



PATHFINDER ROLEPLAYING GAME FOR SCHOOLS AND LIBRARIES

PLANNING YOUR PATHFINDER SOCIETY GAME PROGRAM

Whether you want to fire young people's imaginations, provide a safe haven, or build their problem-solving and analytical skills, creating your own Pathfinder Society game program can create an atmosphere of acceptance, respect, and cooperation. Through the award-winning Pathfinder Roleplaying Game (Pathfinder RPG), players take on the role of powerful wizards trained to use magical spells, wise clerics of gods benevolent or malign, canny fighters hacking through monsters with enchanted swords, witty rogues ready to disarm even the deadliest of traps, or countless other heroes and adventurers. Players are limited only by their imaginations, and all that's needed to begin the journey is the *Pathfinder RPG Beginner Box*, a Game Master, and a core group of two to five players.

Pathfinder Society Organized Play is a cooperative, worldwide, fantasy roleplaying campaign that puts players in the role of agents of the Pathfinder Society, a legendary league of explorers, archaeologists, and adventurers dedicated to discovering and chronicling the greatest mysteries and wonders of an ancient world. There are tens of thousands of Pathfinder Society members worldwide, and regional coordinators who can assist with your local game.

Why Roleplay in a Library or School?

Roleplaying games can be used effectively for after-school programs and clubs, or as part of a public library's teen services. The Pathfinder RPG not only includes all the materials necessary for an engrossing and challenging game, but also provides a series of acclaimed novels that flesh out the fantasy world and provide springboards for the imagination. Players also learn to actively use library resources, reference material, information technology, and more under the helpful guidance of a librarian or teacher.

Foster Creative Minds

Participating in a roleplaying session is an easy way for young people to begin thinking from a character's perspective: "What would this person do in this situation, how would he or she react, and what could he or she feasibly accomplish?" This not only encourages a story-driven mindset, but also can strengthen a sense of empathy. The game rewards creative thinking, problem solving, and the ability to work cooperatively with others.

Improve Math Skills

Character creation and progression depend on the interaction between the numbers on each player's character sheet. Optimizing a character and attaining desired abilities rely upon an individual's ability to understand and navigate the way these statistics interact with the world of the game.

Practice Problem Solving

One of the most famous aspects of tabletop roleplaying games is problem solving. Most adventures involve some sort of puzzle or riddle that needs to be solved in order for the party to progress, so success in the game relies on teamwork and group problem-solving skills.

Nurture Cooperation

Teamwork and cooperation are paramount for having a successful party. Whether the Game Master engineers circumstances that require the abilities of multiple characters or cooperation simply evolves from the continued interaction of the members, each participant must learn to respect and work with the others.

Build Confidence, Reinforce Respect

Roleplaying can have other benefits—such as helping a shy person feel comfortable stepping up and being the center of attention, or encouraging a usually dominant personality to instead take a backseat and provide support. Everyone has a voice, and everyone has a direction in the Pathfinder world!



THE PATHFINDER RPG EXPERIENCE

Preparation

WHEN: Decide on a date, time, and frequency (Saturdays from 4–6, for example).

WHERE: Determine the location—reserve a meeting room or designate a specific area of your library. Keep in mind that games can get noisy! Tables and chairs are a must.

Who: Will you be open to whoever shows up or do you want to ask participants to register ahead of time? Be sure to include age ranges. If you do take registrations, start the process a reasonable time before your first meeting. An average game should have one Game Master, as well as five players.

Promotion

POSTERS: Print off the promotional poster from paizo.com and be sure to include date, time, and follow-up information.

NOTIFY THE PRESS: Send a press release to local papers and online media.

FLYERS: Use the template at paizo.com to promote your event. Position flyers where teens are but also spread them around the community. Share with your local high school. Put the flyers near the library computers teens use most. Share with local businesses that cater to teens, especially any stores that specialize in video games, card games, or tabletop roleplaying games.

SOCIAL MEDIA: Post the event on Facebook, tweet about it, set up a character Pinterest board—the possibilities are as endless as the Internet!

DISPLAY: Show off the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Beginner Box* (ISBN: 978-1-60125-372-9, \$34.99). The set provides many of the necessary items to begin the game, such as dice, character markers, maps, and a starter adventure. Display the mat, the character guides, and the pieces ahead of time to attract interest. Include a signup sheet at the display so that you can easily capture names.

Planning

TELL THE STORY: Create a document listing the benefits of roleplaying games and the positive influence they have on teen players. Use the benefits listed in this guide as a jumping-off point and share this information with your library director or school principal and the press.

SET THE STAGE: Whether you start with the *Beginner Box* or launch into the full Pathfinder rules set and, gauge your game to fit your players' time, ability, and maturity.

