The
Mage-Knight
A Full 20-Level Base Class Blending
Martial and Magical Prowess
By Jacob S Kellogg
GUILD

Splitting the Difference

The concept of a "gish"—the colloquial term for a character straddling the line between a warrior and a mage—is in a bit of a strange spot in 5th Edition *Dungeons & Dragons*. You can be a fighter who dabbles slightly in magic or a spellcaster who dabbles slightly in swordplay, but for whatever reason, the half-caster chassis is reserved for the divine paladin and the nature-themed ranger.

That's kind of ridiculous, which is why I created the Mage-Knight class. Using the aforementioned half-caster chassis, the Mage-Knight provides a rich blend of martial and magical prowess.

This document covers the description and class features of the Mage-Knight, providing you with everything you need to play this class in one of your games. In addition to the base class, you'll find four subclasses: the Aegis, the Arcane Archer, the Ritualist, and the Spellblade. Each of these offers a theme to reinforce your own vision of a spell-and-steel character.

I hope you enjoy the Mage-Knight class; if so, then please consider leaving a review so that other players can find it as well! Thanks for reading, and best of luck in your adventure!

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The Mage-Knight

An elven swordsman looks up at the wounded drake, which seems to mock him as it hovers in the air beyond his reach. Scowling, the elf glares at the drake before launching a bolt of lightning from his off hand that shoots the drake right out of the sky.

A peasant captured by goblins finds himself untied by an invisible rescuer. No sooner do the goblins notice the fleeing hostage than one of the goblins is run through by the blade of an armored human. She smirks at the shock on the faces of the goblins surrounding her, before she disappears again.

A gnomish archer grins as she draws a bead on the charging ogre. Her arrow finds its mark, then erupts into a torrent of flame. The ogre drops to its knees, its charge broken and its flesh smoldering.

A warforged soldier finishes setting up camp for the merchants he's escorting through the wilderness. As his wards go to sleep, he sets up a magical perimeter around the campsite, then sits excitedly by the fire as he prepares to identify the magical scimitar he found in that last cave.

Not every warrior is a dumb brute, and not every wizard is a frail old man. A talented few pursue a path which mixes martial prowess with arcane power, combining these typically disparate traditions into a potent and flexible adventurer called a mage-knight. Blending strength of body and strength of mind, mage-knights are never without a solution for the dangers they face on their adventures.

Versatility and Potency

While a mage-knight may never reach the same pinnacle of skill at arms as a fighter or the same lofty power as a wizard, having access to both traditions at once is a form of power in itself. Additionally, the mage-knight does not keep these two disciplines isolated from one another, but instead blends them in new and unique ways to perform feats that neither fighters nor wizards can achieve.

Creating a Mage-Knight

Creating a mage-knight character requires a motivation, a reason for your character to choose a hybrid path. What compelled your character to straddle two different disciplines, rather than taking the more traditional path of a fighter, wizard, or some other class?

Perhaps an event in their past hurt their ability to trust others, resulting in a need to take care of themselves by knowing a little bit of everything.

The Mage-Knight

Level	Proficiency Bonus	Features	Arcanum Points	Cantrips Known	Spells Known	—Spell Slots per Spell Level— 1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
1st	+2	Spellcasting, Sword and Spell	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	+2	Fighting Style, Martial Arcanum	2	2	2	2	—	—	—	—
3rd	+2	Mage-Knight Tradition	3	2	3	3	—	—	—	—
4th	+2	Ability Score Improvement	4	3	4	3	—	—	—	—
5th	+3	Extra Attack	5	3	5	4	2	—	—	—
6th	+3	Spell Sunder, Arcane Strike	6	3	5	4	2	—	—	—
7th	+3	Tradition feature	7	3	6	4	3	—	—	—
8th	+3	Ability Score Improvement	8	3	6	4	3	—	—	—
9th	+4	Battle Magic	9	3	7	4	3	2	—	—
10th	+4	Drain Magic	10	4	7	4	3	2	—	—
11th	+4	Tradition feature, Forceful Weapon	11	4	8	4	3	3	—	—
12th	+4	Ability Score Improvement	12	4	8	4	3	3	—	—
13th	+5	—	13	4	9	4	3	3	1	—
14th	+5	Resonance Shield	14	4	9	4	3	3	1	—
15th	+5	Tradition feature	15	4	10	4	3	3	2	—
16th	+5	Ability Score Improvement	16	4	10	4	3	3	2	—
17th	+6	—	17	4	11	4	3	3	3	1
18th	+6	Improved Spell Sunder	18	4	11	4	3	3	3	1
19th	+6	Ability Score Improvement	19	4	12	4	3	3	3	2
20th	+6	Master Battlemage	20	4	12	4	3	3	3	2

