

Are You Ready to Be a Nobody?



Zero Level Characters

A Supplement for
Swords & Wizardry Continual Light





Zero-Level Characters
for Swords & Wizardry Continual Light
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How to Use this Book

This supplement to *Sword & Wizardry Continual Light* is meant to give players and referees a fun way to add history and a depth to the characters in a campaign:

For players it provides information about what their character did prior to becoming an adventurer and rewards them with an interesting special ability to differentiate their character from others of the same class.

For referees it provides a tool to begin a campaign outside of a tavern, where normal villagers are called to service in order to rescue the mayor's daughter from goblins, join a posse to hunt down a criminal or whatever creative reason the referee wishes.

To create a zero-level character roll a d20 and consult the table below. Each entry will have the following information:

Profession

A brief description of the profession.

An example of a reason the character wants to become an adventurer.

Prime Characteristic: At character creation, the player may swap out any other Characteristic score with this one. For example an Herbalist with a Strength 16 and a Wisdom 9 can switch these two so that the character has a Strength of 9 and a Wisdom of 16.

Special Ability: a profession-specific capability.

Starting Equipment: a list of trapping the character begins the game with.

Zero-level characters all start with 1d6 gp and 1HD. They need to survive one game session to advance to 1st level in whatever class the player decides. When they advance to 1st level, they do not gain a new HD (except the +1hp from being a fighter).

Zero-Level Character Table

1: Alchemists' Apprentice

A pupil being learning how to formulate magical potions.

At this rate, the old man will never teach me enough to become a journeyman...

Prime Characteristic: Intelligence

Special Ability: Identify Magic Potions and Poisons

Starting Equipment: Either a staff or a dagger as well as one bottle of greek fire (burns for 1d6 rounds in a 5 ft. area doing 1d6 hits per round).

2: Body Guard

Merchants need muscle to protect them from rivals and thieves, body guards provide that muscle.

My last employer refused to listen to my advice about safety and now I have no employer.

Prime Characteristic: Strength

Special Ability: On a successful hit, may disarm an opponent instead of doing damage.

Starting Equipment: Club, sling, leather armor and a shield.

3: Entertainer

Whether a jester, a bard or an orator, entertainers make a living by amusing and delighting people through art.

Ever hear of a starving artist?

Prime Characteristic: Charisma

Special Ability: Can spend half a day in town busking or performing to earn room and board for 1d6 days.

Starting Equipment: Six daggers and the player's choice of an instrument.

4: Herbalist

Someone who specializes in growing and collecting a variety of plants for medicinal, magical and culinary purposes.

Old lady Mabh passed away last week...who is going to buy my latest stock before it goes bad?

Prime Characteristic: Wisdom

Special Ability: Identify Plants

Starting Equipment: Either a staff or a dagger, a sling, a pouch full of herbs and a shield.

5: Initiate

A novice living in a monastery that has yet to be tonsured as a full-blown monastic.

I thought my calling was to be a monk, but I think I am going stir-crazy staring at my cell wall all day...

Prime Characteristic: Wisdom

Special Ability: Can take one turn to heal 1d3 hp. May be done once per character once per day.

Starting Equipment: Staff, a holy symbol, robes and a horse hair shirt [AC 8 (11)].

6: Laborer

A peasant, surfer or some one from the lower classes who is relegated to doing menial, physical work.

I'd rather die by goblin sword than have to listen to the foreman yell at me all day long again.

Prime Characteristic: Constitution

Special Ability: Can make a saving throw at +2 to avoid any negative effects of alcohol consumption.

Starting Equipment: A Hammer (can be used as a club), a water skin filled with cheap alcohol and a leather apron [AC 8 (11)].

7: Merchant

A burgher who trades and sells on the market, often insuring large shipments and getting rich through high stakes investment.

I spent my last coin insuring that wreck that is now being picked over by pirates, no doubt.

Prime Characteristic: Charisma

Special Ability: When purchasing any item, can either take 10% or 1d20% off the list price.

Starting Equipment: A short sword and a dagger, a nice set of clothes and 1d6x10 gp.

8: Outlaw

Any one who lives outside the law in order to eat and survive.

Sure, the life of a highwayman sounds romantic, but go ahead and ask when was the last time I got a good night sleep.

Prime Characteristic: Strength

Special Ability: Can intimidate creatures of less HD than the character. Targets must make a saving throw (minus the character's Strength or Charisma bonus, which ever is higher) to avoid cowering for 1d6+1 rounds. If the save is missed by more than 5, the targets will actually obey the character for 1d6+1 rounds.

Starting Equipment: A sword, a bow, leather armor and shield

9: Pedlar

A seller of trinkets, baubles and knickknacks.

Imagine all the stuff I could sell if I ever found a lost treasure.

Prime Characteristic: Charisma

Special Ability: Can appraise the value of any item.

Starting Equipment: A sling, a sack with pots and pans, a pouch with colored ribbons and a pack containing a tinderbox, 4 blankets and some rope.

10: Pharmacist

Someone who specializes in medicinal potions.

Do you know how expensive the ingredients are to make just one healing potion?

Prime Characteristic: Intelligence

Special Ability: May take 1 week and 100gp to make a Healing Potion

Starting Equipment: A dagger, one healing potion and a leather apron [AC 8 (11)].



