

Cityscape, Part 2

Urban Magic
By Ari Marmell



[Cityscape](#) presents a variety of new feats, spells, and warlock invocations that were developed in an urban environment or that you can use in a city-based setting. While these are the most prevalent of new tools and tricks for the urban adventurer, however, they are far from the only ones. Other, stranger wielders of magic, from the mysterious shadowcaster to the heretical binders, draw on powers and entities of a particularly urban bent. For those who do not practice such esoteric arts, not only magic items, but also alchemical and entirely mundane tools, exist to enhance the abilities of the city explorer.



Several of the abilities and items herein reference mechanics from *Cityscape*. Both the shadowcaster and the binder can be found in the *Tome of Magic*.

Spirits of the City

Binders do not work their own magics, but instead call upon and bond with vestiges, strange spiritual beings from beyond the known multiverse. While none of these vestiges are entirely unique to large communities, several have both histories and abilities that lend themselves toward urban adventuring.

Astaroth, Unjustly Fallen

A fallen angel who would never accept responsibility for his own transgressions, Astaroth grants his summoners influence over the behavior of others, knowledge of hidden things, and the ability to sicken enemies.

Astaroth

Vestige Level: 4th

Binding DC: 22

Special Requirement: No

Legend: Scholars know little of Astaroth before his fall, save that he favored constant interference and assistance when it came to mortals, rather than leaving them to develop on their own. Some tales claim that he was responsible for teaching humanoid such techniques as metalworking and even alchemy.

According to ancient writings, Astaroth himself maintains that this was why he fell, cast from Heaven for the "crime" of aiding the mortal races in their development of civilization. Most theologians, however, remain convinced that the angel was exiled for greater crimes. Legends range from an attempt to usurp the position of some heavenly god, to an effort to raise an entire mortal race to



celestial status, to an attempt to turn all mortals away from worship of the gods so that he might be free to influence them as he saw fit. Astaroth admitted to no such defiance, however, and swore to the day of his disappearance that his fall was unjust.



For centuries Astaroth roamed many worlds, mortal and spiritual alike. To the celestials, he was an outcast -- another prideful fallen angel who could not even admit to his errors, let alone atone for them. Yet because he refused to embrace damnation, he found no allies among the fiends either. Eventually he settled among mortals. He watched over them as a guardian and mentor to start, but slowly his obsession with "protecting" the mortals grew uncontrollable. Astaroth became a dictator, restricting even the day-to-day behavior of his subjects to keep them "safe." The fallen angel was finally slain by an uprising within the populace, but none of the Outer Planes would grant his soul any respite. Eventually, with no afterlife to call his own, stripped even of his physical existence, Astaroth simply went -- elsewhere.

Manifestation: Accompanied by the sound of flapping wings and cawing crows, Astaroth manifests as a hideously ugly angel. His limp wings are filthy gray, his features drawn and gaunt, and his eyes yellowed. He carries a viper in his right hand and wears a tarnished crown upon his brow. A horrific stench accompanies him, almost but not quite enough to sicken everyone nearby.

Sign: Your skin yellows, and you emit a foul, unwashed odor. While this odor is not strong enough to impede or distract an opponent, it does attract attention.

Influence: Astaroth's influence renders you incapable of taking responsibility for your own actions. You cannot admit any fault, acknowledge any mistake, or make reparations or apologies for any wrong, no matter the consequences or the evidence against you.

Granted Abilities: Astaroth guided mortals, and he still grants abilities based in knowledge and education. As a fallen angel, and then a vestige, his magics have grown ever grimmer and more distasteful; he also grants powers based on directly controlling and offending others.

Angelic Lore: Astaroth constantly whispers the secrets of reality in the back of your mind, allowing you to draw on his own nigh-infinite knowledge. This functions as the bardic knowledge ability (*PH* 28), based on your effective binder level.

Astaroth's Breath: Once every 5 rounds, you can exhale a 60-foot cone of foul-smelling gas. Creatures within the cone must make a Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round and sickened for an additional 1d4 rounds. Those who make the save are merely sickened for 1 round. Creatures immune to poison or disease are immune to this effect.

