The Wizard

Often considered the most powerful class, the wizard is the ubiquitous spellcasting class in Dungeons & Dragons. Wizards are among the most famous of individuals — a number of spells bear the names of wizards from the eariest days of the game. Wizards have a versatile and powerful spell list, easily enabling them to serve roles, such as blaster and controller, and also packing a lot of defensive and utility spells.

The wizard is the best class because it has the strongest and most versatile spells in the game. A wizard can confound targets with potent illusions, defend its allies with barriers and walls, destroy it foes with fire, ice, lightning, and poison, charm and control others, summon and control creatures from other planes, animate the dead or snuff the life of a creature, wield powerful transmutation spells, and use spells to divine mysteries. All of these options are enabled simply through the wizard spell list.

The wizard class receives new features and subclasses in this section. You gain class features in the *Player's Handbook* when you reach certain levels in your class. This section offers additional features you can gain as a wizard. Unlike features in the *Player's Handbook*, you don't gain the features here automatically. Consult with your DM on whether you gain a feature in this section if you meet the requirements. These features can be selected separately from one another; you can use some, all, or none of them.

If you take a feature that replaces another feature, you gain no benefit from the replaced feature and don't qualify for anything in the game that requires it.

Preparations: Selective Targets

3rd-level wizard feature

When you prepare a wizard spell that targets only one type of creature, such as humanoids, you can modify it to target a different creature type. Both creature types must be: beast, humanoid, giant, monstrosity, ooze, plant, or undead. This feature doesn't apply to conditional effects against a creature type, such as with the *blight* spell.

You can only prepare a number of modified spells equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of one) through the Preparations feature. Preparations you gain at higher level draw from this same pool. You can prepare the same spell more than once, with each preparation having the spell's base effect or a modified

effect. You can only apply one Preparations feature to a spell at a time. A modified version of a spell is never in your spellbook; you can't cast them as rituals.

Preparations: Substitute Reagents

7th-level wizard feature

When you prepare your spells, you can substitute the material components of a wizard spell with a different material component worth the same value. The substituted components are consumed if the spell consumes any of its material components.

Preparations: Square the Circle

13th-level wizard feature

When you prepare a wizard spell that affects targets in a cone, line, or sphere, you can change the shape of that area of effect. A cylinder or cube can't be changed by this feature. The spell's range becomes self for a cone or line, or 150 feet for a sphere.

A line converts into a cone with a length equal to half the line's length, rounded up to the nearest 5 feet. A line converts into a sphere with a radius equal to one fifth the line's length, rounded up to the nearest 5 feet.

A cone converts into a line with a length twice the cone's length and a width of 5 feet. A cone converts into a sphere with a radius equal to half the cone's length, rounded up to the nearest 5 feet.

A sphere converts into line with a length equal to five times the sphere's radius and a width of 5 feet. A sphere converts into a cone with a length equal to twice the sphere's radius.

Arcane Traditions

The following options are available to you when you choose your Arcane Tradition: Arcane Hierophant and Rune Magic.

Arcane Hierophant

Arcane hierophants are devotees of nature and traffic in the same circles as druids. These wizards study natural lore and magic. They often prefer elemental and nature spells to other spells, but will leverage the tools they possess to protect the wilds.

Druidic Magic
2nd-level Arcane Hierophant feature

You may add two 1st-level druid spells to your spellbook, as well as two cantrips from the druid spell list, one of which must be *druidcraft* if you don't already know it. In addition, you can add druid spells to your spellbook the same way you learn new wizard spells. Whenever you learn a new wizard spell from gaining a wizard level, you can also choose from the spells on the druid list. Spells from the druid list in your spellbook, as well as the cantrips added by this feature, count as wizard spells for you.

In addition, you can prepare a number of additional of spells equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum of 0). The additional spells must be spells in your spellbook and on the druid list.

Only spells from the wizard spell list can be used with the Spell Mastery feature.

Natural Lore
2nd-level Arcane Hierophant feature

You gain proficiency in Nature and learn Druidic, the secret language of druids (described under "Druid" in chapter 3 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Savant of Nature
6th-level Arcane Hierophant feature

You have expanded your knowledge and familiarity with the natural world. Choose one of the following skills provided you are already proficient: Animal Handling, Nature, or Survival. Your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make with the chosen proficiency.

