

So you want to create some class combo

Pathfinder guide to finding good class combinations for multiclassing and gestalt.

You want to multiclass your paladin and don't know which martial classes use CHA? Feel lazy to look through all the classes and archetypes to find what you need? You create gestalt character to fill the role and don't want to be too MAD?

Now you have the answer! All information you've needed, ideas and more in one place. Rejoice!

Mental attributes

How to read this table:

Usefulness: this is how much given class is dependant of given attribute.

- **The One Stat** means given stat is so powerful, so defining for the class, that it is pretty much the one and only stat you'll be rising after character generation. And on generation you want AT LEAST 16 in it. For example. Int for Wizard.
- **Very useful** means that class have some major scaling from given attribute, but for some reason this attribute is not a one and only attribute which the class needs - either because of combat focus of the class, or too small benefits for raising after some threshold.
- **Pretty useful** means that class have some abilities scaling from given attribute, but there's not too much and often this attribute may be even dumped.
- **May find some use** means that class have no abilities dependant on given attribute, but it may be complementing some of class roles, or increasing versatility (and, in case of Wisdom, help in covering weak save).

Class entry template: Archetype Class [3rd party] (subtype/role).

- **Archetype:** some classes have archetypes which change class scalings to another stat. For example. Mysterious Stranger Gunslinger changes scaling from Wisdom to Charisma.
- **Class:** obvious.
- **3rd party:** I've included classes from well-known Dream Scarred Press books. These are marked with [3pp] note. Martial initiators (from Path of War and expansions) are marked as [3pp mart], and psionic classes (from Psionics Unleashed and other books) are marked as [3pp psi].
- **Subtype/role:** many specializations or build types need some attributes more than other. They are listed in (brackets). For example, Bard focused on buffs and debuffs really need to max Charisma to raise DCs and gain more spells per day, but usual bard may invest more to other attributes.

Usefulness	Intelligence	Wisdom	Charisma
The One Stat	- Alchemist - Arcanist - Occultist - Psychic - Witch - Wizard - Cryptic [3pp psi] - Psion [3pp psi] - Tactician [3pp psi]	- Cleric - Druid - Inquisitor (with Guided Weapon) - Shaman - Spiritualist - Vitalist [3pp psi]	- Bard (caster) - Mesmerist - Oracle (caster) - Sorcerer - Fractured Mind Spiritualist - Summoner - Dread [3pp psi] - Wilder [3pp psi]
Very useful	- Investigator - Magus - Warlock Vigilante - Aegis [3pp psi] - Warder [3pp mart] - Harbinger [3pp mart]	- Hunter - Inquisitor - Monk - Zealot Vigilante - Warpriest - Psychic Warrior [3pp psi] - Stalker [3pp mart] - Marksman [3pp psi] - Mystic [3pp mart]	- Antipaladin - Bard (hybrid) - Bloodrager - Eldritch Scion - Magus - Medium - Scaled Fist Monk - Oracle (fighter) - Paladin - Skald - Swashbuckler - Warlord [3pp mart] - Zealot [3pp mart]
Pretty useful	- Cavalier - Fighter (some feats) - Rogue (skillmonkey) - Vigilante (some archetypes)	- Gunslinger - Psychic - Ranger - Psion [3pp] (13 is mandatory)	- Arcanist - Cavalier - Cleric - Mysterious Stranger - Gunslinger - Ninja - Psychic - Spiritualist - Tactician [3pp psi]
May find some use	- Bard - Rogue - Literally everyone	Every martial char	- Rogue (face) - Vigilante (face) - Samurai

SPECIAL ENTRIES:

- **Kineticist**. The most useful stat for Kineticist is Constitution, so you can grab her with pretty much every other class. On the other hand, the usefulness of such a combo is questionable.

- Pre-nerf **Witch Scarred Doctor** witch archetype. Constitution as a main casting stat. You couldn't even dream about it. Bunch of other pretty stuff is just icing on the cake. Sadly, this archetype got killed by Paizo. Rest in parts.

STR or DEX?

Notice: this table will cover only martial classes.

How to use this table:

Matches:

- **Best match**: class is great with you build it around given attribute. Never a miss.
- **Good match**: class may be built around given attribute.
- **OK match**: class may be built around given attribute, but it not exactly martial and thus likely will need other attributes more.
- **Bad matches** and other won't be covered in this guide. You may build dex-barbarian, but for what? If you know answer to this question, just go along and do what you've planned. Experiments, ho!

Attributes:

- **Strength**: class is good with strength builds. Power attack and stuff.
- **Dexterity**: class is good with dexterity builds. Weapon Finesse, Dervish Dance, Deadly Agility, Two Weapon Fighting...
- **Both**: class may be built for both characteristics almost equally well.
- **Constitution**: except for special entries, won't be covered in this guide. EVERYONE needs Constitution. Wizards, fighters, clerics, rogues. Take it, love it, live with it. That's all.

Class entry template: archetype class [third party] (usual attribute importance).

Match	Strength	Dexterity	Both
Best match	- Barbarian		- Fighter
Good match	- Monk (str monk)		
OK match			- Bard

SPECIAL ENTRIES:

- **Barbarian**. Barbarian loves Constitution! WAAAAAAAAA!
- **Syntesist Summoner**. Physical Attributes? Who needs them? Not me.

What the hell is gestalt?

Gestalt is a popular optional rule, ported from D&D 3rd edition. Let me quote.