Honeyed Tongue: You gain a +4 competence bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks.

Master Craftsman: While bound to Astaroth, you gain a +4 competence bonus on all Craft checks. In addition, each time you bind with Astaroth, you may select one item creation feat as a temporary bonus feat. So long as you continue to bind with Astaroth, you may use that feat as though you possessed it normally; you must still spend all standard gold and XP for any item you create, and you must still provide all necessary spells for a given item.

If your effective binder level is not at least as high as the necessary caster level to take a specific item creation feat, you cannot choose that feat. For instance, a 4th-level binder could not choose any item creation feat with a prerequisite of caster level 5th or higher.

Word of Astaroth: You may make a *suggestion*, as the spell, with a caster level equal to your effective binder

level. You must wait 5 rounds before attempting another *suggestion*, and at any given time, you may only have a total number of people under the effects of this ability equal to your Charisma bonus.

Desharis, the Sprawling Soul

The first of the "city-born fey," represented today by such creatures as the zeitgeist (*Cityscape* 138) and the gray jester (*Heroes of Horror* 151), Desharis is a boon to those who work to spread civilization, and anathema to most fey and worshipers of the wild. He grants binders shelter against the dangers of the wild, and he provides powers to carve out their own niche against nature.

Desharis

Vestige Level: 6th

Binding DC: 27

Special Requirement: Yes

Legend: According to ancient myths, the earliest true community was a human village called Desh, or "shelter" in the old tongue. Here the people dwelt together for protection against predators, and they first constructed structures rather than use existing shelters for protection against the elements. (For more on the legend of Desh, see *Races of Destiny*.)

This legend itself is neither uncommon nor unknown today. What few realize, however, is how swiftly the natural and magical worlds adapt to changes within. Desh was not merely the first community, but it also birthed the first urban fey, a distant ancestor of what would become the mighty zeitgeist.

Desharis knew nothing of his own origins. He knew only that of his two conflicting urges -- one to protect the sanctity of the natural world, the other to defend Desh and the people therein -- the latter was by far the stronger. Invisibly, he worked to stave off attacks from predators; to keep the village free of plague; and to aid its inhabitants when other humanoids attempted to raid Desh for its supplies. While the people of Desh thanked the gods and spirits for their fortune, however, they never knew of Desharis himself. The other fey of the world, horrified at the notion of a spreading society that might supplant the natural order, counted Desharis a traitor. They worked to thwart his efforts and even destroy him. Though he was, in effect, the very embodiment of community, Desharis was ever alone.

Desharis grew bitter at the disdain of the other fey, and some suggest that he inspired the spread of civilization as vengeance against them. Whatever the case, Desharis spread as the notion of community did, growing ever more diffuse, ever larger. Though he gained in size and influence, he gained nothing in the way of power; smaller villages added nothing to his abilities, and larger communities frequently birthed their own urban fey. Eventually, the spirit of community was too diffuse and spread out to exist as a being at all -- and yet, as the embodiment of civilization, now a permanent part of the world, he could not entirely fade away.

Special Requirement: If you have gone more than a day without binding Desharis, you may only draw his seal in a village or larger city. Attempts to do so elsewhere fail outright. You can, however, "carry" Desharis into the wild; this is why you may continue to summon him, even outside the urban environment, if you have not allowed more than a day to lapse since you last did so.

Manifestation: Desharis appears with the sound of a hundred distant voices talking and shouting, though specific words remain completely unintelligible. A veritable mob of individuals appears as from a great distance,



as though the air above his seal had become a window to some other place. As the mob approaches, these bare silhouettes meld together even as they take on greater details, eventually combining to form a single humanoid shape standing 10 feet in height. Though the silhouettes look human, Desharis himself appears made of equal amounts of stone, wood, metal, and glass.

Sign: While hosting Desharis, your eyes turn to glass. Anyone meeting your gaze sees the movement of multiple silhouettes behind them, as though looking through a window at a busy street.

