

champion guide pathfinder 2e

Champion Guide Pathfinder 2e: Mastering the Paladin of the Second Edition

champion guide pathfinder 2e is a journey into one of the most iconic and venerated classes in the Pathfinder universe. Whether you're a seasoned player or a newcomer looking to build a character that embodies unwavering devotion, righteous fury, and stalwart defense, this guide will walk you through the essentials of crafting and playing a champion in the thrilling world of Pathfinder 2nd Edition. From understanding the role and core mechanics to diving into build strategies and roleplaying tips, let's explore how to make the most of the champion class.

Understanding the Champion Class in Pathfinder 2e

At its heart, the champion is Pathfinder 2e's take on the classic paladin archetype—an unyielding protector who stands firm against evil and champions justice. However, unlike some traditional interpretations, the champion in Pathfinder 2e offers a flexible framework that lets you tailor your character's sense of morality and code of conduct through the choice of cause and alignment restrictions.

The Champion's Core Role

Champions typically serve as frontline defenders who combine martial prowess with divine magic. Their role in a party is often to protect allies, control the battlefield, and deliver powerful smites against foes that threaten the group or violate their sacred tenets. The class excels at soaking damage and imposing conditions on enemies through their divine blessings and auras.

Alignment and Cause: Defining Your Champion's Path

One of the unique aspects of the champion in Pathfinder 2e is the concept of "cause," which determines the champion's alignment restrictions and thematic flavor. Causes such as Paladin, Liberator, Redeemer, and Desecrator each provide different benefits and roleplaying opportunities. For example:

- **Paladin Cause:** Lawful good, focusing on justice and righteousness.
- **Liberator Cause:** Chaotic good, championing freedom and individuality.
- **Redeemer Cause:** Neutral good, emphasizing redemption and mercy.
- **Desecrator Cause:** Chaotic evil, embracing destruction and domination.

Choosing a cause not only influences your character's moral compass but also grants specific abilities and determines how your champion interacts with the world.

Champion Abilities and Key Mechanics

To optimize your champion, it's important to understand the class features, ability score priorities, and how to effectively use your feats and divine powers.

Key Ability Scores

The champion relies primarily on Strength or Dexterity for weapon attacks, depending on your combat style choice, along with Charisma, which fuels your divine abilities and boosts your armor class (AC). Prioritizing these stats will ensure your champion is both a formidable combatant and a resilient protector.

Divine Ally and Champion's Reaction

A signature feature of the champion is the Divine Ally, which allows you to bless a weapon, shield, or mount with divine power, enhancing your combat abilities. Choosing the right Divine Ally based on your playstyle can dramatically affect your effectiveness in battle.

Additionally, the Champion's Reaction, often a Retributive Strike or Shield Ally, provides defensive and offensive benefits that trigger in response to enemy actions, reinforcing your role as a tactical defender.

Smite and Lay on Hands

Smite is a powerful offensive ability that lets you channel divine energy to deal extra damage against foes, especially those of evil alignment or those opposing your cause. Coupled with Lay on Hands, a healing ability that allows you to restore hit points, champions strike a balance between offense and support.

Building Your Champion: Tips and Strategies

Creating a champion that fits your playstyle and party needs involves thoughtful choices in ancestry, background, feats, and equipment.

Choosing Ancestry and Background

Ancestry can complement your champion's role. For example, human champions benefit from versatile feats and extra skill proficiencies, while dwarves provide durability with their natural toughness. Your background should support your champion's narrative and mechanical strengths, perhaps emphasizing

a militant upbringing or a religious vocation.

Feats and Combat Style

Combat feats can enhance your defensive capabilities or bolster your offensive presence. If you prefer a shield-focused champion, feats that improve shield use and protection are invaluable. Alternatively, if you lean toward a two-handed weapon style, feats that increase damage output and critical hit potential become more attractive.

Equipment Considerations

Champions thrive in heavy armor, so investing in the best armor you can afford is a priority. Shields are almost always beneficial for champions, especially those who want to protect allies and maintain high AC. Weapons should align with your chosen Divine Ally and combat style, whether that means a longsword for a classic paladin feel or a spear for reach and versatility.

Roleplaying Your Champion

Beyond mechanics, the champion offers rich storytelling possibilities. Their strict or flexible adherence to their cause can create compelling moral dilemmas and character development arcs.

Living by Your Code

Your champion's cause isn't just a set of rules; it's a guiding philosophy that shapes interactions with NPCs, allies, and enemies. Embracing this in roleplay enriches the game experience and challenges both you and your party to think about justice, mercy, and conviction.

Interacting with Party Members

Champions often act as the moral compass or shield of the party. Whether offering encouragement, standing against wrongdoing, or negotiating peace, your champion's presence can influence the group's dynamics and decisions.

