

99 Archetypes and Stock Characters

Absent-Minded Professor — An absent-minded scientific genius (Doc Brown from *Back to the Future*)

All Loving Hero — A character that loves everyone and will suffer for the sins of their loved ones.

Anti-Hero — A hero that is driven by pursuit for power, sex, money, control, or particular vices and because of this, they are often selfish, anti-social, power-hungry, and materialistic. But they sometimes showcase some heart in the end (Max from *The Road Warrior*)

Anthropomorphic Personification — The living embodiment of a fundamental abstraction. They may be god-like in power, but have a much narrower focus and struggle with limits based on what they represent (Joy, Sadness, Fear, Anger, and Disgust from *Inside Out*)

Audience Surrogate — Characters who the audience sympathize with by actively seeing themselves as them. Usually victims of social challenges (Clay and Hannah from *13 Reasons Why*)

Bad Boy — A macho loner that doesn't care that he's bad. He's actually proud of it and that often attracts others (Dallas from *The Outsiders*)

Big Fun — The big, fun, lovable guy or girl (Hurley from *Lost*)

Black Knight — An evil fighter or antagonist (Darth Vader from *Star Wars*)

Blind Seer — Characters with a sacrifice of sight that has greater cosmic knowledge (Chirrut from *Rogue One*)

Boss — The boss of everyone. They are usually controlling, competitive, stubborn, aggressive, and always call the shots

Boy Next Door — The average nice guy that does everything in the right

Career Criminal — This character commits high stakes crime and is often smart and highly skilled (Neil McCauley from *Heat*)

Champion — The character who is devoted to the cause/life/honor of one character and everything that they entail (Sam from *The Lord of the Rings*)

Child — This character is young in age or spirit, and loves adventure — or at least they think they do until they truly experience it (Tim from *Jurassic Park*)

Chosen One — They have been chosen by someone or some force and are the only ones capable of resolving the plot (Neo from *The Matrix*)

Chooser of the Chosen One — This is the character who finds and chooses The Chosen One (Morpheus from *The Matrix*)

Conscience — A classic character type whose sole purpose is to act as the hero's conscience and moral compass (Jiminy Cricket from *Pinocchio* or Clarence from *It's a Wonderful Life*)

Contender — A competitive underdog (Rocky from *Rocky* or Daniel from *The Karate Kid*)

Corrupter — Their primary role in the story is to bring out the worst in everyone (Rumpelstiltskin in *Once Upon a Time*)

Damsel in Distress — A noble and innocent woman in need of rescue (Kim in *Taken* or Lois Lane in *Superman*)

Dark Lord — The near-immortal personification of evil (Sauron from *The Lord of the Rings*)

Dumb Muscle — This character lacks intelligence, or fails to showcase it, and are tasked with doing the heavy lifting of the villain or any antagonist

Elderly Master — A wise, powerful man or woman teaching their powerful craft to a young student (Mr. Miyagi from *The Karate Kid*)

Egomaniac — They like to be the center of attention and usually are often very insecure, overcompensating for a deep need to be loved and/or revered.

Fall Guy — The scapegoat that the powerful or empowered use

Father Figure — The man who showcases authority, yet has a pure heart and will do all he can to protect those he loves and watches over, either physically or emotionally (Atticus from *To Kill a Mockingbird*)

Femme Fatale — A beautiful but mischievous and traitorous woman (Catherine Trammel in *Basic Instinct*)

Ferryman — A character that acts as a guide or aid, allowing characters to travel over near impossible obstacles to reach specific destinations (Heimdall from *Thor*)

Final girl — The "last girl standing" in a horror movie (Laurie from *Halloween*)

Gentle Giant — Big, strong, and intimidating, but they've got a heart of gold. (Fezzik from *The Princess Bride*)

Gentleman Thief — A very charming, sophisticated, and well-mannered thief (Thomas Crown from *The Thomas Crown Affair*)

Girl Next Door — An average but attractive girl with a wholesome quality to her

God or Goddess — All powerful but often showcase human qualities in the end (Zeus from *The Little Mermaid*)

Good King — He is honorable, virtuous, wise, and understanding. He cares about his subjects no matter how seemingly unimportant they are and puts their well-being above his own (King Arthur)

Grande Dame — A very flamboyant woman, often used as a stereotype for an elderly high society socialite (Martha from *Arthur*)