Influence: Under Desharis's influence, you cannot stand to be alone, and the more people you have around you, the better. You never voluntarily accept any task that requires you to be alone, and you argue vigorously against options that would split the party. If you have the opportunity to socialize with large groups of people (such as entering a boisterous tavern), you must take it unless doing so is overtly harmful, or you have reason to suspect the individuals are hostile to you.

Granted Abilities: Desharis grants abilities that reflect his desire to protect the civilized peoples of the world, plus provides a few that show his anger at the fey and other creatures of nature.

City-Dweller: While hosting Desharis, you move at your normal rate when moving through a crowd, rather than requiring two squares of movement for every square as is normal. In addition, you gain a +6 competence bonus on Gather Information and Knowledge (local) checks (and may use the latter even if you have 0 ranks in it).

Infinite Doors: Once per day, you can pass through an exterior doorway (one that leads from inside a building to outside), and appear through another exterior doorway within 3,000 yards. The two doors must both be set in buildings made of similar materials; for instance, you could pass from a wooden building to another wooden building, or a stone building to another stone building. You can either select a specific door with which you are familiar as the destination, or simply declare that you are appearing through the closest appropriate door to a given distance. (If no appropriate portal exists within range or in the direction you wish to travel, the effect does not function.) This is a teleportation effect.

Language of the City: You can speak with any humanoid, as per the *tongues* spell.

Smite Natural Soul: You may attempt to smite an animal, elemental, fey, or plant with a single melee attack. You add your Charisma bonus (if any) to the attack roll and deal 1 extra point of damage per effective binder level. If you accidentally smite a creature that is not one of the above types, the attempt has no effect. Once you have used this ability, you cannot do so again for 5 rounds.

Spirits of the City: You can *animate objects*, as the spell, as a caster of your binder level. Once you have used this ability, you must wait 5 rounds after the effect has expired, or all the objects have been destroyed, before you may do so again.

Shadows of the City

Binders are not the only practitioners of strange magics operating in the bustling city. The night-touched shadowcaster draws her power from the Plane of Shadow, and the dark and twisted reflection of the material world cast therein. And nothing, an urban shadowcaster would tell you, casts a longer or darker shadow than tall buildings and endless winding streets.





Apprentice Path Mysteries

Night's Long Fingers

1 Quicker than the Eye: Gain bonus on Sleight of Hand checks; use Sleight of Hand at a distance.

2 Trail of Haze: Touched target emits a trail of shadowy mist only you can see.

3 Umbral Fist: Make special attacks at a distance.

Darkened Alleys

4 Fearful Gloom: Area of shadow causes fear in all who enter.

5 Sickening Shadow: Area of shadow causes illness in all who enter.

6 Deadly Shade: Area of shadow enhances or dampens damage dealt within.

Master Path Mysteries

Shadowscape

7 Grasping Shadows: Tendrils grapple foes and cause blindness.

8 Menagerie of Darkness: Transform nearby animals and vermin into shadow creatures and gain control over them.

9 Black Labyrinth: Shift portions of the real world into Shadow and vice-versa, creating a bewildering array of effects.

New Mysteries

Black Labyrinth

Master, Shadowscape

Level/School: 9th/Conjuration (Creation)

Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)

Area: One-mile-radius spread, centered on a point in space

Duration: 24 hours/2 levels (D)

Saving Throw: Will partial; see text

Spell Resistance: No

The air blackens, the shadows of the alleys lengthen, and the wind shrieks as the Shadow and Material Planes collide.

Black labyrinth causes substantial disorientation within the area it affects. Direction and distance become impossible to determine, as the world itself bends and twists.

- All attacks have a 50% miss chance.
- Area effects with a source or target within the *black labyrinth* have a 20% chance of improper placement. If this occurs, the spell is centered 1d4 x 5 feet in a random direction from where the caster intended. To determine direction, use the rules for a missed splash weapon (*PH* 158).

