DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® Supplement

UNEARTHED ARCANA™

Andy Collins, Jesse Decker,
David Noonan, Rich Redman

UNEARTHED ARCANA

ANDY COLLINS, JESSE DECKER, DAVID NOONAN, RICH REDMAN

ADDITIONAL DESIGN
ANDREW FINCH, STEVE KENSON, CHARLES RYAN, BILL SLAVICSEK, ED STARK, JONATHAN TWEET, JD WIKER, JAMES WYATT

EDITORS
MICHELE CARTER, GWENDOLYN F.M. KESTREL, CHARLES RYAN

MANAGING EDITOR
KIM MOHAN

DESIGN MANAGER
ED STARK

DIRECTOR OF RPG R&D
BILL SLAVICSEK

IMAGE TECHNICIAN
JAY SAKAMOTO

PRODUCTION MANAGER
JOSH FISCHER

ART DIRECTOR
DAWN MURIN

COVER ARTIST
MATT CAVOTTA

INTERIOR ARTISTS
STEVEN BELLEDIN, ED COX, WAYNE ENGLAND, EMILY FIEGENSCHUH, DAVID HUDNUT, JEREMY JARVIS, DOUG KOVACS, JOHN AND LAURA LAKEY, DAVID MARTIN, DENNIS CRABAPPLE MCCLAIN, MARK NELSON, JAMES PAVELEC, STEVE PRESCOTT, DAVID ROACH, RICHARD SARDINHA, RON SPENCER, STEPHEN TAPPIN, JOEL THOMAS, BEN THOMPSON

GRAPHIC DESIGNER
DAWN MURIN

GRAPHIC PRODUCTION SPECIALIST
ERIN DORRIES

CARTOGRAPHER
TODD GAMBLE

This d20™ System game utilizes mechanics developed for the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® game by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

Resources for this product include *Psionics Handbook* by Bruce Cordell, *Swords of Our Fathers* by JD Wiker (Game Mechanics), *Mutants & Masterminds* by Steve Kenson (Green Ronin Publishing), *Call of Cthulhu* by Monte Cook and John Tynes, *d20 Modern Roleplaying Game* by Bill Slavicsek, Jeff Grubb, Rich Redman, and Charles Ryan, *Oriental Adventures* by James Wyatt, *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* by Bill Slavicsek, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker, *Player's Option: Combat & Tactics* by L. Richard Baker III and Skip Williams, *Alternity Player's Handbook* by Bill Slavicsek and Richard Baker, and the University of Notre Dame's Latin parser at http://www.nd.edu/fiarchives/latgramm.htm.

Valuable advice provided by Bruce Cordell and James Wyatt

Playtesters: Richard Baker, Greg Collins, Dale Donovan, Chris Galvin, Joe Hauck, Kevin Kukas, Viet Nguyen, Brent Pearson, Tim Rhoades, Marc Russell, Scott Smith, Dennis Worrell, Warren Wyman, James Wyatt

U.S., CANADA, ASIA, PACIFIC, & LATIN AMERICA
Wizards of the Coast, Inc.
P.O. Box 707
Renton WA 98057-0707
Questions? 1-800-324-6496

EUROPEAN HEADQUARTERS
Wizards of the Coast, Belgium
T Hofveld 6d
1702 Groot-Bijgaarden
Belgium
+322-467-3360

620-88156-001-EN
9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1
FIRST PRINTING: February 2004

Product Identity: The following items are hereby identified as Product Identity, as defined in the Open Gaming License version 1.0a, Section 1(e), and are not Open Content: All trademarks, registered trademarks, proper names (characters, deities, artifacts, places, etc.), artwork, trade dress, and the names and game statistics for the following monsters: beholder, displacer beast, gauth, githyanki, githzerai, mind flayer, slaad, umber hulk, and yuan-ti.

Open Content: Except for material designated as Product Identity (see above) and the githyanki/githzerai, slaad, and yuan-ti bloodlines in Chapter 1, the contents of this WIZARDS OF THE COAST® game product are Open Game Content, as defined in the Open Gaming License version 1.0a Section 1(d). No portion of this work other than the material designated as Open Game Content 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**.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, D&D, DUNGEON MASTER, d20, d20 MODERN, d20 System, WIZARDS OF THE COAST, *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, *Monster Manual*, *Unearthed Arcana*, and their respective logos are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., in the U.S.A. and other countries. Distributed to the hobby, toy, and comic trade in the United States and Canada by regional distributors. Distributed in the United States to the book trade by Holtzbrinck Publishing. Distributed in Canada to the book trade by Fenn Ltd. Distributed worldwide by Wizards of the Coast, Inc., and regional distributors. This material is protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America. Any reproduction 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. Printed in the U.S.A. ©2004 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

Visit our website at **www.wizards.com/dnd**

Contents

Introduction 4

Chapter 1: Races 5
- Environmental Racial Variants 5
- Elemental Racial Variants 15
- Reducing Level Adjustments 18
- Bloodlines 19
- Racial Paragon Classes 32

Chapter 2: Classes 47
- Variant Character Classes 47
- Specialist Wizard Variants 59
- Spontaneous Divine Casters 64
- Class Feature Variants 65
- Prestigious Character Classes 69
- Gestalt Characters 72
- Generic Classes 76

Chapter 3: Building Characters 79
- Alternative Skill Systems 79
- Complex Skill Checks 81
- Character Traits 86
- Character Flaws 91
- Spelltouched Feats 92
- Weapon Group Feats 94
- Craft Points 97
- Character Background 100

Chapter 4: Adventuring 109
- Defense Bonus 109
- Armor as Damage Reduction 111
- Damage Conversion 112
- Injury 113
- Vitality and Wound Points 115
- Reserve Points 119
- Massive Damage Thresholds and Results 119
- Death and Dying 121
- Action Points 122
- Combat Facing 124
- Hex Grid 128
- Variable Modifiers 129
- Bell Curve Rolls 132
- Players Roll All the Dice 133

Chapter 5: Magic 135
- Magic Rating 135
- *Summon Monster* Variants 136
- Metamagic Components 139
- Spontaneous Metamagic 151
- Spell Points 153
- Recharge Magic 157
- Legendary Weapons 162
- Item Familiars 170
- Incantations 174

Chapter 6: Campaigns 179
- Contacts 179
- Reputation 180
- Honor 185
- Taint 189
- Tainted Prestige Classes 191
- Sanity 194
- Test-Based Prerequisites 210
- Level-Independent XP Awards 213

Afterword: When Worlds Collide 216

Variant Checklist 219

Sidebars

(BtC = Behind the Curtain; HR = House Rule)

- Aquatic Race Level Adjustments 7
- Subraces and Paragon Classes 32
- HR: Skilled Half-Elves 40
- Paragon Classes in Your Game 46
- Multiclassing and Variant Classes 48
- Urban Tracking [General] 56
- HR: Spontaneous Domain Casting 64
- BtC: Spontaneous Casting 65
- HR: Druid Domains 68
- Unique Spells 71
- HR: Fractional Base Bonuses 73
- Skill Knowledge [General] 81
- Why Complex Checks? 83
- BtC: How Many Successes? 85
- BtC: Designing Traits 89
- BtC: Creating Flaws 91
- BtC: Spelltouched Feats 93
- HR: Adding a Favored Class 100
- Additional Favored Class [General] 100
- BtC: Class Defense 110
- BtC: Armor as DR 112
- Combo: Defense Bonus and Damage Reduction 112
- BtC: Damage Conversion 113
- BtC: Injury 114
- HR: Slower Magical Healing 115
- BtC: Vitality and Wounds 117
- HR: Out-of-Turn Dodge 118
- BtC: Reserve Points 119
- BtC: Massive Damage Rules 120
- BtC: Death and Dying 121
- BtC: Action Points 122
- HR: Luck Checks 124
- Combat Awareness [General] 127
- HR: Enhancement and Touch AC 128
- BtC: Variable Modifiers 129
- BtC: The Bell Curve 132
- BtC: Players Rolling Dice 134
- BtC: Summoning Lists 138
- HR: Metamagic and Sorcerers I 140
- BtC: Metamagic Components 150
- HR: Metamagic and Sorcerers II 151
- BtC: Spontaneous Metamagic 152
- HR: Daily Spell List 153
- BtC: Spell Points 154
- HR: Simplified NPC Spellcasters 156
- HR: Recharging Magic Items 158
- BtC: Recharge Magic 159
- HR: No Spell Resistance against Energy Damage 174
- BtC: Creating Incantations 177
- BtC: Who's Affected by Reputation? 182
- BtC: Honor and Alignment 187
- BtC: Taint 193
- It Came from Cthulhu 195
- Sanity Resistance 197
- Forbidden Knowledge 198
- Variant Rule: Insane Insight 201
- The Heal Skill and Mental Treatment 202
- HR: Puzzles and Hints 207
- BtC: Sanity 208
- BtC: Test-Based Prerequisites 212
- HR: XP Bonus Pool 214
- BtC: Level-Independent XP 215

Numbered Tables

- 1–1: Reducing Level Adjustments 18
- 1–2: Bloodline Levels 20
- 1–3: Bloodline Strength 30
- 1–4: Minor Bloodlines 31
- 1–5: Intermediate Bloodlines 31
- 1–6: Major Bloodlines 31
- 1–7: Bloodline Trait Distribution 31
- 1–8: The Drow Paragon 33
- 1–9: The Dwarf Paragon 34
- 1–10: The Elf Paragon 35
- 1–11: The Gnome Paragon 37
- 1–12: The Half-Dragon Paragon 39
- 1–13: The Half-Elf Paragon 40
- 1–14: The Half-Orc Paragon 41
- 1–15: The Halfling Paragon 42
- 1–16: The Human Paragon 43
- 1–17: The Orc Paragon 45
- 1–18: The Tiefling Paragon 46
- 2–1: Variant Paladin Class Features 54
- 2–2: Spells Known 65
- 2–3: Ranger Favored Environments 66
- 2–4: The Prestige Bard 69
- 2–5: The Prestige Paladin 71
- 2–6: The Prestige Ranger 72
- 2–7: The Expert 77
- 2–8: The Spellcaster 78
- 2–9: Spellcaster Spells Known 78
- 2–10: The Warrior 78
- 3–1: Skills by Class 80
- 3–2: Example Complex Skill Checks 81
- 3–3: Character Traits 86
- 3–4: Spelltouched Feats 93
- 3–5: Sample Crafted Items 98
- 3–6: Craft Points Gained by Level 99
- 3–7: Item Creation Feats 99
- 4–1: Defense Bonus 110
- 4–2: Defense Bonus for Other Classes 110
- 4–3: Creature Defense Bonuses 110
- 4–4: Armor and Damage Reduction 111
- 4–5: Natural Armor and Damage Reduction 112
- 5–1: Magic Rating by Class 136
- 5–2: Metamagic Components 141
- 5–3: Spell Points per Day 153
- 5–4: Bonus Spell Points 154
- 5–5: Spell Point Costs 155
- 5–6: General Recharge Times 158
- 5–7: Spell Recharge Times 160
- 5–8: The Battle Scion 164
- 5–9: The Faith Scion 166
- 5–10: The Spell Scion 168
- 5–11: The Swift Scion 169
- 5–12: Item Familiar Abilities 171
- 6–1: Contacts 180
- 6–2: Reputation Scores 182
- 6–3: The Tainted Sorcerer 193
- 6–4: The Tainted Warrior 193
- 6–5: Sanity Loss from Creatures 196
- 6–6: Sanity Loss from Spellcasting 196
- 6–7: Example Forbidden Tomes 198
- 6–8: Duration of Temporary Insanity 200
- 6–9: Short-Term Temporary Insanity Effects 200
- 6–10: Long-Term Temporary Insanity Effects 200
- 6–11: Random Indefinite Insanity 201
- 6–12: Drugs 203
- 6–13: Alternative Experience Point Progression 214
- 6–14: Experience Award (Single Monster) 214

Introduction

Warning: Get ready to drink from the fire hose.

Unearthed Arcana exposes you to more variant rules and alternative methods of gaming than anyone can hope to use in a single campaign. On top of those, a bunch of House Rule sidebars written by various members of the Wizards of the Coast R&D department describe personal variants they've used in their home campaigns. In fact, there's probably more in here than you could reasonably use in a dozen campaigns, and some of it you probably won't ever get around to actually introducing to your game.

Take a deep breath—it's okay.

Just as no player actually casts all the new spells in the latest rulebook, and no DM actually uses all the new creatures in the latest manual of monstrosities, you shouldn't feel any compulsion to use all these variants, even in a lifetime of gaming.

Instead, pick and choose the ones that feel right for your style of gaming, your players, and your campaign. Some groups may latch on to a specific variant—whether the taint rules, Sanity checks, spell points, or legendary weapons—in a heartbeat, making it a central feature of their game world. Others find a few smaller changes to incorporate, such as a variant class or class feature, reputation checks, or alternative massive damage thresholds. Use the checklist at the back of the book to track what you're using, and what changes you make to the variants you use.

The "trick" behind getting your money's worth from this book is an attitude of curiosity and experimentation. Some groups may have a conservative outlook: "We like the way our game works and don't want to wreck it." It's okay to think that way—but nothing in this book can wreck your game unless you let it. If you try out a variant and it doesn't work for you after a session or three, go back to the way you were playing, or just start over from where you were before you tried out the new rules. No harm, no foul.

The adventurous groups, though—the ones willing to learn new ways to play their familiar game—stand to reap the biggest rewards from *Unearthed Arcana*. In a way, this book perfectly represents the game itself: Adventurous characters get rewarded, though it takes work to reap those rewards.

When you turn to the next page, the inundation begins. Just remember to take small sips at first—try out a small number of variants for starters, gradually increasing the level of change until you reach your comfort level. Don't worry that you're not using all the new stuff at once. After all, there's always another campaign waiting to be born, and maybe in that one you finally try out the new metamagic components, or the spelltouched feats, or . . .

—*Andy Collins*

WHAT'S INSIDE?

It's usually true that you don't need to read a D&D rulebook from front to back to get the most out of it—and that's never been more true than in the case of *Unearthed Arcana*. Using the table of contents as a guide, you can simply flip to a part of the book that looks interesting and start reading. That said, here's a summary of what each chapter contains.

Chapter 1: Races introduces the concept of racial variants, keyed either to a particular environment or a certain elemental type. It offers a way to reduce a character's level adjustment, which can pay off in more rapid advancement at higher levels. Much of the chapter is devoted to bloodlines—a way to make characters distinctive by giving them a hint of monstrous ancestry. Finally, it presents paragon classes that enable characters to develop into quintessential examples of their race.

Chapter 2: Classes is full of ways to tailor the standard D&D character classes. It provides a system allowing divine spellcasters to cast their spells spontaneously, as well as some variant class features. You can replace the standard bard, paladin, and ranger classes with prestige versions of those classes, or you can create gestalt characters who gain levels in two classes at the same time. For a simpler approach to class selection, try out the generic classes at the end of this chapter.

Chapter 3: Building Characters offers options for detailing a character—a new way of determining which skills a character knows, a system for complex skill checks, and selections of traits and flaws that make characters more distinctive. Spelltouched feats and weapon group feats add even more variety to what characters can do. Instead of using the standard rules for the Craft skill, you can give characters craft points that they spend to create alchemical substances and magic items. The largest section of this chapter deals with character background, a way to create a character of higher than 1st level who has a unique personal history.

Chapter 4: Adventuring is a treasure trove of ideas for changing basic aspects of the way the game works. If you want to try out a new system for how Armor Class is determined, or the benefit that armor provides, or how characters are affected by damage, you'll find options here. You can give characters action points, which they use to improve their chances of succeeding at a task. You can change the way combat works by keeping track of a creature's facing, or by using a hexagonal grid rather than a square grid. You can even modify the most fundamental concept in the d20 System rules by getting rid of the d20 altogether!

Chapter 5: Magic is in many ways a counterpart to Chapter 4, except that the variants here are all related to the effects of magic on the game. You can give each character and creature a magic rating, which determines its caster level. You can generate individualized lists of *summon* spells related to each caster's world view or goals. Metamagic components allow spellcasters to use spells with the effect of a metamagic feat already built in. The spontaneous metamagic variant gives casters the opportunity to assign metamagic effects to a spell just as it is cast. The spell point system gives casters more flexibility in their daily spell choices. Rather than limiting casters to a certain number of spells per day, you can use the recharge magic system to determine how often a character can cast a particular spell or a spell of a certain level. You can change the role of magic in the game without altering any other rules by using the material on legendary weapons, item familiars, and incantations.

Chapter 6: Campaigns takes a look at concepts that can flesh out characters and affect (for good or ill) the way they interact with their world. Contacts are NPCs who can provide various forms of aid to player characters. Reputation and honor help to determine how the other residents of the campaign world perceive the PCs. For a darker and grittier campaign world, one in which characters are up against perils they can't control, you can incorporate the rules for taint or insanity (or both). Finally, for a different way of determining how characters fullfill the requirements for feats and prestige classes, check out the variant on test-based prerequisites.

Afterword: When Worlds Collide offers some brief advice for DMs on how to use a wide variety of variant rules during play without necessarily creating different campaign worlds for different combinations of variants.

Illus. by D. Kovacs

In many ways, a character's race provides a foundation for defining his place in the game world. Whether elf or dwarf, half-orc or half-dragon, a character's race is the cornerstone upon which the character crafts an identity.

The races in the *Player's Handbook* provide a variety of interesting roles. Add in the options presented in the *Monster Manual* or various campaign settings, and the variety becomes impressive indeed. But what if that variety isn't enough?

That's where this chapter comes in. The four variant systems presented here throw open the doors of racial options. You can play a troll-blooded human or a jungle-born halfling, a fire-touched elf or a paragon of dwarvenkind. These variants can be used individually or alongside one another, depending on the whims of the DM.

So dig in! You may never look at gnomes the same way again. . . .

ENVIRONMENTAL RACIAL VARIANTS

Racial variants are a great way add diversity to your game without drastically changing the ecology of your world. One method of altering the existing races is to introduce environmental variants, a number of which are presented here.

You may decide that one or more of these variants represent the "standard" version of a given race in your world. For instance, in a desert-based campaign the desert races presented below could replace the normal versions of the races described in the *Player's Handbook* and *Monster Manual*.

Alternatively, these variants could coexist with the standard races (or even with other variants) in your world. For example, you can use them as world-building tools—the existence of racial offshoots may constitute living proof of an ancient racial migration in response to some disaster.

Each racial variant modifies the race to which it is applied (hereafter called the standard race) in minor ways. All racial traits of the standard race—racial skill bonuses, bonus feats, special sensory capabilities (such as darkvision and low-light vision), ability modifiers, combat bonuses against specific foes, and racial weapon proficiencies—are retained unless the variant specifies otherwise. For instance, a human retains his extra skill points and extra feat at 1st level, a dwarf retains his stonecunning ability, and an elf retains her ability to spot secret doors, unless the variant description specifically indicates otherwise.

Many of the variant races described in this section provide alternate ability score adjustments. In these cases, the adjustments given here supersede the standard race's adjustments. For example, the aquatic goblin's ability score adjustments are –2 Strength, +2 Constitution, and –2 Charisma. These adjustments take the place of the goblin's normal –2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, and –2 Charisma.

Because humans are, by nature, the most adaptable of races, environmental variants are generally not included for humans. The exception is aquatic humans, which, due to their ability to live and

breathe underwater, are sufficiently different from other humans to warrant an environmental variant.

AQUATIC RACES

Beneath the surface of the ocean lies an exotic and alien world, complete with canyons, mountains, volcanoes, and forests. Inky depths conceal sunken cities, sleeping deities, and titanic monsters. For residents of the aquatic realm, the sunny world of the air is as mysterious and unknown as the black depths of the sea.

Players wanting their characters to be ocean dwellers can use these variants. Or, their characters might encounter these races while journeying beneath the sea.

The following cultural attributes are common to most aquatic races.

Personality: An aquatic race usually shares the temperament and interests of the standard race, but its members tend to be more serene than their landborn cousins.

Physical Description: A water creature is taller and thinner than a standard member of her race. Her feet and hands are webbed to facilitate swimming. (Aquatic elves even have fins along their limbs that serve the same purpose.) A water creature's skin ranges from pale green to dark blue. Her hair usually matches her skin color but may be one or two shades darker.

Water dwellers wear very little clothing, and what they do wear tends to cling tightly to their bodies. Some favor jewelry made of coral and other undersea treasures.

Relations: The attitudes of water creatures tend to be very similar to those of their landborn cousins. Members of aquatic races generally treat landborn creatures with guarded pleasantness on the rare occasions when they meet.

Aquatic gnome

Arctic gnome

Desert gnome

Jungle gnome

Alignment: Having avoided most of the political, economic, and military turmoil of the surface world, water creatures tend to take a much more placid view of life than their landborn cousins do. Members of an aquatic race favor neutrality in at least one aspect of alignment, if not both.

Lands: The civilizations of water dwellers often mirror those of their standard races, though water folk favor more loosely organized governments and more open societies. Water creatures generally have plenty of space available for building, so they rarely structure their habitats as densely populated cities. Instead, undersea races prefer to maintain loosely defined territories in which families and individuals can carve out their own niches.

Religion: Water creatures usually pay homage to at least one deity related to oceans, storms, or nature, such as Obad-Hai. Otherwise, their worshiping habits are similar to those of their standard races.

Language: Water creatures speak any languages spoken by members of their standard race. Many also learn Aquan to facilitate communication with other underwater creatures.

Adventurers: While there are plenty of adventures to be found beneath the waves, water creatures occasionally venture onto land to fulfill some important goal. Some are lured by the alien ways of the surface people; others feel a wanderlust that can be tamed only by walking the earth.

General Aquatic Racial Traits

All aquatic races have the following racial traits.

Illus. by M. Nelson

- Aquatic: An aquatic race gains the aquatic subtype. An aquatic creature can breathe underwater. It cannot also breathe air unless it also has the amphibious special quality. An aquatic creature can hold its breath outside the water for 2 rounds per point of Constitution. After that, it begins to suffocate (see page 304 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).
- Swim speed: An aquatic creature always has a swim speed. It can move through water at its swim speed without making Swim checks. It has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some action or avoid a hazard. It can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.
- Bonus Language: Aquan. Aquatic races are familiar with the language of water-based creatures.

Aquatic Dwarves

Beneath the waves, dwarves remain the masters of stone. They build massive, elaborate fortresses near the mineral-rich waters that surround undersea thermal vents.

Racial Traits: Aquatic dwarves have the general aquatic racial traits described above and all the dwarf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, as well as those noted below.

- +2 Strength, +2 Constitution, –4 Dexterity, –2 Charisma. Aquatic dwarves are tough enough to survive the brutal environment of the sea floor, but rely on strength and heavy armor rather than agility.
- An aquatic dwarf has a swim speed of 20 feet.

Aquatic Elves

The aquatic landscape is dotted with forests of kelp and roofed with sporadic blankets of sargasso weed. Hidden among these watery groves are the ancient settlements of the elves.

Racial Traits: Aquatic elves have the general aquatic racial traits described above, the elf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, and the aquatic elf traits given on page 103 of the *Monster Manual*, with the following exception.

- No gills.

Aquatic Gnomes

Aquatic gnomes travel the world beneath the waves in elaborate wood and shell chariots pulled by domesticated sea creatures. Their vehicles range in size from single-person launches to those large enough to house several families.

Racial Traits: Aquatic gnomes have the general aquatic racial traits described above and all the gnome racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- An aquatic gnome has a swim speed of 20 feet.
- Well-Traveled: Aquatic gnomes receive a +2 racial bonus on Sense Motive and Gather Information checks. They always know when their welcome is wearing out.
- No +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds: Aquatic gnomes do not come into combat with kobolds as frequently as their land-bound cousins. They retain their bonus against goblinoids, however.
- No racial bonus on Craft (alchemy) checks or Listen checks: Aquatic gnomes' visual acuity has improved at the expense of their other senses.

Aquatic Goblins

Aquatic goblins are feared and reviled as ocean-dwelling piranhas. A band of aquatic goblins and their shark mounts is likely to swoop down on any individual or group perceived as weak, to strip it of everything from gold and jewelry to clothing and hides. Leaving a trail of junk behind them as they evaluate their loot, the bandits swim off in search of other unlucky victims.

Aquatic goblins to take up adventuring for many reasons. While most goblins are neutral evil, many have different beliefs and seek like-minded individuals outside the tribe. Some lack opportunities to advance, and tire of living on the scraps of those with more authority or higher social position.

Racial Traits: Aquatic goblins have the general aquatic racial traits described above and all the goblin racial traits given on page 134 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- –2 Strength, +2 Constitution, –2 Charisma. Aquatic goblins are hardy creatures, but weaker than many races.
- An aquatic goblin has a swim speed of 30 feet.
- Thievery: Aquatic goblins get a +2 racial bonus on Disable Device and Sleight of Hand checks.
- An aquatic goblin's racial bonus on Move Silently and Ride checks is only +2. Aquatic goblins are known for riding Medium sharks.

Aquatic Half-Elves

Aquatic elves sometimes wed aquatic humans, just as land-based elves sometimes marry surface-dwelling humans. The aquatic results are aquatic half-elf children. They often serve as the diplomats and negotiators for either their human or elf communities, depending on where they live.

Elf Racial Traits: Aquatic half-elves have the general aquatic racial traits described above and all the half-elf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- An aquatic half-elf has a swim speed of 40 feet.

AQUATIC RACE LEVEL ADJUSTMENTS

None of the aquatic races have level adjustments (see Monsters as Races, page 172 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) when your entire campaign is set underwater and all the PCs have the aquatic subtype, or when playing a nonaquatic campaign. The advantages gained by an aquatic character when in an aquatic environment even out with those of other aquatic characters, and their disadvantages in nonaquatic environments make up for any advantages they might enjoy.

However, when a mix of aquatic and nonaquatic characters occurs in an aquatic or ship-based campaign, aquatic characters enjoy a distinct advantage over their land-based cousins. In this case, consider applying a +1 level adjustment for all aquatic races, due to their swim speed, improved low-light vision or darkvision, and other special abilities.

- No racial bonus on Gather Information checks.
- +2 racial bonus on Survival checks: Aquatic half-elves spend a great deal of time traveling between elf and human settlements on their diplomacy work, and so are accustomed to surviving in the undersea wilderness.

Aquatic Half-Orcs

In their remote and wild tribal homes, aquatic orcs occasionally coexist with barbarian tribes of aquatic humans. Sometimes the two groups intermarry, producing aquatic half-orcs.

Racial Traits: Aquatic half-orcs have the general aquatic racial traits described above and all the half-orc racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, in addition to those noted below.

- An aquatic half-orc has a swim speed of 30 feet.
- Emissaries: As emissaries for their tribes, aquatic half-orcs receive a +2 racial bonus on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks. They aren't the best diplomats under the waves, but they're a far sight better than their orc cousins.

Aquatic Halflings

Aquatic halflings are much more settled than their surface-dwelling cousins. Their slight size means they are easily buffeted by currents that flow beneath the waves like the rivers of the surface world. Many predatory creatures think nothing of swooping down on such small prey. As a result, aquatic halflings often live among dwarves and humans, within the defenses those races provide.

Racial Traits: Aquatic halflings have the general aquatic racial traits described above and all the halfling racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, in addition to those noted below.

- An aquatic halfling has a swim speed of 20 feet.
- Low-Light Vision: An aquatic halfling can see four times as far as a nonaquatic human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Aquatic Humans

Aquatic humans have a place beneath the surface of the sea, perhaps as descendants of forgotten civilizations whose island cities sank beneath the surface. They may replace merfolk in such campaigns, or exist along with them.

Racial Traits: Aquatic humans have the general aquatic racial traits described above and all the human racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, in addition to those noted below.

- An aquatic human has a swim speed of 30 feet.
- Low-Light Vision: An aquatic human can see four times as far as a nonaquatic human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

Illus. by D. Crabapple

Aquatic Kobolds

Aquatic kobolds are seldom seen outside their mines, much like their surface-dwelling cousins—despite the fact that their broad tails make them exceptional swimmers. They dig constantly, always expanding their subterranean territory, and as a result frequently come into conflict with aquatic dwarves. Aquatic kobolds often hire mercenaries to fight for them, hiding behind their carefully constructed traps and other defenses and paying their defenders with the mineral wealth they uncover while expanding their warrens.

The life of an aquatic kobold is one of constant toil and fear. Some few kobolds seek peace of mind through personal power and boon companions. These rare individuals become adventurers.

Racial Traits: Aquatic kobolds have the general aquatic racial traits described above and all the kobold racial traits given on page 162 of the *Monster Manual*, as well as the following trait.

- An aquatic kobold has a swim speed of 40 feet.

Aquatic Orcs

Aquatic orcs survive on the slopes of cliff sides or undersea drops, far from the warmth of volcanic vents and the nurturing light of the sun. As such, they control access to the secrets of the deep ocean trenches—but are menaced by fell creatures that rise up out of the trenches in search of fresh prey.

Aquatic orcs stand ever vigilant against attackers and thieves when they're not making preemptive strikes against those foolish enough to settle near their territory.

Occasionally an individual orc questions the need for constant battle, or seeks strategies other than brute force. Such iconoclasts often leave their tribes—at least temporarily—to become adventurers.

Racial Traits: Aquatic orcs have the general aquatic racial traits described above and all the orc racial traits given on page 204 of the *Monster Manual*, as well as the following trait.

- An aquatic orc has a swim speed of 30 feet.

ARCTIC RACES

Your campaign might be set in a snow-swept expanse of glaciers, mountains, and icy seas. Settlements cluster around sources of heat, including hot springs and volcanic vents. Frozen in the ice are relics of a forgotten, warmer time. Strange creatures descend from the glaciers, wreaking havoc and drawing adventurers like beacons.

Players wanting their characters to be nonhuman arctic dwellers can build characters using these variants, or their characters could encounter these races while journeying across the ice and snow.

The following cultural attributes are common to most arctic races.

Personality: Nearly all ice dwellers are more grim and humorless than members of their standard races. Efficiency

in word and deed is crucial to survival in the harsh arctic realms, so arctic creatures tend to get straight to the point in conversation, and they have little patience for those who speak in riddles or half truths. Because they must struggle for even the most basic existence in the severe climate of the arctic regions, excess of any kind is offensive to them. Thus, they tend to be frugal and to value hard work for the benefit of all over individual accomplishment.

Physical Description: An ice dweller is hardier than a member of his standard race, and he tends to carry extra weight on his frame even when in exceptional physical condition. His skin can be any shade from pale white to light blue, and his hair and eyes can be of any color found among members of his standard race.

Arctic creatures wear many layers of clothing as protection against the intense cold of their homeland. They do not particularly value jewelry or other ornamentation, and they carry only what they need to survive.

Relations: Those who spend their lives in the bleak and comfortless arctic regions treat outsiders with guarded wariness, if not outright distrust. Though members of most arctic tribes are willing to welcome strangers in from the cold, they tend to watch such newcomers very closely and hurry them on their way as soon as possible. Of course, a stranger with a particularly useful skill may be invited to stay—it is difficult to turn away a strong back or a skilled toolmaker in the desolate and frigid lands where the arctic races make their homes.

In addition to their particular distrust of outsiders, members of arctic races tend to harbor many of the same prejudices held by their standard races.

Alignment: Arctic races are generally inclined toward the alignment preferences of their standard races.

Lands: It is difficult for any living thing to survive in the frozen wastelands where arctic races live. Thus, most other races know little or nothing of their arctic cousins, and what they do know is often tainted by legend and hearsay. Most arctic creatures make their homes in ice caves or beneath the ground, although some tribes have adapted to life on the surface by building ice houses and other structures that can survive fierce winter storms.

Religion: Arctic races worship deities typical of their standard races. Obad-Hai is a popular choice of worship, and some give sacrifice to Nerull to ward away the attention of the Reaper. Boccob is often associated with the uncaring forces of arctic weather.

Adventurers: Ice dwellers must exert themselves merely to survive in the bitter climate of their homelands, so they tend to make ideal adventurers. Those who dislike the constant struggle of life in the arctic often travel far from their homes in search of comfort, if not adventure. Occasionally, arctic tribes send emissaries into temperate lands to gather aid against particularly strong enemies or to secure emergency stores during hard times.

General Arctic Racial Trait

All arctic races have the following racial trait.

- Cold Endurance: Members of arctic races have a +4 racial bonus on Fortitude saves made to resist the effects of cold weather or exposure.

Arctic Dwarves

In the icy wastes, dwarves are the masters of both ice and stone. They build massive, elaborate defenses of ice and rock around the mines where they dig for copper, silver, gold, and iron.

Racial Traits: Arctic dwarves have the general arctic racial trait described above and all the dwarf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 Strength, +2 Constitution, –4 Dexterity, –2 Charisma. Arctic dwarves are tough enough to survive the brutal environment of the arctic, but rely on strength and heavy armor rather than agility.
- Icecunning: Arctic dwarves can apply their stonecunning benefits to structures and natural features made of ice, as well as those made of stone.
- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds: Arctic dwarves must defend against constant assaults by kobolds. This trait replaces the dwarf's racial bonus on attack rolls against orcs.
- +2 racial bonus on Appraise and Craft checks related to items made of ice.

Arctic Elves

The arctic landscape is dotted here and there with permanent fog banks caused by subterranean heat interacting with snow and ice or warm springs steaming in the freezing air. Hidden in these oases of warmth are the ancient settlements of the elves.

Racial Traits: Arctic elves have the general arctic racial trait described above and all the elf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- –2 Strength, +2 Dexterity: Arctic elves look down on physical exertion, preferring quick action when necessary.
- +2 racial bonus on any one Craft skill (chosen by the character at the time of creation).
- +2 racial bonus on Survival checks made in arctic environments: Arctic elves are naturally adept at staying alive in the harsh conditions of their homeland.
- No racial bonus on Search checks.
- No special ability to notice a secret or concealed door within 5 feet without actively looking for it.

Arctic Gnomes

Arctic gnomes travel the ice and snow on cleverly constructed sleds pulled by immense woolly mammoths. The animals serve as transportation, a source of fibers for weaving, and walls against the elements. The sleds are enclosed, often transporting entire families.

Racial Traits: Arctic gnomes have the general arctic racial trait described above and all the gnome racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 racial bonus on Sense Motive checks: Arctic gnomes always seem to know instinctively when their welcome is wearing out.
- No racial bonus on Craft (alchemy) checks.

Arctic Goblins

Arctic goblins are feared and reviled because their appearance heralds theft, assaults, and property damage. They survive by

moving from place to place, constantly driven out of their previous homes by irate neighbors.

Arctic goblins to take up adventuring for many reasons. While most goblins are neutral evil, many have different beliefs and seek like-minded individuals outside the tribe. Some just want an opportunity to settle down and work to earn a better reputation than that of their fellows.

Racial Traits: Arctic goblins have the general arctic racial trait described above and all the goblin racial traits given on page 134 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- –2 Strength, +2 Constitution, –2 Charisma. Arctic goblins are hardy creatures, but weaker than many races.
- Low-Light Vision: An arctic goblin can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. She retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- +2 racial bonus on Bluff and Sleight of Hand checks: Arctic goblins are natural thieves, snatching up anything that isn't nailed down.
- No racial bonus on Move Silently checks: Arctic goblins aren't as stealthy as their nonarctic cousins.

Arctic Half-Elves

Arctic elves wed humans as often as basic elves do, producing arctic half-elf children. These half-breeds tend to have great wanderlust, and are uncomfortable staying in one place for very long. They often carry messages and rumors with them as they travel between communities.

Racial Traits: Arctic half-elves have the general arctic racial trait described above and all the half-elf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- No racial bonus on Diplomacy checks: Their transient nature prevents arctic half-elves from being as well trusted as their normal counterparts.
- +2 racial bonus on Survival checks: Arctic half-elves spend a great deal of time traveling between elf and human settlements, and are accustomed to surviving in the wilderness.

Arctic Half-Orcs

The arctic is a harsh place, a frozen testing ground for the chosen people of Gruumsh. Many tribes of arctic orcs eke out a living on the warm slopes of volcanic mountains, herding elk and caribou. Often their mutual dependence on sources of fresh water and meat brings them into contact with arctic-dwelling human barbarians. The resulting offspring are sometimes welcome in places where full orcs are not, valued for their tenacity, courage, and combat prowess.

Racial Traits: Arctic half-orcs have the general arctic racial trait described above and all the half-orc racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- Low-Light Vision: An arctic half-orc can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- +2 racial bonus on Diplomacy checks: Arctic half-orcs often serve as emissaries for the arctic orc tribes that spawned them.

Arctic Halflings

Arctic halflings are hunters and fishermen, stalking walrus and seal and putting to sea to fish, usually in the company of larger races such as humans. They are a peaceful, spiritual people whose rituals include preexpedition prayers for forgiveness from the animals they hope to kill.

Racial Traits: Arctic halflings have the general arctic racial trait described above and all the halfling racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 racial bonus on Swim checks: Arctic halflings rarely swim by choice, but are reasonably good at saving themselves from drowning.
- No racial bonus on attack rolls with slings. Arctic halflings do not particularly favor slings for hunting.
- Favored Class: Ranger. A multiclass arctic halfling's ranger class does not count when determining whether she takes an experience point penalty for multiclassing (see XP for Multiclass Characters, page 60 of the *Player's Handbook*). This trait replaces the base halfling's favored class.

Arctic Kobolds

Arctic kobolds are seldom seen outside their mines. They dig constantly, always expanding their subterranean territory (which is often carefully constructed to tap into geothermal vents for heat), and as a result are in constant conflict with arctic dwarves. Arctic kobolds often hire mercenaries to fight for them, hiding behind their carefully constructed traps and other defenses and paying their defenders with the mineral wealth they uncover while expanding their warrens.

Racial Traits: Aquatic kobolds have the general arctic racial trait described above and all the kobold racial traits given on page 162 of the *Monster Manual*, with one exception as noted below.

- –2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, –2 Constitution, –2 Wisdom: Arctic kobolds are stronger than other kobolds, but are weaker of will.

Arctic Orcs

Arctic orcs are primitive herders, eking out a living on the slopes of volcanic mountains and building their crude huts near hot springs or steam vents. They herd woolly cattle, caribou, and elk. As a result, they control large sources of meat, water, and heat—all things coveted by others living in or traveling through the arctic. What they don't have, they take by force.

Arctic orcs stand ever vigilant against attackers and thieves—when they're not making preemptive strikes against those foolish enough to settle near their territory.

Occasionally an individual orc questions the need for constant battle, or seeks strategies other than brute force. Such iconoclasts often leave their tribes—at least temporarily—to become adventurers.

Racial Traits: Arctic orcs have the general arctic racial trait described above and all the orc racial traits given on page 204 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- Low-Light Vision: An arctic orc can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- No light sensitivity.
- +2 racial bonus on Handle Animal checks: Arctic orcs are herders, and they rely on their skills with animals to keep their tribes fed.

DESERT RACES

In a campaign set in a vast desert, water is worth its weight in gold, and shifting sands occasionally reveal long-buried ruins of forgotten civilizations.

Players wanting their characters to be nonhuman desert dwellers can build characters using these variants, or their characters could encounter these races while journeying across the sands.

The following cultural attributes are common to most desert races.

Personality: Members of the desert races are usually quite friendly, although during the day they may seem brusque as they hurry to get about their business and out of the oppressive heat. At night, however, they offer warm greetings and good drink to any travelers who happen upon their camps. To them, a stranger is neither friend nor foe—just good company whose presence brings a moment of joy.

Physical Description: A desert creature is usually hardier in build than a member of his standard race. Bronze skin and dark hair are typical, since such adaptations tend to make life in the scorching desert more comfortable.

The clothing favored by desert creatures tends to be loose and light, and they wear just enough to keep the heat off during the day and the chill off at night. Most desert creatures wear headgear that not only protects them from the sun but also provides some warmth during cold desert nights.

Relations: Most desert dwellers are not choosy about trading partners, but many share the prejudices of their standard races. Regardless of race, most share a dislike of the scavenging desert kobolds and the omnipresent nuisance of desert goblins.

Alignment: The predominant alignment among desert races is neutral. It takes equal parts of law and chaos to survive under the harsh desert sun. Evil folk soon find themselves without friends, and to be isolated in an environment that cannot long support individuals means certain death. In contrast, those who place the principles of goodness over the needs of survival often find themselves in dire straits. Life in the desert often requires one to meet one's own needs before tending to another's.

Lands: Except for desert dwarves and desert gnomes, most desert dwellers are nomads who wander from one settlement to the next in search of vital supplies. Thus, they have no true lands of their own. Desert dwarves, however, are very protective of their settlements and private oases, and they are willing to defend them to the death if need be.

Religion: Desert creatures tend to have the same religious preferences as members of their standard races, with an emphasis on the worship of sun, light, or fire deities such as Obad-Hai and Pelor.

Language: Members of desert races speak the same languages as their standard races.

Adventurers: Opportunity for adventure is common on the burning sands. Denizens of the desert may turn to adventuring because they find the scavenger's life too difficult, or simply because they crave the rewards of the adventuring life. Although nomadic societies are often made up of networks of extended families, those who leave them to pursue their own goals rarely return.

General Desert Racial Trait

All desert races gain the following racial trait.

- Heat Endurance: Members of desert races gain a +4 racial bonus on Fortitude saves made to resist the effects of hot weather.

Desert Dwarves

Because of their skill with stone and engineering, dwarves are acknowledged masters of locating water and digging wells. The importance of water to desert peoples gives the dwarves both great wealth and great political power.

Racial Traits: Desert dwarves have the general desert racial trait described above and all the dwarf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- –2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution: Desert dwarves are tough enough to survive the brutal environment of the desert, but they rely more on cunning and fast talk than agility.
- No stonecunning.
- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against humanoids of the reptilian subtype (including kobolds and lizardfolk) and dragons (including half-dragons): Desert dwarves are trained in special combat techniques that allow them to fight common enemies more effectively. This bonus replaces the normal dwarf's bonus against orcs and goblinoids.
- +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against dragons: This replaces the dwarf's dodge bonus to AC against giants. Dragons are a more common threat than giants in desert climes, and desert dwarves have adapted to meet this challenge.
- +2 racial bonus on Knowledge (architecture and engineering), Knowledge (dungeoneering), and Profession (miner) checks: Desert dwarves protect a great deal of information about what lives beneath the desert and how to reach it.
- No racial bonus on Craft checks.

Desert Elves

In the desert, elves follow nomadic lifestyles. They herd horses, cattle, and goats across the sands, sleeping during the day and working or traveling at night. Their wandering takes them many places and puts them in contact with many cultures. As a result, they are welcome everywhere for the news and exotic trade goods they carry.

Racial Traits: Desert elves have the general desert racial trait described above and all the elf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- –2 Strength, +2 Dexterity: Desert elves are physically weaker than their normal cousins, but are also hardier, toughened by the harsh reality of desert life.
- Weapon Proficiency: Desert elves receive the Martial Weapon Proficiency feats for the scimitar, rapier, and shortbow (including composite shortbow) as bonus feats. Desert elves prefer the scimitar to the longsword and the

shortbow to the longbow, because they can use shortbows while mounted.

- +2 racial bonus on Handle Animal and Ride checks: Desert elves spend most of their lives riding and working with animals.
- No racial bonus on Listen checks.

Desert elf

Illus. by S. Prescott

Desert Gnomes

Desert dwarves may dig and maintain wells, but desert gnomes pay for them. Desert gnomes establish and operate fortified trading posts around wells and oases, cultivating crops wherever possible and scouring the surrounding desert for the wealth of buried civilizations. Desert gnome outposts are rarely quiet, doing business both day and night.

Racial Traits: Desert gnomes have the general desert racial trait described above and all the gnome racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 racial bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Sense Motive checks: Desert gnomes are skilled at haggling and negotiating.
- No racial bonus on Listen checks or Craft (alchemy) checks.

Desert Goblins

Desert goblins are feared and reviled because their appearance often heralds the arrival of a horde of nomadic hobgoblins and bugbears. As the desert dwarf proverb puts it, "The only good thing about goblins is that once they arrive, you know they'll soon be gone."

Desert goblins take up adventuring for many reasons. While most goblins are neutral evil, many have different beliefs and seek like-minded individuals outside the tribe. Some lack opportunities to advance, and they tire of living on the scraps of those with more authority or higher social position.

Racial Traits: Desert goblins have the general desert racial trait described above and all the goblin racial traits given on page 134 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- Low-Light Vision: A desert goblin can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- +2 racial bonus on Gather Information checks: Desert goblins soak up gossip like sponges when they visit towns or settlements.

Desert Half-Elves

Desert elves often wed humans, just as their more common cousins do, producing desert half-elf children. These offspring often serve as diplomats and negotiators for either their human or elf communities, depending on where they live.

Racial Traits: Desert half-elves have the general desert racial trait described above and all the half-elf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 racial bonus on Sense Motive checks: A desert half-elf's survival often relies on his ability to gauge the social situation.
- No racial bonus on Listen checks.

Desert Half-Orcs

The deserts of the world are harsh places, and ideal testing grounds for Gruumsh's chosen people. Many tribes of orcs live in isolated desert canyons or the ruins of ancient cities, now abandoned to the sands. Often their mutual dependence on sources of fresh water brings them into contact with desert-dwelling human barbarians. The resulting offspring, valued for their tenacity, courage, and combat prowess, are often welcome in places where full-blooded orcs are not.

Racial Traits: Desert half-orcs have the general desert racial trait described above and all the half-orc racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 Constitution, –2 Intelligence: The desert half-orc is lean and hardy rather than muscular, but has adapted to be more socially adept than a typical half-orc.
- Low-Light Vision: A desert half-orc can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- Run: Desert half-orcs receive Run as a racial bonus feat. Typically too poor to afford mounts, half-orcs learn from an early age to get from place to place by running.

Desert Halflings

Like gnomes, halflings are most likely to be active during the day. Most other races regard them somewhat like cats, in that they appear whether invited or not, work at what they want when they want, and disappear without prior notice. A desert gnome proverb observes that "Halflings in your town are a source of trouble, but at least they don't tolerate competition."

Racial Traits: Desert halflings have the general desert racial trait described above and all the halfling racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 racial bonus on Hide and Sleight of Hand checks: Desert halflings are stealthy and nimble-fingered.
- No racial bonus on Climb and Jump checks.

Desert Kobolds

Desert kobolds live like scaly, intelligent rats, hiding in forgotten corners of settlements, living just over the dunes from trading posts, and always reappearing right after the residents think they've finally been killed off.

Desert kobolds claim they were among the first to settle the deserts, and that gnomes threw them out into the wilderness. Though their survival relies on goods available at oasis settlements and trading posts, desert kobolds hate the gnomes who often build and run such settlements.

The life of a desert kobold is one of constant fear, which motivates them to build traps and fortifications and to ambush intruders. Some few kobolds, however, seek peace of mind through personal power and boon companions. These rare individuals become adventurers.

Racial Traits: Desert kobolds have the general desert racial trait described above and all the kobold racial traits given on page 162 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- –4 Strength, +2 Dexterity, –2 Wisdom: Desert kobolds are hardier than other kobolds, but are weak-willed.
- No light sensitivity.
- +2 racial bonus on Survival checks.
- No racial bonus on Profession (mining) checks: Desert kobolds don't mine.
- Favored Class: Rogue. A multiclass desert kobold's rogue class does not count when determining whether he takes an experience point penalty for multiclassing (see XP for Multiclass Characters, page 60 of the *Player's Handbook*). This trait replaces the normal kobold's favored class.

Desert Orcs

Desert orcs are martial creatures who live for battle. Prowess in battle is their only measure of social standing, and they don't particularly care if weaker races get hurt when orcs test their skills. In fact, the chief difference between desert orcs and desert goblinoids is that the former never accept defeat—when desert orcs attack, they conquer or die trying.

Desert orcs live in a perpetual state of war, participating in eternal night sorties from their isolated desert canyons and ancient ruined cities to attack settlements and expand their territory. Only the burning sun, and their weakness when in it, keeps them from ruling the desert with Gruumsh's iron fist.

Occasionally an individual orc questions the need for constant battle, or seeks strategies other than brute force. Such iconoclasts often leave their tribes—at least temporarily—to become adventurers.

Racial Traits: Desert orcs have the general desert racial trait described above and all the orc racial traits given on page 204 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- Low-Light Vision: A desert orc can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. She retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- Endurance: Desert orcs gain Endurance as a racial bonus feat.

JUNGLE RACES

A vast equatorial jungle, where tiny trading posts hacked from the vegetation dot riversides, giant vines and tree roots conceal cities of forgotten societies, and races that predate human civilization struggle to maintain their ancient traditions, makes a compelling setting for a campaign.

Players wanting their characters to be nonhuman jungle dwellers can build characters using these variants, or their characters could encounter these races while journeying through the green labyrinth of the jungle.

The following cultural attributes are common to most jungle-dwelling races.

Personality: Jungle races tend to be very territorial, and they guard their families and clans closely. They are not quick to trust strangers, but they form strong bonds with outsiders who do manage to earn their trust.

Physical Description: A jungle dweller looks very much like a member of her standard race. Typically, only a jungle creature's rough, hide-sewn clothing and unkempt appearance mark her as unusual.

Relations: Members of the jungle races are very territorial, so they interact with other creatures only when absolutely necessary. They often maintain good trading relations with other wild races, but they rarely trade with civilized cultures except through intermediaries such as local druids or rangers.

Alignment: Jungle races are often more chaotic than members of their standard races, rejecting the typical strictures of civilized society. However, their loyalty to family is high.

Lands: Jungle races avoid heavily populated areas, settling in remote areas of wilderness.

Religion: Members of the jungle races tend to be more superstitious than religious. Most rely on religious leaders (some of whom are actually adepts of great power) to give them spiritual guidance. Individuals may pray to aspects of animal and nature deities, such as Ehlonna or Obad-Hai, but only rarely does one of them achieve true communion with such a deity.

Adventurers: Jungle dwellers may set out into the world for a variety of reasons. They may need the help of a group of civilized folk to avert a prophesied disaster, or they might be asked by tribal elders to retrieve an artifact from an ancient burial site to protect them from a coming conflict. Often, such a quest is only the beginning of a jungle creature's adventuring career. She may be lured away from her people by the wonders of civilized society, or she may form a bond with outsiders who will never be welcome in her tribal lands.

Jungle Dwarves

Because of their height, dwarves can duck under vegetation that impedes humans—yet they are stockier than gnomes or halflings, and able to bull through what they can't avoid. Hardy to a fault, jungle dwarves are explorers, pathfinders, and traveling merchants.

Racial Traits: Jungle dwarves have all the dwarf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- Low-Light Vision: A jungle dwarf can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. She retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- +2 bonus on Heal, Knowledge (nature), and Survival checks: Jungle dwarves know a great deal about what lives in the jungle, and are adept at finding it (or avoiding it, as the case may be).

- +2 bonus on Spot checks: Jungle dwarves have keen eyesight.
- No stonecunning: Jungle dwarves live aboveground.
- No racial bonus on Craft checks related to stone or metal items.
- Favored Class: Ranger. A multiclass jungle dwarf's ranger class does not count when determining whether she takes an XP penalty for multiclassing (see XP for Multiclass Characters, page 60 of the *Player's Handbook*). Jungle dwarves need both outdoor skills and combat proficiency to survive. This trait replaces the normal dwarf's favored class.

Jungle Elves

Jungle elves are somewhat more primal than their baseline counterparts. In many jungles, ancient elven cities have been swallowed up by the voracious encroachment of trees, vines, and animals, leaving just a shadowy remnant of the population to remember the former glories of their lost civilization.

Racial Traits: Jungle elves have all the elf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- Weapon Proficiency: Jungle elves receive the Martial Weapon Proficiency feats for the handaxe, rapier, shortsword, and shortbow (including composite shortbow) as bonus feats. Proficiency with a rapier is a vestige of past glories and an honored tradition among jungle elves. The other weapons are useful tools for survival in their environment.
- +2 racial bonus on Knowledge (history) checks: Jungle elves pride themselves on being the keepers of much lore that has been forgotten to others.
- No ability to notice secret or concealed doors by passing within 5 feet.

Jungle Gnomes

Jungle gnomes live in and along the mighty rivers that wind through the jungles. A gnome jungle town is often a collection of boats tied together across a river, with channels to allow passing vessels through (after they pay a toll, of course). Jungle gnomes are also seen traveling the rivers, trading what they can find to those they meet along the way.

Racial Traits: Jungle gnomes have all the gnome racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- No racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds.
- No dodge bonus to Armor Class against giants.
- +2 racial bonus on Climb and Swim checks: Jungle gnomes live their lives clambering in and out of boats, and in and out of the water.
- +2 racial bonus on Craft (shipbuilding) checks: A little lumber and a few simple tools make for a happy and industrious jungle gnome.
- +2 racial bonus on Use Rope checks: Jungle gnomes consider rope the most useful tool on their boats.
- No racial bonus on Listen or Craft (alchemy) checks.

Jungle Goblins

If monkeys were evil and could speak, they'd be a lot like jungle goblins.

Jungle goblins are territorial, tree-dwelling savages with a sadistic streak a mile wide. Their skills at climbing and moving from tree to tree, combined with their cunning and vicious nature, cause even other goblinoids to respect them.

Jungle goblins generally take up adventuring to gain personal power and serve their ambitions within their clans, or because they somehow lack the evil nature of the rest of their kind.

Racial Traits: Jungle goblins have the goblin racial traits given on page 134 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- A jungle gnome has a climb speed of 20 feet. Jungle goblins are natural climbers, able to scramble up trees with ease. A jungle goblin has a +8 racial bonus on all Climb checks. It must make a Climb check to climb any wall or slope with a DC of more than 0, but it always can choose to take 10 (see Checks without Rolls, page 65 of the *Player's Handbook*), even if rushed or threatened while climbing. If it chooses an accelerated climb (see the Climb skill, page 69 of the *Player's Handbook*), it moves at double its climb speed and makes a single Climb check at a –5 penalty. It cannot run while climbing. It retains its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (if any) while climbing, and opponents get no special bonus on their attacks against a climbing jungle goblin. Also, jungle goblins add their Dexterity modifier to Climb checks instead of their Strength modifier.
- Low-Light Vision: A jungle goblin can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- +4 racial bonus on Jump checks: Jungle goblins are accomplished leapers.
- No racial bonus on Hide and Move Silently checks.
- Favored Class: Barbarian. A multiclass jungle goblin's barbarian class does not count when determining whether he takes an experience point penalty for multiclassing (see XP for Multiclass Characters, page 60 of the *Player's Handbook*). This trait replaces the normal goblin's favored class.