Advanced Tips for Experienced Champions

For those who have mastered the basics, there are nuanced tactics and builds to explore.

Multiclassing Opportunities

Combining champion levels with classes like fighter or cleric can enhance your versatility. For example, dipping into cleric grants access to a wider range of divine spells, while fighter levels improve combat feats and weapon proficiencies.

Maximizing Champion Feats

Selecting feats that synergize with your cause and combat style can create powerful combos. For instance, pairing Shield Block with Retributive Strike maximizes your ability to protect and punish foes simultaneously.

Optimizing Spell Use

While champions have limited spellcasting, choosing spells that bolster defense or utility—like Bless or

Shield of Faith—can turn the tide of battle. Learning to time these spells effectively is key to maintaining your frontline presence.

Whether you're drawn to the unwavering justice of the Paladin cause or the fierce independence of the Liberator, mastering the champion guide in Pathfinder 2e opens doors to a fulfilling and dynamic gameplay experience. With a balance of might, magic, and moral complexity, the champion stands ready to defend what is right and inspire those around them.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the role of the Champion class in Pathfinder 2e?

The Champion in Pathfinder 2e serves as a frontline defender and holy warrior, protecting allies with strong defensive abilities and delivering divine justice against enemies.

How do you choose the right Cause for your Champion in Pathfinder 2e?

Choosing the right Cause depends on your desired playstyle; for example, the Paladin Cause focuses on righteousness and healing, the Liberator Cause emphasizes freedom and protection, and the Desecrator Cause leans towards vengeance and offense.

What are the key abilities to prioritize when building a Champion in Pathfinder 2e?

Champions should prioritize Strength or Dexterity for attack and defense, Constitution for durability, and Charisma to enhance their divine abilities and class features.

How does the Champion's Lay on Hands ability work in Pathfinder 2e?

Lay on Hands allows the Champion to heal allies by spending Focus Points, restoring hit points and potentially removing conditions, making it a vital support ability in combat.

What are some effective feats to select for a Champion in Pathfinder 2e?

Effective feats include Shield Block for damage mitigation, Retributive Strike for counterattacks, and Divine Ally to bond with a weapon or shield that grants additional benefits.

Can a Champion in Pathfinder 2e be effective in both melee and ranged combat?

While Champions excel in melee combat due to their defensive capabilities and weapon proficiencies, certain builds and feats allow them to be effective with ranged weapons as well, though melee remains their primary strength.

How does the Champion's alignment restrictions affect character creation in Pathfinder 2e?

Champions must adhere to the alignment requirements of their chosen Cause, which influences their roleplaying and limits multiclassing or actions that conflict with their moral code.

Additional Resources

Champion Guide Pathfinder 2e: Mastering the Paladin of the Tabletop

champion guide pathfinder 2e delves into one of the most iconic and revered classes in the Pathfinder 2nd Edition role-playing game system. Known for their unwavering commitment to righteousness and their role as stalwart defenders, champions blend martial prowess with divine conviction. This guide

aims to provide a thorough examination of the champion class, offering insights into its mechanics, archetypes, and optimal strategies, useful for both newcomers and seasoned players seeking to refine their gameplay.

Understanding the Champion Class in Pathfinder 2e

The champion in Pathfinder 2e serves as a frontline protector, often embodying the archetype of the paladin or holy warrior. Players attracted to the champion class typically appreciate its thematic emphasis on honor, justice, and the defense of the weak. Unlike classes focused solely on damage output or spellcasting versatility, champions excel in balancing offense and defense, leveraging their divine abilities to shield allies and smite foes.

From a mechanical standpoint, champions are characterized by their access to divine spells, auras that bolster their party, and the powerful divine ally feature, which provides a thematic bond with a weapon, shield, or mount. Their key ability score is typically Strength or Charisma, depending on the build, which influences their combat and spellcasting effectiveness.

Key Features and Mechanics

Champions start with a suite of class features that set them apart:

- **Divine Ally:** At 1st level, champions form a bond with a divine ally, choosing between a weapon, shield, or mount. This feature provides unique benefits, such as enhanced weapon damage, improved shield defenses, or a loyal mount for mobility and tactics.
- **Deity and Cause:** Choosing a deity and a champion cause (such as Paladin, Liberator, or Desecrator) shapes the character's roleplaying and mechanical abilities. The cause determines the champion's alignment restrictions and special class features.

- **Lay on Hands:** A potent healing ability that allows champions to restore hit points to themselves or allies, making them indispensable in prolonged engagements.
- **Retributive Strike:** A hallmark reaction that punishes foes who attack the champion's allies, reinforcing the champion's role as a protector.
- **Auras:** Champions emit powerful auras that grant saving throw bonuses to nearby companions, enhancing party survivability.

These features collectively create a class that thrives in group play, offering both offensive and defensive support.

