



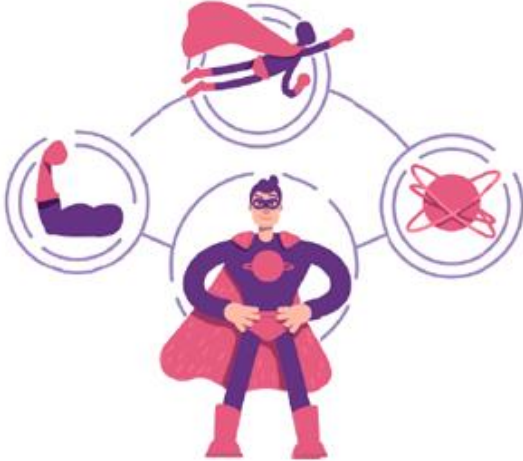
Edits

by Stacey

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Archetype Descriptions

Hero	
	<p>The hero archetype is the most common, as many stories will require a hero to “save the day” in some capacity. A hero is also regularly the protagonist who is the focus of the story. A hero can start the story reluctant to take up the role, born and trained to save others, doing one good deed that led them to help more and more, or even making a self-serving choice that puts them in a position where their actions could serve the greater good. Noble heroes are often tested throughout a story physically, mentally, spiritually, and/or morally to help them grow into the hero that is needed by the end. These trials can also help to reveal strengths and flaws that set them apart from the other characters in the story. Their many associated traits can come from anywhere and be used in simple, grand, and unique ways.</p>
Characteristics	Courage, Resilience, Faith, Competes against great odds, Standing up for those who can't
Challenges	Arrogance, Delusions of grandeur
Strengths	Courage, Perseverance, Honor, Physical and/or mental strength
Weaknesses	Overconfidence, Hubris
What to Watch for	Don't fall into the trap of making them <i>too</i> good. They shouldn't be untouchable or with no moral dilemmas as it destroys any form of suspense, more compelling heroes are the ones that must make hard choices and struggle. It is also possible to flip the hero archetype well in order to twist reader expectations for the story and characters



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Outlaw / Rebel



The rebel archetype is most easily recognized by how they stand out from society and/or the other characters in a story. The two biggest variations of this archetype include the rebel who is active or passive in their defiance of the status quo. Rebels can be driven to push back against society, either physically or verbally. Or they can simply live on the outside and not want to make trouble for themselves. A rebel can lead the charge and inspire others to fight against flawed leaders and/or power structures, or they can hide in the shadows and break the law to just benefit themselves. A rebel can have a potent reason to be defiant. They can also be different because they like to be.

Characteristics

Leadership, Risk-taking, Individuality, Bravery, Honesty, Unapologetic, Charismatic, Resourceful

Challenges

Negativity, Lawlessness, Fanaticism

Strengths

Independent thinking, Virtue, Owes no favors

Weaknesses

Self-involved, Criminal activities, Obsesses with their goal, Uncompromising, Lack resources and/or means of power

What to Watch for

Beware of the perfect bad boy images, as often readers will be disgruntled when the story doesn't benefit from that cliché. Be sure to have realistic flaws without going overboard



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Magician



The magician archetype is often a powerful figure who harnesses the systems of the story’s universe to achieve key goals. This goes beyond just a magic system and their power can come in varied forms. They can seek power in knowledge, political standing, wealth, and/or physical or mental strength. They’re so skilled that they seem inhuman compared to other characters. They often will search for more power for themselves than to help others. Magician characters have a drive to seek more, even when they have an abundance of power. This archetype can easily be used in characters that stand with or against the protagonist.

Characteristics

Powers of perception, Intuition, Cleverness

Challenges

Trickery, Hubris, Manipulation

Strengths

Omniscience, Omnipotence, Discipline

Weaknesses

Corruptibility, Arrogance

What to Watch for

Beware of characters that are good or evil just for the sake of it. Add a humanizing trait or motivation to help readers relate/empathize with them.



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Ruler



A ruler archetype is one of the simplest to identify and create. This character has legal, military, or emotional power over others, usually on a large scale. They have some level of responsibility for others, as little as their household or as large as a kingdom. Their method of ruling can be anywhere on a spectrum, from an iron fist to total compassion for every person. Commonly, the two biggest fears of a ruler archetype are a threat to their control or power over those they rule or a threat of harm to those they protect.

Characteristics

Order, Stability, Control, Traditional, Powerful

Challenges

Entitlement, Greed, Irrelevance

Strengths

Omnipotence, Status, Resources

Weaknesses

Aloofness, Disliked by others, Out of touch, Controlling, Many enemies, Fear of losing position/status

What to Watch for

Don't make the ruler singularly evil or good with no unique personality beyond cliches. You can craft the ruler character just as human as other characters and not just a figure of power.



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Caregiver



A caregiver archetype is often the most supportive and self-giving character in a story. They rarely are the main characters and instead help others to be their best. They will give practically anything to nurture and protect those they care for. They also are a steady place and voice for characters to turn to for compassion, empathy, and kindness. Caregivers can be found in many roles: parents, teachers, mentors, partners, guardians, siblings, friends, etc.

