, since the longer pole enables the wielder to make a stronger swing. This is a good weapon to use in subduing someone, or even for a disarming maneuver. Bear in mind that the footman's flail is a two-handed weapon, whereas the horseman's flail is one-handed.*

*"There is certainly no problem in a footman using a horseman's flail, although it is not a good habit. A foot soldier would be better off with a different blunt weapon that can cause more damage or have more versatility, such as a warhammer."*

-- Brother George, Cleric

The followers of Peter the Hermit who fought in the Crusades in the 11th and 12th centuries used flails, placing spikes on the short flail heads. This adaptation gave rise to other modifications, such as replacing the second bar with two or more iron balls attached by chains.

Footman's flails were used mostly in the 13th and 14th centuries by foot soldiers, especially peasant troops, while the horseman's version enjoyed use by cavalry troops during the same time period.

Flails were used as late as the 1920's by Polish peasants against Soviet troops.

## **Gaff/Hook**

The gaff or hook is actually a tool used to hook and land fish. It is commonly found where fishing boats are encountered, and the hooks are in plentiful supply, affording the disarmed adventurer a weapon of last resort.

The gaff consists of a metal hook with a wooden or metal crossbar at the base. A one-handed tool, the hook protrudes from between the middle and ring fingers.

Some sailors who have lost a hand have a cup with a gaff hook attached to the stump, guaranteeing that they are never without a weapon.

*"Ya don't often see adventurers whacking away with gaffs. To them, it's only a tool. But more often than not, dock workers, press gangs, pirates, and sailors have a pretty good swing with those hooks."*

-- Rych the Seeker, Harbormaster

## **Hand or Throwing Axe**

The hand axe or throwing axe is also known as a hatchet. The axe blade has a sharp steel tip, counterbalanced by a pointed fluke. The short handle has a point on the bottom and the head may have a spike on top.

This weapon is often used by barbarian tribes. Some hand axes are carried on the saddles of knights and horsemen, who respect this weapon after seeing barbarians wield the axes effectively.

Despite this acceptance by civilized folk, the throwing axe is often relegated to backup weapon status since the creation of the battleaxe, whose longer handle gives the wielder greater force in his swing. The maximum length of the hand axe's handle is about 18 inches, not very great, though better than a dagger's reach in hand-to-hand combat. The throwing axe's last advantage, its ability to be hurled, was eclipsed with the advent of better bows such as the long bow.

Short races such as gnomes make good use of hand axes. The gnomes' traditional enemies, the kobolds, also use hand axes. The weapon's size is small enough to be wielded properly, and it can be hurled as a last resort. Dwarves, of course, are far more interested in the heavier battleaxe.

*"The throwing axe is a good backup weapon for an adventurer. It can be used in melee*



*combat or as a missile weapon, although with mediocre range. The weapon is also useful as a general tool, especially to outdoor types such as rangers, who often need a good tool to hack away at undergrowth in order to blaze a trail."*

*-- Dalraun Ironedge, Ranger*

## Harpoon

The harpoon is a hunting weapon, which, in times of duress, may be used for defense. Its development by primeval man was for hunting marine mammals and large fish.

The first harpoons were merely pointed sticks. Later, these became sticks with a sharp head of horn or bone. The heads often had hooks cut into them for increased damage and to hold the harpoon fast in the beast's flesh. The head was then fitted or attached to the end of the shaft, secured by animal sinews.

Metal harpoon heads evolved later, most with pointed or barbed heads. These heads are usually detachable from the shaft, but are connected to the thrower by a cord attached between the point and the barb.

When a hunter throws the harpoon and hits an animal, he follows the victim as best he can, playing out as much rope as needed until the beast tires and dies.

Some creatures may be of sufficient intelligence to try to free themselves from the harpoon. If the target has Intelligence of 2 or greater and some means of dislodging the hook or breaking the line, it is allowed a saving throw vs. poison. Success means the victim is freed. Failure means the harpoon is still attached, the victim takes another hit point of damage, and is drawn 10' closer to the harpoon's wielder. The victim is pulled toward the wielder *only* if a concentrated attempt is made and the victim is of a size and weight that makes this possible (e.g., a harpooned whale cannot be hauled in by a fighter with 13 Strength).

Certain primitive jungle tribes traditionally use harpoons to hunt wild boar. Kuo-toa, the aquatic subterranean fish-men, favor the harpoon with as many nasty barbs on the weapon as possible.

Harpoons may be used one- or two-handed, and there is no change in speed factor for using it one way or the other. This is a definite advantage. On the other hand, the harpoon has a poor throwing range, and damage potential is less when it is used one-handed, much like a bastard sword. The harpoon is a common weapon in coastal areas, but its primary function is not as a weapon against an intelligent opponent.

Adventurers on ships may experiment with fitting harpoons onto ballista launchers, if the DM permits. This may be especially handy if the PCs are hunting some sea creature that they must haul back to port.

## Javelin

Javelins are classified as light spears, suitable for melee or missile combat, usable either on horseback or on foot. The weapon has been around since man's earliest days. The javelin head is not very large, and is usually leaf-or lancet-shaped. Javelin heads may have barbs.

As a weapon of war, the javelin has low popularity, though it is often used for hunting purposes. Javelins are also used as a ceremonial weapon of bodyguards in civilized

nations. Halberdier yeomen are often assigned javelins.

Javelin throwing is a common contest of the games of sport of ancient civilizations.

Javelins may be used either one- or two-handed, and like the harpoon, there is no difference in speed factor between the two styles. The javelin has a respectable throwing range, certainly better than that of a spear, with damage potential comparable to the spear. Like the harpoon, the javelin gives the adventurer the advantage of a weapon that may be used effectively either as a melee weapon or as a missile weapon.

Many drow carry javelins, often coating the weapons with the same poison they use on crossbow bolts. Kobolds also use javelins, as any weapon which inflicts damage from a long distance is embraced by that cowardly race. Advanced races of lizard men are also javelin users.

## Knife

A knife consists of a single-edged, pointed blade with a handle mounted asymmetrically. It is an early weapon, used even by primitive tribes. In these cultures, a knife is little more than a flint blade with one or two cutting edges.

Bone knives are little more than a sharpened piece of bone, often decorated in the same way as daggers. Like other bone weapons, bone knives are apt to shatter.

True knives appeared when man began using alloys such as bronze. A knife was cast from a single piece of bronze, with a single straight edge or slightly curved blade. The curvature is often accentuated near the point.

When man began using iron, knife handles went through a change. The malleability of iron made it easy to create and keep a sharp edge, while also enabling the maker to extend the blade into a flat tang, which was then covered with sidepieces of wood, bone, or horn. This made the handles easier to decorate. In primitive civilizations, knives are used as an all-purpose tool, on the hunting grounds, and as a tool of sacrifice.

Different forms of knives may be found among the different peoples who depend heavily on this useful tool. Small knives are made for domestic uses, longer knives for hunting and war.

Small knives exhibit their own evolution, resulting in the common man's small knife with a four-inch blade and a plain handle of bone or horn. The more influential citizen may have a knife with a handle of rock crystal or other stone, enclosed in a precious metal. Despite the great value of these knives, they are not as effective in combat as the larger knives (-1 to attack and damage rolls).

Non-domestic knives, or outdoor knives, have stronger blades and sharper points. They are carried in their own sheaths, or in the scabbard of a larger weapon, such as a sword, creating a specialized set.

In some areas, knife makers are prohibited from selling knives with leaf-shaped blades. Such decrees are an effort to prevent such knives from being carried casually. The leaf shape causes a large, gaping wound that bleeds heavily.

*"Though it seems as if a dagger and a knife are very much alike, there are important differences. A knife is lighter than a dagger. Its shape does not allow it to be thrown as easily, which explains why the lighter knife has the same throwing range as a dagger. The knife causes only slightly less damage than the dagger. Both weapons have the same*

*rate of fire. The dagger is less a tool and more a weapon, while it can be argued that the reverse applies to the knife.*

*"An adventurer of high station may wish to have a knife and a sword of similar design, both housed in one scabbard. Such a thing is certainly considered a status symbol (definitely a mixed blessing).*

*"A big advantage of knives is that they are found everywhere. Cooks, trappers, and hunters are but three occupations that justify carrying a knife."*

*-- Peripim Furfoot, Halfling Adventurer and Professional Cook*

Knife handles historically exhibited wide variations in materials and workmanship. Cast silver knife handles were popular in the 16th century, inlaid mother-of-pearl was in vogue in the 17th century, porcelain handles were popular in the 18th century, and carved ivory and bone with fine silver plate was the trend in the 19th century.

Nations or cultural groups created knives that suited their particular styles or customs. A common knife in southern Europe, for instance, had a blade that folded toward the handle, with the cutting edge housed in a special groove. In Spain, these were called the Navaja, and in Italy the Serramancio. We know them today as clasp knives or jackknives.

By far the most famous knife of the past two centuries was a heavy, single-edged, sharply pointed blade with a small handle with wooden sidepieces. The knife was designed for melee combat. This knife was much in use in the American West, and was named for its creator: Colonel James Bowie.

## **Lance**

The term "lance" originally referred to spears wielded by footmen and cavalry. It eventually referred only to cavalry spears.

Lance design varies between cultures and eras. Generally, the lance is a long shaft of tough wood, usually ash, with an iron head in the shape of a laurel or willow leaf, with cutting edges and a sharp point meant to penetrate armor.

Lances are meant to be gripped close to the bottom, putting a great distance between the wielder and his target. As a rule, the lance is aimed diagonally above the horse's neck. The opponents face each other with their left sides oncoming.

Along with almost any variety of sword, the lance is considered the best offensive weapon for mounted soldiers. Some knights carry a small fabric pennant affixed just below the lance head. These pennants are either triangular or square, and carry the colors or symbols of the knight's family or liege.

In parades, lances are held vertically, with the butt set in a stirrup or on the horseman's right thigh. On a march, the lance is held across the shoulder, across the saddlebow, or horizontally alongside the horse.

Through evolution, weaponsmiths sought to increase the damage caused by the lance by making them heavier.

One of the biggest problems with using a lance is the jarring impact on the user. In order to address this problem, a thick leather ring called a graper is fitted to the shaft just behind the wielder's hand. This acts as a stop against the armpit, halting the lance's rearward motion upon impact.

Another important part of a lance is a rest. The rest is a small, sometimes folding

bracket fixed to the right side of the knight's breastplate armor. The graper is leaned against this rest when the lance is in use. The rest enables the knight to get the maximum push from his lance, inflicting the most damage.

The difference between the light, medium, and heavy, lances stems from the length (10' for a light, 12' for a medium, and 14' for a heavy), and weight (five pounds, ten pounds, and fifteen pounds for light, medium, and heavy respectively).

Each lance type can be used only if the rider is on a horse of corresponding type or greater. Thus, a knight on a heavy warhorse can use any lance, while the scout on a light warhorse is limited to the light lance.

## Jousting Lance

Jousting lances, used in "jousts of peace," are the heaviest lances, weighing 20 pounds and measuring at least 13 feet long. These lances are fitted with a three-pronged head in order to prevent armor penetration. The prongs are short, blunt projections that emerge from the headpiece, as opposed to a sharp point. This lance is also known as a "courtesy lance." In a full tilt, a joust of war, the head is blunt and may actually cause fatalities.

Locathah riding on the backs of giant eels use light lances.

*"Light lances can be used as a polearm by adventurers who do not relish combat on horseback, preferring instead to meet the enemy on foot. It can be hard to wield a heavy lance in a forest, so a medium lance may be a good compromise.*

*"Lances are best used as a mounted weapon. When used from the back of a charging mount, it inflicts double damage.*

*"Nothing is more awe-inspiring than a mounted knight, wielding her lance and charging a dragon. Of such things legends are made, and no mounted warrior worth his salt should be without his lance, especially a paladin. I know I have mine!"*

*-- Maura Smallwood, Paladin*

The lance's history can be traced to the Middle East, and was widely used by Greco-Roman horsemen.

Though rendered obsolescent in 1600 by the advent of firearms, lances were still used by light cavalry until the 19th century, with many European armies maintaining use of the lance in the Russian Civil War and World War I. Two of the most well-known uses of the lance in the 20th century were the Polish lancers' charges against German armor in 1939, and the Italian charges against the Russians in 1942.

## Lasso

A lasso is a length of rope with a loop at one end, tied with a knot that enables the loop to be tightened. The wielder twirls the lasso and throws the loop at the intended target. If it hits, the lasso has encircled the target, enabling the attacker to dismount the victim, make him fall, pin him, strangle him, etc. The wielder must specify exactly what he wants the lasso to accomplish before making his attack roll.

A successful hit does not cause damage to the target, but incidental damage can occur from the results of certain actions performed with the lasso, such as making someone fall

or strangling a victim.

The many tricks which can be performed with a lasso are outlined in the Equipment Chapter of *The Complete Fighter's Handbook*.

A lasso may be severed by 2 hit points of cutting damage. A victim's Strength can break a lasso, using the character's Bend Bars/Lift Gates roll. Only one attempt can be made on any one lasso.

Lassos are also called lariats. Characters can take lasso as a weapon proficiency, but they should remember that the Rope Use nonweapon proficiency gives a +2 bonus to hit with a lasso.