Jungle Half-Elves

Some elf communities believe that introducing human blood into their families is a way to invigorate their race once again. Others prefer a mixed-race emissary to deal with outsiders, rather than a pure-blood elf. Either way, jungle half-elves are the result.

Racial Traits: Jungle half-elves have all the half-elf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 racial bonus on Bluff and Sense Motive checks: Jungle half-elves must maintain constant awareness of their place within society.
- No racial bonus on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks.

Jungle Half-Orcs

The jungle is a wonderful home for orcs. It provides them with places to hide, plenty of food, and as much or as little contact with other races as they want—which is always more than the other races want. On occasion, such contact with humans produces half-orcs.

Racial Traits: Jungle half-orcs have all the half-orc racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, withadditions and exceptions as noted below.

- Low-Light Vision: A jungle half-orc can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions

of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- +2 racial bonus on Climb and Jump checks: Jungle half-orcs move almost as easily through the trees of their jungle home as they do on the ground.

Jungle Halflings

Jungle halflings live a much more settled life than their normal counterparts do. They build villages along rivers and burn clearings in the jungle to plant their crops. In addition, they gather the most abundant food source in their environment, fish, and hunt with poison-tipped weapons.

Racial Traits: Jungle halflings have all the halfling racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.
- Weapon Proficiency: Jungle halflings receive the Martial Weapon Proficiency feats for the throwing axe, handaxe, and shortbow (including composite shortbow) as bonus feats. For jungle halflings, the axe is both a practical tool and a ceremonial item. They grow up using the other weapons for hunting and fishing.
- Poison Use: Jungle halflings use poison extensively when hunting, and as a result never poison themselves when applying poison to a weapon or when using a poisoned weapon in combat. Jungle halflings make extensive use of poisons harvested from vermin, particularly those that damage Dexterity scores.
- No racial bonus on saving throws. Jungle halflings have no unusual ability to avoid mishaps.
- +2 racial bonus on Fortitude saving throws against poison: Jungle halflings have adapted a resistance to their own favorite method of bringing down prey.
- No morale bonus on saving throws against fear: Jungle halflings may be cunning, but they are no braver than other races.
- No racial bonus on attack rolls with slings.
- Favored Class: Barbarian. A multiclass halfling's barbarian class does not count when determining whether she takes an experience point penalty for multiclassing (see XP for Multiclass Characters, page 60 of the *Player's Handbook*). Jungle halflings live much closer to nature, and must rely on cunning, resourcefulness, persistence, courage, and mercilessness to survive. This trait replaces the normal halfling's favored class.

Jungle Kobolds

Clouded mountain peaks, many of which have religious or ceremonial importance to those who live below, tower over jungle canopies. Few know of the ancient ruined cities near the rocky summits, concealed amid the clouds. Dwelling in such ancient ruins are the jungle kobolds.

Those few explorers who have reached the cities report that their jungle kobold residents claim to have built them, pointing to reptilian and draconic images on the walls and in the architecture as evidence. The explorers report, however, that the cities were obviously built by and for people larger than the little reptilian humanoids.

Jungle kobolds lack the cowardice common to other kobolds, thanks to the isolation of their mountain peak homes. By all reports they show a calmer, more generous side than other kobolds do.

Racial Traits: Jungle kobolds have the kobold racial traits given on page 162 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.
- –4 Strength, +2 Dexterity, –2 Intelligence: Life at high altitude has toughened jungle kobolds, but their isolation has hindered their intellectual growth.
- Altitude Adaptation: Jungle kobolds are adapted to life at high altitudes, and thus don't suffer altitude sickness. They are always considered acclimated to high altitudes.
- +2 racial bonus on Climb checks: Jungle kobolds add their Dexterity modifier to Climb checks instead of their Strength modifier.
- No racial bonus on Craft (trapmaking) or Profession (miner) checks.

Jungle Orcs

If gorillas were evil and could speak, they'd be a lot like jungle orcs. Jungle orcs live a simple existence, moving through the jungle hunting and gathering food in clan groups (equivalent in size to the squads given in the orc *Monster Manual* entry, plus 150% noncombatants). Although combat is common within the clans, it's relatively bloodless and hardly ever lethal. Only when jungle orcs encounter other clans or other races do they show the true extent of their violent, evil nature.

Conquest is a baffling concept to jungle orcs. They attack, take whatever strikes their fancy, and move on. They lack the discipline required to maintain the things they steal, so they always seek weakly defended settlements and caravans to replace those things that break or wear out in the humidity of the jungle.

Occasionally an individual jungle orc questions the need for constant battle, or seeks strategies other than brute force. These are often the more intelligent members of their clans. Such iconoclasts often leave the jungle—at least temporarily—to become adventurers.

Racial Traits: Jungle orcs have all the orc racial traits given on page 204 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.
- Low-Light Vision: A jungle orc can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- +2 racial bonus on Heal and Survival checks: Jungle orcs must be self-sufficient in order to survive their environment.

VARIANTS

The core DUNGEONS & DRAGONS cosmology has six Inner Planes, four of which correspond to the classic elements: air, earth, fire, and water. You can link races to various elements without making them extraplanar creatures. In fact, you can create an entire philosophical system based on various combinations of element types and their relative strengths.

The races described below are the elemental races tied to each element. While members of these races are not actually elementals, and are, like most creatures, composed of all four elements, each has a special affinity for one of the four. This element has the most powerful influence on members of that race and strongly shapes not only the race's physiology, but also its members' outlook and personality. Gnomes, for example, are

most strongly associated with air, and dwarves are most strongly affiliated with earth.

Despite their affinity for a particular element, these creatures' types and subtypes do not change.

Each racial variant modifies the race to which it is applied (the standard race) in minor ways. All racial traits of the standard race (including racial skill bonuses, bonus feats, special sensory capabilities (such as darkvision and low-light vision), ability modifiers, combat bonuses against specific foes, and racial weapon proficiencies) are retained unless the variant specifies otherwise. For instance, a dwarf retains his weapon familiarity, and an elf retains her ability to spot secret doors.

Most of these variant races provide alternate ability adjustments. The ability score adjustments given here supersede the standard race's adjustments. For example, the water halfling's ability score adjustments are –2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, and +2 Constitution. This is instead of the normal –2 Strength and +2 Dexterity, not in addition to it.

As with the environmental racial variants (see the previous section), the balanced and adaptable nature of humans precludes them from having a strong elemental proclivity. The personality of an individual human reflects, perhaps, the strength of various elements within that individual, but humans gain no particular virtues or vulnerabilities related to their elemental components.

RACES OF AIR

Traits associated with air include an intuitive and emotional nature. Creatures with strong ties to the air element tend to be curious and investigative, capable of influencing others with their words. Politically they believe in sacrifice for a cause or belief.

Members of air races often differ in appearance from their typical cousins. Common features include light blue or pale white skin, light blue or white hair, and flesh that is cool to the touch.

All members of air races have the following traits.

- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against creatures of the earth subtype, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Earth.
- –2 penalty on all saving throws against spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities with the earth subtype or used by creatures of the earth subtype, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Earth.
- Breathless (Ex): Members of air races do not breathe, so they have immunity to drowning, suffocation, and attacks that require inhalation (such as some types of poison).

Air Gnomes

Air gnomes are identical with gnomes as described in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, except for some differences in racial traits.

Racial Traits: Air gnomes have the general traits of air races described above and all the gnome racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 Dexterity, –2 Strength: Air gnomes are agile, but lack physical power.
- No racial bonus on attack rolls against kobolds and goblinoids.
- +4 dodge bonus to Armor Class against Large or larger creatures of the earth subtype: This bonus replaces the gnome's racial bonus to AC against giants.

Air Goblins

Air goblins are an example of the air traits turned to evil. Their strongest emotions are fear and anger, and their creativity is usually malicious and hurtful.

Racial Traits: Air goblins have the general traits of air races described above and all the goblin racial traits given on page 134 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +4 Dexterity, –2 Strength, –2 Constitution: Air goblins are more agile and persuasive than normal goblins, but are physically weak and frail. Sorcerers are far more common among air goblins than they are among normal goblins.
- No racial bonus on Ride checks: Air goblins don't commonly ride mounts.

RACES OF EARTH

Traits associated with earth include insight and thoughtfulness. Creatures with strong ties to the earth element tend to be serious folk. Many are careful researchers or masterful strategists. Politically they believe in self-reliance and in benefiting from their own efforts.

Members of earth races often vary in appearance from their typical cousins. Common earth race features include earth-like skin, eyes like gems or like black pits, gravelly voices, large hands and feet, iron gray hair, and a metallic sheen to the skin.

All members of earth races have the following traits.

- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against creatures of the air subtype, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Air.
- –2 penalty on all saving throws against spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities with the air subtype or used by creatures of the air subtype, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Air.
- Stability: An earth creature gains a +4 bonus on ability checks made to resist being bull rushed or tripped when standing on the ground (but not when climbing, flying, riding, or otherwise not standing firmly on the ground). If the standard race already has this ability, the bonuses stack.

Earth Dwarves

Earth dwarves are identical with dwarves as described in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, except for some differences in racial traits.

Racial Traits: Earth dwarves have the general traits of earth races described above and all the dwarf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 Strength, +2 Constitution, –2 Dexterity, –2 Charisma: Earth dwarves are physically powerful, but somewhat clumsy in action and speech.
- Improved Stonecunning: An earth dwarf's racial bonus on Search checks to notice unusual stonework is +4 (instead of +2).
- No +2 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like effects.
- No +1 racial bonus on attacks against orcs and goblinoids.
- +4 racial bonus on Appraise checks and Craft checks that are related to stone or metal items: An earth dwarf has a particularly strong familiarity with objects made of the bones of the earth, hence the higher racial bonus.

Earth Kobolds

Earth kobolds personify earth traits turned toward evil. They are less emotional than their normal kobold cousins, and are cunning with trickery and traps.

Racial Traits: Earth kobolds have the general traits of earth races described above and all the kobols racial traits given on page 162 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- –2 Strength, –2 Constitution: Earth kobolds are stronger, though less agile, than their typical kobold cousins.
- +4 racial bonus on Craft (trapmaking) checks related to stonework traps: Earth kobolds are particularly skilled at crafting traps made from the earth.

RACES OF FIRE

Members of fire races are sensualists, existing to experience sensation of all sorts. They tend to be highly perceptive, and are often artists and artisans. Politically they disdain constraints on behavior, especially moral or religious inhibitions, or constraints imposed by conventional authority.

Members of fire races often vary in appearance from their normal cousins. Common fire racial features include charcoal gray or deep red skin, red or orange hair that waves like flames, unusually warm skin, and large red teeth.

All members of fire races have the following traits.

- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against creatures of the water subtype, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Water.
- –2 penalty on all saving throws against spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities with the water or cold subtype or used by creatures of the water or cold subtype, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Water.
- Resistance to fire 5.

Fire Elves

Fire elves are identical with elves as described in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, except for some differences in racial traits.

Racial Traits: Fire elves have the general traits of fire races described above and all the elf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 Dexterity, –2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, –2 Charisma: Fire elves are quick of action and thought, but share the standard race's frailty.

Fire Hobgoblins

Where fire elves prefer pleasurable sensations and pleasing aesthetics, fire hobgoblins revel in pain and the sensations of battle. Their favorite arts are those of strategy and tactics.

Racial Traits: Fire hobgoblins have the general traits of fire races described above and all the hobgoblin racial traits given on page 154 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, –2 Charisma: Fire hobgoblins are as quick and hardy as their normal cousins, but possess a greater intellect.
- Low-Light Vision: A fire hobgoblin can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight (the preferred lighting condition among fire hobgoblins), and similar conditions of poor illumination. He retains the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.
- No darkvision.
- No racial bonus on Move Silently checks.

RACES OF WATER

Water races are creatures of sensation, but their response to it is more careful and critical than that of the fire races. They take action only after prudent consideration, but remain flexible and adaptable. Politically they are traditionalists, more comfortable with proven systems than radical new ideas.

Members of water races often vary in appearance from their typical cousins. Common water racial features include lightly scaled skin, clammy flesh, blue-green skin or hair, and large black eyes.

All members of water races share the following traits.

- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against creatures of the fire subtype, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Fire.
- –2 penalty on all saving throws against spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities with the fire subtype or used by creatures of the fire subtype, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Fire.

Fire elf

Water halfling

Air goblin

Earth kobold

Illus. by Lakeys

- Natural Swimmers: Members of water races have a swim speed equal to their base land speed. (If the creature already has a swim speed, it improves by 10 feet.) A water creature can move through water at its swim speed without making Swim checks. It has a +8 racial bonus on any Swim check to perform some special action or avoid a hazard. A water creature can always choose to take 10 on a Swim check, even if distracted or endangered. It can use the run action while swimming, provided it swims in a straight line.

Water Halflings

Water halflings are identical with halflings as described in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, except for some differences in racial traits.

Racial Traits: Water halflings have the general traits of water races described above and all the halfling racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- –2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +2 Constitution: Water halflings are quick and healthy, but physically weak.

Water Orcs

Water orcs exemplify the water traits turned to evil. Though slow to reach decisions, once a water orc chooses a course of action its resolve is harder to shift than a tidal wave.

Racial Traits: Water orcs have the general traits of water races described above and all the orc racial traits given on page 204 of the *Monster Manual*, with additions and exceptions as noted below.

- +4 Strength, +2 Constitution, –2 Intelligence, –2 Wisdom, –2 Charisma: Water orcs are strong and tough, but share the standard race's limited mental capacities.

HALF RACES

Half-elves and half-orcs are part elemental race and part human. As a result, they have some of the elemental traits of their non-human parents—but not all of them. In appearance, they rarely possess more than one variant feature: A fire half-elf might have the charcoal gray skin, but not hair that waves like flames or large red teeth.

Fire Half-Elves

Fire half-elves enjoy the finer things in life, but are not as hedonistic as their fire elf parents. Their human side allows them to temper their indulgences through self-control.

Racial Traits: Fire half-elves have all the half-elf racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, as well as the following traits.

- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against water creatures, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Water.
- –1 penalty on all saving throws against spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities used by water creatures, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Water.

Water Half-Orcs

Water half-orcs combine the flexibility and careful consideration of their water orc parentage with human capacities for resolve and quick action.

Racial Traits: Water half-orcs have all the half-orc racial traits given in Chapter 2 of the *Player's Handbook*, as well as the following traits.

- +1 racial bonus on attack rolls against fire creatures, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Fire.
- –1 penalty on all saving throws against spells, spell-like abilities, and supernatural abilities used by fire creatures, including extraplanar creatures from the Elemental Plane of Fire.

REDUCING LEVEL ADJUSTMENTS

When a character with a level adjustment advances in experience, the level adjustment he started with becomes more and more of a burden. Eventually, the benefits of the creature type may come to be eclipsed by those of his class features, and the player may regret his choice of race. Under this variant system, the character can pay an XP cost at certain intervals to decrease the burden of his level adjustment.

Once the total of a character's class levels (not including any Hit Dice from his creature type or his level adjustment) reaches three times his level adjustment, his level adjustment is eligible to be decreased by 1.

For instance, a gnoll's level adjustment is +1. When a gnoll character gains his third class level (remember, the gnoll's 2 starting Hit Dice don't count), he can pay an XP cost to reduce his level adjustment to +0.

If the level adjustment is greater than +1, this process repeats until the creature's level adjustment reaches +0. Each time, use the creature's current level adjustment to determine the point at which the level adjustment can go down by 1. For example, a drow (level adjustment +2) may drop to level adjustment +1 after gaining her sixth class level, and then to +0 after gaining an additional three class levels.

Table 1–1: Reducing Level Adjustments gives the levels at which level adjustments are eligible to be reduced for starting level adjustments of +1 to +6. Creatures with a level adjustment of +7 or more retain their full normal level adjustment until reaching epic levels (21st level or higher), and thus aren't included on the table. However, you can follow the pattern described above to determine when such creatures' level adjustments can be decreased.

Table 1–1: Reducing Level Adjustments

Starting Level Adjustment	Number of Class Levels Necessary for Level Adjustment Reduction (Not Including Racial Hit Dice)
+1	3
+2	6, 9
+3	9, 15, 18
+4	12
+5	15
+6	18

EXPERIENCE POINT COST

Each time a character's level adjustment is eligible to be reduced, the character may pay an XP cost to take advantage of the reduction. The character must pay an amount of XP equal to (his current ECL – 1) × 1,000. This amount is immediately deducted from the character's XP total. The deduction should reduce the character's effective character level (ECL) by 1. (If this deduction would not reduce the character's ECL by 1, the character's XP total is set at the maximum of the level below his current ECL instead.) This XP cost can't be reversed in any way, and the payment must be voluntary on the part of the character. The

payment must be made immediately upon becoming eligible to reduce the character's level adjustment.

For instance, a 2nd-level gnoll fighter (ECL 5) who later gains a third class level has a minimum of 15,000 XP (his ECL has just gone from 5 to 6). He is eligible to reduce his level adjustment from +1 to +0. He must pay 5,000 XP, since his ECL is now 6 (2 Hit Dice plus 3 class levels plus his +1 level adjustment). After he pays the XP, his level adjustment decreases by 1 to +0. He now has 10,000 XP. His ECL falls to 5 (2 Hit Dice plus 3 class levels). Even if the XP payment would not reduce him to 5th level—for instance, if his XP total after reaching 6th level were 20,000 or more—his XP total can't remain above the maximum for 5th level, which is 10,000. Effectively, the gnoll has "paid off" his level adjustment with an XP cost, and he is now a 5th-level character.

Similarly, a drow cleric who has just reached 6th level (ECL 8) is eligible to reduce her level adjustment from +2 to +1. She must pay 7,000 XP, and her ECL becomes 7 (6 class levels plus her +1 level adjustment). When she gains her 9th class level (ECL 10), she can reduce her level adjustment to +0 (and her ECL to 9) by paying another 9,000 XP.

On the surface, this tradeoff may look like a bad deal. The drow cleric has now sacrificed 16,000 experience points, putting her behind her comrades in total class levels. Now, however, she progresses as if she had never had a level adjustment. With the self-correcting nature of the experience point system, she will soon catch up to the rest of her party, and will reach 20th level after earning a total of 206,000 XP (190,000 plus the 16,000 in XP costs). If she had not used this variant system, she would have had to amass 231,000 XP to reach her 20th class level (which is ECL 22 for a normal drow with a +2 level adjustment).

BLOODLINES

Every so often, an individual is born who stands out a little from the rest of his people. This individual displays characteristics associated with a different kind of creature, such as a dragon, giant, celestial, or demon. Such a character is said to have a bloodline.

Bloodlines can exist for any of a number of reasons. Perhaps the character has an unusual ancestor, such as a dragon who took alternate form to live among humans or elves. The character might be a throwback to an earlier age, when all species were more closely related. The bloodline might be the result of unusual supernatural energies present during conception, pregnancy, or birth. It could also be an omen sent by the gods, part of an ancient prophecy or dire legend. The DM should decide the truth behind the bloodline, though the character need never know why he is different.

BLOODLINE STRENGTH AND SOURCE

Every bloodline has both a source (the kind of creature from which its characteristics are drawn) and a strength (minor, intermediate, or major). The stronger the bloodline, the more potent the traits and benefits granted by it.

Every source has a minor bloodline associated with it. A minor bloodline doesn't alter a character much, and thus don't represent a very significant power increase over an ordinary character. In some cases, the only bloodline associated with a source is minor. This is most often true of sources derived from relatively weak creatures such as minotaurs or hags.

Many sources also have intermediate bloodlines. These affect the character's power level more drastically, and come from more potent races, such as elementals, slaadi, and many dragons and giants.

Major bloodlines only come from the most powerful and primal of sources, including celestials, demons, devils, and the mightiest of dragons. A character with a major bloodline is a potent scion of his ancestor, displaying significant powers and abilities.

BLOODLINE LEVELS

Over the course of his career, a character with a bloodline becomes more powerful than one without a bloodline. Because the power gain is gradual over a span of twenty levels, a static level adjustment doesn't truly reflect this difference. Instead, a bloodline character must take one or more levels of "bloodline" at various points in his career, as noted on Table 1–2: Bloodline Levels. Before a character with a bloodline reaches the indicated character level, he must take one class level of "bloodline." Class levels of "bloodline" do not increase a character's character level the way a normal class level does, but they do provide certain benefits (see below).

If the character does not take a class level of bloodline before reaching the character level indicated on the table, he gains no further bloodline traits and must take a 20% penalty on all future XP gains. As soon as he meets the minimum bloodline level, he gains all bloodline abilities due him according to his character level, and the XP penalty no longer applies.

For example, Alarion is a 1st-level character with a major bloodline (silver dragon). The bloodline trait he receives at 1st level is a +2 bonus on Sense Motive checks. When he reaches 2nd character level, he gains the Alertness feat as a bloodline trait. Before he reaches 3rd character level, he must take a level of bloodline in order to continue gaining bloodline traits. If he reaches 3rd character level and has no bloodline levels, he does not gain the bloodline trait due him at 3rd character level (Strength +1) and must take a 20% reduction on all future XP gains. If he later meets the minimum required bloodline levels, he gains his 3rd-level trait at that time (as well as any other traits he may have failed to receive for not taking his bloodline level right away), and the XP reduction no longer applies to future gains. Before reaching his 6th character level, he must have taken two levels of bloodline in order to keep gaining bloodline traits. If he takes his third bloodline level before reaching 12th character level, he becomes eligible to gain all the traits of his bloodline (as they become available when he reaches new character levels).

A bloodline level grants no increase in base attack bonus or base save bonuses, no hit points or skill points, and no class features. It counts as a normal class level (with no class skills) for the purpose of determining maximum skill ranks. Levels of bloodline never result in XP penalties for multiclass characters.

Include the character's bloodline level when calculating any character ability based on his class levels (such as caster level for spellcasting characters, or save DCs for characters with special abilities whose DCs are based on class level). The character doesn't gain any abilities, spells known, or spells per day from the addition of his bloodline levels, though—only the calculations of his level-based abilities are affected.

If a character has levels in two or more classes in addition to his bloodline levels, each class gains the benefit of adding the bloodline levels when calculating abilities.

For example, a 2nd-level sorcerer with a major bloodline takes a bloodline level when earns enough XP to advance in level. He is treated as a 3rd-level spellcaster for the purpose of spell durations, caster level checks, and so forth. But he doesn't gain a 3rd-level sorcerer's spells per day or spells known.

Similarly, the stunning attacks of a 3rd-level monk with one bloodline level have a save DC equal to 12 (10 + one-half class level) plus her Wisdom modifier, since the bloodline level is treated as if it were a monk class level when calculating the save DC. A 3rd-level monk/3rd-level sorcerer with two bloodline levels would be treated as a 5th-level spellcaster and a 5th-level monk for determining level-based abilities.

Table 1–2: Bloodline Levels

Bloodline Level	—— Bloodline Strength —— Minor	Intermediate	Major
1st	12th	6th	3rd
2nd	n/a	12th	6th
3rd	n/a	n/a	12th

BLOODLINE TRAITS

Depending on the strength of a character's bloodline, he gains a new bloodline trait every one, two, or four character levels (or effective character levels, for characters with a level adjustment greater than +0). The traits gained are given in each bloodline description.

Bloodline Trait Descriptions

Bloodline traits fall into four categories.

Ability Boost: You gain a permanent +1 increase to the given ability score. This is similar to the ability increase gained by characters at every fourth level.

Bloodline Affinity: You gain a bonus (either +2, +4, or +6) on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with creatures of your bloodline.

Skill Boost: You receive a +2 bonus on checks made with the given skill.

Special: You gain a special ability. Common bloodline special abilities include bonus feats, natural armor, special attacks (such as the ability to smite evil or smite good), special qualities (such as resistance to energy, spell resistance, or scent), or spell-like abilities.

If you already have a feat that a bloodline provides as a bonus feat, you may choose a different feat. For example, the minor celestial bloodline grants Alertness as a bonus feat at 8th level. If a character with this bloodline already has Alertness by the time he reaches 8th level, he can choose any other feat instead (subject to normal prerequisites, of course).

BLOODLINE DESCRIPTIONS

Each description below includes some basic information to help the player and DM incorporate the bloodline into the campaign, including potential origins and minor characteristics to help flesh out the character. The description also provides the bloodline traits gained at particular character levels.

Celestial

A character with a celestial bloodline can trace her heritage to beings of the Upper Planes, much like an aasimar or celestial creature. Most angels, archons, guardinals, and eladrins have the ability to interbreed with humanoids, and

Human with minotaur bloodline

Human with lycanthrope bloodline

Human with celestial bloodline

Illus. by S. Prescott

examples of celestial creatures descending from the heavens to live with mortals often appear in myth and legend. Descendants of such relationships often have silver or golden hair, a proud bearing, or a piercing stare.

Celestial Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Sense Motive checks
8th	Alertness
12th	Wisdom +1
16th	*Protection from evil* 1/day (Sp)
20th	Celestial affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Sense Motive checks
2nd	+2 on Sense Motive checks	Alertness
3rd	—	Wisdom +1
4th	Alertness	*Protection from evil* 1/day (Sp)
5th	—	Celestial affinity +2[1]
6th	Wisdom +1	Smite evil 1/day (Su)[2]
7th	—	+2 on Concentration checks
8th	*Protection from evil* 1/day (Sp)	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)
9th	—	Charisma +1
10th	Celestial affinity +2[1]	+2 on saves against poison (Ex)
11th	—	Celestial affinity +4[1]
12th	Smite evil 1/day (Su)[2]	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)
13th	—	+2 on Listen checks
14th	+2 on Concentration checks	Improved Initiative
15th	—	Constitution +1
16th	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)
17th	—	Celestial affinity +6[1]
18th	Charisma +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Spot checks
20th	+2 on saves against poison (Ex)	Damage reduction 5/evil

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with celestials.
2 You can smite an evil creature with a melee attack as a paladin of your character level once per day.

Demon

A character with a demon bloodline has one or more ancestors of demonic origin. The most common source of such a bloodline is a succubus, but any demon capable of taking humanoid form might be responsible for the character's unusual traits. Characters with a demon bloodline may bear some minor characteristic reminiscent of such an ancestor: sinister glowing eyes, a faint smell of brimstone, or a love of brutality.

Demon Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Move Silently checks
8th	Power Attack
12th	Strength +1
16th	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)
20th	Demon affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Move Silently checks
2nd	+2 on Move Silently checks	Power Attack
3rd	—	Strength +1
4th	Power Attack	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)
5th	—	Demon affinity +2[1]
6th	Strength +1	Smite good 1/day (Su)[2]
7th	—	+2 on Hide checks
8th	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)
9th	—	Constitution +1
10th (Ex)	Demon affinity +2[1]	+2 on saves against poison
11th	—	Demon affinity +4[1]
12th	Smite good 1/day (Su)[2]	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)
13th	—	+2 on Intimidate checks
14th	+2 on Hide checks	Cleave
15th	—	Charisma +1
16th	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)
17th	—	Demon affinity +6[1]
18th	Constitution +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Spot checks
20th	+2 on saves against poison (Ex)	Damage reduction 5/good

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with demons.
2 You can smite a good creature with a melee attack as a blackguard of your character level once per day.

Devil

For a character with a devil bloodline, an erinyes is often the source. However, other devils with the ability to use a *polymorph* effect, such as gelugons or pit fiends, have been known to consort with mortals. A character with this bloodline may also possess tiny horns or unusually sharp teeth.

Devil Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Bluff checks
8th	Dodge
12th	Charisma +1
16th	*Darkness* 1/day (Sp)
20th	Devil affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Bluff checks
2nd	+2 on Bluff checks	Dodge
3rd	—	Charisma +1
4th	Dodge	*Darkness* 1/day (Sp)
5th	—	Devil affinity +2[1]
6th	Charisma +1	Smite good 1/day (Su)[2]
7th	—	+2 on Diplomacy checks
8th	*Darkness* 1/day (Sp)	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)
9th	—	Constitution +1
10th	Devil affinity +2[1]	+2 on saves against poison (Ex)
11th	—	Devil affinity +4[1]
12th	Smite good 1/day (Su)[2]	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)

13th	—	+2 on Search checks
14th	+2 on Diplomacy checks	Alertness
15th	—	Intelligence +1
16th	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)
17th	—	Devil affinity +6[1]
18th	Constitution +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Listen checks
20th	+2 on saves against poison (Ex)	Damage reduction 5/good

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with devils.
2 You can smite a good creature with a melee attack as a blackguard of your character level once per day.

Doppelganger

The ultimate humanoid shapechanger, a doppelganger can be anyone, anywhere, at any time. It's easy to imagine even a single doppelganger being responsible for a plethora of offspring tainted with shapechanging powers.

Doppelganger Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Disguise checks
8th	*Alter self* 1/day (Sp)
12th	Charisma +1
16th	*Detect thoughts* 1/day (Sp)
20th	Doppelganger affinity +2[1]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with doppelgangers.

Dragon, Black

The sinister black dragon occasionally makes a close "alliance" with a like-minded humanoid, and that can lead to a black dragon bloodline. A character with this bloodline shares his ancestor's cunning and malevolence, and may have a sunken, almost skeletal appearance to his face.

Black Dragon Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Swim checks
4th	+2 on Swim checks	Alertness
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Alertness	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)
10th	—	Black dragon affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Hide checks
16th	Acid resistance 5 (Ex)	Resistance to acid 10 (Ex)
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Black dragon affinity +2[1]	Water breathing (Ex)[2]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with black dragons.
2 You can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use special abilities while submerged.

Dragon, Blue

In times long past, blue dragons often interacted with the kings and queens of great desert empires. The bloodlines created by such intermingling were treated as a mark of royalty, though such empires have long since vanished. An individual bearing a blue dragon bloodline tends to be territorial and may smell faintly of ozone.

Blue Dragon Bloodline Traits

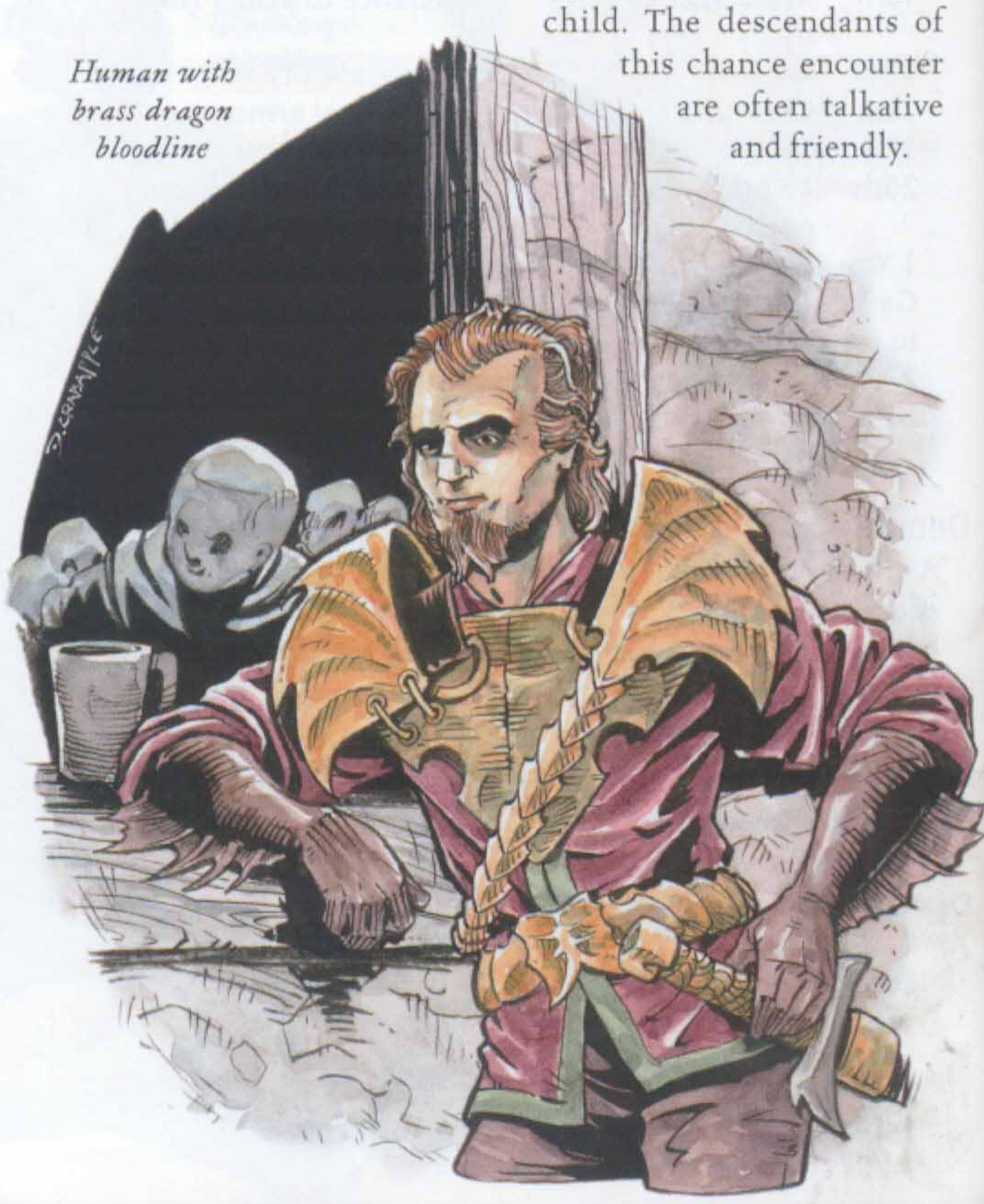
Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Bluff checks
4th	+2 on Bluff checks	Alertness
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Alertness	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)
10th	—	Blue dragon affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Sense Motive checks
16th	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)	Resistance to electricity 10 (Ex)
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Blue dragon affinity +2[1]	*Create/destroy water* 1/day (Sp)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with blue dragons.

Dragon, Brass

Bards tell a popular tale of a lost desert traveler encountering a friendly woman who nurses him back to health before putting him on the path home. In the tale, this helpful individual turns out to be a powerful brass dragon who merely wants someone to talk to, and who, many months later, gives birth to a half-dragon child. The descendants of this chance encounter are often talkative and friendly.

Human with brass dragon bloodline



Illus. by D. Crabapple

Brass Dragon Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Gather Information checks
4th	+2 on Gather Information checks	Alertness
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Alertness	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)
10th	—	Brass dragon affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Bluff checks
16th	Fire resistance 5 (Ex)	Resistance to fire 10 (Ex)
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Brass dragon affinity +2[1]	*Speak with animals* 1/day (Sp)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with brass dragons.

Dragon, Bronze

With its innate ability to take on humanoid form, coupled with a natural inquisitiveness, it is common for the bronze dragon to give rise to lines of creatures carrying its bloodline. These descendants tend to share the bronze dragon's curiosity as well as its love for the water.

Bronze Dragon Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Swim checks
4th	+2 on Swim checks	Alertness
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Alertness	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)
10th	—	Bronze dragon affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Sense Motive checks
16th	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)	Resistance to electricity 10 (Ex)
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Bronze dragon affinity +2[1]	Water breathing (Ex)[2]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with bronze dragons.
2 You can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use special abilities while submerged.

Dragon, Copper

When the playful copper dragon meets a like-minded creature, a long-term friendship is often struck. The result of such a relationship can give rise to a long line of dragon-blooded individuals. Such characters often share the copper dragon's incorrigible nature, but may also be a bit miserly.

Copper Dragon Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Perform checks
4th	+2 on Perform checks	Alertness
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Alertness	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)
10th	—	Copper dragon affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Bluff checks
16th	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)	Resistance to acid 10 (Ex)
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Copper dragon affinity +2[1]	*Spider climb* 1/day (Sp)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with copper dragons.

Dragon, Gold

Gold dragons occasionally take more than a passing interest in mortals. Thanks to their ability to *polymorph*, some leave a lasting reminder of their presence in the form of a half-dragon child. Even many generations later, this draconic blood can manifest in the form of bloodline traits. Descendants of a gold dragon tend to get along well with other good-aligned creatures, displaying uncommon grace and courtesy.

Gold Dragon Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Sense Motive checks
8th	Alertness
12th	Strength +1
16th	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)
20th	Gold dragon affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Sense Motive checks
2nd	+2 on Sense Motive checks	Alertness
3rd	—	Strength +1
4th	Alertness	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)
5th	—	Gold dragon affinity +2[1]
6th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
7th	—	+2 on Heal checks
8th	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)	Resistance to fire 10 (Ex)
9th	—	Constitution +1
10th	Gold dragon affinity +2[1]	Water breathing (Ex)[2]
11th	—	Gold dragon affinity +4[1]
12th	+1 to natural armor	+1 to natural armor
13th	—	+2 on Swim checks
14th	+2 on Heal checks	Power Attack
15th	—	Intelligence +1
16th	Resistance to fire 10 (Ex)	Breath weapon (Ex)[3]
17th	—	Gold dragon affinity +6[1]
18th	Constitution +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Jump checks
20th	Water breathing (Ex)[2]	Immunity to fire (Ex)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with gold dragons.
2 You can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use special abilities while submerged.
3 30-ft. cone of fire; 6d8 damage; Reflex half (DC 10 + one-half HD + Con modifier).

Dragon, Green

In certain rare instances, green dragons have been known to take control of (rather than simply devour) small enclaves of forest-dwelling humanoids. Some of those humanoids later give birth to half-dragon offspring, creating bloodlines that last centuries. Descendants of a green dragon are often voracious and belligerent, picking fights with little or no provocation.

Green Dragon Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Move Silently checks
4th	+2 on Move Silently checks	Alertness
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Alertness	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)
10th	—	Green dragon affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Bluff checks
16th	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)	Resistance to acid 10 (Ex)
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Green dragon affinity +2[1]	Water breathing (Ex)[2]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with green dragons.
2 You can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use special abilities while submerged.

Dragon, Red

Though most evil dragons don't enjoy friendly relationships with humanoids, red dragons do occasionally spawn bloodlines among humanoids. Such descendants exhibit extraordinary powers beyond those of their people. A character with a red dragon bloodline is usually covetous and vain, and may smell faintly of smoke.

Red Dragon Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Bluff checks
8th	Alertness
12th	Strength +1
16th	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)
20th	Red dragon affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Bluff checks
2nd	+2 on Bluff checks	Alertness
3rd	—	Strength +1
4th	Alertness	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)
5th	—	Red dragon affinity +2[1]
6th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
7th	—	+2 on Intimidate checks
8th	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)	Resistance to fire 10 (Ex)
9th	—	Constitution +1
10th	Red dragon affinity +2[1]	*Locate object* 1/day (Sp)
11th	—	Red dragon affinity +4[1]
12th	+1 to natural armor	+1 to natural armor
13th	—	+2 on Appraise checks
14th	+2 on Intimidate checks	Power Attack
15th	—	Charisma +1
16th	Resistance to fire 10 (Ex)	Breath weapon (Ex)[2]
17th	—	Red dragon affinity +6[1]
18th	Constitution +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Jump checks
20th	*Locate object* 1/day (Sp)	Immunity to fire (Ex)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with red dragons.
2 30-ft. cone of fire; 6d8 damage; Reflex half (DC 10 + one-half HD + Con modifier).

Dragon, Silver

Silver dragons are perhaps most likely of all dragons to have taken humanoid companions, and thus this is the most common dragon bloodline. Characters of the silver dragon bloodline tend to be regal and statuesque.

Silver Dragon Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Sense Motive checks
8th	Alertness
12th	Strength +1
16th	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)
20th	Silver dragon affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Sense Motive checks
2nd	+2 on Sense Motive checks	Alertness
3rd	—	Strength +1
4th	Alertness	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)
5th	—	Silver dragon affinity +2[1]
6th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
7th	—	+2 on Perform checks
8th	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)	Resistance to cold 10 (Ex)
9th	—	Constitution +1
10th	Silver dragon affinity +2[1]	*Alter self* 1/day (Sp)
11th	—	Silver dragon affinity +4[1]
12th	+1 to natural armor	+1 to natural armor
13th	—	+2 on Bluff checks
14th	+2 on Perform checks	Power Attack
15th	—	Charisma +1
16th	Resistance to cold 10 (Ex)	Breath weapon (Ex)[2]
17th	—	Silver dragon affinity +6[1]
18th	Constitution +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Jump checks
20th	*Alter self* 1/day (Sp)	Immunity to cold (Ex)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with silver dragons.
2 30-ft. cone of cold; 6d8 damage; Reflex half (DC 10 + one-half HD + Con modifier).

Dragon, White

Some arctic tribes have managed to bargain with nearby white dragons, trading food and occasional sacrifices for protection from their enemies. These alliances can result in dragon-blooded

descendants, who tend to mimic the single-minded ferocity of their forebears.

White Dragon Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Hide checks
4th	+2 on Hide checks	Alertness
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Alertness	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)
10th	—	White dragon affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Swim checks
16th	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)	Resistance to cold 10 (Ex)
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	White dragon affinity +2[1]	Icewalking 1/day (Ex)[2]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with white dragons.
2 As *spider climb*, but the surface must be icy.

Elemental, Air

Similar to but less specific than a djinni bloodline (see below), the air elemental bloodline derives its power from a connection to the Elemental Plane of Air. Characters with air elemental bloodlines tend to shift between emotions with surprising quickness, and may have hair or skin tinged with light blue.

Air Elemental Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Balance checks
4th	+2 on Balance checks	Improved Initiative
6th	—	Dexterity +1
8th	Improved Initiative	*Gust of wind* 1/day (Sp)
10th	—	Air elemental affinity +2[1]
12th	Dexterity +1	Weapon Finesse
14th	—	+2 on Spot checks
16th	*Gust of wind* 1/day (Sp)	Air mastery (Ex)[2]
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Air elemental affinity +2[1]	Flyby Attack

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with air elementals.
2 As the air elemental special ability.

Elemental, Earth

Creatures that bear a bloodline of elemental earth feel a sense of gravity and stability that ties them to the stones of the world. They have a palpable sense of inertia about them, which sometimes manifests as a slowness to take action.

Earth Elemental Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Climb checks
4th	+2 on Climb checks	Power Attack
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Power Attack	*Meld into stone* 1/day (Sp)
10th	—	Earth elemental affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Listen checks
16th	*Meld into stone* 1/day (Sp)	Earth mastery (Ex)[2]
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Earth elemental affinity +2[1]	Improved Sunder

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with earth elementals.
2 As the earth elemental special ability.

Elemental, Fire

Those who bear elemental fire within their veins are often high-strung and quick-tempered. Their eyes often seem to glow like embers, and their skin may take on a reddish hue.

Fire Elemental Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Tumble checks
4th	+2 on Tumble checks	Dodge
6th	—	Dexterity +1
8th	Dodge	*Pyrotechnics* 1/day (Sp)
10th	—	Fire elemental affinity +2[1]
12th	Dexterity +1	Mobility
14th	—	+2 on Listen checks
16th	*Pyrotechnics* 1/day (Sp)	Resistance to fire 10 (Ex)
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Fire elemental affinity +2[1]	Spring Attack

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with fire elementals.

Elemental, Water

The bloodline of elemental water is most common among the water-breathing races, but it also manifests among sailors and fishermen, and even the occasional character with no link whatsoever to oceans, seas, or large lakes. Such characters are often independent-minded, and generally don't live in any one place for very long.

Water Elemental Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Swim checks
4th	+2 on Swim checks	Power Attack
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Power Attack	*Fog cloud* 1/day (Sp)
10th	—	Water elemental affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Spot checks
16th	*Fog cloud* 1/day (Sp)	Swim 30 ft.[2]
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Water elemental affinity +2[1]	Improved Bull Rush

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with water elementals.
2 Or +30 ft. to existing swim speed.

Fey

Every culture tells stories of fey creatures taking mortal lovers, so it's no surprise that individuals display fey bloodlines from time to time. Regardless of whether it descended from a dryad, nymph, satyr, or other kind of fey, a creature with a fey bloodline often has a personality that is both aloof and carefree.

Fey Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Hide checks
8th	Iron Will
12th	Charisma +1
16th	*Charm person* 1/day (Sp)
20th	Fey affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Hide checks
2nd	+2 on Hide checks	Iron Will
3rd	—	Charisma +1
4th	Iron Will	*Charm person* 1/day (Sp)
5th	—	Fey affinity +2[1]
6th	Charisma +1	Low-light vision
7th	—	+2 on Move Silently checks
8th	*Charm person* 1/day (Sp)	Alertness
9th	—	Dexterity +1
10th	Fey affinity +2[1]	*Speak with animals* 1/day (Sp)
11th	—	Fey affinity +4[1]
12th	Low-light vision	*Invisibility* 1/day (Sp)
13th	—	+2 on Perform checks
14th	+2 on Move Silently checks	Damage reduction 1/cold iron
15th	—	Wisdom +1
16th	Alertness	*Deep slumber* 1/day (Sp)
17th	—	Fey affinity +6[1]
18th	Dexterity +1	*Speak with plants* 1/day (Sp)
19th	—	+2 on Bluff checks
20th	*Speak with animals* 1/day (Sp)	Damage reduction 5/cold iron

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with fey.

Genie, Djinni

Though few sages put much stock in myths that humanoids and genies share a common ancestor, there is no denying that the races are very similar in form. Characters with a djinni bloodline are often haughty but display great guile.

Djinni Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Concentration checks
8th	Improved Initiative
12th	Dexterity +1
16th	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)
20th	Djinni affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Concentration checks
2nd	+2 on Concentration checks	Improved Initiative
3rd	—	Dexterity +1
4th	Improved Initiative	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)
5th	—	Djinni affinity +21
6th	Dexterity +1	+1 to natural armor
7th	—	+2 on Knowledge (the planes) checks
8th	Resistance to acid 5 (Ex)	Dodge
9th	—	Wisdom +1
10th	Djinni affinity +2[1]	*Invisibility* 1/day (Sp)
11th	—	Djinni affinity +4[1]
12th	+1 to natural armor	Resistance to acid 10 (Ex)
13th	—	+2 on Appraise checks
14th	+2 on Knowledge (the planes) checks	*Create food and water* 1/day (Sp)
15th	—	Strength +1
16th	Dodge	*Gaseous form* 1/week (Sp)
17th	—	Djinni affinity +6[1]
18th	Wisdom +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Sense Motive checks
20th	*Invisibility* 1/day (Sp)	Immunity to acid (Ex)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with djinn.

Genie, Efreeti

Characters with the bloodline of the efreet are most likely descended from slaves of that terrible and powerful race. They typically have reddish skin and a cruel disposition, and may display tiny horns or bronze-colored eyes.

Efreeti Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Bluff checks
8th	Improved Initiative
12th	Strength +1
16th	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)
20th	Efreeti affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Bluff checks
2nd	+2 on Bluff checks	Improved Initiative
3rd	—	Strength +1
4th	Improved Initiative	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)
5th	—	Efreeti affinity +2[1]
6th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
7th	—	+2 on Knowledge (the planes) checks
8th	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)	Dodge
9th	—	Charisma +1
10th	Efreeti affinity +2[1]	*Produce flame* 1/day (Sp)
11th	—	Efreeti affinity +4[1]
12th	+1 to natural armor	Resistance to fire 10 (Ex)
13th	—	+2 on Concentration checks
14th	+2 on Knowledge (the planes) checks	*Scorching ray* 1/day (Sp)
15th	—	Dexterity +1

16th	Dodge	*Wall of fire* 1/week (Sp)
17th	—	Efreeti affinity +6[1]
18th	Charisma +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Intimidate checks
20th	*Produce flame* 1/day (Sp)	Immunity to fire (Ex)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with efreet.

Genie, Janni

As natural wanderers of the Material Plane, the only thing surprising about janni bloodlines may be that there aren't more of them. A creature who bears the janni bloodline tends to be a couple inches taller than normal for his race, standing with a proud and regal posture. He may also share the janni's nomadic behavior.

Janni Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Appraise checks
8th	Improved Initiative
12th	Wisdom +1
16th	*Invisibility* 1/day (Sp)
20th	Janni affinity +2[1]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with jann.

Human with frost giant bloodline

Giant

In ages past, giants mingled more freely with smaller humanoids. Today, the evidence of such relationships is rare at best. Characters with bloodlines of the lesser evil giants (hill, frost, and fire) may be the result of voluntary or involuntary breeding with the greatfolk. Bloodlines of stone, cloud, or storm giants, on the other hand, are more likely the results of long-ago alliances between those races and the ancient nobility of the world. In any event, characters bearing giant bloodlines tend to be massive for their race, and often share characteristics (skin and hair color, attitudes, and such) with their ancestor.

An intermediate bloodline can only be taken for cloud giants, fire giants, frost giants, stone giants, and storm giants. A major bloodline can only be taken for storm giants.

Cloud Giant Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Climb checks
4th	+2 on Climb checks	Power Attack
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Power Attack	+1 to natural armor
10th	—	Cloud giant affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	*Obscuring mist* 1/day (Sp)
14th	—	+2 on Jump checks
16th	+1 to natural armor	Improved Bull Rush
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Cloud giant affinity +2[1]	Scent (Ex)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with cloud giants.

Fire Giant Bloodline Traits

Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Climb checks
4th	+2 on Climb checks	Power Attack
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Power Attack	+1 to natural armor
10th	—	Fire giant affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	Resistance to fire 5 (Ex)
14th	—	+2 on Jump checks
16th	+1 to natural armor	Cleave
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Fire giant affinity +2[1]	Resistance to fire 10 (Ex)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with fire giants.

Frost Giant Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Climb checks
4th	+2 on Climb checks	Power Attack
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Power Attack	+1 to natural armor
10th	—	Frost giant affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)
14th	—	+2 on Jump checks
16th	+1 to natural armor	Improved Sunder
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Frost giant affinity +2[1]	Resistance to cold 10 (Ex)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with frost giants.

Illus. by J. Pavelec

Hill Giant Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Climb checks
8th	Power Attack
12th	Strength +1
16th	+1 to natural armor
20th	Hill giant affinity +2[1]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with hill giants.

Stone Giant Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Climb checks
4th	+2 on Climb checks	Point Blank Shot
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Point Blank Shot	+1 to natural armor
10th	—	Stone giant affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	*Stone shape* 1/week (Sp)
14th	—	+2 on Jump checks
16th	+1 to natural armor	Combat Reflexes
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Stone giant affinity +2[1]	+1 to natural armor

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with stone giants.

Storm Giant Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Climb checks
8th	Power Attack
12th	Strength +1
16th	+1 to natural armor
20th	Storm giant affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Climb checks
2nd	+2 on Climb checks	Power Attack
3rd	—	Strength +1
4th	Power Attack	+1 to natural armor
5th	—	Storm giant affinity +2[1]
6th	Strength +1	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)
7th	—	+2 on Jump checks
8th	+1 to natural armor	Cleave
9th	—	Constitution +1
10th	Storm giant affinity +2[1]	Water breathing (Ex)[2]
11th	—	Storm giant affinity +4[1]
12th	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)	Resistance to electricity 10 (Ex)
13th	—	+2 on Swim checks
14th	+2 on Jump checks	*Call lightning* 1/day (Sp)
15th	—	Wisdom +1
16th	Cleave	*Freedom of movement* 1/day (Sp)
17th	—	Storm giant affinity +6[1]
18th	Constitution +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Concentration checks
20th	Water breathing (Ex)[2]	Immunity to electricity (Ex)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with storm giants.
2 You can breathe underwater indefinitely and can freely use special abilities while submerged.

Githyanki/Githzerai

After a raid, a githyanki or githzerai war party may return home with prisoners or rescued slaves. In some rare instances—particularly when children are involved—they take pity on these individuals and raise them as their own. Upon reaching adulthood, such a gith-raised character may take a mate among his or her rescuers, resulting in half-blooded children who then pass on the gith traits to their offspring. These descendants share the githyanki warlike nature or the githzerai xenophobia, and tend to be hard-hearted or even cruel.

Githyanki Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Search checks
8th	Iron Will
12th	Constitution +1
16th	Spell resistance 2 + HD
20th	Githyanki affinity +2[1]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with githyanki.

Githzerai Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Concentration checks
8th	Iron Will
12th	Dexterity +1
16th	Spell resistance 2 + HD
20th	Githzerai affinity +2[1]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with githzerai.

Hag

Many hags have the ability to change their appearance, making it possible for them to interact with creatures of other races. Though horrible to contemplate, some use this ability to lure in mates, in the hopes that the offspring can help them further their evil plots. The descendants of a hag tend to be strong but ugly, and often share their ancestor's love of schemes.

Hag Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Hide checks
8th	Alertness
12th	Strength +1
16th	+1 to natural armor
20th	Hag affinity +2[1]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with hags.

Lycanthrope

When he isn't murdering innocent townsfolk, the typical lycanthropic character may enjoy an almost entirely normal social life—even having a family. While the offspring of an afflicted lycanthrope might not share the curse itself, the bloodline might still pass its characteristics down the generations, allowing later descendants to display some of the lycanthrope's attributes. Regardless of the original animal

stock, the carriers of lycanthropic bloodlines tend to share similar characteristics, including a feral stare and an overabundance of body hair.

Lycanthrope Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Search checks
8th	Power Attack or Dodge[1]
12th	Constitution +1
16th	Scent (Ex)
20th	Lycanthrope affinity +2[2]

1 If the base animal's Strength is higher than its Dexterity, it gains Power Attack. Otherwise, it gains Dodge.
2 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with lycanthropes.

Minotaur

Horrid tales describe the fate of innocents carried away from their homes by marauding minotaurs—and the rare individual displaying a minotaur bloodline proves the truth of such stories. These characters have a savage look, with thick hair and sometimes even tiny stubs of horns.

Minotaur Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Search checks
8th	Alertness
12th	Strength +1
16th	+1 to natural armor
20th	Minotaur affinity +2[1]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with minotaurs.

Ogre

A character with ogre blood is most likely the result of raids on humanoid settlements, but may also derive from the more intelligent and magically gifted race of ogre mages (in fact, all intermediate ogre bloodlines are actually ogre mage bloodlines). These characters may appear clumsy and brutish, but they can possess a high degree of cunning.

