

HIRING RETAINERS

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Old-School Essentials presents basic procedures for locating and hiring retainers, but much detail (e.g. pay rates) is left to the referee's judgement. This article provides some additional detail, for groups that prefer more concrete guidelines.

Locating Potential Retainers

Frequenting drinking establishments: Spending a night buying rounds and greasing palms in taverns costs 50gp. Per night, there is a 3-in-6 chance of successfully locating applicants (see *Applicants*).

Posting notices of help wanted: Spending a day posting notices in public places costs 25gp. Per day, there is a 2-in-6 chance of successfully locating applicants (see *Applicants*), who will apply at the specified location 1d4 days later.

Repeated searches: Each method of locating applicants may only be used with a certain maximum frequency, depending on the size of settlement: in villages, each method may be used once a month; in small towns, once a week; in large towns, twice a week; in cities, once a day.

Applicants

Roll on the table below each time a search for potential retainers succeeds.

Number of Applicants by Settlement Size

Settlement	Townfolk	Adventurers
Village	1d4	1
Small Town	1d6	1d3
Large Town	2d4	1d4
City	2d6	1d6

Townfolk

Normal humans without a character class (effectively level 0) willing to join an adventuring party. See the Normal Human monster listing in *Old-School Essentials*. Often used as torch-bearers or porters.

Starting equipment: None.

Adventurers

Independent adventurers of a specific character class (roll on the *Retainers' Character Class* table).

Level: Most applicants are 1st level, but 1-in-6 may be of level 1d3+1.

Starting equipment: Basic adventuring gear, weapons, and armour (e.g. using the tables under *Quick Equipment*, p16).

Retainers' Character Class

d12	Class	Alternatives
1	Cleric	Bard, druid
2-4	Fighter	Barbarian, knight, paladin, ranger
5	Magic-user	Illusionist
6-8	Thief	Acrobat, assassin
9-10	Halfling*	Gnome, svirfneblin
11	Dwarf*	Duergar, half-orc
12	Elf*	Drow, half-elf

Alternatives: If using *Old-School Essentials Advanced Fantasy*, 2-in-6 applicants may be of one of these alternative classes.

*: If using the optional rule for separate race and class (see *Old-School Essentials Advanced Fantasy*), roll 1d8 for class. Re-roll if an unsuitable class results.

Offering Wages

Once an applicant has been located, the hiring PC must offer them a certain wage.

Townfolk: Will want a daily rate of pay.

Adventurers: Will want a daily rate of pay *plus* a share of any treasure recovered.

Poor, Standard, and Generous Wages

Generosity	Daily Rate	Loot Share
Mean (-2)	2sp	¼ share
Poor (-1)	5sp	⅓ share
Standard	1gp	½ share
Decent (+1)	5gp	⅔ share
Lavish (+2)	10gp	Full share

Applicant Reaction

The applicant's reaction to the offer is determined by a 2d6 reaction roll, modified by the hiring PC's CHA and reputation, as well as the generosity of the offer. See *Retainers* in *Old-School Essentials*.

Generosity modifiers: The modifier listed in the table above is applied to the 2d6 reaction roll to determine whether the applicant accepts the offer.

Bonus payments: Offering to buy equipment for the applicant or give them a sum of money up front may improve the offer generosity by one step in the table above, to a maximum of a +2 generosity bonus.

Refused offers: A reaction roll of 3–5 indicates that the applicant refuses. The referee may allow player to try again with an improved offer.



Treasure-Share XP (Optional Rule)

The standard rules for awarding XP state that XP earned in an adventure is divided evenly between all surviving characters, including retainers (who suffer a -50% penalty to XP earned, as they are only following instructions). The division of *treasure* is agreed by the party and does not influence the amount of XP each character gains.

Some groups prefer the division of XP to directly match the division of treasure, as follows.

Division of treasure: The manner in which treasure is divided is the party's decision (usually agreed before the adventure). Retainers are typically awarded a flat fee per day of work and possibly a fractional share of treasure.

Division of XP: Each character earns XP equal to the gp value of the treasure they were awarded by the party. XP not earned due to treasure (e.g. XP from monsters defeated) is divided evenly between all members of the party.

Retainers' XP penalty: If using this optional rule, retainers do not suffer any penalty to XP earned. (But typically earn less XP than PCs as they are awarded a smaller share of treasure.)

Example: A party recovers 1,400gp worth of treasure and is awarded 400 XP for defeating monsters. The surviving members—3 PCs and 1 retainer—agreed to divide treasure as follows: each PC gains a full share (400gp) and the retainer gains a half share (200gp). Each PC thus gains 400 XP and the retainer gains 200 XP. The XP from defeating monsters is divided evenly—the PCs and the retainer each gain 100 XP.