

# Assassin

Assassins are known variously as Headsmen (if lawful), Thugs (if neutral) or Pragmati (if chaotic). The assassin is a special subclass of the thief, more specialised in the quick kill but gaining a less broad knowledge than other thieves. While a higher level thief will learn to decipher languages and will eventually be able to cast spells from scrolls, an assassin never learns to do this. And while a thief is somewhat proficient in causing more damage when unobserved using the backstab skill, the assassin also has the option to attempt to assassinate another creature with a single blow.

Headsmen (lawful assassins) typically operate within the laws of the lands in which they live, acting as executioners or, on occasion, bounty hunters. Thugs (neutral assassins) may also take up such work, but are also often found working with Thieves Guilds and criminal or merchant houses, gathering information and only rarely being called upon to kill. Whereas the Pragmati often fulfil the role of hired killers (for those who can find them and who can afford their services).

## Class Details

Assassins progress as if thieves with regard to hit dice, combat and saving throws, can wear only leather armour and cannot use a shield. An assassin can, like a thief, use any missile fire or one handed melee weapon. If striking at a target unaware of their presence, an assassin of level 3 or above can backstab as a thief (although unlike a thief, the damage inflicted by backstab never increases beyond double). Assassins never learn to decipher languages or codes as thieves do, and they do not gain the capacity to cast magic user spells from scrolls.

(a) From first level an assassin can attempt to assassinate an opponent. An assassination requires either surprising a target (at normal chances) or attacking unknown from behind (as a backstab). A bladed weapon must be used. The basic chance for success is 50%, +5% per level of the assassin -5% per level or HD of the victim. A successful assassination sees the target killed, immediately. To attempt an assassination the target must have identifiable anatomy (oozes, slimes etc.

cannot be assassinated), be alive (constructs and undead cannot be assassinated) and the assassin must be able to hit the target (e.g. an assassin cannot assassinate a lycanthrope without a silver or magical weapon).

(b) From third level assassins can, instead of attempting to assassinate a victim, try to backstab, like a thief. Unlike thieves, who gain increased damage in backstabs at higher levels, assassins never caused more than double damage with a successful backstab.

(c, d, e) Regardless of whether the campaign uses General Skills, assassins gain the following skills at the stated level. If the assassin possesses that skill, or chooses to learn the skill upon reaching a level where they can study a new skill, the assassin gains a +2 bonus to that skill.

Lvl	Headsmen	Thug	Pragmati
5(c)	Law and Justice	Signalling (choose type)	Mimicry
8(d)	Lip Reading	Blending	Disguise
11(e)	Detect Deception	Persuasion	Deception

Experience Points	Level	Headsman Title	Thug Title	Pragmati Title
0	1 (a)	Apprentice	Apprentice	Apprentice
1200	2	Axeman	Associate	Poisoner
2400	3 (b)	Verdugo	Made Man	Murderer
4800	4	Bounty Hunter	Enforcer	Slayer
9600	5 (c)	Hangman	Goombah	Cut-throat
20000	6	Decapitator	Caporegime	Killer
40000	7	Deathman	Boss	Hit-Man
80000	8 (d)	Executioner	Consigliere	Manslayer
160000	9	Headsman	Godfather	Pragmatist
280000	10			
400000	11 (e)			
520000	12			
640000	13			
760000	14			
880000	15			
1000000	16			
1120000	17			
1240000	18			
1360000	19			
1480000	20			
1600000	21			
1720000	22			
1840000	23			
1960000	24			
2080000	25			
2200000	26			
2320000	27			
2440000	28			
2560000	29			
2680000	30			
2800000	31			
2920000	32			
3040000	33			
3160000	34			
3280000	35			
3400000	36			

## Higher Experience Levels

### Land Owning Assassins

Name level Assassins may construct bases. A Headsman may construct a Guildhouse in any large town or city, with the consent of the landowner, or may lay claim to an area without a guild. Typically it is wisest to contact any existing Headsmans organisation or guild in the area. A Thug may construct a base referred to as a Casa, for business and operations that may or may not be viewed as legitimate within the campaign setting. It is typically wise to consult other Thug organisations (or ‘families’) in the region to scope out free areas and activities in which operations will not cause conflict. A Pragmatist is unlikely to seek (or be given) consent from other Pragmati to establish a base, which is called a Lair, and may find himself in conflict both with the legal rulers of an area and indeed other Pragmati lairs.

All assassins will attract 2d6 first level apprentices. These will typically be loyal to the assassin (up to a point for Pragmati), and will not automatically be replaced if killed or if they leave, and the character will have to recruit any more, if desired.

As they advance in level, a higher level Headsman may seek to become Guildmaster of a larger guild. Typically this may be at level 18 or above, and may eventually become a powerful official in the wider guild body. Rulers and other powerful NPCs often approach larger branches of the Guild with work suited to the Headsmen, and it is always up to the local Guild Master to decide to take these jobs or pass them on.

A higher level Thug may expand his Family and seek to exert control over other Families, through competition, direct conflict or by buying their interests. Thugs typically gain respect of local businesses and rulers, and Godfathers will often be

approached with opportunities from such people, and from other Godfathers running their own Casas.

Pragmatists rarely gain the gratitude of rulers or citizens but may gain their respect. There is no wider Pragmatist organisation, and to gain a larger and more influential lair a Pragmatist must either seize it from a rival or take territory therefrom and expand. While Pragmatists are feared by most, powerful chaotic NPCs and creatures may frequently require their services, and will (usually cautiously) approach members of the Lair with tasks.

### Travelling Assassins

A travelling Headsman is known as a Reaper, a travelling Thug is referred to as a Bravo, and a travelling Pragmatist is called a Terminator. Travelling assassins do not need to visit a guild branch once a year, but are otherwise subject to the same conditions and advantages as travelling thieves.

## Thief

Thieves are unchanged from the *Rules Cyclopedia* with the only change being to weapon mastery (thieves get four slots at first level) and backstab. When backstabbing, increase the damage multiplier caused as shown in the table.

Thief Level	Backstab Damage
1	x2
9	x3
18	x4
27	x5
36	x6