*"Lasso? What sort of heroic weapon is a lasso? What is a warrior going to do, tie up his victim and make him die of embarrassment? Bah! If a warrior is so keen on using a length of hemp rope, let him learn Rope Use. That way, not only is there a better chance at hitting a victim with a lasso than if he were proficient with the lasso as a weapon, but the adventurer will also pick up many more tricks, rather than wasting time trying to become expert at throwing silly loops of rope! Lassos, indeed!"*

*-- Kedar the Dark, Warrior Lord of Adauntlynn*

## **Mace**

The mace is a direct descendant of the basic club, being nothing more than a wooden club with a stone or iron head mounted on one end. The head design varies, with some being spiked, others flanged, and still others with pyramidical knobs.

The mace has existed since man began working with metal. The first maces were made in order to give the club wielder more power in his swing.

High-level priests, knights, and even paladins may have a personalized, decorated mace that serves primarily as a symbol of rank.

Since the mace is a weapon that requires very little in the way of specialized training, it is a favored weapon among goblins.

## **Footman's Mace**

Footman's maces originated as heavy wooden truncheons, about two and a half feet in length and covered with iron studs. As time went by, flanged heads similar to the horsemen's mace were used instead. This mace is a two-handed weapon.

There are two different types of footman's maces: an emergency weapon made from materials at hand and thrown together by a blacksmith, and the maces made by professional weaponsmiths for troops. In order to reflect the difference between the two types, the homemade mace should be given a -1 penalty to attack and damage rolls.

The hasty, emergency maces are usually a wooden handle with any sort of metal head attached.

## **Horseman's Mace**

The first horseman's maces were a wooden handle, about 18 inches long, with a leather wrist strap at the bottom of the handle so the weapon would not be dropped, and a metal head. As time progressed, knights preferred to have maces made entirely of metal.

The horseman's mace became an important weapon to the knight. Knights usually keep

a mace slung over a hook on the saddlebow. Not surprisingly, an alternate name for the horseman's mace is the knight's mace. This type of mace is a one-handed weapon.

*"Maces are a step up from the basic club, and are a good weapon especially for priests who cannot use edged weapons. Adventurers may find that the horseman's mace is actually a good secondary weapon for a footman, though the reverse is certainly not true!"*

*"A mace is specially made for crushing things, especially helmets and armor."*  
-- Brother "Helmsbane" Maynard

The Romans armed their allied auxiliaries with bronze-headed maces, although they never used maces themselves.

Two styles of mace head patterns emerged before the 14th century. The first was a ferrule from which extended knot or node-shaped pieces, and the second was a geometrically designed head with vanes (conical or diamond-shaped flanges).

Gothic influence in the 14th century made maces more decorative, a trend which ended in the 16th century, when maces were given a more military form. Eastern European maces, especially those from Poland and Hungary, had onion-shaped heads, an idea taken from the Turkish maces. Maces were used as a weapon up until the 18th century.

During the Middle Ages, arming oneself with a mace took on significance among nobles and army commanders. The mace became a preferred weapon among wealthy or illustrious users, and it became symbolic of power, wealth, and renown. These maces were shaped or decorated in a manner that represented the wielder. Thus, the owner of a mace became recognized as a person of prominence and rank, with the number of ribs and flanges on the mace indicating the owner's status.

## **Main-Gauche**

The main-gauche (French for "left hand") is a large dagger with a basket hilt. Since most swordsmen use their right hand to wield a sword, this dagger is meant for the left hand, wielded as a defensive weapon when a warrior is using the two-handed fighting technique. The main-gauche is also called a "left-hand dagger."

The heavy basket of the main-gauche is the equivalent of an iron gauntlet for the purposes of hand-to-hand combat.

Fighters proficient with main-gauche gain a +1 bonus to hit with Disarm and Parry maneuvers. More information on fighting styles and maneuvers can be found in *The Complete Fighter's Handbook* in the Combat chapter.

*"A main-gauche causes the same damage as a normal dagger, but the former is designed especially for defense. It's important not to confuse the main-gauche with the parrying dagger. The latter has a different design, including longer quillons and sometimes a triple blade. A parrying dagger also has a greater likelihood of breaking an opponent's weapon. A main-gauche offers better protection to the user's hand. In any case, it is quite a sight to see a warrior using a sword in one hand and a main-gauche in the other."*

-- Mendrill Halfelven, Bard



## Mancatcher

A mancatcher is a polearm with a special function: to capture an opponent without killing him. The weapon consists of a long pole with a set of spring-loaded, sharpened jaws at one end. The victim is caught between the jaws, which then snap shut.

The target, regardless of armor and other defensive devices (magical or otherwise), is treated as AC 10, though appropriate Dexterity bonuses are allowed. If a hit is scored, the opponent is caught, losing shield and Dexterity bonuses. In addition, the victim can be pushed and pulled around at the whim of the mancatcher's wielder.

While caught in the mancatcher, the victim suffers 1d2 hit points of damage per round. There is a 25% chance that the trapped character will fall to the ground.

The victim may attempt to escape the grip of a mancatcher by making a successful bend bars/lift gates roll, but he suffers an extra 1d2 points of damage while breaking away.

*"Mancatchers are good for pulling horsemen off their mounts and pinning them to the ground, but the weapon is only good on man-sized opponents. Smaller creatures like goblins and kobolds can just slip on through, and the larger creatures don't have the right frame, though why anyone would want to capture any of these disgusting things alive is beyond me.*

*"Mancatchers are used often by that foul, subterranean race of fish-men, the kuo-toa. Some adventurers who may have suffered the depredations of the kuo-toa and who see a character wielding a mancatcher may get a bit upset. Often, it's best to steer clear of weapons that remind certain people of certain races, unless of course, someone is really good with the weapon in question!"*

*-- Troxel the Unpredictable*

## Morning Star

The morning star is a wooden shaft topped with a metal head made up of a spiked iron sheath. Morning stars have an overall length of about four feet. Some such weapons have a round, oval, or cylindrical shaped head studded with spikes. Extending from most morning star heads, regardless of design, is a long point for thrusting.

The weapon is designed to allow the wielder to inflict greater damage with his swing. The weighted, spiked head adds to this ability significantly.

Long-handled morning stars are used by foot soldiers, while the short-handled versions are used by horsemen. It is a very popular weapon due to its effectiveness and its simplicity of production.

The morning star traces its ancestry to the mace, which in turn traces its lineage back to the club.

Hobgoblins, a race that takes great delight in inflicting pain, often use morning stars. Troglodytes use stone morning stars.

*"Morning stars are clubs with a real nasty attitude. They can cause as much damage to a man as a longsword, probably because of them spikes. I hear tell that the morning star*



*is called a bludgeoning weapon as well as a piercing weapon, but tell me, have you ever seen a sharp spike hit someone at high speeds and have that called bludgeoning?"*  
-- Suriel, Cleric of Tyr

The morning star was derived from the Swiss Morgenstern (literally: "morning star"), and was used during the 16th and 17th centuries, especially in England. The weapon had the perverse nickname of "holy water sprinkler."

The morning star was popular from the Middle Ages to the late 17th century, though its use continued among peasants and poor urban militiamen and gangs up to the 19th century.

## Net

The net is a tool that has been used as a weapon since the days when emerging civilizations held gladiatorial arena combat. This version of the net is an eight- to twelve-foot diameter circular net with weights around the edges and a trailing rope used to guide the net and pull it away. It is usually folded in such a way that it twirls open when thrown. It is tossed with one hand, with the attacker holding onto the guide rope with the other hand.

A successful hit with this weapon means that the victim is netted and must try to break free by making a Strength check once per round until successful. The netted victim cannot make any sort of attack until the net has been shaken off.

On the round after the victim is netted, the attacker has several options for his next action, including using another weapon to strike the entangled victim. The victim loses his Dexterity and shield bonuses to armor class until he is freed.

The attacker may improve his grip on the victim by looping the trailing rope around the netted character. This requires a normal attack roll for success, and the victim loses 4 points of effective Strength (for determining success of freeing oneself from the net) per successful round of attack. If the victim's Strength is reduced to zero, he is hopelessly tangled and cannot escape unless helped by someone outside the net.

If a warrior throws a net and misses, it is open and unfolded. It may still be thrown, but it is no longer folded correctly and is consequently an unwieldy weapon. Attackers suffer a -3 penalty to hit when throwing an unfolded net.

A properly folded net allows the attacker to perform Disarm, Parry, and Pin maneuvers. Such attacks are at a -3 to hit if the net is unfolded.

Certain underwater races, such as nixies and sahuagin, use nets not only for fishing, but also as a combat weapon, usually when they wish to take a victim alive.

*"This weapon is rather unusual, but it can be quite effective. Imagine, a weapon which, if it hits, will immobilize an opponent in just one round. Of course, such a weapon is not very effective on larger than man-sized or exceptionally strong creatures (such as an ogre), though it may buy a wounded adventurer some time, since a successful hit means that the victim must abandon plans for attacking and concentrate instead on getting out of the net.*

*"Characters who can set snares and traps ought to consider the net when making their little traps. It could come in handy for defense or in a hasty retreat."*

-- *Bramm Po, Illusionist*

### **Pick, Military**

The medieval military pick was a specialized weapon. It probably originated from the common mining tool. As armor grew heavier, the pick's form and function were soon adapted to a specialized role. This role was to penetrate the heavier armor types, from chain mail up through full plate armor. The military pick was a modification of a weapon called the *martel-de-fer*, a type of war hammer that had a hammerhead balanced by a thick, curved piercing fluke or "crow's beak."

The military pick generally consists of a heavy piercing fluke mounted on a haft. The weapon might have either one or two flukes, and the haft might be spiked.

The weapon is popular with knights and the heavy foot soldiers of certain mercenary companies. Dwarves and gnomes are also fond of the weapon, and deep gnomes (svirfneblin) in particular use great numbers of them.

### **Footman's Pick**

The footman's version of this weapon has a longer haft (up to 5'), enabling it to be wielded with two hands. The weapon weighs about six pounds and can be swung with great penetrating force.

### **Horseman's Pick**

The horseman's pick is lighter (about 4 pounds) and has a shortened haft (about two feet), making it easier to wield from horseback. It is commonly used by knights and heavy mercenary horsemen, who face more heavily armored opponents. The deep gnomes' weapon is also of this lighter variety.

*"Races who particularly enjoy mining, such as gnomes, svirfneblin, and dwarves, can be found with these weapons. They usually know how to use a pick both as a tool and as a weapon, though they will first use normal weapons if given the chance. Sometimes they have to wield these as weapons against another race known for its subterranean diggings, and who also use the pick as a weapon: the duergar."*

-- *Nahac the Gnome Sage*

### **Polearms**

Also called staff weapons, polearms are defined as hafted weapons--edged weapons mounted on a short handle or on a longer shaft wielded with two hands. The shafts are usually made of wood, though metal shafts sometimes exist.

An alternate term for polearm is pollaxe, which is used to describe any weapon which has a metal head in a combination of axe, beak, or hammer, mounted on a pole ranging four to six feet in length. Poll is the contemporary word for a steel head mounted on a staff, and the term should not be confused with "poleaxe."

Though descriptions of the various polearm types follow, there are certain characteristics common with all pole weapons, as outlined here.

Polearms are easy to make and are used often by peasants and common foot soldiers.

The polearm is a great equalizer for these troops, who often must fight armored men on horseback. A polearm gives the wielder a long reach without exposing himself to the swing of a sword. Setting polearms to receive a charge grants the wielders an initiative bonus.

A primary use of the polearm is to allow warriors in the second rank to attack over the shoulders of the front rank. Often times, a fighter with a hand weapon and shield will team up with one using a pole arm, and they will fight as a coordinated unit.

Polearms that have special attachments to topple mounted targets have a base 20% chance of success.

Special optional rules for implementing polearm tactics may be found in the Combat chapter in *The Complete Fighter's Handbook*.

Gnolls and hobgoblins make it a point to carry polearms often. A band of such creatures encountered carrying polearms will be knowledgeable in polearm tactics. Orcs favor halberds, pikes, and glaives.

While the Master Weapons Chart at the end of this chapter shows which polearms cause extra damage when set to receive a charge, any polearm can be used to receive a charge regardless of whether it causes extra damage.

### ***The Real Way To Use A Polearm***

*"Alright, listen up, for I am only going to say this once. I grow weary of seeing groups of bumbling amateurs running around with polearms, each person with a different type. One uses his halberd, another uses a pike, still another has a guisarme-voulge, and he cannot even pronounce it, let alone use it! This is ridiculous. If you are going to use a polearm, use it correctly! Here's how.*

*"First of all, for the gods' sake, try to get some idea of where your group is going. Are you going to the jungle or a dense forest? You are? Then why buy a polearm, you fool!? You will have no room to wield it, and more often than not you'll wind up poking your comrade's eye out. Make sure that the terrain suits the weapon.*

*"Next, once you know that the destination justifies a polearm, each person should get the same type of polearm. The weapons vary in the speed with which they can be swung and the amount of space needed to wield the things. Different polearms complicate what should be a simple operation.*

*"When you see an enemy charging at you, have all the polearm bearers line up in the front row, with weapons set to receive the charge. In order to set for a charge, the wielder should stand sideways, leaning forward so the left shoulder faces the oncoming foe. The polearm should be set at an angle, with the head pointing away from the ground, facing up at the enemy. The end of the handle should rest against the instep of the right foot. Both hands hold the pole firmly. You are now ready to receive a charge.*

*"Once the enemy impales himself on the blades, you cannot just pull out the staff weapon and begin hitting the creature. Your non-polearm-wielding comrades behind you should begin throwing spells, hurling missiles, spears, whatever, at the impaled foes. Try your best to keep the enemy on the blade, and out of your reach.*

*"Now that's the way to use a polearm! It is a team effort that needs to be practiced often. Remember this, and perhaps it will save your life!"*

*-- Fiona the Ranger, Daughter of Dierdre*

### **Awl Pike**

Also known just as a "pike" and a Morris pike (corruption of Moorish), this is an infantry spear ranging 16 to 22 feet in length. Awl heads are usually leaf- or lozenge-shaped. The pole is made of a strong wood, such as ash. Many pike heads are made with two tongues of steel, nailed down the sides of the shaft in order to prevent the head from getting hacked off. The grip is often bound with cloth and the butt capped in steel to prevent the shaft from splitting. The awl pike has the dubious distinction of being the slowest polearm available. Add to this its mediocre damage against man-sized opponents, and one is left with a weapon of questionable value, except when used en masse on the battlefield.