Maybe they began studying to be a wizard, but longed for a more hands-on approach to life and tried to split the difference. Or perhaps they were just so broadly talented that they wanted to master everything.

Ultimately, your character has decided to pursue a life of adventure, and has decided that the way to do so is by learning the arts of both sword and spell. The question is, why?

Quick Build

You can make a mage-knight quickly by following these suggestions. First, your highest ability score should be either Strength or Dexterity, followed by Intelligence. Second, choose the sage or soldier background. Third, choose the *fire bolt* and *light* cantrips.

Class Features

As a mage-knight, you gain the following class features.

Hit Points

Hit Dice: 1d10 per mage-knight level
Hit Points at 1st Level: 10 + your Constitution modifier
Hit Points at Higher Levels: 1d10 (or 6) + your Constitution modifier per mage-knight level after 1st

Proficiencies

Armor: Light armor, medium armor, shields
Weapons: Simple weapons, martial weapons
Tools: None
Saving Throws: Constitution, Intelligence
Skills: Choose two from Arcana, Athletics, History, Intimidation, Investigation, and Religion.

Equipment

You start with the following equipment, in addition to the equipment granted by your background:

- *(a)* scale mail or *(b)* leather armor
- *(a)* a longbow and 20 arrows or *(b)* one martial weapon

- *(a)* a martial weapon and a shield or *(b)* two martial weapons
- *(a)* a scholar's pack or *(b)* an explorer's pack

If you are using the Starting Wealth by Class variant rule, you begin with 5d4 x 10 gp. A multiclassed mage-knight must have scores of 13 or higher in both Intelligence and either Strength or Dexterity.

Spellcasting

As a disciple of the arcane, your studies have borne fruit in your ability to cast spells. See the *Player's Handbook* for the general rules of spellcasting and the end of this document for the mage-knight spell list.

Cantrips

At 1st level, you know two cantrips of your choice from the mage-knight spell list. You learn additional mage-knight cantrips at higher levels, as shown in the Cantrips Known column of the Mage-knight table.

Spell Slots

The Mage-Knight table shows how many spell slots you have to cast your spells of 1st level and higher. To cast one of these spells, you must expend a slot of the spell's level or higher. You regain all expended spell slots when you finish a long rest.

For example, if you know the 1st-level spell *burning hands* and have a 1st-level and a 2nd-level spell slot available, you can cast *burning hands* using either slot.

Note that you do not have any spell slots until you reach 2nd level in this class.

Spells Known of 1st Level and Higher

The Spells Known column of the Mage-Knight table shows when you learn spells of 1st level and higher from the mage-knight spell list. Each of these spells must be of a level for which you have spell slots, as shown on the table. For instance, when you reach 5th level in this class, you can learn one new spell of 1st or 2nd level.

Additionally, when you gain a level in this class, you can choose one of the mage-knight spells you know and replace it with another spell from the mage-knight spell list, which also must be of a level for which you have spell slots.

Spellcasting Ability

Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for your mage-knight spells, since you learn your spells through dedicated study and memorization. You use your Intelligence whenever a spell refers to your spellcasting ability. In addition, you use your Intelligence modifier when setting the saving throw DC for a mage-knight spell you cast and when making an attack roll with one.