- All Search and Spot checks take a -10 penalty.
- Any movement, from a 5-foot step to a full run and everything between, occurs in a random direction. (Again, use the rules for a missed splash weapon to determine direction.) Reroll any result that places the creature in an "illegal" space (in another creature's area, within a wall, and so on). A random roll that results in a fall off a ledge (or a similar mishap) *is* allowable. A successful Will save negates this particular effect, but that save must be repeated for each round of movement.
- Any teleportation effects with a destination inside the *black labyrinth* deposit their passengers 1d% x 5 feet from the intended destination. If this would put them inside a solid object, treat as a mishap as described in the *teleport* spell. If this would send them outside the mystery's area, roll again. A teleport effect cast within the *black labyrinth* and intended to transport the subject to a point outside the affected area requires a successful Will save; failure indicates that the subject instead teleports to a random point within the *blacklabyrinth*.

When within your own *black labyrinth*, you are immune to the last two effects (movement and teleportation), but not the others. You may attempt to guide your companions through the *labyrinth*; this does not allow them to find their way automatically, but it does grant them a +4 bonus on Will saves to resist those two effects.

Deadly Shade

Initiate, Darkened Alleys

Level/School: 6th/Necromancy [darkness]

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area: 30-ft.-radius emanation

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

Tendrils of darkness flow from the ground like smoke, filling the area with writhing, shifting darkness. A cold draft washes over your soul even as the tendrils rise.

The area of *deadly shade* is filled with shadowy illumination, as per *darkness* (PH 216). In addition, each time you invoke this mystery, decide if you wish the spell to deal or absorb damage.

If you choose to deal damage, anyone within the area who suffers hit point damage from any source must make a Fortitude save. Failure indicates that the subject gains a negative level. Success prevents the negative level, but if the individual is damaged again within the area, he must attempt a new save. These negative levels fade in 1 hour per caster level, and they never cause permanent level loss.

If you choose instead to have the *deadly shade* absorb damage, all creatures within the area gain DR 4/-- and energy resistance 4 against all energy types. (This stacks with other forms of resistance or other sources that grant DR X/--.)

Fearful Gloom

Initiate, Darkened Alleys

Level/School: 4th/Necromancy [Darkness, Fear, Mind-Affecting]

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area: 30-ft.-radius emanation

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will partial; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

Plumes of blackness swiftly fill the air like a viscous fog. The shifting of shadow and mists just barely suggests the presence of screaming faces and indescribable horrors lurking in the dark.

The area of *fearful gloom* is filled with shadowy illumination, as per *darkness* (PH 216). All creatures within the area, or who enter it, must attempt a Will save or become frightened; on a successful save, they are shaken instead. If the creature has fewer than 5 HD, it is panicked on a failed save and frightened on a success. Creatures within the area must repeat the save each round until they either fail or leave the area. Once a creature has left the *fearful gloom*, the effects last an additional 2d6 rounds.

Grasping Shadows

Master, Shadowscape

Level/School: 7th/Conjuration (Creation)

Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Area/Target: 20-ft.-radius spread

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will partial

Spell Resistance: See text

Stalks of shadows burst from the ground, as though desperate to escape the bonds of the earth, and immediately flail at everyone nearby.

This mystery creates an area of grasping tendrils that function as the spell *Evard's black tentacles* (PH 228), with one additional hazard: Anyone successfully grappled by a tentacle must attempt a Will save or go blind. A successful save means the individual is safe from blinding during that particular grapple, but if she escapes and is then regrappled, she must make another saving throw. The blindness is permanent until magically cured.

Menagerie of Darkness

Master, Shadowscape

Level/School: 8th/Transmutation

Range: 30 ft.

Area: 30-ft.-radius emanation centered on you

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Nearby animals and vermin abruptly shudder. Their mouths and eyes gape wide as a torrent of blackness flows into them from the surrounding gloom.

Any animals or vermin within the emanation, or who enter it, must make a Will save or immediately take on the aspects of their shadow selves, temporarily gaining the dark creature template (*Tome of Magic* 158). You gain control over these animals, as per the spell *dominate animal* (PH 224). You can command any number of them as a single move action if you are giving them all the same orders. If you wish to give different commands to different animals or vermin, however, you must spend a move action on *each* order.