### **Bardiche**

The word bardiche is the corrupted spelling of berdysh. The berdysh (Russian term) is in effect an elongated battleaxe with a large, narrow, curved axe head measuring 24 to 32 inches long, mounted on a pole five to eight feet long.

The upper part of the head can be used for thrusting, while the lower part is in the form of a langet. A langet is an iron strap used to increase the strength of the head and protect the most exposed part of the weapon from blows.

Berdysh require more room to wield than a pike or a spear, but the weapon has a unique function: it can be used as a gun rest. The smaller berdysh have two rings for attaching to a shoulder strap. This arrangement is popular among horsemen.

### **Bec de Corbin**

Also called the bec de faucon, the names mean "crow's beak" and "falcon's beak" respectively. This pole weapon has a hook much like a bird's beak and is ideal for cutting open armor like some great can opener. The weapon also has a hammer or axe side that delivers a solid hit. This is a highly specialized weapon, designed for the purpose of cutting armor then striking the now unarmored victim with the other side of the weapon. The pole shaft is eight feet long.

### **Bill-Guisarme**

Also known simply as a "bill," this weapon is derived from an agricultural tool, the bill hook. Throughout its years of use, the bill's head went through many changes. Its most common head form is a sharp spike with a sturdy hook whose inside and outside edges were sharpened, and a cutting blade reminiscent of a cleaver. The pole length ranges around eight feet.

### **Fauchard**

Developed from the common agricultural sickle or scythe, the fauchard consists of a long, curving blade with a large, pointed head and a *fluke* (a small, curved hook found on many polearms). The head is mounted on a wooden pole about eight feet long. Peasants can often change scythes into fauchards.

The fauchard is classified as a glaive. It is not very good as a thrusting weapon, but is used mainly as a slashing weapon. It fulfils the need for a weapon that puts some distance between the wielder and his enemy.

Since the fauchard is not an instrument designed foremost as a weapon but rather a

farm tool adapted for war, it is inefficient as a weapon of war, being rather bulky and needing a large area to be used properly.

### **Fauchard-Fork**

This term denotes a fauchard with the fluke attached. The fluke was added in order to improve the weapon's thrusting capability, but the effort was fruitless. It is still a bulky weapon, requiring much space to be wielded effectively.

### **Glaive**

The glaive is a pole weapon with a large head shaped like a knife or a sword mounted on an eight- to ten-foot long shaft. The blade usually turns outward in order to increase the cutting area. Some glaives are fitted with flukes. Overall, the glaive's damage potential is not spectacular, but its long reach makes up for this. It effectively takes a normal sword blade and gives it a great reach.

### **Glaive-Guisarme**

This term describes a glaive with a fluke mounted on the back of the blade. It is slower and heavier than a glaive, and its potential damage is nothing noteworthy.

### **Guisarme**

Also called the gisarme or the giserne, the guisarme is an elaborately curved blade, much like the crescent blade of an axe, attached to a six-foot long staff. Thrusting spikes are often attached to the top of the shaft. The guisarme is supposed to have come from the farmer's pruning hook. The weapon may have contributed to the development of the berdysh and the halberd.

### **Guisarme-Voulge**

This term describes the guisarme in its later stages, with a curved axe-head. It features a back spike, the fluke, for punching through armor, and the blade's end tapers for thrusting attacks. Often, the fluke is replaced with a sharp hook for use in dismounting riders. It is a slower weapon than the plain guisarme but causes comparable damage.

### **Halberd**

By far the oldest and most often used polearm, the halberd consists of a cleaverlike axe blade mounted on a staff averaging six feet in length. The axe blade is balanced at the rear with a fluke, and surmounted by a sharp spike, usually of quadrangular design. The fluke is sometimes replaced by a hook used to dismount cavalry. A halberd can be best described as a cross between a spear and an axe.

Though a halberd's main function is to dismount cavalry, it may also be employed as a thrusting weapon and a cutting weapon. It is not a fast weapon, even compared to other polearms. Still, it does more damage to a man-sized opponent than all other polearms.

### **Hook-Fauchard**

Like the fauchard-fork, the hook-fauchard is another attempt to improve the fauchard. This weapon has a hook fitted on the blade's back. The hook is used to dismount cavalry. Like its predecessors, it was not a very effective weapon. Its damage potential is horrible

compared to the fauchards that it was supposed to improve upon, and it is slower than the original fauchard.

### **Lucern Hammer**

The lucern hammer is a hammerhead with a spike at its rear, mounted on a long pole, reaching as much as ten feet in length. In some cases, the end is fitted with a spike to keep enemy soldiers at bay. It is one of the heavier pole weapons and is rather slow. The entire weapon is usually made of steel, including the pole, and often it is decorated with carvings and precious metal gilding.

### **Military Fork**

The military fork is the warrior's version of a simple agricultural farming tool. The head consists of two parallel spikes, often fitted with hooks for pulling horsemen off their mounts. Certain versions of the fork have a blade mounted just below the spikes. The wooden staff is about seven feet long.

Forks are useful not only as thrusting weapons, but as tools for climbing the defender's ramparts, setting up ladders, and hoisting baskets of supplies.

### **Partisan**

The partisan (alternatively spelled "partizan") is a staff weapon consisting of a long, tapering, double-edged spear blade with two diagonally-set flukes at the base. The shaft is about eight feet long. The partisan's flukes may be used to catch and break opponents' weapons, as well as to inflict extra damage. Partisan heads are large enough to allow engraving and ornamentation.

### **Ranseur**

Also known as the rancoon and the rawcon, the ranseur resembles a partisan, except that the ranseur's flukes are longer, resulting in a three-pronged head. The flukes are, however, shorter than the middle blade. Partisans are sturdier than ranseurs. The three prongs are large enough to puncture armor or trap a weapon and disarm the opponent (considered a Called Shot, -4 to hit, see Combat chapter of *The Complete Fighter's Handbook*).

### **Spetum**

Spetums are similar to ranseurs, except that the side blades sometimes angle backward, increasing the damage when the blade is pulled out of a wound. When the weapon is pulled out of a victim, he suffers an additional 1d2 hit points of damage due to the side blades. The spetum's shaft is eight feet long.

### **Voulge**

Also called the vouge and the Lochaber axe, this weapon is a large, long blade, narrowing to a spike at the top, with a hook-shaped fluke at the blade's rear. The staff is eight feet long. Though it is a simple weapon to make, this advantage is offset by the fact that it is one of the slowest polearms available.

*"Taken as an entire weapon group, polearms are a useful weapon especially in an*

*outdoor setting. Their advantages include a good reach, excellent defensive capability, and the ability to knock opponents off their mounts. Among the drawbacks of polearms as a whole are the amount of room needed to wield them, their diminished usefulness in close-quarters melee, their overall slowness, and their encumbrance. Also, with so many polearm types to choose from, it is unlikely that a group of adventurers all have the same weapon or that everyone in the group will want a polearm of any sort in the first place. Polearms are more effective if several people have them; a single adventurer wielding a halberd is not going to stop a row of four charging orcs. Remember the advice given earlier and try to co-ordinate polearm choices before going off to adventure."*

*-- Fiona, Daughter of Dierdre*

The sarisa, a Macedonian infantry spear, was the ancestor of the pike. The Swiss rediscovered the idea of mounting a spear head on a very long pole, and it became so popular that they adopted the pike as their national weapon in the 15th century. Their prowess with the pike, not only as a defensive weapon but as an offensive one, prompted other European nations to adopt it. The pike remained in use until the end of the 17th century, when muskets and bayonets made the long spears obsolete.

The berdysch were created by the Russians and used by Muscovite infantry during the 16th and 17th centuries. They were also used in Scandinavia and eastern Europe.

The bec de corbin (and faucon) was used by the upper classes during the Late Middle Ages and early Renaissance. The terms are French, but the weapons were so named by English writers!

The bill was a popular weapon with the English, and, along with the halberd, remained in use longer than all other polearms, well into the early 17th century. The English bills had a shorter shaft length, usually around four feet, and were rather tough.

The glaive (derived from the Latin *gladius*, meaning "sword") blade increased in size over the years until it was big enough to have a nation's or ruler's coat of arms engraved upon it. It was often carried in parades. Glaives were introduced in the 14th century and favored by the French. The blade is said to resemble a large bread knife. The 16th century Italians and Germans favored the glaive as a palace guard weapon.

The guisarme was used extensively between the 12th and 17th centuries.

Halberds were introduced sometime between the 6th and 9th centuries AD, when foot soldiers of Northern Europe mounted their swords, called scramasax, on poles. The Swiss refined this weapon and wielded it with devastating skill. In fact, halberds were known to split a man's head from pate to jaw, armor notwithstanding! The halberd got its name during the first primitive versions made by the Swiss.

The word *halberd* comes from the German words *halm* (staff), and *barte* (axe).

Primitive halberds had a wide blade with a straight cutting edge. The staff fit through two sockets in the back of the blade. This design was probably inspired by the guisarme. By the end of the 15th century, the halberd was modified in order to increase its effectiveness. This is the halberd type most often referred to when using the term. The primitive halberds were soon referred to as the *Swiss vouge* (voulge). Like most polearms, the halberd fell into decline with the introduction of firearms.

Confusion often exists whether a lucern hammer is a hammer. It is safe to say yes, it is a hammer, and is alternately called a war hammer. A short-handled version of the lucern hammer was used by mounted troops as early as the mid-13th century. It is longer than



the weapon most adventurers call a war hammer and is used mainly by massed units on the battlefield. The lucern hammer gets its name from the Swiss city of Lucerne, whose armories were well-stocked with the weapon, so much so that scholars named them after the city.

Military forks are descended from farmer's pitchforks, though the former's spikes were straight as opposed to the curved spikes of the latter. This weapon appeared frequently during the Crusades and peasant revolts from the 15th to 19th centuries. In 1920, Polish peasants used forks to fight off Soviet troops attacking Warsaw.

Partisans are a derivative of the langdebeve, a broad-bladed spear. The name *partisan* came from the people who wielded it, the partisans, in late 15th century France and Italy. After its retirement as a weapon of war, partisans continued to be used as ceremonial weapons in royal courts. In fact, the Swiss Guards of the Vatican and the Yeomen of the Guard at the Tower of London still use partisans at state occasions or when in full dress.

The term *voulge* has been used to describe many types of polearms, thus its true meaning is obscure. A number of texts associate the voulge with the English bill, the French glaive, and the Swiss vouge, the latter of which is the accepted voulge form. The lochaber axe is a Scottish polearm used in the 16th to 18th centuries, most likely descended from the gisarme.

## Quarterstaff

The simplest and humblest of staff weapons, the quarterstaff is a length of wood ranging six to nine feet in length. High quality quarterstaves are made of stout oak and are shod with metal at both ends. The quarterstaff must be wielded with both hands.

*"Such a simple weapon, yet so popular. Any class of adventurer, be he an armored warrior, spell thrower, cutpurse, or man of faith, can use a quarterstaff. The staff is also a fine practice weapon, especially in place of other two-handed weapons such as two-hand swords or polearms. The staff is held in the middle with the left hand, while the right hand holds on at one-quarter of the whole staff's length from the end.*

*"Quarterstaves are popular among the kenku, the mysterious, Oriental, birdlike humanoids. This blunt weapon is usually used to knock out an opponent as opposed to killing him.*

*"Wizards may decorate their staves, even cast spells on them in order to make the weapons look magical. It may fool someone into thinking that a simple wooden staff is in fact a staff of the magi."*

*-- Albertus, Battle Mage*

## Sap

Alternatively called a blackjack, the sap is a small leather bag filled with sand, lead shot, coins, or other weighted materials. It is used to quietly knock out a victim by administering a blow to the head or back of the neck. Thus, the sap has no effect on helmeted targets. If the sap strikes any other part of the body, the damage is halved and there is no other effect.

Of the damage caused by the sap attack, 25% is actual physical damage, and the other 75% is temporary damage that wears off in 1d6 turns.

In order to effectively use the sap, the attacking character makes a Called Shot at -8 to hit. If a hit is scored, damage is determined normally. The attacker then has a 5% chance per hit point of damage to knock out the victim, up to a maximum of 40%. This maneuver works only against targets that are man-sized or smaller.

When a sapping maneuver is performed on a sleeping or magically held victim, the maneuver automatically hits, but the chance of knockout increases to 10% per hit point of damage, to a maximum of 80%.