Companion Familiar
10th-level Arcane Hierophant feature

You add the *find familiar* spell to your spellbook and never need material components to cast it. When you cast the spell, you can choose any beast with a CR no higher than 1/4 as the familiar's form. Any familiar you gain has a number of temporary hit points equal to your level in this class; whenever you finish a long rest, your familiar regains these temporary hit points.

After you cast either a wizard cantrip or use your action to make a spell attack using a wizard spell, you can take a bonus action to allow your familiar to take the Attack action on its turn.

Will of Nature
14th-level Arcane Hierophant feature

When you cast a wizard spell from the druid list using a spell slot no higher than 5th level, you can infuse it with your magical power to treat that spell as if you cast it using a spell slot one level higher. The spell must have a casting time of an action and can't require a material component with a gold cost. You can do this twice and regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Rune Magic

Wizards of this tradition have studied the rune carving and inscription methods of the giants, learning to adapt the magics of the runes to their purposes. Rune mages are adept at using these runes to enhance themselves and others.

Bonus Language

2nd-level Rune Magic feature

You learn to speak, read, and write Giant.

Rune Scribe

2nd-level Rune Magic feature

You can place a magical rune upon a willing creature to enhance it. You know two runes of your choice from among the runes described below. Each time you gain a level in this class, you can replace one rune you know with a different rune from this feature. When you reach certain levels in this class, you know one additional rune: at 6th level (3 runes), 10th level (4 runes), and 14th level (5 runes).

Whenever you finish a long rest, you can trace a rune on a wiling creature you touch. You can place a number of runes equal to number of runes you know. Your rune remains on the creature until you finish a long rest, and a creature can bear only one of your runes at a time.

The following runes are available to you when you learn a rune. If a rune has a level requirement, you must be at least that level in this class to learn the rune.

Guile. The bearer of the rune gains a +4 bonus to AC against opportunity attacks and can't have its mind read against its will. It has advantage on ability checks and saving throws to be deceitful.

In addition, when you cast an illusion or enchantment spell or manifest a telepathy power, you can use your reaction to invoke the rune. You cast the spell without somatic or verbal components. If the spell or power requires concentration, you can choose to have its effects linger for 2 rounds after you stop concentrating on it. Once you invoke this rune, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

Potency. The bearer of the rune increases the save DC for its spells, powers, traits, or class features by 1.

In addition, when you cast a spell using a 1st-level or higher slot or manifest a power with at least 1 power point that requires 1 action to cast or manifest, you can invoke the rune to cast the spell or manifest the power as a bonus action. Once you invoke this rune, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

Vigor. The bearer of the rune increases one ability score of your choice by 2, to a maximum of 19.

In addition, you can invoke the rune to remove one condition from its bearer as a bonus action. The condition you remove must be: blinded, charmed, deafened, paralyzed, poisoned, stunned, or unsettled. Once you invoke this rune, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

Vitality. Whenever the bearer of the rune has at least 1 hit point, but no more than half its maximum hit point total, it regains 1 hit point at the start of each of its turns until it has at least half its maximum hit points. If the bearer is reduced to 0 hit points, it doesn't regain hit points from the rune.

In additional, you can invoke the rune as a bonus action. to restore vitality: each creature you chose within 15 feet of the rune's bearer regains 2d8 + your Intelligence modifier hit points. Once you invoke this rune, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

Celerity (10th Level or Higher). The bearer of this rune increases its movement speed by 10 and whenever it succeeds on a Dexterity saving throw to take half damage, it takes no damage instead.

In addition, you can invoke this rune as a bonus action to empower its bearer. During the bearer's next turn it can take a second action which can be used to take the Attack (one weapon attack only), Dash, Disengage, Hide, or Use an Object action. Once you invoke this rune, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

Clarity (10th Level or Higher). The bearer of the rune has advantage on saving throws and ability checks against illusions, charms, and other mind-affecting effects.