Spell save DC = 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier

Spell attack modifier = your proficiency bonus + your Intelligence modifier

Sword and Spell

As a mage-knight, you have learned to blend martial and magical disciplines. You can use a weapon you are holding as an arcane focus for your mage-knight spells. You can also use a hand that's holding a weapon to perform the somatic components of your mage-knight spells.

Fighting Style

At 2nd level, you adopt a particular style of fighting as your specialty. Choose one of the following options. You can't take a Fighting Style option more than once, even if you later get to choose again.

Archery

You gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls you make with ranged weapons.

Defense

While you are wearing armor, you gain a +1 bonus to AC.

Dueling

When you are wielding a melee weapon in one hand and no other weapons, you gain a +2 bonus to damage rolls with that weapon.

Martial Arcanum

Also at 2nd level, your multidisciplinary studies result in an ability to use magic in more ways than simply casting spells. This manifests in the form of the following abilities.

You have a pool of arcanum points which you can use to fuel various abilities, starting with Arcane Deflection and Elemental Weapon, which are described below. You have a number of arcanum points as shown in the Arcanum Points column of the Mage-Knight table. You regain all expended arcanum points when you finish a short or long rest.

Arcane Deflection

Whenever you are hit with an attack, you can use your reaction and expend 1 arcanum point to add your Intelligence modifier to your AC until the start of your next turn.

Elemental Weapon

As a bonus action, you can spend 1 arcanum point to infuse one weapon you are holding with elemental power. Choose acid, cold, fire, or lightning. For 1 minute, attacks with that weapon deal an extra 1d6 damage of the chosen type. This effect ends early if the weapon leaves your possession, if you are incapacitated, or if you activate this ability again.

This bonus damage increases to 2d6 when you reach 11th level and to 3d6 when you reach 17th level.

Mage-Knight Tradition

At 3rd level, you devote yourself to a particular tradition of study, reflecting your preferred blend of magic and steel. These traditions are the Aegis, the Arcane Archer, the Ritualist, and the Spellblade, each of which is detailed at the end of this class description.

Your choice of tradition grants you features when you choose it at 3rd level, and again at 7th, 11th, and 15th level.

Ability Score Improvement

When you reach 4th level, and again at 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level, you can increase one ability score of your choice by 2, or you can increase two ability scores of your choice by 1. As normal, you can't increase an ability score above 20 using this feature.

Extra Attack

Beginning at 5th level, you can attack twice, instead of once, whenever you take the Attack action on your turn.

Spell Sunder

Starting at 6th level, you can use weapons to rupture magical effects. Whenever you hit a creature, object, or magical effect with a weapon attack, you can expend 3 arcanum points to attempt to dispel any spells on the target. For each spell on the target, make an Intelligence check against a DC of 10 + the spell's level. On a success, the spell ends.

Arcane Strike

Also at 6th level, your blend of might and magic has become second nature. Any weapon you wield is considered magical for the purpose of overcoming resistance to nonmagical attacks and damage.

Battle Magic

At 9th level, you have mastered the art of weaving spellcasting and weapon use into a single harmonious act. When you use your action to cast a mage-knight spell, you can make one weapon attack as a bonus action.

Drain Magic

Beginning at 10th level, whenever you hit a creature with a weapon attack, you can spend any number of arcanum points. If the target can cast spells, they must make a Charisma saving throw against your spell save DC or lose their highest-level unused spell slot (or spell, in the case of Innate Spellcasting or similar features), up to a spell level equal to the arcanum points spent. You then regain an expended spell slot of a spell level no higher than half the spell level of the slot lost by the target.

Forceful Weapon

Starting at 11th level, you can imbue your weapons with pure arcane energy. When you activate your Elemental Weapon feature, you can spend 2 arcanum points instead of 1. If you do, that feature deals force damage instead of its usual damage types.