*"A sap is more suited to an urban environment than to the great outdoors or dungeon crawl. It is a weapon favored by thieves looking to cosh someone on the head and take his purse. If a party of adventurers is infiltrating a stronghold in order to capture someone, however, a sap may come in handy."*

*-- Kyrian Darkstar, the Infiltrator*

## Scourge

The scourge is a short whip with several leather tails or thongs. Each thong has metal barbs, broken glass, or any other sharp fragments attached along its length. A similar device, the cat-o-nine-tails, is a nine-tailed whip with knots tied in each thong.

The scourge is not so much a weapon as it is a means of inflicting great pain. Still, it causes damage and can be used as a weapon.

The only creatures known to wield scourges with any sort of consistency are the Balor Tanar'ri, chaotic evil denizens of the Abyss. This should give the idea of the type of creature who wields such an instrument.

*"A scourge? Why would any self-respecting adventurer want one? Those dreaded things are most associated with torture, not combat. No one raises an eye when an adventurer walks into town with a sword; a man has to protect himself, and, times being what they are, no one will begrudge an adventurer's right to carry a sword. But carrying a scourge will probably mark someone as a follower of some cruel, torturing deity, or at the very least, as an evil person. Any adventurer with a shred of decency will avoid the scourge and get something that will put an enemy out of its misery, not prolong it!"*

*--Strang of Tempus*

*"How odd. Personally, I find the scourge to be of great value in temple worship. It is also a great motivator."*

*-- Leeahn, Priestess of Loviatar, Mistress of Pain*

The scourge is truly a monument to man's ability to cause suffering. When a scourge hits a victim, the thongs curl around the trunk and limbs, with the barbs digging into the flesh. The torturer then pulls the scourge away, ripping even more of the victim's skin. In ancient Rome, certain soldiers were trained with the scourge to cause the maximum amount of pain without killing the victim. Roman citizens were exempt from scourging, while subject peoples were not.

## Sickle

The sickle is a farming implement consisting of a crescent-shaped blade mounted on a short handle. It is used in combat primarily by peasants or adventurers who have no weapon and are forced to make do with whatever they can find. Most farms have sickles, which are used for cutting weeds, grass, and grains.

Druids favor the sickle due to its strong association with agriculture. Golden sickles are used to harvest mistletoe as components for druid spells.

As a weapon, the sickle is as effective as a dagger, but is slower overall.

## Sling

Slings have existed since the beginning of recorded history. The basic sling consists of a leather or fabric strap with a pouch for holding the missile. The weapon is held by both ends of the strap and twirled around the wielder's head. When top speed is attained, the missile is launched by releasing one of the strap's ends.

The sling is a cheap weapon and is easy to make. Thus, it is common among peasants, especially since it makes a good hunting weapon.

The sling's missile is either a smooth, rounded stone or a ball of lead. While stones are easier to find (most shallow streams have an abundance of smooth stones), the lead bullet causes more damage and flies farther than the stone.

A sling's projectile is capable of producing severe bruising or even broken bones against a man or his mount. Against armor, however, the sling loses most of its effectiveness.

Halflings are known to be quite good at using the sling, and it is a common weapon among members of that race.

*"Slings are a fine missile weapon for thieves, since the weapon is easily concealed and quiet. Actually, it is not a bad proficiency for anyone to pick up, since making a sling and finding ammunition is easy. The sling's missiles have a good range. If using a sling out-of-doors, one never lacks for ammunition, though lead bullets fly farther and cause more damage."*

*-- Ariane, Professional Cutpurse*

Slings were heavily used by the peoples living around the Mediterranean basin. The Romans did not assign slings to their soldiers, but allowed their auxiliary troops to use them. The sling was used during the Middle Ages, and slingers are depicted on the Bayeux Tapestry, not as soldiers, but as hunters.

## Spear

One of man's earliest weapons, dating back to the most primitive of times, the first spears were simply wooden poles or sticks sharpened at one end. When fire was discovered and mastered, spear points were hardened by charring. As man became more adept at using tools, spears were either fitted with a stone head or the point was reinforced with splints of stone or bone.

When man mastered metals, spear heads were made from iron and steel. Having reached this end, weaponers began experimenting with different types of spear heads, thus leading to the development of certain polearm types such as the ranseur.

Spear shafts are usually made from yew or ash, since these woods are both flexible and strong. The shafts range five to eleven feet in length. In melee, spears may be used either one or two handed, with more damage inflicted if used in the latter mode. Spears 10 feet or longer cannot be wielded with one hand.

Though spears are normally used for thrusting, they can also be thrown. Special devices exist for hurling spears. These devices are variously shaped pieces of wood, horn, or bone with hooks, hollows, or grooves meant to house the spear butt. When using one of these throwers, the spear's throwing range is doubled. The cost of a spear thrower is 1 gold piece. The thrower weighs two pounds.

A character wielding a spear gains an attack bonus for high Dexterity and a damage bonus for high Strength.

### **Long Spear**

A long spear is like a normal spear, except that its shaft ranges 12 to 13 feet in length and cannot be thrown.

Orcs and ogres use spears often in battle. They are simple weapons for simple-minded creatures.

*"Spears are versatile, since they can be used by footmen and horsemen alike. The former can set their spears into the ground, in hope of impaling a charging enemy. Footmen can use spears as melee weapons or as missile weapons. Horsemen use spears in much the same way as lances.*

*"As for long spears, unless one is prepared to forego shield protection and use the weapon with two hands, it is not worth selecting over the normal spear. Long spears need room to be wielded properly, they cannot be thrown, their damage is not much better than a normal spear, and they are slower than their smaller brethren."*

*-- Lord Boris Vladimir, Professional Warrior*

Spears have existed since the Paleolithic era, some 500,000 years ago. Horsemen of 20,000 BC began using them as missile weapons, complete with the hurling devices explained earlier.

The Greeks were fond of large formations of spearmen in their armies.

The Franks began producing what we know as the spear. These spears had long, leaf-shaped blades and two triangular "wings" set just below the head. These wings prevented the spear from penetrating too far into a victim (and consequently making it harder to pull out), and enabled the spear carrier to parry more easily with his weapon.

In the 14th century, spears used by horsemen evolved into the lance. Long spears in the 15th century developed into the pike.

### **Staff-Sling**

Also called the fustibalus, the staff-sling consists of a wooden rod, three to four feet in length, with a sling attached to one end. The rod is used to increase the range that a heavy object can be thrown by enabling the slinger to twirl the sling harder. It is not meant to increase the distance of the average sling bullet. In fact, it has poorer range for stones or bullets.

An optional form of ammunition is the stinkpot, a clay vessel filled with burning sulfur or quicklime. This is considered a grenade-like weapon and is subject to the combat rules found in Chapter Nine of *The Player's Handbook*. For range, the stinkpot has a short range of 20 feet, medium range of 40 feet, and long range of 60 feet.

When the stinkpot breaks, everyone in a 20-foot diameter circle who does not leave the area within one round must save vs. poison or be unable to attack or move at greater than half their movement rate. Those who save successfully attack at a -2 penalty due to nausea and watering eyes. The effects last as long as the subject remains in the area and for 1d4 rounds thereafter.

The stink cloud lasts for 1d3+1 rounds, then dissipates. Optionally, stinkpots in underground settings may give off clouds that last 1d6+1 rounds due to lack of open air.

Due to the trajectory that a staff-sling gives a missile, it cannot fire at short-range targets. It has less range than a sling and is a slower weapon, but the staff-sling can hurl a heavier object.

*"Anyone who gets a staff-sling in the hope of seeing his sling bullet fly into the next kingdom is in for a rude shock. The weapon is only good for hurling large loads a healthy distance. The stinkpot idea is perhaps the best way to get the most use out of the staff-sling. One thing's for sure, as much as halflings like slings, you'll rarely catch one using this thing!"*

-- Severian, *Master Swordsman*

## Stiletto

Also known as a stilet, the stiletto is a short dagger with a strong, triangular or square-sectioned blade that tapers to a sharp point at the tip. The stiletto is designed for thrusting, in particular to pierce armor such as leather or mail. Therefore, the stiletto gives the wielder a +2 bonus to attacks against plate mail, ring mail, chain mail, and all forms of leather armor. Most stiletos are made completely of steel.

Most cities, except those involved in a war, prohibit the carrying of a stiletto since it is an easily concealed weapon.

Stiletos are narrow enough to be concealed in sword canes or even in the handle of a large sword, such as the long, bastard, or two-handed swords.

## Sword

### General Information

#### History of the Sword

The most common definition of a sword is an edged weapon with a long blade made for cutting blows, thrusts, or both.

Swords first appeared in the prehistoric period when humans, who had been using daggers of stone, began working with copper. The copper dagger could be fashioned with a long blade, and in the ensuing years, the blades got longer and longer. Eventually, the blade reached such a length that it could no longer be called a dagger.

This new, improved weapon was superior to the dagger, which was quickly relegated

to a secondary role in melee combat.

Copper eventually gave way to bronze. Swords of varying lengths (what we now know as the long sword and short sword) came into being, with blades ranging from 27 to 35 inches.

Sword design was influenced by the dagger. Since the dagger is a thrusting weapon, early swords were also designed for thrusting. Eventually, the need arose for a weapon capable of slashing blows, so swords developed the double-edge, still retaining the sharp point.

Sword handles went through their own stages of development. In southern Europe, sword handles were decorated with ivory, gold, and semi-precious stones, while in northern Europe, the handles were decorated with engravings.

The discovery of iron revolutionized sword making. Bronze was rare, while iron was plentiful, though the latter was harder to work with. The change from bronze to iron was slow. For three centuries, both iron and bronze swords were in use.

The Romans developed the gladius, a short sword, in order to have a weapon that their rigidly-trained troops could use with swiftness and precision.

With iron proving itself superior to bronze, the latter was relegated for accessory parts, such as the grip or the sheath. The Hallstatt culture developed longer sword blades (31-35 inches) as advances in ironworking enabled them to make lighter and stronger blades. These blades were so pliable that they could be twisted into a spiral for three or four turns before breaking. This was known as "pattern welding." One drawback of this, however, was the fact that the blade could become misshapen when it struck something, often forcing the wielder to stop fighting and straighten out the blade with his foot or a rock! This was the type of sword that Gallic and Teutonic armies used against Roman legions, and is considered a long sword. Often, the craftsman making a sword placed a trademark identifying the maker.

As swords evolved, a small oval plate was placed between the shoulder of the blade and the grip. This was designed to protect the grip against damage from the metal mouth of the sheath. It also protected the user's hand.

Early stories of famous knights include lore about their swords, even mentioning the craftsmen who made the weapons. Siegfried had Balmus, Roland had Durandal, and Charlemagne had Joyeuse. King Arthur, of course, had Excalibur.

In the Carolingian period, the sword's grip was altered, becoming more specialized and defined. The oval attached to the grip was turned into a four-sided bar about four inches long. This became the guard. The wooden grip ended in a large pommel, which balanced the weapon. Such a sword measured about 40 inches in length.

At the start of the Romanesque Period (11th-12th centuries), the sword's form remained the same, but the blade became broader. These swords are considered broad swords by some scholars.

During this period, the sword was used primarily for slashing blows, as reflected in the Bayeux Tapestry, which shows armed men using swords in this manner.

The Gothic period saw swords becoming more specialized, depending on the knight's intentions. The knight's sword was a thing of beauty and strength, and it is this sword that resembles the long sword of fantasy. Knights usually owned several swords, each with its own use.

In the 15th and 16th centuries, swords were given to common foot soldiers, and their



designs changed accordingly. There were more ring-guards (to protect fingers), knuckle bows, and other such devices. The two-handed sword emerged from this era.

During the 16th century, fighters began emphasizing sword thrusts, and blades changed to accommodate this. Elaborate basket hilts were perfected to give the hand better protection. This gave birth to swords such as the rapier.

By the end of the 16th century, with guns rising in prominence, swords were increasingly relegated to duelling.

The longsword is considered by some to be the principle weapon of nobility, the broad sword the typical weapon of the commoner, and the bastard and two-handed swords the specialized weapons of mercenaries.

Eventually, the sword became a symbol of tradition, and is still worn on many military dress uniforms out of respect for that tradition.

### **Bastard Sword**

Also known as the hand-and-a-half sword, the bastard sword derives its name from the fact that it is halfway between the two-handed sword and the long sword.

The bastard sword has a double-edged blade and a long grip, which can accommodate both hands if preferred. The overall length of the bastard sword ranges between four feet and four feet ten inches.

Some bastard swords are equipped with knuckle guards, and others have asymmetrical pommels shaped like animal or bird heads.

*"The bastard sword is an excellent, versatile edged weapon which can be used one-or two-handed. Using it two-handed gives a warrior better damage potential, but makes him unable to use a shield. It is also a slower weapon. Using it one-handed allows the use of a shield, but causes less damage, comparable to that of a long sword."*

-- Lord Jon Ironedge, Ruler of Hawkhaven

### **Broad sword**

The broad sword is a heavy military sword with a double-edged blade. Overall sword length is about three and one-half feet, and the sword is designed mostly for cutting. Most broad swords have a basket hilt or a shell guard. A favored cavalry weapon, the broad sword is known in different cultures by different names, usually dependant on the hilt configuration. The basket hilt broad swords offer a +1 bonus to Parry maneuvers. In addition, punching attacks done with the basket hilt are treated like a metal gauntlet (see the *Player's Handbook*, Chapter 9).