In addition, you can invoke the rune to grant the target truesight for 1 minute as a bonus action. Once you invoke this rune, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

Rune Barrier

6th-level Rune Magic feature

You learn to invoke your rune magic to protect yourself. When you are the target of an attack or caught within the area of an effect which requires a Dexterity saving throw, you can use your reaction to erect a barrier of force. If the effect requires a Dexterity saving throw, you automatically succeed on the save. The barrier has a hit point count equal to three times your level in this class and takes damage instead of you. If the barrier is reduced to 0 hit points, it shatters and you take any remaining damage.

The barrier's hit points persist between uses, and it can't be invoked if it has 0 hit points. Each time you finish a short rest, the barrier regains 5 hit points. When you finish a long rest, the barrier regains all of its hit points.

Cipher

10th-level Rune Magic feature

Your study of runes and related magic has given you familiarity in working with deciphering scripts. It takes you only half as long to decode a cipher, learn a new language, or translate ancient text. Whenever you make an ability check to decipher or decode a text or uncover the meaning behind a symbol, you always add your proficiency bonus to the check.
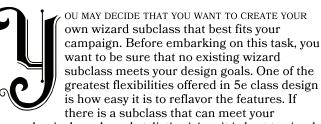
In addition, you can bear up to two runes at once.

Master of Runes

14th-level Rune Magic feature

You can invoke each rune you know from your Rune Scribe feature twice, rather than once, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a short or long rest.

Making Your Own Wizard Subclass

YOU MAY DECIDE THAT YOU WANT TO CREATE YOUR own wizard subclass that best fits your campaign. Before embarking on this task, you want to be sure that no existing wizard subclass meets your design goals. One of the greatest flexibilities offered in 5e class design is how easy it is to reflavor the features. If there is a subclass that can meet your mechanical needs and stylistic vision, it is best to simply use that and save a lot of time in designing, writing, and playtesting.

If, however, you find that no existing subclass achieves the fantasy or has the mechanics to match your vision, this section will guide you toward making a wizard subclass that fits the 5e D&D model. The guidelines will help you create the features for your subclass and detail how you should balance the class to fit within the official options and those offered by Therin Creative and similar content creators.

Please note that despite the guidance offered herein, your subclass may need further tuning. Be certain to spend the time to playtest your subclass.

Class Chassis

The wizard class is the classic spellcaster, storing the repository of its knowledge of spells within a spellbook. It is a full spellcaster, gaining up to 9th-level spells, and the wizard has the largest spell list in the game, giving it a wide range of spell options. Intelligence is the primary ability used by the class. The wizard's specialty is spellcasting, often able to cast more spells more often than its peers, through features such as Arcane Recover, Spell Master, and Signature spell, as well as its enhanced ritual casting.

Hit Dice

The wizard has only a d6 Hit Dice. Natively, it is the frailest class in the game, as a wizard will often be conflicted on raising Constitution, when it desires Dexterity for initiative to end a combat before it begins or Wisdom to pursue the learned and wise fantasy favored by many archetypal mages. Often, a wizard will have one or more spells to compensate for this shortcoming.

Proficiencies

The wizard has limited weapon options and no training with armor. This isn't much of a hindrance as the class has good cantrip options for damage or obstruction. While the wizard has high Intelligence, it only has two proficiencies, of which most are knowledge skills.

Ability Score Improvement

The wizard uses standard progression for the Ability Score Improvement (ASI) feature (4th, 8th, 12th, 16th, and 19th level). Sorcerers shouldn't gain additional ASI features as that is the domain of the fighter and rogue classes and not something a subclass generally grants.

Spellcasting

The wizard is a powerful spellcaster, and its spellcasting feature is regarded as the strongest when one factors its ease at adding new spells to its spellbook, the depth of the wizard list, and its superior ritual casting ability. Over time, the wizard could add every wizard spell to its list of spells it can prepare, dwarfing its peers. This allows the wizard to have great diversity in its spell options and to switch those options out every day. A wizard can have a spell it can prepare for just about every situation.

Overall, the wizard class provides a character with plenty of power just from its Spellcasting and related features such that its Arcane Traditions are free to focus on other aspects.

Ribbon Features

A wizard's subclass is where it has its ribbon features. These should define the overall theme for the tradition. Keep in mind that the Spellcasting feature, especially for the wizard, doubles as a ribbon feature with numerous utility spells.

Arcane Tradition Features

Arcane Traditions grant features at 2nd, 6th, 10th, and 14th level. This provides a smooth, almost standardized, progression of features.