Resonance Shield

At 14th level, you learn how to set up a specialized magical shield to protect your body or mind from harm. Whenever you finish a long rest, you become proficient in a saving throw of your choice. This effect lasts until the next time you finish a long rest.

Improved Spell Sunder

Beginning at 18th level, when you make an Intelligence check as part of your Spell Sunder feature, you have advantage on that check.

Master Battlemage

At 20th level, when you roll initiative and you have no arcanum points left, you regain 4 arcanum points.

Mage-Knight Traditions

Mage-knights are known for their blending of martial and arcane disciplines. Experienced mage-knights choose some element of this blended tradition to specialize in: the shield, the bow, the book, or the sword. Your choice of mage-knight tradition reflects your specialty.

Aegis

Some mage-knights learn to augment their defenses with a magic-infused shield, making themselves especially resilient on the battlefield. This is the path of the Aegis.

Shield of the Aegis

Starting when you select this tradition at 3rd level, you can reduce the impact of incoming attacks. Whenever you are hit by an attack while wielding a shield, you can use your reaction and expend 1 arcanum point to reduce the damage you take by an amount equal to 1d8 plus your mage-knight level.

Absorbing Shield

Starting at 7th level, you have learned how to absorb energy with your shield. Whenever you finish a long rest, choose acid, cold, fire, lightning, or thunder. This selection lasts until the next time you finish a long rest. Whenever you use your Shield of the Aegis feature to prevent damage of the selected type, you gain temporary hit points equal to the amount of damage prevented.

Retributive Shield

Beginning at 11th level, attacking you becomes dangerous. Whenever a creature within 5 feet of you misses you with a melee weapon attack while you're wielding a shield, you can use your reaction and expend 1 arcanum point to blast the attacker with energy. The attacker takes 2d8 force damage and must make a Strength saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed save, the creature is either pushed 10 feet away from you or knocked prone (your choice).

Improved Retributive Shield

Starting at 15th level, whenever a creature within 5 feet of you misses you with a melee weapon attack while you're wielding a shield and are not incapacitated, if you do not activate your Retributive Shield feature, that creature takes 1d8 force damage.

Arcane Archer

Retaining the preference for long-range combat that's typical of mages, Arcane Archers learn to infuse arrows with magic to become turrets of arcane power.

Homing Arrows

When you select this tradition at 3rd level, you learn how to magically redirect errant projectiles. When you make a ranged weapon attack, you can expend 1 arcanum point to add 1d8 to the attack roll. You make this choice after rolling the attack but before determining the result.

Countersnipe

At 7th level, you learn how to infuse your ammunition with abjuration magic and disrupt magical effects in the blink of an eye. When you see a creature within 60 feet of you casting a spell, you can use your reaction and expend 1 arcanum point to make a ranged weapon attack against the caster. On a hit, the attack deals damage as normal, and the caster must make a Constitution saving throw as though concentrating on a spell. On a failure, the spell fails and has no effect.

Spell Carrier

Beginning at 11th level, you can use your arrows to deliver your spells. Once on each of your turns when you hit with a ranged weapon attack, you can cast a spell as part of the same action used to attack by expending arcanum points equal to the level of the spell. You must still expend a spell slot as normal, and the spell you cast must have a casting time of 1 action and must either target a creature (with a range other than "self") or affect an area.

The target of your ranged weapon attack becomes the target of the spell, or serves as the point of origin for the spell's area. If the spell normally requires a spell attack, use the result of the triggering weapon attack instead. If the spell normally requires that you see your target (or the point of origin), you ignore that requirement.

Ethereal Arrows

Starting at 15th level, you can make your arrows incorporeal, allowing them to pass through solid objects. As a bonus action, spend 1 arcanum point. For 1 minute, your ranged weapon attacks ignore cover. This includes total cover, though a target behind total cover is likely to be unseen as well.

