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Dungeons & Dragons Player's Handbook: Core Rulebook I V.3.5



Synopsis

Endless adventure and untold excitement await! Prepare to venture forth with your bold companions into a world of heroic fantasy. Within these pages, you'll discover all the tools and options you need to create characters worthy of song and legend for the Dungeons & Dragons roleplaying game. The revised Player's Handbook is the definitive rulebook for the Dungeons & Dragons game. It contains complete rules for the newest edition and is an essential purchase for anyone who wants to play the game. The revised Player's Handbook received revisions to character classes to make them more balanced, including updates to the bard, druid, monk, paladin, and ranger. Spell lists for characters have been revised and some spell levels adjusted. Skills have been consolidated somewhat and clarified. A larger number of feats have been added to give even more options for character customization in this area. In addition, the new and revised content instructs players on how to take full advantage of the tie-in D&D miniatures line planned to release in the fall of 2003 from Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

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Customer Reviews

My gaming group has switched to edition 3.5 mainly because we started adding new players, and the 3.0 books were no longer available. Also, I'd been rough on my 3.0 books and they were falling apart. It was a matter of convenience. It is not a perfect system. As a matter of fact, it's only marginally "better" than the 3.0 game it's replaced. It is not a new edition - that will be D&D 4.0. But it's changed more than a simple errata sheet could explain, so it's not really 3.0 any more either. It probably did not need to be made. That said, I think some of the reviews here have been rather unfair. There's the "I've been playing D&D since the 70's and this sucks" reviews. Version 3.x is a

different game. Get over it. You can still play D&D the way you like - nobody's stopping you. Dust off your old rulebooks and have yourself a good time. It's awfully childish complaining that the new version of the game isn't the game you fell in love with 25 years ago. Of course it isn't! When you complain that the things you loved about D&D have changed, you don't come off as a seasoned, intelligent role-player, you come off as a whiney old fogey pining for the "good ol' days." There's the "how come they have to make everything balanced?" reviews. D&D has never made sense. No matter what edition you played, if you were a God and set up a world that followed the D&D rules, it would fall into chaos within weeks because things don't make sense. Why complain that wizards and fighters are now pretty close to each other in terms of power? Why does it "make sense" to do it some other way? This is, ultimately, a game, not some sort of simulation. All the players around the table deserve to have equal amounts of fun.

I've heard all the backlash before I got a chance to review this. I heard that this update was not only not needed, but an ill conceived attempt just to boost Wizard's profits for the year. I've heard numerous people describe the evils of the D20 system. I heard it all, and needless to say, I feel that criticism was unfounded. The Player's Handbook 3.5 does a fixes many of the problems of the original book. Wizards of the Coast came up with a much overdue and spectacular idea a few years ago when they opened up their game mechanics with the open gaming license making source books for any type of character (gladiators, necromancers, and even shamans) easy to find, and it all fit together. 3rd edition was the granddaddy that started it, and it gets an overhaul. Most notably, they change 3 of the classes. The Bard finally gets more skill points (6) so that he can more resemble the "Jack of all Trades" than a low rent, underpowered mage/thief that nobody wanted to play. The Ranger, perhaps one of the most loved classes in First and Second Edition D and D was nearly unplayable in 3rd edition (past 1st level anyway.) This problem is fixed, with choices in specialization with the bow or two weapon fighting, more skill points, and increases in power more in line with the other classes. (No more playing for one favored enemy and a few cantrips you can cast at 8 level.) The Monks are no longer cookie cutters of each other, as you have choices to make along the way so that you can do things that not every other monk you'd meet would be able to do. Oh, by the way, now every race that has a special weapon (Dwarven Warhaxe) can fight with it without a feat. What an idea!!

First things first: If you already have Third Edition, you probably don't need this book unless you're the Dungeon Master. The material is by and large similar enough to 3.0 that you can continue using

your PHB and trust your DM to advise you of any important changes. If you don't have 3e, though, or if you're a DM, this is the most usable, accessible, thoroughly playtested version of D&D yet. 3.5 came out of tons of feedback WotC received on 3rd edition, particularly through the RPGA's Living Greyhawk (basically a huge international multi-party campaign for D&D). It seems that there were a lot of play-balance issues that were not obvious during in-house development, but quickly emerged in the face of thousands of min-maxers trying to game the system. Some things were too strong, others too weak, etc., for the game to be as fun as it could have been. 3.5 is an attempt to fix those imbalances, as well as make everything just a little easier for the players and the DM. Examples:

- Skills have been condensed, so your hard-earned skill points go farther
- Rules for concealment and cover have been simplified. No longer does the DM have to try to figure out whether that rogue sniper has three-quarters' cover or only half cover.
- Spells that were being rampantly abused, such as haste, were doctored to fit the original design intent -- no more hasted sorcerers walloping your party with two fireballs per round.

Some things were just altered so they made more *sense*. For example, 3rd edition rangers all had Two-Weapon Fighting, period. But the archetypal rangers, LOTR's Aragorn and Legolas, were known far more for their archery skills than for two-weapon fighting (Legs' tricky knife work in the movie version notwithstanding).

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