*"The broad sword is as fast as a long sword and causes comparable damage to man-sized targets, but lacks the same ability against larger creatures. Its benefits in parrying and hand-to-hand combat are good, but if an adventurer is more of the 'forget finesse, let's just hack them to bits' school, a long sword or a bastard sword may be a better choice. Someone who likes showing off, such as a swashbuckler, would favor a broad sword."*

-- Rushlight of Tethys, Ranger

### **Claymore**

The claymore is a large, cross-hilted sword consisting of a straight, broad, double-edged blade and long quillons angling toward the blade. The grip is leather-covered and topped with a wheel-shaped pommel. The sword is slightly shorter than the two-handed sword.

Claymores are treated as bastard swords in terms of damage, weight, and weapon speed.

Claymores are greatswords of Scottish origin, used by Highlanders and Scottish mercenaries in Ireland. The sword was popular from the end of the 15th century to the early 17th century. The term *claymore* is from the Gaelic *claidheamh-mor*, meaning *great sword*.

### **Cutlass**

The cutlass is a sword with a single-edged, curved, broad blade attached to a basket hilt. The blade is short and heavy. The sword is favored among pirate crews and is easily found in port communities, but is rare inland. Cutlass users enjoy the same advantages in Parrying as broad sword users.

*"Cutlasses cause damage compared to short swords, but are slower and heavier. A broad sword is a better weapon, since it gives the same Parry benefits and causes more damage."*

-- *First Mate Arlundar, of the galleon Angelwing*

### **Falchion**

The falchion is a sword with a single-edged, heavy blade. The blade's back is usually straight, while the edge has a curve. The blade also broadens close to the tip, which gives the blade a cleaver-like appearance and increases the damage inflicted. The sword is heavy, which also contributes to a fearsome cutting blow.

### **Gladius**

The gladius is the first refined version of the short sword. It has a double-edged blade and a strengthened tip. The grip is made of wood, bone, or ivory and is topped with a round pommel. The sword is carried on a warrior's right side, slung from a baldric passing over the left shoulder. In terms of damage and length, the gladius or drusus resembles the short sword.

A drusus is a gladius of exceptional quality, and consequently has a series of special things associated with its care in order to maintain a sharp edge. The restrictions are listed in *The Complete Fighter's Handbook* (Equipment Chapter).

### **Khopesh**

This Egyptian weapon has approximately six inches of handle and quillons. The blade extends straight out about eighteen inches from the handle, then curves into a slight sickle shape for another two feet. In effect, this only adds another eighteen inches to the overall length. The entire sword is usually made of bronze or iron.

*"The khopesh is a slow sword, heavy and unwieldy. Its damage is unremarkable as compared to other swords, especially when one realizes the drawbacks that must be*

*suffered when wielding the khopesh. All in all, it is a primitive weapon of a culture that has not grasped the finer techniques in sword-smithing.*

*"Still, the weapon resembles a sickle in some ways and is usable by druids. This gives these nature priests a chance to wield a sword, yet stay within their weapon restrictions."*  
-- Eibhelin Hathleah, Warrior/Priestess

## Long Sword

These swords are usually referred to as doubled-edged swords, war swords, or military swords. In many cases, the long sword has a single-edged blade. There is no single version of the long sword; the design and length vary from culture to culture, and may vary within the same culture depending on the era.

Among the most common characteristics of all long swords is their length, which ranges from 35 inches to 47 inches. In the latter case, the blade is known to take up 40 inches of the total length.

Most long swords have a double-edged blade and a sharp point at the tip. Despite the tip, the long sword is designed for slashing, not thrusting.

Often, long swords have two grooves that run the length of the blade, one on each surface. These grooves are called fullers, and are meant to make the sword lighter and more flexible. If a sword did not have some elasticity, it would shatter when it hit a target.

The handles of all long swords fit only one human-sized hand. Most long swords have a small, oval, metal plate between the blade's base and the grip. This oval protects the grip from getting damaged against the metal in the mouth of the sheath. It also offers some modest protection to the hand. A second piece of metal, either oval or round, is fitted onto the pommel.

*"Ah, the long sword! A warrior's best friend! It is without a doubt the most common melee weapon among skilled adventurers, and rightly so. It inflicts a respectable amount of damage to both man-sized and large opponents, is fairly fast for its size, and is relatively light.*

*"Elves favor long swords, and most are trained from childhood in their use. One guess as to the reason for this is the fact that the sword is light and quick and can cause a lot of damage when in battle, much like the elves themselves. That's only a guess, of course, and the truth may never be known, at least if I have anything to say about it."*

-- Lord Noro Goldentree, High Elf

The classic long sword depicted in fantasy gets its design from the Gothic period. This is the longest variety of long sword, with a 40-inch blade.

## Rapier

The rapier is a light weapon with a straight, double-edged, pointed blade. It is designed to be a light, thrusting sword. The term *rapier* is often used to describe a civilian weapon, as opposed to the heavier and deadlier swords of soldiers and mercenaries. Rapiers are fashionable among nobles and gentlemen.

As a new art of fighting evolved with emphasis on thrusting with the blade as opposed to slashing, a new weapon was required. This art is known as fencing, and it requires a

rapier. As the sport grew in popularity, the rapier was required to be narrower and lighter. It became not a slashing weapon at all, but a weapon purely for thrusting.

The early rapier handles have straight quillons (cross guards), side guards, and knuckle bows. The later versions have shell guards, similar to the basket hilts of the broad sword and cutlass. As a result, the rapier wielder enjoys the same Parry and punching bonuses outlined earlier.

*"The rapier isn't as fast as the short sword, but it does a slight bit more damage. The rapier is a good dueling weapon, and is popular with rich young nobles and swashbucklers."*

-- Rollo, *Aspiring Swashbuckler*

### **Sabre/Scimitar**

Alternatively spelled *saber*, this sword is a long, curved, single-edged blade intended mostly for horsemen. It is a popular weapon for light cavalry. The sabre's hilt grants the user the Parry and punching bonuses of the rapier.

Members of the foul race of yuan-ti often use scimitars.

*"Another curved, single-edged blade? Well, the sabre is a bit different since it's meant to be a slashing weapon instead of a thruster like the rapier. Both swords cause the same amount of damage and are equally as fast."*

*"As for the scimitar, it is merely another form of sabre, but with heavier Oriental influences. It causes slightly better damage than the sabre, and is just a bit slower. Druids favor scimitars."*

-- Gwynne Arendahl, *Fighter*

The sabre was initially developed in Central Asia, used by tribes that wandered the steppes. By the 9th century, the Slavs, who battled the Asians, had adopted the weapon. The term *sabre* is Slavic-Hungarian.

Sabres were used extensively in central and eastern Europe and by the Turks.

The Persian style of the sabre was discovered by Napoleon's troops. This version was known as the shamshir, which is commonly called the scimitar. This blade has a greater curve to it and is tapered to an elongated, sharp point.

### **Short Sword**

The short sword is the first type of sword to come into existence. In the simplest of terms, a short sword can be considered a dagger with a blade so long that it can no longer be called a dagger. The term *short sword* does not exist in sword classifications. However, it has come to be used to describe a double-edged blade about two feet in length. The sword tip is usually pointed, ideal for thrusting.

Short swords are fitted with a handle that can accommodate only one hand.

*"The short sword is a good weapon for archers, crossbowmen, and other warriors whose primary weapon is not a sword, but who see the necessity for having an edged weapon that causes respectable damage. The small size and lightness of the sword makes it an ideal weapon to carry without the warrior worrying about getting encumbered with*

*too much weight. Short swords are quick weapons, almost as fast as daggers, and causing more damage. A short sword with even a minor enchantment becomes an extremely valuable weapon.*

*"Halflings, gnomes, and dwarves are known to favor short swords, since the weapon's length is compatible with their stature.*

*"Elves are trained in use of the short sword. It is a common elven weapon for two reasons: the elves favor the swiftness and lightness of the weapon, and, since many elves are archers, the short sword becomes a good fallback weapon should the enemy close ranks into melee range.*

*"The short sword is often seen on the belts of the average man, or at least the average man who can afford one and knows how to use it! It is a good weapon to have in a city, provided one follows any local rules for securing the weapon. A short sword enables a man to discreetly wear a sword in the city, not calling as much attention to himself as he would if he wore a bastard sword or two-handed sword strapped to his back!"*

*-- Cendril, Elf Warrior-Mage*

The short sword is a descendant of the Roman gladius. In essence, it is a gladius made by improved metalworking techniques.

The Germans developed the *baselard* short sword, common in the 16th century, while the Italians had the *cinquedea*, a short sword with a blade that was broader at the base. Both versions of short sword were popular with civilians, not professional soldiers or knights.

## **Two-Handed Sword**

The two-handed sword is a derivative of the long sword. Weaponsmiths have always looked for ways to improve existing weapons. In an effort to improve the long sword, the blade was lengthened (having a longer reach than one's enemy is always preferable). Eventually, the handle had to be extended and two hands became necessary in order to properly swing the sword. The primary function of two-handed swords is cleaving mounted knights and breaking up pike formations.

The blade on the two-handed sword is a long, double-edged blade. The blade point may be sharp or rounded. The hilt has straight or slightly curved quillons. The pommel may be faceted, triangular, or pear shaped, though whatever the shape, it tends to get larger toward the top, as a counterbalancing measure.

As its name implies, this sword is a two-handed weapon and cannot be used in one hand, even if the wielder has high Strength. The weapon and its hilt are balanced for two-handed use. A fighter wielding a two-handed sword cannot use a shield.

An average two-handed sword measures five to six feet in length. It is a favored weapon among foot soldiers.

The astral race known as the Githyanki favor two-handed swords. These weapons tend to be decorated with gems, beads, and precious metals.

*"This is the sort of weapon that makes a statement to all who see the wielder, and the statement is beware. The two-handed sword is correctly associated with lots of damage. In fact, wearing such a sword slung across your back may make the impression that the wielder is not so much interested in saving his own neck (since he cannot use a shield*

*and is consequently easier to hit) as he is in relieving an enemy of his head.*

*"This sword is slow and heavy, but then again, it needs to have great mass in order to cause the damage that it does. Warriors who carry a two-handed sword usually don't carry any other large or medium-sized weapon. At best, a dagger is carried as a backup weapon of desperation.*

*"Despite the impressive features of the two-handed sword, a bastard sword is a better weapon. First of all, the bastard sword gives the warrior the choice of using it one- or two-handed, thus enabling him to use a shield.*

*"Furthermore, the bastard sword is faster. The two-hander does a bit more damage than the bastard sword wielded two-handed, but the difference is insignificant. Still, when it comes to hitting those extra large beasties such as dragons, a two-handed sword comes in mighty handy."*

*-- Finnegan Bospur, Paladin*

The two-handed sword was a weapon of 13th century Teutonic origin. It was extensively used by German and Italian foot soldiers from the mid-15th to the late 16th century. In later years, the two-handed sword became largely a ceremonial or processional weapon, usually heavily decorated.

## **Trident**

A trident is a long pole measuring four to eight feet with a metal, triple-bladed fork on one end. It is not used as a weapon by professional armies, but has seen some limited use from peasant guerrillas. The trident is normally a tool used for fishing, with some limited uses as an agricultural or hunting tool. It is a two-handed weapon.

Several aquatic races, such as locathah, mermen, sahuagin, and tritons, use tridents. They realize the versatility of the trident, since it is effective as both a fishing tool and a weapon.

## **War Hammer**

Mounted knights cannot effectively use long pole weapons while on horseback, and as a result, many weapons have been fitted with shorter shafts so they may be wielded with just one hand. Maces and flails are two previous examples of this--the war hammer is another.

The horseman's war hammer is the descendent of the Lucerne hammer. It is made entirely of steel, with rondels protecting and strengthening the grip. Rondels are small disks of metal, often shaped into decorative designs. The shaft is about 18 inches long.

Dwarves favor war hammers as a primary weapon. It is guessed that, given the dwarves' skill in using the hammer for non-combative purposes, they naturally developed the skill for using it as a weapon of war. The war hammer personifies the dwarven race: short, tough, and blunt.

Some war hammers are fitted with a spike at the top. This can be used as a thrusting weapon and causes 1d3 points of damage.

*"A war hammer is a good secondary melee weapon. It causes a little more damage*



*than a dagger and can be thrown just as far. The weapon is terrific against skeletons, better than edged weapons. In a pinch, the war hammer can also be a tool for things like hammering in spikes. A lot of clerics who can't use edged weapons have found the hammer an acceptable alternative."*

*-- Pandar Goldsmith, Dwarven Warrior*

## Whip

The whip or bull whip is a long, heavy, plaited lash usually made of leather or rawhide (untanned hide). The braided leather is thicker toward the handle, narrowing to a slender cord at the end. Some handles are wooden rods attached to the lash, while others are part of the same piece of rawhide. The whip's length varies from 15 to 25 feet. A whip is carried coiled and attached to the user's belt.

Common uses for the whip include leading herd animals and as a tool for punishment.

If a character wishes to knock a weapon out of an opponent's hand, this may be attempted with a whip using a Called Shot with intent to disarm. The attacker gets a -4 penalty on his attack roll. Further details are found in *The Complete Fighter's Handbook* in the Combat chapter.

A character proficient with the whip can entangle an opponent's limbs or weapon. Before rolling the attack die, the user declares whether or not he intends to entangle. If a hit is scored, some sort of entanglement occurs. If wielded by a non-proficient user, the chance to entangle is only 5%. If wielded by someone proficient, there is a 5% chance per level that entanglement occurs (to a maximum of 95%). Percentile dice are rolled to determine the exact effect. The entanglement chances are 50% (01-50 on 1d100) for one limb, 10% (51-60) for two limbs, 20% (61-80) for the weapon arm and the weapon, and 20% (81-00) for the head.