Ogre Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Climb checks
4th	+2 on Climb checks	Power Attack
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Power Attack	+1 to natural armor
10th	—	Ogre affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	*Darkness* 1/day (Sp)
14th	—	+2 on Concentration checks
16th	+1 to natural armor	*Invisibility* 1/day (Sp)
18th	—	Charisma +1
20th	Ogre affinity +2[1]	*Fly* 1/day (Sp)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with ogres.

Slaad

In perhaps one in a million cases, a red slaad's egg implant or a blue's slaad fever has an unexpected result: A creature physically similar to the afflicted humanoid, rather than a true slaad. These creatures are often fearsome warriors, using their strength and ferocity to great advantage.

Slaad Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Jump checks
4th	+2 on Jump checks	Power Attack
6th	—	Strength +1
8th	Power Attack	*Shatter* 1/day (Sp)
10th	—	Slaad affinity +2[1]
12th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Climb checks
16th	*Shatter* 1/day (Sp)	Cleave
18th	—	Constitution +1
20th	Slaad affinity +2[1]	Resistance to energy 5 (Ex)[2]

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with slaadi.
2 Roll 1d10 to determine type of energy: 1–2 acid; 3–4 cold; 5–6 electricity; 7–8 fire; 9–10 sonic.

Titan

Whether as allies, tyrants, or objects of reverence, titans have on occasion interacted actively with lesser beings. In rare cases, these interactions have given rise to scions of great power—power that hides within rare mortals to this very day. Creatures with a titan's bloodline tend to have wild emotional swings, and are generally large and powerful.

Titan Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Jump checks
8th	Power Attack
12th	Strength +1
16th	*Levitate* 1/day (Sp)
20th	Titan affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Jump checks
2nd	+2 on Jump checks	Power Attack
3rd	—	Strength +1
4th	Power Attack	*Levitate* 1/day (Sp)
5th	—	Titan affinity +2[1]
6th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
7th	—	+2 on Concentration checks
8th	*Levitate* 1/day (Sp)	Improved Sunder
9th	—	Constitution +1
10th	Titan affinity +2[1]	Spell resistance 2 + HD
11th	—	Titan affinity +4[1]
12th	+1 to natural armor	Use oversized weapon (Ex)[2]
13th	—	+2 on Knowledge (any one) checks
14th	+2 on Concentration checks	*Daylight* or *deeper darkness* 1/day (Sp)[3]
15th	—	Intelligence +1
16th	Improved Sunder	*Remove curse* or *bestow curse* 1/day (Sp)[3]

17th	—	Titan affinity +6[1]
18th	Constitution +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Sense Motive checks
20th	Spell resistance 2 + HD	Damage reduction 5/lawful

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with titans.
2 As the titan special ability.
3 If you are good, you gain *daylight* at 14th level and *remove curse* at 16th; if evil, *deeper darkness* and *bestow curse*; if neutral, 50% chance of either.

Troll

Though the origin of such a bloodline is almost too hideous to contemplate, there are nonetheless a few creatures who display a certain trollish fortitude. Such characters tend to bear many scars from old wounds, and are often ferocious in attitude.

Troll Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Spot checks
4th	+2 on Spot checks	Great Fortitude
6th	—	Constitution +1
8th	Great Fortitude	Double heal rate (Ex)[2]
10th	—	Troll affinity +2[1]
12th	Constitution +1	+1 to natural armor
14th	—	+2 on Listen checks
16th	Double heal rate (Ex)[2]	Power Attack
18th	—	Strength +1
20th	Troll affinity +2[1]	Scent (Ex)

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with trolls.
2 You heal naturally at double normal rates.

Vampire

The vampire's powers of persuasion have led more than one weak-willed humanoid into its deadly clutch of intimacy. Though it seems impossible that any child could result from such a union, tales of humanoids possessing some of the vampire's physical and mental prowess abound. These pale, haunted creatures are inevitably cloaked in mystery and deception, for even good-aligned descendants of vampires fear retribution from those mistaking them for the undead.

Vampire Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor
4th	+2 on Climb checks
8th	Stealthy
12th	Strength +1
16th	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)
20th	Vampire affinity +2[1]

Character Level	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	+2 on Climb checks
2nd	+2 on Climb checks	Stealthy
3rd	—	Strength +1
4th	Stealthy	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)
5th	—	Vampire affinity +2[1]
6th	Strength +1	+1 to natural armor
7th	—	+2 on Search checks
8th	Resistance to cold 5 (Ex)	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)
9th	—	Charisma +1
10th	Vampire affinity +2[1]	Lightning Reflexes
11th	—	Vampire affinity +4[1]
12th	+1 to natural armor	Alertness
13th	—	+2 on Sense Motive checks
14th	+2 on Search checks	Improved Initiative
15th	—	Dexterity +1
16th	Resistance to electricity 5 (Ex)	*Suggestion* 1/day (Sp)
17th	—	Vampire affinity +6[1]
18th	Charisma +1	+1 to natural armor
19th	—	+2 on Bluff checks
20th	Lightning Reflexes	Damage reduction 5/silver

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with vampires.

Yuan-ti

At least one faction among these ruthless serpentfolk often engages in intimate relations with untainted humanoids, believing this to be a means of corrupting other races. The descendants of such activities are often indistinguishable from purebloods, having subtle snakelike features such as scaly patches or unblinking eyes.

Yuan-ti Bloodline Traits

Character Level	Minor	Intermediate
2nd	—	+2 on Hide checks
4th	+2 on Hide checks	Alertness
6th	—	Charisma +1
8th	Alertness	*Detect poison* 1/day (Sp)
10th	—	Yuan-ti affinity +2[1]
12th	Charisma +1	Blind-Fight
14th	—	+2 on Disguise checks
16th	*Detect poison* 1/day (Sp)	*Chameleon power* 1/day (Sp)[2]
18th	—	Intelligence +1
20th	Yuan-ti affinity +2[1]	+1 to natural armor

1 You gain the indicated bonus on all Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Perform checks made to interact with yuan-ti.
2 As the yuan-ti special ability.

RANDOM BLOODLINE DETERMINATION

Bloodlines are best included as part of a character with both the DM and player working together to select an appropriate bloodline for the PC. However, if you want to generate a PC's bloodline randomly, use the following tables as a guide.

First, roll d% and consult Table 1–3: Bloodline Strength to determine the bloodline's strength. Then roll d% on Table 1–4: Minor Bloodlines, Table 1–5: Intermediate Bloodlines, or Table 1–6: Major Bloodlines to determine the source.

Table 1–3: Bloodline Strength

d%	Bloodline Strength
01–55	Minor
56–85	Intermediate
86–100	Major

Table 1–4: Minor Bloodlines

d%	Bloodline Source
01–05	Celestial
06–10	Demon
11–15	Devil
16–19	Doppelganger
20	Dragon, black
21	Dragon, blue
22–23	Dragon, brass
24–25	Dragon, bronze
26–27	Dragon, copper
28–29	Dragon, gold
30	Dragon, green
31–32	Dragon, red
33–35	Dragon, silver
36	Dragon, white
37–40	Elemental, air
41–44	Elemental, earth
45–48	Elemental, fire
49–52	Elemental, water
53–57	Fey
58–60	Genie, djinni
61–62	Genie, efreeti
63–65	Genie, jann
66–67	Giant, cloud
68–69	Giant, fire
70–71	Giant, frost
72–74	Giant, hill
75–76	Giant, stone
77–78	Giant, storm
79	Githyanki
80	Githzerai
81–82	Hag
83–87	Lycanthrope
88	Minotaur
89–91	Ogre
92	Slaad
93	Titan
94	Troll
95–97	Vampire
98–100	Yuan-ti

Table 1–5: Intermediate Bloodlines

d%	Bloodline Source
01–05	Celestial
06–10	Demon
11–15	Devil
16–17	Dragon, black
18–19	Dragon, blue
20–21	Dragon, brass
22–23	Dragon, bronze
24–25	Dragon, copper
26–28	Dragon, gold
29–30	Dragon, green
31–33	Dragon, red
34–37	Dragon, silver
38–39	Dragon, white
40–44	Elemental, air
45–49	Elemental, earth
50–54	Elemental, fire
55–59	Elemental, water
60–65	Fey
66–69	Genie, djinni
70–72	Genie, efreeti
73–75	Giant, cloud
76–78	Giant, fire
79–81	Giant, frost
82–84	Giant, stone
85–87	Giant, storm
88	Ogre
89	Slaad
90–91	Titan
92–93	Troll
94–97	Vampire
98–100	Yuan-ti

Table 1–6: Major Bloodlines

d%	Bloodline Source
01–11	Celestial
12–22	Demon
23–33	Devil
34–40	Dragon, gold
41–47	Dragon, red
48–57	Dragon, silver
58–67	Fey
68–76	Genie, djinni
77–83	Genie, efreeti
84–90	Giant, storm
91–95	Titan
96–100	Vampire

CREATING OTHER BLOODLINES

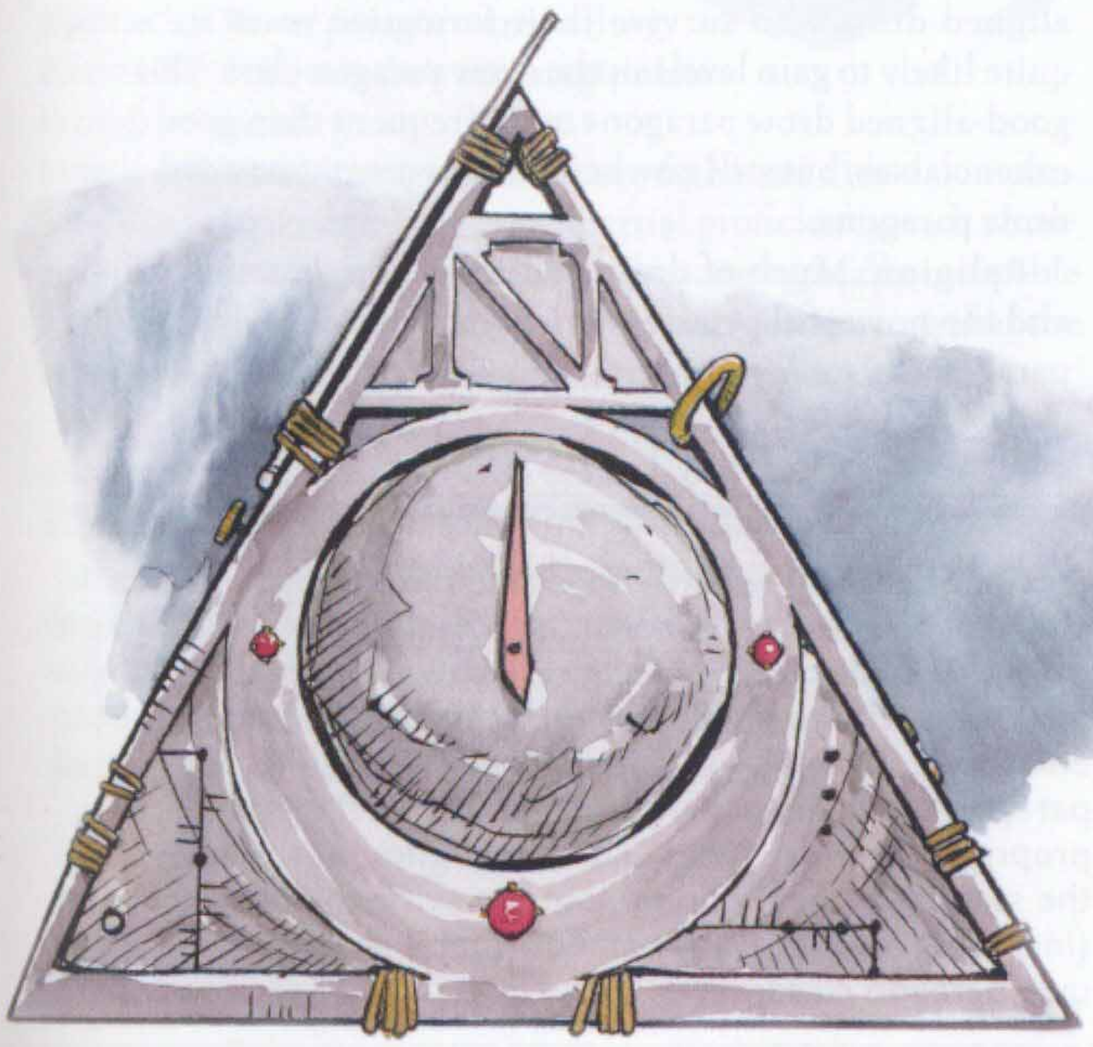
The bloodlines described here are by no means a comprehensive list of all possible permutations. You might choose to create bloodlines of creatures not included here, to create more specialized celestial, demon, or devil bloodlines, or even to create more potent versions of the bloodlines here for use in your game.

Table 1–7: Bloodline Trait Distribution gives you the basic framework for bloodline traits. Over the course of twenty levels, a major bloodline boosts four skills (giving each a +2 bonus) and three ability scores (increasing each by 1). It grants a bloodline affinity at three stages (+2, +4, and +6) and provides ten special abilities. Intermediate bloodlines grant the first ten traits, spread out over twenty levels. Minor bloodlines grant the first five traits.

When creating a new bloodline, use those described above as guidelines for appropriate special abilities.

Table 1–7: Bloodline Trait Distribution

Character	————Trait Gained————		
Level	Minor	Intermediate	Major
1st	—	—	Skill boost 1
2nd	—	Skill boost 1	Special 1
3rd	—	—	Ability boost 1
4th	Skill boost 1	Special 1	Special 2
5th	—	—	Affinity +2
6th	—	Ability boost 1	Special 3
7th	—	—	Skill boost 2
8th	Special 1	Special 2	Special 4
9th	—	—	Ability boost 2
10th	—	Affinity +2	Special 5
11th	—	—	Affinity +4
12th	Ability boost 1	Special 3	Special 6
13th	—	—	Skill boost 3
14th	—	Skill boost 2	Special 7
15th	—	—	Ability 3
16th	Special 2	Special 4	Special 8
17th	—	—	Affinity +6
18th	—	Ability boost 2	Special 9
19th	—	—	Skill boost 4
20th	Affinity +2	Special 5	Special 10



Illus. by D. Crabapple

RACIAL PARAGON CLASSES

In most D&D campaigns, the ideas of class and race are separate concepts. But with racial paragon classes, the line between the two becomes blurred. Racial paragons are, as their name suggests, nearly ideal examples of the strengths and abilities of the character's race. Unlike members of other classes, however, racial paragons are more than merely powerful individuals. They are strong in all the ways that their race is strong, while still vulnerable in the ways that their race is vulnerable. Beyond that, they possess powers or capabilities that supersede those of normal members of their race. While any elf might rise in power, prestige, and (in D&D terms) level, most do so by gaining levels in the character classes described in the *Player's Handbook*—only a few are so much in tune with their heritage and racial abilities that they become racial paragons.

Racial paragons rarely undergo the rigorous training or study that members of other classes commonly undertake between levels. Their experience, wisdom, and heroic abilities simply manifest in the form of superior innate racial abilities. Despite this strong association with race, racial paragons need not have specific views or special dedication to their race's beliefs or typical attitudes (although many do).

Obviously, a character can only take levels in the racial paragon class associated with his race. A human cannot take levels in dwarf paragon—only dwarves are capable of reflecting the highest virtues of dwarfhood by gaining levels in the dwarf paragon class. (Half-elves and half-orcs are an exception; see the Half-Elf Paragon and Half-Orc Paragon sections below.)

Like the fighter, the wizard, and the other standard character classes, the racial paragon classes have no prerequisites (other than being a member of the appropriate race). Paragon class levels can be taken any time a character gains a new level, even at 1st level (in which case they receive four times the normal number of skill points gained at each succeeding level). A character can multiclass freely between standard character classes, prestige classes for which he or she qualifies, and the character's appropriate racial paragon class.

It's possible for a powerful magic effect such as *shapechange*, *reincarnate*, or *wish* to change a character's race. If a character has already taken racial paragon levels in his original race, he can never become a paragon of another race. However, such shapechanging and form-altering magics also cause no loss of a paragon's class abilities—the class abilities gained from racial paragon levels are affected no more or less drastically than benefits gained from having levels in any other class.

Levels in racial paragon classes never result in XP penalties for multiclass characters.

DROW PARAGON

Separated from the rest of the elven people by a legacy of deceit, betrayal, and evil, the drow are easily one of the most dangerous of the humanoid races. Most drow paragons embody all their race's evil nature and delight in calculated cruelty, but some manage to pull away from this dark path, instead embodying the potential that all elves share for beauty, grace, and martial skill.

Drow society is full of intrigue and fierce competition. Even the most able drow paragons can do little more to advance their race than to strive against the machinations of other powerful drow. When they succeed in breaking away from drow culture and its cruel influence, however, good-aligned drow paragons can be the most able and successful members of their race.

Adventures: Drow paragons adventure for one of two reasons. Those of an evil bent adventure to increase their own personal power, by acquiring wealth and powerful magic items or by improving their combat skills. Those few drow paragons with less selfish motives adventure to remove themselves from the influence of their race's harsh and cruel society. These latter drow paragons are the ones most likely to be seen in the company of other races.

Characteristics: Drow paragons are typically more reserved than other members of their race. Drow paragons consider themselves the elite of drow society, although they are careful about sharing these viewpoints with the powerful priestesses that hold sway over most aspects of drow culture. If anything, drow paragons are even more secretive and devious than average members of their race, and their success in such dangerous society emphasizes their ability to navigate treacherous social environments and manipulate the actions of others. It is said that the day a drow stops scheming is the day of her death.

Alignment: The vast majority of drow, including most drow paragons, are unrelentingly evil. However, the few good-aligned drow who survive their formative years are actually quite likely to gain levels in the drow paragon class. This makes good-aligned drow paragons more frequent than good drow of other classes, but still nowhere near as common as evil-aligned drow paragons.

Religion: Much of drow culture is dominated by religion, and the powerful priestesses who rule drow society see drow paragons as tools—more skilled than other ambitious drow,

SUBRACES AND PARAGON CLASSES

As a general rule, a member of a subrace can take levels in the standard race's paragon class unless a specific paragon class exists for the subrace. For example, aquatic elves, gray elves, wild elves, and wood elves may all advance as elf paragons, but drow elves may not, because drow have a separate paragon class (assuming the DM uses the drow paragon class given here). If the DM wanted to further differentiate the elven subraces by creating a paragon class for one or more of the subraces, those subraces could not then take levels of elf paragon.

When deciding whether to create new paragon classes for subraces in your game, consider how different the subrace is from the main race. For instance, the gray elf is very similar to the standard (high) elf, but both the wild elf and wood elf receive a penalty to Intelligence, suggesting that the elf paragon's Intelligence increase at 3rd level might not be appropriate for those races. The forest gnome is very similar to the standard (rock) gnome, but the svirfneblin is so different (including a +3 level adjustment) that it probably deserves its own paragon class.

Table 1–8: The Drow Paragon

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Improved spell-like abilities	+1 level of cleric or wizard
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Improved darkvision (+30 ft.), light sensitivity	—
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Ability boost (Dex +2)	+1 level of cleric or wizard

perhaps, but no more inherently valuable. This outlook chafes against the drow paragon's own belief that she is the elite of her race. As a result, drow paragons are unlikely to follow religion of any kind when removed from the direct influence of the drow priestesses.

Background: Drow paragons learn their skills just as other drow do: by succeeding where weaker drow fail. Drow paragons build their skills among the hidden dangers of the subterranean realms and in a society where the powerful freely prey upon the weak. Regardless of alignment or other abilities, drow paragons are all forced at some point to make a decision about their race's cruel and ever-present religion. Those drow paragons who choose to follow the tenets of the evil priestesses often rise to become deadly lieutenants, carrying out the will of the matriarchs. The few who reject the priestesses' teachings must do so quietly and covertly, biding their time until they can escape the influence of other drow.

Races: Most drow paragons have little use for members of the other races, viewing them only as potential prey or slaves. Good-aligned drow paragons, however, see the merits of interracial cooperation. These paragons seek out adventurers of other races, often coming to relate more to the societies of their adventuring companions than to their own culture.

Other Classes: Drow paragons see members of other classes as tools. They value a broad skill set in those with whom they associate, provided they can control the actions of these associates when the need arises. Drow paragons are willing to work with anyone they can manipulate to their own ends.

That said, drow paragons often see fighters as ideal companions because they combine great martial proficiency with physical prowess, while at the same time they are typically incapable of matching the drow's stealth and subtlety—ensuring that the drow paragon can gain the upper hand whenever desired.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Drow paragons have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Drow paragons favor fighting from ambush, making Dexterity important for its role in sneaking and striking with ranged weapons. Wisdom helps in detecting a potential foe before the foe detects the drow in turn. Strength is also important due to its obvious role in melee combat.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d6.

Class Skills

The drow paragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the drow paragon class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Drow paragons are proficient with all simple weapons, rapiers, longswords, and hand crossbows, and with light armor.

Spells per Day: At 1st and 3rd level, a female drow paragon gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in cleric. A male drow paragon instead gains new spells per day as if he had gained a level of wizard. The paragon does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (bonus metamagic feats, and so on). This essentially means that the character adds the level of drow paragon to her level in cleric or wizard, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

If the drow paragon is female and has no levels in cleric, or is male and has no levels in wizard, this class feature has no effect.

Improved Spell-Like Abilities: At 1st level, a drow paragon gains one additional daily use of each of her innate spell-like abilities.

Improved Darkvision (Ex): At 2nd level, a drow paragon's darkvision range increases by 30 feet.

Light Sensitivity (Ex): A 2nd-level drow paragon's light blindness is lessened to light sensitivity. Instead of being blinded by bright light, she is merely dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell.

Ability Boost (Ex): At 3rd level, a drow paragon's Dexterity score increases by 2 points.

DWARF PARAGON

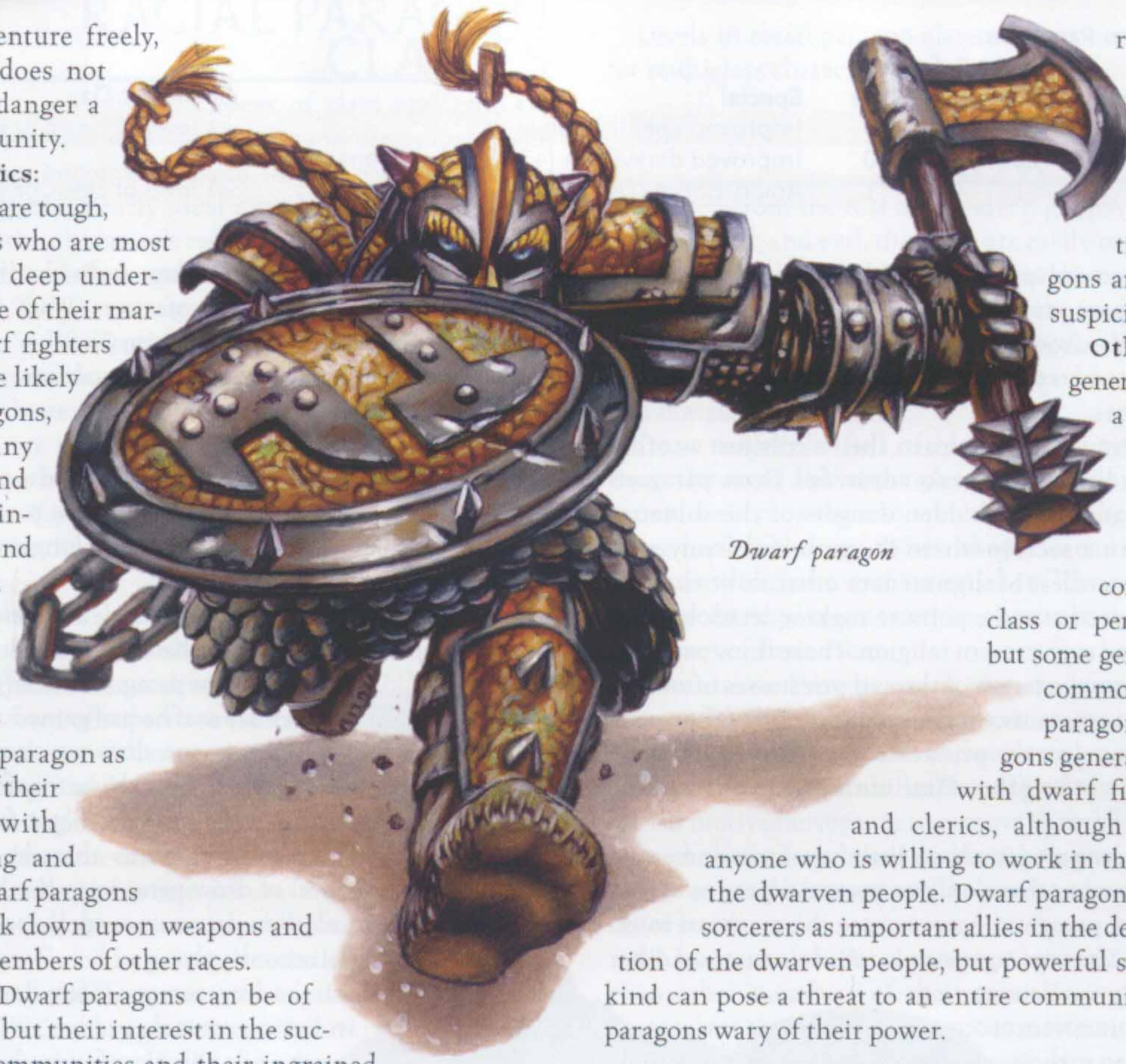
Known for their skill in warfare, their ability to withstand physical and magical punishment, and their great love of stone and stonework, dwarves grow as strong as their mountain homes. Dwarf paragons exemplify this strength, gaining a deeper intuitive understanding of stone and stonework, building upon their already proven toughness, and promoting the crafts and strengths of their people whenever possible.

Dwarf paragons are doughty warriors, and powerful paragons often take the lead in battles as well as diplomatic engagements.

Adventures: Dwarf paragons stand at the forefront of their people, ready to defend or promote the interests of their race through word and deed. Although they are as disparate a group as the members of any character class, most dwarf paragons

undertake adventure freely, as along as it does not threaten or endanger a dwarven community.

Characteristics: Dwarf paragons are tough, skilled warriors who are most at home when deep underground. Because of their martial focus, dwarf fighters and paladins are likely to become paragons, although many clerics also find that their race's innate abilities and interests blend well with their divine training, and they frequently take levels in dwarf paragon as well. Because of their race's ability with weaponsmithing and other crafts, dwarf paragons are likely to look down upon weapons and gear made by members of other races.



Dwarf paragon

Illus. by R. Spencer

Alignment: Dwarf paragons can be of any alignment, but their interest in the success of their communities and their ingrained sense of dwarven honor ensures that many act in a lawful and good manner. Neutral dwarf paragons are found more frequently in areas where relations with other good races have become strained, or where the different races focus more on the interests of their people than on morality.

Religion: Religion is an important part of many dwarven communities, and thus dwarf paragons often exemplify this aspect of dwarven life as they exemplify all others. Many dwarf paragons are also clerics of dwarven deities, and the two philosophies support and reinforce each other.

Background: Although many dwarf paragons grow into their power in the hearts of strong and strident dwarven communities, some rise from areas where dwarves have been oppressed or even defeated. Whatever their origins, dwarf paragons are tough, determined folk who seek out specialized training and master complex tasks to further the aims of their people. Dwarf paragons are often descended from heroes of older generations, and these individuals may seek to honor their ancestors' memory through deeds of their own.

Races: Dwarf paragons are all dwarves, of course, and like other racial paragons, their actions and efforts are motivated primarily by the interests of their people. Despite their focus on their own race's innate abilities, they remain surprisingly open to adventuring with members of other races. In most cases, it is practicality that drives a paragon more than anything else—once a dwarf paragon has decided on a course of action, he uses whatever and whomever is at hand to accomplish the task.

Dwarf paragons, like other members of their race, consider the building of trust and friendship a long, slow task that cannot be rushed. Although it might take a hundred years or more to earn a dwarf paragon's complete trust, dwarf paragons are by no means a suspicious lot.

Other Classes: In general, the reactions of a dwarf paragon are governed more by how an individual or race interacts with the dwarven community than by class or personal training—but some general attitudes are common to most dwarf paragons. Dwarf paragons generally get along well with dwarf fighters, paladins, and clerics, although they appreciate anyone who is willing to work in the best interests of the dwarven people. Dwarf paragons see wizards and sorcerers as important allies in the defense and promotion of the dwarven people, but powerful spellcasters of any kind can pose a threat to an entire community, making dwarf paragons wary of their power.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Dwarf paragons have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Strength is important for dwarf paragons because they often serve as defenders of their people and emphasize their own martial training. Constitution is important not only to a dwarf paragon's ability to stay on his feet in battle, but also because physical toughness is a hallmark of the dwarf race.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d10.

Class Skills

The dwarf paragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

TABLE 1–9: THE DWARF PARAGON

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Craft expertise, improved stonecunning
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Improved darkvision (+30 ft.), save bonus
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Ability boost (Con +2)

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the dwarf paragon class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Dwarf paragons are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, with light, medium, and heavy armor, and with shields (but not with tower shields).

Craft Expertise (Ex): A dwarf paragon may add his class level as a racial bonus on all Craft checks related to stone or metal items.

Improved Stonecunning (Ex): At 1st level, a dwarf paragon's racial bonus on Search checks to notice unusual stonework increases to +4. The range at which he receives an automatic Search check for coming near an example of unusual stonework increases to 20 feet. Also, he can intuit where true north lies in relation to himself (as if he had 5 ranks in Survival) whenever underground.

Improved Darkvision (Ex): At 2nd level, a dwarf paragon's darkvision range increases by 30 feet.

Save Bonus (Ex): A 2nd-level dwarf paragon's racial bonus on saves against poison and against spells and spell-like effects increases by 1.

Ability Boost (Ex): At 3rd level, a dwarf paragon's Constitution score increases by 2 points.

ELF PARAGON

Accomplished with both spell and blade, elves move through the world at a pace removed from that of shorter-lived races. Long-standing champions of good, the elf race is storied beyond telling and peopled by heroes beyond counting. As mighty as the elf race can be, it is not often that elves turn to warfare or combat, preferring instead the paths of poetry, dance, song, and lore. With their long life spans and many talents, elves excel in numerous areas and classes, but a few exemplify to an even greater degree the complex and powerful nature of their race.

Adventures: Elf paragons retreat from the world less readily than most elves, seeing much of the nature of the elf race in the form and shape of the world. They enjoy travel and interaction with other races, learning as much about themselves in the process as they do about those they meet. Elf paragons are aware that voluntary isolation from other good-aligned races poses a great danger to the elven race—although such self-absorption lessens the pain and frustration involved in dealing with other races, it leaves an elven community vulnerable to stagnation and decline.

Characteristics: Elf paragons are curious, patient, and, when roused to action, deadly. They are swift and stealthy and have amazingly acute senses, allowing them to react far faster than opponents might expect. Their aptitude in both stealth and weapons makes them excellent at attacking from ambush, and their propensity to take rogue and ranger levels in addition to their paragon levels accentuates these strengths.

Alignment: Elf paragons can be of any alignment, but most are neutral good. They see the world as a place of harmony, a place that can provide bounty to all those willing to live in peace—so long as society is not pushed to extremes of law or anarchy.

Religion: Although elves as a whole can be as religious as members of any other race, elf paragons rarely concentrate on religion. Instead, they focus their attention and devotion on the mortal members of their race.

Background: Most elf paragons come into their abilities through a strong love of their people and the work of an influential mentor. Although this mentor may be of any class, it is often the lorekeepers and wizards of the elf race who seek to foster the skills of fledgling elf paragons, knowing that one young elf turning to the path of the paragon can benefit the race for nearly a thousand years.

Races: Elf paragons are, for the most part, open and gracious when dealing with members of other races. Even if she secretly looks down on shorter-lived and less gifted folk, an elf paragon knows that other races can offer her the one thing that most elves lack: a sense of urgency. As an elf paragon grows in power, she becomes more and more apt to look upon members of other races as curiosities to be studied rather than as peers—but she remains gracious and trusting, striving to learn how the virtues of other races might benefit the elf race.

Other Classes: Like most racial paragons, elf paragons tend to think more in terms of relations with other races than they do about interactions with other classes. Elf paragons relate best to characters who revere nature or seek to live in harmony with the world around them. They find common philosophical ground with monks and common cause with many paladins, but they are most comfortable around wizards, rangers, and druids. Although elves are as religious as any other race, elf paragons often mistrust clerics' reliance on divine guidance, and heavily armored warriors have an approach to combat that elf paragons sometimes have a hard time appreciating.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Elf paragons have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Agility and physical grace are hallmarks of the elf race, and a high Dexterity score helps an elf paragon avoid blows in combat and make more accurate ranged attacks. Dexterity can even (after the selection of the Weapon Finesse feat) aid in melee combat. A high Intelligence score allows an elf paragon to access a broader selection of skills, and a high Wisdom is important for some of the class's most important class skills.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d8.

Class Skills

The elf paragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Table 1–10: The Elf Paragon

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Elfsight, resist enchantments	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Weapon Focus	+1 level of wizard
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Ability boost (Int +2)	+1 level of wizard

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the elf paragon class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Elf paragons are proficient with all simple weapons, rapiers, longswords, shortbows, and longbows. Elf paragons are proficient with light armor, but not with shields.

Spells per Day: At 2nd and 3rd level, an elf paragon gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in wizard. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (bonus metamagic feats, and so on). This essentially means that she adds the level of elf paragon to her level in wizard, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly.

If an elf paragon has no levels in wizard, this class feature has no effect.

Elfsight (Ex): An elf paragon has exceptional visual acuity. Her racial bonus on Search and Spot checks increases to +4. In addition, an elf paragon's low-light vision increases in range, allowing her to see three times as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination.

Resist Enchantments (Ex): An elf paragon's racial bonus on saves against enchantment spells or effects increases by 2.

Weapon Focus (Ex): At 2nd level, an elf paragon gains Weapon Focus as a bonus feat. This feat must apply to either the rapier, longsword, shortsword, shortbow, longbow, composite shortbow, or composite longbow.

Ability Boost (Ex): At 3rd level, an elf paragon's Intelligence score increases by 2 points.

GNOME PARAGON

Curious, intelligent, and likable, gnomes move easily through the societies and communities of other races. They enjoy a strong sense of loyalty to clan as well as the pull of new experiences offered by adventure. While these sometimes opposing motivations get some adventuring gnomes into trouble with family and clan, gnome paragons successfully blend both aspects of their race's nature. They serve as an example to others of how to promote and protect their community and clan while at the same time constantly searching the world for new and interesting opportunities.

Adventures: Gnome paragons adventure for the sake of discovery. They are curious and social individuals who can balance the demands of clan life with the joys of travel. Many gnome paragons blend their love of adventure with their duties to their clans by traveling and adventuring only during the summer months, returning in the autumn to their homes with news and skills learned during their travels.

Characteristics: Personable and curious, gnome paragons get along well in most communities, and they often provide a lively diversion wherever they go. Socially adept enough to know when their questions are wearing thin on their companions, gnome paragons nonetheless share their race's propensity for long strings of seemingly unrelated questions. This lighthearted behavior does not make them silly or weak, however; they are calm and likable in most situations, but determined and sometimes ruthless when protecting their friends and communities.

Alignment: Gnome paragons are almost always good-aligned, with an equal balance of neutrality and chaos represented among the class.

Religion: Seldom religious themselves, gnome paragons are curious about religion and sincerely interested in the traditions of others. Those gnome paragons who do follow the teachings of one deity almost always worship a deity of knowledge or travel, the two disciplines that appeal most to the paragon's inquisitive nature.

Background: Gnome paragons have incredibly varied backgrounds, much more so than the paragons of any other race except humans. They travel unusual and individual paths toward achieving their status as paragons, and most do so without realizing it. Burgeoning gnome paragons are so involved

Gnome paragon

Halfling paragon

Illus. by J. Jarvis

Table 1–11: The Gnome Paragon

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Illusion aptitude, keen senses	—
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	*Mirror image*	+1 level of bard
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Ability boost (Cha +2)	+1 level of bard

in the nature of their race and the love of new experience that they seldom realize they champion and demonstrate the greatest virtues of gnomekind.

Races: Gnome paragons, like many other gnomes, prefer the company of dwarves over that of other races—but they enjoy social interaction with nearly any race. Gnome paragons are sincerely interested in experiencing what other races have to offer, making their company appealing to all but the most reclusive or staid individuals. Gnome paragons are even willing to interact with monstrous creatures, and good-aligned individuals from normally evil races find themselves welcome in gnome communities due to the efforts of gnome paragons.

Other Classes: Gnome paragons enjoy adventuring with members of any class. They benefit greatly from fighting beside or behind a larger, stronger melee combatant. They are adept in social situations that many classes find taxing. And they provide minor spellcasting support that benefits many combinations of allies. Gnome paragons even get along well with the paragons of other races, finding the magnified characteristics of racial paragons both entertaining and instructive.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Gnome paragons have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Charisma determines the effectiveness of a gnome paragon's limited spellcasting ability, and it is important to the social skills in which the class excels. Dexterity can help gnome paragons survive combat with larger, stronger foes, and help make them more effective as ranged combatants, while Constitution can make them more able to withstand the physical dangers of adventuring.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d6.

Class Skills

The gnome paragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the gnome paragon class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Gnome paragons are proficient with all simple weapons and with light armor.

Spells per Day: At 2nd and 3rd level, a gnome paragon gains new spells per day and spells known as if he had also gained a level in bard. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (bard class features, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of gnome paragon to his level in bard, then determines spells per day, spells known, and caster level accordingly.

If a gnome paragon has no levels in bard, this class feature has no effect.

Illusion Aptitude (Ex): A gnome paragon may add his class level to his caster level to determine the effects of any illusion spells he casts, including those gained as innate abilities of the gnome race. This bonus stacks with the extra spellcasting levels gained from the gnome paragon's spells per day entry (see above).

For example, a 2nd-level wizard/3rd-level gnome paragon's caster level is 2nd for most wizard spells but 5th for wizard spells of the illusion school (and 4th for his innate spell-like abilities *dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, and *prestidigitation*). A 3rd-level bard/2nd-level gnome paragon's caster level is 5th for most bard spells but 7th for bard spells of the illusion school.

This increased caster level affects only spells that the character can cast; it does not give him access to higher-level spells or more spells per day.

Keen Senses (Ex): A gnome paragon's racial bonus on Listen checks and Craft (alchemy) checks increases to +4.

***Mirror Image* (Sp)**: At 2nd level, a gnome paragon gains the ability to cast *mirror image* once per day as a spell-like ability with a caster level equal to his gnome paragon level.

Ability Boost (Ex): At 3rd level, a gnome paragon's Charisma score increases by 2 points.

HALF-DRAGON PARAGON

Half-dragons are a diverse lot. Their dragon parents differ in attitudes and abilities depending on their kind, and the magical nature of dragons means that their other parent can be nearly anything. This diversity might seem to preclude the idea of a half-dragon paragon, but the overwhelming strength of the dragon heritage makes such paragons possible. Half-dragon paragons are defined in large part by the nature of their dragon parent, making a half-gold dragon much different from a half-red dragon—although both are gifted with extraordinary physical abilities and force of personality.

Adventures: Half-dragon paragons adventure for the obvious reasons of gaining wealth, power, or the other trappings of worldly success. Some are motivated to adventure to gain stature in their dragon parents' eyes or (in the case of many chromatic half-dragons) to gain the power necessary to protect themselves from their powerful dragon parents. Metallic half-dragons might be motivated to adventure to fulfill some noble quest or to undertake some journey of self-discovery, but chromatic half-dragons typically adventure for more selfish reasons.

Characteristics: Half-dragons have an innate self-confidence that borders on arrogance—or crosses that border. Many individuals, of course, manage to rein in their arrogance around other races. Half-dragons follow the nature of their dragon parents much more often than that of their other parent, being kind or cruel as their dragon parent would be.

Illus. by E. Fiegenschuh

Alignment: A half-dragon paragon generally follows the precepts and beliefs of her dragon parent, adopting the alignment and beliefs typical of that dragon parent's kind. There are those who rebel against their dragon parents and their parents' alignments, though. Instances of this behavior are more common among chromatic half-dragon paragons—but the evil dragons are often keen to destroy rebellious offspring. As a result, half-dragon paragons with unexpected alignments are rare among both metallic and chromatic varieties.

Religion: Half-dragon paragons rarely gravitate to religion; they're simply too self-involved to study the tenets of an organized religion. Many metallic half-dragons have no trouble making common cause with good-aligned clerics, however, and those who multiclass as paladins find that their noble natures blend well with the religion behind the paladin's code. Chromatic half-dragons, however, take a different tack, and many have benefited from the adulation of cults of lesser creatures dedicated to the worship of dragons. Whether they believe in their own divinity or not, evil dragons and half-dragons have no trouble duping and using those they see as beneath themselves.

Background: Strife and tragedy haunts chromatic half-dragon paragons just as love and a powerful protective presence shelters most metallic half-dragon paragons. A half-dragon paragon masters the skills of combat and adventuring out of necessity: Chromatic half-dragons must do so to gain some measure of protection or usefulness in the eyes of their powerful and cruel parents, and metallic half-dragons must do so to ensure that they do not become a vehicle through which others can take advantage of their noble parents.

Races: Just as it dominates many other aspects of their lives, the innate confidence of half-dragon paragons shapes their view of other races. Half-dragons have a grudging respect for any who achieve greatness or prove themselves capable. But they maintain, to one degree or another, that anything that one can accomplish could be more easily accomplished if one were a half-dragon.

Other Classes: Because half-dragon paragons are blessed with substantial physical prowess, they tend to favor martial classes for multiclass options, and they have a higher regard for those who stand toe-to-toe with their enemies than for those who strike from afar. Although they admit that spellcasters can indeed grow mighty, they scoff at sorcerers, who owe their abilities to a mere trace of dragon ancestry.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Half-dragon paragons have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Strength is important to half-dragon paragons because of its role in combat. Charisma is important because many half-dragon paragons also have minor sorcerous spellcasting ability, and Wisdom and Charisma are both important for many half-dragon paragon class skills.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d12.

Class Skills

The half-dragon paragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Diplomacy (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spot (Wis).

In addition, each half-dragon paragon gains class skills based on its parent dragon type:

Black: Hide (Dex), Move Silently (Dex), and Swim (Str).

Blue: Bluff (Cha), Hide (Dex), and Spellcraft (Int).

Brass: Bluff (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), and Survival (Wis).

Bronze: Disguise (Cha), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Copper: Bluff (Cha), Hide (Dex), and Jump (Str).

Gold: Disguise (Cha), Heal (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Green: Bluff (Cha), Hide (Dex), and Move Silently (Dex).

Red: Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), and Jump (Str).

Silver: Bluff (Cha), Jump (Str), and Perform (Cha).

White: Hide (Dex), Move Silently (Dex), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Table 1–12: The Half-Dragon Paragon

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+2	Sorcerous blood
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+3	Natural armor increase
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+3	Breath weapon 3/day

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the half-dragon paragon class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Half-dragon paragons gain no proficiency with any weapons or armor.

Sorcerous Blood (Ex): A character's half-dragon paragon levels stack with sorcerer levels for purposes of determining the caster level of arcane spells granted through sorcerer levels. For example, a 2nd-level sorcerer/3rd-level half-dragon paragon's caster level is 5th for the spells she can cast as a sorcerer. This increased caster level affects only spells that the character can cast; it does not give her access to higher-level spells or more spells per day.

Natural Armor Increase (Ex): At 2nd level, a half-dragon paragon's natural armor bonus improves by 1.

Breath Weapon (Su): At 3rd level, a half-dragon paragon can use her innate breath weapon three times per day (but only once every 1d4 rounds).

HALF-ELF PARAGON

Although their mixed heritage rarely leaves half-elves embittered, many can find it difficult to call any community home. Humans and elves move through the world at very different paces and have extremely divergent tastes and habits, and neither quite fits a half-elf's innate preferences and attitudes. Half-elf paragons are those half-elves who reconcile these two sides of their nature and create an outlook that is wholly their own.

Adventures: Half-elf paragons turn to adventuring for many reasons. Like members of any other class, many half-elf paragons adventure out of a simple desire for wealth, fame, or personal power. Because they are less attached to their communities than any other racial paragons (except perhaps for half-orcs), half-elf paragons rarely adventure to defend a home or further the interests of their race as a whole—instead, they often turn to adventuring as a means of finding their own place in the world.

Characteristics: Half-elf paragons are a strange blend of curiosity and introspection. Half-elf paragons share the adaptable and inventive nature of their human parents with the refined senses and penchant for long, careful thought of their elf parents. Half-elf paragons are accomplished in both combat and stealth, and one often fills the role of scout or sentry in an adventuring party. Although it might seem to some that half-elf paragons lack focus, it is in a half-elf paragon's nature to fit her skills to the job at hand—and it is precisely her blend of skills that makes her capable of overcoming a wide array of challenges.

Alignment: Half-elf paragons can be of any alignment, but most are chaotic and many are good. Freedom appeals to half-elves—perhaps, because they seldom have firm roots in a community, they find free choice and an open mind appealing. Although a half-elf's mixed ancestry is occasionally the result of an evil act, most half-elves exhibit the better aspects of their parent races' natures.

Religion: Half-elf paragons tend to have extreme views on religion. Many shy away from it, seeking clerics and other servants of the gods only when need arises. A few gravitate toward religion, devoting themselves to a specific deity, an entire pantheon, or a philosophy. Such individuals find, in religion, the sense of belonging and purpose they don't get from their communities. Half-elf paragons who are drawn to religion often follow a deity of travel or freedom, finding the road and its endless challenges a compelling change from their homes.

Background: The background of most half-elves, paragons included, tends to be one of extremes. Either a half-elf finds unusual acceptance and peace throughout her life, or she finds herself faced with near-constant upheaval and turmoil. Whatever their individual circumstances, adult half-elves rarely have strong ties to a place or community, and many choose a life of adventure and travel.

Races: Half-elf paragons are reserved in their views on other races. They get along well with members of most races, but the two races to which they are closest—humans and elves—are also the two most likely to provoke strong feelings from a half-elf paragon. Events in an individual half-elf paragon's life are likely to shape attitudes about one or the other of those races—usually for ill.

Other Classes: Half-elf paragons are among the most open-minded adventurers to be found. They value the skills of other

Table 1–13: The Half-Elf Paragon

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Bonus feat, divided ancestry, elven vision	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Persuasion	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Ability boost (+2)	—

classes equally, although their elven heritage gives them a slight preference for wizards and rangers. Because half-elf paragons often multiclass as rogues and rangers, they share some of the predilections of those classes, valuing less subtle companions when battle is joined but occasionally finding them a nuisance when stealth is called for.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Half-elf paragons have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Equally adept at melee and ranged combat, half-elf paragons benefit from high Strength and high Dexterity scores. Wisdom and Charisma, because of their importance to the half-elf paragon's most useful class skills, are also valuable to the class.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d8.

Class Skills

The half-elf paragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the half-elf paragon class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Half-elf paragons are proficient with all simple weapons and with light armor.

Spells per Day: At 2nd level, a half-elf paragon gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class she belonged to before adding the level. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (bonus metamagic or item creation feats, bard or assassin abilities, and so on). This essentially means that she adds the level of half-elf paragon to the level in the spellcasting class, then determines spells per day, spells known, and caster level accordingly.

If a character had more than one spellcasting class before she became a half-elf paragon, she must decide to which class she adds the level of half-elf paragon. If a half-elf paragon has no levels in a spellcasting class, this class feature has no effect.

HOUSE RULE: SKILLED HALF-ELVES

In my campaign, I wanted to make half-elves more attractive as a character option. Thus, half-elf characters get +1 skill point per level (or +4 skill points at 1st level) just as humans do, thanks to their human heritage. The human bonus feat remains unique to that race, ensuring that the human race still has an appeal to players.

—Andrew Finch

Bonus Feat (Ex): At 1st level, a half-elf paragon gains a bonus feat. The character must meet the feat's prerequisites normally.

Divided Ancestry (Ex): Unlike other racial paragons, half-elves can take levels in more than one racial paragon class. After gaining at least one level as a half-elf paragon, a character can take either elf paragon levels or human paragon levels (but not both).

Elven Vision (Ex): At 1st level, a half-elf paragon's visual acuity improves to match that of an elf's. A half-elf paragon's racial bonus on Search and Spot checks increases to +2.

Persuasion (Ex): A 2nd level half-elf paragon's racial bonus on Diplomacy and Gather Information checks increases to +3. She gains a +2 racial bonus on all other Charisma-based skills.

Ability Boost (Ex): At 3rd level, a half-elf paragon increases one ability score of her choice by 2 points.

HALF-ORC PARAGON

Half-orc paragons differ from other racial paragons in that they rarely have large populations of other half-orcs promoting and supporting their views of their race. Rather, most half-orc paragons find the strength to champion their heritage by overcoming the challenges of a unique and sometimes isolating background. Powerful warriors, half-orc paragons combine the innate ferocity of their orc heritage with the quick thinking and adaptability of humanity.

Adventures: Half-orc paragons adventure to see the world, look for a home, search for fame and power, or simply wander for wandering's sake. With fewer connections to their race as a whole than other racial paragons, half-orc paragons are likely to remain active adventurers for long periods of time.

Successful half-orc paragon adventurers often attract others of their race. These like-minded half-orcs seek acceptance in the half-orc paragon's community, seek to become adventuring companions, or simply want to be followers.

Characteristics: Half-orc paragons are as mixed in outlook as they are in ancestry. Most half-orc paragons come to identify strongly with one or the other of their parent races, and see themselves as the bridge between that race and other half-orcs. Many view themselves as gifted with strength and opportunities beyond those of either of their parent races.

Alignment: Half-orc paragons, like most orcs and half-orcs, tend toward a chaotic outlook. Some half-orc paragons give in to bitterness caused by the difficulties they encounter in communities of other races, but most look beyond that, drawing strength of character from the inequities they face.

Religion: Half-orc paragons rarely have strong religious views. Although they respect the obvious power of the deities and their clerics, few half-orc paragons feel the call of a higher power—perhaps because they sit so clearly between two numerous and powerful races.

Background: Most half-orc paragons become champions of their race because they endure unusual circumstances involving both humans and orcs. Many who are born in areas of great conflict between the two races feel the constant pull of a mixed

heritage. Often, it is travel away from such areas that crystallizes the paragon's view of his own race, allowing him to see the value and virtue in his own abilities and outlook.

Races: Half-orc paragons face challenges wherever they turn, for many races look on them with suspicion or view their orcish parentage as a taint. Most half-orc paragons form close friendships with only a few individuals. Because it is usually difficult for a half-orc to find friendship and trust, even among those of their own kind, half-orc paragons are all the more loyal to those who do become their close friends.

Other Classes: Half-orc paragons understand the harsh life and ferocity of barbarians, particularly those paragons who hail from regions populated by barbarian tribes. Half-orc paragons admire classes that are proficient in battle, considering the practiced skills of a fighter and the woods lore of the ranger equally valid choices for a warrior. Although half-orc paragons can admire the effects of powerful spells wielded by clerics, wizards, and other spellcasters, they often look on members of such classes with suspicion or even contempt, seeing magic as little more than a cover for physical weakness.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Half-orc paragons have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Strength is important to half-orc paragons because of its role in combat, and several half-orc paragon skills are based on Strength. Dexterity and Constitution are valued because of their roles in combat, and a high Constitution also allows a half-orc paragon to rage for longer periods of time.

Alignment: Any, although predominantly chaotic.

Hit Die: d8.

Class Skills

The half-orc paragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

TABLE 1–14: THE HALF-ORC PARAGON

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Divided ancestry, monstrous mien
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Rage 1/day
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Ability boost (Str +2)

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the half-orc paragon class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Half-orc paragons are proficient with all simple and martial weapons, and with light armor and medium armor.

Human paragon

Half-elf paragon

Half-orc paragon

Illus. by S. Prescott

Divided Ancestry (Ex): Unlike other racial paragons, half-orcs can take levels in more than one racial paragon class. After gaining at least one level as a half-orc paragon, a character can take either orc paragon levels or human paragon levels (but not both).

Monstrous Mien (Ex): Half-orc paragons can channel their innate ferocity, resulting in a +4 racial bonus on Intimidate checks.

Rage (Ex): At 2nd level, a half-orc paragon comes to understand and draw upon the natural ferocity that courses through his blood. He gains the ability to fly into a screaming blood frenzy once per day (or one additional time per day, if he already has a rage ability). The effect of this ability is identical with the effect of a barbarian's rage (see page 25 of the *Player's Handbook*). If a half-orc paragon has improved rage abilities (such as the barbarian class features greater rage, indomitable will, tireless rage, or mighty rage), those improvements apply to the rage ability granted by the half-orc paragon class as well.

Ability Boost (Ex): At 3rd level, a half-orc paragon's Strength score increases by 2 points.

HALFLING PARAGON

Clever and capable, halfling paragons love travel, and they embody the curiosity and easygoing ways of the halfling people. Despite their curiosity and good-natured outlook, halfling paragons are the most capable members of their race. They are survivors, cunning and resourceful enough to survive in a world filled with large, dangerous creatures. When halfling paragons travel through communities and countries populated by other races, they are quick to make friends and often end up at the center of traveling or adventuring groups.

Adventures: Filled with the wanderlust of the halfling race, halfling paragons see adventuring as a natural extension of their travels through the world. In fact, it's unlikely that a halfling paragon thinks of herself as being on an adventure at any time, even in the middle of a trap-filled dungeon. For a character with a lust for excitement and discovery, what could be a more natural place to visit than a dungeon or ancient ruin?

Occasionally halfling paragons embody the worst of their race's characteristics, using their stealth abilities and their natural cunning to steal from other races—races they consider dupes and fools.

Characteristics: Exasperated adventuring companions claim that halfling paragons invented curiosity. With their small size and uncanny stealth, halfling paragons can go nearly anywhere undetected. Remaining undetected, however, is rarely any fun. Halfling paragons enjoy the benefits of their small size, and many secretly wonder how bigger races can ever do anything quietly.

