

The Rogue – A Thief Variant for Swords & Wizardry White Box

The rogue is an urban thief who specializes in a mix of skills of their own choosing. Rogues use cleric attack tables, and are limited to daggers, short swords, slings, light crossbows and short bows as weapons. They can wear leather armor but may not use a shield. Humans and Halflings can be rogues, both with unlimited advancement. Rogues get no XP bonuses for high ability scores, and must be neutral or chaotic in alignment.

Rogue Advancement

Level	Exp. Points	Hit Dice (d6)	To-Hit	Saving Throw	Skills, Skill Bonus
1	0	1	+0	15	3, +0
2	1,400	2	+0	14	1 additional, +2
3	2,800	3	+0	13	1 additional, +1
4	5,600	3+1	+1	12	1 additional, +2
5	11,200	4	+1	11	1 additional, +1
6	22,400	5	+2	10	1 additional, +2
7	44,800	6	+2	9	1 additional, +1
8	90,000	6+1	+3	8	1 additional, +2
9	180,000	7	+4	7	1 additional, +1
10	360,000	8	+5	6	1 additional, +2

Skills

The following is the list of skills available to rogues. At first level, rogues get their choice of three skills, then gain one additional skill with each level. The base chance of success with each skill is any roll of 6 or lower on 2d6. Where an ability appears in parentheses after the skill name, that means any bonus the rogue possesses due to the named ability score applies to the skill success. If more than one ability is listed (e.g. STR+DEX), simply add bonuses for each listed ability. At each successive level, the rogue adds one skill of their choice, and also adds the given bonuses from the above table to any existing skill or skills of their choice (but not to the skill just chosen).

- Backstab (STR)
- Climb walls (STR+DEX)
- Defensive fighting (STR+DEX)
- Disarming (STR+DEX)
- Remove or set small traps (DEX)
- Hide in shadows (WIS)
- Move silently (DEX)
- Pick locks (DEX)
- Poison admixtures (INT)
- Read secret writing & scrolls (INT)
- Sleight of hand, pick pockets (DEX)
- The art of falling (DEX)
- Tracking (WIS)

For example, Rufus the 1st level Rogue chooses three skills – *backstab*, *move silently* and *pick locks*. His base chance of success is 7 or more on 2d6 with each. Assuming he has a 15 DEX, which gives him a +1 bonus, his chance of success at picking locks and moving silently rises to 6 or more on 2d6. At second level, Rufus chooses to add *hiding in shadows*, and further chooses to add his available +2

bonus to the backstab skill, giving him a 5 or more in 2d6 chance of success with that. Note that Rufus could also have chosen to split the available +2 bonus between any two of his initial three skills. The referee may add penalties or bonuses to a skill check, depending on circumstances, usually within the range of +/- 2. A skill roll of 12 is always a success, while a roll of 2 is always a failure, regardless of whatever bonuses or penalties are applied.

Backstab: If a rogue is able to maneuver behind an opponent, he can opt to backstab with a dagger or short sword. A normal attack roll is made at +4, and if it is successful, the strike does double damage (at 4th level, this rises to triple damage, and at 8th level quadruple damage), and the rogue then makes a skill check for an added six-sided die of damage. Magical bonuses, if any, are added after the damage factor is calculated.

As an example, our 5th-level Rogue Rufus has managed to sneak behind the Goblin King, and strikes with his +1 dagger. His attack roll at +4 is successful, but his skill check fails, so he rolls normal dagger damage of d6-1, then triples it, and adds the +1 magical bonus to that. If he had succeeded in his skill check, he would add an extra d6 of damage to the total.

Note that victims must have a back in order to be backstabbed, so creatures like slimes or oozes are not affected by backstabs.

Climb Walls: The rogue can climb sheer surfaces that would normally be unclimbable by others. Assume any failure occurs at halfway up the surface being climbed, and results in a fall. Falling damage is normally 1d6 per 10 feet fallen (but see *The Art of Falling*, below).

Defensive Fighting: This allows the rogue to parry an attack so that his opponents get a to-hit penalty of -1 plus any DEX or STR bonuses. This gives a range of -1 to -3. This penalty is in effect in a given combat round as long as the rogue forfeits their attack that round. However, a successful skill check allows the rogue to also attack normally that round.

Disarming: The rogue is adept at causing opponents to drop any one held weapon on a successful skill check roll. The rogue must have initiative to attempt to disarm his opponent, and cannot attack in the same round he chooses to disarm. A failure means his opponent can attack normally.

