

MARINER

The mariner is a fighter sub-class that specializes in the skills and weapons mastery appropriate to seafarers. Mariners may be of any alignment; two well known sub-variants of the mariner are the neutral buccaneers and the evil pirates, who are identical to the mariners in every respect. Mariners use the attack and saving-throw tables of fighters and they have no innate spell-casting abilities. Starting ages, initial funds, restrictions on material and magical ownership and the like are as per the fighter class.

To become a mariner, a character must have a strength of not less than 12, an intelligence of 12 or greater, a dexterity of 13 or greater and a constitution of not less than 10. They do not gain bonuses for earned experience. Mariners may be human (with unlimited level advancement), elves (either gray or high), half-elves or half-orcs. Elves and half-elves may be multi-classed as mariner/magic-users or mariner/thieves. Half-orcs may become mariner/clerics, mariners/thieves or mariner/assassins. Level limits for demi-humans are the same as for fighters as per the Players Handbook. Note -- half elves may be of aquatic elven stock, in which case they have all the standard abilities for both class and race, plus they may learn the languages of dolphins and whales.

Armor and Weapons

Mariners normally wear only leather armor because shipboard work is too strenuous for bulkier dress. Before battle, magical chain mail, ring mail or studded leather may be donned, but such armor will be taken off again as soon as the fighting is done. Mariners value movement and low encumbrance highly.

Due to their training and agility in combat, mariners gain a +1 bonus to their armor class and dodgeable saving throws while wearing leather or no armor at all (c.f. combat dodge). This armor bonus is cumulative with the wearing of magical rings, bracers and other items as well as bonuses for high dexterity or combat dodge. In addition, mariners gain an additional +1 bonus to armor class at 8th and 15th level (c.f. ranger). Mariners may initially have the skill acrobatic dodge as well. Mariners will use only small-sized shields (bucklers) and may use spiked bucklers as well.

Mariners begin at 1st level with proficiency in three weapons and one non-weapon skill. They gain a new weapon and non-weapon proficiency for every three experience levels they rise (i.e., a new weapon at 4th, 7th, 10th, etc, level) and wield weapons with which they are not proficient at a -2 "to hit" penalty. Mariners gain new attacks per round as a ranger does; they may also use oil or poison, but will rarely do so.

Because shipboard fighting takes place in close quarters and striking speed is so important, mariners only use certain hand-to-hand weapons and no others; hand axes, clubs, daggers, hammers, knives, saps, scimitars, quarter staves and one-handed swords (broad, long and short). These weapons are also very effective against lightly armored opponents. Short spears and tridents will be used in initial boarding actions and may be taken with proficiency, though these weapons are usually discarded in close combat. Being skilled at close-quarter fighting (including "pier six brawls") gives mariners a +1 bonus to hit when using their fists.

Mariners use various missile weapons that adapt well to seafighting. Javelins and harpoons are favored for their range and power, and spears are often cast between ships as well. Mariners may also be proficient at heavy weapons such as ballistae and catapults and mariners who dive underwater may choose to be proficient with the underwater net (see Dungeon Master's Guide, p.56).

Note that the firing of a catapult aboard a ship is a tricky thing, as the shot may fly through the ship's own rigging and sails.

Light and heavy crossbows are commonly used, since these weapons have great ranges and penetrating power against lightly armored opponents. Longbows and short bows require greater care than crossbows and are more easily damaged by seawater, and thus are not usually learned. Mariners can use crossbows with great accuracy, gaining a +1 "to hit" bonus when using them. This results from using them so often on normally unsteady ships and from practice aiming at individual targets. Crossbows may not be reloaded in a ship's rigging [unless your name is Raitan]; solid footing is required to re crank the weapon.

Sea combat is not always to the death; it is often preferable to capture opponents, as experienced sailors are hard to come by. Thus mariners often try to win fights by killing as few sailors as possible. Defensive parrying is often used, as is disarming, so in these respects a mariner should be treated as a cavalier of equal level [+2 bonus to parry].

Shipboard life and familiarity with the sea gives the mariner a wide variety of special talents. These skills are listed below.

- 1) All mariners learn the sciences of navigation and pilotry. They have a base 60% of performing these functions, modified upward by +5% per level of experience.