Ritualist

As a ritualist, you look beyond the "here and now" of combat magic, learning to broaden your versatility through the mastery of slower magics, such as ritual spells and magical equipment.

Ritual Casting

Starting when you choose this tradition at 3rd level, you can cast any mage-knight spell you know as a ritual if that spell has the ritual tag.

Tome of Rituals

Also at 3rd level, you gain a special book in which you record spells that you can cast as rituals. This book starts with three spells of your choice from any class, including this one. The chosen spells must have the ritual tag and must be of a level no higher than half your level in this class, rounded up. As long as you have your tome with you, you can cast the spells within it, but only as rituals.

When you reach 5th level, and again at every odd-numbered mage-knight level thereafter, choose one additional spell to add to your tome. As before, each spell chosen can be from any class, but must have the ritual tag and must be of a level no higher than half your level in this class, rounded up.

Arcanum Casting

Beginning at 7th level, you can speed up your ritual magic. Whenever you cast a spell as a ritual, you can choose to expend a number of arcanum points equal to the spell's level instead of increasing the casting time.

Arming Rite

By 11th level, you have learned to combine your experience with ritual magic and weaponry by developing a unique ritual to enhance your armaments. Performing this ritual takes 10 minutes and enhances one weapon, shield, or suit of armor for 8 hours.

For the duration, the item becomes magical if it wasn't already magical, and confers a bonus equal to half your proficiency bonus to attack and damage rolls (if a weapon) or to AC (if a shield or suit of armor). If the item already has such a bonus, only the higher of the two applies.

This enhancement ends early if the item leaves your possession. Once you use this ability, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

Master Magesmith

Starting at 15th level, you require only half the time and materials to craft magical weapons, armor, wands, and staves.

Spellblade

As a spellblade, you have chosen to weave magecraft and swordplay into a unified discipline, making you a force to be reckoned with in close quarters.

Prescient Riposte

Starting when you select this tradition at 3rd level, you can magically enhance your reflexes to retaliate against your foes. Whenever you activate your Arcane Deflection feature, if it causes the triggering attack to miss and you are wielding a melee weapon, you can retaliate as part of the same reaction.

If the triggering attack was a melee attack and the attacker is within reach, you can make one melee weapon attack against them. If the triggering attack was a ranged attack, you can make a ranged spell attack against the attacker, deflecting their spell or projectile back at them on a hit.

Eldritch Cyclone

Beginning at 7th level, you can sweep your weapon in a magically-charged spin attack. As an action, spend a number of arcanum points up to your Intelligence modifier (minimum 1 point), then each creature within 15 feet of you must make a Dexterity saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed save, a creature takes force damage equal to 1d8 per arcanum point spent, and is also knocked prone if it is Large or smaller. On a successful save, a creature takes half as much damage and does not fall prone.

Battlemage's Speed

Starting at 11th level, you can cast *haste* on yourself by expending 5 arcanum points instead of a spell slot. This spell does not require concentration when cast using this feature.

Improved Battle Magic

Beginning at 15th level, your blend of spell and steel is more potent than most. Whenever you make a melee weapon attack granted by your Battle Magic feature, you gain advantage on the attack roll.

New Spells

The following spells are designed for use with the mage-knight class. Consider carefully before using them with other classes, especially full-casters who would gain access to them earlier.

Aetherslip

2nd-level transmutation
Casting Time: 1 bonus action
Range: Self
Components: V
Duration: 1 round

Until the end of your turn, you become semi-corporeal, allowing you to slip quickly across the battlefield with minimal impediment. Your speed increases by 15 feet, you ignore nonmagical difficult terrain, your movement does not provoke opportunity attacks, and you can move through the spaces of enemy creatures (although you cannot end your turn there). Additionally, whenever you make a melee weapon attack against a creature whose space you occupy, you have advantage on the attack roll.