Alignment: Most halfling paragons are chaotic good. They love freedom, and their approach to life is in many ways carefree and unpredictable. While most halflings tend toward neutrality over chaos, a halfling paragon embodies the race's curiosity and love of travel.

Religion: Halfling paragons favor a variety of deities. Some flit from religion to religion carelessly; they find new ideas compelling and often investigate the tenets of one religion for a while before moving on to another. In this way, halfling paragons amass a few scattered bits of philosophy culled from several different religions into their own happy amalgam. Halfling paragons who remain dedicated to one deity or philosophy almost always multiclass as clerics devoted to a god of travel.

Background: A halfling paragon learns her skills while traveling with her clan. Although she may be born to a nomadic people, even the clan's travel eventually seems too infrequent, the pace too slow. The wanderlust of the halfling race flows through her, and eventually she sets off on her own, outpacing the slow-moving wagons of her people. Many halfling paragons multiclass as rogues or rangers, and their skills develop while sneaking around in large cities or stalking game through deep wilderness.

Races: Halfling paragons travel, and they never seem to tire of it. Because they spend so much time in the communities of other races, they strive to get along well with everyone. They are adept, as most halflings are, at fitting into the communities of others, although they rarely stay long.

Halfling paragons enjoy a mixed lot of traveling companions—too many members of just one race makes for boring company. Although open-minded in the extreme, halfling paragons can occasionally find dwarves too dour and serious for their tastes. Halfling paragons particularly enjoy the company of gnomes.

Other Classes: Halfling paragons regard other classes with a mixture of relief and frustration. They are happy to stand behind fighters and members of other physically powerful classes when monsters charge up to do battle, and they are grateful when a spellcaster's abilities help them sneak past an opponent or heal their wounds. But few classes can match the halfling paragon's capability for stealth, and more often than not it is members of those other classes that get the halfling paragon into a fight in the first place. Halfling paragons get along best with other stealthy characters, particularly rogues and rangers, and many multiclass between the two classes.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Halfling paragons have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Dexterity is important to halfling paragons because it helps them avoid the attacks of larger foes and increases their accuracy with thrown weapons and slings, their favorite forms of attack. Because halfling paragons value skill and subtlety, a high Intelligence can help them a great deal. Charisma is important to many of the halfling paragon's class skills.

Alignment: Any, although most favor neutrality.

Hit Die: d6.

Class Skills

The halfling paragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

TABLE 1–15: THE HALFLING PARAGON

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Athletic prowess, save bonus
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Thrown weapon mastery
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	Ability boost (Dex +2)

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the halfling paragon class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Halfling paragons are proficient with all simple weapons and with light armor.

Athletic Prowess (Ex): At 1st level, a halfling paragon's racial bonus on Climb, Jump, and Move Silently checks improves to +3.

Save Bonus (Ex): A 1st-level halfling paragon's racial bonus on all saving throws increases by 1.

Thrown Weapon Mastery (Ex): At 2nd level, a halfling paragon gains a +2 bonus on damage rolls when using a thrown weapon or a sling.

Ability Boost (Ex): At 3rd level, a halfling paragon's Dexterity score increases by 2 points.

HUMAN PARAGON

Human inventors, explorers, and others who push the boundaries of knowledge and experience may become human paragons. They turn adversity into opportunity by finding new ways to apply their skills, discovering new techniques to solve problems, and challenging entropy by constantly seeking out ventures they have not yet mastered. Humans, and the paragons who rise from among them, balance strength with agility and temper intellect with intuition.

Adventures: Adventure occupies much of a human paragon's time. Whether impulsive or carefully studious, a human paragon searches almost constantly for the new and unexplored. Few, however, think of themselves as pioneers or inventors. They see themselves as naturally curious, deeming the intelligent and unusual way in which they use their skills to be the norm rather than an exception. Curiosity and wanderlust are easily the two most common motivations for undertaking adventures, but human paragons may find themselves on adventures as a result of a quest or some other necessary duty.

Characteristics: Human paragons are inventiveness personified. They are adaptable and capable of using their skills in a broad variety of situations. Perhaps because they are capable in such a wide range of situations, human paragons tend to dislike repetition and crave variety. They seldom pass up a chance to indulge in a new experience, and a new challenge is much more likely to excite them than a lingering goal.

If human paragons have a downfall, it is that they see themselves capable of overcoming any challenge or inventing a solution for any problem. When asked who would be best for a task, a human paragon almost always chooses himself—not out of overconfidence or egotism, but because he has learned through success after success that when backed into a corner, he'll almost always find a way out.

Alignment: Human paragons have few tendencies in alignment. Perhaps more are attracted to chaos over law, although those who become devoted to a religion or cause seem to gravitate toward lawful deities or philosophies.

Religion: Humans are as varied in their beliefs as they are in every other aspect of their lives, and human paragons are no exception. Many human paragons dabble in religion, learning a bit of one doctrine, following another deity for a brief time, and so on. Although these individuals seldom stay with one belief system for long, they become quite well versed in religion over time. While it's more common to find human paragons with only these surface attachments to religion, some human paragons develop a passion for worship that fuses seamlessly with their views of humanity, resulting in zealotry. In almost every case, these human paragons follow lawful deities and multiclass as clerics or paladins.

Background: Although there is no single common background for human paragons, many share some common characteristics. They often arise from situations in which they have many opportunities to learn, either from parents, an accepting community, or even a monastery filled with learned monks and clerics.

Races: Human paragons are open and accepting, embodying the best aspects of humanity's flexibility and tolerance. Human paragons usually delight in poking gentle fun at the foibles of other races, finding their extremes of behavior amusing. They also find much to admire in other races, including the stoic fortitude of the dwarves, the beauty and grace of the elves, and the curiosity and inventiveness of the halflings. In truth, human paragons are closer in attitude to halflings than any other race—both suffer (or benefit) from more than a touch of wanderlust.

Table 1–16: The Human Paragon

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Adaptive learning	—
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Bonus feat	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Ability boost (+2)	+1 level of existing class

Illus. by D. Martin

Other Classes: Human paragons are widely accepting of other classes. They value the presence of fighters, rangers, and other skilled combatants, knowing that they are more likely to survive a battle when teamed with such characters. They also understand the value of knowledge, and they regard spellcasters with a bit of awe. Rogues and bards, closest in ability (if not in spirit) to human paragons, usually have skills that overlap the paragon's in several areas, allowing the paragon to diversify his learning rather than become overly specialized.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Human paragons have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Skilled and quick to adapt, human paragons benefit from a high Intelligence. But they are also often at the forefront of humanity's wars, making Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution important for their respective roles in combat.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d8.

Class Skills

The human paragon can choose any ten skills as class skills. (Knowledge skills must be selected individually.)

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier. (Does not include the human's bonus skill point at each level.)

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the human paragon.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Human paragons are proficient with all simple weapons and with light armor. In addition, a human paragon is proficient with any one martial weapon of his choice.

Spells per Day: At 2nd and 3rd level, a human paragon gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class he belonged to before adding the level. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (bonus metamagic or item creation feats, bard or assassin abilities, and so on). This essentially means that he adds the level of human paragon to the level in the spellcasting class, then determines spells per day, spells known, and caster level accordingly.

If a character had more than one spellcasting class before he became a human paragon, he must decide to which class he adds each level of human paragon. If a human paragon has no levels in a spellcasting class, this class feature has no effect.

Adaptive Learning (Ex): At 1st level, a human paragon can designate any one of his human paragon class skills as an adaptive skill. This skill is treated as a class skill in all respects for all classes that character has levels in, both current and future. For example, if a human paragon chooses Spot as an adaptive skill, he treats Spot as a class skill for all future class levels he gains, even if it is not normally a class skill for the class in question.

Bonus Feat (Ex): At 2nd level, a human paragon gains a bonus feat. Due to the varied talents and adaptable nature of humans, this feat can be any feat for which the human paragon is qualified (he is not restricted to a special list of bonus feats). The character must meet the prerequisites for the bonus feat normally.

Ability Boost (Ex): At 3rd level, a human paragon increases one ability score of his choice by 2 points.

ORC PARAGON

Aggressive, brutal, and often at odds with the other humanoid races, orcs view war and hatred as their right. They have a deep and nearly endless enmity for elves and dwarves, having battled both races for countless generations. Like members of other paragon classes, orc paragons embody the best of their race, combining the strength and confidence of their people with intelligent observation and a willingness to temper risk with calculation.

Adventures: Orcs undertake adventures for many reasons, although most do so to gain wealth or power. For orcs, "adventuring" often means raiding the cities and towns of other humanoid races, rather than exploring lost tombs or slaying powerful monsters. Despite this tendency, orcs can occasionally be found accompanying small groups of adventurers on quests of great significance. Some find their own culture stifling, and wish to rise above its cruel savagery, while others seek to learn the fighting techniques of other races to grow mighty themselves, hoping to become a champion of the orc race.

Characteristics: Mean and foul-tempered, orcs have many characteristics that other humanoid races find offensive or repulsive. Most orcs are savage and cruel. Orc paragons, however, temper this behavior with keener powers of observation and a slightly more tolerant view of other races and cultures. Orc paragons are much more curious than other members of their race, and many come to see learning as the key to advancing the orc cause.

Alignment: Orc paragons are nearly always chaotic, but a rare few see a greater future for orcs as a race if they can become more orderly and organized. These orc paragons, arguably the most forward-thinking members of their warlike race, favor neutral alignments.

Religion: Although orcs as a race tend to follow the teachings of brutal and savage deities or worship powerful evil creatures, orc paragons are seldom deeply religious. Those who rise to leadership positions in their tribes don't hesitate to use religious beliefs as a tool to shape the tribe members to their desired ends, but they rarely possess strong beliefs themselves. The exceptions to this general statement can be extremely dangerous, however, and sometimes raise great hosts in the name of some powerful orc god.

Background: Orc paragons gain their skills in the crucible that is orc culture. They prove their strength by defeating lesser members of their tribes and often earn leadership positions within their culture. Nearly all orc paragons eventually seek knowledge and skills from cultures beyond their own, striving to bring more potent forms of combat and more sophisticated knowledge back to their tribes.

Races: Orc paragons, like other orcs, hate and detest elves and dwarves above all other races. Orcs rarely view other races as anything more than potential prey for their raids and wars, but when necessary, orc paragons can suppress their aggressive nature and get along with other races.

Other Classes: Orc paragons respect those with strength and physical power, especially barbarians and fighters. Rangers are more often opponents of orc paragons than allies, but even so the two classes share a grudging respect for each other's skills and martial proficiency. Orc paragons care little for arcane spellcasters, but quickly learn to value powerful wizards and sorcerers capable of taking down multiple foes with a single spell.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Orc paragons have the following game statistics.

Illus. by S. Tappin

Abilities: Strength is important to orc paragons because of its role in combat, and several orc paragon skills are based on Strength. Dexterity and Constitution are also important to an orc paragon's capability for combat.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d10.

Class Skills

The orc paragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

TABLE 1–17: THE ORC PARAGON

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Improved darkvision (+30 ft.), no light sensitivity
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Elf slayer
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Ability boost (Str +2)

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the orc paragon class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Orc paragons are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and with light and medium armor.

Improved Darkvision (Ex): At 1st level, an orc paragon's darkvision range increases by 30 feet.

No Light Sensitivity: An orc paragon loses his race's light sensitivity at 1st level.

Elf Slayer (Ex): A 2nd-level orc paragon learns to channel his hatred of the elven race. He gains a +2 bonus on weapon damage rolls against elves.

Ability Boost (Ex): At 3rd level, an orc paragon's Strength score increases by 2 points.

TIEFLING PARAGON

Tieflings are humans with traces of fiendish ancestry. Although tieflings are not as powerful or as potent as full-fledged half-fiends, their touch of fiendish blood does grant them significant bonuses to their physical and mental abilities as well as some minor resistances and spell-like abilities. Although a few tieflings manage to overcome their ancestry and remain good and trustworthy individuals, most tieflings follow the dark urges tugging at them, becoming selfish, cruel, and evil as they mature. Tiefling paragons, both good and evil, are those who most successfully come to terms with their family's history. The good ones see themselves as rising above their ancestry, while the evil ones embrace its power.

Adventures: Tiefling paragons undertake adventures for the usual reasons of gaining wealth, prestige, or power. Evil tieflings, in particular, adventure to fulfill selfish desires—to gain powerful magic or find lost knowledge that will give them an advantage in some conflict. Good tiefling paragons typically adventure to prove their worth to a community, to stick with the few close companions they have managed to find, or simply to get away from the press of civilization.

Characteristics: Tiefling paragons are stealthy, deceptive, and often selfish. Trusted by few, they in turn trust no one, knowing that, no matter their behavior, they'll likely be suspected of wrongdoing as soon as any problem arises in the community. Because of such hard lessons in dealing with other races, tiefling paragons are suspicious of kindness and almost never trust that a member of another race will remain loyal or friendly once the tiefling's ancestry is known. Many tiefling paragons, even those who aren't truly evil, have an appetite for cruelty that is difficult to suppress.

Alignment: Almost all tiefling paragons are evil. Those that are not must constantly struggle against thoughts of violence and corruption, seldom knowing the peace that many other good-aligned creatures take for granted.

Religion: Most tiefling paragons steer clear of religion, knowing that many followers of good deities see it as their duty to

expose or attack tieflings. Evil tiefling paragons involved with evil cults (typically dedicated to powerful fiends of some kind) are an exception.

Background: Tiefling paragons learn their skills while slipping quietly through the societies of other races. They frequently multiclass as rogues, and often have similar backgrounds. A lucky few tiefling paragons have mentors and opportunities to learn in comfortable environments, but the vast majority must overcome the prejudices of those who fear the tiefling's ancestry, learning their skills among criminals and in back alleys.

Tiefling paragons do not see themselves as fellows or champions of their race. Instead, if evil, they see themselves as champions of evil and representatives of their fiendish forefathers. Good tiefling paragons seek to absolve themselves of the reputation imposed upon them by their ancestry.

Races: Tiefling paragons have widely differing attitudes about the humanoid races, depending on alignment and their experiences in the communities of different races. Although they can get along in many societies, tiefling paragons prefer large human cities, where it's generally easier to conceal their ancestry. Tiefling paragons rarely have time for dwarves, mostly because dwarves are likely to be suspicious and critical of the tiefling's presence. Conversely, they empathize with the prejudice and difficulties that half-orcs face in many civilized communities and can form friendships based on this shared perspective.

Other Classes: Tiefling paragons are happy to work with members of other classes, provided that the tiefling can manipulate events to her own ends, make off with choice treasure at opportune moments, or gather information for later use. Evil tieflings, naturally, avoid the company of paladins, but those tieflings who have dedicated themselves to good actually prefer the company of holy warriors, knowing that a paladin's word will go a long way toward assuring others that the tiefling can be trusted.

GAME RULE INFORMATION

Tiefling paragons have the following game statistics.

Abilities: Because they tend to favor light armor, agile combat styles, and stealth whenever possible, Dexterity is extremely important to tiefling paragons. A high Intelligence grants the tiefling paragon access to more skills at each level, and a high Constitution helps compensate for the Hit Die lost because of the tiefling's level adjustment. Although tieflings take a racial penalty to Charisma, a good score in this ability can help those tiefling paragons who wish to conceal their nature from others and gain acceptance whenever their true nature becomes known.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d8.

Class Skills

The tiefling paragon's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Disguise (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

TABLE 1–18: THE TIEFLING PARAGON

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+2	+2	Improved resistance
2nd	+1	+3	+3	+3	*Darkness*, skill bonus
3rd	+2	+3	+3	+3	Ability boost (Dex +2)

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the tiefling paragon class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Tiefling paragons are proficient with all simple weapons and with light armor.

Improved Resistance (Ex): At 1st level, one of a tiefling paragon's natural resistances to energy (fire, cold, or electricity) improves from 5 to 10. The character can choose which of her three resistances improves, but once she makes this choice it can never be altered.

***Darkness* (Sp):** At 2nd level, a tiefling paragon can use her *darkness* spell-like ability three times per day.

Skill Bonus (Ex): A 2nd-level tiefling paragon's racial bonus on Bluff and Hide checks improves to +4.

Ability Boost (Ex): At 3rd level, a tiefling paragon's Dexterity score increases by 2 points.

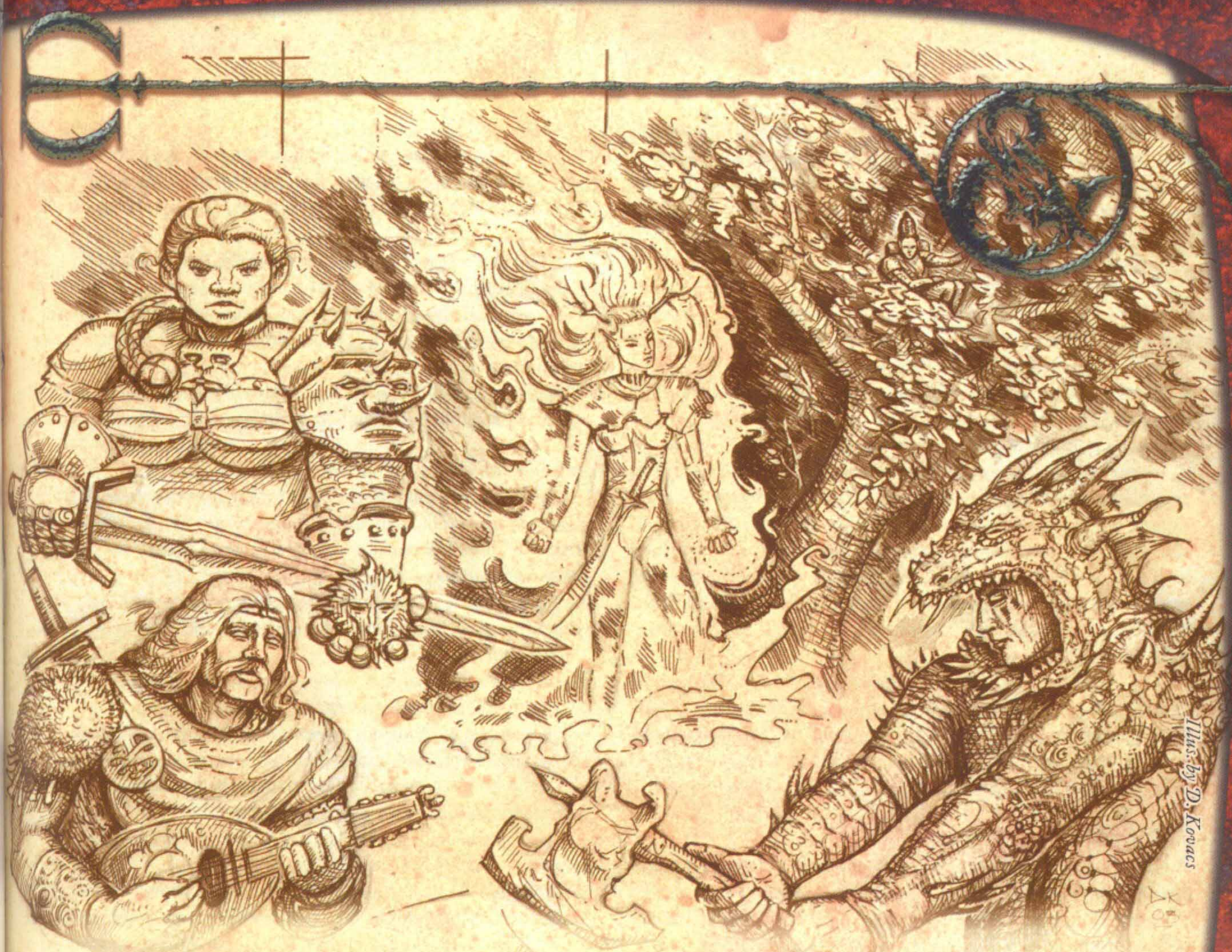
PARAGON CLASSES IN YOUR GAME

Like many of the variants in this book, racial paragons can be a powerful tool for shaping a campaign world or play experience. Including racial paragons in a campaign is as easy as allowing players to advance in the classes or designing NPCs with class levels from the appropriate paragon class. However, this variant can be more than just another long list of possible classes. By allowing different subsets of the racial paragon classes to be present in your game, you can shape which races are the most influential or numerous in the campaign.

For example, in a setting in which elves and dwarves have all but died out, the traditions of their racial paragon classes might have been lost. In the same campaign, however, humans, half-orcs, and halflings all thrive, and powerful NPCs of these races might frequently have a level or two in the appropriate paragon class.

Furthermore, the prevalence of racial paragons can reflect the importance of racial issues. In campaigns where tensions run high between the civilized races, each race is more likely to have a large number of racial paragons among its members. As the cause of expanding humanity's borders into the wilderness becomes more and more important to the race, more human paragons come to the fore—while halflings in the same campaign, content and secure with their lot in life, turn to other classes and pursuits less tied to the goals of their race.

You might choose to create your own racial paragon classes. When creating a racial paragon class for a race with a level adjustment of +1 or higher (such as drow or half-dragon), it's acceptable for the class to be a little better than a paragon class for a race with a level adjustment of +0. In general, the benefits of a race with a level adjustment tend to decrease in value as the character gains levels, and an above-average paragon class can help that race maintain its edge.



Illus. by D. Kovacs

As important as your character's race is, it's (usually) a one-time choice made at the beginning of your character's career. Your selection of class levels, on the other hand, is a recurring decision that is shaped both by personal preference and the realities of the campaign world.

The eleven character classes in the *Player's Handbook* cover many of the basic fantasy archetypes, from the raging warrior to the crafty wizard ard. But the number of character roles imaginable is essentially infinite, and even when factoring in all the prestige class choices available, you may not be able to find the combination of class features that perfectly captures your mental image of your character.

This chapter presents a wide variety of options that allow you to tweak the existing character classes without completely scrapping them and starting from scratch. Whether they involve swapping out one class feature for another or trying a new twist on an old favorite, these variants allow the players and DM to retain the familiarity of existing classes while exploring worlds of difference.

With your DM's permission, you can use any one of these variant classes in place of the standard class of the same name. Depending on the campaign world, variant classes may exist side by side with standard classes, or they may replace standard classes entirely. For instance, the DM may decide that all monks must choose a fighting style that reflects their original training, or that all barbarians must choose a totem.

For those who prefer a less specialized approach to character building, the chapter also includes a trio of "generic" classes that allow players the ability to custom-craft their character's unique identity.

Throughout this chapter, the term "character class" is used to refer to any class that may be taken by a 1st-level starting character. This includes the eleven classes that appear in Chapter 3 of the *Player's Handbook*, as well as any similar class in other products.

VARIANT CHARACTER CLASSES

This section presents sixteen variant versions of the character classes in the *Player's Handbook*, along with several additional variants created by swapping one or more class features for features of other classes.

Each fully detailed variant has entries for one or more of the following topics. If an entry does not appear, use the material for the class as presented in the *Player's Handbook*.

Alignment: Changes to the class's alignment restrictions.

Hit Die: Changes to the class's Hit Die.

Base Attack Bonus: If the class uses a different base attack bonus, this entry gives the column to use (good, average, or poor).

Base Save Bonuses: If the class has a different mix of good and poor saves, this entry gives the appropriate column for each save.

Class Skills: Additions or subtractions from the class skill list, and/or changes in the number of skill points gained per level.

Class Features: Changes, additions, or subtractions to the class's special features, including spellcasting.

BARBARIAN VARIANT: TOTEM BARBARIAN

In a barbarian-heavy campaign, you can increase the variation between barbarian characters if each barbarian tribe dedicates itself to a different totem creature, such as the bear or the jaguar. The choice of a totem must be taken at 1st level, and cannot be changed later except under extreme circumstances (such as the barbarian being adopted by another tribe).

If you use this variant, the barbarian loses one or more of the following standard class features: fast movement, uncanny dodge, trap sense, and improved uncanny dodge. In place of these abilities, the barbarian gains class features as determined by his totem. All totems do not necessarily grant abilities at the same levels, nor do they all grant the same number of abilities. These class features are extraordinary abilities unless otherwise indicated.

The list of totems discussed here is by no means exhaustive. If you prefer to use other totems, you can either substitute the totem name for that of a similar creature (such as changing the Lion Totem to the Tiger Totem) or create a new set of totem abilities, using the information here as a guide.

Ape Totem Class Features

A barbarian dedicated to the ape totem does not gain the standard fast movement, uncanny dodge, trap sense, and improved uncanny dodge barbarian class features, and instead gains the following abilities.

- At 1st level, an ape-totem barbarian gains a climb speed equal to one-half his base land speed (round down to the nearest 5-foot interval). For instance, a human, elf, half-elf, or half-orc ape-totem barbarian has a climb speed of 15 feet, while a dwarf, gnome, or halfling ape-totem barbarian has a climb speed of 10 feet. See Movement Modes, page 311 of the *Monster Manual* for more information on creatures with a climb speed.
- At 2nd level, an ape-totem barbarian gains a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks.
- A 3rd level ape-totem barbarian gains Power Attack as a bonus feat.
- At 5th level, an ape-totem barbarian's climb speed equals his base land speed.

Bear Totem Class Features

A barbarian dedicated to the bear totem does not gain the standard fast movement, uncanny dodge, trap sense, and improved uncanny dodge barbarian class features, and instead gains the following abilities.

- A 1st-level bear-totem barbarian gains Toughness as a bonus feat.
- At 2nd level, a bear-totem barbarian gains Improved Grapple as a bonus feat, even if he doesn't meet the normal prerequisites.
- A 3rd-level bear-totem barbarian gains Great Fortitude as a bonus feat.
- Beginning at 5th level, a bear-totem barbarian gains a +4 bonus on grapple checks when raging.

Boar Totem Class Features

A barbarian dedicated to the boar totem does not gain the standard fast movement, uncanny dodge, trap sense, and improved uncanny dodge barbarian class features, and instead gains the following abilities.

- When raging, a 1st-level boar-totem barbarian is treated as having the Diehard feat, even if he doesn't meet the normal prerequisites.
- At 3rd level and higher, a boar-totem barbarian's rage lasts for 2 rounds longer than normal.
- Beginning at 7th level, a boar-totem barbarian's damage reduction is 1 point higher than the normal value. Thus, at 7th level, a boar-totem barbarian's damage reduction is 2/–, and it rises by 1 point every three levels thereafter.

Dragon Totem Class Features

A barbarian dedicated to the dragon totem does not gain the standard fast movement, uncanny dodge, trap sense, and improved uncanny dodge barbarian class features, and instead gains the following abilities.

- A 1st-level dragon-totem barbarian gains Blind-Fight as a bonus feat.
- At 2nd level, a dragon-totem barbarian gains a +2 bonus on saves against paralysis and sleep effects.
- At 5th level, a dragon-totem barbarian gains the frightful presence ability (see page 309 of the *Monster Manual*). The save DC is equal to 10 + 1/2 barbarian level + barbarian's Cha modifier.

Eagle Totem Class Features

A barbarian dedicated to the eagle totem does not gain the standard fast movement and trap sense barbarian class features, and instead gains the following abilities.

MULTICLASSING AND VARIANT CLASSES

Multiclassing between variants of the same class is a tricky subject, and the DM has to make rulings based on what is appropriate for his campaign. In cases where a single class offers a variety of paths (such as the totem barbarian or the monk fighting styles), the easiest solution is simply to bar multiclassing between different versions of the same class (just as a character can't multiclass between different versions of specialist wizards). For variants that are wholly separate from the character class—such as the bardic sage or the urban ranger—multiclassing, even into multiple variants of the same class, is probably okay. Identical class features should stack if gained from multiple versions of the same class (except for spellcasting, which is always separate).

In any case, only the first version of a favored class is treated as favored; a halfling rogue/wizard who later begins gaining levels in the wilderness rogue variant class can't treat both the rogue and wilderness rogue classes as favored, only the class gained first (in this case, rogue). Under no circumstances does spellcasting ability from multiple classes (even variants of the same class) stack. A character with levels of bard and levels of bardic sage has two separate caster levels and two separate sets of spells per day, even though the classes are very similar.

- At 1st level, an eagle-totem barbarian's keen vision grants him a +2 bonus on Spot checks.
- An eagle-totem barbarian gains Lightning Reflexes as a bonus feat at 3rd level.

Horse Totem Class Features

A barbarian dedicated to the horse totem does not gain the standard uncanny dodge, trap sense, and improved uncanny dodge barbarian class features, and instead gains the following abilities.

- At 2nd level, a horse-totem barbarian gains Run as a bonus feat.
- A 3rd-level horse-totem barbarian gains a +2 bonus on Handle Animal checks made with regard to horses and a +2 bonus on Ride checks made to ride a horse.
- At 5th level, a horse-totem barbarian gains Endurance as a bonus feat.

Jaguar Totem Class Features

A barbarian dedicated to the jaguar totem represents the "standard" barbarian and gains the barbarian class features as described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Lion Totem Class Features

A barbarian dedicated to the lion totem does not gain the standard fast movement, uncanny dodge, and improved uncanny dodge barbarian class features, and instead gains the following abilities.

- At 1st level, a lion-totem barbarian gains Run as a bonus feat.
- A 2nd-level lion-totem barbarian gains a +2 bonus on Hide checks.
- A 5th-level lion-totem barbarian gains a +2 bonus on damage rolls whenever he charges.

Serpent Totem Class Features

A barbarian dedicated to the serpent totem does not gain the standard fast movement, uncanny dodge, trap sense, and improved uncanny dodge barbarian class features, and instead gains the following abilities.

Eagle and bear totem barbarians

- At 1st level, a serpent-totem barbarian gains a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves against poison.
- A 2nd-level serpent-totem barbarian gains a +2 bonus on Move Silently checks.
- At 3rd level, a serpent-totem barbarian gains Improved Grapple as a bonus feat, even if he doesn't meet the normal prerequisites.
- A serpent-totem barbarian gains Improved Initiative as a bonus feat at 5th level.

Wolf Totem Class Features

A barbarian dedicated to the wolf totem does not gain the standard uncanny dodge, trap sense, and improved uncanny dodge barbarian class features, and instead gains the following abilities.

- A 2nd-level wolf-totem barbarian gains Improved Trip as a bonus feat, even if he doesn't meet the normal prerequisites.
- A 5th-level wolf-totem barbarian gains Track as a bonus feat.

BARD VARIANT: BARDIC SAGE

The bardic sage focuses his efforts on learning, research, and the power of knowledge.

Alignment: The bardic sage must be neutral good, neutral, or neutral evil. The true pursuit of knowledge cares little for ethical extremes. A bardic sage who becomes chaotic or lawful cannot progress in levels as a bardic sage, though he retains all his bardic sage abilities.

Base Save Bonuses: The bardic sage has good Will saves, but has poor Fortitude and Reflex saves.

Class Features

The bardic sage has all the standard bard class features, except as noted below.

Spellcasting: A bardic sage learns and casts spells as a normal bard, with a few exceptions. In addition to the normal number of spells known, a bardic sage knows one divination spell of each spell level he is capable of casting. For example, a 1st-level bardic sage knows four 0-level bard spells plus one 0-level bard spell of the divination school (such as *detect magic*, *know direction*, or *read magic*). The bardic sage's number of spells per day does not change.

To learn or cast a spell, a bardic sage must have an Intelligence score (not Charisma score) equal to at least 10 + the spell level. All other spellcasting factors, including bonus spells and save DCs, are still determined using the bardic sage's Charisma score.

Add the following spells to the bardic sage's class spell list: 1st—*detect chaos/evil/good/law*; 2nd—*zone of truth*; 3rd—*arcane sight*; 4th—*analyze dweomer* (lowered from 6th), *sending*; 5th—*contact other plane*, *greater scrying* (lowered from 6th); 6th—*true seeing*, *vision*.

Bardic Knowledge: A bardic sage gains a +2 bonus on all bardic knowledge checks.

Bardic Music: A bardic sage's powers of inspiration are not as persistent as those of a traditional bard. His ability to inspire courage, inspire greatness, or inspire heroics lasts only 3 rounds after the ally can no longer hear the bardic sage sing, rather than the normal 5 rounds.

Illus. by D. Roach

BARD VARIANT: DIVINE BARD

Not all bards are arcanists; some derive their special powers from a divine tradition. In many primitive cultures, the divine bard takes the place of the cleric or the adept as the guide of the people's religious beliefs.

Class Features

The divine bard has all the standard bard class features, except as noted below.

Spellcasting: A divine bard learns and casts spells as a normal bard, with some minor exceptions. A divine bard's spells are divine spells, not arcane spells.

To learn or cast a spell, a divine bard must have a Wisdom score (not Charisma score) equal to at least 10 + the spell level. All other spellcasting factors, including bonus spells and save DCs, are still determined using the bardic sage's Charisma score.

Like druids, paladins, and rangers, divine bards need not designate a specific deity as the source of their spells. However, a divine bard can't cast spells of an alignment that doesn't match his. Thus, divine bards cannot cast lawful spells (since bards can't be lawful). Neutral divine bards can't cast any spells associated with an alignment (and are thus relatively rare).

Add the following spells to the divine bard's class spell list: 0—*create water, cure minor wounds;* 1st—*detect evil/good/law, protection from evil/good/law;* 2nd—*consecrate, desecrate, gentle repose;* 3rd—*magic circle against evil/good/law, prayer;* 4th—*remove disease, speak with dead, sending;* 5th—*divination, restoration;* 6th—*commune, hallow, unhallow, raise dead.*

BARD VARIANT: SAVAGE BARD

The savage bard is a warrior at heart, though his arcane powers strike fear into the enemies of his tribe. Savage bards often multiclass as barbarians to improve their combat prowess.

Alignment: A savage bard must be chaotic in alignment. A savage bard who becomes nonchaotic cannot progress in levels as a bard, though he retains all his bard abilities.

Base Save Bonuses: A savage bard has good Fortitude and Will saves, but has poor Reflex saves.

Class Skills: A savage bard loses Decipher Script and Speak Language as class skills. He adds Survival to his list of class skills.

Class Features

The savage bard has all the standard bard class features, except as noted below.

Illiteracy: A savage bard is illiterate, just as a barbarian is. An illiterate savage bard cannot use or scribe scrolls.

Spellcasting: Remove the following spells from the savage bard's class spell list: *calm emotions, comprehend languages, detect secret doors, erase, prestidigitation, read magic, sepia snake sigil, summon monster* (I through VI).

Add the following spells to the savage bard's class spell list: 1st—*calm animals, detect snares and pits, endure elements, summon nature's ally* I; 2nd—*bull's strength, pass without trace, summon nature's ally* II; 3rd—*snare, summon nature's ally* III; 4th—*insect plague, summon nature's ally* IV; 5th—*commune with nature, summon nature's ally* V; 6th—*creeping doom, reincarnate, summon nature's ally* VI.

CLERIC VARIANT: CLOISTERED CLERIC

The cloistered cleric spends more time than other clerics in study and prayer and less in martial training. He gives up some of the cleric's combat prowess in exchange for greater skill access and a wider range of spells devoted to knowledge (and the protection of knowledge).

Most cloistered clerics are nonchaotic, since they believe that a disciplined lifestyle lends itself better to learning.

Hit Die: The cloistered cleric uses a d6 for his Hit Die (and has hit points at 1st level equal to 6 + Con modifier).

Base Attack Bonus: The cloistered cleric's lack of martial training means that he uses the poor base attack bonus.

Class Skills: The cloistered cleric's class skill list includes Decipher Script, Speak Language, and all Knowledge skills (from the Knowledge domain, see below). The cloistered cleric gains skill points per level equal to 6 + Int modifier (and has this number ×4 at 1st level).

Class Features

The cloistered cleric has all the standard cleric class features, except as noted below.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Cloistered clerics are proficient with simple weapons and with light armor.

Lore (Ex): Thanks to long hours of study, a cloistered cleric has a wide range of stray knowledge. This ability is identical to the bard's bardic knowledge class feature, using the cloistered cleric's class level in place of the bard level.

Deity, Domains, and Domain Spells: Most cloistered clerics worship deities associated with knowledge and learning, including (but not necessarily limited to) Boccob, Vecna, and Wee Jas. Other deities who might have cloistered clerics among their clergy include Corellon Larethian, Moradin, Pelor, and Yondalla.

In addition to any domains selected from his deity's list, a cloistered cleric automatically gains Knowledge as a bonus domain (even if Knowledge is not normally available to clerics of that deity). He gains the Knowledge domain granted power and may select his bonus domain spell from the Knowledge domain or from one of his two regular domains.

Spellcasting: Add the following spells to the cloistered cleric's class spell list: 0—*message;*

Savage bard

Illus. by R. Spencer

1st—*erase, identify, unseen servant*; 2nd—*fox's cunning*; 3rd—*illusory script, secret page, tongues* (reduced from 4th level); 4th—*detect scrying*; 6th—*analyze dweomer*; 7th—*sequester*; 9th—*vision*.

DRUID VARIANT: DRUIDIC AVENGER

The druidic avenger channels her inner fury to wreak vengeance upon those who injure the natural world. This comes at a price, however, since the avenger must give up some of her own sensitivity to nature.

Class Skills: Add Intimidate to the avenger's list of class skills. Eliminate Diplomacy from the avenger's list of class skills.

Class Features

The druidic avenger has all the standard druid class features, except as noted below.

Animal Companion: An avenger does not gain the service of an animal companion.

Fast Movement (Ex): A druidic avenger's base land speed is faster than the norm for her race by 10 feet. This ability is identical to the barbarian ability of the same name.

Rage (Ex): An avenger can enter a furious rage, identical to that of a barbarian. An avenger can use this ability once per day at 1st level, and one additional time per day for every five levels above 1st.

An avenger does not gain the greater rage, indomitable will, or mighty rage abilities.

Spontaneous Casting: An avenger cannot channel stored spell energy into summoning spells.

Tireless Rage (Ex): At 17th level and higher, an avenger no longer becomes fatigued at the end of her rage.

Wild Empathy: A druidic avenger takes a –4 penalty on wild empathy checks.

FIGHTER VARIANT: THUG

The thug is a street fighter, a survivor who learns to mix brute force with a bit of craftiness. He has most of the fighter's strengths, along with some additional skills to help keep him alive on the mean streets. Despite the name, not all thugs are mere hooligans—many are crafty veterans who use their knowledge of the streets to gain an advantage against their opponents.

Most thugs are nonlawful, though sometimes gangs of thugs with a lawful streak band together.

Class Skills: Add the following skills to the fighter's class skill list: Bluff, Gather Information, Knowledge (local), and Sleight of Hand. The thug gains skill points per level equal to 4 + Int modifier (and has this number ×4 at 1st level).

Class Features

The thug has all the standard fighter class features, except as noted below.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Thugs are proficient with all simple and martial weapons and with light armor.

Bonus Feats: A thug doesn't gain the normal fighter bonus feat at 1st level. Also, add Urban Tracking (see the sidebar later in this chapter) to the list of fighter bonus feats available to the thug.

Illus. by D. Crabapple

MONK VARIANT: FIGHTING STYLES

In literature and lore, the combat styles and aptitudes of a monk depend greatly on where (or by whom) she was trained. The monk in the *Player's Handbook*, however, presents only a relatively limited variety of options to personalize your monk.

A 1st-level monk (regardless of character level) may select one of the fighting styles described below. By selecting one of these fighting styles, she dictates which bonus feats she gains at 1st, 2nd, and 6th level (when a monk normally gains one of two bonus feats, as given in the *Player's Handbook*). In addition, at 1st level she gets a +2 bonus on checks involving a skill of her selection (in exchange for the freedom of choice she gives up by preselecting her bonus feats). Finally, she gains a bonus ability at 6th level if she has met the listed prerequisites by that time. If the character hasn't yet met the prerequisites, she doesn't gain the bonus ability, even if she meets the prerequisites at some later time.

These fighting styles serve a variety of purposes in a campaign. Each one might symbolize a different monastery, creating a rivalry (friendly or unfriendly) between their students. Perhaps a specific master teaches each style only to a few select students, meaning that a monk must prove herself worthy before pursuing the training. Or maybe each monk simply chooses her own way in life, styling herself after great martial artists of the past.

A monk can abandon her fighting style by selecting a different bonus feat at 2nd or 6th level; however, if she does so, she loses the bonus on skill checks gained at 1st level and never gains the bonus ability of the fighting style (even if she meets the prerequisites).

Cobra Strike

Monks of the Cobra Strike School specialize in agility and defense. By making herself hard to pin down, the Cobra Strike monk forces the enemy to fight on her terms.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Escape Artist.

1st-Level Feat: Dodge.

2nd-Level Feat: Mobility.

6th-Level Feat: Spring Attack.

6th-Level Bonus Ability: The dodge bonus to Armor Class granted by your Dodge feat increases to +2. *Prerequisites:* Balance 4 ranks, Escape Artist 9 ranks.

Denying Stance

The Denying Stance monk seeks to neutralize the opponent's maneuvers, thwarting him at every turn until he becomes so frustrated that he makes a crucial error.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Tumble.

1st-Level Feat: Improved Grapple.

2nd-Level Feat: Combat Reflexes.

6th-Level Feat: Improved Disarm.

6th-Level Bonus Ability: When fighting defensively or using the Combat Expertise feat, you gain a +2 bonus on grapple checks and disarm attempts. *Prerequisites:* Tumble 9 ranks, Combat Expertise.

Hand and Foot

Students of the Hand and Foot style learn to use their appendages for both offense and defense.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Balance.

1st-Level Feat: Stunning Fist.

2nd-Level Feat: Deflect Arrows.

6th-Level Feat: Improved Trip.

6th-Level Bonus Ability: You gain a +2 bonus on attacks of opportunity made against an opponent attempting to bull rush or trip you, and a +4 bonus on Dexterity or Strength checks to avoid being tripped or bull rushed. *Prerequisites:* Balance 9 ranks, Tumble 4 ranks.

Invisible Eye

Monks of the Invisible Eye rely on their senses, particularly hearing, to aid them in combat.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Listen.

1st-Level Feat: Combat Reflexes.

2nd-Level Feat: Lightning Reflexes.

6th-Level Feat: Blind-Fight.

6th-Level Bonus Ability: When unarmed and fighting defensively, using Combat Expertise, or using the total defense action, increase the dodge bonus to Armor Class that you gain from using that tactic by 1. *Prerequisites:* Listen 9 ranks, Agile.

Overwhelming Attack

A monk trained in the Overwhelming Attack style always presses the advantage, preferring a showy display of all-out offense to any form of defense.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Intimidate.

1st-Level Feat: Power Attack.

2nd-Level Feat: Improved Bull Rush.

6th-Level Feat: Improved Overrun.

6th-Level Bonus Ability: If you have used Intimidate to demoralize your opponent at any time within the previous 10 rounds, you gain a +4 bonus on Strength checks made to bull rush or overrun that opponent. *Prerequisites:* Intimidate 4 ranks, Perform (dance) 4 ranks.

Passive Way

The Passive Way focuses on making your opponent overreach himself or underestimate your skill.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Bluff.

1st-Level Feat: Combat Expertise.

2nd-Level Feat: Improved Trip.

6th-Level Feat: Improved Feint.

6th-Level Bonus Ability: You gain a +4 bonus on Strength checks made to trip an opponent who is denied his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class. *Prerequisites:* Bluff 4 ranks, Sense Motive 4 ranks, Skill Focus (Bluff).

Sleeping Tiger

The Sleeping Tiger style mixes smooth motions with powerful strikes. It favors a quick, first-strike approach, preferably from a position of ambush.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Hide.

1st-Level Feat: Weapon Finesse.

2nd-Level Feat: Improved Initiative.

6th-Level Feat: Improved Sunder.

6th-Level Bonus Ability: Once per round, when an opponent would be denied his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, the monk deals an extra 1d6 points of damage with a melee attack made with a light weapon. Any creature immune to sneak attacks is immune to this ability. *Prerequisites:* Hide 9 ranks, Power Attack.

Undying Way

Monks of the Undying Way believe in patience above all else. They work to outlast their opponents by means of superior endurance.

1st-Level Skill Bonus: Concentration.
1st-Level Feat: Toughness.
2nd-Level Feat: Endurance.
6th-Level Feat: Diehard.
6th-Level Bonus Ability: When fighting defensively, using Combat Expertise, or using the total defense action, the monk gains damage reduction 2/–. *Prerequisites*: Concentration 9 ranks.

PALADIN VARIANTS: FREEDOM, SLAUGHTER, AND TYRANNY

The three paladin variants presented here demonstrate examples of alternative-alignment paladins. Each one follows a specific code of conduct tailored to its specific alignment. The paladin of freedom is chaotic good, dedicated to liberty and free thought. The paladin of tyranny is the opposite, a lawful evil villain bent on dominating those weaker than she. The paladin of slaughter is a brutal champion of chaos and evil who leaves only destruction trailing in his wake. (If you use these versions of the paladin class, you might consider designating the standard paladin in the *Player's Handbook* as the "paladin of honor" to differentiate it from the variants.)

These paladin variants aren't meant to be unique classes in and of themselves, but rather alignment-based variations of the paladin. They have the same Hit Die, skill points per level, weapon and armor proficiencies, and spells per day as the standard paladin in the *Player's Handbook*. Their class skill lists are nearly identical, with exceptions noted below. Their spellcasting functions identically to that of the standard paladin (though their spell lists are somewhat different). When a class feature has the same name as a paladin class feature, it functions the same as the one described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Paladin of Freedom Class Features

The paladin of freedom has all the standard paladin class features, except as noted below.

Class Skills: Replace Diplomacy with Bluff on the class skill list.

Aura of Resolve (Su): Beginning at 3rd level, a paladin of freedom is immune to compulsion effects. Each ally within 10 feet of him gains a +4 morale bonus on saving throws against compulsion effects. This ability otherwise functions identically to the paladin's aura of courage class feature.

Spellcasting: Remove the following spells from the paladin's spell list: *death ward, discern lies, dispel chaos, magic circle against chaos, protection from chaos.*

Add the following spells to the paladin's spell list: 1st—*protection from law;* 3rd—*magic circle against law, remove curse;* 4th—*dispel law, freedom of movement.*

Code of Conduct: A paladin of freedom must be of chaotic good alignment and loses all class abilities if he ever willingly commits an evil act. Additionally, a paladin of freedom's code requires that he respect individual liberty, help those in need (provided they do not use the help for lawful or evil ends), and punish those who threaten or curtail personal liberty.

Associates: While he may adventure with characters of any good or neutral alignment, a paladin of freedom will never knowingly associate with evil characters (except on some sort of undercover mission), nor will he continue an association with someone who consistently offends his moral code. A paladin of freedom may accept only henchmen, followers, or cohorts who are chaotic good.

Paladin of Slaughter Class Features

The paladin of slaughter has all the standard paladin class features, except as noted below.

Class Skills: Replace Diplomacy with Intimidate on the class skill list.

Illus. by D. Hudnut

Table 2–1: Variant Paladin Class Features

Level	Freedom	Tyranny	Slaughter
1st	Aura of good, *detect evil*, smite evil 1/day	Aura of evil, *detect good*, smite good 1/day	Aura of evil, *detect good*, smite good 1/day
2nd	Divine grace, lay on hands	Divine grace, deadly touch	Divine grace, deadly touch
3rd	Aura of resolve, divine health	Aura of despair,divine health	Debilitating aura, divine health
4th	Turn undead	Rebuke undead	Rebuke undead
5th	Smite evil 2/day, *special mount*	Smite good 2/day, *special mount*	Smite good 2/day, *special mount*
6th	*Remove disease* 1/week	*Cause disease* 1/week	*Cause disease* 1/week
7th	—	—	—
8th	—	—	—
9th	*Remove disease* 2/week	*Cause disease* 2/week	*Cause disease* 2/week
10th	Smite evil 3/day	Smite good 3/day	Smite good 3/day
11th	—	—	—
12th	*Remove disease* 3/week	*Cause disease* 3/week	*Cause disease* 3/week
13th	—	—	—
14th	—	—	—
15th	*Remove disease* 4/week, smite evil 4/day	*Cause disease* 4/week, smite good 4/day	*Cause disease* 4/week, smite good 4/day
16th	—	—	—
17th	—	—	—
18th	*Remove disease* 5/week	*Cause disease* 5/week	*Cause disease* 5/week
19th	—	—	—
20th	Smite evil 5/day	Smite good 5/day	Smite good 5/day

Aura of Evil (Ex): The power of a paladin of slaughter's aura of evil (see the *detect evil* spell) is equal to her paladin of slaughter level, just as with the aura of a cleric of an evil deity.

Detect Good **(Sp)**: At will, a paladin of slaughter can use *detect good*, as the spell.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, a paladin of slaughter may attempt to smite good with one normal melee attack. This ability is otherwise identical to the standard paladin's ability to smite evil, including increased daily uses as the paladin of slaughter gains class levels.

Deadly Touch (Su): Beginning at 2nd level, a paladin of slaughter can cause wounds with a successful touch attack. Each day she can deal a total number of hit points of damage equal to her paladin level × her Charisma bonus. An opponent subjected to this attack can make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 paladin level + paladin's Cha modifier) to halve the damage dealt.

Alternatively, a paladin of slaughter can use any or all of this power to cure damage to undead creatures, just as an *inflict wounds* spell does. This power otherwise functions identically to the paladin's lay on hands ability.

Debilitating Aura (Su): Beginning at 3rd level, a paladin of slaughter radiates a malign aura that causes enemies within 10 feet of her to take a –1 penalty to Armor Class. This ability otherwise functions identically to the paladin's aura of courage class feature.

Rebuke Undead (Su): A paladin of slaughter rebukes undead rather than turning undead.

Cause Disease **(Sp)**: A paladin of slaughter can inflict disease with her touch (as the *contagion* spell) a number of times per week that a standard paladin of her level would normally be able to remove disease.

Spellcasting: Replace the standard paladin's spell list with the following spell list: 1st—*bane, cause fear, corrupt weapon, create water, curse water, detect poison, detect undead, divine favor, endure elements, inflict light wounds, magic weapon, protection from good, protection from law, read magic, resistance, virtue*; 2nd—*bull's strength, cure light wounds, darkness, delay poison, eagle's splendor, inflict moderate wounds, owl's wisdom, resist energy, undetectable alignment*; 3rd—*blindness/deafness, cure moderate wounds, deeper darkness, dispel magic, greater magic weapon, heal mount, prayer, inflict serious wounds, magic circle against good/law*; 4th—*break enchantment, cure serious wounds, dispel good, dispel law, inflict critical wounds, poison, unholy sword.*

Code of Conduct: A paladin of slaughter must be of chaotic evil alignment and loses all class abilities if she ever willingly commits a good act. Additionally, a paladin of slaughter's code requires that she disrespect all authority figures who have not proven their physical superiority to her, refuse help to those in need, and sow destruction and death at all opportunities.

Associates: While she may adventure with characters of any evil or neutral alignment, a paladin of slaughter will never knowingly associate with good characters, nor will she continue an association with someone who consistently offends her moral code. A paladin of tyranny may accept only henchmen, followers, and cohorts who are chaotic evil.

Paladin of Tyranny Class Features

The paladin of tyranny has all the standard paladin class features, except as noted below.

Aura of Evil (Ex): The power of a paladin of tyranny's aura of evil (see the *detect evil* spell) is equal to his paladin of tyranny level, just as with the aura of a cleric of an evil deity.

Detect Good **(Sp)**: At will, a paladin of tyranny can use *detect good*, as the spell.

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, a paladin of tyranny may attempt to smite good with one normal melee attack. This ability is otherwise identical to the standard paladin's ability to smite evil, including increased daily uses as the paladin of tyranny gains class levels.

Deadly Touch (Su): Beginning at 2nd level, a paladin of tyranny can cause wounds with a successful touch attack. Each day she can deal a total number of hit points of damage equal to her paladin level × her Charisma bonus. An opponent subjected to this attack can make a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 paladin level + paladin's Cha modifier) to halve the damage dealt.

Alternatively, a paladin of tyranny can use any or all of this power to cure damage to undead creatures, just as an *inflict wounds*

spell does. This power otherwise functions identically to the paladin's lay on hands ability.

Aura of Despair (Su): Beginning at 3rd level, a paladin of tyranny radiates a malign aura that causes enemies within 10 feet of him to take a –2 penalty on all saving throws. This ability otherwise functions identically to the paladin's aura of courage class feature.

Rebuke Undead (Su): A paladin of tyranny rebukes undead rather than turning undead.

Cause Disease **(Sp)**: A paladin of tyranny can inflict disease with his touch (as the *contagion* spell) a number of times per week that a standard paladin of her level would normally be able to remove disease.

Spellcasting: Replace the paladin's spell list with the following spell list: 1st—*bane, corrupt weapon, create water, curse water, detect poison, detect undead, divine favor, doom, endure elements, inflict light wounds, magic weapon, protection from chaos, protection from good, read magic, resistance, virtue*; 2nd—*bull's strength, cure light wounds, darkness, delay poison, eagle's splendor, hold person, inflict moderate wounds, owl's wisdom, resist energy, undetectable alignment*; 3rd—*bestow curse, cure moderate wounds, deeper darkness, discern lies, dispel magic, greater magic weapon, heal mount, prayer, inflict serious wounds, magic circle against chaos/good*; 4th—*break enchantment, cure serious wounds, dispel chaos, dispel good, dominate person, inflict critical wounds, unholy sword.*

Code of Conduct: A paladin of tyranny must be of lawful evil alignment and loses all class abilities if he ever willingly commits a good act. Additionally, a paladin of tyranny's code requires that he respect authority figures as long as they have the strength to rule over the weak, act with discipline (not engaging in random slaughter, keeping firm control over those beneath his station, and so forth), help only those who help him maintain or improve his status, and punish those who challenge authority (unless, of course, such challengers prove more worthy to hold that authority).

Associates: While he may adventure with characters of any evil or neutral alignment, a paladin of tyranny will never knowingly associate with good characters unless it serves his needs, nor will he continue an association with someone who consistently offends his moral code. A paladin of tyranny may accept henchmen and followers of any alignment, but may only accept cohorts who are lawful evil.

RANGER VARIANT: PLANAR RANGER

The planar ranger roams the multiverse instead of the wilderness, learning the secrets of the elemental planes, the glorious Seven Heavens, and the horrible Abyss.