Navigation:

- Two or more navigators working in consort: +15%
- Ship sailing against a moderate current: -5%
- Strong breeze: -10%
- Ship is old and/or worn (unseaworthy): -10%
- Ship sailing against a strong current: -15%
- Strong Gale: -25%
- Storm or gale force winds: -50%
- Out of sight of landmarks (no astrolab): -30%
- Light cloud cover (astrolab): -10%
- Heavy cloud cover (astrolab): -25%

Piloting:

- Two or more pilots in consort: +15%
- Lighthouse in the area: +25%
- Ship is unseaworthy: -10%
- Strong Breeze: -10%
- Ship sailing against strong current: -15%
- Light fog: -15%
- Strong gale: -25%
- Heavy fog (1/3 mile visibility): -30%
- Storm or greater force winds: -50%

- 2) Given the amount of time mariners are aboard ship, they become completely acclimated to the nautical environment. This allows them to predict the weather in their immediate area (within a 5-mile radius) if they are on the sea or in shore-lying areas. Also, all mariners have a certain degree of sea lore (similar to bardic legend lore) gained from all the ghost stories and legends they have heard. This ability allows a mariner to remember the names and histories of sunken ships, recognize uncharted islands from rumors and landmarks as well as identify sea monsters and ghost ships. The base chance of both these abilities is 35% and advances each level as shown below to a maximum of 80%.

- 3) Mariners can climb ropes and ladders as per a thief climbing walls of equal levels. This ability is checked ONLY when the mariner is climbing under difficult situations (a storm, the ship is rammed, the mariner is trying to move "double-time" up the rigging, etc).
- 4) The swimming and diving skills of mariners are superior to those of all other classes. Mariners make drowning checks after twice the normal time, have double normal swimming encumbrance and have a base speed of 2" (instead of 1"). In addition, mariners are able to dive from great heights. A mariner may safely dive from a height of 10' per level (with a maximum height of 150' -- all distance above this subtract the first 150' when determining damage). One foot of water is needed for every 10' fallen, with a minimum of depth of 3' and a maximum of depth 12'. Finally, mariners may hold their breath for one segment per level longer than non-mariners with the same constitution.
- 5) Due to a mariner's experience in underwater battles, they gain certain advantages over other land-dwellers when in undersea combat. At 3rd level, a mariner gains +2 to his initiative rolls when fighting a surface-dweller underwater. At 7th level a mariner can melee a sea-dweller at par (as if he were another sea-dweller).
- 6) At 3rd level mariners become familiar enough with ship construction that they gain the skill "shipwright." At 10th level this ability improves to the construction and rigging of superior ships and at 17th level a mariner's skill is equal to the greatest master shipwright.
- 7) Also at 3rd and every three levels afterward (6th, 9th, etc) a mariner gains an additional sea-based language, such as triton, koalinth, merman or lizard man. At the DM's option, additional languages can include foreign sea cultures the mariner has experienced. These languages are the result of the great amount of training and linguistic exposure a mariner receives during his/her travels.
- 8) At 10th level mariners gain the skills necessary to becoming a true captain. They are able to rouse their crew so they fight at +10% morale and +1 to hit. Such a speech requires three uninterrupted rounds and the entire crew must gather to listen. A mariner is also aware of the function of each man aboard ship and may substitute for any position if required.

The following restrictions apply to mariners:

- 1) Mariners only keep what treasure they can either keep on their person or aboard their ship. All additional treasure is buried or cached away. Mariner's always try to avoid encumbering themselves when possible.
- 2) It is very rare for mariners to settle down on land; if they do it is usually because they have abandoned their sea-faring career. Mariners do not gain any hirelings or henchmen if they build a castle or stronghold, although they are able to attract sailors if the captain a ship.

MARINER EXPERIENCE TABLE

Experience	Level	d8+1	Level Title	Nav/Pilot	Sea Lore
0 2,250	1	1	Sailor	65%	35%
2,251 4,500	2	2	Ship's mate	70%	40%
4,501 9,000	3	3	Sea dog	75%	45%
9,001 20,000	4	4	Seaman	80%	50%
20,001 40,000	5	5	Seafarer	85%	55%
40,001 75,000	6	6	Sea rover	90%	60%
75,001 150,000	7	7	Sea hawk	95%	64%
150,001 300,000	8	8	Sea master	100%	68%
300,001 575,000	9	9	Mariner	105%	71%
575,001 850,000	10	9+3	Mariner	110%	74%
850,001 1,125,000	11	9+6	Mariner	115%	76%
1,125,001 1,400,000	12	9+9	Mariner	120%	78%
1,400,001 1,675,000	13	9+12	Mariner	125%	79%
1,675,001 1,950,000	14	9+15	Mariner	130%	80%*
+275,000 per additional level after 14th.					

Mariners gain 3 h.p. per level after the 14th.

* -- Indicates maximum progression in this skill