At any given time, you may have a total number of Hit Dice of animals and vermin under your control equal to 4 x your caster level.

Menagerie of darkness does not affect animals or vermin with Hit Dice higher than your caster level.

Quicker than the Eye

Apprentice, Night's Long Fingers

Level/School: 1st/Transmutation

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 minute/level (D)

A faint layer of shadow flows like ink over your hands, staining them pitch black -- and then, in an instant, they appear normal once more.

You gain a +5 enhancement bonus on Sleight of Hand checks (which you can now attempt even if you have no ranks in that skill). This bonus increases to +10 at 5th level, and +15 at 10th level. In addition, if you invoke *umbral hand* (*Tome of Magic* 152), you may attempt Sleight of Hand checks through it.

Sickening Shadow

Initiate, Darkened Alleys

Level/School: 5th/Necromancy [Darkness]

Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Area: 30-ft.-radius emanation

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw: Fortitude partial; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

An oily black smoke rolls out of nowhere, obscuring sight and sound. It leaves a distasteful residue on everything within, and the scent is one of open sewers and putrefied flesh.

The area of *sickening shadow* is filled with shadowy illumination, as per *darkness* (PH 216). All creatures within the area, or those who enter it, must attempt a Fortitude save or be nauseated. Those who succeed are merely sickened. Creatures within the area must repeat the save each round until they either fail or leave the area. Once a creature has left the *sickening shadow*, the sickened effect lasts for 2d6 rounds. Nausea lasts for 1d4 rounds and is then followed by an additional 2d6 rounds of being sickened.

Trail of Haze

Apprentice, Night's Long Fingers

Level/School: 2nd/Illusion (Phantasm)

Range: Touch

Target: One creature

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: No

At your touch, the target seems almost to leak. A tiny plume of jet-black mist emerges from his flesh, first in a trickle, then an ever-increasing stream.

The mist emerging from the subject is an illusion that only you can see. It constantly drifts from the subject to your location, providing a nearly foolproof way of finding and identifying the subject. The trail stretches for a number of miles equal to half your shadowcaster level, so it is possible for the target to escape your detection if he moves fast enough (or *teleports*). If the subject leaves the plane, the trail ends, though it resumes if he returns before the duration expires. The haze allows you to track the target, identify him if he disguises himself, or even locate the square he is in should he become invisible.

Umbral Fist

Apprentice, Night's Long Fingers

Level/School: 3rd/Transmutation

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 1 round/level (D)

Your hand turns jet black and seems to flicker as tiny wisps of shadow constantly leak from between your fingers and disappear.

For the duration of this mystery, you can, as a standard action, make a special attack against any foe within medium range (100 ft. + 10 ft./level). You must have line of sight to the target.

You can make any one of the following special attacks: bull rush, disarm, or trip. For purposes of adjudicating these attacks, make your touch attack as normal, if one is necessary. When actually resolving the opposed roll, however, substitute your caster level for your base attack bonus and either your Intelligence or Charisma modifier (your choice) for your Strength. Because the attack is made at a distance, it does not draw an attack of opportunity that such an attack would draw under normal circumstances, nor can your foe attempt to perform the same maneuver on you in turn, even if such is normally allowed.

About the Author

Ari Marmell has spent time on several creative endeavors, not the least of which is [Cityscape](#), a supplement that helps DMs bring campaign cities to life.

Based on the original **Dungeons & Dragons®** game by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and on the new edition of the **Dungeons & Dragons** game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison. **D&D**, **Dungeons & Dragons**, and **Forgotten Realms** are registered trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All Wizards characters, character names, and the distinctive likenesses thereof are trademarks owned by Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This material is protected under the laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction of or unauthorized use of the material or artwork contained herein is prohibited without the express written permission of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. This product is a work of fiction. Any similarity to actual people, organizations, places, or events is purely coincidental. This Wizards of the Coast game product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without written permission. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, please visit **www.wizards.com/d20**. ©2001-2006 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. All rights reserved. Made in the U.S.A.

Visit our website at www.wizards.com/dnd