BASIC D20 SOCIAL CLASS

If desired, a social class system can be introduced into your Basic d20 campaign. The social classes listed below are suitable for use in typical d20 fantasy campaigns. Class Code gives the letter designation of the social class for shorthand purposes. The U, M, and L stand for Upper, Middle, and Lower. The underclass is designation by "UC" while the criminal underclass is "CUC." Class Name gives a plain language name for the class, such as "Esquire Class" or "Servant Class." Starting Wealth shows how much money a character from that social class receives during character generation. Monthly Upkeep shows how much a character of this social class must spend per month to maintain their lifestyle (or risk dropping to the next lower social class). Class Purchase Price shows how much money must be spent over and above normal monthly upkeep costs to raise their social class to that level from the next lower social class (subject to GM discretion). Price Multiple is a multiplier applied to everything the character purchases (even during character generation). The "% of Society" column shows the percentage of the population in that particular social class. The "% of PCs" column shows what percentage of player characters are from the indicated social class. The last column, Roll, can be used to randomly roll a character's social class during character generation.

Class Code	Class Name	Starting Wealth (gp)	Monthly Upkeep	Class Purchase Price	Price Multiple	% of Society	% of PCs	Roll (d100)
UUC	Royal	8d4X100	800 gp	--	X 3	0.002%	1%	00
MUC	Noble	6d4X100	400 gp	32000 gp	X 2	0.010%	3%	97-99
LUC	Knighted	4d4X100	200 gp	16000 gp	X 2	0.988%	9%	88-96
UMC	Esquire	8d4X10	100 gp	8000 gp	X 1.5	2.5%	32%	56-87
MMC	Gentle	6d4X10	50 gp	4000 gp	X 1	6.5%	20%	36-55
LMC	Merchant	4d4X10	25 gp	2000 gp	X 1	12%	15%	21-35
ULC	Yeoman	8d4	12 gp	600 gp	X 1	22%	10%	11-20
MLC	Servant	6d4	6 gp	300 gp	X 1	26%	6%	05-09
LLC	Peasant	4d4	2 gp	100 gp	X 1	30%	4%	01-04
UC	Underclass	2d4	--	--	X 1	+10-20%	Var.	--
CUC	Criminal	6d4X10	50 gp	--	X 1	+5-10%	Var.	--

Player characters are exceptional individuals and the majority of adventurers are from higher social classes (sons and daughters of the middle class and upper class who will not inherit wealth or lands). At start, players can always choose a lower social class than the one rolled for their character, but cannot choose a higher one. Characters can always start out in the Criminal Class, but should record their originally rolled social class.

If a player does not wish to roll on this table at all, the default starting class is MMC.

A character's social class determines their station in the campaign world. More importantly to players, it determines Starting Wealth and Monthly Upkeep costs. The Class Purchase Price allows advancement

to the next higher social class in about thirteen years if a character spends twice his monthly upkeep the entire time each month. The Price Multiple gives the multiplier that must be applied to all purchases made by members of that social class. For example, a Noble Class character must pay double for all weapons, armor, clothing, and other items, or risk being ridiculed by his peers and treated as a lower social class individual by inferiors. You must dress the part. Enforcement of the Price Multiplier and campaign ramifications for being a "cheapskate" are left to the imagination of the GM.

Also, characters must pay Monthly Upkeep costs or they risk being reduced in social class. Once a character has failed to pay one year's worth of Monthly Upkeep, they are reduced one social class. Keep a running total of the deficit. Thus, if a Knighted Class character falls behind 2,400 gp on Monthly Upkeep, they become members of the Esquire Class. This could occur by spending only 100 gp per month on expenses for two years, or spending nothing on Monthly Upkeep for one year. Exceptional circumstances can rapidly reduce a character's social class if the GM desires. Spending over the normal amount should be kept track of as well. Once a total equal to the next higher social class's Purchase Price has been spent, the character goes up one social class. Only one social class may be climbed per year. Any number of social classes can be lost in a year (GM's judgment).

The names of the classes suggest the most common members of that class, but each class has a wide variety of types. Performers from the common classes can rise to the middle classes, extremely successful warriors can reach the upper classes, upper class individuals can enter monasteries to have their social classes reduced, etc.

Social class provides a clear indication of who gets precedence over whom. Within a party of adventurers, for example, if the character with the highest social class is not the leader and spokesman, NPCs will think it quite odd and wonder why that character allows his authority to be usurped. They may even question his courage. This is entirely a role playing function and the GM must enforce it. If characters violate precedence inside or outside their group, it should cause problems.

WHY USE A SOCIAL CLASS SYSTEM?

Using a social class system can give each player rich opportunities for role playing. The social class of a character, with its attendant behavior and ethos, has featured prominently in many types of fiction. It is only natural that a social class system should be a part of a role playing game. A lower class character isn't necessarily worse than a higher class character; they just need to be played differently. It's not like the player himself is a member of that class! It should be remembered that higher class characters cannot just order around characters of lower station. They should expect deference and respect, but in return they must act as good role models and exercise the proper responsibility of their status (*noblesse oblige*). In other words, it's a two-way street. Every social class has its own rights and responsibilities and it is up to the GM to brief players on what is expected of their characters in the campaign milieu.