

# The Joust<sup>er</sup> Invented by Malakai

The joust. An event of celebration, where the honor of two men is placed on the line in a test of skill both in horsemanship and strength. The weapon of choice: the lance, a simple, brutally effective weapon designed for the specific person of running another being through. For those elite gladiators of this specialized arena, there is no thrill more grand than that of the snort of the horse, the roar of the crowd, the dust in the nostrils as you charge headlong down to lists with intent of unhorsing your opponent.

However, though the joust itself is generally considered a sport, it is indeed true that its origins were purely military in design. A cavalry of men with lances, or long spears charging forward in battle could wreak havoc upon the enemy lines, literally crushing every opposition in a flurry of hooves and splintered wood. The elite horsemen have refined their technique throughout the years, until it has become a perfected art, a mix of finesse and brutal force.

## **Adventures:**

Though most Joust<sup>er</sup>s are obviously men of the military, those few who separate from their units to adventure serve the hazily-defined role of knight that lies just between the righteous paladin and the jack-of-all-trades fighter. They provide the heavy support for the party, charging down foes with brutal efficiency, crushing opposition. Their strict code of honor, coupled with their skills, makes them ideal as caravan guards, as well as escorts for smaller parties of important nobles and merchants. Their foot skills are none-too shabby either, making them adequate replacements for the more run-of-the-mill fighter and paladin where mounted combat is impractical.

## **Characteristics:**

While the primary characteristic of the Joust<sup>er</sup> is quite conspicuously their mounted prowess and use of the lance as a primary weapon, their other combat abilities are fairly well-rounded as well, as many jousting matches end as fights on foot between swordsmen.

## **Religion:**

While not a prerequisite by any means for the class, most Joust<sup>er</sup>s follow ethos similar to paladins, finding solace in religion that settles their admittedly-dangerous sport of choice. After all, when one might die in the next bout, it is wise to have one's soul reckoned for in the after life...

## **Background:**

Most Joust<sup>er</sup>s arrive at their choice of class via nobility, coming from a background of venerated knights, paladins, and other Joust<sup>er</sup>s. Still, the occasional peasant might rise to this coveted position, either through deception or uncanny luck.

## **Races:**

The races most suited to being Joust<sup>er</sup>s are humans, with their natural propensity for all things warlike, and half-orcs, who's great stature and strength serve them well in a brutal sport. Elves are too light of build to serve effectively as Joust<sup>er</sup>s, although a few take up the long spear to serve in just that capacity, substituting finesse where brute force is the letter of the day. Dwarves, with their abhorrence of horses, make terrible Joust<sup>er</sup>s, with the exception of those few who master this shortcoming and become stalwart, if short, Joust<sup>er</sup>s. Halflings and gnomes lack the stature to become Joust<sup>er</sup>s, better suited to sports that don't involve the bashing of one's opponent. Joust<sup>er</sup>s are virtually unheard of in monstrous races.

## **Game Rule Information**

Joust<sup>er</sup>s may opt to begin the game with a light warhorse, saddle, lance, bastard sword, and Joust<sup>er</sup>'s armor (See Class Features below). It is by no means a requirement that they do so, however, and any Joust<sup>er</sup> who does start with the stated equipment halves their starting money.

**Alignment:** LG

**Hit Die:** d10

## **Class Skills**

The Joust<sup>er</sup> class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are; Climb (Str), Craft (Lance, Armorsmithing) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Spot (Wis), and Swim (Str)  
See Chapter 4 in the *Core Rulebook 1* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at 1st Level: (4 + Int modifier) x 4

Skill Points at each additional Level: 4 + Int modifier

## Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Joustier:

**Weapon and Armour Proficiency:** A Joustier is proficient with all type of simple and martial weapons, and armour. 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.

**Mounted Combat:** At 1<sup>st</sup> Level the Joustier gains free use of the feat Mounted Combat (See page 83 of the Core Rulebook 1.)

**Joustier's Armor:** The armor that a Joustier wears is somewhat different from standard armor, in that it is fortified on the side most often struck in a joust (the side opposite the Joustier's main hand.) This special armor is in all regards the same as half plate armor, with the exception that all attacks to the Joustier's "off side" suffer a penalty of -2 to hit and -2 to damage (i.e. an attack to a right-handed joustier's left side suffers the stated penalties.) This armor is expensive and difficult to maintain, and thus costs double to repair or purchase, and adds a +10 to the difficulty of anyone trying to forge such a suit of armor.