Hobgoblins are known to carry whips, but this is probably more for keeping prisoners and slaves in line than as a combat weapon. Still, a hobgoblin wielding a whip should be presumed to be skilled at it, and able to make the special attacks with it.

*"The whip is another example of something designed for one purpose that gets used for another, much like a pitchfork, pruning hook, or harpoon. As a weapon, the whip is unimpressive if you're talking about raw damage. The whip is great for Called Shots and such, but try using a whip on a troll, and all you'll get is one slightly stung, very mad troll.*

*"The same holds true for armored targets. A whip is designed for hitting bare skin. Any sort of armor, including leather and padded, will help protect the wearer from the whip's sting.*

*"No, if someone is looking for a weapon that causes damage and is a good parrying tool, the whip is not it. If you enjoy fancy maneuvers and bizarre trick shots, then the whip is the right thing. The whip is better suited for the city environment, where there are more humans, demi-humans, and other such races which fear the lash, as opposed to the wilderness, where myriad monsters abound who do not shrink from a little pain.*

*"A whip is a slow weapon. Someone using a whip must have at least 10 feet between himself and the enemy, since a whip will not work too well in close quarters.*

*"A whip is great for a fighter who wants to disarm an opponent, snare a victim, or even wrap the whip around a beam and use it to swing over a chasm."*

-- Gorin Grimblade, Veteran Warrior

**TABLE 6: Master Weapons Chart**

Item	Cost	Weight		Type	Speed Factor	Damage	
		(lbs)	Size			S-M	L
Arquebus***	500 gp	10	M	P	15	1d10	1d10
Battle Axe	5 gp	7	M	S	7	1d8	1d8
Belaying pin	2 cp	2	S	B	4	1d3	1d3
Blowgun	5 gp	2	L	--	5	--	--
Barbed Dart	1 sp	‡	S	P	--	1d3	1d2
Needle	2 cp	‡	S	P	--	1	1
Bolas	5 sp	2	M	B	8	1d3	1d2
Bow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Composite long bow	100 gp	3	L	--	7	--	--
Composite short bow	75 gp	2	M	--	6	--	--
Flight arrow	3 sp/12	‡	M	P	--	1d6	1d6
Long bow	75 gp	3	L	--	8	--	--
Sheaf arrow	3 sp/6	‡	M	P	--	1d8	1d8
Stone arrow, flight	3 cp/12	1/10	M	P	--	1d4	1d4
Short bow	30 gp	2	M	--	7	--	--
Caltrop	2 sp	2/10	S	P	n/a	1	1d2
Cestus	1 gp	2	S	S	2	1d4	1d3
Chain	5 sp	3	L	B	5	1d4+1	1d4
Club	--	3	M	B	4	1d6	1d3
Crossbow	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Hand quarrel	1 gp	‡	S	P	--	1d3	1d2
Hand crossbow	300 gp	3	S	--	5	--	--
Heavy quarrel	2 sp	‡	S	P	--	1d4+1	1d6+1
Heavy crossbow	50 gp	14	M	--	10	--	--
Light quarrel	1 sp	‡	M	P	--	1d4	1d4
Light crossbow	35 gp	7	S	--	7	--	--
Dagger or dirk	2 gp	1	S	P	2	1d4	1d3
Bone dagger	1 sp	1	S	P	2	1d2	1d2
Parrying dagger	5 gp	1	S	P	2	1d3	1d3
Stone dagger	2 sp	1	S	P	2	1d3	1d2
Dart	5 sp	1/2	S	P	2	1d3	1d2
Flail, Footman's	15 gp	15	M	B	7	1d6+1	2d4
Flail, Horseman's	8 gp	5	M	B	6	1d4+1	1d4+1
Gaff/Hook	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Attached	2 gp	2	S	P	2	1d4	1d3
Held	5 cp	2	S	P	2	1d4	1d3
Hand/Throwing axe	1 gp	5	M	S	4	1d6	1d4
Harpoon	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
One-handed	20 gp	6	L	P	7	1d4+1	1d6+1
Two-handed	20 gp	6	L	P	7	2d4	2d6
Javelin	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
One-handed	5 sp	2	L	P	4	1d4	1d4
Two-handed	5 sp	2	L	P	4	1d6	1d6
Javelin, Stone	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
One-handed	5 cp	2	M	P	4	1d4	1d4
Two-handed	5 cp	2	M	P	4	1d4+1	1d6
Knife	5 sp	1/2	S	P/S	2	1d3	1d2
Bone knife	3 cp	1/2	S	P/S	2	1d2	1d2
Stone knife	5 cp	1/2	S	P/S	2	1d2	1d2

Lance @	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Heavy horse lance	15 gp	15	L	P	8	1d8+1	3d6
Jousting lance	20 gp	20	L	P	10	1d3-1	1d2-1
Light horse lance	6 gp	5	L	P	6	1d6	1d8
Medium horse lance	10 gp	10	L	P	7	1d6+1	2d6
Lasso	5 sp	3	L		--	10	--
Main-Gauche	3 gp	2	S	P/S	2	1d4	1d3
Mancatcher **	30 gp	8	L	--	7	--	--
Morning star	10 gp	12	M	P/B	7	2d4	1d6+1
Net	5 gp	10	M	--	10	--	--

Item	Cost	Weight	Size	Speed	Factor	Damage	
		(lbs)		Type		S-M	L
Polearm	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Awl pike #	5 gp	12	L	P	13	1d6	1d12
Bardiche	7 gp	12	L	S	9	2d4	2d6
Bec de corbin	8 gp	10	L	P/B	9	1d8	1d6
Bill-guisarme	7 gp	15	L	P/S	10	2d4	1d10
Fauchard	5 gp	7	L	P/S	8	1d6	1d8
Fauchard-fork	8 gp	9	L	P/S	8	1d8	1d10
Glaive *	6 gp	8	L	S	8	1d6	1d10
Glaive-guisarme*	10 gp	10	L	P/S	9	2d4	2d6
Guisarme	5 gp	8	L	S	8	2d4	1d8
Guisarme-voulge	8 gp	15	L	P/S	10	2d4	2d4
Halberd	10 gp	15	L	P/S	9	1d10	2d6
Hook fauchard	10 gp	8	L	P/S	9	1d4	1d4
Lucern hammer #	7 gp	15	L	P/B	9	2d4	1d6
Military fork *	5 gp	7	L	P	7	1d8	2d4
Partisan #	10 gp	8	L	P	9	1d6	1d6+1
Ranseur #	6 gp	7	L	P	8	2d4	2d4
Spetum #	5 gp	7	L	P	8	1d6+1	2d6
Voulge #	5 gp	12	L	S	10	2d4	2d4
Quarterstaff	--	4	L	B	4	1d6	1d6
Sap	1 gp	1/10	S	B	2	1d2	1d2
Scourge	1 gp	2	S	--	5	1d4	1d2
Sickle	6 sp	3	S	S	4	1d4+1	1d4
Sling	5 cp	‡	S	--	6	--	--
Sling bullet	1 cp	1/2	S	B	--	1d4+1	1d6+1
Sling stone	--	1/2	S	B	--	1d4	1d4
Spear	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
One-handed	8 sp	5	M	P	6	1d6	1d8
Two-handed	8 sp	5	M	P	6	1d8+1	2d6
Spear, long	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
One-handed	5 gp	8	L	P	8	1d8	1d8+1
Two-handed #	5 gp	8	L	P	8	2d6	3d6
Spear, stone	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
One-handed	8 cp	5	M	P	6	1d4	1d6
Two-handed	8 cp	5	M	P	6	1d6	2d4
Staff sling	2 sp	2	M	--	11	--	--
Stinkpot	1 sp	2	S	B	--	1d3	1d3
Stiletto	5 sp	1/2	S	P	2	1d3	1d2
Sword	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Bastard sword	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
One-handed	25 gp	10	M	S	6	1d8	1d12
Two-handed	25 gp	10	M	S	8	2d4	2d8

Broad sword	10 gp	4	M	S	5	2d4	1d6+1
Claymore	25 gp	10	M	S	8	2d4	2d8
Cutlass	12 gp	4	M	S	5	1d6	1d8
Drusus	50 gp	3	M	S	3	1d6+1	1d8+1
Falchion	17 gp	8	M	S	5	1d6+1	2d4
Khopesh	10 gp	7	M	S	9	2d4	1d6
Long sword	15 gp	4	M	S	5	1d8	1d12
Rapier	15 gp	4	M	P	4	1d6+1	1d8+1
Sabre	17 gp	5	M	S	4	1d6+1	1d8+1
Scimitar	15 gp	4	M	S	5	1d8	1d8
Short sword	10 gp	3	M	P	3	1d6	1d8
Two-handed sword	50 gp	15	L	S	10	1d10	3d6
Trident	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
One-handed	15 gp	5	L	P	7	1d6+1	3d4
Two-handed	15 gp	5	L	P	7	1d8+1	3d4
War hammer	2 gp	6	M	B	4	1d4+1	1d4
Whip	1 sp	2	M	--	8	1d2	1

\* This weapon inflicts double damage against charging creatures of L or greater size.

\*\* This weapon can dismount a rider on a successful hit.

\*\*\* This weapon available only if allowed by the DM.

@ This weapon inflicts double damage when used from the back of a charging mount.

# This weapon inflicts double damage when firmly set to receive a charge.

‡ These items weigh little individually. Ten of these weigh one pound.

## Chapter 4

### Adventurer's Equipment

The following section includes information about the general equipment used by adventurers. In addition to armor and weapons, a character also needs equipment to fight the elements and rugged terrain that he will encounter on his journeys.

#### Backpacks

Adventurers' backpacks come in a wide variety of shapes, sizes, and materials. The least expensive variety is a simple canvas sack equipped with shoulder straps. These may be purchased or constructed by the adventurer.

A backpack may also be a woven basket with a woven or wooden lid. This is carried on the back by means of shoulder straps. They are durable, but cumbersome due to their rigid form.

The preferred style of backpack is a leather bag equipped with multiple pockets and slung over the shoulders with padded shoulderstraps. Some types of leather may be waterproofed. Such a bag has a leather flap that is secured with one or more buckles. If the bag is loaded properly and secured correctly, the contents will not spill even if the

adventurer is suspended upside down.

Experienced tailors or leatherworkers may be commissioned to construct special backpacks. This may include special pockets to hold commonly used items or a special padded section of pockets to hold valuable breakables such as potions. Cost of such bags is generally double that of the deluxe backpack.

Cost: Sack 4 sp

Basket 5 sp

Deluxe Leather 2 gp

## **Block & Tackle**

A block and tackle is a set of ropes and pulleys that increases the ability to lift heavy objects. When a rope is passed through the multiple wheels of the blocks, it allows characters of any degree of strength to pull heavy objects (more than their normal strengths would allow).

A block and tackle has limited use and normally can be used only to lift objects vertically. In addition, the block and tackle must be able to be securely suspended above the object and have enough room for the adventurers to work.

A block and tackle may be considered to add a +4 bonus to any one character's Strength, for purposes of lifting, to a maximum of 19. If a number of persons work together, a bonus of +2 is added to the Strength score of each participant.

Block and tackles vary in weight depending on the load they can support. A block and tackle suitable for lifting objects of less than 200 pounds weighs 10 pounds; a set capable of lifting 1,000 pounds weighs 50 pounds; and a set suitable for lifting up to 5,000 pounds weighs 200 pounds.

A block and tackle comes equipped with a series of square wooden blocks with greased internal wheels, straps and harnesses to attach the blocks to a wall, tree limb, or other attachments, and 50 feet of rope appropriate to the set (depending on the weight of the block and tackle, the rope may be light, heavy, or chain).

Cost: 8 gp (light), 15 gp (Medium), 25 gp (Heavy)

## **Crampons**

Crampons are sold in pairs to be attached to hard boots by several leather straps. Crampons are spiked and gnarled bands of steel that increase the traction of smooth-soled boots. They can be used to scale rocky cliffs or cross icy plains. When worn, crampons increase Climbing ability by +15% or Mountaineering proficiency by +1. Crampons can also be used as a weapon. If a victim is prone, stomping on the victim while wearing a pair of crampons inflicts 1d2 points of damage per 100 pounds of weight of the character. If the victim is in melee, a successful attack roll must be made. Success causes 1 point of damage (only one foot can thrust). If an attack roll indicates a miss, the wearer must make a successful Dexterity check to avoid falling. Using crampons in this way ruins them in a 1d10 rounds of active use.

Cost: 4 gp

## **Clawed Gloves and Shoes**

Similar to crampons, claws give climbers and mountaineers greater ability to cling to handholds and ledges. Both types are held on with leather straps and add a +5% to Climbing and a +1 to Mountaineering.

Cost: Gloves 3 gp, Shoes 5 gp

### **Flint and Steel**

More than the name suggests, flint and steel may include a number of items. The equipment is carried in a small leather pouch, often waterproofed, and includes a large piece of flint, several coarse steel bars, tinder, and scraps of charred cloth. With such tools, a character can start a small smoldering flame in 1d6 rounds (longer in windy conditions or if the kindling is wet).

Starting a fire with flint and steel requires practice, but is not difficult. A wad of tinder (frayed cedar bark, thistledown, or dried grass) is placed in a dirt depression. A scrap of charred cloth (a one-inch square is sufficient) is placed on the tinder. The flint is struck against the steel, knocking sparks off the metal. The carbon content of the charred fabric is highly ignitable and lights quickly when touched by a spark. This, in turn, lights the tinder and the fire may gradually be fed with larger bits of wood.