Power of a Full Spellcaster

The wizard class has access to the most powerful spells. Arcane Traditions should generally not add power, or add power through slightly empowering the Spellcasting feature, such as the Empowered Evocation feature. You should aim subclass power between the wizard baseline and the School of Evocation, since that Arcane Tradition is the offensive-oriented wizard subclass. The wizard spell list is strong enough that the wizard subclass doesn't need to increase the class's damage potential.

Building an Arcane Tradition

Once you understand the class chassis, you're one step closer to building a subclass. You'll also want to review existing subclasses to get a feel for their design and balance. This section will aid you in understanding what your subclass features should accomplish.

Before starting on the formal work to build your subclass, devise its theme and role. What is your subclass's purpose? What roles does it fill in an adventuring party? How are its mechanics interesting and unique? Why would a player choose your subclass?

Let's start by looking at some existing wizard subclasses.

School of Abjuration. The defensive wizard, this tradition allows the wizard to create a ward as a function of casting its favored spells. Players choose this arcane tradition because they want to enhance the defenses of their character and its allies and be the best at countering enemy magic.

School of Evocation. For many players, this has become the iconic wizard, focused as a blaster with the strongest damage potential. In spite of leaning toward magic artillery, it is still a wizard with all the supplemental spells at its disposal. Players choose this arcane tradition because they desire to decimate their

foes with powerful damaging spells while leveraging the versatility of the wizard spell list.

War Magic. A more tactical wizard, these mages have some added defensive and offensive ability. They exhibit a more mid rank experience, wanting to be closer to the action, but not fully at risk of harm. Players choose this arcane tradition to have a well-rounded battle mage that is encouraged to dispel and counter enemy spells. This subclass often requires more deliberate consideration on its combat choices.

Bladesinging. Pairing pageantry with potency, bladesingers add some martial skill on top of its spellcasting. The make effective skirmishers and can more readily survive attacks than other wizards. Players choose this arcane tradition to be able at melee combat and to pursue a more spell-leaning gish concept or to enhance the wizard's defenses while being stylish.

Arcane Hierophant. This tradition expands their spell list to become the master of versatility. It also serves as a niche for nature-themed wizards or mage-themed druids. Players choose this arcane tradition because they want choose from the broadest spell list, tapping a great range of control spells and to fill less traditional wizard roles for their party.

Each wizard subclass leans a certain direction and incorporates some new tricks, but at its core, each is a wizard, mastering the strongest spells with the greatest versatility.

Building the Subclass

This guide covers building an arcane tradition consistent with official published material. An Arcane Tradition focuses the wizard class a certain way. Each is always a wizard with the full might of the wizard spell selection behind it.

Subclass features are granted at 2nd, 6th, 10th, and 14th level. Each Arcane Tradition feature level should generally only grant one subclass feature, except 2nd level, which should grant two features. Consult the Wizard Subclass Features table for when you should grant features.

There are exceptions for the rule of only granting a single subclass feature:

- Ribbon features are frequently weak on their own, so in certain cases you may grant a second, minor feature, which could be another ribbon feature.
- The feature has some complex interactions that are much clearer when separated. Often this is indication that something should be cut, but in rare cases, it makes sense to split a feature for comprehension.
- You are expanding an existing feature in a minor way. Sometimes it's better to include the enhancement in the core feature, and at other times it could be a note in another feature.

Wizard Subclass Features

Wizard Level	Feature
2nd	Signature Feature, Ribbon Feature
6th	Wizard Pool Feature
10th	Wizard Pool Feature
14th	Wizard Pool Feature

Signature Feature
2nd-level [Your Wizard Subclass] feature

With the Signature feature, you want grant the subclass something that defines what is unique about it. Often, you will include a new mechanic to the wizard that can be as complicated as Bladesong or simple as portent. Increasing the wizard's versatility, as the School of Cerebromancy (psionic power) and Arcane Hierophant (druid spells) traditions do, is also a Signature feature.

In general, the wizard Signature feature doesn't increase the wizard's damage budget directly, but it could create situations when a wizard is stronger in the immediate term, such as with a well-placed Portent die swap.