Playing

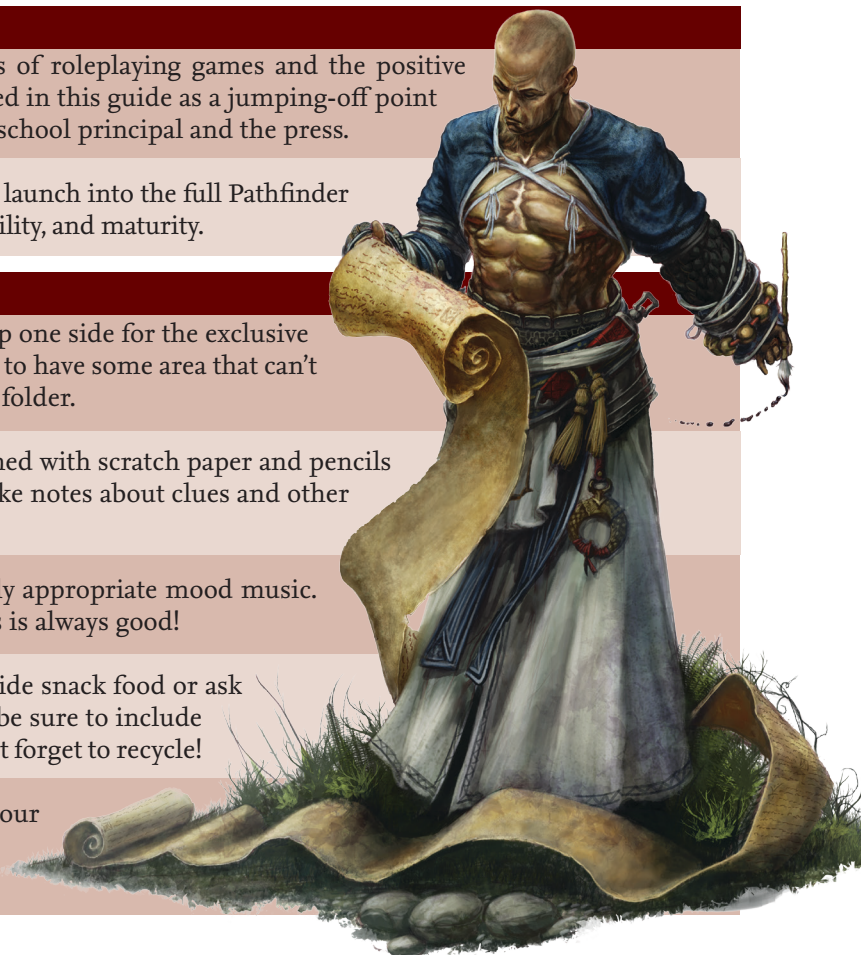
PLACE: You will need a table or tables. Make sure you keep one side for the exclusive use of the Game Master. The Game Master will also need to have some area that can't be seen by the players, so set up a small barrier such as a folder.

PAPER AND PENCILS: Make sure that your players are armed with scratch paper and pencils so they can keep track of their abundant statistics and take notes about clues and other key information.

MUSIC: Everything is more fun with a soundtrack. Supply appropriate mood music. Howard Shore's soundtrack for the *Lord of the Rings* films is always good!

FOOD: Fighting monsters builds an appetite. Either provide snack food or ask players to bring their favorites to share. Along with this, be sure to include restroom breaks and plenty of waste receptacles, and don't forget to recycle!

BOOKS: Include a display of Pathfinder Tales novels so your players can learn more about the Pathfinder multiverse and build their powers of imagination.



GAME MASTER TIPS

✦ Understanding Group Dynamics

One of the things a Game Master (or GM) must do at all points during a session is evaluate members' personalities and interaction. This will enable the GM to avoid any potentially destructive situations that could impact the group. For example, when prisoners are taken, if one character's motivation specifically states that she cannot harm creatures that have surrendered and another is driven by a dark, pragmatic worldview that demands their execution, conflict is inevitable. It's much better to avoid situations like these—moral dilemmas for the party as a whole are fine, but issues that could cause an unbridgeable rift between members of the group are best avoided entirely.

Another of the GM's primary objectives is leading the group toward a specific path without them realizing it. In addition to being the only authority figure in the game (which necessitates some leadership skills), the GM has a story to tell, and must tell the story while maintaining the group's perception that this is their adventure. Conflict naturally conflict arises if the GM tries to take the adventure in a direction that the group does not approve of—while the GM technically has the power to say “No, you have to do this,” the players also have the power to say “No I don't” and leave. Getting players to do what is needed without directly telling them is a key aspect of being a successful GM.