Class Skills: Eliminate Knowledge (nature) and Knowledge (dungeoneering) from the ranger's class skill list.

Add Knowledge (the planes) and Speak Language (Abyssal, Aquan, Auran, Celestial, Ignan, Infernal, Terran only) to the class skill list.

Class Features

The planar ranger has all the standard ranger class features, except as noted below.

Wild Empathy: A planar ranger takes no penalty on wild empathy checks made to influence magical beasts with the celestial or fiendish templates. However, he takes a –4 penalty when using this ability against animals.

Animal Companion: A nonevil planar ranger may have a celestial version of a normal animal as his animal companion. A nongood ranger may have a fiendish version of a normal animal as his animal companion.

Spellcasting: A planar ranger's spellcasting ability is largely unchanged from that of the standard ranger, with one exception: Any ranger spell that normally affects animals also affects celestial or fiendish versions of animals when cast by a planar ranger.

RANGER VARIANT: URBAN RANGER

The urban ranger stalks the treacherous streets of the city, relying on his knowledge of alleyways and underworld contacts to keep him alive.

Class Skills: Eliminate Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (dungeoneering), and Survival from the ranger's class skill list. Add Gather Information, Knowledge (local), and Sense Motive to the class skill list.

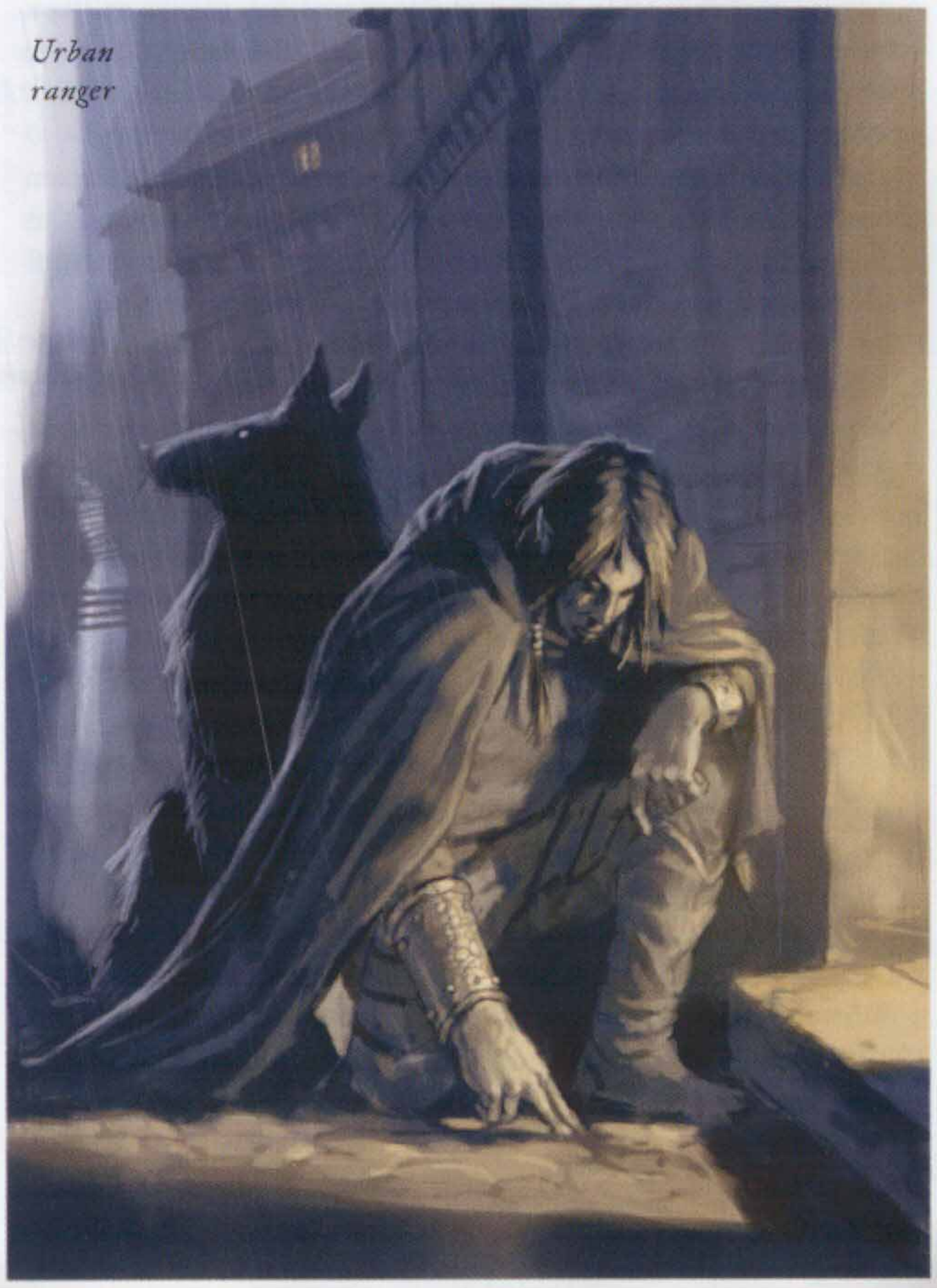
Class Features

The urban ranger has all the standard ranger class features, except as noted below.

Animal Companion: An urban ranger cannot have an animal larger than Medium as his animal companion.

Urban Tracking: An urban ranger does not gain the Track feat at 1st level. Instead, he gains the Urban Tracking feat (see the sidebar), which allows him to use Gather Information to track down a missing person, suspect, or other individual within a community.

Wild Empathy: An urban ranger adds only one-half his class level to wild empathy checks, reflecting his limited connection with the natural world.



Urban ranger

Illus. by S. Tappin

Favored Enemy: At the DM's discretion, an urban ranger may select an organization instead of a creature type as his favored enemy. For example, a character might select a particular thieves' guild, merchant house, or even the city guard. The favored enemy bonuses would apply to all members of the chosen organization, regardless of their creature type or subtype.

Spellcasting: The urban ranger's spell list is different from the standard ranger list. The following spells are eliminated from the urban ranger's spell list: *animal messenger, charm animal, detect animals or plants, speak with animals, bear's endurance, hold animal, snare, speak with plants, command plants, diminish plants, plant growth, reduce animal, tree shape, water walk, commune with nature,* and *tree stride.*

In exchange, the urban ranger adds the following spells to his class spell list: 1st—*comprehend languages, detect chaos/good/evil/law, detect secret doors, message;* 2nd—*detect thoughts, knock, locate object, eagle's splendor;* 3rd—*discern lies, invisibility, speak with dead, tongues;* 4th—*dimensional anchor, locate creature, Mordenkainen's faithful hound, true seeing.*

Woodland Stride: An urban ranger does not gain this ability.

Swift Tracker (Ex): Beginning at 8th level, am urban ranger may make a Gather Information check for his Urban Tracking feat every half hour without taking the normal –5 penalty.

Camouflage: An urban ranger does not gain this ability.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex): An urban ranger can use this ability in any area, whether natural terrain or not.

ROGUE VARIANT: WILDERNESS ROGUE

The wilderness rogue prefers to put her skills to use in the great outdoors, rather than in cramped alleys and dungeon corridors. In many ways, she is similar to the traditional ranger, though with less combat savvy and with none of the ranger's divine link to the natural world.

Class Skills: Remove the following rogue class skills from the wilderness rogue's class skill list: Appraise, Diplomacy, Decipher Script, Forgery, and Gather Information.

Add the following skills to the wilderness rogue's class skill list: Handle Animal, Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (nature), Ride, and Survival.

Class Features

The wilderness rogue has all the standard rogue class features, except as noted below.

Special Abilities: Add woodland stride (as the 7th-level ranger ability), camouflage (as the 13th-level ranger ability) and hide in plain sight (as the 17th-level ranger ability, requires the rogue to already have the camouflage ability) to the list of special abilities that can be chosen by the wilderness rogue.

SORCERER VARIANT: BATTLE SORCERER

The battle sorcerer is no weak arcanist, hiding behind the fighters. Instead, she is a capable physical combatant who mixes magical prowess with fighting skill.

Hit Die: d8.

Base Attack Bonus: The battle sorcerer uses the base attack bonus progression of the cleric.

Class Skills: Remove Bluff from the battle sorcerer's class skill list. Add Intimidate to the battle sorcerer's class skill list.

Class Features

The battle sorcerer has all the standard sorcerer class features, except as noted below.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: At 1st level, a battle sorcerer gains proficiency with any light or one-handed martial weapon of the character's choice. She also gains proficiency with light armor.

Spellcasting: A battle sorcerer can cast sorcerer spells derived from her class levels of battle sorcerer while in light armor without the normal arcane spell failure chance.

A battle sorcerer has fewer daily spell slots than a standard sorcerer. Subtract one spell per day from each spell level on Table 3–16: The Sorcerer, page 52 of the *Player's Handbook* (to

---

URBAN TRACKING [General]

You can track down the location of missing persons or wanted individuals within communities.

Benefit: To find the trail of an individual or to follow it for 1 hour requires a Gather Information check. You must make another Gather Information check every hour of the search, as well as each time the trail becomes difficult to follow, such as when it moves to a different area of town.

The DC of the check, and the number of checks required to track down your quarry, depends on the community size and the conditions:

If you fail a Gather Information check, you can retry after 1 hour of questioning. The DM should roll the number of checks required secretly, so that the player doesn't know exactly how long the task will require.

Normal: A character without this feat can use Gather Information to find out information about a particular individual, but each check takes 1d4+1 hours and doesn't allow effective trailing.

Special: A character with 5 ranks in Knowledge (local) gains a +2 bonus on the Gather Information check to use this feat.

Community Size[1]	DC	Checks Required
Thorp, hamlet, or village	5	1d3
Small or large town	10	1d4+1
Small or large city	15	2d4
Metropolis	20	2d4+2

1 See page 137 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide.*

Conditions	DC Modifier
Every three creatures in the group being sought	–1
Every 24 hours party has been missing/sought	+1
Tracked party "lies low"	+5
Tracked party matches community's primary racial demographic[1]	+2
Tracked party does not match community's primary or secondary racial demographic[1]	–2

1 See Racial Demographics, page 139 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide.*

You can cut the time between Gather Information checks in half (to 30 minutes per check rather than 1 hour), but you take a –5 penalty on the check.

a minimum of zero spells per day). For example, a 1st-level battle sorcerer may cast four 0-level spells and two 1st-level spells per day (plus bonus spells, if any).

Battle sorcerer

A battle sorcerer knows fewer spells per spell level than a standard sorcerer. Subtract one spell known from each spell level on Table 3–17: Sorcerer Spells Known, page 54 of the *Player's Handbook* (to a minimum of one spell per spell level). For example, a 4th-level battle sorcerer knows five 0-level spells, two 1st-level spells, and one 2nd-level spell. When she reaches 5th level, the battle sorcerer learns one additional 1st-level spell, but doesn't learn an additional 2nd-level spell (since two minus one is one).

WIZARD VARIANT: DOMAIN WIZARD

A wizard who uses the arcane domain system (called a domain wizard) selects a specific arcane domain of spells, much like a cleric selects a pair of domains associated with his deity. A domain wizard cannot also be a specialist wizard; in exchange for the versatility given up by specializing in a domain instead of an entire school, the domain wizard casts her chosen spells with increased power.

Some of the arcane domains described below have the same name as a divine domain. Regardless of any apparent similarity, these domains have no connection to one another.

Class Features

The domain wizard has all the standard wizard class features, except as noted below.

Arcane Domain: At 1st level, a domain wizard selects an arcane domain from those listed below. (At the DM's discretion, the player might create an alternatively themed domain instead.) Once selected, the domain may never be changed.

A domain wizard automatically adds each new domain spell to her list of known spells as soon as she becomes able to cast it. These spells do not count against her two new spells known per wizard level.

A domain wizard casts spells from her chosen domain (regardless of whether the spell was prepared as a domain spell or a normal spell) as a caster one level higher than her normal level. This bonus applies only to the spells listed for the domain, not all spells of the school or subtype whose name matches the domain name.

In some cases, an arcane domain includes spells not normally on the wizard's class spell list. These spells are treated as being on the character's class spell list (and thus she can use wands or arcane scrolls that hold those spells, or even prepare those spells in her normal wizard spell slots).

Spellcasting: A domain wizard prepares and casts spells like a normal wizard. However, a domain wizard gains one bonus spell per spell level, which must be filled with the spell from that level of the domain spell list (or with a lower-level domain spell that has been altered with a metamagic feat).

No Prohibited Schools: Unlike a specialist wizard, a domain wizard need not select any prohibited schools or domains. All wizard spells are available to her to learn.

Abjuration Domain

0—*resistance*; 1st—*shield*; 2nd—*resist energy*; 3rd—*dispel magic*; 4th—*remove curse*; 5th—*Mordenkainen's private sanctum*; 6th—*greater dispel magic*; 7th—*banishment*; 8th—*mind blank*; 9th—*prismatic sphere*.

Antimagic Domain

0—*detect magic*; 1st—*protection from chaos/evil/good/law*; 2nd—*obscure object*; 3rd—*dispel magic*; 4th—*minor globe of invulnerability*; 5th—*break enchantment*; 6th—*antimagic field*; 7th—*spell turning*; 8th—*protection from spells*; 9th—*Mordenkainen's disjunction*.

Battle Domain

0—*daze*; 1st—*true strike*; 2nd—*protection from arrows*; 3rd—*greater magic weapon*; 4th—*fire shield*; 5th—*Bigby's interposing hand*; 6th—*Tenser's transformation*; 7th—*power word blind*; 8th—*moment of prescience*; 9th—*time stop*.

Cold Domain

0—*ray of frost*; 1st—*chill touch*; 2nd—*chill metal* (as 2nd-level druid spell); 3rd—*sleet storm*; 4th—*wall of ice*; 5th—*cone of cold*; 6th—*Otiluke's freezing sphere*; 7th—*delayed blast frostball* (as *delayed blast fireball*, but deals cold damage instead of fire damage); 8th—*polar ray*; 9th—*comet swarm* (as *meteor swarm*, but deals cold damage instead of fire damage).

Conjuration Domain

0—*acid splash*; 1st—*mage armor*; 2nd—*web*; 3rd—*stinking cloud*; 4th—*summon monster IV*; 5th—*wall of stone*; 6th—*acid fog*; 7th—*summon monster VII*; 8th—*maze*; 9th—*gate*.

Divination Domain

0—*detect magic*; 1st—*detect secret doors*; 2nd—*see invisibility*; 3rd—*arcane sight*; 4th—*arcane eye*; 5th—*prying eyes*; 6th—*true seeing*; 7th—*greater arcane sight*; 8th—*discern location*; 9th—*foresight*.

Illus. by M. Nelson

Enchantment Domain

0—*daze*; 1st—*charm person*; 2nd—*Tasha's hideous laughter*; 3rd—*suggestion*; 4th—*confusion*; 5th—*hold monster*; 6th—*greater heroism*; 7th—*insanity*; 8th—*mass charm monster*; 9th—*dominate monster*.

Evocation Domain

0—*light*; 1st—*magic missile*; 2nd—*flaming sphere*; 3rd—*lightning bolt*; 4th—*shout*; 5th—*wall of force*; 6th—*Bigby's forceful hand*; 7th—*Mordenkainen's sword*; 8th—*Otiluke's telekinetic sphere*; 9th—*Bigby's crushing hand*.

Fire Domain

0—*flare*; 1st—*burning hands*; 2nd—*scorching ray*; 3rd—*fireball*; 4th—*wall of fire*; 5th—*cone of fire* (as *cone of cold*, but deals fire damage instead of cold damage); 6th—*summon monster* VI (fire creatures only); 7th—*delayed blast fireball*; 8th—*incendiary cloud*; 9th—*meteor swarm*.

Illusion Domain

0—*ghost sound*; 1st—*disguise self*; 2nd—*invisibility*; 3rd—*major image*; 4th—*phantasmal killer*; 5th—*shadow evocation*; 6th—*mislead*; 7th—*mass invisibility*; 8th—*scintillating pattern*; 9th—*shades*.

Necromancy Domain

0—*disrupt undead*; 1st—*ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd—*false life*; 3rd—*vampiric touch*; 4th—*fear*; 5th—*waves of fatigue*; 6th—*circle of death*; 7th—*control undead*; 8th—*horrid wilting*; 9th—*energy drain*.

Storm Domain

0—*ray of frost*; 1st—*obscuring mist* (as 1st-level cleric spell); 2nd—*gust of wind*; 3rd—*lightning bolt*; 4th—*ice storm*; 5th—*control winds* (as 5th-level druid spell); 6th—*chain lightning*; 7th—*control weather*; 8th—*whirlwind* (as 8th-level druid spell); 9th—*storm of vengeance* (as 9th-level cleric spell).

Transmutation Domain

0—*mage hand*; 1st—*expeditious retreat*; 2nd—*levitate*; 3rd—*haste*; 4th—*polymorph*; 5th—*baleful polymorph*; 6th—*disintegrate*; 7th—*reverse gravity*; 8th—*iron body*; 9th—*shapechange*.

OTHER CLASS VARIANTS

These variants simply swap one or more of that class's features for one or more class features of another class. A class feature gained works just as it did for its original class, including the level at which it is gained and any other effects, except as noted below.

Barbarian

A barbarian who prefers crafty hunting over pure ferocity might choose to exchange his rage ability for certain ranger class features.

Gain: Favored enemy (as ranger); archery combat style, improved archery combat style, and archery combat style mastery (as ranger).

Lose: Rage, greater rage, indomitable will, tireless rage, mighty rage.

Bard

A rare bard might display a special link to nature and the mysterious world of the fey. Such characters tend to be more aloof and less inspiring than standard bards.

Gain: Animal companion (as druid), nature sense (as druid), resist nature's lure (as druid), wild empathy (as druid).

Lose: Bardic knowledge, inspire courage, inspire competence, inspire greatness, inspire heroics.

Cleric

Some clerics prefer to be champions of good (or evil), standing at the forefront of the battle against the enemy.

Gain: Smite evil, if the cleric would normally channel positive energy, or smite good, if the cleric would normally channel negative energy (as paladin); aura of courage (as paladin).

Lose: Turn undead.

Druid

The druid might choose to give up her wild shape ability in exchange for becoming a swift and deadly hunter.

Gain: Bonus to Armor Class when unarmored (as monk, including Wisdom bonus to AC), fast movement (as monk), favored enemy (as ranger), swift tracker (as ranger), Track feat (as ranger).

Lose: Armor and shield proficiency, wild shape (all versions).

Fighter

Some fighters prefer stealth and cunning over martial skill. This variant can also be combined with the thug variant described earlier in this chapter.

Gain: Sneak attack (as rogue).

Lose: Bonus feats.

Monk

A monk might choose to give up some of her mobility in exchange for the ability to withstand attacks.

Gain: Damage reduction (as barbarian).

Lose: Enhancement bonus to unarmored speed, bonus to Armor Class when unarmored (retain Wisdom bonus to AC when unarmored).

Paladin

The paladin who takes an active role in hunting her foul enemies must give up her defensive powers.

Gain: Favored enemy (as ranger; may only select aberrations, dragons, giants, monstrous humanoids, evil outsiders, or undead).

Lose: Lay on hands, turn undead, *remove disease*.

Ranger

A ranger might forgo training in weapon combat in exchange for the ability to take animal form and move swiftly through the woodlands.

Gain: Wild shape (as druid; Small or Medium animals only), fast movement (as barbarian).

Lose: Combat style, improved combat style, combat style mastery.

Rogue

The rogue who favors martial training over stealth and cunning can profit if she chooses her fights carefully.

Gain: Bonus feats (as fighter).

Lose: Sneak attack.

Sorcerer/Wizard

A sorcerer or wizard might desire a more durable companion to accompany him on excursions into the wilderness.

Gain: Animal companion (as druid; treat sorcerer or wizard as a druid of half his class level).

Lose: Familiar.

Wizard

Some wizards trade their knowledge of magic and craft to improve their combat prowess.

Gain: Bonus feat list (as fighter; bonus feats gained at 1st level and every five levels as wizard).

Lose: Scribe Scroll, wizard bonus feat list.

SPECIALIST WIZARD VARIANTS

Because magic plays such an important role in the D&D game, the wizard class offers great opportunities for change when designing a campaign or a character. The following variants present different versions of the specialist wizards described in the *Player's Handbook*. Each variant specialist class gives up one of the standard specialist's class abilities in exchange for a new ability unique to the variant specialist. Each specialist class has three variants: one that replaces the specialist's summon familiar ability, one that replaces the specialist's bonus spells, and one that replaces the specialist's bonus spell per day from the specialty school.

Because each variant requires the loss of an existing ability, you can use more than one of these variants at the same time. By choosing among the variant abilities presented for each specialist, you can easily customize the way that magic works in a campaign, in a geographic region of a campaign, for a school of magic, or even for a single spellcaster. Players can easily create unique and interesting characters using these variants.

For example, a campaign might be set up with some or all of the following variants for specialist wizards.

- All abjurers in the campaign have the resistance to energy variant ability because the setting includes a large number of gates to the elemental planes.
- Evokers from the city of Kinhaven all have the overcome resistance ability, but they do not gain additional spells as specialist wizards. However, other evokers in the campaign gain abilities exactly as described in the *Player's Handbook* and consider the evokers of Kinhaven a disruptive offshoot of the pure study of magic.
- The students and masters at a college of necromancy from a distant region slowly undergo undead apotheosis instead of gaining bonus feats, but most necromancers in the campaign gain abilities exactly as described in the *Player's Handbook*. This difference has led some to feel that the foreign necromancers have a more thorough understanding of the powers of death. Traditional necromancers have a hard time attracting students, while the foreigners gain several new apprentices each year.
- One conjurer of particular power in the city of Balthak-Ruhl cannot obtain a familiar and instead casts summoning spells exceptionally quickly, as described in the rapid summoning variant ability. He claims he can teach others to wield magic as he does, but so far he has gathered few students.

In addition to a description of the variant class's abilities, each entry below includes brief suggestions on sample campaigns, adventures, or characters that might benefit from the use of the variant specialists. These notes are suggestions only, since nearly any campaign can benefit from adding variety to spells and spellcasters.

Although these abilities allow the creation and customization of variant classes, a character cannot, for example, take a few levels of conjurer using the rapid summoning variant and then "multiclass" into regular conjurer levels. These variants all follow the normal rules for multiclassing by specialist wizards.

ABJURER VARIANTS

Masters of protective magic, abjurers can fill many roles in a campaign, from bodyguard to battlemage to adventurer. Although it lacks offensive options, the school of abjuration provides some of the most effective combat spells in the game. An evoker or transmuter might find it easier to bring down large groups of foes, but an abjurer is far more likely to bring herself and her companions through a fight alive.

In a campaign with a high degree of intrigue or political machinations, the protective abilities of an abjurer can guard against foes both obvious and unexpected, and rival groups of abjurers, all with slightly different powers, might vie for prominence among each nation's schemers and courtiers. In combat-heavy campaigns, realms might employ abjuration specialists to protect against the battle magic of their rivals, and in any campaign, adventurers might come to rely on the skills of an abjurer to protect against the dangers of dungeon and wilderness.

Resistance to Energy (Su): Once per day, an abjurer using this variant can create a mystical shield that grants herself or any one creature that she touches limited protection against a chosen energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). The affected creature gains resistance equal to 5 plus one-half the abjurer's class level against the chosen energy type. Activating this ability is a standard action. Once activated, the protection lasts for 1 hour. This protection overlaps with (and does not stack with) the effects of spells such as *resist energy*.

An abjurer using this variant permanently gives up the ability to obtain a familiar.

Aura of Protection (Ex): Once per day, a 5th-level abjurer using this variant can generate a protective aura that shields against both physical and magical attacks. When the abjurer generates this field, she gains a deflection bonus to her Armor Class and a resistance bonus on all saving throws equal to her Intelligence modifier. This ability requires a standard action to activate, and each use protects against only one attack or spell. Once activated, the protective aura lasts for 1 minute or until the abjurer is attacked or required to make a saving throw, whichever comes first.

An abjurer using this variant can use this ability one additional time per day for every five class levels gained above 5th.

An abjurer using this variant does not gain bonus feats for advancing as a wizard.

Spontaneous Dispelling (Ex): At 5th level, an abjurer using this variant gains the ability to spontaneously cast the spell *dispel magic*. This ability is similar to the cleric's ability to spontaneously cast *cure* spells, with a few exceptions. The abjurer can "lose" four or more levels of prepared spells to cast *dispel magic*. The prepared spells can be of any level or combination of levels as long as the total spell levels add up to four or more (0-level spells don't count). For example, an abjurer using this variant could lose two 2nd-level spells or one 1st-level spell and one 3rd-level spell to cast *dispel magic*.

At 11th level, an abjurer can "lose" seven or more levels of prepared spells to spontaneously cast *greater dispel magic*.

An abjurer using this variant can use it in conjunction with a readied action to use *dispel magic* or *greater dispel magic* as a counterspell.

An abjurer using this variant does not gain additional spells per day for being a specialist wizard.

CONJURER VARIANTS

One of the most versatile schools of magic, conjuration offers its disciples an effective solution to nearly any task: Simply summon the appropriate monster and let it solve the problem. In combat, high-level conjurers fight from behind wave after wave of summoned foes, and in most battles they simply direct their summoned allies into the conflict. In addition to these vaunted summoning powers, conjuration provides effective combat spells and access to teleportation magic.

While virtually any campaign can benefit from rival groups of conjurers serving diverse agendas, conjurers are particularly effective in combat-heavy campaigns. Campaigns that feature a great deal of long-distance travel or travel between planes also benefit from including diverse groups of conjurers, because their specialty facilitates travel and encourages a thorough understanding of the creatures of the Outer Planes.

Rapid Summoning (Ex): Any time a conjurer using this variant casts a *summon monster* spell, its casting time is 1 standard action rather than 1 full round. (Creatures so summoned can only take a standard action in the round they are summoned.) Conjurers using this variant gain the normal benefits from enhancing a *summon monster* spell with the Quicken Spell feat.

A conjurer using this variant permanently gives up the ability to obtain a familiar.

Enhanced Summoning (Ex): At 1st level, a conjurer using this variant gains the Augmented Summoning feat for free instead of the Scribe Scroll feat.

At 5th level, the conjurer's summoned creatures become particularly tough to dispel. Add 2 to the DC of any caster level check made to dispel the conjurer's summoned creatures. At 15th level, this addition to the DC increases to 4.

At 10th level, the conjurer's summoned creatures gain an additional +2 bonus to Strength and Constitution. At 20th level, these bonuses increase to +4. These bonuses stack with those granted by the Augmented Summoning feat.

A conjurer using this variant does not gain bonus feats for advancing as a wizard.

Spontaneous Summoning (Ex): Conjurers using this variant can "lose" a prepared spell to cast any *summon monster* spell of a lower level. For example, a conjurer who has prepared *greater invisibility* (a 4th-level spell) may lose that spell to cast *summon monster I*, *summon monster II*, or *summon monster III*.

A conjurer using this variant does not gain additional spells per day for being a specialist wizard.

Note: Since conjurers using this variant obviously summon monsters frequently, the DM should require the conjurer's player to prepare simple record sheets ahead of time for each monster that the character commonly summons. It is also important to emphasize speedy play on the part of the conjurer and his summoned monsters.

DIVINER VARIANTS

Seekers of knowledge, hoarders of lore, and master spies, diviners are perhaps the most underrated specialist wizards. Because they must give up access to only one other school of magic, they are also the most versatile specialists. More than any other specialists, diviners excel at gathering information, and an adventuring party that includes a diviner is much more likely to prepare properly for an adventure.

Many campaigns benefit from featuring more than one type of divination specialist, and diviners can play important parts in any game revolving around information gathering. Campaigns that feature mysteries and detective-style adventures, themes of prophecy and oracles, or large amounts of social interaction and espionage all make excellent forums for a diviner's powers. In campaigns that feature variant diviners with different class abilities, one simple way to add more variety is to make each distinct group of specialists experts in and proponents of a different form of divination. In game terms, this divergence is represented by altering the material components for some divination spells. For example, one group of diviners might favor osteomancy and require a collection of bones to use as components for their spells.

Enhanced Awareness (Ex): A diviner using this variant adds Sense Motive to her list of class skills. In addition, she gains minor benefits when casting certain divination spells.

She needs only to study an item for 10 minutes (rather than 1 hour) when casting *identify*.

An *arcane eye* cast by the diviner travels at 20 feet per round when studying its surroundings (rather than 10 feet per round).

Add +1 to the saving throw DCs of the character's divination spells. (This bonus stacks with the bonus from the Spell Focus and Greater Spell Focus feats.)

A diviner using this variant permanently gives up the ability to obtain a familiar.

Bonus Feat List: A diviner using this variant gradually grows in awareness and perceptive ability, but at the expense of her metamagic capabilities. The diviner may not select a metamagic feat as a wizard bonus feat (that is, those feats gained at 5th, 10th, 15th, and 20th level). However, the following feats are added to the list of bonus feats available to her at those levels: Alertness, Blind-Fight, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, and Skill Focus (Spot, Listen, or Sense Motive only).

Prescience (Ex): Gifted with extraordinary insight and perceptive abilities, a diviner using this variant can add an insight bonus equal to her Intelligence modifier to any attack roll, saving throw, skill check, or level check she makes. The diviner can use this ability once per day, plus one additional time per day for every five class levels attained. Using this ability is a free action that can be taken out of turn if needed, but the character must choose to use this ability before the die roll is made.

A diviner using this variant does not gain additional spells per day for being a specialist wizard.

ENCHANTER VARIANTS

Charmer, schemer, deceiver, pacifist: An enchanter can be all these and more. As a practictioner of one of the most subtle schools of magic, an enchanter might charm a guard into opening a well-defended gate that fifty warriors couldn't take by force. Good-aligned enchanters use their powers to seek out truth and encourage others onto the path of good, while their evil counterparts bend others' minds at their whim and gather personal power as rapidly as possible.

Campaigns that feature a large amount of social scenarios, political intrigue, or investigation benefit greatly from the inclusion of variant enchanters. These spellcasters, skilled in the manipulation

of others and capable of concealing their own identities, make excellent villains and manipulators, or even investigators skilled at using magic to draw the truth out of opponents.

Players and DMs alike should also consider the ramifications that enchantment spells and similar effects have on a game world. Is casting *charm person* legal? Is a character legally responsible for actions taken while charmed? Do most of the campaign's inhabitants know that enchantment effects exist? Are there folk remedies that supposedly provide protection against enchantment effects? Do they actually work? Having ready answers to these and similar questions not only adds consistency to the game, but also clarifies and highlights the role of the enchanter.

Cohort: Upon reaching 6th level, an enchanter using this variant gains the service of a loyal cohort of the player's choice (with the DM's approval). The cohort is a 4th-level character when first gained; after that point, follow the normal rules described in the Leadership feat (page 106 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*) to determine the cohort's level, but treat the enchanter's level as being two lower than normal.

The enchanter doesn't gain any followers from this ability. If the enchanter selects the Leadership feat, he attracts followers as normal, the penalty to the enchanter's effective level is eliminated, and the enchanter automatically qualifies for the "special power" modifier to his Leadership score.

An enchanter using this variant permanently gives up the ability to obtain a familiar.

Social Proficiency (Ex): Enchanters using this variant are as proficient at manipulating others through mundane means as they are at influencing their minds magically. Add the following skills to the character's list of wizard class skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Intimidate, and Sense Motive. The enchanter also gains a +2 competence bonus on checks involving one of these skills (player's choice) every five levels (5th, 10th, 15th, and 20th). This bonus can only be applied once to each skill.

An enchanter using this variant does not gain bonus feats for advancing as a wizard.

Extended Enchantment (Su): Enchanters using this variant ensnare the minds of others more easily with their magic, and as a result their enchantment spells last longer than those cast by other spellcasters. Once per day, plus one additional time per two class levels gained above 1st, an enchanter using this variant can cast a spell from the enchantment school as if it were enhanced by the Extend Spell metamagic feat. This enhancement does not affect the spell's level.

Abjurer

Necromancer

Illusionist

Illus. by E. Fiegenschuh

An evoker does battle with an illusionist

Illus. by M. Nelson

This ability cannot be used to extend a spell with a duration of concentration, instantaneous, or permanent.

An enchanter using this variant does not gain additional spells per day for being a specialist wizard.

EVOKER VARIANTS

Masters of the raw power of magical energy, evokers can turn the tide of a battle with a single powerful spell, leveling groups of foes faster than any other practitioner of magic. Where some wizards focus on careful spell preparation and protective spells to survive combat encounters, evokers simply blast away with powerful energy attacks. Their prodigious offensive abilities ensure that evokers become the center of an adventuring group's battle plan.

Campaigns that include large numbers of wizards aligned to different nations are particularly suitable for variant evokers, since each nation develops unique cadres of evokers to serve in battle. Groups of militant evokers marching in unison with more conventional groups can change the tide of nearly any battle. In addition, campaigns that include themes of primal energy, raw nature, or extreme elemental conditions can all benefit from introducing evokers with variant abilities. Evokers in these sorts of campaigns might explore the raw essence of magic, struggling to harness its energies in new and unique ways.

Energy Affinity (Ex): Evokers using this variant must choose an energy type (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic). This choice is made upon character creation and cannot be altered thereafter. Any time the character casts an evocation spell with the chosen energy type, she casts the spell as if her caster level were one higher (affecting range, duration, damage, caster level checks, and any other factor influenced by caster level).

An evoker using this variant permanently gives up the ability to obtain a familiar.

Energy Substitution (Ex): An evoker of 5th level or higher using this variant can substitute energy of one type for another. When casting a spell that has an energy descriptor (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic), the evoker can change the energy descriptor and the spell's effects to energy of a different type.

Using this ability is a free action that must be declared before the spell is cast. The evoker can use this ability once per day for each five class levels he has attained (1/day at 5th, 2/day at 10th, and so on).

An evoker using this variant does not gain bonus feats for advancing as a wizard.

Overcome Resistance (Ex): The energy spells of an evoker using this variant can ignore some or all of a target's resistance to energy. Using this ability is a free action that must be announced before the evoker casts the spell to be affected. Every creature affected by the spell is treated as if its resistance to the spell's energy type was 10 points lower, to a minimum of 0. (This lowered resistance applies only to this spell; other effects with the same energy descriptor must get through the creature's normal resistance.)

The overcome resistance ability does not give the affected spell any ability to affect creatures with immunity to the spell's energy type, nor does the affected spell have any additional effect on creatures that do not have resistance to energy.

An evoker may use this ability one time per day, plus one additional time per day for every two class levels attained beyond 1st (2/day at 3rd, 3/day at 5th, and so forth).

An evoker using this variant does not gain additional spells per day for being a specialist wizard.

ILLUSIONIST VARIANTS

Illusionists control their surroundings by shaping, distorting, and deceiving the perceptions of others. To some their abilities seem weak, because they only distort and disguise rather than effecting true change, but those affected by an illusionist's spells know better, understanding that their own senses can be turned against them at any time.

Campaigns that deal in deception or that have a high level of social interaction, a fair number of mystery adventures, or even simply suspicious players can benefit from the introduction of variant illusionists. Campaigns featuring multiple types of variant illusionists might give each group or variant an even more distinctive flavor by making each the master of a particular subset of illusion spells. Illusionists from one nation might, for example, have the chains of disbelief variant ability and favor phantasms, while the illusionist thieves of the Guild of Shadows might have the shadow shaper variant ability and favor glamers and shadow magic.

Chains of Disbelief (Ex): Even if a viewer disbelieves an illusion created by an illusionist using this variant and communicates the details of the illusion to other creatures, those other creatures do not receive the normal +4 bonus on their saving throws to disbelieve the illusion. Furthermore, even when presented with incontrovertible proof that the illusion isn't real, creatures must still succeed on a Will saving throw to see objects or creatures that the illusion obscures, although they get a +10 bonus on the saving throw.

An illusionist using this variant permanently gives up the ability to obtain a familiar.

Shadow Shaper: An illusionist using this variant has a special bond with the Plane of Shadow, and gains several special abilities as he advances in level.

At 1st level, Hide is treated as a class skill for the illusionist.

At 5th level, the illusionist may add his Intelligence modifier (in addition to his Dexterity modifier) to his Hide skill checks.

At 10th level, the illusionist's illusions become infused with shadow stuff from the Plane of Shadow, making them more realistic and more likely to fool the senses. The save DCs of the illusionist's illusion spells increase by +1. This benefit stacks with similar bonuses, such as from Spell Focus.

At 15th level, the illusionist can hide in plain sight (as the ranger ability, except that the illusionist need not be in natural terrain).

At 20th level, the illusionist gains the ability to blend into shadows. In any condition of illumination that would normally grant the illusionist concealment, he instead gains total concealment (as if he were invisible).

An illusionist using this variant does not gain bonus feats for advancing as a wizard.

Illusion Mastery (Ex): An illusionist using this variant automatically adds two illusion spells to his spellbook every time he gains a level that grants access to a new spell level. Furthermore, any time the illusionist learns a new illusion spell, he treats that spell as if he had mastered it with the Spell Mastery feat.

An illusionist using this variant does not gain additional spells per day for being a specialist wizard.

NECROMANCER VARIANTS

Wrapped in mystery and burdened by reputations of evil, necromancers control dangerous energies that rob the living of strength and grant unlife to the dead. The most powerful necromancers command dangerous undead minions and threaten towns, cities, and sometimes even entire kingdoms with their power. Although necromancers make excellent villains and nemeses for a group of adventurers, neutral- and good-aligned necromancers who view themselves as the shepherds of the living and guardians of the dead can also prove valuable allies.

Campaigns that include evil necromancers or groups of undead as antagonists can benefit from the inclusion of variant necromancers. Rival groups of necromancers might view certain types of undead as the only true or "pure" undead and all others as evils that must be destroyed, with each group disagreeing on which types are which. Other factions or groups might have an innate loathing for undead raised by any but themselves.

Skeletal Minion: A 1st-level necromancer using this variant can begin play with an undead minion (a human warrior skeleton, as described on page 226 of the *Monster Manual*). Obtaining this minion takes 24 hours and uses up magical materials that cost 100 gp.

This creature is a loyal servant that follows the necromancer's commands and accompanies her on adventures if desired. If the skeletal minion is destroyed, the necromancer suffers no ill effects and may replace it by performing a ceremony identical to the one that allowed her to obtain her first servant.

At 1st level, the skeleton is completely typical, but it gains power as the necromancer gains levels. The skeleton has a number of Hit Dice equal to the necromancer's class level. Add one-half the necromancer's class level to the skeleton's natural armor bonus. Add one-third of the necromancer's class level to the skeleton's Strength and Dexterity scores.

A necromancer using this variant permanently gives up the ability to obtain a familiar.

Undead Apotheosis (Ex): As a necromancer using this variant progresses in levels, she gains some of the qualities that typify undead creatures.

At 5th level, the necromancer gains a +2 bonus on all saving throws made to resist *sleep*, stun, paralysis, poison, or disease. This bonus increases to +4 at 15th level.

At 10th level, the necromancer gains a +4 bonus on saving throws made to resist ability damage, ability drain, or energy drain.

At 20th level, the necromancer gains 25% resistance to critical hits, as the light fortification armor special ability described on page 219 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

A necromancer using this variant does not gain bonus feats for advancing as a wizard.

Enhanced Undead (Ex): Any time a necromancer using this variant creates an undead creature (such as with *animate dead*, *create undead*, or *create greater undead*), all undead creatures created gain a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength and Dexterity, and two additional hit points per Hit Die. This ability does not affect the number or Hit Dice of animated creatures that the necromancer can create or control.

A necromancer using this variant does not gain additional spells per day for being a specialist wizard.

TRANSMUTER VARIANTS

Masters of change, transmuters are among the most varied and versatile specialists. Transmutation spells, by their very nature, can change the environment and allow the spellcaster to solve nearly any problem.

This school's utility and variety ensures that nearly any campaign's magic becomes richer with the introduction of variant

transmuters. Campaigns in which the magic system is undergoing change benefit from introducing variant transmuters. Likewise, campaigns that include an above-average number of magical cultures or a long history of magical sophistication benefit from alternative traditions of transmutation magic.

Enhance Attribute (Ex): Once per day, plus one additional time per five class levels, a transmuter using this variant can add a +2 enhancement bonus to any one of his ability scores. This bonus lasts for a number of minutes equal to the transmuter's class level. Using this ability is a free action (and counts as using a quickened spell, so it may only be used once per round).

A transmuter using this variant permanently gives up the ability to obtain a familiar.

Spell Versatility (Ex): A 5th-level transmuter using this variant can adapt magic of other schools to his own style of spellcasting. For every five class levels that the transmuter gains, he can select one spell of any spell level that he has access to and treat it as if it were a transmutation spell. This means, for example, that the specialist can learn the spell normally and even prepare it as a bonus spell from the transmutation school. This spell can even be from a school that he has chosen as a prohibited school. Once a spell is chosen to be affected by this ability, it cannot be changed.

For example, a transmutation specialist using this variant has selected abjuration and necromancy as his prohibited schools. At 5th level, he gains access to 3rd-level spells. He chooses *dispel magic* and forever after treats *dispel magic* as if were a transmutation spell.

A transmuter using this variant does not gain bonus feats for advancing as a wizard.

Transmutable Memory (Ex): A transmuter using this variant can alter some of his prepared spells in a short amount of time. Once per day, the transmuter can give up a number of prepared spell levels (up to a maximum total equal to half his class level) and prepare different spells in their place, as long as the number of newly prepared spell levels is equal to or less than the number of spell levels given up (0-level spells don't count). For example, a 12th-level transmuter who uses this variant can lose two 1st-level spells and two 2nd-level spells from memory (a total of six spell levels, half the character's class level) and prepare two 3rd-level spells.

Using this ability requires a number of minutes of concentration equal to the number of spell levels given up. If the transmuter's concentration is broken during this time, all spells to be lost are gone and no spells are gained in their place.

A transmuter using this variant does not gain additional spells per day for being a specialist wizard.

SPONTANEOUS DIVINE CASTERS

As a twist on the traditional divine spellcaster, this variant converts the cleric and druid into spontaneous spellcasters. Such characters have a limited number of spells known, as the sorcerer does, though their selection is not quite as limited as the sorcerer's list.

Like other spellcasters, a character using this variant system can cast a certain number of spells per day. His base daily spell allotment is the same as a normal cleric's number of spells per day (not including domain spells), plus one spell per day of each spell level he can cast. For instance, a 1st-level cleric using this system can cast four 0-level spells and two 1st-level spells per day.

However, the divine caster's selection of spells known is limited. At 1st level, the character begins play knowing four 0-level spells and two 1st-level spells of your choice, plus his two 1st-level domain spells (if a cleric) or *summon nature's ally I* (if a druid). At each new level in the character's divine spellcasting class, he gains one or more new spells, as indicated on Table 2–2: Spells Known.

HOUSE RULE: SPONTANEOUS DOMAIN CASTING

Rather than allowing a cleric to prepare one spell each day from either of his domains, allow the cleric to spontaneously cast any domain spell in place of a prepared spell of the same level or lower.

This functions identically with the cleric's ability to spontaneously cast *cure* spells. The cleric "loses" a prepared spell to cast either one of his domain spells of the same level or lower.

This house rule reduces a cleric's overall spell power by one spell per spell level, and makes his choice of domains much more significant. A cleric of Kord who selects the Chaos and Luck domains seems a very different spellcaster from one who selects the Good and Strength domains.

If you use this variant, the Healing domain loses much of its appeal, since six of the nine spells associated with that domain are *cure* spells and thus available for spontaneous casting by all clerics who channel positive energy. (To a lesser extent, this variant diminishes the value of the Destruction domain, but since only three of that domain's spells are *inflict* spells, the effect is much less severe.) Consider granting clerics who select the Healing domain the ability to use d12s instead of d8s when casting *cure* spells. Thus, such a cleric's *cure light wounds* spell would cure 1d12 damage +1/level, and his caster level is treated as one higher than normal thanks to the granted power.

Alternatively, you can simply eliminate the normal cleric's ability to spontaneously cast *cure* or *inflict* spells. This makes the selection of the Healing domain (or the Destruction domain, for evil clerics) into an extraordinarily powerful choice, but simultaneously places a dramatic limitation on the average cleric's ability to heal damage. If you use this option, you might want to allow a cleric of any good deity to select the Healing domain as one of his domains.

For example, a 1st-level cleric of Obad-Hai has selected access to the domains of Air and Animal. He may cast one 1st-level spell for being a 1st-level cleric, plus one 1st-level bonus spell because of his 15 Wisdom. Instead of preparing one domain spell (either *obscuring mist* or *calm animals*) each day, he may spontaneously cast *obscuring mist* or *calm animals* in place of either or both of his prepared 1st-level spells. He does not prepare domain spells. If this cleric had chosen the Earth and Plant domains, he could spontaneously cast *magic stone* or *entangle* in place of either or both of his prepared 1st-level spells.

If you use the Druid Domains house rule described elsewhere in this chapter, you could allow such characters to use these same spontaneous casting rules (either in addition to or in exchange for the existing druid ability to spontaneously cast *summon nature's ally* spells).

—Andy Collins

Characters who use this option lose the ability to spontaneously cast *cure*, *inflict*, or *summon nature's ally* spells in place of other spells. However, each time the character gains a new spell level, he gains one or more bonus spells known to add to his list. A cleric may add his two domain spells to his list of spells known, while a druid may add the appropriate *summon nature's ally* spell to her list of spells known. (An entry of 0 on the table indicates that the cleric knows only his domain spells of that level, and the druid knows only the *summon nature's ally* spell of that level.)

Table 2–2: Spells Known

	Spells Known								
Level	0	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
1st	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	5	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3rd	5	3	0	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4th	6	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5th	6	4	2	0	—	—	—	—	—	—
6th	7	4	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
7th	7	5	3	2	0	—	—	—	—	—
8th	8	5	3	2	1	—	—	—	—	—
9th	8	5	4	3	2	0	—	—	—	—
10th	9	5	4	3	2	1	—	—	—	—
11th	9	5	5	4	3	2	0	—	—	—
12th	9	5	5	4	3	2	1	—	—	—
13th	9	5	5	4	4	3	2	0	—	—
14th	9	5	5	4	4	3	2	1	—	—
15th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	0	—
16th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	1	—
17th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	0
18th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	1
19th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	2
20th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3

Upon reaching 4th level, and at every even-numbered class level after that, a cleric or druid can choose to learn a new spell in place of one he already knows. This functions identically to the sorcerer's ability to swap out known spells, except that a cleric may never choose to lose a domain spell and a druid may never choose to lose a *summon nature's ally* spell.

For example, Jozan the cleric has chosen the domains of Good and Healing, which means that at 1st level, he automatically knows *cure light wounds* and *protection from evil*. In addition, he chooses four spells from the list of 0-level cleric spells (*cure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *light*, and *read magic*) and two spells from the list of 1st-level cleric spells (*bless* and *shield of faith*). He now knows four 0-level spells and four 1st-level spells.

Another example: At 4th level, Vadania the druid learns a new 0-level spell and a new 2nd-level spell. She can also choose to replace one of her 0-level spells known with a different spell of the same level. She chooses to replace *know direction* (since Soveliss has sufficient ranks in Survival to determine true north, this spell isn't as important any more) with *detect poison* (because Krusk is tired of accidentally eating toxic berries).

CLASS FEATURE VARIANTS

Even if you're satisfied playing one of the character classes from the *Player's Handbook*, other options allow you to customize your character. Variant versions of several of the iconic class features common to the character classes are presented below. If you prefer the variant to the standard class feature, ask your DM if he approves of your swapping out your class feature for the variant version.

As with the variant character classes, these variant class features can exist side by side with the standard class features—some rangers might hunt goblinoids while their comrades favor woodland missions—or can completely replace the standard features. The balance between the standard class and the variant is up to the DM.

FAVORED ENEMY VARIANT: FAVORED ENVIRONMENT

Instead of selecting a type of creature against which to apply a bonus on certain skills and damage rolls, the ranger selects a specific natural environment and gains bonuses when in that environment.

At 1st level, a ranger may select a natural environment from among those given on Table 2–3: Ranger Favored Environments. Due to the ranger's experience in that environment, he gains a +2 bonus on Hide, Listen, Move Silently, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills in that environment. He also gains the same bonus on Knowledge (nature) checks made in association with that environment (or on Knowledge [dungeoneering] checks made in association with underground environments, if the ranger has selected underground as a favored environment).

At 5th level and every five levels thereafter (at 10th, 15th, and 20th level), the ranger may select an additional favored environment from those given on the table and gains an identical bonus on the appropriate skill checks in that environment. In addition, at each such interval, the bonuses in any one favored environment (including the one just selected, if so desired) increase by

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: SPONTANEOUS CASTING

This option trades versatility—one of the divine spellcaster's strengths—for sheer spellcasting power (much like the difference between sorcerers and wizards). Since the cleric and druid spell lists depend on versatility of effect, particularly defensive or utilitarian spells, the spontaneous-casting divine caster is allowed to know more spells per spell level than the sorcerer (by adding domain spells or *summon nature's ally* spells on the list of spells known). No longer is the divine caster the character who can come up with any effect under the sun; instead, he becomes a much more specialized member of the adventuring group.

This variant has the secondary effect of individualizing the divine casters in your game, since no two characters choose to learn the same set of spells. With only a limited number of spells known from which to choose, characters must make tough choices each time they gain new spells known. For instance, is it more important that a 4th-level cleric learn *cure moderate wounds*—particularly if he already knows *cure light wounds*—or *bear's endurance*? Should your druid learn *resist energy* as a 2nd-level spell, or should she wait until she gains access to 3rd-level spells and learn *protection from energy* instead? The cleric's choice of domains becomes crucial, because those areas form the backbone of his available spells.

2. For example, a 5th-level ranger has two favored environments. In one he has a +4 bonus on the appropriate skill checks, and in the other he has a +2 bonus. At 10th level, he has three favored environments, and he gains an additional +2 bonus, which he can allocate to any of his three favored environments. Thus, his bonuses could be either +4, +4, and +2 or +6, +2, and +2.

If the ranger chooses desert or forest, he must also choose a climate type, as indicated on the table (either "cold" or "temperate or warm" for desert, or "cold or temperate" or "warm" for forest).

The DM may rule that a ranger can't select an environment that he has never visited.

Table 2–3: Ranger Favored Environments

Environment	Examples
Aquatic	sea, ocean (on or under water)
Desert, cold	tundra
Desert, temperate or warm	badlands, sandy desert
Forest, cold or temperate	forest
Forest, warm	jungle
Hills	rugged terrain up to 2,000 feet elevation
Marsh	bog, moor, swamp
Mountain	rugged terrain above 2,000 feet elevation
Plains	farmland, grassland, steppe, prairie
Underground	dungeons, caverns

RAGE VARIANT: WHIRLING FRENZY

A barbarian with this variant form of rage doesn't gain the normal bonuses when he enters a rage. Instead, when a barbarian with whirling frenzy enters a rage, he temporarily gains a +4 bonus to Strength and a +2 dodge bonus to Armor Class and on Reflex saves.

While in a whirling frenzy, the barbarian may make one extra attack in a round at his highest base attack bonus, but this attack takes a –2 penalty, as does each other attack made that round. This penalty applies for 1 round, so it also affects attacks of opportunity the barbarian might make before his next action.

Whirling frenzy is otherwise identical to the standard barbarian rage in all other ways. At 11th level (when a standard barbarian gains greater rage), the Strength bonus increases to +6, and the dodge bonus to Armor Class and on Reflex saves increases to +3. At 20th level (when a standard barbarian gains mighty rage), the Strength bonus increases to +8, and the dodge bonus to Armor Class and on Reflex saves increases to +4.

A barbarian using this variant doesn't gain indomitable will at 14th level. Instead, he gains evasion, but only while in a whirling frenzy.

A character can't use whirling frenzy at the same time that he uses any other form of rage (or similar ability).

Whirling frenzy

Illus. by S. Belledin

TURNING UNDEAD VARIANT: LEVEL CHECK

The standard rules for turning undead allow a cleric to affect a relatively narrow band of undead (up to 4 HD greater than his cleric level). This makes many undead creatures "off limits" for this iconic power of the cleric. This variant changes the cleric's turning check into a battle of personality strength, representing it by a level check that also takes into account the opponents' Charisma scores.

When turning undead using this variant, the cleric makes a turning check against the closest creature first, followed by a separate check against the next closest, and so on. When two or more creatures are equally close, the creature with the lowest number of Hit Dice is affected first (if it's still a tie, the character chooses which is affected first). Creatures more than 60 feet away cannot be turned.

A turning check is a level check to which the character also adds his Charisma modifier. (Use the character's effective turning level, which is equal to class level for a cleric or class level –3 for a paladin.) The DC is 10 + the creature's Hit Dice + its turn resistance (if any) + its Charisma modifier. (To speed play, the DM can add a "Turn DC" score to the statistics block of each undead creature.)

If you use this variant, some creatures' turn resistance should be increased to keep them from being too easy to turn. Any creature with turn resistance of +4 or higher should gain an additional +2 to its turn resistance. Creatures with turn resistance of +3 or lower need no change.

If the check fails, the creature is unaffected. Its Hit Dice do not count against the total number of creatures the character can turn (see below).

If the character succeeds on the check, the affected creature stands frozen in place for 1 round, just as if it were paralyzed (though this affects even creatures with immunity to paralysis). On each succeeding turn, the character may take a standard action to concentrate on the effect, prolonging the effective paralysis for an additional round. (This doesn't count as a turn attempt, and affects all undead creatures that the character has "paralyzed" in this manner.) The character may concentrate on this effect for a maximum of 10 consecutive rounds, after which the undead creature can act normally. If a creature affected in this way is attacked or takes damage, the effect is broken and the creature may act normally beginning on its next turn. (The character's proximity to

the creature has no effect.) This effect is the same whether the character channels positive or negative energy.

If the character's check beats the DC by 5 or more, he may instead turn the creature (if he channels positive energy) or rebuke it (if he channels negative energy).

If the creature has Hit Dice equal to one-half the character's effective cleric level or less, the turning attempt automatically succeeds, and he does not have to make a check (the creature's Hit Dice still count against the maximum). Furthermore, such undead are automatically destroyed (if the character channels positive energy) or commanded (if he channels negative energy).