Cost: 5 sp

### **Grappling Hook**

A grappling hook is used to secure a rope for climbing. A grappling hook is normally made of two, three, or as many as four cast iron bent bars welded or fused together. Deluxe grappling hooks are sometimes available with folding hooks; thus, they can be folded flat for easy carrying. Such a hook costs approximately twice the price of an ordinary hook.

The grappling hook can be thrown easily into a tree, roof ledge, or rocky crevice. In determining whether a grappling hook catches in the target object, a normal attack roll is made vs. AC 10. One round is required to throw the hook; another round is required to retrieve it.

In an emergency, the DM might allow clever adventurers to fashion a makeshift grappling hook from a rope and a wooden slat or metal rod. This may be used as a normal grappling hook.

Cost: 8 sp

### **Healer's Bag**

This bag may come in any shape or size, but is usually made of leather or heavy canvas. It is used primarily by characters who have the Healing Proficiency. A healer's bag allows such a character a +1 bonus to his chance to successfully heal a victim.

A healer's bag may be purchased new, complete with all supplies, or may be assembled by a healer. A complete bag includes 30 rolled bandages of varying size, 20 feet of rolled gauze, a tiny metal mixing bowl, a ceramic mortar and pestle, and ten jars of various herbs that can be crushed and mixed with water to form a paste to be applied to wounds. The kit also includes three curved needles (often made of gold to prevent rust) and a



spool of white or black silk thread (50 feet) to be used to stitch gaping wounds. Some kits may include several ceramic vials to be filled with clean water.

Cost: 6 gp

### Housebreaker Harness or Spider

This leather halter is essential for any thief. The harness, sometimes referred to as a spider, is an assortment of straps that are hooked around the thighs and over the shoulders. A broad leather strap is secured around the waist. Attached to the belts are small hooks, safety clips, and adjustable clamps. From these various clips, the thief can hang small tools or attach ropes or tether lines. Using this harness can prevent a thief from falling, secure him to a wall, or free his hands to use his picks.

One possible drawback to such a harness is the jangling noise it may make. If a thief spends two rounds securing all clips and removing any unused clips, he operates under his normal chance to move silently. If such precautions are not taken, the thief's chance to move silently is penalized 15%.

Cost: 8 gp

### Lantern

An adventurer's lantern is similar to a common lantern, but is usually made of more rugged material. Adventurer's lanterns rarely have a glass plume or tower. In general, lanterns come in three varieties, as described below.

**Beacon Lantern:** A beacon is more than a simple lantern. The light source weighs as much as 50 pounds and is normally found in a light house or mounted on a ship rather than with a group of adventurers. A beacon provides a focused beam of light reaching 240 feet, with an additional 120 feet of semi-darkness (a total of 360 feet of light). A beacon is fueled by lantern oil which lasts 2 hours per pint.

Cost: 150 gp

**Bullseye Lantern:** A bullseye lantern is an easily portable light source, similar in design to the beacon lantern. It has a metal housing with a panel of glass to keep wind away from the flame. The metal is usually polished on the inside to reflect light outward. A trap door or shutter can be set in place over the glass to block out the light. Even when the shutter is closed, some light still escapes from the lantern. Closing off every crack in the lantern's assembly would quickly extinguish the flame. Such lanterns are often equipped with adjustable vents to regulate airflow. Adventurers must remember that even if the shutter is closed, the lantern will shed enough light to give away their position in a dark dungeon.

This lantern projects light in a funnelled path. A bullseye lantern's light reaches 60 feet, with an additional 20 feet of semi-darkness. A bullseye lantern burns six hours per pint of oil.

Cost: 12 gp

**Hooded Lantern:** A hooded lantern projects light in 360 degrees and is capped overhead

to limit the radiation of heat. This allows it to be carried with a handle located at the top of the lantern.

Hooded lanterns generally have a metal reservoir for the oil and a metal cap. Between the two is a cylinder of thick glass that allows light to escape. Some models have metal spines between panes of glass or a metal assembly with disks of thick glass set in. The latter type is the most durable.

Few hooded lanterns can be covered to restrict light, but the DM may allow such lanterns to restrict light to a few feet.

This lantern projects light 30 feet in all directions and burns six hours per pint of oil supplied.

Cost: 7 gp

## **Locks**

Locks are available for a variety of purposes. These range from simple padlocks suitable for securing a small chest to elaborate inset door locks for houses and mansions. Simple locks are usually made of iron, steel, or bronze and have a simple mechanism that opens with one key. Elaborate locks may be made of gold, silver, or other precious metals. They may have a hidden keyhole or multiple keys.

Inset locks are usually commissioned to fit a specific door. Padlocks may be available for ready sale from a locksmith or sometimes a blacksmith. Single key locks are most common; double key locks are available from perhaps 20% of locksmiths.

Cost: Good - 100 gp, Poor - 20 gp

## **Provisions**

Dry provisions generally consist of a few basic foodstuffs. In general, rations include a hard biscuit called hardtack, made of ground wheat and water, and beef or buffalo jerky or dried fish. Dried fruits such as apples, apricots, cherries, and raisins may also be included in dry rations.

Many hard cheeses can survive several days or weeks on the trail. Cheese, however, is not part of standard rations and must be acquired in addition to the standard package.

Rations are not meant as a substitute for meals for any length of time. Foraged herbs, greens, berries, and vegetables are necessary to maintain good health. Without such supplements, various nutritional diseases may set in. The disease most likely to plague adventurers is scurvy. This can be avoided by the inclusion of fruits, especially citrus, and onions.

Both beef jerky and hardtack are relentlessly hard; the biscuits have very little taste. Considerable quantities of water (as much as double a normal ration of water) must be consumed when living on such rations to make such food digestible; lack of water can also result in dehydration.

If a party attempts to live on rations for more than three to four weeks at a time, the DM may rule that 1 point of Constitution is lost due to nutritional deficiency. This may be recovered by eating foods other than rations for one week.

Hardtack, jerky, and the like are generally carried by human adventurers. Other races have their own variations on rations. Elves in particular carry a mixture of nuts, corn,

seeds, dried fruit, and small candies. This is sometimes carried as a loose mix, and is sometimes carried in small patties held together by brown sugar, honey, molasses, or lard. Either variation requires the consumption of extra water as explained above.

Cost: 7-15 gp (per one-week supply)

## Rope

Rope is one of the most important items of equipment to an adventurer. A 50-foot length of rope will be used when climbing surfaces, pulling heavy loads, repelling down sheer cliffs, and traversing deep ravines. There are two basic types of ropes.

**Hemp Rope:** Hemp is a tough, fibrous plant used to make stout rope. A hemp rope is rugged and durable, but very bulky and heavy. The diameter of a hemp rope can range from 1/4-inch to three inches or more (found primarily on ships). A fifty-foot length of hemp rope weighs nearly 20 pounds and is capable of holding more than 500 pounds of weight.

Cost: 1 gp

**Silk Rope:** A silk rope is made of long threads of silk. The threads are braided together with other strands of silk to make thin cords, and these in turn are braided together into a pliable and stiff braid. A silk rope is less encumbering and easier to work with (its smooth texture is not as rough on the hands), but does not have the ability to hold as much weight as a hemp rope. Usually no more than 200 pounds can be held by the line at once. A silk rope weighs about eight pounds for a 50-foot length.

Cost: 10 gp

## Thieves' Picks and Tools

A thieves' toolkit comes in a flat, folding leather case or a rolled suede case and includes dozens of small tools. A set normally contains 20 wires, ranging in gauge from the thickness of string to that of a slender pencil. Each is approximately 12 to 18 inches long. These are used to poke into small holes or push triggers or buttons from a short distance. The toolkit also includes a set of 12 skeleton keys that fit many standard locks. Also in the set are several screwdrivers, a wire clipper, clamps, and pincers ranging in three sizes from minute, small, and average. Bundled with this package may be a small chisel, hacksaw, and hammer.

In some of the more deluxe toolkits, small vials of metal-eating acids may be found, along with magnifying glasses and slender pieces of high-tempered steel that are used as miniature crowbars. A thieves' toolkit will range in weight and size greatly, depending on the initial cost of the package.

Cost: Basic 30 gp

Deluxe 50 gp

## Waterskin/Wineskin

Water and wine skins come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and materials. The most common type is the kidney-shaped goatskin bag with a metal cap on the narrow end.

Other types may be encountered made of sheepskin, bearskin, or other hide. Barbaric races and humanoids (especially orcs, goblins, and hobgoblins) may adorn their waterskins with teeth, horns, or hooves of the animal that gave up its hide for the item.

A waterskin of normal size can hold two quarts of water. Players should remember that a normal human requires two quarts of water per day to maintain good health. More water will be required in hot conditions or in cases of high physical activity. Characters subsiding on dry rations also require more water. An active character may drink a gallon of water a day, and those trekking through deserts and open savannahs may find it necessary to drink as much as two gallons per day.

Cost: 8 sp

## **Weaponblack**

This oily substance comes in small vials or jars. Such vials could potentially be mistaken for potions (consumption causes 1d10 points of damage).

Weaponblack is used to smear the surfaces of weapons and metal armor to coat them with a pasty, matte black finish, rendering them nearly invisible in darkness. Thieves who coat their blades gain a +5% bonus to their chances to Hide in Shadows. After a typical melee, the weaponblack will be wiped from most of the blade from its heavy use. The weapon must be blackened again if desired. Armor will need its black coating touched up following a melee.

A jar of weaponblack contains enough material to coat one full set of plate armor, two sets of scale mail, or three sets of chain mail. The same size jar can coat a long sword 10-12 times.

Cost: 1 gp

# Chapter 5

## Clothing

### **Introduction**

Clothing for the fantasy adventurer varies drastically between character classes, among social classes, from one city or province to the next, and from campaign to campaign. The types of apparel presented here are the most commonly worn items of the medieval period.

Many variations exist in each article of clothing. Fabrics, fasteners, embellishments, and the quality of craftsmanship can all create wide variations in style, comfort, and durability. For example, a doublet might be made of silk, linen, or woolen cloth, depending upon the skill or location of the tailor. This must be taken into account when using the prices presented here. The price ranges are intended to be guidelines only. Prices should be adjusted to suit the occasion within the adventure, taking into account

the available materials and workmanship and the needs of the character.

## **General Styles and Trends**

### **Peasant Clothing**

The peasant or poor beginning adventurer generally has few resources and wears whatever is available and functional. Such individuals rarely bother with fashion. Keeping warm is usually the first priority. Therefore, peasants tend to wear as many layers as possible.

The most typical, basic, and fundamental peasant garment is the chemise, which is a loose shirt that covers the body from the neck to the thigh or mid-calf. A chemise may have long or short sleeves or may be sleeveless.

The next layers of clothing add two garments to the basic costume, a cote and surcote. These two articles of clothing are worn over the chemise, with the surcote over the cote. These items may vary in the extreme, ranging from a style resembling a knee-length tunic to variations on a simple or hooded cloak.

### **Academical Dress**

Early universities are often associated with the church, so many of the educated people, especially teachers, are of a Holy Order. Therefore, priestly and academic dress are practically identical.

The earliest medieval Ecclesiastical dress is the same as the everyday clothing of the average person. This consists of many loose, long tunics (down to the ankles), a hood with shoulder cape, hose, and shoes. A round hat with a tab or nub on the top may also be worn.

While secular styles change, the dress of priests and academics tends to remain the same. This stagnant style has the effect of distinguishing the academic community from other members of the equivalent class level. Many priests wear similar types of clothing and can therefore be immediately identified as either an educated person or a member of a priestly society.

### **Sumptuary Laws**

The Sumptuary Laws, historically passed from 1300 to 1700 A.D., were designed to restrict the import of foreign goods, and, more importantly, to maintain a social class structure by permitting only members of a certain class level and position to wear specific garments, fabrics and styles. For example, at one time, the most important indication of one's status within the upper class was the type of fur that lined the edges of garments. Furs permitted only to the aristocracy included marten, vair, and ermine. In descending social importance order, other furs were otter, fox, beaver, lamb, goat, and wolf. Any commoner wearing restricted materials was subject to harsh punishment.

Another example of a Sumptuary Law is the reservation of the color purple for persons of royalty. Specific purple dyes are made available only to the tailors of the aristocracy.

At the DM's option, sumptuary laws might be created for certain cities, provinces, or countries. Therefore, specific materials may be hard for the adventurer to find for sale in the open market. Such laws will undoubtedly add flavor and color to role-playing and may provide the basis for unusual adventures.

Adventurers traveling from one kingdom to another could easily and unknowingly offend the local aristocracy by wearing a forbidden color or material. Common punishments include a specified term of hard labor, a whipping, or imprisonment. The severity of the punishment varies widely, depending on the kingdom and other factors.

## **Materials Used in Medieval Clothing**

### **Brocaded Material**

A rich fabric, often silk, woven with raised designs, usually with gold or silver thread. Highly sought by the upper classes.

### **Brocatelle**

An imitation of brocaded material executed with a combination of colored yarns. This material is used by members of the lower class to emulate genuine brocaded material.

### **Camlet, camelot**

This refers to a fabric that is rumored to be composed, in part, from an exotic animal's coat, namely camel hair. It actually refers to an elegant fabric that is a mixture of silk or velvet and some camel hair. Used only by the upper classes.