✦ Acting and Storytelling

Of course, preparing the world and adventures aren't the only aspects of the Pathfinder world the GM must bring to life. Rather than simply reading out the published adventures, a GM needs to bring the adventure to life with color and excitement—in short, *acting!* Voicing the action in real time to the players is key for maintaining that crucial sense of investment and adventure. Good storytelling is especially important if the GM is running an original adventure rather than one supplied by Paizo Publishing.

✦ Mastering the Game

The *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Beginner Box* is the best place to start, as it provides everything necessary for both a new GM and new players. Ideally the GM would be relatively experienced, having run at least a few adventures, but that is less necessary if he or she uses the adventures Paizo publishes for new players and GMs.

✦ Beginner Box Contents

HERO'S HANDBOOK: Abridged game rules for players.

Game Master's Guide: Abridged game rules for GMs; also contains a low-level adventure for the group to cut their teeth on.

DICE: one 20-sided die, one 12-sided die, two 10-sided dice, one 8-sided die, one 6-sided die, and one 4-sided die.

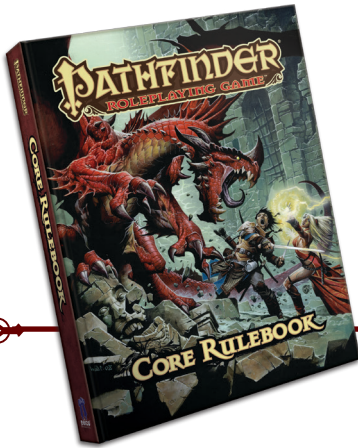
PAWNS: More than 80 punch-out pawns representing player characters and monsters in the game world.

CHARACTER SHEETS: Four pregenerated character sheets, for players who want to jump straight into the action, and four blank character sheets for creating custom heroes.

FLIP-MAT: A two-sided, erasable map on which the GM can sketch out adventure locations.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook:

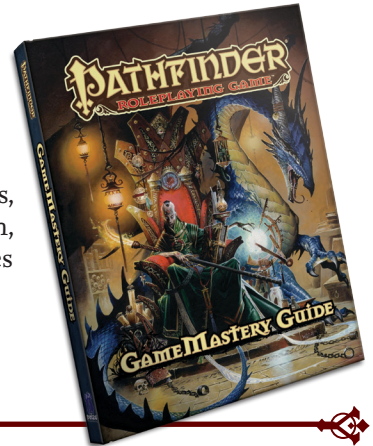
The definitive rulebook for the full Pathfinder RPG experience, this volume is helpful when you are ready to step up your game—it contains tons of new races, classes, skills, magical treasures, and more.

(ISBN: 978-1-60125-150-3, \$49.99)

Pathfinder Roleplaying Game GameMastery Guide:

Going beyond the *Core Rulebook* to offer tips, guidelines, and additional rules for GMs, the *GameMastery Guide* includes encounter charts, idea lists, advice on encounter design, tips for adapting published products to a personal campaign, and complete guidelines for building a campaign from scratch.

(ISBN: 978-1-60125-217-3, \$39.99)



Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary:

More than 250 monsters are detailed in this guide, from the comedic-but-deadly goblin to many menacing varieties of dragons.

(ISBN: 978-1-60125-183-1, \$39.99)



Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide:

This comprehensive guide, which includes a giant poster map and cultural explanations of the different kingdoms and settings of the Pathfinder world, is ideal for those who are ready to expand their game universe.

(ISBN: 978-1-60125-269-2, \$39.99)



PATHFINDER TALES

The Pathfinder world provides the setting for a series of fantasy novels, paving the way for gamers to become readers. Pathfinder Tales novels are rich in detail and characterization and provide wings for the imagination. Here are just a few of the many Pathfinder Tales novels available.



Blood of the City by Robin D. Laws

From visionary game designer and author Robin D. Laws comes a new urban fantasy adventure of murder, betrayal, and political intrigue. Luma is a cobblestone druid, a canny fighter and spellcaster who can read the chaos of Magnimar's city streets like a scholar reads books. Together, she and her siblings in the powerful Derexhi family form one of the most infamous and effective mercenary companies in the city, solving problems for Magnimar's wealthy elite.

(ISBN: 978-1-60125-456-6 \$9.99)

City of the Fallen Sky by Tim Pratt

Written by Hugo Award winner Tim Pratt, this tale follows the spotty career of Alaeron, once a student of alchemy with the dark scholars of the Technic League, but who has now fled their order. When a back-alley rescue lands him in trouble with a powerful crime lord, he must travel across wide seas and steaming jungles in search of a wrecked flying city and the magical artifacts that can buy his freedom.