The character makes checks against each eligible creature until he has affected the maximum Hit Dice worth of creatures, or there are no more eligible creatures. He can affect a number of Hit Dice of creatures equal to three × his effective cleric level on any one turning attempt. For example, a 4th-level cleric (or 7th-level paladin) can affect up to 12 HD worth of creatures, which could mean two creatures with 6 HD each, four creatures with 3 HD each, or any other combination that adds up to 12 HD.

An evil cleric can instead channel negative energy to bolster undead or to dispel a turning effect. In either case, the cleric makes a normal turning check (if attempting to dispel a turning effect, add the turning cleric's Charisma modifier to the DC of the evil cleric's turning check). If the cleric successfully rebukes the undead, the undead gain turn resistance +2 (if he was attempting to bolster them) or are no longer turned (if he was attempting to dispel the turning effect).

For example, Jozan, a 3rd-level cleric, faces three ghouls and a ghast. Jozan can turn up to 9 HD of creatures. Two of the ghouls are 10 feet and 15 feet away, respectively. The third ghoul and the ghast are both 20 feet away. His turning attempts affect the closest ghouls first, then the farthest ghoul, and then the ghast. Jozan makes the first turning check. A ghoul has 2 HD, but it also has +2 turn resistance, so it is treated as a 4 HD creature. After adding the ghoul's +1 Charisma modifier, the turning check DC is 15. Jozan rolls a 12, which, with his three cleric levels and +1 Charisma modifier, gives him a result of 16, so the nearest ghoul is halted in place. (If Jozan wants to maintain the effect, he'll have to continue to concentrate on it in later rounds.) He has successfully turned 4 HD worth of creatures, leaving him with 5 HD. This is enough to affect another ghoul, so he makes another turning check against the next closest ghoul. Jozan rolls a 6 against the second ghoul, for a result of 10, so the ghoul is unaffected. Against the third ghoul, his roll is 16 for a result of 20, which beats the DC by at least 5, so Jozan can turn the ghoul if he wishes to do so. Since he knows he can't affect the ghast on this turning attempt—it has 4 HD and +2 turn resistance, and Jozan has only 1 HD of turning left—he chooses to paralyze the third ghoul rather than sending it scurrying back into its burrow where it can gather more allies. (Even if Jozan had failed to affect the third ghoul, he would only have 5 HD left—not enough to affect the ghast thanks to its +2 turn resistance.) On his next turn, Jozan can choose to continue holding the ghouls in place or, if his allies have already destroyed the three ghouls, use another turning attempt against the ghast (which requires a DC 19 turning check).

TURNING UNDEAD VARIANT: PLANAR BANISHMENT

Instead of channeling energy to turn or rebuke undead, with this variant a cleric can channel energy to banish outsiders.

Make a turning check as normal. The result indicates the most powerful outsider affected (treat an outsider as having Hit Dice equal to its Hit Dice + its Cha modifier, if any). If the roll is high enough to let the cleric affect at least some outsiders within 60 feet, roll 2d6 + cleric's class level + cleric's Cha modifier for turning damage. That's how many total Hit Dice of outsiders the cleric affects.

Any outsider affected by the turning attempt is banished back to its home plane. (If it is already on its home plane, there is no effect.) Even if it has the ability to travel between planes, it cannot do so for 10 rounds (1 minute). If the cleric has twice as many levels (or more) as the outsider has effective Hit Dice, he destroys any outsiders that he would normally banish.

If the cleric would normally turn or destroy undead, he has the ability to banish or destroy evil outsiders (that is, outsiders with the evil subtype, as defined by the *Monster Manual*). Characters who would normally rebuke or command undead instead gain the ability to banish or destroy good outsiders. As an additional option, the DM might allow clerics worshiping a lawful deity to banish or destroy chaotic outsiders, while clerics worshiping a chaotic deity could banish or destroy lawful outsiders. This ability would replace the ability to banish or destroy good or evil outsiders.

If you use this variant, consider allowing clerics who can turn or rebuke elementals (that is, clerics with access to the Air, Earth, Fire, or Water domains) to instead banish elementals of the same element and banish or destroy elementals of the opposing element.

This variant is otherwise identical to turning undead, including limits of daily uses and feats that enhance a cleric's turning ability.

WILD SHAPE VARIANT: ASPECT OF NATURE

Instead of taking animal form, a druid with this variant form of wild shape takes on one or more aspects of nature when she uses her wild shape ability.

At 5th level, a druid may take on one aspect from those described below. At 8th level, the druid can take on up to two aspects simultaneously. At 11th level, she can take up on to three aspects simultaneously, and at 15th level the limit increases to its maximum of four simultaneous aspects. (Some aspects can only be combined with certain other aspects, as indicated in their descriptions.) Each aspect taken on counts as one daily use of the druid's wild shape ability. Multiple versions of the same aspect don't stack. Taking on one or more aspects is a standard action (which does not provoke attacks of opportunity), and the effect lasts for 1 minute per druid level.

Some aspects, as noted in their descriptions, have a minimum druid level as a prerequisite.

A druid may take on one aspect per day for every daily use of wild shape she is entitled to. For instance, a 5th-level druid could normally use wild shape once per day, so she could assume an aspect once per day. A 10th-level druid could take on four aspects per day and can choose to take on two aspects simultaneously (which would use up two of the druid's daily uses).

Unless otherwise noted in an aspect's description, a druid who assumes an aspect of nature retains her own type and subtype(s), keeps her extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like abilities, and retains her ability to communicate and cast spells. She is considered proficient with any natural attacks granted by the aspect.

Illus. by B. Thompson

Agility: The druid gains a +8 bonus to Dexterity but takes a –4 penalty to Strength. *Prerequisite:* Druid level 8th.

Aquatic: The druid grows gills, enabling her to breathe underwater (while retaining her ability to breathe air). Webbing between her fingers and her toes grants her a swim speed of 40 feet (or 30 feet if wearing medium or heavy armor or carrying a medium or heavy load) and a +8 bonus on her Swim checks.

Elemental Air: The druid's body becomes gaseous (as the *gaseous form* spell, except that she can fly at a speed of 100 feet with perfect maneuverability and doesn't lose her supernatural abilities while in this form). While in this form, the druid has immunity to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, and stunning, as well as any other immunities provided by the *gaseous form* spell. The druid cannot cast spells while this aspect is in effect. She can't combine this aspect with any other aspect except for agility and endurance. *Prerequisite:* Druid level 16th.

Elemental Earth: The druid's body becomes stony and rocklike. While in this form, the druid has immunity to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, and stunning. She gains a slam attack that deals bludgeoning damage equal to a morningstar of the druid's size (1d8 for Medium druids, 1d6 for Small druids). Her natural armor bonus becomes +8 (replacing any other natural armor bonus the druid has, though enhancement bonuses to natural armor still apply normally). She also gains damage reduction 10/magic. The druid cannot cast spells while this aspect is in effect. She can't combine this aspect with any other aspect except for endurance and vigor. *Prerequisite:* Druid level 16th.

Elemental Fire: The druid's body bursts into flame. While in this form, the druid has immunity to fire, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, and stunning. In addition, any creature struck by the druid in melee (whether with a weapon, unarmed attack, or natural weapon) takes an extra 1d6 points of fire damage and must succeed on a Reflex save or catch fire for 1d4 rounds (see Catching on Fire, page 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). The save DC is 10 + 1/2 druid level + druid's Con modifier. Creatures hitting the druid with natural weapons or unarmed attacks while this aspect is in effect take 1d6 points of fire damage and also catch fire unless they succeed on the Reflex save noted above. The druid also gains damage reduction 10/magic. The druid cannot cast spells while this aspect is in effect. She can't combine this aspect with any other aspect except for agility and endurance. *Prerequisite:* Druid level 16th.

Elemental Water: The druid's body becomes semifluid. While in this form, the druid gains a +10 bonus on Escape Artist checks, resistance to fire 10, and immunity to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, and stunning. She gains a swim speed of 90 feet and a +8 bonus on her Swim checks. Her touch puts out torches, campfires, exposed lanterns, and other open flames of nonmagical origin if these are Large or smaller. The druid can dispel magical fire she touches as if she had cast *greater dispel magic* on it. She also gains damage reduction 10/magic. The druid cannot cast spells while this aspect is in effect. She can't combine this aspect with any other aspect except for endurance and vigor. *Prerequisite:* Druid level 16th.

Endurance: The druid gains a +4 bonus to Constitution. *Prerequisite:* Druid level 8th.

Flight: The druid grows wings (feathery or batlike, at her option) that enable her to fly at a speed of 40 feet with average maneuverability (or 30 feet if wearing medium or heavy armor or carrying a medium or heavy load).

Plant: The druid's body becomes plantlike. While in this form, the druid gains a +10 bonus on Hide checks made in areas of forest, overgrowth, or similar terrain. She gains immunity to poison, *sleep*, paralysis, and stunning. She gains a slam attack that deals bludgeoning damage equal to a light mace of the druid's size (1d6 for Medium druids, 1d4 for Small druids). Her natural armor bonus becomes +4 (replacing any other natural armor bonus the druid has, though enhancement bonuses to natural armor still apply normally). She can't combine this aspect with any other aspect except for vigor. *Prerequisite:* Druid level 12th.

Poison: The druid gains a bite attack that deals bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage equal to a dagger of the druid's

HOUSE RULE: DRUID DOMAINS

In my campaign, each druid may choose a single domain from the following list: Air, Animal, Earth, Fire, Plant, Sun, and Water. The druid gains a bonus spell of each spell level, which may be used only to prepare a domain spell of that level (or of a lower level, if affected by a metamagic feat). The druid also gains the domain's granted power, except as noted below.

Druids who select the Animal domain or the Plant domain gain Skill Focus (Knowledge [nature]), since Knowledge (nature) is already a class skill for druids.

A druid who chooses the Sun domain gains the ability to turn undead 1/day as a cleric of her level, and cannot perform a greater turning.

—Andrew Finch

size (1d4 for a Medium druid, or 1d3 for a Small druid). In addition, the bite delivers a toxic venom (Fortitude save DC 10 + 1/2 druid's level + druid's Con modifier; initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con).

Scent: The druid gains the scent ability, as described on page 314 of the *Monster Manual*.

Speed: The druid gains a +30-foot enhancement bonus to her base land speed.

Tooth and Claw: The druid gains a primary bite attack (at her full base attack bonus) and two secondary claw attacks (at her base attack bonus –5 and adding only half her Strength bonus on damage rolls). The bite attack deals bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage equal to a short sword of the druid's size (1d6 for a Medium druid, or 1d4 for a Small druid), while the claws deal piercing and slashing damage equal to a dagger of the druid's size (1d4 for a Medium druid, or 1d3 for a Small druid).

Vigor: The druid gains a +8 bonus to Strength but takes a –4 penalty to Dexterity. *Prerequisite*: Druid level 8th.

PRESTIGIOUS CHARACTER CLASSES

A number of the character classes described in the *Player's Handbook* represent very specific (if not always specialized) roles in the game. These classes—the bard, the paladin, and the ranger—might require special training to enter, training that can be mimicked by transforming these classes into prestige classes.

With this variant, these classes become off limits for starting (1st-level) characters. Thus, the three prestige classes presented below represent elite character archetypes, roles that can only be achieved through training in specific areas of knowledge and expertise. In each case, the prestige class recreates the feel of the character class, but with slight variations. Each class has fifteen levels, allowing a character who enters at 6th level to continue along that path all the way up to 20th level.

If you use any of the variant classes presented here, the standard version of the class should be unavailable. For instance, you shouldn't include both the standard paladin character class and the paladin prestige class in the same game.

PRESTIGE BARD

The prestige bard is a jack-of-all-trades, master of none. She relies on wit, agility, and no small amount of magic to see her through her daring adventures.

Virtually all characters who become prestige bards are already multiclass characters, usually mixing rogue and wizard or rogue and sorcerer. Some dabble in barbarian or fighter as well, depending on their social backgrounds.

NPC prestige bards may serve as heralds, tale-tellers, spies, ne'er-do-wells, or all of the above. Some work in troupes, others form colleges, but most share a strong streak of independence.

Compared to the standard character class, the prestige bard gains her bardic music abilities later in her career, but has a greater range of spells available.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a prestige bard, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any nonlawful.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.

Skills: Knowledge (any one) 4 ranks, Perform (any one) 8 ranks.

Special: Ability to cast at least one 1st-level arcane spell from each of the divination, enchantment, and illusion schools.

Class Skills

The prestige bard's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (n/a), Spellcraft (Int), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the prestige bard class.

Table 2–4: The Prestige Bard

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Bardic music (countersong, *fascinate*, inspire courage +1), bardic knowledge	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Inspire competence	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Inspire courage +2	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
6th	+4	+2	+5	+5	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
7th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Inspire greatness	—
8th	+6	+2	+6	+6	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9th	+6	+3	+6	+6	Song of freedom	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
10th	+7	+3	+7	+7	Inspire courage +3	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
11th	+8	+3	+7	+7	Inspire heroics	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
12th	+9	+4	+8	+8	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
13th	+9	+4	+8	+8	Mass suggestion	—
14th	+10	+4	+9	+9	—	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
15th	+11	+5	+9	+9	Inspire courage +4	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: As the standard bard in the *Player's Handbook*. A prestige bard can cast any arcane spells in light armor without the normal arcane spell failure chance.

Spellcasting: When a new prestige bard level is gained (except at 1st, 3rd, 7th, and 13th level), the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in whatever arcane spellcasting class she belonged to before she added the prestige class.

A prestige bard casts arcane spells from the schools of divination, enchantment, and illusion at +2 caster level. She casts arcane spells from the schools of evocation and necromancy at –2 caster level.

Bardic Knowledge (Ex): As the standard bard ability of the same name.

Bardic Music: As the standard bard ability of the same name, except that the minimum number of ranks in Perform required is increased by 5 (8 ranks for countersong, *fascinate*, or inspire courage; 11 ranks for inspire competence, and so forth).

PRESTIGE PALADIN

After training in the arts of combat and the mysteries of the divine, the prestige paladin is anointed as a holy warrior dedicated to the protection of law and goodness.

Most prestige paladins are clerics or fighter/clerics, though rare cleric/monks might pursue this path as well.

NPC prestige paladins usually belong to a holy order dedicated to a lawful good deity such as Heironeous. Some are lone wanderers, dealing out justice while walking the earth.

Compared to the standard paladin, the prestige paladin gives up a small amount of combat prowess in exchange for a larger spell list and a higher top end of his spellcasting powers. Also, his class features aren't quite as powerful as the standard paladin's as a result of his reduced paladin class level.

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

To qualify to become a prestige paladin, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Lawful good.

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Skills: Knowledge (religion) 2 ranks, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) 2 ranks, Ride 4 ranks.

Feats: Mounted Combat.

Spellcasting: Ability to cast *protection from evil* as a divine spell.

Special: Ability to turn undead.

Class Skills

The prestige paladin's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (nobility and royalty) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), and Sense Motive (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the prestige paladin class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: As the standard paladin in the *Player's Handbook*.

Spells per Day: A prestige paladin's training focuses on divine spellcasting. At every odd-numbered level reached, the prestige paladin gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in whatever divine spellcasting class he belonged to before he added the prestige class.

Illus. by E. Cox

TABLE 2–5: THE PRESTIGE PALADIN

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	*Detect evil*, smite evil 1/day, turn undead	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Divine grace, lay on hands, *special mount*	—
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Aura of courage, divine health	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	*Remove disease* 1/week	—
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Smite evil 2/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	—	—
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	*Remove disease* 2/week	—
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Smite evil 3/day	—
11th	+11	+7	+3	+3	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
12th	+12	+8	+4	+4	*Remove disease* 3/week	—
13th	+13	+8	+4	+4	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
14th	+14	+9	+4	+4	—	—
15th	+15	+9	+5	+5	Smite evil 4/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

Detect Evil **(Sp)**: As the standard paladin ability of the same name.

Smite Evil (Su): As the standard paladin ability of the same name.

Turn Undead (Su): For the purpose of determining his ability to turn undead, a prestige paladin's class levels stack with his levels from all his other classes from which he has gained the ability to turn undead. For instance, a 4th-level fighter/1st-level cleric/2nd-level prestige paladin would turn undead as a 3rd-level cleric.

Divine Grace (Su): As the standard paladin ability of the same name.

Lay on Hands (Su): As the standard paladin ability of the same name, except that the total number of hit points of damage that a prestige paladin can heal per day is equal to his Charisma modifier × (his paladin level + 3). For example, a 3rd-level prestige paladin with a Charisma of 16 (+3 modifier) can heal 18 points of damage per day.

Special Mount **(Sp)**: As the standard paladin ability of the same name, except treat the prestige paladin's effective level as three higher when calculating the mount's bonus Hit Dice, powers, and so forth (see the sidebar The Paladin's Mount on page 45 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Aura of Courage (Su): As the standard paladin ability of the same name.

Divine Health (Ex): As the standard paladin ability of the same name.

Remove Disease **(Sp)**: As the standard paladin ability of the same name, except that a prestige paladin gains the ability at 4th level and can use this ability one additional time per week for every four levels gained thereafter (twice at 8th and three times at 12th).

Code of Conduct and Associates: These restrictions are the same as those described in the *Player's Handbook*.

Ex-Paladins

Same as for the standard paladin, but with no restrictions on multiclassing.

PRESTIGE RANGER

The prestige ranger navigates the dark forests, craggy mountains, or desert wastes of her homeland with unparalleled skill. She becomes one with nature while remaining a deadly hunter.

Most prestige rangers are former druids, though some multiclass in barbarian, fighter, or rogue. Some replace druid levels with cleric levels, selecting the Animal domain. If your campaign uses the wilderness rogue (described earlier in this chapter), that class also provides a good starting point for a would-be prestige ranger.

NPC prestige rangers are typically loners, trusting few but themselves while on the hunt. Some form loose affiliations of like-minded individuals, occasionally relying on each other for assistance in dire times.

Compared to the standard ranger, the prestige ranger gives up immediate access to some of her iconic abilities (such as favored enemy) by having to qualify for the class, but has a much wider selection of spells.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a prestige ranger, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +4.

Skills: Knowledge (nature) 2 ranks, Survival 4 ranks.

UNIQUE SPELLS

The bard, paladin, and ranger spell lists in the *Player's Handbook* (as well as similar lists in other books) contain a number of spells that don't appear on other classes' spell lists. In general, any character who enters one of these prestige classes should gain access to spells unique to that class's spell list from the *Player's Handbook*, at the same levels indicated for the standard class. At the DM's discretion, spells unique to that class's spell list found in other books may also be available, but on a case-by-case basis. The DM may require such spells to be researched or learned specifically by the character, rather than simply making them freely available.

Table 2–6: The Prestige Ranger

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+1	+2	+2	+0	1st favored enemy, animal companion, wild empathy	—
2nd	+2	+3	+3	+0	Bonus feat, woodland stride	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3rd	+3	+3	+3	+1	Swift tracker	—
4th	+4	+4	+4	+1	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5th	+5	+4	+4	+1	2nd favored enemy	—
6th	+6	+5	+5	+2	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7th	+7	+5	+5	+2	Bonus feat	—
8th	+8	+6	+6	+2	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9th	+9	+6	+6	+3	Camouflage	—
10th	+10	+7	+7	+3	3rd favored enemy	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
11th	+11	+7	+7	+3	—	—
12th	+12	+8	+8	+4	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
13th	+13	+8	+8	+4	Hide in plain sight	—
14th	+14	+9	+9	+4	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
15th	+15	+9	+9	+5	4th favored enemy	—

Feats: Endurance, Track, and either Rapid Shot or Two-Weapon Fighting.

Spellcasting: Must be able to cast *calm animals* as a divine spell.

Class Skills

The prestige ranger's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (dungeoneering) (Int), Knowledge (geography) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis), Swim (Str), and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the prestige ranger class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: As the standard ranger in the *Player's Handbook*.

Animal Companion (Ex): At 1st level, a prestige ranger gains an animal companion. This is identical to the standard druid ability of the same name.

If a prestige ranger already has an animal companion from another class, the character's prestige ranger levels stack with those class levels for purposes of determining the companion's abilities.

Favored Enemy (Ex): As the standard ranger ability of the same name.

Wild Empathy (Ex): As the standard ranger ability of the same name.

If a prestige ranger already has the wild empathy ability from another class, the character's prestige ranger levels stack with those class levels when making animal empathy checks.

Bonus Feat: At 2nd level, a prestige ranger gains either Manyshot or Improved Two-Weapon Fighting as a bonus feat. She must have the Rapid Shot feat to select Manyshot as a bonus feat, and she must have Two-Weapon Fighting to select Improved Two-Weapon Fighting as a bonus feat. However, the ranger need not have any of the other normal prerequisites for the bonus feat selected.

At 7th level, a prestige ranger gains either Improved Precise Shot or Greater Two-Weapon Fighting as a bonus feat. She must have the Manyshot and Rapid Shot feats to select Improved Precise Shot as a bonus feat, and she must have Two-Weapon Fighting and Improved Two-Weapon Fighting to select Greater Two-Weapon Fighting as a bonus feat. However, the ranger need not have any of the other normal prerequisites for the bonus feat selected.

Woodland Stride (Ex): As the standard ranger ability of the same name.

Camouflage (Ex): As the standard ranger ability of the same name.

Hide in Plain Sight (Ex): As the standard ranger ability of the same name.

GESTALT CHARACTERS

In this high-powered campaign variant, characters essentially take two classes at every level, choosing the best aspects of each. The process is similar to multiclassing, except that characters gain the full benefits of each class at each level. If the two classes you choose have aspects that overlap (such as Hit Dice, attack progression, saves, and class features common to more than one class), you choose the better aspect. The gestalt character retains all aspects that don't overlap.

The gestalt character variant is particularly effective if you have three or fewer players in your D&D group, or if your players enjoy multiclassing and want characters with truly prodigious powers. This variant works only if every PC in the campaign uses it, and it results in complicated characters who may overwhelm newer D&D players with an abundance of options.

BUILDING A GESTALT CHARACTER

To make a 1st-level gestalt character, choose two standard D&D classes. (You can also choose any of the variant classes in this book, though you can't combine two versions of the same class.) Build your character according to the following guidelines.

Hit Dice: Choose the larger Hit Die. A monk/sorcerer would use d8 as her Hit Die and have 8 hit points (plus Constitution modifier) at 1st level, for example.

Base Attack Bonus: Choose the better progression from the two classes.

Base Saving Throw Bonuses: For each save bonus, choose the better progression from the two classes. For example, a 1st-level gestalt fighter/wizard would have base saving throw bonuses of Fortitude +2, Reflex +0, Will +2—taking the good Fortitude save from the fighter class and the good Will save from the wizard class.

Class Skills: Take the number of skill points gained per level from whichever class grants more skill points, and consider any skill on either class list as a class skill for the gestalt character. For example, a gestalt barbarian/bard would gain skill points per level equal to 6 + Int modifier (and have four times this amount at 1st level), and can purchase skills from both the barbarian and bard lists as class skills.

Class Features: A gestalt character gains the class features of both classes. A 1st-level gestalt rogue/cleric, for example, gets sneak attack +1d6, trapfinding, 1st-level cleric spells, and the ability to turn or rebuke undead. Class- and ability-based restrictions (such as arcane spell failure chance and a druid's prohibition on wearing metal armor) apply normally to a gestalt character, no matter what the other class is.

A gestalt character follows a similar procedure when he attains 2nd and subsequent levels. Each time he gains a new level, he chooses two classes, takes the best aspects of each, and applies them to his characteristics. A few caveats apply, however.

- Class features that two classes share (such as uncanny dodge) accrue at the rate of the faster class.
- Gestalt characters with more than one spellcasting class keep track of their spells per day separately.
- A gestalt character can't combine two prestige classes at any level, although it's okay to combine a prestige class and a regular class. Prestige classes that are essentially class combinations—such as the arcane trickster, mystic theurge, and eldritch knight—should be prohibited if you're using gestalt classes, because they unduly complicate the game balance of what's already a high-powered variant. Because it's possible for gestalt characters to qualify for prestige classes earlier than normal, the DM is entirely justified in toughening the prerequisites of a prestige class so it's available only after 5th level, even for gestalt characters.

Gestalt Combinations

Because the player of a gestalt character chooses two classes at every level, the possibilities for gestalt characters are almost limitless. The following combinations are particularly potent.

Barbarian/Bard: The "bardarian" has two choices in a battle: use a mix of party-aiding spells and attacks, or rage and use inspirational music to urge the rest of the party on as he attacks. Only the bardic music abilities that actually require a Perform check (such as countersong and *fascinate*) are off limits during a rage. Neither barbarians nor bards wear heavy armor, so gear selection is straightforward.

HOUSE RULE: FRACTIONAL BASE BONUSES

The progressions of base attack bonuses and base save bonuses in the *Player's Handbook* increase at a fractional rate, but those fractions are eliminated due to rounding. For single-class characters, this rounding isn't significant, but for multiclass characters, this rounding often results in reduced base attack and base save bonuses.

For example, a 1st-level rogue/1st-level wizard has a base attack bonus (BAB) of +0 from each class, resulting in a total BAB of +0. But that's only due to the rounding of each fractional value down to 0 before adding them together—the character actually has BAB +3/4 from her rogue level and BAB +1/2 from her wizard level. If the rounding was done after adding together the fractional values, rather than before, the character would have BAB +1 (rounded down from 1-1/4).

The table below presents fractional values for the base save and base attack bonuses presented in Table 3–1 in the *Player's Handbook*. To determine the total base save bonus or base attack bonus of a multiclass character, add together the fractional values gained from each of her class levels.

For space purposes, the table does not deal with the multiple attacks gained by characters with a base attack bonus of +6 or greater. A second attack is gained when a character's total BAB reaches +6, a third at +11, and a fourth at +16, just as normal.

This variant is ideal for campaigns featuring many multiclass characters, since it results in their having slightly higher base save and base attack bonuses than in a standard game.

For example, in a standard game, a 5th-level cleric/2nd-level fighter would have base save bonuses of Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +4. In this variant, the same character would have Fort +7 (rounded down from +7-1/2), Ref +2 (rounded down from +2-1/3), and Will +5 (rounded down from +5-1/6).

Another example: A standard 2nd-level rogue/9th-level wizard would have a base attack bonus of +5, +1 from rogue and +4 from wizard. Using the fractional system, that character's base attack bonus would be +6, +1-1/2 from rogue and +4-1/2 from wizard, enough to gain a second attack at a +1 bonus.

Fractional Base Save and Base Attack Bonuses

Class Level	Base Save Bonus (Good)	Base Save Bonus (Poor)	Base Attack Bonus (Good)	Base Attack Bonus (Average)	Base Attack Bonus (Poor)
1st	+2-1/2	+1/3	+1	+3/4	+1/2
2nd	+3	+2/3	+2	+1-1/2	+1
3rd	+3-1/2	+1	+3	+2-1/4	+1-1/2
4th	+4	+1-1/3	+4	+3	+2
5th	+4-1/2	+1-2/3	+5	+3-3/4	+2-1/2
6th	+5	+2	+6	+4-1/2	+3
7th	+5-1/2	+2-1/3	+7	+5-1/4	+3-1/2
8th	+6	+2-2/3	+8	+6	+4
9th	+6-1/2	+3	+9	+6-3/4	+4-1/2
10th	+7	+3-1/3	+10	+7-1/2	+5
11th	+7-1/2	+3-2/3	+11	+8-1/4	+5-1/2
12th	+8	+4	+12	+9	+6
13th	+8-1/2	+4-1/3	+13	+9-3/4	+6-1/2
14th	+9	+4-2/3	+14	+10-1/2	+7
15th	+9-1/2	+5	+15	+11-1/4	+7-1/2
16th	+10	+5-1/3	+16	+12	+8
17th	+10-1/2	+5-2/3	+17	+12-3/4	+8-1/2
18th	+11	+6	+18	+13-1/2	+9
19th	+11-1/2	+6-1/3	+19	+14-1/4	+9-1/2
20th	+12	+6-2/3	+20	+15	+10

ADDING FRACTIONS

Adding together halves, quarters, and thirds can be tricky. Here's a cheat sheet to help you with some of the common sums you might encounter.

1/4 + 1/3 = 7/12
1/4 + 2/3 = 11/12
1/2 + 1/3 = 10/12
1/2 + 2/3 = 14/12, or 1-2/12
3/4 + 1/3 = 13/12, or 1-1/12
3/4 + 2/3 = 17/12, or 1-5/12

—Andy Collins

Illus. by E. Cox

Barbarian/Wizard: The barbarian brings that d12 Hit Die to the table, and that's almost all that matters to the fragile wizard. A good Fortitude save is sure to save the gestalt character's hide a few times, and a high-Intelligence character benefits greatly from the union of two disparate class skill lists. And as a bonus, you're literate at 1st level. The only downside? You can't cast spells in a rage. This combination deliberately tweaks the stereotypes of both classes, so you'll want to spend some time thinking about your character's backstory.

Cleric/Sorcerer: This gestalt combination is effectively the mystic theurge prestige class on steroids. You can load up on combat spells as a sorcerer, then prepare utility and protective spells as a cleric—which you can always spontaneously cast as healing spells if you like. As a side benefit, your high Charisma helps both your arcane spellcasting and your ability to turn undead.

Druid/Ranger: With the ranger's base attack bonus, you'll be a more effective combatant when you wild shape into a predator. The extra skills of a ranger are welcome, and if you choose the archery combat style, you'll be ready for both ranged combat and an up-close fight in wild shape form.

Fighter/Ranger: If you like feats, this is the class for you. Most fighters must choose whether to split their feats between melee and ranged combat or emphasize one kind of attack at the expense of the other. The fighter/ranger can have it both ways, relying on the fighter bonus feats to improve melee attacks and the ranger's combat style, improved combat style, and combat style mastery to pick up three good archery feats.

Fighter/Rogue: Every rogue likes to get behind the enemy and dish out sneak attack damage. With this gestalt combination, that trick gets even better because you have the hit points and Armor Class to survive toe-to-toe with the enemy, you'll hit more often, and you get more attacks, which just means more chances to pick up a fistful of d6s. You can wear heavy armor, but you'll degrade some of your better skills and you'll lose access to evasion.

Monk/Cleric: You'll probably give up your armor, but you can run around the battlefield in a blur, healing your comrades and putting the hurt on the bad guys with such combinations as stunning fist with an *inflict serious wounds* spell attached. Once you draw up your new character, flip through the *Player's Handbook* and note how many great cleric spells have a range of touch. The same Wisdom score that drives your spellcasting also improves your Armor Class.

Monk/Sorcerer and Monk/Wizard: With three good saves, more hit points, and the best unarmored Armor Class, the monk covers up many of the weak points of the sorcerer or wizard. The only downside is that the important ability scores for sorcerers and wizards—Charisma and Intelligence—are the two ability scores that the monk cares least about. This can be a tough combination to pull off, especially if you're using point-based ability score generation.

Paladin/Sorcerer: Charisma does the heavy lifting for this gestalt combination. Why? Two words: divine grace. Like all sorcerers, you'll send your Charisma score into the stratosphere with the every-four-levels improvement and the best *cloak of Charisma* you can afford. Every time you get more spells, your saving throws improve as well. The downside? You can't wear armor like most paladins.

Sorcerer/Wizard: Unlike most gestalt characters, your hit points, Armor Class, base attack bonus, and saving throws aren't any better than a standard sorcerer or wizard. But oh, the spells you can cast! Unlike a standard arcane spellcaster,

you can afford to use your highest-level spells in most of your serious fights. It's a good idea to use your sorcerer slots on combat spells (such as the ubiquitous *fireball*) and the occasional defense or utility spell (perhaps *mage armor* or *haste*). Then you can use your wizard slots for spells that are great against specific foes (such as *dismissal*) or life-savers in specific situations (*gaseous form*). You can gamble a little more with your wizard spell selection because you know you have all those useful sorcerer spells backing you up.

BALANCING GESTALT CHARACTERS

Obviously, this variant results in characters who are significantly more powerful than the D&D standard. But how much more powerful? The simple answer—that gestalt characters are twice as powerful as standard characters—isn't accurate. Gestalt characters don't have an advantage in the most important currency in D&D: available actions. Even a character who can fight like a barbarian and cast spells like a sorcerer can't do both in the same round. A gestalt character can't be in two places at once as two separate characters can be. Gestalt characters who try to fulfill two party roles (melee fighter and spellcaster, for example) find they must split their feat choices, ability score improvements, and gear selection between their two functions.

While a gestalt character isn't as powerful as two characters of equal level, a gestalt character is more powerful than a standard character. Hit points will always be at least equal to those of a stadnard character, saving throws will almost certainly be better, and gestalt characters have versatility that standard characters can't achieve without multiclassing. Furthermore, a party of gestalt characters has greater durability and many more spells per day, so they can often take on six or more consecutive encounters without stopping to rest and prepare more spells.

Your players may be excited by the chance to play fighters with powerful sneak attacks or spellcasters who can cast any spell in the *Player's Handbook*. But as the DM, you know that the only measure of PC power that matters is the comparison with NPC power. By throwing monsters of higher Challenge Ratings at them, you'll still be giving them significant challenges. Gestalt characters look superior compared to standard D&D characters, but that's a false comparison. With this variant, such "standard" D&D characters don't exist.

Here's how to build a campaign that can handle gestalt characters.

Challenge Ratings: Gestalt characters can obviously handle more opposition than standard characters. The simplest way to compensate for this is to use adventures with tougher monsters. In general, a party of four gestalt characters can handle multiple encounters with a single monster of a Challenge Rating equal to their average level + 1. If the monster poses a challenge because it forces the characters to succeed on life-threatening saving throws (such as with a medusa or a wyvern), it's even weaker against gestalt characters, who have few or no weak saves. Characters can handle multiple encounters with such monsters at a Challenge Rating equal to their average level + 2. A shambling mound (CR 6) or a medusa (CR 7) would be appropriate average encounters for four 5th-level gestalt characters. If you take this approach, realize that characters gain levels faster than in a typical D&D campaign, because they're gaining experience points as if those encounters were harder than they actually are. You're obviously comfortable with a high-powered game, so faster advancement may be an additional benefit, not a problem. If you rely on published adventures, this is the easiest option.

If you want to keep level advancement at the standard D&D average of thirteen encounters per level, reduce the Challenge Ratings of all the monsters and NPCs in your campaign by 1 (or by 2 if they rely on failed PC saving throws to pose a challenge). The shambling mound and the medusa would both become CR 5 monsters, and the gestalt characters gain levels at the usual rate. Monsters with a Challenge Rating of 1 become CR 1/2, and other monsters with fractional Challenge Ratings have their CRs cut in half (kobolds become CR 1/6, in other words). Many staple low-CR monsters don't work well against a party of gestalt characters, even 1st-level gestalts.

Adventure Design: Once you adjust the Challenge Ratings, you have one more subtle factor to consider when you design adventures for gestalt characters. You must take into account the greater "adventure stamina" of gestalt characters both when you're preparing an adventure and when you're at the gaming table running the adventure. Because gestalt characters have more hit points, better saving throws, and deeper spellcasting lists than standard D&D characters, they can safely tackle more encounters in a row before they run low on hit points and spells.

Gestalt characters can, for example, delve deeply into a dungeon on their first foray, when the dungeon denizens may not be expecting them. The defenders of any site in a site-based adventure can't rely on wearing out a party of gestalt characters. They have to pose enough of a threat that the gestalt characters retreat because they're worried about their hides, not just because the wizard is almost out of spells.

In event-based adventures, gestalt characters can wreak havoc with timetables because they have more resources at their disposal. For example, a 10th-level gestalt wizard/sorcerer can easily teleport the entire party four times a day—without resorting to scrolls. That means two round trips to visit the wizened sage who's an expert in rune translation, each in the blink of an eye.

At the gaming table, you may want to plan longer gaming sessions because rest periods for the characters are natural stopping points for the players, and gestalt characters have fewer rest periods. If you do stop in the middle of the action, encourage your players to take careful notes of which class abilities they expend, which spells they have active, and other relevant information. Gestalt characters are complex enough that relying solely on memory is a recipe for trouble.

NPCs: An important aspect of most campaigns is verisimilitude—which is centered on the notion that everything in the campaign world is obeying the same set of rules. Accordingly, any important NPCs in your game should also be gestalt characters. It's probably not necessary to have low-level noncombatant NPCs pick two classes, but any NPCs above 1st level should be constructed as gestalt characters. (NPCs with levels only in NPC classes—adept, aristocrat, commoner, expert, and warrior—can remain standard characters.)

Prestige Classes: The high-powered nature of the gestalt character variant gives you more room to create unique prestige classes. First, you can create narrowly specialized prestige classes, and they'll still be compelling choices for PCs because the characters can simultaneously advance in a regular class while taking levels in the prestige class. Players won't feel shoehorned into a very specific prestige class if they have another class they're also advancing in. Second, you can create truly outrageous prestige classes—but add the additional cost that such classes take up

both class choices for gestalt characters. For example, a prestige class that offered a d12 Hit Die, +1/level base attack bonus, two good saves, full spellcasting, and a host of class features would be completely unbalanced in a standard D&D game. But if it takes up both "class slots" for a gestalt characters, it's no more powerful than taking a level in the barbarian/wizard gestalt.

Campaign Pacing: Once it is adjusted as outlined above, a campaign that employs gestalt characters isn't that different from a standard D&D campaign. Gestalt characters don't gain access to key campaign-changing abilities faster than their standard counterparts. No gestalt character can use *teleport* or raise the dead under her own power before 9th level, and no non-monk gestalt character gets a second melee attack in a round before 6th level. Gestalt characters get to tackle monsters a level or two ahead of time, but they're still fighting gnolls at low levels, beholders at middle levels, and balors at high levels. Perhaps the only noticeable difference in terms of campaign pacing is that gestalt PCs are "something special" from the beginning. They are far more powerful than typical 1st-level commoners even at the beginning of the campaign. Again, this difference only matters for a level or two, because standard 3rd-level characters are also far more powerful than 1st-level commoners.

GENERIC CLASSES

Between the *Player's Handbook*, various D&D and d20 System supplements, and this tome, the class options available to characters can seem overwhelming. Though that variety can lead to interesting and exciting combinations, a DM who desires to run a simpler campaign (while still allowing for character variety) can use these "generic" character classes in place of the character classes in the *Player's Handbook*.

The three generic classes here—warrior, expert, and spellcaster—cover the common roles of a group of adventurers. (Despite sharing names with NPC classes from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, the warrior and expert presented here are very different from those classes.) But despite these classes' basic approaches to character building, each one allows a wide variety of archetypes through the selection of skills and feats.

If you use these generic classes, you shouldn't also use the character classes in the *Player's Handbook* (or the variants of those classes presented in this book). You can still include prestige classes, if you wish to add that level of complexity to your game, but you may have to tweak some prestige class prerequisites that include class features not available to these classes.

SAVING THROWS

Each generic class has one or two good saves and one or two poor saves. At 1st level, the character designates which saves are good or poor. If the character later gains a level in a different class, he designates which saves are good or poor for that class.

For example, Kevin is creating a 1st-level warrior, a class with one good save and two poor saves. He wants to create a swashbuckling-type character, so he designates his good save as Reflex and his poor saves as Fortitude and Will.

Later, Kevin's warrior gains a level of expert, a class with two good saves and one poor save. He wants to keep his Reflex save high, so he designates that as a good save. He also decides that he wants his character to become better at resisting enchantments, so he designates Will as his other good save, and Fortitude is left as his poor save.

CLASS SKILLS

Each generic class has a specific number of class skills, as given in the class description. When a character takes his first level in a generic class, he chooses which skills to designate as class skills. Once these are selected, the character can't change his choice of class skills (though if he gains a level in another class, he can choose different skills as class skills for that class).

For example, a warrior has six class skills, plus Craft. Kevin wants to play an agile, crafty warrior who uses his high Dexterity and Charisma scores to good effect. At 1st level, the character designates his class skills as Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Hide (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Move Silently (Dex), Profession (Wis), and Tumble (Dex).

When Kevin's warrior gains a level of expert, a class with twelve class skills plus Craft and Profession, he must choose a new set of class skills. Kevin wants his character to be able to continue purchasing the same skills as class skills, so he starts by designating all the skills he chose for his warrior as class skills. Since his character has taken up life as a thief and second-story artist, he adds Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Disable Device (Int), Knowledge (local) (Int), Listen (Wis), and Open Lock (Dex) to his list of class skills.

BONUS FEATS

Each class gains a bonus feat at 1st level, and additional bonus feats at specific levels throughout the character's career. Each time the character gains a bonus feat, he may select any feat for which he meets the prerequisites. There is no list of bonus feats to select from.

For the purposes of these classes, the following class features can be selected in place of bonus feats (unless noted, each may only be selected once).

Evasion (Ex): As the monk ability. *Prerequisite:* Base Reflex save +3.

Familiar: As the sorcerer ability. Use spellcaster level to determine familiar's abilities. *Prerequisite:* ability to cast arcane spells.

Favored Enemy (Ex): As the ranger ability. May be selected more than once; each additional selection improves any one favored enemy bonus (including the one just selected) by 2.

Greater Sneak Attack (Ex): Add +4d6 to your sneak attack damage. *Prerequisites:* Hide 18 ranks, Move Silently 18 ranks, sneak attack, improved sneak attack.

Improved Evasion (Ex): As the monk ability. *Prerequisites:* Base Reflex save +7, evasion.

Improved Sneak Attack (Ex): Add +3d6 to your sneak attack damage. *Prerequisites:* Hide 11 ranks, Move Silently 11 ranks, sneak attack.

Smite Evil (Su): As the paladin ability, once per day, plus one additional daily use per five character levels. *Prerequisite:* good alignment.

Sneak Attack (Ex): As the rogue ability, but +2d6 on damage rolls. *Prerequisites:* Hide 4 ranks, Move Silently 4 ranks.

Turn Undead (Su): As the cleric ability. *Prerequisite:* ability to cast divine spells.

Trap Sense (Ex): Combines the rogue class features trap sense and trapfinding. *Prerequisite:* Search 4 ranks.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Combines the barbarian class features uncanny dodge and improved uncanny dodge. All class levels stack to determine the minimum character level required to sneak attack the character.

Wild Empathy (Ex): As the druid ability. *Prerequisite:* Handle Animal 4 ranks.

You can't recreate all the character classes of the *Player's Handbook* with these generic versions, particularly classes with complicated, unique, or specialized features such as bardic music, a wizard's familiar, or a druid's wild shape ability. If your DM allows it, you might be able to select other class features in place of one or more feats.

EXPERT

The expert can be a jack-of-all-trades or a master of a limited area of expertise. Based on his selection of skills and feats, he can focus on diplomatic matters, stealth, combat, wilderness survival, thievery, or any of a number of critical tasks.

Expert *Spellcaster* *Warrior*

At first glance, the expert appears similar to the rogue; it shares that class's combat ability, wide range of class skills, and tendency toward simple weapons and light armor. Unlike a rogue, however, the expert has no special class features, but instead defines his specialty by his selection of bonus feats.

Hit Die: d6.

Table 2–7: The Expert

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Good Saves	Poor Save	Special
1st	+0	+2	+0	Bonus feat
2nd	+1	+3	+0	Bonus feat
3rd	+2	+3	+1	—
4th	+3	+4	+1	Bonus feat
5th	+3	+4	+1	—
6th	+4	+5	+2	—
7th	+5	+5	+2	—
8th	+6/+1	+6	+2	Bonus feat
9th	+6/+1	+6	+3	—
10th	+7/+2	+7	+3	—
11th	+8/+3	+7	+3	—
12th	+9/+4	+8	+4	Bonus feat
13th	+9/+4	+8	+4	—
14th	+10/+5	+9	+4	—
15th	+11/+6/+1	+9	+5	—
16th	+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	Bonus feat
17th	+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	—
18th	+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	—
19th	+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	—
20th	+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	Bonus feat

Base Save Bonuses: Two good saves and one poor save.

Class Skills: Choose any twelve skills as class skills, plus Craft and Profession.

Skill Points: 6 + Int modifier (or four times this number at 1st level).

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: All simple weapons, one martial weapon; light armor.

Bonus Feats: The expert gets one bonus feat at 1st level, another at 2nd level, one at 4th level, and another one at every fourth class level thereafter (8th, 12th, and so on).

SPELLCASTER

Whether arcane or divine, the spellcaster has an array of magical effects at her beck and call. Depending on her choice of spells, she can be a healer or an enchanter, a necromancer or a trickster.

The spellcaster most closely resembles the sorcerer, though she has fewer spells per day than that class. In exchange, she gains a number of bonus feats that she can use to improve her magical aptitude, increase her survivability, heighten her combat skills, or achieve any of a wide variety of other goals.

Hit Die: d4.

Base Save Bonuses: One good save and two poor saves.

Class Skills: Choose any four skills as class skills, plus Craft, Knowledge (all), and Profession.

Skill Points: 2 + Int modifier (or four times this number at 1st level).

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: One simple weapon; no armor.

Bonus Feats: The spellcaster gets one bonus feat at 1st level, one at 5th level, and another one at every fifth class level thereafter (10th, 15th, and so on).

Spellcasting: A spellcaster learns and casts spells as a sorcerer. She may select her spells known from the cleric, druid, and sorcerer/wizard spell lists.

A spellcaster must choose at 1st level whether to be an arcane spellcaster or a divine spellcaster. This choice has no impact on the spells that she may learn, but affects what kinds of scrolls she can use and which ability score controls her spellcasting. An arcane spellcaster may designate either Intelligence or Charisma as the ability score that determines the highest-level spell she can learn or cast, and the Difficulty Class of her spell's saving throws. A divine spellcaster must use Wisdom to determine the highest-level spell she can learn or cast, and the DC of her spell's saving throws.

Multiclassing: A character can multiclass between arcane spellcaster and divine spellcaster.

Illus. by S. Belledin

TABLE 2–8: THE SPELLCASTER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Good Save	Poor Saves	Special	Spells per Day 0	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
1st	+0	+2	+0	Bonus feat	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	+1	+3	+0		5	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3rd	+1	+3	+1		5	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4th	+2	+4	+1		6	5	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5th	+2	+4	+1	Bonus feat	6	5	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6th	+3	+5	+2		6	6	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
7th	+3	+5	+2		6	6	5	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
8th	+4	+6	+2		6	6	5	4	2	—	—	—	—	—
9th	+4	+6	+3		6	6	6	5	3	—	—	—	—	—
10th	+5	+7	+3	Bonus feat	6	6	6	5	4	2	—	—	—	—
11th	+5	+7	+3		6	6	6	6	5	3	—	—	—	—
12th	+6/+1	+8	+4		6	6	6	6	5	4	2	—	—	—
13th	+6/+1	+8	+4		6	6	6	6	6	5	3	—	—	—
14th	+7/+2	+9	+4		6	6	6	6	6	5	4	2	—	—
15th	+7/+2	+9	+5	Bonus feat	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	3	—	—
16th	+8/+3	+10	+5		6	6	6	6	6	6	5	4	2	—
17th	+8/+3	+10	+5		6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	3	—
18th	+9/+4	+11	+6		6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	4	2
19th	+9/+4	+11	+6		6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5	3
20th	+10/+5	+12	+6	Bonus feat	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	5

TABLE 2–9: SPELLCASTER SPELLS KNOWN

Level	Spells Known 0	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
1st	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2nd	5	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
3rd	5	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
4th	6	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5th	6	4	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
6th	7	4	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
7th	7	5	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
8th	8	5	3	2	1	—	—	—	—	—
9th	8	5	4	3	2	—	—	—	—	—
10th	9	5	4	3	2	1	—	—	—	—
11th	9	5	5	4	3	2	—	—	—	—
12th	9	5	5	4	3	2	1	—	—	—
13th	9	5	5	4	4	3	2	—	—	—
14th	9	5	5	4	4	3	2	1	—	—
15th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	—	—
16th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	2	1	—
17th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	—
18th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	2	1
19th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	2
20th	9	5	5	4	4	4	3	3	3	3

WARRIOR

The warrior is the basic combatant of the trio of generic classes. He has the fighter's hit points, combat prowess, bonus feats, and weapon selection.

Unlike the fighter, the warrior can choose a different array of class skills, can designate any one of his saves as a good save, and can select his bonus feats from the entire list of feats available. Also, if he wants to be proficient in heavy armor, he must take the Armor Proficiency (heavy) feat.

Hit Die: d10.

Base Save Bonuses: One good save and two poor saves.

Class Skills: Choose any six skills as class skills, plus Craft.

Skill Points: 2 + Int modifier (or four times this number at 1st level).

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: All simple and martial weapons; light and medium armor; shields (but not tower shields).

Bonus Feats: A warrior gets one bonus feat at 1st level, on e at 2nd level, and another one at every second class level (4th, 6th, and so on).

TABLE 2–10: THE WARRIOR

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Good Save	Poor Saves	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	Bonus feat
2nd	+2	+3	+0	Bonus feat
3rd	+3	+3	+1	—
4th	+4	+4	+1	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+1	—
6th	+6/+1	+5	+2	Bonus feat
7th	+7/+2	+5	+2	—
8th	+8/+3	+6	+2	Bonus feat
9th	+9/+4	+6	+3	—
10th	+10/+5	+7	+3	Bonus feat
11th	+11/+6/+1	+7	+3	—
12th	+12/+7/+2	+8	+4	Bonus feat
13th	+13/+8/+3	+8	+4	—
14th	+14/+9/+4	+9	+4	Bonus feat
15th	+15/+10/+5	+9	+5	—
16th	+16/+11/+6/+1	+10	+5	Bonus feat
17th	+17/+12/+7/+2	+10	+5	—
18th	+18/+13/+8/+3	+11	+6	Bonus feat
19th	+19/+14/+9/+4	+11	+6	—
20th	+20/+15/+10/+5	+12	+6	Bonus feat

MULTICLASS GENERIC CHARACTERS

With only three classes to choose from (four if you count arcane spellcasters and divine spellcasters as separate classes), multiclassing in this variant system offers a much smaller variety of combinations than in the standard game. Thus, the DM probably shouldn't apply an XP penalty for characters who multiclass.

If you wish to retain the "favored class" element of the standard game, treat any race whose favored class is barbarian, fighter, monk, or paladin as having warrior as its favored class. A race whose favored class is bard, ranger, or rogue has expert as its favored class. A race that has cleric or druid as its favored class treats divine spellcaster as favored, while a race with a preferred class of sorcerer or wizard treats arcane spellcaster as its preferred class.

Illus. by D. Kovacs

After you choose your character's race and class, the next step is to add the various details that make him unique. A character's skills, feats, alignment, and other factors help differentiate him from others who share his race and/or class, while simultaneously defining his place in the world.

This chapter includes variant rules that can be added to your game's skill and feat systems. Some, such as the complex skill check variant, have relatively minor impacts on how the game works. Others, such as the alternative skill system, can dramatically change significant elements of the game. As with any variant, consider carefully before adding any of these to your game. Unlike variant races or classes—which generally only affect those who choose to play such characters—these changes affect every character in your game. For that reason, the DM should include his players in any decision-making process about these variants. Make sure that everyone is at least willing to try out the new rules before making a radical change to the way your game works. Doing so not only makes your players feel more involved in the campaign, but also helps prevent hurt feelings down the road.

ALTERNATIVE SKILL SYSTEMS

When compared to the combat maneuvers and magical talents of the characters in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game, the skill system often appears to run a distant third in importance. It is, however, a detailed part of the D&D game system and a place where you'll often spend a considerable amount of time if you create detailed PCs, NPCs, or monsters to use in your game. The variant skill systems discussed here eliminate some of the complexity of the standard skill system, but at the expense of fewer opportunities for customization.

MAXIMUM RANKS, LIMITED CHOICES

This variant skill system allows for some customization during character creation and during character advancement. It allows for more up-front choices and fewer down the road. In general, this system works for players and DMs who want the versatility of the skill system but don't want to worry about counting up every skill point and adjusting skills every level. It's particularly useful for DMs who are creating NPCs from scratch.

Essentially, this system treats each skill as either a known skill or an unknown skill. A character is considered to have the maximum number of ranks allowable in any skill known to that character, and no ranks in any skill unknown to that character.

Learning Skills

Each character begins play knowing a number of skills equal to the number of skill points his character would gain with each new class level. When creating a character, choose a number of skills known based on your first class level (see Table 3–1: Skills by Class). Human characters add one to their number of known skills.

Table 3–1: Skills by Class

Class	Number of Skills Known[1]
Barbarian	4 + Int modifier
Bard	6 + Int modifier
Cleric	2 + Int modifier
Druid	4 + Int modifier
Fighter	2 + Int modifier
Monk	4 + Int modifier
Paladin	2 + Int modifier
Ranger	6 + Int modifier
Rogue	8 + Int modifier
Sorcerer	2 + Int modifier
Wizard	2 + Int modifier

1 Minimum of one skill known, regardless of Intelligence penalty.

For classes or monster types not listed on the table, simply assign a number of skills known equal to the number of skill points gained at each new level or Hit Dice, plus the character's or monster's Intelligence modifier.

Note whether each skill known is a class skill or cross-class skill for your character, based on his starting class.

For example, Gimble the gnome bard has an Intelligence of 12 (+1 bonus), and thus may know seven skills at 1st level. He selects the following seven skills (and denotes Forgery as a cross-class skill):

Perform (string instruments)
Spellcraft
Use Magic Device
Gather Information
Listen
Decipher Script
Forgery (cc)

Skill Modifiers

For each of your known skills, your modifier is calculated as if you had the maximum number of ranks allowable in that skill. For a class skill, the skill modifier is equal to your character level +3; for a cross-class skill, the modifier is half that number, rounded down.

As with a normal skill check, you also add any other modifiers that apply (racial bonuses, ability modifiers, bonuses from synergy, and so forth).

For example, at 5th level, Gimble has a Charisma of 16 and a masterwork lute. When he makes a Perform (string instruments) check, he uses this formula:

1d20 + 8 (class skill) + 3 (Cha modifier) + 1 (masterwork lute)

When he makes a Forgery check, the formula changes to reflect the fact that Forgery is a cross-class skill:

1d20 + 4 (cross-class skill) + 1 (Int modifier)

Skills that don't have ranks, such as Speak Language, work differently. A character who chooses Speak Language as a known skill learns four new languages at 1st level and one new language at each level thereafter (if Speak Language is a class skill) or two new languages at 1st level and one new language at each odd-numbered level thereafter (if Speak Language is a cross-class skill).

