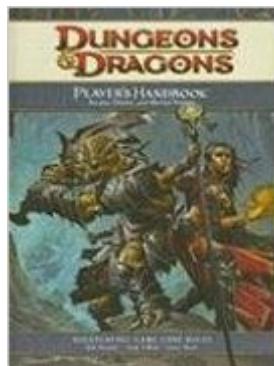


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Dungeons & Dragons Player's Handbook: Arcane, Divine, And Martial Heroes (Roleplaying Game Core Rules)



Synopsis

The first of three core rulebooks for the 4th Edition Dungeons & Dragons® Roleplaying Game. The Dungeons & Dragons Roleplaying Game has defined the medieval fantasy genre and the tabletop RPG industry for more than 30 years. In the D&D game, players create characters that band together to explore dungeons, slay monsters, and find treasure. The 4th Edition D&D rules offer the best possible play experience by presenting exciting character options, an elegant and robust rules system, and handy storytelling tools for the Dungeon Master. The Player's Handbook presents the official Dungeons & Dragons Roleplaying Game rules as well as everything a player needs to create D&D characters worthy of song and legend: new character races, base classes, paragon paths, epic destinies, powers, more magic items, weapons, armor, and much more.

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Customer Reviews

4th edition D&D = Different. That fact alone would have spawned endless teeth gnashing from loyalists of prior versions - but what differences are we talking about? How different is it? In a word: very. 4th edition is a sea change in the core rules that is easily on par with the change from 2nd Edition to 3rd Edition. Start with the thematic changes: The core races have changed. Humans, Halflings, Elves, Half-Elves and Dwarves are back - they've just been supplemented with three new races. Dragonborn (dragonmen), Eladrin (magical fey of the wood) and Tiefling (humanoids with an otherworldly taint). Classes from 3.0 and 3.5 have been dropped from this volume (There is no druid, monk, bard, or barbarian). These classes are promised in future Player's Handbooks. Not the most

auspicious beginning. Thematic changes like this are easy to spot - but are perhaps the least important changes in the game. I dislike the concept of Dragonborn ("Dragon-anything" is a label I feel makes its subject seem cartoonish and clichéd), but as a GM - I can easily fix this. In my world Dragonborn will be lizardmen, with a backstory that I choose. I take the rules and make them my own. The WotC game designers have clearly tried to shift the game mechanics towards customized character development: (a rules buffet, so to speak) - so anyone who wants to have a druid could achieve a reasonable facsimile of powers and rituals and achieve the rest thematically. Many will have a problem with this - but I frankly don't. Being able to mix and match classes in 3.5 was a radical shift (and a brilliant one) and the re-thinking of that model that occurs in 4th Edition provides more options, not less.

I don't mind at all that WotC has sacrificed some sacred cows to make the system more streamlined. I don't mind that you have to roll to hit with magic missile. I don't mind that you have to use miniatures, or a battlegrid. I don't mind that the game is more combat-oriented. I do mind that the game just feels boring. Sure, I can make a Dragonborn fighter and an Eladrin wizard. But they don't do anything spectacularly different. Except that the wizard is, for some magically unknown reason, unable to whack anything with his staff. All of the powers that they've added essentially boil down to $XdY + \text{Ability modifier damage}$, and if you're lucky, a 1-turn status effect. I give great praise to WotC for making the classes balanced. It's very difficult (if not impossible) to push your character off the RNG completely. The problem is that they made everything too balanced, so that no one does anything particularly flavorful. Not only that, but the character you make is essentially straight-jacketed into one of the two (and sometimes three) predetermined character archetypes that are presented. Taking a power from a different character build is inefficient, because it takes a different attribute to use, which you probably don't have as high. I don't care if my wizard impales people with ice spikes or burns them with fire, because there's functionally no difference. Defenses against particular damage types are so few and far between that you can do the same thing with the same spell, over and over again. The elite and solo monsters that are presented are a joke. They have anywhere from 2x-5x the amount of HP a normal monster should have, and have an extra 10%-25% chance to end any effect on them every turn.

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