**Lance Focus:** As stated, the primary weapon of the mounted Joustier is their lance. Once per day, they may choose to add the listed bonus to any roll involving their lance (it need not necessarily be an attack or damage roll, for those who think innovatively.) If the roll fails, the attempt is wasted for the day, as well as any other unpleasant side-effects that might arise from the missed roll.

**Spirited Charge:** At 5<sup>th</sup> level, the Joustier gains free use of the feat Spirited Charge (See page 85 of the Core Rulebook 1.)

**Animal Empathy:** At 9<sup>th</sup> level, the Joustier is so in tune with the actions of his mount that he gains the skill Animal Empathy as a class skill.

**Improvised Lance:** At 13<sup>th</sup> level, the Joustier may use any item that they can lift of medium to large size (length only) as a lance, at a penalty of -2 to the hit and damage rolls.

**Expert Rider:** At 15<sup>th</sup> level, the Joustier gains a +10 competence bonus to all ride checks.

**Riding Grapple:** Once per day, the Joustier may opt to make a grappling attack from on horseback, lifting the target from the ground and carrying them until the grapple is broken (see Grappling, page 137 of the Core Rulebook 1.)

**Riding Dodge:** Once per day, the Joustier may opt to forfeit their attack for a round in favor of adding a +2 dodge bonus to their and their mount's armor classes. A full action must be used to do this.

**Grand Champion:** At 20<sup>th</sup> level, the Joustier has gained quite a reputation for themselves as a mounted warrior. They may take 10 on any ride check, even those that normally would interrupt concentration. In addition, due to their reputation they add +2 to any Charisma-based rolls when using their reputation as a leverage tool.

**Table: The Joustier**

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 <sup>st</sup>	+1	+2	+0	+0	Mounted Combat, Joustier's Armor
2 <sup>nd</sup>	+2	+3	+0	+0	Lance Focus +1
3 <sup>rd</sup>	+3	+3	+1	+1	
4 <sup>th</sup>	+4	+4	+1	+1	Lance Focus +2
5 <sup>th</sup>	+5	+4	+2	+2	Spirited Charge
6 <sup>th</sup>	+6/+1	+5	+2	+2	Lance Focus +3
7 <sup>th</sup>	+7/+2	+5	+3	+3	
8 <sup>th</sup>	+8/+3	+6	+3	+3	Lance Focus +4
9 <sup>th</sup>	+9/+4	+6	+4	+4	Animal Empathy
10 <sup>th</sup>	+10/+5	+7	+4	+4	Lance Focus +5
11 <sup>th</sup>	+11/+6/+1	+7	+5	+5	
12 <sup>th</sup>	+12/+7/+2	+8	+5	+5	
13 <sup>th</sup>	+13/+8/+3	+8	+6	+6	Improvised Lance
14 <sup>th</sup>	+14/+9/+4	+9	+6	+6	
15 <sup>th</sup>	+15/+10/+5	+9	+7	+7	Expert Rider
16 <sup>th</sup>	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+7	+7	Riding Grapple
17 <sup>th</sup>	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+8	+8	
18 <sup>th</sup>	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+8	+8	Riding Dodge
19 <sup>th</sup>	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+9	+9	
20 <sup>th</sup>	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+9	+9	Grand Champion

**Moderator's Notes:** This class balanced fairly well when tested against other classes of comparable type, namely the Fighter and Paladin. The player that used it actually found it preferable, yet still challenging to play. It is primarily weaker than the paladin, due to the lack of healing skill, yet stronger than the fighter due to its specific abilities. Strategy is of key importance with the Joustier, as is an understanding of the rules involving mounted and charging combat. The Joustier is the perfect class for the DM running an arena-style campaign or adventure. Additionally, I was asked why it was called the Joustier and not the Knight, and I pointed out that not only are the Joustier's abilities focused towards that particular sport, but the term Knight is more of a title than a class. A Joustier could be a knight, to a noble of sorts, but a knight would be too general a concept.