Prerequisites and Minimum Skill Ranks

If you need to determine how many ranks your character has in a skill (for purposes of meeting prerequisites for prestige class or feat requirements, or for any other reason), simply assume you have the maximum number of ranks you could have in any of the skills you know. For class skills, that's always your character level +3, and for cross-class skills it's half that total (rounded down).

For example, to use the song of freedom bardic music ability, Gimble must be at least 12th level and have at least 15 ranks in a Perform skill. Since Perform is a class skill for bards, and Gimble has selected Perform (string instruments) as one of his skills, he is treated as having the maximum possible ranks in Perform (string instruments). Thus, by 12th level, he is considered to have 15 ranks in Perform (string instruments). At the same time, he is considered to have only 7 ranks in Forgery (a cross-class skill).

Multiclass Characters

Multiclassing under this variant system is a little more complex than in the normal rules and does not achieve the same results as single classing would.

First, compare your current list of known skills to your new class's list of class skills. If any of your new class's class skills are currently known by you as cross-class skills, you may choose one such skill and designate it as a class skill. This change immediately increases your modifier for the chosen skill (see Skill Modifiers, above). Every time you gain a level in this new class, you may choose another such skill, if applicable, and change it from a cross-class skill to a class skill.

Second, compare your new class's number of skills known at 1st level to the number of skills known at 1st level from the class you already have. If you already have more than one class, compare it to the class that would grant the highest number of skills, even if that wasn't your first class. For example, if you are playing a 2nd-level rogue/5th-level fighter and pick up a level of barbarian, use the rogue's number of skills (8), even though you have more fighter levels than rogue levels.

If your new class grants an equal or lower number of skills, you can choose one skill from your new class's list to add to the skills you know as a class skill. You immediately gain the new skill at the maximum possible rank.

If your new class grants you up to four more skills than your best previous class, you may choose two skills from your new class's list to add to the skills you know as class skills. You immediately gain the two new skills at the maximum possible rank.

If your new class grants you five or more skills over and above your best class, you may choose three skills from your new class's list to add to the skills you know as class skills. You immediate gain the three new skills at the maximum possible rank.

Perform this operation every time you gain 1st level in a new class.

This system reflects the idea that by multiclassing, you learn more abilities and, in particular, skills. Most characters do end up with higher numbers of skills and ranks if they multiclass under this variant system, but they still have fewer skill choices.

Learning New Skills

If you are not interested in multiclassing but wish to learn new skills anyway, you have two options.

If you increase your Intelligence modifier, you learn one additional skill. Make this skill choice using the class skill list of any of your existing classes. You can choose a class skill or a cross-class skill.

Alternatively, your DM can allow the Skill Knowledge feat, which increases your character's number of known skills (see the sidebar on the facing page).

LEVEL-BASED SKILLS

This even simpler variant system assumes that skills are much less important in your game and that you really don't want to be bothered with tracking or even looking for skill ranks over the course of a fast-paced game session.

Making Skill Checks

Under this system, characters do not normally acquire skill ranks or track skill points at all. Each character has a list of known skills that includes all his class skills (from all classes).

When a character makes a skill check under this variant skill system, use these formulas:

Class Skills: 1d20 + character level + modifiers
Cross-Class Skills: 1d20 + modifiers

Here, the trade-off for simplicity is ability. Characters with a large number of class skills are extremely versatile, but even their average skill check result is lower than that made by a character using the existing skill system. For skills outside their areas of expertise (cross-class skills), they have nothing beyond their own basic abilities and perhaps magic or other bonuses.

Under this system, all barbarians are good at climbing, jumping, listening, riding, and the like, but have virtually no ability to bluff, hide, search, or perform other cross-class tasks. Monks become superior acrobats (with talent in balancing, climbing, jumping, and tumbling) but no proficiency at anything outside the idiom of the typical monk (such as disguise or survival).

A character who wishes to specialize or branch out her skill knowledge can still select feats such as Skill Focus, Alertness, and the like, regardless of whether the skills affected by the feat are class skills or cross-class skills. This is the best avenue for a fighter who wishes to improve his awareness, a wizard who wants to become intimidating, and so on.

Skills that don't have ranks, such as Speak Language, work differently. A character who has Speak Language as a class skill learns four new languages at 1st level and one new language at each level thereafter. Characters without Speak Language as a class skill can't learn new languages without selecting the Skill Knowledge feat and designating Speak Language as a class skill.

Multiclassing

Since skills are not as important in a game that uses this system (at least, that's the intention), when a character multiclasses, combine the skill lists. Consider all skills on both lists as class skills.

Learning New Skills

As with the maximum ranks variant described earlier, the Skill Knowledge feat (see the sidebar on this page) can be selected by a character to add to his number of skills known. In this case, the feat only allows you to designate a cross-class skill as a class skill (since you already know all your class skills).

SKILL KNOWLEDGE [General]

You gain access to new knowledge and abilities.

Benefit: Choose any two skills from one of your current classes' skill lists. You now know these skills as class skills.

Special: Instead of choosing two class skills, you may choose one cross-class skill (whether you already know it or not) and learn it, treating it as a class skill from that point forward.

COMPLEX SKILL CHECKS

With most skill checks, a single die roll immediately determines whether or not a character succeeds. If a character wants to jump across a chasm or recall a specific piece of information, his success or failure is apparent after a single check.

For complicated and time-consuming tasks (such as disabling a very complex trap or researching an obscure bit of knowledge), or at times when the DM wants to build tension and suspense, the complex skill check variant described here might be called for. In such a case, a specific number of successful skill checks must be achieved to complete the task. The complexity of the task is reflected in the DC of the required check, the number of successful rolls required to complete the task, and the maximum number of failed rolls that can occur before the attempt fails. In most cases, one or two failed rolls does not mean that a complex skill check has failed, but if three failed rolls occur before the character makes the required number of successful rolls, the attempt fails. Although three failures is a common baseline, DMs are encouraged to change the number if the situation warrants it.

The DM can also apply a penalty to future rolls in the complex check if the character rolls one or more failures. For instance, an intricate trade negotiation requiring a complex Diplomacy check might assess the character a –2 penalty on her checks for each failed check made as part of the complex check (representing the tide of the negotiation turning against her).

Each die roll is one portion of a complex skill check, and each die roll in the attempt represents at least 1 round of effort (it might represent more time, depending on the skill or task in question).

Like skill checks, ability checks can also be complex.

Complex skill checks are rarely used in situations that call for opposed checks.

TABLE 3–2: EXAMPLE COMPLEX SKILL CHECKS

Successes Required	Complexity	Example (Skill)
2 or 3	Slight	Training a riding horse (Handle Animal)
4 to 6	Ordinary	Making a crossbow (Craft [weaponsmithing])
7 to 9	Good	Bypassing a fiendish trap (Disable Device)
10 or more	Amazing	Pick an amazing lock (Open Lock)

TRYING AGAIN

Complex skill checks can usually be retried. However, like normal skill checks, some complex skill checks have consequences, and those consequences must be taken into account. (For example, a trap that requires a complex Disable Device check to disarm is triggered if the attempt fails, just as with a normal trap and a normal Disable Device check.)

Some skills are virtually useless for a particular task once an attempt to accomplish that task has failed, and this includes complex checks as well as regular skill checks. The Complex Skill Use section, below, describes which skills can be used in complex skill checks and which allow retries after failed attempts.

INTERRUPTING A COMPLEX SKILL CHECK

Most complex skill checks can be interrupted without adversely affecting the result of the check. However, the DM is free to rule that interrupting a specific check affects the result. At the DM's discretion, an interruption can count as one failed roll in the check's progression or can mean that the complex check fails.

AID ANOTHER

You can use the aid another action normally with complex skill checks. Characters aiding the character making the attempt must roll their aid another attempts each time the character makes a new die roll that is part of the complex skill check.

TAKING 10 AND TAKING 20

You can take 10 on a die roll during a complex skill check in any situation when you could take 10 on a normal check using that skill.

You can't take 20 when making a complex skill check. Taking 20 represents making the same skill check repeatedly until you succeed, but each successful die roll in a complex skill check represents only a portion of the success you must achieve to complete the skill check.

COMPLEX SKILL USE

The following section provides general guidelines for using the complex skill check variant with each skill in the D&D game.

Appraise

The Appraise skill seldom lends itself to complex skill checks. In rare cases, the DM might rule that a relic from a lost civilization or an extremely powerful magic item might require a complex skill check to appraise properly. In these cases, the DC and number of successes required should be determined by the DM specifically for the item in question.

Alternatively, if an item has a common value that is accepted in most of the campaign world but a drastically different value in one small portion of the setting, it might require one simple check to appraise the item's common value and a second, complex check (usually at a higher DC) to assess the item's worth in the specific area.

Balance

Since one Balance check covers movement over a short distance, using the skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. Situations that call for multiple Balance checks always require multiple simple checks, not one complex check.

Bluff

Almost all uses of the Bluff skill require only a single roll to indicate whether or not you successfully fool an individual or a small group. However, in certain complicated social situations, a DM might want to speed the game along by requiring one complex Bluff check rather than many simple checks.

For example, one of the characters wants to spend several days in a noble's court trying to convince the people there that he and his adventuring companions are more capable than they really are. Rather than roleplay the many individual interactions, the DM decides to simulate this activity with a complex Bluff check. Because the nobles have heard little of the group's exploits, the DM sets the DC at 25 and requires that the player achieve five successful rolls before rolling three failures. Although this is a good simulation of the character interacting with a series of minor NPCs over several days, the DM still decides that interactions with a few individuals (the duke, his chancellor, and one renowned knight in the duke's service) are too important to incorporate into the complex check, and decides that the player should roleplay short encounters with each of the three and make separate, simple Bluff checks for each of them.

Climb

Because one Climb check covers movement over a short distance, using the skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. Situations that call for multiple Climb checks always require multiple simple checks, not one complex check.

Concentration

Typical use of the Concentration skill never requires a complex skill check, but special circumstances might require complex checks as determined by the DM.

For example, the entrance to an enchanter's laboratory might be magically enhanced with mental barriers to entry and require a complex Concentration check to pass through.

Craft

Normal use of the Craft skill in many ways resembles a complex skill check, though it penalizes the character on each failure (rather than only after three failures).

You can replace the standard Craft check rules with a complex Craft check. In that case, a single failed check doesn't ruin one-third of the raw materials; instead, rolling three failures before achieving the requisite number of successes ruins one-third of the raw materials, requiring the character to start over. Each check represents a single day (if the item's value is no more than 1 gp) or a full week (if the item's value is higher than 1 gp) of work.

Craft DC	Successes Required
9 or lower	1
10–14	3
15–19	5
20–24	7
25 or higher	10

Decipher Script

Complicated books, convoluted essays, or coded documents might require a complex Decipher Script check. When a character attempts to decipher an extremely long document, the DM can require one complex skill check rather than a simple skill check for each page. The DCs for complex checks follow the same guidelines that normal Decipher Script checks follow (DC 20 for simple messages, DC 25 for standard texts, and DC 30 or higher for intricate, exotic, or very old writing). Succeeding on the complex check requires that the character achieve one successful attempt for every ten pages of the manuscript before failing the check three times.

Diplomacy

Although typical use of the Diplomacy skill does not allow retries or lend itself to complex skill checks, a DM might choose to simulate an unusually long diplomatic session or interactions with multiple small groups for an extended period of time with one complex Diplomacy check.

For example, a character wants to convince a large and fractious group of merchants to suspend travel through a dangerous area for a short amount of time so that he and his companions can adventure in the area and confront the monsters there without exposing innocent travelers to danger. Instead of rolling thirty or more Diplomacy checks and roleplaying the reaction of each merchant in the group, the DM uses one complex skill check with a DC of 30 (representing the extreme difficulty of getting all the quarrelsome merchants to agree) that requires five successes before rolling three failures. The DM also might rule that because the tide of opinion can turn against the character very quickly in this case, each failed roll applies a cumulative –2 penalty to further rolls in the complex skill check.

Disable Device

Nearly any trap can be made to require a complex Disable Device check rather than a simple one. If the trap requires a large number of successes (six or more) or if the attempt is ruined by less than three failures, adjust the Challenge Rating of the trap up by 1 or 2 to reflect the greater difficulty of disarming the trap.

A trap that requires a complex skill check may have a higher cost and Challenge Rating than a trap of the same sort that only requires a simple check; see the following table. Page 75 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* has information on the cost of various kinds of traps.

Feature	Cost Modifier	CR Modifier
3 or more successes	+250 gp per additional success	— (up to 6) or +1 (7 or more)
3 failures	+0 gp	—
2 failures	+500 gp	+1
1 failure	+1,500 gp	+1

Disguise

Although typical use of the Disguise skill does not allow retries or lend itself to complex skill checks, DMs might require that the disguised character make a complex Disguise check in the same complicated social situations that require a complex Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate check.

Escape Artist

Although normal use of the Escape Artist skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks, a few specific environmental situations might call for a complex Escape Artist check. The most obvious of these and by far the most common is a long, extremely narrow passage that is only wide enough to let a character wiggle through. In this case, each successful roll made in the complex check represents navigating a portion of the passage, and a failed complex check means the character is stuck somewhere within the passage.

Forgery

As with Disguise, this skill rarely lends itself to complex checks, but in unusual situations where a forged document must go through the hands of several individuals, the DM might substitute a complex check for a simple Forgery check.

Gather Information

Typically, the Gather Information skill allows characters to get a general impression of major news items in a city or to find the answer to a specific question or information about a specific rumor. As long as the character has only a few questions or rumors to follow up on, a simple skill check should be used. In situations where the characters have half a dozen or more leads and questions to follow, the DM might want to use one complex skill check to resolve the information-gathering attempts. In this case, the number of successes required equals the number of questions or leads pursued, and the DM determines the number of failures that ruin the complex check.

In a complex Gather Information check, each die roll represents 2 hours spent pursuing each individual question or lead.

Handle Animal

Complex skill checks work well with the extended training times that some uses of the Handle Animal skill require. When an animal is trained for a general purpose such as combat riding or hunting, it requires several weeks of work and one simple Handle Animal check under the normal rules. With the complex skill checks variant, this use of the skill always involves a complex skill check, with each die roll representing one week of training time. Rolling three failed results during the complex check means that the entire attempt fails and that training must begin again.

General Purpose	Time	DC	Successes
Combat riding	6 weeks	20	6
Fighting	3 weeks	20	3
Guarding	4 weeks	20	4
Heavy labor	2 weeks	15	2
Hunting	6 weeks	20	6
Performance	4 weeks	15	4
Riding	3 weeks	15	3

WHY COMPLEX CHECKS?

Complex skill checks allow the DM to build suspense in critical situations, add tension to multiple-round tasks during combat, enhance special adventure-specific tasks, and resolve complex activities more quickly.

To build suspense with complex skill checks, the DM can simply substitute a complex skill check for a normal skill check during a critical task. In most such situations, using a complex check lessens the likelihood that one failed roll will cause the party a significant setback.

Complex skill checks provide a more balanced way of creating combat-affecting situations that depend on skill checks. For example, a complex Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check made to find the weak spot in a narrow stone bridge might allow the characters to collapse the bridge more easily and elude a group of powerful pursuers.

Complex skill checks can also enhance adventure-specific or location-specific tasks such as disabling a particularly complex trap, appraising an extremely rare work of art, and so on. .

Complex skill checks let players resolve complicated situations with fewer die rolls. This is especially true of complex social interactions requiring multiple Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate checks.

Heal

Although normal use of the Heal skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks, DMs are free to require complex skill checks to treat particularly virulent strains of a disease or especially effective mixes of certain poisons.

Hide

Normal use of the Hide skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. In certain unusual situations, a DM might use a complex skill check to simulate navigating an intricate environment such as an urban area while remaining unnoticed (this might mean blending in rather than remaining entirely out of sight in particularly crowded areas). For example, if a character wants to move from one place to another within a large city without being seen by members of the city watch, the DM might use a complex skill check to simulate the character's progress without having to determine the location of every guard or roleplaying each encounter.

Intimidate

Although typical use of the Intimidate skill does not allow retries or lend itself to complex skill checks, a DM might choose to simulate an unusually complicated series of social encounters with one complex skill check in the same way that Bluff and Diplomacy can be used in such situations.

Jump

Since one Jump check represents one jump attempt, using the skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. Situations that call for multiple Jump checks always require multiple simple checks, not one complex check.

Knowledge

Researching rare or lost knowledge is an excellent use of the complex skill check variant.

To attempt a complex Knowledge check, a character must have access to a library that the DM decides is sufficient for the task. The DM is also free to rule that several successful rolls in a complex Knowledge check exhaust a particular library or tome's resources and lead the character to another work or library. In this way, a complex Knowledge check can become an adventure in itself as the character searches out rare or lost volumes of information.

Listen

Since one Listen check represents one attempt to hear something, using the skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. Situations that call for multiple Listen checks always require multiple simple checks, not one complex check.

Move Silently

Using the Move Silently skill does not normally lend itself to complex skill checks, but a complex check can be used to simulate an unusually long period of moving silently in the same way that a complex Hide check might be used.

Open Lock

Although normal locks require only one Open Lock check, the DM is free to include locks or a series of locks that requires a complex check to open. (He can also rule that each casting of a *knock* spell counts as six successes toward opening a complex lock.) Particulars for complex locks are given in the table below.

Lock Quality	DC	Successes	Price
Very simple	20	2	25 gp
Very simple	20	3	30 gp
Average	25	4	50 gp
Average	25	5	60 gp
Average	25	6	70 gp
Good	30	7	100 gp
Good	30	8	120 gp
Good	30	9	140 gp
Amazing	40	10	200 gp

Illus. by B. Thompson

Perform

Normal use of the Perform skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. At the DM's discretion, a few rare and powerful magic instruments might require a complex Perform check to activate.

Profession

Because each Profession check already represents a week of work, the use of the Profession skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks.

Ride

Normal use of the Ride skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. A character performing a lengthy demonstration of difficult or trick riding, or competing in a race, might have to make a complex Ride check to pull off the entire show or finish the race; one roll per round is probably appropriate.

Search

At the DM's discretion, certain very well-hidden items might require a complex Search check to find. Usually this activity represents several individual Search attempts made in sequence and is

typically better handled by treating each separate attempt as a normal Search check.

Sense Motive

Although typical use of the Sense Motive skill does not allow retries or lend itself to complex skill checks, a DM might choose to simulate an unusually complicated series of social encounters in a deceit-filled environment with a complex skill check like those described under the Bluff and Diplomacy descriptions.

Sleight of Hand

Normal use of the Sleight of Hand skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. A character performing a lengthy demonstration of legerdemain (such as a magic show relying on sleight of hand) might have to make a complex Sleight of Hand check to pull off the entire show; one roll per 15 minutes is probably appropriate.

Spellcraft

Although use of the Spellcraft skill does not normally lend itself to complex skill checks, the DM is free to rule that examining a complicated magical effect might require a complex Spellcraft check.

Spot

Since one Spot check represents one attempt to notice something, using the skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. Situations that call for multiple Spot checks always require multiple simple checks, not one complex check.

Survival

The DM might rule that a complex Survival check allows long-term survival in one type of climate or terrain, raising the required number of successes for extreme environments such as arctic regions or deserts.

Swim

The DM might rule that a complex Swim check allows a character to successfully swim for a longer period of time than 1 round. The amount of time each successful complex skill check allows the character to swim, along with the required number of successes and the DC, is given in the table below. (The DC is slightly higher than for simple round-by-round checks to reflect the fact that the character is making many fewer checks.)

Water Condition	Successes	Time	DC
Calm water	2	1 hour	12
Rough water	4	30 minutes	18
Stormy water	8	10 minutes	25

Tumble

Normal use of the Tumble skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. A character performing a lengthy routine of acrobatics might have to make a complex Tumble check to pull off

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: HOW MANY SUCCESSES?

During play, the DM will encounter additional situations in which complex skill checks may be appropriate. Two questions then arise: How high should the DC be, and how many successes should the task require? The answers to both of those questions depend on how great a chance of success the DM wants the players to have.

Although making these determinations might seem daunting, the system for complex skill checks actually provides the DM a great deal of flexibility. Under the standard rules, DMs have only one tool to represent increasingly difficult tasks: increasing the DC. With complex checks, the DM can also use the number of successful attempts required to achieve overall success to control a skill check's difficulty.

In most situations when the DM feels a complex skill check is warranted, it's appropriate for the DC of a complex skill check to match the DC of a simple check involving the same activity. This decreases the character's chance of achieving overall success, but because complex skill checks are used to best effect in tense situations and climactic encounters, increasing the difficulty adds spice to the scenario.

Increasing the number of successes required always increases the difficulty of the task, but the degree of increase depends greatly on how likely the character attempting the check is to get a success each time he rolls the die.

For example, Lidda has a Disable Device modifier of +14 and she encounters a trap with a DC of 25. Under the normal rules, Lidda has a 50-50 chance of successfully disarming the trap (because half of the possible results on a d20 are 11 or higher, granting her a success). If the trap requires a complex check to disarm, however, these odds can change. If succeeding on the complex check requires a certain number of successful die rolls before the same number of failures are recorded, Lidda's chance of overall success is essentially unchanged, but if the trap requires more successes to disarm than the number of failures required to fail the complex check, the chance of overall success drops. The more difficult it is for the character to meet or exceed the DC, the more pronounced the difference. If in the above example Lidda had a Disable Device modifier of +9 (meaning that she has to roll a 16 or higher to get a success), increasing the number of required successes reduces the chance of overall success much more rapidly.

To determine the likelihood of overall success on a given complex skill check, compare the number that the character must roll on a d20 (obtained by subtracting the character's skill modifier from the check's DC) to the number of successes on the table below. By using this table to guide the choice of DC and number of successes, the DM can give two checks with an equal likelihood of success vastly different flavors.

Required Roll	Simple Check	Complex Check (3[1])	Complex Check (5[1])	Complex Check (10[1])
2[2]	95%	99.88%	99.62%	98.04%
6[2]	75%	89.65%	75.64%	39.07%
11	50%	50%	22.66%	1.93%
16	25%	10.35%	1.29%	0.004%
20	5%	0.12%	0%	0%

1 Number of successes required. (In each case, three failures ends the attempt.)
2 If character can take 10, success is guaranteed.

the entire show. The frequency of the checks depends on the complexity of the routine.

Use Magic Device

Normal use of the Use Magic Device skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. However, when a character makes a check to activate a magic item (especially a complicated one, or one with several different functions) for the first time, the DM might find a complex skill check appropriate. In very special cases, this check might require a full round of concentration per roll, but it should usually be part of the action required to activate the item.

Use Rope

Since one Use Rope check represents one attempt to manipulate a rope, using the skill does not lend itself to complex skill checks. Situations that call for multiple Use Rope checks always require multiple simple checks, not one complex check.

CHARACTER TRAITS

Traits are aspects of a character's personality, background, or physique that make him better at some activities and worse at others. In many ways, traits resemble feats: A character can have only a limited number of traits, and each trait provides some benefit. Unlike feats, however, traits always carry a corresponding drawback. In addition to their game effects, traits suggest characteristics about the character's personality that might lead to interesting roleplaying opportunities. Together with a character's class and feat selection, traits offer a way for game mechanics to encourage deeper character backgrounds and consistent roleplaying.

Traits serve as an interesting starting point for roleplaying, reminding players of their characters' most prominent strengths and weaknesses. However, roleplaying a certain aspect of a character's personality does not require possessing the trait. For example, a paladin can be honest and forthright without the Honest trait. The player should roleplay the character consistently even though the character's honesty has no effect on his skill checks.

A character can begin play with up to two traits, chosen by the player at the time of character creation. Alternatively, the DM can require players to roll on Table 3–3: Character Traits to determine the traits possessed by their characters.

As characters advance in level and ability, they might want to get rid of the traits that they chose at the beginning of play. Although characters cannot rid themselves of a trait directly, specific feats, skill ranks, or magic items can compensate for the penalties imposed by a trait. For example, an abrasive character can work on becoming more personable by spending skill points to gain a rank in Bluff and a rank in Diplomacy, thereby offsetting the drawback from the Abrasive trait.

If the DM allows it, players may add traits to their characters after 1st level. The DM might allow a player to assign a trait to her character after she has roleplayed the character in a manner consistent with the trait in question, or after a traumatic or life-changing experience (after dying, a character might develop the Cautious trait or the Aggressive trait). If the DM includes this option, a character should gain a new trait no more frequently than once every five levels.

TABLE 3–3: CHARACTER TRAITS

d%	Trait	d%	Trait
01–03	Abrasive	61–62	Quick[1]
04–06	Absent-minded	63–65	Reckless
07–09	Aggressive	66–68	Relentless
10–11	Brawler[1]	69–70	Saddleborn
12–13	Cautious[1]	71–73	Skinny
14–16	Detached	74–76	Slippery
17–19	Dishonest	77–78	Slow[1]
20–21	Distinctive[1]	79–81	Specialized
22–24	Easygoing	82–84	Spellgifted
25–27	Farsighted	85–87	Stout
28–30	Focused	88–90	Suspicious
31–33	Hard of Hearing	91–93	Torpid
34–36	Hardy	94–96	Uncivilized
37–39	Honest	97–100	Roll again twice[2]
40–41	Illiterate[1]		
42–43	Inattentive[1]		
44–46	Musclebound		
47–49	Nearsighted		
50–51	Nightsighted[1]		
52–54	Passionate		
55–57	Plucky		
58–60	Polite		

1 Trait has special restrictions (see the text). If you don't qualify, roll again.

2 No starting character may have more than two traits. If a player rolls this result two or more times, the player may choose which two traits to keep.

ROLEPLAYING OF TRAITS

If a player creates a character with one or more of the traits described here, she has three basic choices for how that trait affects the character's personality.

First, the character might view the trait as a weakness. A character with this view might try to hide the trait or make excuses for his behavior. On the other hand, he might seek out others with the trait to feel better about his own idiosyncrasy.

Second, the character might view the trait as a strength. A character might call attention to the trait, encourage others to act in ways that mimic the trait, or simply assume that those without the trait are less worthy than those who possess it.

Finally, the character might not acknowledge the trait at all. A character might adopt this attitude toward a trait for several reasons, each suggesting something different about the character's background and personality.

—The character might not be aware of the trait; for example, a nearsighted character might not realize that others see better at a distance because his impairment is mild and the onset was so gradual that he never noticed the change.

—The character might be aware of the trait but not want to admit that he possesses it. For example, an abrasive character might realize that his mannerisms affect others, yet find more solace in putting the blame on those whom he offends rather than on himself.

—The character might know but simply not care.

TRAIT DESCRIPTIONS

Each trait in this section includes a benefit, a drawback, any special limitations regarding its selection by a character, and roleplaying ideas for how to incorporate it into your character's personality.

Abrasive

You are difficult and demanding in conversation, which tends to oppress those around you.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Intimidate checks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Diplomacy checks and Bluff checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be loud and abrupt or quiet and sinister, but either way, most find them disconcerting or irritating.

Absent-Minded

You are fascinated by knowledge and learning and are capable of pursuing complex trains of thought quite quickly. However, your preoccupation with such thoughts makes you a little less aware of your surroundings.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Knowledge checks (although this does not let you use a Knowledge skill untrained).

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Spot checks and Listen checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might flit from idea to idea, trailing off in mid-sentence or mumbling their way through complex ideas. Conversely, characters with this trait might be extremely articulate but still allow their thoughts to move faster than the pace of a conversation.

Aggressive

You are quick to initiate combat, and you tend to press the attack once battle is joined. Your enthusiasm makes you a dangerous foe, but you sometimes leave yourself open to blows that a more cautious warrior would avoid.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on initiative checks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty to Armor Class.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait are often hotheaded and quick to anger, or simply think that the best defense is a quick offense.

Brawler

You naturally move close to your opponents when fighting, instinctively grabbing and punching rather than striking with weapons.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on unarmed attack rolls and grapple checks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on all other attack rolls.

Special: The bonus from this trait doesn't apply to natural weapons. A character with the Improved Unarmed Strike feat can't select this trait (if a character with this trait later gains that feat, he loses the trait).

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait often disdain the use of weapons entirely, and some eventually learn more refined martial arts based on their instinctive fighting techniques. Many brawlers might not even be consciously aware that they fight differently from other characters; they simply know that the best way to take someone out of a fight is to grab him or punch him in the face.

Cautious

You are cautious in combat, even a bit cowardly, and you take more care to defend yourself than others. However, this caution renders you susceptible to fear effects.

Benefit: You gain an additional +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class whenever you fight defensively or take the total defense action.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on saving throws made to resist fear effects.

Special: You cannot select this trait if you have immunity to fear or fear effects. If you later gain immunity to fear, you lose the benefit of this trait.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might consistently urge talking rather than fighting, or they might do little to encourage that their companions avoid combat and simply remain as far away from foes as possible, using ranged weapons or spells.

Detached

You maintain a distance from events that keeps you grounded but limits your reaction speed.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Will saves

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Reflex saves.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait are likely to be quiet and restrained, but they might be vocal when others falter in their beliefs.

Dishonest

You are naturally deceitful and insincere with others. You have a talent for lying, but have difficulty convincing others when you do speak truthfully.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Bluff checks.

Drawback: You take a –2 penalty on Diplomacy checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be portrayed as crafty liars, or lying might simply be second nature to them, making actually telling the truth a difficult chore.

Distinctive

You have some distinctive physical feature such as a scar, a prominent nose, a limp, or some similar characteristic that is hard to disguise or conceal.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Reputation checks (see Reputation in Chapter 6).

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Disguise checks.

Special: This trait is available only if your campaign includes the Reputation variant described in Chapter 6.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be sensitive about it, or they might play up its presence to gather attention, sympathy, or notoriety.

Easygoing

You are naturally friendly. Others feel comfortable around you, but this trait also makes it more difficult for you to be pushy or suspicious.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Gather Information checks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Intimidate checks and Sense Motive checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be more easily manipulated in interactions with NPCs, or they might simply prefer not to argue and instead use their natural talent to learn more about the world around them.

Farsighted

You have difficulty focusing on nearby objects, but your distance vision is more keen than normal.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Spot checks.

Drawback: You have a –2 penalty on Search checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be sensitive about it, or they might simply be oblivious to its presence, having never known any different way of experiencing the world.

Focused

You can keep your attention on a task despite many distractions; however, events in the background pass you by.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Concentration checks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Spot checks and Listen checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait often seem single-minded or even obsessive in their focus on a specific task.

Hard of Hearing

You have a slight hearing impairment, and to compensate, you have become more in tune with your other senses.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Spot checks.

Drawback: You take a –2 penalty on Listen checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be sensitive about it, or they might simply be oblivious to its presence, having never known any different way of experiencing the world.

Hardy

You are made of tougher stuff than the average person, but you're not quite as quick to react to dangerous effects.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Fortitude saves.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Reflex saves.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might see their physical prowess as normal and look down on less hardy individuals, or they might see it as their duty to play the role of protector and help those less able to endure physical hardship.

Honest

You are naturally straightforward and sincere. This quality helps you persuade people to your viewpoint, but you have difficulty telling lies and seeing deception in others.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Diplomacy checks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Bluff checks and Sense Motive checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be naïve and too unsophisticated to lie, or they might be aware of worldly matters and simply choose to take a higher ground.

Illiterate

You cannot read, but you have devoted yourself to learning other skills.

Benefit: Choose any one skill except Decipher Script or Forgery. You gain a +1 bonus on checks using that skill.

Drawback: You are illiterate.

Special: You can eliminate the negative effect of this trait by spending 2 skill points to become literate. Unlike with the barbarian, you cannot become literate by taking a level in any class other than barbarian.

You can't select this trait if your character is already illiterate because of race, class, or any other reason.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be sensitive about not being able to read, or they might not value "book learnin'."

Inattentive

You are skilled at finishing simple tasks quickly, but you have a difficult time dealing with longer, more complex tasks.

Illus. by E. Cox

Benefit: Choose a skill that allows complex skill checks. You gain a +1 bonus on simple skill checks made using the chosen skill.

Drawback: You take a –4 penalty on any complex skill checks made with the chosen skill.

Special: You can take this trait more than once. Its effects do not stack. Instead, choose a new eligible skill each time you select this trait.

This trait is available only if your campaign includes the complex skill checks variant described earlier in this chapter.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might flit from subject to subject in conversation, or they might seem typical in most situations but leave most of their long-term projects perpetually unfinished.

Musclebound

You are good at almost everything that requires strength, but less adept than most at tasks that require coordination.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Strength-based skill checks and ability checks.

Drawback: You take a –2 penalty on Dexterity-based skill checks and ability checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait are likely to solve problems with physical strength rather than through trickery or finesse.

Nearsighted

You have difficulty focusing on distant objects, but your eye for detail is more keen than normal.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Search checks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Spot checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be sensitive about it, or they might simply be oblivious to its presence, having never known any different way of experiencing the world.

Nightsighted

Your eyes are particularly well suited to using darkvision, but they are less well adapted to what others consider normal light.

Benefit: Add 10 feet to the range of your darkvision.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Spot checks when in areas of bright light.

Special: You must have darkvision as a racial ability to have this trait.

Roleplaying Ideas: This trait might not affect a character's personality at all, but it might make the character prefer going on underground or nighttime adventures.

Passionate

You are made of tougher stuff than the average person, but you are highly suggestible.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Fortitude saves.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Will saves.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be gruff and place extreme value on overcoming physical obstacles, or conversely, their weakness against magical enchantments might leave them fascinated and fearful of such things.

Plucky

You have a strength of will not reflected in your limited physical gifts.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Will saves.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Fortitude saves.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be annoyingly positive-minded, or they might only show their mental resilience in times of dire need.

Polite

You are courteous and well spoken.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Diplomacy checks.

Drawback: You take a –2 penalty on Intimidate checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be honestly polite and kind, or they might simply be adept at mimicking social conventions to get what they want.

Quick

You are fast, but less sturdy than average members of your race.

Benefit: Your base land speed increases by 10 feet (if you don't have a land speed, apply the benefit to whichever of your speeds is highest).

Drawback: Subtract 1 from your hit points gained at each level, including 1st (a result of 0 is possible).

Special: You must have a Constitution of 4 or higher to select this trait.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait typically try to stay away from physical combat, but a rare few might relish it, striving to see if their superior speed is enough to best hardier warriors.

Reckless

You naturally sacrifice accuracy to put more power behind your blows.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on damage rolls after successful melee attacks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on melee attack rolls.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: DESIGNING TRAITS

Although this section provides a large number of character traits, a player who wants to create a character with a distinctive personality may ask the DM to design a new trait. If that happens, the DM should keep in mind that the traits variant is only effective if the benefits and the drawbacks of the traits are related. If the drawback and benefit of a trait apply to disparate or unrelated aspects of the game, it becomes too easy for a player to choose a trait for her character that provides a bonus on a commonly attempted ability check or skill check while the corresponding penalty applies to a rarely used or never-used aspect of play. For example, a trait that gave a bonus to Armor Class and a penalty on attack rolls would be poor design because spellcasters make very few attack rolls (making the penalty far less severe) yet continuously gain the benefit.of the increased Armor Class.

As long as the DM and player talk about a new trait ahead of time and view it in light of what skills and abilities the character uses most often, this potential pitfall is easy to avoid.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be loudly passionate about entering combat and overcoming foes through strength of arms, or they might be quiet and so desperate to avoid confrontation that they put extra effort into every blow in an attempt to end the encounter more quickly.

Relentless

You don't know the meaning of the word "tired." You go all out until you simply can't continue.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Constitution checks and similar checks made to continue tiring activities (see the Endurance feat, page 93 of the *Player's Handbook*, for a mention of all the checks and saves to which this benefit applies).

Drawback: Any effect or condition that would normally cause you to become fatigued instead causes you to become exhausted.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait may see others as soft or weak, especially anyone who complains about being tired or fatigued. They might openly scoff at others' weaknesses or might quietly encourage them to "tough it out."

Saddleborn

You are a natural in the saddle, but you have little patience for handling animals when not riding them.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Ride checks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Handle Animal checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait rarely bother to consider animals as good for anything other than mounts, but they are extremely confident about their riding abilities.

Skinny

You are very slender for your race.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Escape Artist checks.

Drawback: You take a –2 penalty on Strength checks to avoid being bull rushed or overrun.

Roleplaying Ideas: Skinny characters tend to be pushed around by tougher types, so those with this trait might be shy, or they might be very defensive when faced with such situations.

Slippery

You are less adept at grappling and wrestling than others of your size and strength, but you are adept at slipping out of another's hold.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Escape Artist checks to escape a grapple and on grapple checks to escape a grapple or avoid being grappled.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on all other grapple checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might fear close combat, knowing they are less adept grapplers than most opponents. On the other hand, good escape artists with this trait might enjoy baiting larger foes into grappling them, knowing they can easily slip out of the grasp of most foes.

Slow

You are slow, but sturdier than average members of your race.

Benefit: Add +1 to your hit points gained at each level.

Drawback: Your base land speed is halved (round down to the nearest 5-foot interval).

Special: You must have a base land speed of at least 20 feet to select this trait.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait tend to be relatively immobile in combat. They typically prefer to wear strong armor (or other protective devices), since it's hard for them to flee a fight.

Specialized

You have a knack for one kind of work or study, but other tasks are harder for you to accomplish.

Benefit: Choose one specific Craft, Knowledge, or Profession skill. You gain a +1 bonus on checks using the specified skill.

Drawback: You take a –2 penalty on all other checks using the same skill (Craft, Knowledge, or Profession, based on the skill chosen).

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait often see themselves as elite artists or experts rather than mere professionals, and they might regard their chosen vocation or study as more useful or interesting than other tasks.

Spellgifted

You have a gift for casting spells from a certain school. Although your spells from this school are more potent than those of other casters, you are not as effective at casting spells from other schools.

Benefit: Choose a school of magic. Add 1 to your caster level when casting spells from that school.

Drawback: Reduce your caster level by 1 whenever you cast a spell that is not from your chosen school.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait might be loudly vocal about the merits of the school of magic that they understand most readily, or they might feel awkward and out of place around "normal" spellcasters as a result of their unusual aptitude.

Stout

You are heavy for your race.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Strength checks to avoid being bull rushed or overrun.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Escape Artist checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Overweight characters are often bullied, so those with this trait might be shy, or they might be very defensive when faced with such situations. Some turn to humor to defuse such situations, while others become bitter.

Suspicious

You are naturally suspicious of everyone and everything. While this trait makes you hard to fool, it makes others slightly less likely to agree with you or find you threatening.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Sense Motive checks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Diplomacy checks and Intimidate checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: This trait might express itself as comic levels of paranoia, or it might make the character quietly cautious about others.

Torpid

You are sluggish and slow to react to danger, but also resistant to others' commands.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on saves against enchantment (compulsion) effects.

Drawback: You take a –2 penalty on initiative checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Torpid characters may be seen as lazy, or as methodical and measured in their actions.

Uncivilized

You relate better to animals than you do to people.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Handle Animal checks and wild empathy checks.

Drawback: You take a –1 penalty on Bluff checks, Diplomacy checks, and Gather Information checks.

Roleplaying Ideas: Characters with this trait are likely to feel awkward in many social situations; that might be expressed as shyness and quiet behavior, or it might be expressed through an overly exuberant need to participate in conversations.

CHARACTER FLAWS

Flaws are like the flip side of feats. Whereas a feat enables a character to be better than normal at performing a task (or even to do something that normal characters can't), a flaw restricts a character's capabilities or imposes a penalty of some sort.

A player may select up to two flaws when creating a character. After 1st level, a character cannot take on additional flaws unless the DM specifically allows it (for examples of times when doing this might be appropriate, see Character Traits, above). Each flaw a player selects entitles his character to a bonus feat. In other words, when you create a character, if you select two flaws, you can also take two bonus feats beyond those your character would be normally entitled to.

Unlike traits (see above), flaws are entirely negative in their impact on a character's capabilities.

FLAW DESCRIPTIONS

Each of the flaws described here has a specific game effect. Some flaws can only be taken by a character who meets a special requirement.

Feeble

You are unathletic and uncoordinated.

Effect: You take a –2 penalty on Strength-, Dexterity-, and Constitution-based ability checks and skill checks.

Frail

You are thin and weak of frame.

Effect: Subtract 1 from the number of hit points you gain at each level. This flaw can reduce the number of hit points you gain to 0 (but not below).

Special: You must have a Constitution of 4 or higher to take this flaw.

Inattentive

You are particularly unaware of your surroundings.

Effect: You take a –4 penalty on Listen checks and Spot checks.

Meager Fortitude

You are sickly and weak of stomach.

Effect: You take a –3 penalty on Fortitude saves.

Murky-Eyed

Your vision is obscured.

Effect: In combat, every time you attack an opponent that has concealment, roll your miss chance twice. If either or both results indicate that you miss, your attack fails.

Noncombatant

You are relatively inept at melee combat.

Effect: You take a –2 penalty on all melee attack rolls.

Pathetic

You are weaker in an attribute than you should be.

Effect: Reduce one of your ability scores by 2.

Special: You cannot take this flaw if the total of your ability modifiers is 8 or higher.

Poor Reflexes

You often zig when you should have zagged.

Effect: You take a –3 penalty on Reflex saves.

Shaky

You are relatively poor at ranged combat.

Effect: You take a –2 penalty on all ranged attack rolls.

Slow

You move exceptionally slowly.

Effect: Your base land speed is halved (round down to the nearest 5-foot interval).

Special: You must have a base land speed of at least 20 feet to take this flaw.

Unreactive

You are slow to react to danger.

Effect: You take a –6 penalty on initiative checks.

Vulnerable

You are not good at defending yourself.

Effect: You take a –1 penalty to Armor Class.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: CREATING FLAWS

You can create new flaws, but be careful: Flaws can unbalance your game. When creating flaws, keep a few issues in mind:

—A flaw must have a numeric effect on a character's specific capabilities. Flaws with primarily roleplaying or story effects have unpredictable effects on game balance.

—Flaws are generally bigger in magnitude than feats. That's because players always choose flaws that have the least impact on their characters, while taking feats that have the most. For example, while a feat affecting skills grants a +2 bonus on two skills, its counterpart flaw might impose a –4 penalty on two skills.

—A flaw must have a meaningful effect regardless of character class or role. That way, a player can't reduce the flaw's importance through multiclassing. For instance, a flaw that only affects spellcasters might seem reasonable—but for nonspellcaster characters, the flaw likely proves meaningless. Even if you restrict the selection of such feats to characters of specific classes, a player can easily select a spellcasting class at 1st level, choose two flaws that apply to spellcasters, gain the bonus feats, multiclass into a nonspellcasting class at 2nd level and thereafter proceed as a primarily nonspellcasting character. The player has sacrificed a level to gain two bonus feats, a tradeoff that appeals to some players.

—Similarly, a flaw that penalizes a character's Charisma-based skill checks only has a significant impact on the party spokesperson—the quiet fighter or barbarian likely won't feel any impact from the penalties.

Weak Will

You are highly suggestible and easily duped.

Effect: You take a –3 penalty on Will saves.

SPELLTOUCHED FEATS

In this variant, a character who has been the target of a spell sometimes finds that some of its magic rubs off on him or her permanently, leaving an echo of the original spell. A character who has *alter self* cast on her many times, for example, may develop the spell-like ability to alter her features into the specific form she's most familiar with. Beneficial spells can linger on a character like magic radiation, bestowing an advantage somehow related to the original spell. In contrast, some PCs have a homeopathic reaction to hostile spells; by suffering the effects of a spell, they develop a countermeasure to it.

Such spelltouched characters are a mystery to academic-minded spellcasters, who can't reliably duplicate the process by repeatedly casting the same spell on a subject. Magic interacts with each individual in a subtly different way.

Accordingly, the only way to become eligible to select a spelltouched feat is to have been exposed to (that is, targeted by or otherwise affected by) one of the spells associated with the feat. If the spell allows a save, you must have failed a saving throw against it at least once, whether intentionally or not. After meeting the prerequisite, you may select a spelltouched feat when your character would otherwise qualify for a feat. The exposure is the game-world explanation for your new power, and the feat choice is the trade-off that keeps the game balanced.

SPELLTOUCHED FEAT DESCRIPTIONS

The spelltouched feats described below follow the normal format for feats.

Accurate Jaunt [Spelltouched]

You have an instinctive sense of interplanar travel.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *greater teleport*, *plane shift*, *teleport*, or *shadow walk* spell.

Benefit: When you use *teleport*, you can roll the targeting roll twice, taking whichever result you prefer. When you use *plane shift* or *shadow walk*, you likewise make the roll to determine your destination twice, choosing the better (usually lower) result.

Bladeproof Skin [Spelltouched]

Your skin has a degree of protection from even the sharpest edge.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *stoneskin* or *iron body* spell.

Benefit: You gain damage reduction 3/bludgeoning. Your skin imposes an armor check penalty of –2 (which stacks with the armor check penalty from armor and shield).

Breadth of Knowledge [Spelltouched]

Your time spent plumbing the depths of magic knowledge has resulted in a treasure trove of obscure facts.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *legend lore* or *vision* spell.

Benefit: All Knowledge checks you make are treated as trained checks, even if you don't have any ranks in the specific skill. If you have at least one rank in the specific Knowledge skill in question, you gain a +1 bonus on the check.

Conductivity [Spelltouched]

You have crude control over electricity effects near you.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *call lightning*, *lightning bolt*, or *chain lightning* spell.

Benefit: Whenever you take damage from an electricity effect, you may send a line of electricity arcing from your body at any single target within 30 feet. This bolt deals half the damage you just took; a Reflex save (DC 16 + your Cha modifier) halves this damage.

Controlled Immolation [Spelltouched]

If you catch on fire, the flames don't hurt you.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *fireball* or *delayed blast fireball* spell.

Benefit: If you catch on fire (as described on page 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), you take no damage from the flames. A creature striking you with its body or a handheld weapon takes 1d6 points of fire damage. The fire persists on your body for 1d4 rounds.

This feat doesn't protect you from other sources of fire damage, whether magical or not, only from the effects of catching on fire. It also doesn't protect your equipment from the effects of fire.

Illus. by B. Thompson

Conductivity

TABLE 3–4: SPELLTOUCHED FEATS

Feat	Prerequisites	Benefit
Accurate Jaunt	Exposure to *greater teleport*, *plane shift*, *teleport*, or *shadow walk*	Better chance of successfully traveling between planes
Bladeproof Skin	Exposure to stoneskin or iron body	Gain damage reduction 3/bludgeoning
Breadth of Knowledge	Exposure to *legend lore* or *vision*	All your Knowledge checks treated as trained
Conductivity	Exposure to *call lightning*, *lightning bolt*, or *chain lightning*	After taking electricity damage, send out a line of electricity that affects one target within 30 feet
Controlled Immolation	Exposure to *fireball* or *delayed blast fireball*	Take no damage from catching on fire; opponents that strike you in melee take 1d6 points of fire damage
Eyes to the Sky	Exposure to *scrying* or *greater scrying*	Automatically spot magical scrying sensor within 40 feet
False Pretenses	Exposure to *charm* or *dominate* spell	Mislead opponent into thinking you are charmed or dominated
Ineluctable Echo	Exposure to *wail of the banshee* or any *power word* spell	Caster who targets you with *power word* spell or *wail of the banshee* is also affected by spell
Life Leech	Exposure to death touch granted power or *death knell* spell	Each creature within 30 feet that has –1 to –9 hp loses 1 hp, which you gain as temporary hit points
Live My Nightmare	Exposure to *phantasmal killer*	Send nightmarish vision against creature that targets you with divination effect
Momentary Alteration	Exposure to *alter self*	Use *alter self* as spell-like ability for 1 minute once per day
Naturalized Denizen	Exposure to *dimensional anchor*	You are never treated as extraplanar creature
Omniscient Whispers	Exposure to *commune* or *contact other plane*	Receive answer to one question per week as if you had cast a *commune* spell
Photosynthetic Skin	Exposure to *barkskin*	Gain +2 to natural armor when outside during the day
Polar Chill	Exposure to *cone of cold* or *ice storm*	Create patch of icy ground that hampers movement
Residual Rebound	Exposure to *spell resistance* or *spell turning*	If you roll natural 20 on save against targeted spell, effect of spell turns back on caster
Stench of the Dead	Exposure to *ghoul touch* or *vampiric touch*	Carrion stench causes those adjacent to you to become sickened

Eyes to the Sky [Spelltouched]

You have an instinctive sense of when someone is magically watching you.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *scrying* or *greater scrying* spell.

Benefit: You automatically spot the magical sensor created by a spell of the scrying subtype (*arcane eye*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *greater scrying*, or *scrying*) if it's within 40 feet of you.

False Pretenses [Spelltouched]

Those who try to charm you get an unpleasant surprise.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *charm* or *dominate* spell.

Benefit: When you succeed on a save against a charm or compulsion effect, the character trying to charm or compel you believes that you failed your save. You can play along voluntarily if you wish to. If the charm or compulsion involves telepathic commands, you continue to receive them, although you aren't obligated to follow them.

Ineluctable Echo [Spelltouched]

Those who use words of power around you hear the sound of their own voices.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *wail of the banshee* or any *power word* spell.

Benefit: When you are targeted by a *power word* spell, whoever speaks the *power word* is also affected by it (as if he had cast it on himself). Likewise, when you're within the area of a *wail of the banshee* spell, the caster of the spell also hears the wail and must succeed on a Fortitude save (using his own save DC) or die.

Possessing the Ineluctable Echo feat doesn't protect you against *power word* or *wail of the banshee* spells. You experience their effects normally.

Life Leech [Spelltouched]

You automatically try to steal the last bit of life energy from anyone nearby.

Prerequisite: Exposure to death touch domain granted power or *death knell* spell.

Benefit: Each dying or stable creature within 30 feet of you (that is, any creature with –1 to –9 hit points) loses an additional 1 hit point at the beginning of your turn. You gain the same amount as temporary hit points that last for 10 minutes. You can't suppress this effect, which functions on both friend and foe.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: SPELLTOUCHED FEATS

Standard D&D feats rarely give your character overtly magical powers. Instead, they represent outstanding natural ability or rigorous training. Some feats such as Spell Focus, Spell Penetration, and metamagic feats make your existing magic better in some respect, but they don't give you magical power you didn't already have.

Spelltouched feats break that rule wide open, giving characters abilities previously impossible without the aid of magic. But they're balanced against the feats that appear in the *Player's Handbook*, so characters who choose them aren't necessarily more powerful than their nonspelltouched counterparts.

If you use this variant, you'll find that magic becomes incrementally more important in your game, and even characters who rely on their martial prowess, such as fighters, sometimes manifest a magical effect.

Because these feats are variants, they employ other game mechanics rarely seen in feats, such as a drawback that accompanies the feat or a limited number of uses per day or week.

Live My Nightmare [Spelltouched]

Those who magically pry into your mind become privy to your most frightening dreams.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *phantasmal killer* spell.

Benefit: Whenever someone successfully targets you with a divination spell or effect, you can send that caster a nightmarish vision. This vision functions as a *phantasmal killer* spell, except that the form comes from your dreams, not the other creature's dreams. The other creature must succeed on a Will save (DC 14 + your Cha modifier) to disbelieve the nightmare and a Fortitude save (DC 14 + your Cha modifier) to avoid dying from fear.

Momentary Alteration [Spelltouched]

You can briefly transform yourself into a second form, acquiring its physical qualities.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *alter self* spell.

Benefit: Choose one specific form that you've turned yourself into with the *alter self* spell. Once per day, you can use *alter self* as a spell-like ability to turn yourself into this form for 1 minute.

Special: You can gain Momentary Alteration multiple times. Each time you take the feat, you can either extend the duration of an already chosen alternate form by 1 minute or choose another specific form from among those you've experienced after casting *alter self* on yourself.

Naturalized Denizen [Spelltouched]

You are unusually anchored to your location.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *dimensional anchor* spell.

Benefit: You are never treated as an extraplanar creature (and you lose the extraplanar subtype). Thus, you can't be affected by a *banishment* or *dismissal* spell or similar effects that send extraplanar creatures back to their home planes.

Omniscient Whispers [Spelltouched]

A constant, barely audible muttering echoes in your ears, usually beyond your comprehension. But if you focus all your energy on listening, you sometimes catch a sentence or two that bears directly on your current situation.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *commune* or *contact other plane* spell.

Benefit: Once per week, you can tune into the voices you hear, getting the answer to a question much as if you had asked it with a *commune* spell.

Using this feat renders you exhausted.

Photosynthetic Skin [Spelltouched]

Your skin toughens when it draws energy from the sun.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *barkskin* spell.

Benefit: Whenever you're outside during the day, you gain a +2 enhancement bonus to your natural armor (characters who don't have natural armor ordinarily have a natural armor bonus of +0).

Polar Chill [Spelltouched]

You can call forth the cold of the arctic regions, making movement and fighting difficult for the unprepared.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *cone of cold* or *ice storm* spell.

Benefit: Once per day, you can make the ground icy in a 20-foot-radius spread around you. Each square in that area becomes covered with ice, so it takes two squares of movement to enter each square, and the DC of Balance and Tumble checks there increases by 5. A DC 10 Balance check is required to run or charge across the ice.

The ice remains for 1 minute or until exposed to fire.

You can't use this feat if you aren't touching the ground, and it doesn't work if the air temperature is above 100 degrees.

Residual Rebound [Spelltouched]

Sometimes spells cast at you rebound on the caster instead.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *spell resistance* or *spell turning* spell.

Benefit: If you roll a natural 20 on a save against a targeted spell, it turns back on the caster as if affected by a *spell turning* spell. Unlike *spell turning*, however, the Residual Rebound feat potentially functions against touch range spells as well. Residual Rebound only works on targeted spells that allow a saving throw, so a *fireball* won't rebound, nor will a *power word stun*.

Stench of the Dead [Spelltouched]

The odor of decay hangs heavy on you, causing others to gasp and retch.

Prerequisite: Exposure to *ghoul touch* or *vampiric touch* spell.