Grotesque — An often tragic character that induces both fear and pity because their deformities overshadow a perfectly normal and likable personality (The Hunchback of Notre Dame)

Harlequin — A clown or professional fool

Herald — This character sets the Hero/Protagonist on the path of adventure (Obi-Wan Kenobi from *Star Wars*)

Hero — The character that faces the most direct danger and conflict as a basis for the central aspect of the story

Hotshot — This character is often skilled, but reckless, known for taking risks (Maverick from *Top Gun*)

Hunter of Monsters — A character whose sole mission is to eliminate whatever monster(s) in question (Quinn from *Jaws*)

Ingenuer — A young woman who is endearingly innocent and wholesome

Imposter/Pretender — They are intelligent and take advantage of situations and characters

Jester — They are always lighthearted and joking but always pure of heart and truly caring for others (Will Ferrell in *Elf*)

Jock — A male athlete who is often muscular, but not very smart

Kirk — The captain or a similar leader who needs to be practical rather than emotional or distant, often having to make decisions in the middle of *The Spock* or *The McCoy* (see below)

Knight-errant — A noble Knight on a Quest

Loner — The Loner isolates him or herself and often struggles to connect with others. They feel alien to others around them (Theodore Twombly from *Her* or Jim from *Rebel Without a Cause*)

Loser — They don't catch any breaks and always seem to get the short end of the stick. They are also either usually unmotivated and don't care about how they are perceived, or they do and try to make the change, only to fail time and time again (Charlie Brown from *The Peanuts* and arguably the guys behind *Pied Piper* in *Silicon Valley*)

Lovable Rogue — They break the law and don't always seem to care about anyone else, but they often show enough heart in the end for audiences to like them (Han Solo from *Star Wars*)

Lovers — Star-crossed lovers who fall romantically in love, despite the constant conflict of other characters. They're often from different sides of the tracks (Romeo and Juliet, Tony and Maria from *West Side Story*)

Loyalist — They have the strong ability to support others and always remain loyal in doing so despite their own lack of abilities and feeling of self-worth (Dr. Watson from *Sherlock Holmes*)

Mad Scientist — Usually insane or highly eccentric. They often play the role of the villain or antagonist and always feel that the science they are exploring is above and beyond any human rights issues or ethics (Dr. Moreau from *The Island of Dr. Moreau*)

Magician or Shaman — A man with special insight or mystical powers coming to the aid of the protagonist (Dick Halloran from *The Shining*)

Maiden — Usually the innocent and pure female that is often in need of rescue. She can be naive, sometimes overly self-confident, and can be attractive but also child-like (Princess Fiona from *Shrek*)

Manic Pixie Dream Girl — Characters that have eccentric personality quirks, are very girlish, and usually dreamingly cute and attractive (Sam from *Garden State*)

McCoy — He or she cares for others deeply and they always seek to do the right thing, no matter what the situation

Mentally or Socially Disabled — Dependent and sometimes draining on others around them at times. More preferred contemporary variations are those that have a heart and contribute to the story in a positive way (Raymond from *Rain Man*)

Mentor — The mentor is the adviser, the expert, and is usually intelligent and wise in whatever field of expertise or philosophy that they are known for. They care for the hero and want to be in the hero's life, which usually starts with conflict at first

Monster — They are either half human or not human at all and usually provoke fear and panic.

Mother Figure — The mother figure is always the source of nurturing and comfort, offering guidance while also sometimes coming off as over-controlling and worrisome, but always acts from the heart (Mrs. Baker from *Boyz n the Hood* and Mrs. Gump from *Forrest Gump*)

Mother's Boy — A man who is excessively attached to his mother. This is played for all types of emotions and genres, including comedy, drama (*Forrest Gump*), and tragedy (*Norman from Psycho*)

Nemesis/Challenger — They usually exist to hate the hero, for any number of reasons. The nemesis or challenger is often similar to the hero in many ways and thus is always trying to overshadow due to jealousy or outright hate (*Loki from Thor*)

Nerd — Usually a socially-impaired, obsessive, or overly-intellectual person. They often have a good heart and always mean well (*Sheldon Cooper from The Big Bang Theory*)

Noble Savage — A wild outsider with noble characteristics that has little to no experience with society's ways (*Tarzan*)

Observer — They often witness all that goes on, but remain quiet and calm throughout. They are usually philosophical and every time they speak or act, it's important (*Rafiki from The Lion King*)

Outlaw — Similar to the Rebel (see below). They are romanticized, charismatic, and can often be the social bandit of the story

Peacemaker — They try to force the peace between characters and situations. Usually the voice of reason between all.