Remove or Set Small Traps: With appropriate tools, rogues can try to deactivate small traps. Failure to deactivate a trap means it has been sprung. Once a trap is disarmed, a rogue can attempt to re-set the trap with a second skill roll made at +1.

Hide in Shadows: A Rogue can hide unseen by using shadows or other concealment to his advantage. He can then move at half-normal movement rate, as long as there are shadows present to hide in. While moving in such a fashion, the rogue must also check his *move silently* skill, or risk alerting others to his presence. As an example, our 2nd level rogue Rufus is in a brightly-lit castle hallway with guards posted at the far end. He cannot use his hide in shadows skill to avoid being seen by the guards, as there are no shadows or other forms of concealment available. If, however, the hallway is lined with large tapestries and statues, he could attempt to hide in one place. If he wanted to move down the hallway without being detected, he would have to make two skill checks, one for hiding in shadows, and one for moving silently. Note that a failure of this skill may not be known to the rogue - he may think he is hiding, when in fact he is visible.

Move Silently: A rogue can use this skill to move at half his normal move rate without making any discernible noise. Similar to hiding in shadows, failure of this skill is not always known - he may think he is moving without sound, when in fact he is heard by others.

Pick Locks: With appropriate tools, a rogue can attempt to pick any non-magical lock mechanism.

Poison Admixtures: Rogues with this skill are adept at mixing poisons with various effects which can be mixed into drink as a liquid or spread as a sticky, fast-drying form on weapon blades. At levels 1-4, rogues can mix poisons that cause drowsiness or confusion. At levels 5-8, rogues can additionally mix sleep or sickness poisons, and at levels 9 and above, rogues can mix poisons that kill. Any poison takes effect within 1d3 turns after being ingested (liquid form), or 1d3 rounds after being introduced to the bloodstream via a weapon wound (which implies a successful attack roll). The skill check indicates potency - a failure indicates the poison has the next lower-level of effect on the poison table, as if the victim made a saving throw automatically - although they are still entitled to an actual save in any case. For 1st-4th level rogues, failure means the poison has no effect, but they will not know that until they try to use it. Poisons spread on blades survive but one successful attack, whether they have any effect or not.

Poison Type	Cost/Time to Prepare	Effect
Drowsiness/ confusion	150GP per dose 1d3 hours	Victim is drowsy or mildly confused for 2d6 rounds. Victims have -2 to-hit and -2 to all saving throws for the duration of the poison's effect. Save for no effect.
Sleep	500GP per dose 2d6 hours	Victim sleeps for 1d6 hours, save for drowsy effect, above.
Sickness	500GP per dose 2d6 hours	Victim is violently ill and unable to attack. Movement is one-fourth normal rate. Effect lasts 1d6 hours. A successful save imparts a mild effect like that of confusion poison.
Kill	2000GP per dose 1d4 days	Victim dies. A successful save means the effect is that of sickness poison.

As an example, Rufus is now 4th level and chooses the *poison admixture* skill. He gathers the required ingredients from a local apothecary at a cost of 150GP, and spreads the poison so made on his dagger blade. The referee makes a skill check in secret, which is 9 on 2d6. Rufus' poison is completely ineffective, but he does not know it. At 5th level, Rufus can attempt to make a sickness poison, but failure of his skill check means it has only the confusion effect when it is actually delivered to the victim, who, if he makes his saving throw, would thus not feel any effect.

Read Secret Writing & Scrolls: Success with this skill allows the rogue to decipher and infer the meaning of any non-magical writing such as that found on treasure maps, in secret correspondence, or in other coded messages. At 8th level and above, rogues can read magic-user scrolls, but a roll of 12 means the spell is reversed (or fails if the effect cannot be logically reversed).

Sleight of Hand, Pick Pockets: Rogues with this skill are adept at stealing or secreting small objects about a victim's person. Failure of the skill means the intended target is aware that the rogue is trying to steal or place an item from or on their person.

The Art of Falling: Rogues who study the art of falling can survive falls from up to 10 feet per level with no damage on a successful skill check. A failure of this check means the rogue only suffers half damage.

Tracking: The tracking skill gives the ability for the rogue to track targets in any environment, given a successful skill check. The referee should assign bonuses or penalties to the skill roll based on the age of the track, familiarity of the environment, light conditions, and the prevailing weather.