(ISBN: 978-1-60125-418-4, \$9.99)



Death's Heretic by James L. Sutter

A warrior haunted by his past, Salim Ghadafar serves as a problem-solver for a church he hates, bound by the goddess of death to hunt down those who would rob her. Salim must unravel a web of intrigue that will lead him on a grand tour of the Outer Planes, where devils and angels rub shoulders with lords and mechanical men, and nothing is as it seems.

(ISBN: 978-1-60125-369-9, \$9.99)

Winter Witch by Elaine Cunningham

Ellasif, a barbarian shield maiden who will stop at nothing to recover her missing sister, and Decclan, a ne'er-do-well young spellcaster-turned-forger, face monsters, magic, and the fury of Ellasif's own cold-hearted warriors in their quest to rescue a lost child.

(ISBN: 978-1-60125-286-9, \$9.99)



Additional titles:

Called to Darkness by Richard Lee Byers (ISBN: 978-1-60125-465-8, \$9.99)

Master of Devils by Dave Gross (ISBN: 978-1-60125-357-6, \$9.99)

Nightglass by Liane Merciel (ISBN: 978-1-60125-440-5, \$9.99)

Plague of Shadows by Howard Andrew Jones (ISBN: 978-1-60125-291-3, \$9.99)

Prince of Wolves by Dave Gross (ISBN: 978-1-60125-287-6, \$9.99)

Queen of Thorns by Dave Gross (ISBN: 978-1-60125-463-4, \$9.99)

Song of the Serpent by Hugh Matthews (ISBN: 978-1-60125-388-0, \$9.99)

The Worldwound Gambit by Robin D. Laws (ISBN: 978-1-60125-327-9, \$9.99)

**New titles are added every
2 months. Please visit
paizo.com/pathfindertales
for the latest updates!**

❖ Player Age and Maturity

The most appropriate GM for a group depends on the players' ages. Younger groups, averaging in the junior high age range of 11 to 14, should have an adult Game Master, ideally someone with a certain amount of pre-established authority like a teacher or a librarian. Most young people of this age have not reached a point where they can readily accept a peer in a position of authority. Additionally, an inexperienced young GM could create a situation where a player is turned off from RPGs in general because of the GM's lack of judgment. With young players, it's usually preferable for the GM to run published adventures. Paizo's Pathfinder Modules are action-packed and tightly constructed, giving younger kids something to really grab on to almost immediately—often, people of this age have not really started to dig into the creative aspect of the game and are instead focused on doing cool things within the game's rules, which means they need lots of nonstop action to test out their characters' abilities.

For older gamers, it is perfectly acceptable to have a responsible teen acting as Game Master. At this point in player development, it is also likely they will become more interested in creating their own adventures or settings. This stage lends itself naturally to a certain relinquishment of power on the part of the teacher or librarian in charge, though a responsible adult should continue to be present in order to take on the GM role if needed because of group dynamics or participation. Keep in mind that the adult leader can take charge of a main overarching campaign while giving various members of the party chances to manage short one-off adventures meant to be fun as well as instructional on the how-tos of being a GM. Of course, roleplaying with the older age range also necessitates more mature content—while GMs running games for the junior high range should hesitate before killing off a player's character or having a villain who does something especially reprehensible, these avenues are now open.

❖ These Are Guidelines—You Make the Rules

These notes and pointers are entirely elastic—if a group of junior high kids is particularly mature, then some of the aspects of the high school groups can be brought in, and if a group of older kids is not ready for more mature content, you can use some of the guidelines for younger players. Just remember that these are very generalized guidelines. Each campaign should be individually tailored to the group's makeup and dynamic, which the GM will gradually become more in tune with, rather than simply following set rules the entire time.



RESOURCES

Pathfinder

Librarian and teacher resources: <http://www.paizo.com/libraries>

Pathfinder Society (thousands of players worldwide, and regional Venture-Captains to assist with your game): <http://www.paizo.com/pathfindersociety>

Check out the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game multiverse:
<http://www.pathfinderwiki.com/>

Find out more about the *Beginner Box* (includes video and free downloadable adventures): <http://paizo.com/beginnerbox>

Pathfinder on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/paizo>

Pathfinder Tales <http://paizo.com/pathfindertales>

About Roleplaying Games

Facts and fictions about roleplaying (helpful for parents):

<http://www.theescapist.com/facts-and-fictions-about-RPGs.pdf>

Price, Nikol. (2005) "Dungeons and Dragons: Adventures in the Library."
Voice of Youth Advocates February 2005: 454–456.

Roleplaying advocacy and benefits: <http://www.theescapist.com/>

Roleplaying games and libraries:

https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/projects/ttr/2008/manual/rpg_games.html



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