In this high-powered campaign variant, characters essentially take two classes at every level, choosing the best aspects of each. The process is similar to multiclassing, except that

characters gain the full benefits of each class at each level. if the two classes you choose have aspects that overlap (such as Hit Dice, attack progression, saves, and class features common to more than one class), you choose the better aspect. The gestalt character retains all aspects that don't overlap.

The gestalt character variant is particularly effective if you have three or fewer players in your group, or if your players enjoy multiclassing and want characters with truly prodigious powers.

In my experience, gestalt characters mostly used when you don't have enough players to run campaign you planned, and you don't want to rework encounters and/or tackle with mythic options with risk of ruining balance of campaign whatsoever.

Ok, tell me more

This is how to create basic gestalt character.

Classes: You choose 2 classes for your character. They progress simultaneously. Later, you can choose to multiclass one of these classes or take a prestige class. You can have only one of two start classes multiclassed and progress only in one of prestige classes at the time. All prestige classes that are essentially class combinations (as Eldritch Knight) are prohibited. Class features from both of your classes counts for prestige class prerequisites.

Hit Dice: You choose larger one from 2 classes. For example, fighter-wizard 3 will get d10 hp per level. But if he then multiclass his fighter to oracle, becoming fighter3/oracle1-wizard4, he will get d8 hp at levelup.

Base Attack Bonus: You get the better BAB progression from your 2 classes. For example, Fighter-Wizard will get full BAB (and +1 at first level).

Skill points per level: Same as above, you get the better one. For example, Bard-Wizard will get 6+Int per level.

Class Skills: You combine class skills from both of your classes

Base Saving Throws Bonuses: You combine good saving throw bonuses from both of your classes. For example, fighter-wizard will get good Fort and Will saves.

Favorite Class: You choose only one favorite class, except if you have Multitalented trait. But even in this case you can only get one favorite class bonus at every level and no more than one.

Class Features: You get both of your classes class features.

- Remember about restrictions, however: if you take druid-fighter, for example, you can't wear metal armor and weapons without consequences.

- If you get stacking class features from both classes (for example, uncanny dodge), they do not stack.
- If you have two casting classes, keep track of them separately, and you can't use class features which modifies your spells from one class with spells of the other. For example, sorcerer-wizard cannot spontaneously use metamagic on wizards spells, not cannot cleric-wizard spontaneously convert wizard spells to "cure wounds" spells.

Everything else remains the same. You don't get additional feats (except for bonus feats from classes such as fighter), traits or ability increases.

Balancing this mess

There's some good publications about balancing gestalt characters from D&D 3, so I won't delve into the subject too deep. Just main things.

First and foremost, gestalts actually are not x2 as strong. They don't have twice as much hit points (even if you maxing PC's HP), they don't have twice as much feats and skills, and - which is most important - they **don't have twice as much actions**. Character may be able shoot things and cast spells, but he won't be able to do both things at the same time. What they have is much more versatility and abilities, more protection, more raw damage power and - which is important again - much more sustaining power. Both as GM and player you should always take these strengths and weaknesses into consideration.

Let's talk, for example, about save-or-suck spells. Dominate person is very nasty when your Big Guy failed his save and become controlled by enemy. If you play with gestalt characters, this scenario is much less likely, because most of martial classes will try to eliminate their weaknesses, and weak Will save is usually one of the top priorities. So in games with 4 gestalt characters, the enemy very dependant on save-or-suck abilities gonna be much weaker (almost 1 or even 2 CR weaker).

But here's the catch: if you play with less than 4 gestalt characters, which is usually the case, such effects actually become NASTIER, even though chances of them working will be much lower. Because you not just lost $\frac{1}{3}$ or even $\frac{1}{2}$ of your team's power, your optimized unstoppable Big Guy, often with spells and abilities ready to fire, just turned against you. Even worse if he's initiator from PoW. And you GONNA be screwed. So in smaller parties I don't recommend putting too much save-or-suck enemies, and if you do, do not decrease their CR.

After you considered such strengths and weaknesses, it's time to actually balance encounters. So there's three ways to do it.

First way. Usually party of 4 gestalt characters is 1 party level stronger than usual, and 1,5-2 levels stronger against save-or-suck enemies. Also, such a party usually able to take one or even two more encounters per day (up to 5-6) after about level 2 because chances your healer is out of heal and wizard is out of spells are much lower. This means such a party can

easily take four CR+1 and CR+2 encounters and decide to keep going. So design your encounters around it.

This way PC will get more XP and level up quicker. If you don't like this, consider other options.

Second way. This is almost like previous one, in fact. Decrease CR of all monsters by one step. CR 2 monsters will become CR 1. CR $\frac{1}{2}$ will become CR $\frac{1}{3}$, or even CR $\frac{1}{4}$. Give XP respectively.

Third way. If you have less than 4 characters, count each one as 1.5. Balance encounters and give XP as for result number.

This way is great for Adventure Paths. If you play with experienced players, I recommend even count one player as two with automatic maximum on HDs. Adventure Paths are mostly easy, so action economy shouldn't be a problem for levels after first and until levels 17-18.

After that, tweak game as you feel it. At first and last levels you may feel need to decrease CR of encounters a bit, especially boss ones. In midgame you may want to increase CR. Do whatever you find good and interesting for players, and go with it. There's no set in stone rules.

Also, giving gestalt to your bosses and NPCs may be a really good idea, especially with 4 players and more.

Lastly, don't be afraid to ban broken combinations. You play for fun after all, not to break the system and "win". And for the name of gods, don't forget to explicitly ban Synthesist Summoner!

Conclusion

Gestalt is a great way to play full-fledged campaign without full party. It is a great way to create powerful and cool characters without multiclassing and mythic. Just use it well, and it will serve you well.