Ribbon Feature
2nd-level [Your Wizard Subclass] feature

A ribbon feature is very minor, often impacting a specific area of the game outside the three pillars: combat, exploration, or social. The Arcane Traditions in the *Player's Handbook* all include a ribbon feature that impacts learning new wizard spell, for example. With the feature, you just want to tweak the wizard's experience in a way that aligns with the specialty of the subclass, but that doesn't encompass what a stronger feature does.

If the Signature feature is narrow in its application or really only increases the options the wizard can do with its actions and class resources, it is appropriate to replace this feature with a Core Enhancement or Utility feature, such as granting a new proficiency.

It will be tempting to replace ribbon features with a stronger feature because that other feature feels more impactful on how the subclass plays. However, with the wizard class, the Signature feature should provide that impact. In the case the Signature alone can't be that impactful in play, then look at a Utility feature, and if that still doesn't lead to compelling and balanced play, use an Expansion feature. This Expansion feature should interact with the Signature feature so that they are complementary or augment the concept of the subclass to fulfill its fantasy in the way Tactical Wit does for the War Magic tradition.

Wizard Pool Feature
6th/10th/14th-level [Your Wizard Subclass] feature

The wizard class design is more flexible than many other classes, given that its focus tends to be on enhancing the core wizard or offering horizontal options as opposed to increasing the class's power. This can make it trickier to create a balanced and enjoyable Arcane Tradition, because you need to pick appropriate feature types to make the subclass meaningful and unique while avoiding overloading it with features that make it too powerful or versatile.

For a streamlined wizard, you should look to adding one Expansion or Core Enhancement feature (of which can be a Combat Enhancement), one Defensive or Utility feature, and one feature the enhances the Signature feature. You aren't required to follow this guideline, but it will give your subclass a good balance of features without inadvertently doubling up on certain aspects and inflating the subclass's power.

If you look at the wizard subclasses from the *Player's Handbook*, you'll see that each one has a diverse selection of effects through its features that all mesh with the theme of the subclass. It may feel that enhancing the Signature feature constrains the breadth of the features, but provided the Signature feature has broader application, such as with the School of Divination, enhancing it adds scale that provides that applicable breadth.

Wizard Pool Feature options include the following feature types:

Defensive. With this feature, you expand or enhance the defensive ability for the class. Examples include Instinctive Charm and Illusory Self.

Enhancement. This feature improves upon part of the class or subclass kit or its resources. It can be as simple as a boost in uses or damage or even add a new layer or decision to another feature. For the wizard, this is typically a Core (often affecting spellcasting) or Signature Enhancement feature. Examples include Greater Portent (Signature) and Shapechanger (Core).

Expansion. The point of an expansion feature is to add something new to the class. Examples include adapting a class feature from a different class, such as the Extra Attack feature. Examples include Command Undead and Empowered Evocation.

Utility. The feature grants new options that augment movement or skills. In some cases it can grant the casting of a spell to bolster noncombat pillars of play. Examples include Benign Transposition (Traversal) and The Third Eye (General).

UPDATE NOTES

1.0 PLAYTEST VERSION (MAY, 2024)

- Arcane Heirophant
  - Limitation on Spell Mastery removed since it's only 2 per long rest. We only want to prevent infinite healing.
  - Bonus spell preparations tied to Wisdom again (we experimented with PB to avoid "minimum of x" language, but decided to stick with ability modifier because it's better design for a class.
  - Companion Familiar feature now requires a spell attack and a bonus action to make the familiar attack.
  - Will of Nature now requires spells to have an action casting time and no valued material component to prevent interaction with ritual spells and certain spells that can get too much benefit from upcasting.
- Rune Magic
  - Cipher replaced with Bonus Language to trim the scope of entry features to better match wizard balance and design.
  - Rune Scribe number of runes known is now level dependent. I've test PB uses on a range of features, and find they aren't a good fit for tier 1 class features, and often ill suited into tier 2.
    - Guile Rune AC bonus reduced to +4. Its mechanics for being deceitful were simplified to just grant advantage.
  - Rune Barrier rewritten to be clearer and now regains some hp on a short rest. This is a powerful feature when paired with the Celerity Rune (intentional that they are superb against Dex save effects).
  - Runic Magic replaced by a new Cipher feature. I wanted to trim the subclass's damage down and keep some interesting flavor. You can also place a second rune on you.