Elemental Shield

3rd-level abjuration
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Components: V, S
Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

You imbue a shield with the ability to protect from blasts of elemental energy. Whenever the shield's wielder is subjected to an effect that allows them to make a Dexterity saving throw to take only half damage, the wielder gains resistance to acid, cold, fire, lightning, and thunder damage from the triggering effect. The wielder does not gain this benefit if they are incapacitated.

At Higher Levels. When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, you can target one additional shield for each slot level above 3rd.

King's Castle

3rd-level conjuration
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 120 feet
Components: S
Duration: Instantaneous

Choose a willing creature you can see within range. You each teleport into the other's space, effectively swapping places. This spell fails if one of you cannot fit in the other's space.

Secret Scabbard

1st-level conjuration (ritual)
Casting Time: 1 minute
Range: Self
Components: V, S, M (a chain link and a tiny knife)
Duration: 24 hours

You create a small pocket dimension where you can store your weapons. It can hold up to six weapons at a time, though a weapon with the heavy property counts as two. A quiver of arrows or similar bundle of ammunition also counts as two weapons. A magic weapon that requires attunement cannot be stored unless you are attuned to it.

You can summon stored weapons to your hands or dismiss them to this pocket dimension as easily as you could draw or stow them in ordinary sheathes. When the spell ends, all its contents fall to the ground within 5 feet of you.

You can have only one storage space at a time. If you cast this spell while it is already active, the previous casting ends.

Mage-Knight Spell List

Below is the spell list for the mage-knight class. Most spells are available in the *Player's Handbook*. Spells from *Xanathar's Guide to Everything* are included and marked by an asterisk (*) and spells detailed earlier in this document are marked by a double asterisk (**). Work with your DM to determine whether a spell from another source might also be appropriate for this class.

Cantrips (0 Level)

Acid Splash
Blade Ward
Dancing Lights
Fire Bolt
Light
Mage Hand
Mending
Message
Poison Spray
Prestidigitation
Ray of Frost
Shocking Grasp
True Strike

1st Level

Alarm
Burning Hands
Charm Person
Chromatic Orb
Comprehend Languages
Detect Magic
False Life
Faerie Fire
Feather Fall
Find Familiar
Fog Cloud
Identify
Mage Armor
Magic Missile
Ray of Sickness
Searing Smite

Shield
Silent Image
Sleep
Tasha's Hideous Laughter
Thunderwave
*Absorb Elements**
*Cause Fear**
*Chaos Bolt**
*Earth Tremor**
*Ice Knife**
*Zephyr Strike**
*Secret Scabbard***

2nd Level

Blindness/Deafness
Blur
Cloud of Daggers
Continual Flame
Darkness
Flaming Sphere
Gust of Wind
Heat Metal
Hold Person
Invisibility
Levitate
Magic Weapon
Melf's Acid Arrow
Mirror Image
Misty Step
Scorching Ray
See Invisibility
Web
*Aganazzar's Scorcher**
*Dragon's Breath**
*Maximilian's Earthen Grasp**
*Pyrotechnics**
*Shadow Blade**
*Aetherslip***

3rd Level

Blink
Counterspell
Dispel Magic
Elemental Weapon
Fireball
Fly
Haste
Lightning Arrow
Lightning Bolt
Protection from Energy
Remove Curse
Sleet Storm
Slow
Stinking Cloud
Vampiric Touch
*Flame Arrows**
*Melf's Minute Meteors**
*Thunder Step**
*Elemental Shield***
*King's Castle***

4th Level

Arcane Eye
Banishment
Confusion
Dimension Door
Evard's Black Tentacles
Fire Shield
Freedom of Movement
Ice Storm
Stone Shape
Stoneskin
Wall of Fire
*Elemental Bane**
*Sickening Radiance**
*Storm Sphere**
*Vitriolic Sphere**

5th Level

Bigby's Hand
Cloudkill
Cone of Cold
Hold Monster
Scrying
Telekinesis
Wall of Force
Wall of Stone
*Enervation**
*Far Step**
*Steel Wind Strike**