Characteristics

Compassion, Steadiness, Loyalty, Empathy, Relatable, Accepting, Grounded, Hard-working, Kind, Virtuous

Challenges

Arrogance, Delusions of grandeur, Letting go of control or safety

Strengths

Honorable, Selfless, Loyal

Weaknesses

Lacking personal ambition, Leadership, Power, Individuality, Unprepared

What to Watch for

A caregiver can become so shallow and selfish that they become flat. Instead, try adding some complexity to their story and actions. Subverted expectations of traditional caregivers include caring for or enabling the antagonist, being exploited to the point of becoming bitter or having a breaking point to show some selfishness.



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Artist / Creator



A creator archetype is often a motivated visionary, working towards a creation that can drive their every thought and/or action. Their creations can be physical or even divine. They are compelled to push limits and leave a legacy. To them, nothing is more important than the art they create. Creators are sometimes even willing to sacrifice themselves to reach their goals.



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Innocent



This archetype is morally pure and whose intentions are only good. They are often a child or child-like character that is a vessel to see the beauty and light of the world and in people. This archetype isn't meant to be a long-lasting or long-standing character. The innocent is used as a background character for the main characters to notice, or they are the starting point for the main character. They usually start from a good and comfortable place until an event alters their world. This will cause them to leave behind the archetype as their eyes are opened to something they were ignorant of, ignored, or didn't impact them until that moment.

Characteristics

Openness to experience, Trust, Honesty, Enthusiasm, Loving

Challenges

Naïve to the world, Denial that problems exist

Strengths

Morality, Kindness, Sincerity

Weaknesses

Vulnerable, Naïve, Rarely skilled or powered

What to Watch for

Usually, this archetype is the starting point of a character that will grow and change throughout the journey. They often fall into 'chosen one' clichés and are mishandled. This archetype has a lot of potential for growth (both for light and/or darkness) so it is hard to make them a cliché beyond the first act.



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Explorer



This archetype is like the rebels, as they are driven to push the boundaries of the status quo. However, while both the rebel and the explorer will push against physical and social boundaries, also the latter will push themselves to change. They have a desire to explore the unknown physically, mentally, and/or spiritually. They often are unsatisfied with their life as it is and will search for something of meaning and bigger than a ‘normal life.’



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Sage / Mentor



A mentor is simply a wise figure who is often asked for or desired by the main characters. They are willing and have a desire to help and further others along their journeys. They can have mystical and/or realistic knowledge and skills that are needed by the protagonist to grow stronger. Mentors often are, but don't have to be, an older/elderly character. A mentor role can be taken on by a large range of characters, as long as they do have more experience and knowledge with what the hero seeks their help to master.



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 Lover 	
	<p>This archetype is a character that is guided by their heart and emotions above all else. They are often willing to change or sacrifice themselves in pursuit of obtaining or maintaining love. The person or object they love is the most important thing in their life. A lover archetype can be seen in a large range of characters as what a person loves can also be a large spectrum. It can range from a love of nature to a place, to an object, as well as to a person. A lover's archetype affection for another isn't limited to being just romantic, but also be guided by a love of friends or family.</p>
Characteristics	Loyalty to another, Willing to sacrifice for others, Devoted
Challenges	Lack of own identity, Obsession, Jealousy
Strengths	Humanism, Passion, Conviction
Weaknesses	Naivete, Irrationality, Fearful of loneliness
What to Watch for	Beware of stereotypes such as the star-struck lover, or love at first sight. Make them a more complex character than just a person who loves one thing or person most.



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Jester



This archetype is a humor-centered character who provides some level of comic relief in a story. A jester's comedy can simply be a joke, but it can also speak on or point out important truths. A jester's humor can also be used for intentional or unintentional jokes depending on their action, words, and/or how other characters view them. This archetype is often used in characters who live in the moment and don't plan very far ahead in life. They carry on a casual attitude and easy-going lifestyle and are often proud of it. They usually are side characters that have a little stake in the primary goal of the protagonist.

Characteristics

Humorous, Originality, Irreverence

Challenges

Being misunderstood, Inefficiency, Not taken seriously, Treated as a second fiddle, Humor taken too far

Strengths

Comedy, Disarming, Insightful

Weaknesses

Can be obnoxious and superficial, Impulsive

What to Watch for

The best subversions can arise from adding this archetype to a character the audience wouldn't normally expect to behave this way.



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Everyman



An everyman is the easiest archetype to create. It is just as the name suggests, a character that is simple and feels recognizable from daily life. They rarely have a higher education or experience outside of everyday life. They will have more simple jobs and lifestyles compared to more grand living or driven characters. They aren't clueless but focus on what is more relevant to their life in the moment. They seek security more than grandeur and will not push against the life they lead. This character is simple for most readers to relate to or know from their own lives. An everyman is a character that will be the most likely to call out things that seem strange or don't belong in their understanding of the world. This archetype is rarely used for main characters beyond the inciting incident of a story. As the everyman will not have enough drive or desire to push a story forward. The few main characters that remain an everyman archetype will often be in stories where the setting or other characters are the focus, and the actions of the everyman have little effect in the grand scheme of things.

Characteristics

Fairness, Stewardship, Accountability

Challenges

Righteousness, Recklessness

Strengths

Grounded, Salt-of-the-earth, Relatable

Weaknesses

Lacking special powers, Often unprepared for extraordinary

What to Watch for

Be careful to not write a common person as just an extension of the innocent. Don't over-expose how oblivious the common person is. If this archetype is the main character, don't make them stumble around for cheap laughs or be the simpleton with no notable characteristics.

Archetype Character Wheel

Use this wheel to help you better understand the motivations and relationships between each archetype.

