

# Weaponry: Poleax

## Overview

The poleax (or ‘pollaxe’) was the premier knightly weapon of late medieval Europe, especially in France, England, Italy, and the Holy Roman Empire. It wasn’t a peasant’s polearm—it was a *duelist’s* and *man-at-arms’* weapon, designed specifically for fighting heavily armored opponents on foot. Its versatility was its strength.

Typically about a man’s height, the poleax combined multiple killing tools into one weapon:

- Axe blade for cleaving
- Hammer or fluke for crushing plate armor
- Top spike for thrusting into gaps
- Butt spike for close-quarters reversals

Poleaxes were common in tournaments and battlefield melees once knights dismounted. Period fight manuals (*Fiore*, *Talhoffer*, *Le Jeu de la Hache*) show them used with grapples, trips, hooks, and deadly half-staff techniques—very much a thinking warrior’s weapon.

In short: if swords were elegant, the poleax was *clinical*.



## Qualities & Utility

- **Damage:** 1d10. **Hands:** Two-handed, melee weapon.
- **Gear Slots:** 2
- **Armor Breaker:** Against creatures wearing metal armor or with natural armor, you gain ADV on your first attack of each combat.
- **Hook & Bash:** On a successful hit, you may forgo damage to knock the target prone instead. (Enemy may avoid by passing DC 12 STR).
- **Reach Control:** Creatures without reach suffer DIS on attacks against you in the same round you hit them.

## Notes for Play

- Impractical in cramped tunnels or tight corridors (DIS to attack in tight spaces).
- Cannot be used while grappling.
- **Cost:** 14 GP. Available from skilled armorers in towns or cities.