### **Fur**

Fur is the dressed pelt of various animals, used in the making of garments. It is used as the predominant material of some garments, while used only as trimming and decoration in others.

Many outer garments that are designed specifically for warmth are made of fur, and may line the inside or the outside of such a garment. Peasant cloaks and other fur-lined garments are usually composed of sheepskin, wolfskin, or other smaller mammals. Other furs used primarily by the lower classes include rabbit and common squirrel. The poorer people tend to stitch pieces of smaller animal furs together to provide protection from the cold.

Some furs are restricted and are allowed to be worn only by the upper class. Furs reserved for the aristocracy included sable, ermine, and vair. Especially prized by royalty is the darker skinned sable and black-tipped white ermine. A vair is a highly sought species of squirrel.

An adventurer could make a good deal of money selling furs if a good furrier and a willing buyer of the furs were discovered. Such entrepreneurs should remember that some furs are not only restricted for wearing, but merely owning the animal's hide may be illegal.

### **Leather**

Leather may be created from the hide or skin of any animal, bird, or reptile. The skin is tanned or treated to preserve it. Leather is used in the creation of many objects of clothing and armor. The major advantage of leather is that it provides adequate protection while remaining flexible and supple, for quiet and complex maneuvering.

## **Articles of Clothing**

### **Apron**

Aprons are worn for a variety of reasons. The most common uses are to protect clothing and the wearer of the apron. This can range from a simple cloth apron worn while preparing a meal to the wearing of a leather apron by a blacksmith. Such aprons are made of thick leather and are intended to protect the wearer from flying sparks and chips of metal.

Cost: Cloth 5-8 sp, Leather 8-12 gp

### **Bag, Pouch, Almoner, Gipsy**

These pouches are made from a variety of fabrics including leather, silk, wool, or linen and come in a variety of sizes. A special type of pouch is called the almoner. It is worn by members of the upper class and is used especially for holding money to be given as alms, hence the name.

All such items are usually attached at the belt or girdle. The pouch might be in plain sight, or, often in populated areas, it might be belted to the undertunic so the wandering eyes of thieves wouldn't see it.

Cost: 4-8 cp

### **Baldrana**

This is a full, wide cloak with a hood used by travelers to protect against the rain.

Cost: 6-9 sp

### **Baldric, Bandoleer**

Usually made of leather (or silk for those who can afford it), this article of clothing is slung around the body from one shoulder to the opposite hip and is used to carry a dagger, pouch, bugle, or sword. Some baldrics are decorated with bells or tassels along the bottom edge. Baldrics are used both for decoration by the lords and ladies of the aristocracy, and for practical purposes by adventurers and government officials. Women of the upper class may wear silk baldrics with gold bells for ornamentation.

Decorative baldrics always have tassels, bells, or other adornments and are made of fashionable materials such as silk or brocade. Functional baldrics, in contrast, are composed only of leather and a buckle, for ease of use and practicality.

Cost: Ornamental 25-50 gp, Leather 7-10 gp

### **Band**

Bands are variations of collars that include the ruff that is favored by royalty. Some bands simply fold over the outer shirt and are called a falling band, while others are designed to stand up, and are appropriately called a standing band. The ruff is reserved for formal occasions, while a falling band might be used for daily wear by an official. Most peasants and adventurers believe the wearing of these bands to be snobbish and a blatant attempt to emulate the aristocracy.

Cost: 1-4 sp

### **Boots**

Boots are an important part of the wardrobe for traveling and outdoor work and



adventuring. They are vital for protection against cold and wet conditions as well as hot and rocky terrains. Many peasants need to wear boots indoors as well, as their living conditions preclude much comfort or heat.

Boots may be found in many stages of design. One of the most popular is the pointed toe variety. The extended toe is especially popular among performers and jugglers, although thieves would do well to avoid them. The pointed toe tends to get in the way while climbing and running.

Another common and functional boot is the leather, mid-calf boot with roll-tops, laced up the side. A variation on the mid-calfboot is the knee-high boots, worn by peasants and called cockers.

Elegant designs reign at court. Such boots might be made of soft leather and even silk, embroidered or inlaid with gems. These are more for show than any practical purpose. See Shoes for more information about footwear.

Cost: 2-8 gp

### **Boot Hose**

These hose are cloth stockings worn inside the boot to protect the silk stocking underneath. They are not visible outside the boot and are generally used only by the upper class.

Cost: 1-5 cp

### **Braies**

Braies are shapeless trousers held up by a drawstring at the waist, worn by men. They are usually kneelength or longer, with the bottoms either being tucked into stockings or bound with leg wrappings. Braies form the basic daily legwear for the commoner.

Cost: 6-10 sp

### **Breeches**

This outer garment is worn by males. Breeches cover the hips and legs down to the knees. This garment has many different styles, from full, puffed designs made from expensive material to tights made with common cloth, similar to the braie.

Cost: 2-5 gp

### **Buckle**

A seemingly inconspicuous piece of a person's clothing, buckles actually hold great significance. The buckle is one of the items that denotes wealth and status within society. Materials used to create buckles include silver, gold, iron, steel, copper, and even ceramic. Along with the basic form of the buckle, these items might be engraved, inset with jewels, or otherwise adorned.

Cost: Common 1-4 gp, Ornamental 10-20 gp

### **Cannons**

Cannons are tube-like breeches that fit snugly over a man's thighs, down to his knees. This article of clothing is usually embroidered in colored silk, gold, or silver thread. Cannons are worn chiefly by the upper classes.

Cost: 8-12 gp

### **Caps**

Many types of caps exist, but the most useful type for adventurers is a fur cap necessary in cold climates. High quality versions of this cap may have ear-coverings attached. Generally, caps fit closely on the head and are usually brimless.

Cost: 1-4 sp

### **Cassock**

A cassock is a long coat or cloak worn outdoors. It is used chiefly by soldiers and hunters. It is worn unbelted, and buttons down the front. This garment is used, especially by hunters, for extra warmth while out in the cold. The soldier's version also serves as an identifying uniform.

Cost: 6-10 gp

### **Caul**

These are netted caps worn by women, made of silk and wool with various designs. For practicality, a caul is used by women to keep long hair out of the way. For decoration, a more elaborate caul is used during formal functions and gatherings.

Cost: 3-7 gp

### **Chainse, Chemise**

This is a white linen undertunic worn under the bilaud, the overtunic. The sleeves of the chainse are fitted at the wrists and are visible beneath the overtunic. The neckline is a simple roundcut with a short slit. This is the most common garment for the peasant. Men of higher classes wear other outer coverings over the chemise.

Cost: 1-6 gp

### **Cloak, Mantle**

The cloak can be made in every possible shape with just about every type of fabric. The most common forms are a circular piece of fabric with a hole in the center for the head, and fabric draped from neck, connected by a chain, brooch, cord, or pins.

A common double use of the cloak is as a blanket in the wilderness. Outdoor cloaks are large and made of durable, thick fabric to keep the adventurer warm during those cold nights under the stars.

Cost: 2-8 sp

### **Coif**

Coifs are white linen caps worn by both sexes. They fit closely on the head and are tied under the chin. The coif is used as a sleeping cap and as an underlayer beneath another hat.

Cost: 1-6 gp

### **Doublet**

This is a shirt, usually fastened up the front with buttons, and sometimes having a short, skirt-like section or peplum. There are many style variations of doublets.

Cost: 1-6 sp

### **Drawers**

Drawers are an undergarment for the body and legs, usually made of white linen.

Drawers are worn under other trousers to provide additional warmth.

Cost: 4-8 sp

### **Ferronniere**

This item of jewelry is a thin chain worn around the forehead with a small jewel set in the center. The ferronniere is worn exclusively by ladies of the upper class. The wearing of a ferronniere is considered to be an elegant touch within the aristocracy. An adventurer hoping to impress someone of high station might benefit from wearing a tasteful ferronniere.

Cost: 50-100 gp

### **Fitchet**

Not an item of clothing but a feature on a garment, a fitchet is a vertical opening at the hip of a gown or surcoat, used to reach the belt and pouch concealed within. This is convenient for hiding valuables in a pouch under many layer of outer garments, making it difficult for a thief to filch the bag.

### **Gamash**

These long leggings are worn outside other leg garments to protect the wearer from cold and wet weather. They are made of cloth and are buttoned down the outside of the leg.

Cost: 3-8 sp

### **Garnache**

This outer garment covers the wearer from the neck down to the ankles. It has wide, elbow-length sleeves cut as part of the garment, like a cape. This allows the wearer to hide bulky items, such as weapons or pouches, under the garnache without attracting attention.

Thieves and fighters especially favor this garment for its excellent ability to conceal objects and allow the wearer full, unhindered movement.

Cost: 5-10 sp

### **Girdle**

The girdle, in its usage as it applies to the medieval period, is a belt for the hips or waist. It is worn by both men and women. The girdle is made of metal, leather, cord, or fabric and often has one or two ends hanging loosely. Objects may be hung from the girdle to add embellishment to the overall outfit.

Cost: 1-6 gp

### **Gloves**

Gloves come in many different types and styles. The most common type is a leather glove worn to protect the wearer from cold weather and from injury. A heavier leather gauntleted glove is used for falconry and hawking, to provide a perch for the bird and to

protect the falconer.

Another functional glove is one designed for archery. Designed to be worn with a normal pair of gloves, the archery glove has two or three reinforced leather fingerstalls which are buttoned across the wrist to provide protection when firing arrows.

Decorative gloves are also worn by men of the noble class. These gloves are made of soft leather, suede, or kid and are adorned with embroidery, jewels, and fringes.

In general, gloves are worn mainly by the upper class. Peasants make do with either cloth mittens or by wrapping their hands in the extra long sleeves of their shirts.

Many customs have been built around gloves. Knights wear them as favors in their helmets during tournaments. They may be used as pledges and can be tossed down as a challenge.

Cost: Leather 1-3 gp, Archer 3-8 gp, Ornate 10-20 gp

### **Gorget**

The gorget is a collarlike article of clothing for the neck, full and broad in front. This originally referred to a piece of armor that protected the neck, but it also applies to the article of clothing men and women of the upper class wear around the neck.

Cost: 1-3 gp

### **Hoods**

Hoods are used to keep the head dry and warm in inclement weather. Hoods were originally a simple head covering, but evolved into more elaborate designs such as a hood with a small cape attached. See liripipe for a specific version of a popular hood.

Cost: 1-6 sp

### **Hose**

Hose are a common covering for the legs. The original design was as roughly-fitting trousers; they evolved into a tighter-fitting garment. The material used to make hose can range from homespun cloth for peasants to velvet and silk for the wealthy. This article of clothing is worn instead of drawers. The main difference is that hose have a tighter fit than drawers. Both garments serve the same function, keeping the wearer's legs warm.

Cost: 1-3 sp

### **Liripipe**

This is a hood with a long peak that can reach a length of 2 to 6 feet. The length of the peak varies with the fashion of the day. Jokers, jugglers and other performers especially favor the liripipe.

Cost: 5-10 sp

### **Pantaloons**

These are various forms of loose coverings for the legs, reaching from the waist to the calves. Pantaloons are tight fitting at the waist and calves, emphasizing the owner's stockings and footwear. They are worn primarily by the upper class while indoors, such as in court.

Cost: 1-6 sp

### **Ruff**

This tight, ruffled collar is worn encircling the entire neck. The ruff is highly admired within the upper class and is used almost exclusively by aristocracy. Although held in disdain by the lower class and most adventurers, the ruff is an excellent piece of clothing for a thief to own, especially one who enjoys disguises. Wearing an authentic ruff in conjunction with other appropriate upper class clothing will almost always guarantee entrance to aristocratic functions with little or no fuss over invitations.

Cost: 8-12 gp

### **Shirt**

Any undergarment covering the top half of the body may be considered a shirt. This is a basic piece of clothing worn next to the skin.

Cost: 1-3 sp

### **Shoes**

Peasants and poor adventurers often wear a simple piece of rawhide as footwear, often with the fur still on it. A leather thong is threaded through the top of the piece of leather and tied at the top in order to hold the leather in place.

Wealthier people wear a basic leather shoe, constructed with a pointed toe. The length of the toe varies according to the individual shoemaker. Some shoe points are so long that they must be chained up and fastened at the knee. This type of shoe would be a hindrance to an adventurer, but might be worn in a city.

Cost: Rawhide 1-3 sp, Leather shoe 8-12 sp

### **Slop**

This term describes many loose fitting articles of clothing such as cloaks, mantles, gowns, or baggy breeches. The term *slop* indicates a particularly cheap, ready-made garment; therefore the low cost.

Cost: 5-8 cp

### **Surcoat, Surcote**

A surcote is a loose-fitting garment worn over a cote or tunic. There are many styles of surcotes, some with sleeves, hoods, capes, or any combination thereof. The surcoat is used primarily as another layer for warmth and is worn by the middle class.

Cost: 5-10 sp

### **Tabard**

A tabard is a loose-fitting, rectangular piece of cloth that hangs back and front over the tunic. It was originally used to cover armor from the sun's rays, keeping the wearer cooler, but has developed into clothing adopted by non-armored men and women. A person's symbol, colors, coat of arms, or other identifying marks are commonly placed on this garment.

Cost: 4-8 sp

### **Tunic**

This body garment is slipped over the head and may be styled with or without sleeves. It may be girded at the waist. This garment can be knee- or ankle-length and is sometimes called a cote.

Cost: 5-10 sp