Champion Guide Pathfinder 2e: Builds and Optimization

Optimizing a champion character requires a nuanced understanding of the interplay between ability scores, feats, equipment, and role within the party. Different champion classes emphasize varied playstyles, from the stalwart defender to the wrathful avenger.

Ability Score Priorities

Most champion builds prioritize Strength for melee combat prowess, as it directly affects attack rolls and damage. However, Charisma is equally important because it enhances class features such as Lay on Hands and Divine Smite, as well as spellcasting capabilities. Dexterity and Constitution are valuable secondary stats, contributing to armor class and hit points, respectively.

Choosing a Champion Cause

The cause selected at character creation defines much of the champion's flavor and abilities:

- **Paladin:** The classic archetype focused on protecting the innocent and smiting evil. Paladins excel in defensive abilities and healing.
- **Liberator:** Champions who fight against oppression, often with more flexible alignments. They blend offense and defense with some unique feats.
- **Desecrator:** An evil-aligned champion who twists divine power to destructive ends, offering a darker roleplaying option.

Each cause unlocks specific feats and spells that tailor the champion's combat style and narrative role.

Feats and Abilities: Crafting Your Champion's Arsenal

Choosing the right feats is critical for maximizing the champion's effectiveness. Feats in Pathfinder 2e are pivotal for customizing character strengths and addressing weaknesses.

Essential Champion Feats

- **Shield Block:** Enables the champion to use their shield to reduce incoming damage, increasing survivability.

- **Divine Smite:** A powerful offensive ability that adds radiant damage to weapon strikes, scaling with level.
- **Retributive Strike:** Provides a defensive reaction to strike back at attackers, reinforcing the champion's protective role.
- **Lay on Hands Improvement Feats:** Increase the healing potency or grant additional uses, critical for party sustainability.
- **Champion's Reaction:** Allows the champion to protect allies by intercepting attacks, a tactical tool that can change the course of battle.

Balancing defensive and offensive feats ensures champions remain versatile and effective throughout diverse combat scenarios.

Spell Selection

While champions are not full casters, their access to divine spells supplements their martial capabilities. Healing spells, protective buffs, and utility spells like Bless or Shield of Faith enhance their role as frontline support. Selecting spells that align with the champion's cause and party needs is essential for maintaining battlefield control.

Comparing Champion to Other Frontline Classes

In Pathfinder 2e, the champion occupies a unique niche among frontline classes such as fighters and barbarians. Whereas fighters emphasize weapon mastery and multiple attacks, and barbarians bring raw damage and rage mechanics, champions focus on defensive capabilities and party support.

Champions shine in campaigns where moral dilemmas and alignment-based decisions are prominent, given their strong thematic ties to deities and codes of conduct. Their healing abilities and auras provide survivability that many martial classes lack, making them indispensable in longer adventuring days or grueling combat encounters.

Pros and Cons of Playing a Champion

- **Pros:**

- Strong defensive capabilities with shields and auras
- Reliable healing via Lay on Hands
- Versatile role as protector and damage dealer
- Rich roleplaying potential through deity and cause choices

- **Cons:**

- Limited offensive damage compared to fighters or barbarians
- Alignment restrictions can limit character flexibility
- Spellcasting is limited compared to full divine casters

Understanding these trade-offs helps players decide if the champion suits their preferred playstyle.

Champion Guide Pathfinder 2e in Campaign Contexts

Champions thrive in campaigns with a strong narrative focus on morality, justice, and divine intervention. Their alignment and cause choices often tie directly into the story's themes, encouraging roleplaying opportunities that explore faith, honor, and sacrifice.

In combat-heavy campaigns, champions provide a valuable balance of frontline durability and party support. Their ability to absorb damage and heal allies makes them reliable anchors for any adventuring group. Conversely, in intrigue-heavy or stealth campaigns, champions may require creative approaches to remain effective, as their straightforward combat style can be less adaptable.

Equipment and Magic Items

Optimal equipment choices are crucial for champions. Heavy armor combined with a shield maximizes defense, allowing champions to fulfill their tanking role effectively. Magic items that boost Charisma or grant additional healing uses can enhance their class features. Weapons that complement the divine ally choice, such as a holy sword or a specialized shield, further reinforce thematic and mechanical strengths.

Final Thoughts on Champion Guide Pathfinder 2e

The champion class remains a cornerstone of Pathfinder 2e's roster, offering a compelling blend of martial and divine power. Whether embodying the traditional paladin archetype or exploring alternative causes, champions provide both mechanical versatility and rich narrative potential. Players seeking a

character that combines frontline resilience with supportive magic will find the champion a rewarding choice. By carefully selecting feats, spells, and equipment, one can tailor a champion to excel in a variety of campaign settings, making this class a reliable and engaging option at any table.

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