

# The Card Master Invented by Malakai

In the times long past, a system of fortune-telling came forth known as the tarot, a method of using a special deck of mystical cards to divine the future. From the tarot descended games, which were far deviated from the original intent of the cards, and much of their magic was forgotten.

However, the playing cards of today are inextricably linked to those ancient tarot cards, still possessing the magic of them in a locked, repressed form. The Card Master has learned to use this magic to their advantage.

## **Adventures:**

Card Masters will adventure for any number of reasons, the most common being monetary in nature. They are gamblers deep down in the blood though, and have trouble resisting challenges and dares.

## **Characteristics:**

The primary characteristic of the Card Master is obviously their ability to use normal playing cards as a powerful magical tool. However, one should not be fooled into believing that they are not equally proficient with weapons. Card Masters often represent an elite form of swashbuckler, the gambling daredevil out for money and fun. (Since the primary characteristic of the Card Master is his playing card use, the player of this class must have a deck of cards handy, with all 54 cards present in the deck preferably, as each card has its own function, and is drawn at the time the character draws.)

## **Religion:**

Card Masters are not required to be part of any religion, but it is often helpful to them to belong to an order devoted to the worship of magical deities, and the study of said magic.

## **Background:**

As stated, the Card Master is often a sort of swashbuckler, fancying themselves as terrific masters of death-defying feats. While they are not strictly rogues, they are fairly close, and often share the same growing up. However, at some point, they realized the truth behind the cards, and branched into magic from there.

## **Races:**

Any race that plays any form of card game can support a Card Master. Elves are especially proficient, due to their long ages (some elves do remember the power of the tarot) and tendencies towards magic. Monstrous races may have card games, but rarely a Card Master, as the research that must be done to divine the secret of the cards is beyond their ken.

## **Classes:**

Rogues and wizards are the classes most often attracted to this class, rogues because it gives them magical abilities, and wizards because it expands on their own magic while adding a dash of actual physical combat ability.

**HD:** d6

## **Requirements**

To qualify to become a Card Master the character must meet the following requirements.

**Base Attack Bonus:** +4

**Skills:** Bluff (Cha), +8 Ranks, Knowledge (Arcana) (Int), +8 Ranks, Sleight of Hand (Dex), +4 Ranks

**Special:** Must have a "favored" deck of cards that the character always carried (except when relieved of them, of course.) The character may carry no other deck besides this one.

## **Class Skills**

The Card Master class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are; Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Arcana) (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

See Chapter 4 in the *Core Rulebook 1* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at each additional Level: 6 + Int modifier

## Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Card Master:

**Weapon and Armour Proficiency:** A Card Master is proficient with simple weapons. They gain no additional armor proficiencies.

Note that wearing armour heavier than leather imposes a penalty to the ranger skills Climb, Hide, Jump, and Move Silently. Swim checks also suffer a –1 penalty for every 5 lbs. of armour or equipment carried.

**Draw Card:** At 1<sup>st</sup> Level the Card Master gains the ability Draw Card. This ability allows them to draw a card from the top of their favoured deck, triggering the magical effect as described on the list below. Drawing a card is a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity. The Card Master may (at this level) only draw one card per round, and only 5 cards per level per day.

### Clubs

The Clubs suit is devoted to magic that directly attacks the opponent. All of these spells are cast at a single target, except where the spell has an area effect:

- 2- Cast *Inflict Minor Wounds*
- 3- Cast *Acid Splash*
- 4- Cast *Magic Missile* (as a 5<sup>th</sup> Level Wizard)
- 5- Cast *Color Spray*
- 6- Cast *Gust of Wind*
- 7- Cast *Shatter*
- 8- Cast *Scorching Ray*
- 9- Cast *Lightning Bolt* (As a 5<sup>th</sup> Level Wizard)
- 10- Cast *Ice Storm*
- Jack- Cast *Disintegrate*
- Queen- Cast *Prismatic Spray*
- King- Cast *Sunburst*

### Spades

The Spades suit is devoted to the magical school of Necromancy. All of these spells are cast at a single target, except where the spell has an area effect:

- 2- Cast *Touch of Fatigue*
- 3- Cast *Disrupt Undead*
- 4- Cast *Ray of Enfeeblement*
- 5- Cast *Command Undead*
- 6- Cast *Vampiric Touch*
- 7- Cast *Halt Undead*
- 8- Cast *Symbol of Pain*
- 9- Cast *Circle of Death* (As a 5<sup>th</sup> Level Wizard)
- 10- Cast *Finger of Death*
- Jack- Cast *Horrid Wilting* As a 5<sup>th</sup> Level Wizard)
- Queen- Cast *Energy Drain*
- King- Cast *Regenerate*