11: Rat-Catcher

Every city has vermin, and every city needs a rat-catcher has his trusty dog to keep them at a minimum.

If I am going to crawl through the muck and mire, I'd much rather be searching for gold than a rat's nest.

Prime Characteristic: Constitution

Special Ability: May have a scent hound [HD 1+1; AC 7[12]; Atk bite (1d4); Move 15; Save 14] as a henchman and may always be able to replace it if it dies.

Starting Equipment: A scent hound, a dagger, a sling and a Ratter's pole with d6 dead rats.

12: Runner

Militaries, governments and merchants all need information quickly and runners deliver that information by going where horses cannot.

The Baron hates bad news. It is only a matter of time before he shoots the messenger.

Prime Characteristic: Constitution

Special Ability: Adds 3 to the base move.

Starting Equipment: A short sword, d6 empty scroll cases and leather armor.

13: Sailor

Whether a conscript, a marine or a fisherman, sailors are anyone who make a living on the sea.

That last storm threw by boat up against the rocks. She's little more than bunch o' splinters now.

Prime Characteristic: Dexterity

Special Ability: Can never be lost while the stars are visible.

Starting Equipment: Short sword, rope, a partial map to some unknown location and leather armor.

14: Seer

Sometimes called soothsayers, oracles or fortune tellers, seers are those who has the gift of foresight.
I am tired of grandmothers trying to use me as matchmaker by having me try to predict how many children a couple will produce.

Prime Characteristic: Wisdom

Special Ability: Roll a d20 at the beginning of a gaming session. This roll may be substituted once during that session for another roll.

Starting Equipment: A staff, a sling and a pouch with divination trapping (tarot cards, bones, dice, etc.).

15: Scribe

Not everyone can read or write, but in a civilized world, everyone is in need of something written.

I am tired of simply reading about adventure, I want to have one myself.

Prime Characteristic: Intelligence

Special Ability: Has a 4 in 6 chance of reading any language (even magical).

Starting Equipment: Either a dagger or a staff, a pack with writing equipment (ink, pen and paper) and a Scroll with the *Spiritual Protection* spell.

16: Soldier

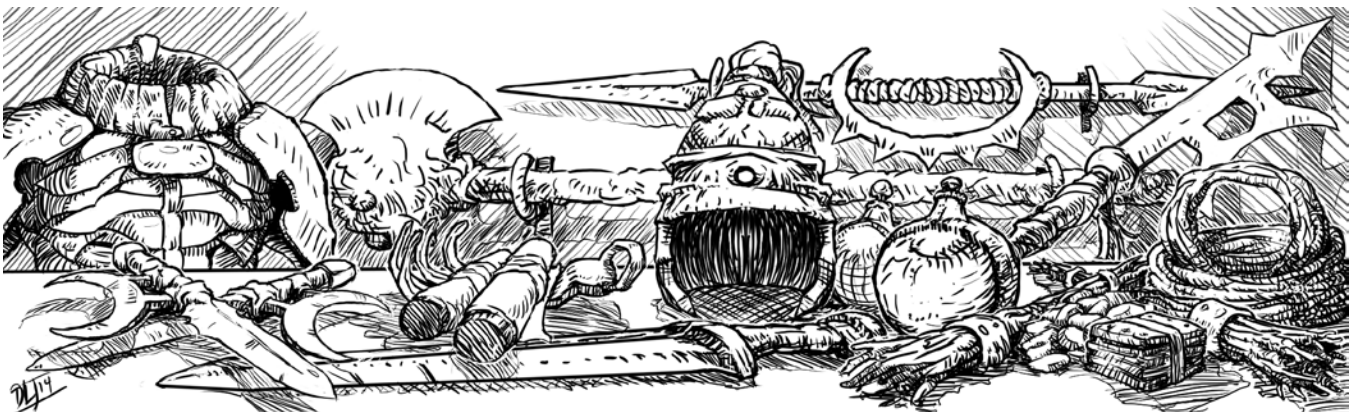
Any veteran of combat and war.

My last pay ran out and it looks like there won't be another war until the next fighting season.

Prime Characteristic: Strength

Special Ability: May only be surprised on a '1.'

Starting Equipment: A spear, a crossbow, leather armor and a shield.



17: Squire

A young nobleman acting as an attendant to a knight.

I am the third son and am expected to go out into the world and make name for myself.

Prime Characteristic: Dexterity

Special Ability: Can identify heraldry, has a 4 in 6 chance of knowing information about a particular noble and has a 2 in 6 chance of securing an audience with a noble.

Starting Equipment: A 2-H sword and chain mail.

18: Woodsman

A person living or working in the woods, especially a forester, hunter, or woodcutter.

Remember the fires last season? Well, they not only burnt down my home, they burned all my trees.

Prime Characteristic: Dexterity

Special Ability: Can spend half a day hunting in the wilderness to secure food to feed 1d6 people for 1 day.

Starting Equipment: An axe, a bow and leather armor.

19-20: Roll Twice

The first roll determines the character's Profession, Prime Characteristic and Starting Equipment. The second roll determines the character's Special Ability. Ignore all rolls of 19 or 20.



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