ORC and Pathfinder Licensing

Rules and Licensing (ORC / Pathfinder)

The short answer

Building a Pathfinder-2e-inspired roguelike is legal. The PF2e Remaster rules are under the **ORC License** (Open RPG Creative License) - perpetual, irrevocable, royalty-free, and explicitly covering **video games**. Game mechanics aren't copyrightable anyway; ORC grants use of the actual SRD expression (rules text, statblocks, action text).

What ORC covers

- Rules, mechanics, statblocks, monster statistics, character options, conditions, actions, spells.

What it does NOT cover

- The **"Pathfinder" name and logo** (trademark - separate negotiation with Paizo, the Owlcat model).
- **Golarion setting, lore, proper nouns, art, music.**

Obligations if using SRD content

1. ORC Notice (standard copy-paste legal block)
2. Attribution notice (credit Paizo and upstream licensors)
3. Reserved Material designation (declare what's yours)
4. No endorsement claims; 60-day cure for breaches; no royalties, forever.

Chosen path

Path A: Pathfinder-inspired, own world. Own statblock format, own monster names, own setting (the game is redesigning its ecosystem anyway). If we later want specific SRD statblocks, bring them in under ORC with the notice. No Pathfinder branding in the title.

~~Path B: actual Pathfinder brand~~ - contacting licensing@paizo.com for a commercial deal is not needed for this project.

Archives of Nethys status (July 2026)

- Paizo's commercial license with AoN **ended July 24, 2026**, but a looser arrangement keeps AoN as an **official rules archive** (no royalties reporting; art moved to Community Use Policy coverage; CUP art expanding).
- Rules content is ORC-licensed regardless of host - the game plan is unaffected.

Scope

- **A couple of classes to start, not the whole shebang** - and port tactical verbs, not classes: Fighter (exec-window zone control), Rogue (feints), Wizard (prep-heavy spells with duration clocks), Cleric (delayed effects). That exercises every phase of the tick model.

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