Pessimist — For them, the glass is always half empty. They won't take risks and often complain about everything every chance they get (*Hudson from Aliens*)

Psychopath — They have no conscience, are amoral, and have the inability to feel or care for others. All of which together is not a great combination.

Rebel — Despite the fact that many believe James Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause* is the quintessential rebel (he's actually better defined as the loner), the truth is that the rebel takes the loner attributes to the next level as they push up against anyone and everyone, walking strictly to a beat of their own drum without caring what others think (*John Bender in The Breakfast Club*)

Redshirt — The expendable character that is never given much backstory and usually dies soon after being introduced. Taken from the original *Star Trek* series where characters with red shirts were often those expendable characters going out on missions with the main characters.

Reluctant Monster — The Reluctant Monster usually has no idea that they're a monster at all. They are often a member of a species that traditionally does nasty things to people, but that is not in their own personal nature (*Frankenstein*)

Rightful King — A lost or forgotten just ruler whose return or triumph restores peace (*Aragon from The Lord of the Rings*)

Seeker — They are always on a quest for the truth, uncovering mysteries, lies, and deception despite all dangers both big and small that they face on a personal and professional level (*Erin Brockovich*)

Shrew — A bad-tempered or aggressively assertive woman

Side Kick — The friends and helpers of the main hero. They are much like the loyalist, but play a more active part in the Hero's adventures (*Robin from Batman Forever* and *Short Round from Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*)

Sociopath — A person with a personality disorder manifesting itself in extreme antisocial attitudes and behavior and a lack of conscience. They are intelligent, cunning, and dangerous (*Hannibal Lecter from The Silence of the Lambs*)

Southern Belle — A young woman that often represents the American Old South's upper class daughter or young and pretty woman (*Scarlett O'Hara from Gone With the Wind*)

Spock — The Spock is an archetype that focuses on logic, rules, and reason while fighting for the greater good

Straight Man — Exists alongside a funny character. Their serious and no-nonsense attitude makes his partner look all the more crazy and funny (*Abbott from Abbott and Costello movies*)

Storyteller — A character that is noted for his or her ability to tell tales, or those that choose to do so, even to the dismay of the other characters (Wally from “Crocodile” Dundee)

Superhero — A hero with special powers that vows to protect the world around them (Marvel Cinematic Universe characters)

Super Soldier — A soldier who operates beyond human limits or abilities (Luc Deveraux/GR44 from Universal Soldier)

Supervillain — Antithesis to the Superhero

Swashbuckler — A joyful, noisy, and boastful renaissance era swordsman or pirate (Jack Sparrow from Pirates of the Caribbean)

Tomboy — A girl usually interested in sports, activities, and displaying attributes that often fall under the umbrella of boys and men in society (Scout from To Kill a Mockingbird)

Tortured Artist — They often display constant torment due to frustrations with art and society

Town Drunk — Usually a male in a small town who is known to be drunk in public fashion

Tragic Hero — A hero with a major flaw that leads to his or her eventual death and downfall (Anakin Skywalker from the Star Wars prequels)

Trickster — They are often the trouble makers, liars, and the self-absorbed. They can be like jesters, but they often make more of an impact on the main characters in some way, shape, or form by the end of the story (The Mask from The Mask or Buddy Love in The Nutty Professor)

Troubled Teen — They hate rules and defy authority, usually because of depression, hormones, or due to social differences. Despite the hard attitude they portray, they are often the most vulnerable (Evie from Thirteen)

Turncoat — The character who switches sides at some point to help out the other side (Cypher from The Matrix)

Village Idiot — A character usually known locally for ignorance or stupidity, but are often shown to have a good heart and can contribute to either the downfall or the uprising of the hero (Noah Percy from The Village)

Villain — An evil character in a story

Whiskey Priest — A priest or ordained minister who teaches at a high standard but also showcases moral weakness through drinking alcohol or other vices (Father Callahan from The Exorcist)

Wise Fool — A “fool” or somewhat socially hindered character with an attribute of wisdom (Dory from Finding Nemo)

Wise Old Man — An elderly character who provides wisdom to the protagonist (Gandalf from The Lord of the Rings)

Yokel — A term referring to the stereotype of unsophisticated back country characters (Carl Spackler from Caddyshack)