

Swords and Wizardry Complete for Castles and Crusades Players

Swords and Wizardry and Castles and Crusades have a similar pedigree, and both are built upon the foundation of the Open Gaming License materials, however, Castles and Crusades feels like more of a cross between AD&D and 3.5e (without skills or feats or prestige classes), where Swords and Wizardry Complete feels more like OD&D and AD&D, with possibly some Basic D&D mixed in.

Here are some differences to be aware of:

Classes

Castles and Crusades has 13 classes, and Swords and Wizardry has 9:

Castles and Crusades	Swords and Wizardry
Assassin	Assassin
Barbarian	-
Bard	-
Cleric	Cleric
Druid	Druid
Fighter	Fighter
Illusionist	-
Knight	-
Monk	Monk
Paladin	Paladin
Ranger	Ranger
Rogue	Thief
Wizard	Magic-User

Races

Castles and Crusades has 7 races, and Swords and Wizardry has 5:

Castles and Crusades	Swords and Wizardry
Dwarf	Dwarf

Elf	Elf
Gnome	-
Half-Elf	Half-Elf
Halfling	Halfling
Half-Orc	-
Human	Human

Combinations

Any race may play any class in Castles and Crusades. In Swords and Wizardry, races and classes are restricted in availability and level. Castles and Crusades also has optional multi-classing rules. In Swords and Wizardry, multi-classing is available only to demi-humans. Humans may “dual-class” however, which is when they cease leveling in one class and start a new one.

Class	Human	Dwarf	Elf	Half-Elf	Halfling
Assassin	*				
Cleric	*				
Druid	*				
Fighter	*	6, 7 (str 17), 8 (str 18)			4
Monk	*				
Paladin	*				
Ranger	*				
Thief	*		*	*	*
Magic-User	*				
Fighter/Thief		6/*			
Fighter/Magic-User			(4/5/6)/* (limit 5 th level spells)	(6/7/8)/(6/7/8)	
Fighter/Magic-User/Thief			(4/5/6)/*/* (limit 5 th level spells)		
Fighter/Magic-User/Cleric				(6/7/8)/(6/7/8)/*	

* unlimited

multi-classed characters can't have more than 9 total HD.

Multi-Classing

Multi-classing has a different set of rules than C&C, and does not half class-and-a-half rules.

Abilities and Saves

There may be several types of modifiers for each ability score in S&W, where in C&C there is one bonus per score. In S&W these bonuses are very small, and abilities are much less important than in C&C.

Abilities and Saves in C&C use the SIEGE system and depend on primes, ability scores, and levels.

In Swords and Wizardry, abilities tend to be fixed percentages or pips on a d6, and there is a single saving throw number at each level. Some classes also get a bonus to this number for specific situations. Generic ability checks aren't a large part of the game (there is no specific rule given), though some checks are given per ability such as "Open Doors" for Strength.

High scores may affect your max level in certain classes when multi classing, and also may give a bonus to XP earned.

Only fighters can use their Strength bonus on to-hit and damage (including on bows)

Alignment

In C&C, a 2 axis, 9 point alignment system is used, allowing for varying degrees of ethicality and morality. In S&W, there are three alignments: Law, Neutrality, and Chaos. These are more of an innate characteristic of an eternal universal balance and less of a personal philosophy.

Equipment

Starting Gold

C&C does starting gold per class. In S&W everyone gets 3d6x10 gold to start.

Equipment Tables

These are roughly equivalent and generic D&D. Notably armor works differently.

In C&C shields have a different rating in terms of # of opponents defended against.

In S&W armor types are simplified with shield being +1 and plate being +6. Both an ascending (like C&C) and descending (Like D&D up to 2nd Edition AD&D) are offered.

Encumbrance

A simple system of weight determines your movement speed. Your strength might give you a carry weight bonus.

Experience

High ability scores that are primary for a class give more experience to PCs.

The experience range in C&C (like AD&D) is mostly spread from levels 1-12. In Swords and Wizardry Complete, they spread from levels 1-20. So 1 million XP might give you level 12 in C&C and 20 in S&W.

Time

In C&C a turn is 1 minute, and a round is 10 seconds.

In S&W a turn is 10 minutes and a combat round is 1 minute.

Initiative Sequence

In C&C there is one mostly unified combat system.

S&WC has 1 main and 3 alternative systems. Mostly these require declaration of spells.

Combat Movement and Maneuvers

C&C has withdrawal, dodge, etc. In S&W you control 5' of space, and it's suggested you get a free attack if someone leaves that space. Parry in S&W is a fighter ability.

In S&W there is a 2 handed, 2 weapon, or shield rule. Shield gives +1 AC, Two handed gives +1 damage, two weapon gives +1 to hit (not two attacks).

In C&C missed shots continue traveling and can hit other characters, friend or foe.

In S&W missile attacks into melee may not choose a particular target.

In C&C you may cast a spell in melee. In S&W it is not possible to do this, and damage to a spell caster after declaration of casting results in a lost spell.

Turning Undead

In C&C type, number, chance of undead turned is based on a SIEGE check.

In S&W turning happens on a table. Neutral clerics are not allowed to be clerics, and chaotic characters may not turn undead.

Death

Negative HP means death in S&W, and in C&C may only mean the character is unconscious.

Morale

Monsters are reasonably expected to flee in certain overwhelming situations in S&W.

Spells

Spells in S&W are given very brief descriptions are much more open to referee interpretation.

Saving throws are not dependent on the caster's level in S&W, so characters in general get better at saving against magical effects.

Why Play Swords and Wizardry?

Why play Swords and Wizardry if C&C seems to do the job, and has more class/race/multiclass options?

I think C&C is a fine game and have enjoyed many, many hours playing and running it. Reasons you might like to try S&W:

1. It's a little lighter. The rules are simply specified without a lot of prose sprinkled in. One book can be used either to learn or to reference the rules quickly.
2. Saving throws differentiate races and classes (they are the main reason to play a halfling, for instance) and you may find them preferable to SIEGE, in that generally you will get better
3. SIEGE can be difficult to understand and explain. The default way of handling primes in C&C is confusing, giving two challenge bases. It's simpler when you convert it to a straight +6 and one challenge base, but even then it can be difficult to explain the interaction between ability bonuses and primes.
4. It preserves the flavor of the old school D&D setting. By having different class/race possibilities and limits, those races are better defined, and also place primacy on humans. This can be especially good for sword-and-sorcery type campaigns where other races are rare.
5. Less emphasis on rules, more emphasis on rulings. While this can make it a bit harder for characters to predict what might happen in a given situation, it also frees up the DM to make things a little more fantastic.
6. You like old school games, but don't want to deal with trying to make them work cohesively and want a clear reference for players.
7. S&W rules are free; just the books cost money. You can get a free PDF or use a website that hyperlinks the rules.

8. Community. The C&C forums are divided and not growing as quickly as they once were. Frog God Games are very active in promoting their game and it's much easier to find S&W players as a result.