### Hearts

The Hearts suit triggers various healing spells and beneficial effects for the Card Master and/or his party. All of these spells are cast at a single target, except where the spell has an area effect:

- 2- Cast *Cure Minor Wounds*
- 3- Cast *Guidance*
- 4- Cast *Cure Light Wounds* (As a 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Cleric)
- 5- Cast *Remove Fear*
- 6- Cast *Cure Moderate Wounds* (As a 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Cleric)
- 7- Cast *Cure Serious Wounds* (As a 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Cleric)
- 8- Cast *Cure Critical Wounds* (As a 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Cleric)
- 9- Cast *Raise Dead* (As a 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Cleric)
- 10- Cast *Cure Light Wounds, Mass* (As a 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Cleric)
- Jack- Cast *Cure Moderate Wounds, Mass* (As a 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Cleric)
- Queen- Cast *Cure Serious Wounds, Mass* (As a 3<sup>rd</sup> Level Cleric)
- King- Cast *Resurrection* (As a 10<sup>th</sup> Level Cleric)

## Diamonds

The Diamonds suit is based on the summoning and alteration of creatures and magical beasts. All of these spells are cast at a single target, except where the spell has an area effect:

2- Cast *Prestidigitation*

3- Cast *Summon Monster I*

4- Cast *Summon Monster II*

5- Cast *Summon Monster III*

6- Cast *Summon Monster IV*

7- Cast *Summon Monster V*

8- Cast *Summon Monster VI*

9- Cast *Summon Monster VII*

10- Cast *Summon Monster VIII*

Jack- Cast *Summon Monster IX*

Queen- Cast *Polymorph Other*

King- Cast *Shapechange*

## Jokers

Finally there are two Jokers in the deck, one that should be marked, the other that is not. These are the most potent cards in the deck, but can only be drawn once a month; if they are drawn more than that, they are discarded and another draw is taken:

Marked Joker- Cast *Wish*

Unmarked Joker- Cast *Power Word, Kill*

**Card Throw:** At 2<sup>nd</sup> Level, the Card Master gains the ability Card Throw. This allows them to throw a single card at their highest ranged attack bonus. The card has a range of 15 and deals 1d3 points of damage (x2 critical). This card can be recovered, but cannot be used again for a month. Using this ability does not trigger the card's magical ability.

**Redraw:** At 4<sup>th</sup> Level, the Card Master gains the ability Redraw. This allows him to draw a different card once per level per day and discard his previous draw. The card that is drawn originally is discarded with no effect, and the new card takes effect.

**Iron Card:** At 6<sup>th</sup> Level, the Card Master's thrown cards can now deal 1d6 damage, threaten on a roll of 19-20, and deal x3 critical damage. This ability may be used once per level per day, and the Card Master must state that he is using the Iron Card before making their attack roll.

**Multi-card:** At 8<sup>th</sup> Level, the Card Master gains the ability Multi-card. This ability allows them to draw extra cards during a round, at the cost of 1 point of Dexterity for every extra card drawn. Each card activates its stated effect, in order of drawing. These cards may not be used again for a week after the Multi-card ability is used. Lost Dexterity points are regained at the rate of 1 per hour.

**Master Deck:** At 10<sup>th</sup> Level, the Card Master and his favoured deck are so in tune with each other that the Card Master knows exactly what card to use. Once per day, the Card Master may look through their deck, picking the card that they desire. Additionally, the Card Master's Card Throw can now deal 1d8 damage, threatens on a roll of 18-20, and deals x3 critical damage. The Card Master must state that he is using this ability before making the attack roll.

## **Table: The Card Master**

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 <sup>st</sup>	+0	+0	+2	+2	Draw Card
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+1	+0	+3	+3	Card Throw
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+2	+1	+3	+3	
4 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+1	+4	+4	Redraw
5 <sup>th</sup>	+3	+1	+4	+4	
6 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+2	+5	+5	Iron Card
7 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+2	+5	+5	
8 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+2	+6	+6	Multi-card
9 <sup>th</sup>	+6	+3	+6	+6	
10 <sup>th</sup>	+7	+3	+7	+7	Master Deck

**Moderator's Notes:** I was surprised by this class. I didn't think that it would balance too well when compared to other, similar prestige classes that deal with magic. However, the meticulous work I did on making certain that the spell selection is limited was rewarded, and the fact that you cannot pick the spell that is going to be used (until 10<sup>th</sup> level, and then only once a day) adds an interesting tension to the drawing of each card. Plus, my players appreciated the addition of the prop, the "favoured deck." It should be noted that to prevent cheating, the DM should shuffle the deck before the player draws.