Benefit: You exude a carrion stench that causes any creature adjacent to you to make a Fortitude save (DC 12 + your Cha modifier) or become sickened as long as it remains adjacent to you and for 1d4 rounds thereafter. You can't suppress the stench voluntarily.

WEAPON GROUP FEATS

In the *Player's Handbook*, weapons are divided into three categories: simple, martial, and exotic. While this system works very well for establishing the complexity of each weapon and balancing the classes' abilities against one another, grouping weapons by similar type offers an exciting variant to determine what weapons a character knows how to use.

At its simplest, the weapon group feat variant establishes a small list of feats called Weapon Group proficiency feats. Each feat allows a character to use a small number of similar weapons without penalty. Although most characters using this system are proficient with fewer weapons than the character classes from the *Player's Handbook*, the weapons they know how to use will be grouped along a similar theme, providing a little more flavor to each character's weapon choice at the expense of a small amount of versatility.

This variant includes references to some weapons featured in the *Arms and Equipment Guide* (marked [A]) and *Complete Warrior* (marked [W]). See those books for full information on weapons so marked.

USING WEAPON GROUPS IN PLACE OF CLASS WEAPON PROFICIENCIES

While the Weapon Group proficiency feats work well in conjunction with the classes' starting armor and weapon proficiencies in the *Player's Handbook*, you might want to substitute a number of these feats for each class's starting weapon proficiencies. Doing this can lend more flavor to specific characters or organizations. It allows you (either as player or as DM) to design a sect of clerics whose members always choose the same weapon group proficiencies, or even establish racial preferences. All dwarf fighters, rangers, and paladins might be required, for example, to choose Weapon Group (picks and hammers) as one of their starting weapon group proficiencies.

For classes not listed here, assign starting weapon group proficiencies using the class's granted weapon proficiencies and these classes as a guide.

Class	Weapon Group Proficiencies at 1st Level
Barbarian	Basic weapons, plus any other three
Bard	Basic weapons, plus any other two
Cleric	Basic weapons, plus any other two
Druid	Basic weapons, plus either druid weapons or spears
Fighter[1]	Basic weapons, plus any other four
Monk	Basic weapons, plus any other one
Paladin	Basic weapons, plus any other three
Ranger	Basic weapons, plus any other three
Rogue	Basic weapons, plus any other two
Sorcerer	Basic weapons, plus either spears or crossbows
Wizard	Basic weapons or crossbows

1 Add Weapon Group (any) to the fighter's list of bonus feats.

USING WEAPON GROUPS WITH RACIAL FAVORED WEAPONS

Some races gain free weapon proficiencies or are innately familiar with specific exotic weapons. Use the following rules to incorporate this concept with the Weapon Group proficiency variant.

Dwarf: Any dwarf who has Weapon Group (axes) is also proficient with the dwarven waraxe and the dwarven urgrosh.

Elf: All elves automatically have Weapon Group (bows) and either Weapon Group (heavy blades) or Weapon Group (light blades).

Gnome: Any gnome who has Weapon Group Proficiency (picks and hammers) is also proficient with the gnome hooked hammer.

WEAPON-SPECIFIC FEATS

A DM who uses this variant can rule that any feat that requires a character to choose a specific weapon to apply the feat's benefit to (such as Improved Critical, Weapon Focus, or Weapon Specialization) can instead be applied to a weapon group. The character must still meet the prerequisites for the feat.

Though this variant seems to grant a large benefit to the character, it really doesn't significantly improve the character's power level. Since a typical character only wields one weapon at a time (or two, with a different weapon in each hand), the character doesn't really become any more powerful in a typical fight.

It does mean that a character is more likely to benefit when new magic weapons are found, since he's more likely to be skilled in their use. That can actually be beneficial to a campaign, in that it allows the DM to include a wider range of interesting treasures that the characters actually use (rather than simply sell or trade).

CREATING NEW WEAPON GROUPS

As you design a campaign or character, you might want to create new weapon groups based on different themes. Possible themes include cultural, racial, or other campaign-world specific ideas. For example, you might create a new weapon group proficiency feat called Weapon Group (hill dwarves) that is available only to dwarves from a specific geographical area of the campaign. Because these dwarves are known for their use of two light weapons at once, this feat grants proficiency in the handaxe, short sword, light hammer, and club, making it easier for these dwarves to learn their race's preferred fighting techniques.

When creating a new weapon group, you should limit each group to three or fewer simple weapons and one to three martial weapons. The Weapon Group proficiency feats described below provide examples of how much versatility each weapon group should provide a character.

WEAPON GROUP FEATS

Following are the Weapon Group proficiency feats available to characters. They are presented in the normal format for feats.

Weapon Group (Axes)

You understand how to use axes and axelike weapons.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: handaxe, battleaxe, greataxe, and dwarven waraxe (two-handed use).

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Basic Weapons)

You understand how to use a few basic weapons.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: club, dagger, and quarterstaff.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Bows)

You understand how to use bows.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: shortbow, longbow, composite shortbow, and composite longbow.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Claw Weapons)

You understand how to use weapons strapped to the hands.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: punching dagger, spiked gauntlet.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Crossbows)

You understand how to use crossbows.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: heavy crossbow, light crossbow, repeating heavy crossbow, and repeating light crossbow.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Druid Weapons)

You understand how to use weapons favored by druids.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: club, dagger, dart, quarterstaff, scimitar, sickle, shortspear, sling, and spear.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Exotic Double Weapons)

You understand how to use the exotic double weapons associated with the weapon groups that you have mastered.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: Whenever you take a Weapon Group proficiency feat, you also gain proficiency in the exotic double weapons associated with that group. When you take this feat, you gain proficiency in the exotic double weapons associated with the weapon groups that you already know how to use.

Some exotic double weapons require you to be proficient with two weapon groups to gain proficiency in their use from this feat.

Illus. by J. Pavelec

Axes: orc double axe, dwarven urgrosh (must also have Weapon Group [spears and lances]).

Flails and Chains: dire flail, gyrspike[A] (must also have Weapon Group [heavy blades]).

Heavy Blades: double scimitar[A], gyrspike[A] (must also have Weapon Group [flails and chains]), two-bladed sword.

Maces and Clubs: double mace[A].

Picks and Hammers: double hammer[W], gnome hooked hammer.

Spears and Lances: dwarven urgrosh (must also have Weapon Group [axes]).

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: If you include exotic double weapons from sources other than the *Player's Handbook*, the DM should assign those weapons to a weapon group as appropriate for the campaign. The lists above includes weapons featured in the *Arms and Equipment Guide* (marked [A]) and *Complete Warrior* (marked [W]).

Weapon Group (Exotic Weapons)

You understand how to use the exotic weapons associated with the weapon groups that you have mastered.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: When you take this feat, you gain proficiency in the exotic weapons associated with the weapon groups that you already know how to use. Whenever you take a Weapon Group proficiency feat, you also gain proficiency in the exotic weapons (but not the exotic double weapons) associated with that group.

Axes: dwarven waraxe (one-handed use).

Bows: elven double bow[A], greatbow[W], composite greatbow[W].

Claw Weapons: bladed gauntlet[A], claw bracer[A], panther claw[A], stump knife[A], tiger claws[A], ward cestus[A].

Clubs and Maces: warmace[W] (one-handed use), tonfa[A].

Crossbows: great crossbow[A], hand crossbow.

Druid Weapons: greatspear[W].

Flails and Chains: chain-and-dagger[A], scourge, spiked chain, three-section staff[A], whip, whip-dagger[A].

Heavy Blades: bastard sword (one-handed use), khopesh[A], mercurial longsword[A], mercurial greatsword[A].

Light Blades: kukri, sapara[A], triple dagger[A], war fan[A].

Monk Weapons: butterfly sword[A], tonfa[A].

Picks and Hammers: dire pick[W], gnome battlepick[A], maul[A] (one-handed use).

Polearms: heavy poleaxe[W].

Slings and Thrown Weapons: bolas, chakram[A], gnome calculus[A], halfling skiprock[A], orc shotput[A], shuriken, throwing iron[A].

Spears and Lances: duom[A], greatspear[W], harpoon[A], manti[A], spinning javelin[A].

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: If you include exotic weapons from sources other than the *Player's Handbook*, the DM should feel free to assign those weapons to a weapon group as appropriate for the campaign. The list above includes weapons featured in the *Arms and Equipment Guide* (marked [A]) and *Complete Warrior* (marked [W]).

Weapon Group (Flails and Chains)

You understand how to use flails and chain weapons.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: light flail and heavy flail.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Heavy Blades)

You understand how to use large bladed weapons.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: longsword, greatsword, falchion, scimitar, and bastard sword (two-handed use).

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Light Blades)

You understand how to use light bladed weapons.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: dagger, punching dagger, rapier, and short sword.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Maces and Clubs)

You understand how to use maces and clubs.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: club, light mace, heavy mace, greatclub, quarterstaff, sap, and warmace[W] (two-handed use).

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: If you use the *Arms and Equipment Guide*, this weapon group also includes the maul.

Weapon Group (Monk Weapons)

You understand how to use weapons normally favored by monks.

Prerequisite: Improved Unarmed Strike.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: kama, nunchaku, quarterstaff, sai, shuriken, and siangham.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Picks and Hammers)

You understand how to use picks and hammers.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: light pick, heavy pick, light hammer, warhammer, scythe, and maul (two handed use).

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Special: If you use the *Arms and Equipment Guide*, this weapon group also includes the lucerne hammer.

Weapon Group (Polearms)

You understand how to use polearms.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: glaive, guisarme, halberd, and ranseur.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Slings and Thrown Weapons)

You understand how to use slings and handheld thrown weapons.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: dart and sling.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

Weapon Group (Spears and Lances)

You understand how to use spears and javelins.

Benefit: You make attack rolls with the following weapons normally: javelin, lance, longspear, shortspear, and trident.

Normal: When using a weapon with which you are not proficient, you take a –4 penalty on attack rolls.

CRAFT POINTS

This variant is designed specifically for campaigns that don't offer a lot of "downtime" to the PCs. It unifies the rules for crafting items and creating magic items, while also replicating a character's ability to come up with just the thing he needs for a specific task in the nick of time. It glosses over the realities of such work—tool kits, alchemical reagents, laboratories, long hours of toil, and the like—to keep the game moving along at an exciting pace. After all, fighting giants, demons, and dragons is generally a lot more fun than waiting for Mialee to finish crafting a new *ring of protection*.

To craft an item without spending the normal labor time, a character with the appropriate item creation feat (such as Craft Masterwork Armor, Brew Potion, or Craft Staff; see below) can pay one-tenth the item's market price in craft points (minimum 1 point). He must also pay material costs equal to one-half the item's market price (this replaces the normal material cost for crafting an item). For a magic item, the character must also pay the normal experience point cost for crafting the item. Once the character declares that he is spending these craft points and gold pieces (and experience points, for a magic item), the item is automatically completed one day later (typically the next morning).

Though this makes it appear as if the item was created "instantly," the assumption is that the character has actually been working on it for a while, but only now got around to finishing it. For instance, Mialee might have been tinkering with Regdar's sword for some time, but only now has finished improving its enhancement bonus. The system simply assumes that characters are always working on various projects in their spare time, whether between forays into the dungeon, while on the road, or even while gathered around the campfire after battling goblins in the Sunless Citadel. Thus, when the time comes, they simply spend the requisite gold and craft points, and the item is "finished" one day later.

To spend craft points toward the creation of an alchemical, masterwork, or magic item, you must have the requisite Craft feat (such as Craft Masterwork Armor for creating a masterwork chain shirt) or assist someone who does (see Assisting, below). Crafting nonmasterwork armor and weapons or simple items—tools, chests, saddles, and the like—doesn't require a Craft feat. Anyone who helps with the creation of such an item can contribute craft points at the normal rate.

For nonmagical items, you must make a successful Craft check (using the DCs given on page 71 of the *Player's Handbook*) to complete the item. For a masterwork item, use the DC of the item or of the masterwork component, whichever is higher. A failed check means you waste one-half of the gold pieces and craft points required for the item, but you may try again as soon as the next day if you still have enough gold pieces and craft points to complete the item. Magic items require no skill check to complete.

You can reduce the amount of craft points required by increasing the amount of time you spend working on the item. For nonmagical items, reduce the craft point cost by 1 point for every 100 sp of work you contribute to the item's creation (see the Craft skill, page 70 of the *Player's Handbook*). For magic items, each 8-hour day spent working on the item reduces the craft point cost by 100.

Example One: A masterwork suit of full plate armor has a market price of 1,650 gp. A character with the Craft Armor feat could pay one-third of this price and make daily or weekly Craft (armorsmith) checks to slowly complete the suit of armor, or he could pay one-half of this price and spend 165 craft points to complete it one day later with a successful DC 20 Craft check. (A failed check at this point would cost him 412 gp and 82 craft points.) Alternatively, he could spend some days or weeks working on the item (making regular Craft checks), then finish it quickly by spending craft points equal to 165 minus 1 per 100 sp of work he has already completed.

Example Two: A *+2 longsword* has a market price of 8,000 gp (not including the material cost of the masterwork longsword itself). Assuming you had the Craft Magic Arms and Armor feat (and didn't have to make the masterwork longsword from scratch), you could either spend 8 days of time to craft the item, or you could spend 800 craft points to finish it "instantly." (In either case, you have to spend 4,000 gp in addition to the time or craft points.) If you wanted, you could save 200 craft points by spending two 8-hour days working on the item.

Table 3–5: Sample Crafted Items

Item	Market Price	Craft Cost
Arrows, 100[1]	10 gp	5 gp, 1 craft
Acid	10 gp	5 gp, 1 craft
Chainmail[1]	20 gp	10 gp, 2 craft
Lock, simple[1]	20 gp	10 gp, 2 craft
Scroll of *cure light wounds*	25 gp	12.5 gp, 1 XP, 2 craft
Greatsword[1]	50 gp	25 gp, 5 craft
Masterwork chainmail	170 gp	85 gp, 17 craft
Potion of *cure moderate wounds*	300 gp	150 gp, 6 XP, 30 craft
Masterwork greatsword	350 gp	175 gp, 35 craft
+1 chainmail[2]	1,000 gp	500 gp, 40 XP, 100 craft
Ring of protection +1	2,000 gp	1,000 gp, 80 XP, 200 craft
+1 greatsword[2]	2,000 gp	1,000 gp, 80 XP, 200 craft
Wand of fireball	11,250 gp	5,625 gp, 450 XP, 1,125 craft
Gloves of Dexterity +4	16,000 gp	8,000 gp, 640 XP, 1,600 craft
+5 chainmail[2]	25,000 gp	12,500 gp, 1,000 XP, 2,500 craft
+5 greatsword[2]	50,000 gp	25,000 gp, 2,000 XP, 5,000 craft
Robe of the archmagi	75,000 gp	37,500 gp, 3,000 XP, 7,500 craft
Tome of understanding +5	137,500 gp	68,750 gp, 5,500 XP, 13,750 craft
Staff of power	200,000 gp	100,000 gp, 8,000 XP, 20,000 craft

1 Does not require a Craft feat.
2 The market prices and craft costs for these items assume that you already have the masterwork item to be enhanced.

ASSISTING

In addition to the primary crafter—who must have the appropriate Craft feat—up to three assistants can contribute craft points to the creation of the item.

Assistants who have the appropriate Craft feat contribute craft points at full normal value. For untrained assistants (those who don't have the appropriate Craft feat), each craft point contributed counts as 1/2 point of assistance.

The primary creator must contribute at least half of the craft points required to create an item.

It doesn't matter who contributes the gold piece cost that goes toward creating the item. Only the primary creator can contribute experience points toward the creation of a magic item.

For example, Regdar has 1,000 gp and a masterwork sword, and wants to help Mialee imbue the sword with a +1 enhancement bonus (turning it into a *+1 longsword*). This task would normally cost 200 craft points. Mialee must supply at least half of this, or 100. Regdar doesn't have Craft Magic Arms and Armor, so he must spend twice as many craft points to achieve the same contribution. Assuming he's the only assistant, he could contribute up to half the effort required to achieve the goal (100 craft points). Since his craft points only count for half value, he has to spend 200 craft points to contribute 100 points worth of value. When those 200 points are added to Mialee's contribution, the gold pieces spent on materials, and the masterwork longsword, the process is complete.

If Lidda (also untrained) assisted Mialee as well, the two assistants combined could still contribute no more than the equivalent of 100 craft points (half the total craft point cost). However, each would have to spend only 100 craft points (50 points of value each) to achieve this goal.

GAINING CRAFT POINTS

A 1st-level character has 100 craft points. With each class level gained, he gains a number of craft points equal to his new level × 100. A 2nd-level character can have as many as 300 craft points, and so forth, all the way up to a 20th-level character, who would have a total of 21,000 craft points (assuming he never spent any).

Creatures with Intelligence of 3 or higher have craft points as a character whose level equals their class levels + Hit Dice. A mind flayer (8 HD), for instance, has the craft points of an 8th-level character. If that mind flayer gained a class level, it would gain an additional 900 craft points. Of course, not all creatures can use their craft points—despite being at least reasonably intelligent, a griffon or pegasus is unlikely to be in a position to craft an item or assist another character in crafting an item. The DM must use his best judgment when determining whether a creature can use its craft points.

Illus. by J. Jarvis

Creatures with Intelligence of 2 or lower (or without an Intelligence score) never gain craft points.

Familiars or special mounts never gain craft points, regardless of their Intelligence or Hit Dice.

Table 3–6: Craft Points Gained by Level

Character Level	Craft Points Gained	Total Craft Points[1]
1st	100	100
2nd	200	300
3rd	300	600
4th	400	1,000
5th	500	1,500
6th	600	2,100
7th	700	2,800
8th	800	3,600
9th	900	4,500
10th	1,000	5,500
11th	1,100	6,600
12th	1,200	7,800
13th	1,300	9,100
14th	1,400	10,500
15th	1,500	12,000
16th	1,600	13,600
17th	1,700	15,300
18th	1,800	17,100
19th	1,900	19,000
20th	2,000	21,000

1 Subtract any craft points already spent from this total, and add any craft points gained from feats.

ITEM CREATION FEATS

Each time you gain an item creation feat, you gain additional craft points as noted on Table 3–7: Item Creation Feats. You don't have to spend these craft points on items appropriate to the feat—you can spend them on any item. For example, Craft Masterwork Weapon grants a bonus of 100 craft points, which you can use to craft weapons, armor, potions, or any other item.

In addition to the item creation feats found in the *Player's Handbook*, this variant includes a number of feats dedicated to the creation of nonmagic items. Table 3–7 gives appropriate new prerequisites for all item creation feats, including those in the *Player's Handbook*.

Table 3–7: Item Creation Feats

Feat	Prerequisites	Craft Points Gained
Brew Potion	Caster level 3rd	1,500
Craft Alchemical Item	Craft (alchemy) 4 ranks	100
Craft Magic Arms and Armor	Caster level 5th	2,500
Craft Masterwork Armor	Craft (armorsmith) 6 ranks	100
Craft Masterwork Ranged Weapon	Craft (bowyer) 6 ranks	100
Craft Masterwork Weapon	Craft (weaponsmith) 6 ranks	100
Craft Rod	Caster level 9th	4,500
Craft Staff	Caster level 12th	6,000
Craft Wand	Caster level 5th	2,500
Craft Wondrous Item	Caster level 3rd	1,500
Forge Ring	Caster level 12th	6,000
Scribe Scroll	Caster level 1st	500
Talented Crafter	Any other item creation feat	500

Craft Alchemical Item [Item Creation]

You are capable of creating alchemical items and substances.

Prerequisite: Craft (alchemy) 4 ranks.

Benefit: You gain 100 craft points. You may use craft points to create alchemical items or substances, such as acid or tanglefoot bags.

You may spend your craft points to create alchemical items or substances at a rate of 1 craft point per 10 gp of market value of the finished item (minimum 1), even without spending the requisite creation time at work on the item.

Special: If you take the requisite creation time at work on the item, you spend only 1 craft point per 50 gp of market value of the finished item (minimum 1).

This feat replaces the requirement of being a spellcaster in order to craft alchemical items as listed in the Craft skill in the *Player's Handbook*.

Normal: Characters without this feat cannot craft alchemical items.

Craft Masterwork Armor [Item Creation]

You are trained in the creation of fine armor and shields.

Prerequisite: Craft (armorsmithing) 6 ranks.

Benefit: You gain 100 craft points. You may use craft points to create masterwork armor or shields.

You may spend your craft points to build masterwork armor or shields at a rate of 1 craft point per 10 gp of market value of the finished item (minimum 1), even without spending the requisite creation time at work on the item.

Special: If you take the requisite creation time at work on the item, you spend only 1 craft point per 50 gp of market value of the finished item (minimum 1).

Normal: Characters without this feat can only craft nonmasterwork armor or shields.

Craft Masterwork Ranged Weapon [Item Creation]

You are trained in the creation of fine ranged weapons and ammunition, such as bows, crossbows, and arrows.

Prerequisite: Craft (bowmaking) 6 ranks.

Benefit: You gain 100 craft points. You may use craft points to create a masterwork ranged weapon or masterwork ammunition.

You may spend your craft points to build ranged weapons or ammunition at a rate of 1 craft point per 10 gp of market value of the finished item, even without taking the requisite creation time at work on the item.

Normal: Characters without this feat can only craft nonmasterwork ranged weapons.

Craft Masterwork Weapon [Item Creation]

You are trained in the creation of fine melee and thrown weapons, such as swords, maces, daggers, and shortspears.

Prerequisite: Craft (weaponsmithing) 6 ranks.

Benefit: You gain 100 craft points. You may use craft points to create a masterwork melee or thrown weapon.

You may spend your craft points to build masterwork melee or thrown weapons at a rate of 1 craft point per 10 gp of market value of the finished item, even without taking the requisite creation time at work on the item.

Normal: Characters without this feat can only craft nonmasterwork melee or thrown weapons.

Talented Crafter [General]

You have an extraordinary talent for item creation.

Prerequisite: Any item creation feat.

Benefits: You gain 500 craft points, which may be used to craft items of any kind.

Special: You may select this feat multiple times. Each time you select it, you gain an additional 500 craft points.

A wizard may select this feat as one of her bonus feats gained at every fifth level.

CHARACTER BACKGROUND

If you define background as "everything that happened to a character before now," then you can use this character background variant to actually generate a character. The system detailed below lets you build a high-level character as if that character had started at 1st level, undertaking adventures and earning experience points.

Before starting to use this system, you'll need to generate a set of ability scores and decide on the character's race; the tables in this section take care of the rest.

To finish generating the character, simply choose the type of adventuring activity he undertook at each level, stopping when you have the character level you want. For example, if you want a 9th-level character, use the tables in this section nine times. You can roll percentile dice or choose the result you like.

This variant is a quick way to bring a new character into an ongoing campaign. You'll get a character who's had some life experiences and built up a personal history. It's also a useful variant if you want to create characters for a new campaign that starts with characters of higher than 1st level. This background variant works best in conjunction with the event-based reputation variant and the contacts variant, both described in Chapter 6; if you aren't using reputation and contacts, then ignore those columns in the tables that follow.

As a general rule (if it matters, depending on how you use this variant), each of these background selections is considered to take up 1d6 months of game time. For example, if you create a dwarf character who begins adventuring at age 48 (see Table 6–4, page 109 of the *Player's Handbook*) and you apply four background selections to the character, the dwarf's age as a 4th-level character is 48 years + 4d6 months.

If you let the dice fall where they may with this variant, you'll get more multiclass characters than you would in a standard D&D campaign where PCs start at 1st level or build their characters to a target level before the campaign begins. Spellcasters in particular lose significant power if they have more than a handful of nonspellcasting levels, so you'll want to monitor the dice results closely.

HOW TO READ THE TABLES

Each of the tables in this section contains eight pieces of information. Here's what the information means.

Activity: A word or phrase that summarizes what the character focused his attention on, or learned the most about, during the time he spent advancing from one level to the next.

Class: The class in which the character's most recent level was gained. Some of the entries in this column are prestige classes or classes with alignment restrictions. If you don't qualify for the class indicated, select one of the other classes on the table instead.

Feats: The character chooses one of the given feats if he is at a level when he ordinarily would gain a new feat (such as 1st, 3rd, or 6th) or when he gains a bonus feat by virtue of his new class level (such as 5th level in wizard). If the feat selection requires a choice because more than one feat is mentioned, it's okay to wait until you're done determining the character's entire background before making that choice. If the character doesn't meet the prerequisite for a feat or already has the feat, take one of the listed alternatives (if applicable) or a feat that appears elsewhere on the table you're using. If the character has a feat that has an improved or greater version (such as Weapon Focus, Spell Penetration, Cleave, or Weapon Specialization), he can take the improved or greater version of the feat whenever the basic version appears on the table.

Skills: This column identifies three or more skills that the character must spend skill points on at his new level. Start at the beginning of the list in an entry, taking one rank in each skill listed, in the order the skills are presented, until you're out of skill points. If you reach the end of the list with skill points remaining, spend the rest however you like.

Gear: This column provides guidance for equipping the character, and it only matters when you've finished creating the character's background. In general, a character spends up to 30% of her wealth (determined using Table 5–1 on page 135 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* or assigned by the DM) on the gear associated with her most recent activity, up to 20% of her wealth on the gear for her second most recent activity, and up to 10% on the gear for her third most recent activity. Background choices made earlier than "third most recent" don't affect the character's equipment. You can spend the character's remaining wealth on anything you choose.

HOUSE RULE: ADDING A FAVORED CLASS

The experience point penalty associated with multiclassing can make some otherwise interesting character archetypes less viable without having the proper combination of race and class(es). In my campaign, I allow characters to select a feat that adds another favored class to their race. This allows a player to better create a unique character while not unduly undercutting the multiclass advantage possessed by humans and half-elves.

ADDITIONAL FAVORED CLASS [General]

You are more adept at combining different talents than most members of your race.

Benefit: Choose a character class, such as ranger. The chosen class is treated as a favored class for the purpose of determining whether your character takes an experience point penalty for multiclassing.

Normal: Without this feat, if any class other than your race's favored class is two or more levels lower than your highest-level class, you take a –20% penalty to XP earned for each class that is not within one level of your highest-level class.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new class.

—Andrew Finch

For example, you want to create a 5th-level wizard with a background entirely in academic magic by rolling d% five times on the table below to represent the five levels. At 3rd level, the d% result is 34, and the Gear column gives "Wand/staff with abjuration spells." At 4th level the result is 63 (Wand/staff with illusion spells), and at 5th level the result is 11 (Rod or staff).

From Table 5–1 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, a 5th-level character has wealth equal to 9,000 gp. The character can spend 30% of this amount, or 2,700 gp, on a rod or staff—a *staff of fire* with 7 charges, for instance. She can spend 20%, or 1,800 gp, on a wand or staff that holds an illusion spell, such as a *wand of invisibility* with 20 charges. She can spend up to 10%, or 900 gp, on a wand or staff that holds an abjuration spell, such as a fully charged *wand of shield*.

Contacts: This column applies only if you're using that variant (see Chapter 6) and the character would earn a new contact at this level.

Reputation (Rep): Similarly, this column applies only if you're using the reputation rules (see Chapter 6). If a bonus appears in this column, add it to your Reputation score.

Recognition: With accomplishments come rewards, in the form of recognition by one's peers or by others who may be impressed by a character's status. To benefit from the reward (if any) identified in this column of a table entry, the character must make a recognition check, which is 1d20 + any modifiers that might apply, as indicated in a background description. Most often, this modifier is the number of ranks the character has in a relevant skill, which is a generally accurate measure of how much time the character has spent honing that skill, which in turn is closely tied to the character's

Academic Magic Background Activities

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–07	Item creation	Wizard	Any item creation	Spellcraft, Craft (any), Concentration	Any magic item	Skill	+0	Society, DC 30
08–15	Metamagic	Sorcerer or wizard	Any metamagic	Know (arcana), Concentration, Spellcraft	Rod or staff	Influence	+0	Degree, DC 24
16–23	Spell research	Wizard	Spell Mastery	Spellcraft, Know (arcana), Concentration	Extra spells in spellbook	Information	+1/2	Degree, DC 26
24–29	Training	Wizard	Leadership, Persuasive	Spellcraft, Know (arcana), Sense Motive	Wondrous item for interaction/communication	Influence	+1	Society, DC 26
30–35	Abjuration	Wizard	Sp Focus (Abj)	Spellcraft, Concentration, Know (the planes)	Wand/staff with abjuration spells	Information	+0	Degree, DC 28
36–41	Conjuration	Wizard	Sp Focus (Conj)	Spellcraft, Concentration, Know (the planes)	Wand/staff with conjuration spells	Information	+0	Degree, DC 28
42–47	Divination	Wizard	Sp Focus (Div)	Spellcraft, Concentration, Know (the planes)	Wand/staff with divination spells	Information	+0	Degree, DC 28
48–53	Enchantment	Wizard	Sp Focus (Ench)	Spellcraft, Concentration, Diplomacy	Wand/staff with enchantment spells	Information	+0	Degree, DC 28
54–59	Evocation	Wizard	Sp Focus (Evoc)	Spellcraft, Concentration, Know (arcana)	Wand/staff with evocation spells	Information	+0	Degree, DC 28
60–65	Illusion	Wizard	Sp Focus (Illus)	Spellcraft, Concentration, Perform (any)	Wand/staff with illusion spells	Information	+0	Degree, DC 28
66–71	Necromancy	Cleric or wizard	Sp Focus (Necro)	Spellcraft, Concentration, Know (religion)	Wand/staff with necromancy spells	Information	+0	Degree, DC 28
72–77	Transmutation	Wizard	Sp Focus (Trans)	Spellcraft, Concentration, Know (arcana)	Wand/staff with transmutation spells	Information	+0	Degree, DC 28
78–85	Creature studies	Wizard	Spell Penetration, Improved Familiar	Know (nature), Know (arcana), Know (the planes)	Wondrous item that mimics monster ability	Influence	+1/2	Society, DC 26
86–94	Battle magic	Sorcerer or wizard	Combat Casting, Any metamagic	Concentration, Spellcraft, Know (arcana)	*Bracers of armor* or *cloak of protection*	Information	+1/2	Society, DC 28
95–100	Divine magic	Cleric	Sp Focus (any)	Concentration, Know (religion), Spellcraft	*Prayer beads* or divine scrolls	Skill	+1/2	Society, DC 24

Know = Knowledge; Sp Focus = Spell Focus.

level. (The more you have learned about the skills that are most central to your success, the more likely it is that you will earn recognition.)

This reward has no specific game effect, but the DM is free to grant an ad hoc bonus of some sort when a famous or accomplished character interacts with those who are impressed by the recognition that character has earned.

ACADEMIC MAGIC BACKGROUND

Many adventurers come from tall towers of magic academies and colleges. They find the adventurer's life much different than the cloistered life they knew when they were learning the secrets of magic. But the lessons in power such characters learned in the classroom serve them well wherever their adventures take them.

Recognition in the academic world takes the form of academic degrees or membership in honorary societies.

A character's ranks in Spellcraft provide a bonus on recognition checks related to degrees, and his ranks in Knowledge (arcana) provide a bonus on recognition checks related to societies.

Example Societies and Degrees

The names of societies and academic degrees given below are provided as a starting point. Depending on the players' interest and the DM's plans for the campaign, the societies could become full-fledged secret cabals, or they could remain honorary societies that rarely meet and don't have agendas beyond their field of study.

Societies: Society of Arcanobiological Studies, The Horned Hand, Fraternity of the Three Mysteries, Scarlet Robe Society, Kau Sathra Vox, Society of Tarsus, Arcane Aid Society, Club of the Mystic Twelve.

Degrees: Master of Eldritch Power (in a particular school of magic), Unsurpassed Scholar in Arcane Arts, Master of Cast Spells.

ARISTOCRATIC BACKGROUND

The noble court formed an important center of medieval life, where knights, troubadours, and artisans experienced the scope of feudal life (minus the peasants). Aristocratic adventures center on intrigue and political maneuvering, but courts also feature ritualized combat such as duels and jousts.

ARISTOCRATIC BACKGROUND ACTIVITIES

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–07	Noble warlord	Fighter or paladin	Leadership, Weapon Focus	Intimidate, Diplomacy, Know (nobility and royalty)	Armor	Influence	+1	Title, DC 22
08–14	Landed gentry	Bard	Leadership, Skill Focus (Diplomacy)	Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Know (nobility and royalty), Know (history), Perform	Wondrous item that aids interaction	Influence	+1	Title, DC 22
15–21	Church potentate	Cleric	Leadership, Persuasive	Diplomacy, Know (nobility and royalty), Spellcraft	Rod or staff	Influence	+1	Title, DC 24
22–28	Dragon-blooded	Sorcerer	Leadership, Sp Focus (Ench)	Diplomacy, Know (nobility and royalty), Concentration	Rod or staff	Influence	+1	Title, DC 24
29–39	Troubadour	Bard	Skill Focus (Perform), Sp Focus (Ench)	Perform (any), Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Know (nobility and royalty), Know (local)	Wondrous item that charms or compels	Influence	+1/2	—
40–49	Court jester	Rogue	Acrobatic, Agile	Perform (any), Tumble, Jump, Know (nobility and royalty), Balance	Wondrous item that aids movement	Influence	+1/2	—
50–59	Court arcanist	Wizard or loremaster[1]	Sp Focus (Ench), Sp Focus (Illus)	Know (nobility and royalty), Know (arcana), Know (local), Spellcraft, Concentration	Extra spells in spellbook	Influence	+1/2	—
60–69	Religious advisor	Cleric	Negotiator, Sp Focus (Div)	Know (religion), Know (nobility and royalty), Spellcraft	Item with divination aura	Influence	+1/2	—
70–80	Chivalric knight	Paladin	Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack	Ride, Intimidate, Diplomacy	Armor	Influence	+1/2	Title, DC 24
81–90	Seneschal	Bard	Negotiator, Investigator	Sense Motive, Diplomacy, Intimidate, Know (nobility and royalty), Know (local)	Item with divination aura	Influence	+1/2	—
91–100	Duelist	Fighter or duelist[1]	Combat Expertise, Improved Feint	Bluff, Perform, (any),Tumble, Sense Motive, Know (nobility and royalty)	Weapon	Influence	+1/2	—

Know = Knowledge; Sp Focus = Spell Focus.
1 Indicates a prestige class from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Only available if the class is allowed in the campaign.

Cross-Cultural Background Activities

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–20	Primitive tribe	Any	Track, Self-Sufficient	Know (nature), Survival, Diplomacy, Spot, Listen	Armor	Skill	+0	DC 28
21–50	Far-off culture	Any	Exotic Weapon Proficiency	Know (geography), Speak Language, Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Know (history)	Weapon	Information	+1/2	DC 26
51–60	Extraplanar	Any	Sp Focus (Abj), Spell Penetration	Know (the planes), Speak Language, Diplomacy, Decipher Script, Spellcraft	Wondrous item that provides protection	Influence	+1/2	DC 28
61–85	Racial minority	Any	Weapon Focus (any racially favored weapon), Improved Critical (any racially favored weapon)	Know (local), Speak Language, Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Gather Info	Weapon	Influence	+1/2	DC 26
86–100	Refugee	Any	Endurance, Diehard	Know (geography), Bluff, Gather Info, Hide, Move Silently	Armor	Information	+0	DC 30

Know = Knowledge; Sp Focus = Spell Focus; Gather Info = Gather Information.

Recognition for characters with aristocratic backgrounds varies widely, because noble courts have a highly stratified social structure. Actual nobles can attain progressively greater noble titles, but other characters who spend time in noble courts don't have that chance.

A character's familiarity with the ways of the noble court provides a bonus on recognition checks; each time the aristocratic background is selected for this character, the bonus increases by 1.

Example Aristocratic Titles

The noble titles below are examples drawn from medieval Europe (Britain in particular), so they're suitable for most sword-and-sorcery settings. Other historical feudal and quasi-feudal cultures (such as Japan and India) can also inspire noble titles for your D&D game.

Titles (Lowest to Highest): Knight, Baronet, Baron or Baroness, Viscount or Viscountess, Count or Countess, Marquess or Marchioness, Duke or Duchess, Grand Duke or Grand Duchess, Prince or Princess, King or Queen, Emperor or Empress.

Sometimes counts are called earls, and marquesses are referred to as marquises or margraves. Germanic culture refers to dukes as grafs and baronets as ritters. Prince or princess can either be a noble title or it can describe a familial relationship: son or daughter of the king or queen.

CROSS-CULTURAL BACKGROUND

This disparate set of background activities differs from the other backgrounds because it represents time spent away from the character's home culture. Unlike with the other backgrounds,

Government Background Activities

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–12	Administrator	Bard or rogue	Leadership, Investigator	Know (local), Diplomacy, Intimidate, Sense Motive, Know (history)	Item that provides protection	Influence	+1/2	Rank, DC 26
13–25	Spy	Rogue	Stealthy, Deceitful	Disguise, Gather Info, Hide, Move Silently, Forgery	Item with illusion aura	Information	+0	—
26–37	Diplomat	Bard	Negotiator, Persuasive	Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Bluff, Intimidate, Know (local)	Item that aids interaction	Influence	+1/2	Rank, DC 28
38–50	City watch	Fighter	Alertness, Power Attack	Know (local), Sense Motive, Jump	Weapon	Influence	+1/2	Rank, DC 28
51–63	Arcane advisor	Wizard or sorcerer	Any item creation Spellcraft,	Know (arcana), in spellbook Know (local)	Scrolls and spells	Information	+0	Society, DC 26
64–75	Honor guard	Fighter or paladin	Combat Expertise, Weapon Focus	Know (history), Intimidate, Ride	Armor	Skill	+1	Rank, DC 26
76–88	Sheriff	Ranger	Alertness, Weapon Focus	Know (local), Ride, Sense Motive, Survival, Intimidate	Weapon	Influence	+1/2	Rank, DC 30
89–100	Theocrat	Cleric	Persuasive, Investigator	Know (local), Spellcraft, Know (religion)	Wand or staff	Influence	+1/2	Rank, DC 28

Know = Knowledge; Gather Info = Gather Information.

Maritime Background Activities

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–12	Pirate	Rogue	Dodge, Mobility	Balance, Jump, Tumble, Bluff, Swim	Weapon	Information	+1/2	Rank, DC 22
13–24	Military navy	Fighter	Leadership, Weapon Focus	Prof (sailor), Swim, Use Rope	Weapon	Influence	+1/2	Rank, DC 24
25–34	Sea trader	Rogue or bard	Negotiator, Deft Hands	Appraise, Sense Motive, Diplomacy, Swim, Prof (sailor)	Wondrous item that aids interaction	Skill	+0	Rank, DC 26
35–44	Ship's marine	Fighter	Power Attack, Improved Sunder	Swim, Climb, Jump	Light armor	Skill	+0	Rank, DC 26
45–52	Stowaway	Rogue	Stealthy, Deceitful	Swim, Hide, Move Silently, Disguise, Bluff	Item that aids stealth	Influence	+0	—
53–62	Shipwrecked	Barbarian	Track, Self-Sufficient	Swim, Survival, Craft (any), Spot, Listen	Simple weapon or hand-crafted item	Skill	+0	—
63–72	Deckhand	Rogue or fighter	Dodge, Weapon Focus	Swim, Use Rope, Prof (sailor), Climb, Jump	Weapon	Information	+0	Rank, DC 26
73–82	Navigator	Bard or wizard	Scribe Scroll, Sp Focus (Trans)	Prof (sailor), Decipher Script, Know (geography), Spellcraft, Swim	Scrolls	Skill	+0	Rank, DC 24
83–90	Wind-bringer	Druid or sorcerer	Sp Focus (Trans), Sp Focus (Conj)	Spellcraft, Concentration, Know (geography), Swim, Prof (sailor)	Item that affects weather or wind	Information	+0	Rank, DC 24
91–100	Chaplain	Cleric	Any metamagic	Heal, Swim, Prof (sailor)	Item that heals or cures	Information	+0	Rank, DC 24

Prof = Profession; Sp Focus = Spell Focus; Know = Knowledge.

there's no character class attached to each activity—select whatever class you picked at the previous level, or choose a class if this is your first background selection. Your time with another culture affects your feat and skill choices, and any contacts you gain during cross-cultural background activities are probably members of that culture.

It's almost impossible to define what form recognition takes in this background, because it depends heavily on the nature of the culture your character is visiting. The exact nature of the recognition earned is up to the DM—it could take the form of rank, title, society membership, or decoration.

Each activity in this background is associated with a specific Knowledge skill. A character's ranks in that skill provide a bonus on recognition checks.

GOVERNMENT BACKGROUND

This set of background activities includes jobs performed for those who work for a city, provincial, or national government—other than those in the army or navy, who are covered under the military and maritime backgrounds described below.

Most of the recognition associated with a government background comes in the form of increases in rank (whether military or civilian in nature).

Each activity in this background is associated with a particular skill—the one mentioned first in the entry's Skills column. A character's ranks in that skill provide a bonus on recognition checks.

MARITIME BACKGROUND

Characters with maritime backgrounds indulge in the same passions as everyone else—war, trade, and larceny—but they do it with a ship's deck beneath their feet (unless they've been shipwrecked, which is one possible activity in this background).

A character's time spent on the high seas provides a bonus on recognition checks; each time the maritime background is selected for this character, the bonus increases by 1.

Example Maritime Ranks

Every navy has its own system of ranks, and few ships are at exactly their full complement of crew. The following system of ranks is a good starting point for most D&D campaigns.

Maritime Ranks (Lowest to Highest): Ordinary hand, able hand, leading hand, petty officer, chief petty officer, sublieutenant, lieutenant, lieutenant commander, commander, captain, commodore, admiral, grand admiral.

MERCANTILE BACKGROUND

Characters with a mercantile background work in the organized business of making money, buying low and selling high. While this characterization describes most jobs in the modern world, in feudal and semifeudal societies the average person has much less connection to commerce. The typical peasant turns over his crops to the local feudal lord, keeping enough to feed his family, and other family members make most of the finished goods (clothes, furniture, and other necessities) they require themselves. Accordingly, characters with the mercantile background are much more common in cities and in societies where money is the most common medium of exchange (rather than communal hunter-gatherer living or a feudal relationship).

The only recognition available in this background category is among caravan guards and guild officials, both of whom can

Mercantile Background Activities

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–14	Caravan guard	Fighter	Alertness, Point Blank Shot	Ride, Spot, Listen	Armor	Information	+0	Rank, DC 24
15–27	Broker	Rogue or bard	Investigator, Persuasive	Gather Info, Sense Motive, Diplomacy, Know (local)	Wondrous item that helps carry loads	Information	+1/2	—
28–40	Negotiator	Rogue or bard	Negotiator, Skill Focus (Diplomacy)	Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Bluff, Intimidate, Know (local)	Wondrous item that aids interaction	Influence	+1/2	—
41–53	Buyer	Rogue or bard	Diligent, Skill Focus (Appraise)	Appraise, Bluff, Sense Motive, Craft (any), Diplomacy	Wondrous item with divination aura	Influence	+0	—
54–69	Traveling merchant	Rogue or sorcerer	Dodge, Mobility	Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Appraise, Bluff, Sleight of Hand	Wondrous item with illusion aura	Information	+1/2	—
70–83	Magic-shop owner	Wizard	Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor	Spellcraft, Know (arcana), Craft (any)	Staff or wand	Skill	+1/2	—
84–100	Guild official	Rogue or cleric	Leadership, Persuasive	Craft (any), Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Bluff, Know (local)	Item that gives morale effect	Influence	+1	Rank; see text

Gather Info = Gather Information; Know = Knowledge.

Military Background Activities

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–11	Raid	Barbarian or fighter	Weapon Focus, Weapon Spec	Climb, Jump, Intimidate, Search, Swim	Melee weapon	Information	+0	Decoration, DC 20
12–19	Trainer	Fighter	Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm	Intimidate, Diplomacy, Know (local)	Wondrous item for morale/interaction	Influence	+1	Rank, DC 22
20–27	Cavalry scout	Ranger	Mounted Combat, Mounted Archery	Ride, Spot, Listen, Survival, Search, Move Silently, Hide	Ranged weapon	Information	+0	Rank, DC 24
28–35	Heavy cavalry	Fighter or paladin	Mounted Combat, Spirited Charge	Ride, Intimidate, Jump	Barding	Information	+1/2	Decoration or rank, DC 24
36–44	Defense	Fighter or dwarven defender[1]	Dodge, Mobility	Prof (siege engineer), Climb, Jump	Armor or shield	Skill	+1/2	Rank, DC 22
45–52	Scout	Ranger or arcane archer[1]	Alertness, Stealthy	Spot, Listen, Move Silently, Hide, Survival	Wondrous item for stealth, communication, or perception	Information	+0	Rank, DC 24
53–63	Shock trooper	Fighter	Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush	Climb, Intimidate, Jump	Armor or shield	Information	+1/2	Decoration, DC 24
64–74	Siege	Fighter	Power Attack, Improved Sunder	Climb, Jump, Prof (siege engineer)	Melee weapon	Information	+1/2	Decoration, DC 22
75–80	War	Fighter	Any fighter bonus feat	Climb, Intimidate, Jump,	Melee weapon	Influence	+1	Rank, DC 20
81–86	Diplomacy	Fighter or paladin	Leadership, Persuasive	Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Know (nobility and royalty)	Wondrous item for morale/interaction	Influence	+1	Rank, DC 24
87–94	Border patrol	Ranger	Point Blank Shot, Far Shot	Survival, Spot, Listen, Hide, Move Silently	Ranged weapon	Information	+0	Rank, DC 26
95–100	Herald	Bard or fighter	Negotiator, Weapon Focus	Know (nobility and royalty), Diplomacy, Know (local), Sense Motive, Spot, Listen, Know (history)	Armor or shield	Influence	+1	Rank, DC 24

Weapon Spec = Weapon Specialization; Prof = Profession; Know = Knowledge.
1 Indicates a prestige class from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Only available if the class is allowed in the campaign.

earn promotions to higher ranks (as described for the military background, below). A caravan guard applies his base attack bonus as a modifier on recognition checks, while a guild official applies his ranks in Diplomacy.

Example Guild Ranks

The guilds in medieval European society usually had a simple set of ranks: apprentice, journeyman, and master. Attaining higher rank meant spending years on the job and passing some sort of examination, or in the case of the master, creating a "master piece" that peers judged worthy. In a system with only three ranks, the recognition check DC for advancing from apprentice to journeyman is 26, and DC for advancing from journeyman to master is 30.

If you want more frequent recognition (and thus more guild ranks), set the recognition check DC at a constant value of 24 and split each rank into three smaller ranks. Characters begin as apprentices in the third degree, then ascend to second-degree apprentices and first-degree apprentices. Then they become journeymen in the third degree.

Because the D&D game is set in a fantasy world, you may wish to develop more fanciful titles for the guilds you create, especially those that are part of nonhuman or otherwise exotic cultures.

MILITARY BACKGROUND

The activities associated with this background include broadly defined military missions. The raid activity, for example, covers everything from young Vikings on their first pillage to elite commandos striking behind enemy lines. Except for all-out war, none of the activities implies continuous assignment. Most soldiers spend much of their time training, guarding, and hanging out in the barracks.

Military recognition takes two forms: decorations (medals, fancy uniforms, tattoos, and the like) and rank (encompassing traditional military ranks and sometimes noble or honorific titles). In each case, the recognition check DC is modified by the character's base attack bonus. Rolling a natural 20 on a recognition check gives the character a double promotion or a more prestigious decoration.

Example Ranks and Decorations

The following military ranks are typical of a national army in a fantasy kingdom. Designing your own command structure and unique decorations is a good way to make your game world seem more real.

Ranks (Lowest to Highest): Armsman, Sergeant, Sergeant Major, Lieutenant, Captain, Major, Colonel, General.

Decorations: Three-Star Cluster (for valor), Ivy-Oak Medallion (for service to the realm), Ribbon of Scarla (for bravery under fire), Iron Gauntlet (for unsurpassed heroism).

RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND

Obviously, clerics dominate this background category. In a larger sense, it represents all activities that have a strong religious element, and in the generally pious societies that dominate most D&D campaigns, that's a pretty wide spread.

Recognition is by ascension in rank, with a character's ranks in Knowledge (religion) providing a bonus on his recognition check.

Religious Background Activities

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–12	Temple leader	Cleric	Leadership, Sp Focus (Ench)	Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Know (religion)	Item that employs divine magic	Influence	+1/2	Rank, DC 26
13–24	Evangelist	Cleric	Negotiator, Sp Focus (Conj)	Diplomacy, Know (religion), Spellcraft	Item that aids interaction	Influence	+1	Rank, DC 28
25–33	Sacred librarian	Bard or cleric	Diligent, Investigator	Gather Info, Know (religion), Know (history), Spellcraft, Search	Item with divination aura	Information	+0	Rank, DC 30
34–42	Keeper of the dead	Cleric	Extra Turning, Sp Focus (Necro)	Know (religion), Spellcraft, Concentration	Item with necromancy aura	Skill	+0	Rank, DC 30
43–51	Cultist	Cleric	Sp Focus (Conj), Sp Focus (Necro)	Disguise, Concentration, Spellcraft	Item that aids disguise or secrecy	Information	+0	Rank, DC 26
52–64	Inquisitor	Cleric	Sp Focus (Div), Investigator	Sense Motive, Intimidate, Spellcraft	Item with divination aura	Information	+1/2	Rank, DC 28
65–77	Exorcist	Cleric	Sp Focus (Abj), Spell Penetration	Spellcraft, Concentration, Know (the planes)	Item that affects extraplanar creatures	Influence	+1/2	Rank, DC 30
78–88	Temple guardian	Paladin, fighter, or blackguard[1]	Power Attack, Cleave	Know (religion), Spot, Climb	Armor	Skill	+0	Rank, DC 28
89–100	Cloistered	Monk	Dodge, Mobility	Tumble, Jump, Balance, Hide, Move Silently	Item that provides protection	Skill	+0	Rank, DC 28

Sp Focus = Spell Focus; Know = Knowledge; Gather Info = Gather Information.
1 Indicates a prestige class from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Only available if the class is allowed in the campaign.

Skilled Background Activities

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–16	Religious scholar	Cleric	Scribe Scroll, Diligent	Decipher Script, Know (religion), Spellcraft	Robe or cloak	Information	+0	Degree or society, DC 26
17–32	Music theorist	Bard	Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Perform)	Perform (any), Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Decipher Script, Speak Language	Instrument	Information	+1/2	Degree or society, DC 28
33–44	Barrister	Rogue	Persuasive, Negotiator	Intimidate, Diplomacy, Sense Motive, Bluff, Know (nobility and royalty)	Wondrous item that protects against spells	Information	+0	Degree or society, DC 26
45–60	Scribe	Wizard	Any metamagic	Decipher Script, Speak Language, Know (arcana)	Extra spells in spellbook	Information	+0	Degree or society, DC 28
61–74	Naturalist	Druid	Track, Natural Spell	Know (nature), Prof (herbalist), Handle Animal, Spellcraft, Concentration	Scrolls, wand, or staff	Information	+0	Degree or society, DC 28
75–90	Scientist	Wizard	Any item creation	Know (architecture and engineering), Craft (any), Spellcraft	Wondrous item that moves by itself	Information	+0	Degree or society, DC 26
91–100	Athlete	Monk or ranger	Athletic, Dodge	Balance, Climb, Jump, Tumble, Swim	Item that boosts physical stats	Information	+1	Trophy, DC 26

Know = Knowledge; Prof = Profession.

Underworld Background Activities

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–12	Street crime	Rogue	Deft Hands, Dodge	Escape Artist, Tumble, Sleight of Hand, Move Silently, Hide	Wondrous item that aids movement	Information	+0	Rank, DC 32
13–23	Protection racket	Rogue	Combat Expertise, Improved Feint	Intimidate, Sense Motive, Bluff, Diplomacy, Search	Weapon	Influence	+1/2	Rank, DC 30
24–32	Gambling	Rogue	Negotiator, Persuasive	Bluff, Sense Motive, Intimidate, Gather Info, Forgery	Magic item based on gem or jewelry	Influence	+1	Rank, DC 30
33–44	Assassination	Rogue or assassin[1]	Improved Critical, Stealthy	Hide, Move Silently, Tumble, Climb, Jump	Weapon	Skill	+1	Rank, DC 30
45–57	Burglary	Rogue or shadow-dancer[1]	Nimble Fingers, Acrobatic	Climb, Open Lock, Hide, Move Silently, Search, Balance	Wondrous item that aids stealth	Skill	+0	Rank, DC 30
58–70	Robbery	Rogue	Weapon Finesse, Quick Draw Use Rope, Hide	Intimidate, Disguise, Bluff,	Weapon	Information	+1/2	Rank, DC 28
71–81	Con games	Rogue or bard	Deceitful, Persuasive	Bluff, Sense Motive, Diplomacy, Forgery, Disguise	Wondrous item that creates illusion	Influence	+1/2	Rank, DC 28
82–90	Fence	Rogue	Diligent, Negotiator	Appraise, Sense Motive, Bluff, Know (local), Gather Info	Any	Influence	+1	Rank, DC 30
91–100	Street fighting	Fighter or rogue	Quick Draw, Combat Reflexes	Intimidate, Sleight of Hand, Bluff, Tumble, Spot	Armor	Skill	+0	Rank, DC 32

Gather Info = Gather Information; Know = Knowledge.
1 Indicates a prestige class from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Only available if the class is allowed in the campaign.

Wilderness Background Activities

d%	Activity	Class	Feats	Skills	Gear	Contacts	Rep	Recognition
01–12	Hunter-gatherer	Barbarian	Track, Self-Sufficient	Survival, Spot, Listen, Climb, Swim	Weapon	Skill	+0	Chieftain, DC 28
13–25	Nature guardian	Druid	Natural Spell, Combat Casting	Concentration, Spot, Survival, Spellcraft, Know (nature)	Armor	Information	+1/2	—
26–36	Game hunter	Ranger	Weapon Focus, Improved Critical	Survival, Spot, Listen, Hide, Move Silently	Weapon	Skill	+0	—
37–47	Explorer	Ranger or horizon walker[1]	Alertness, Endurance	Survival, Know (nature), Spot, Listen, Know (geography)	Wondrous item that aids movement	Information	+1	—
48–56	Hermit	Druid or sorcerer	Sp Focus (Illus), Sp Focus (Ench)	Survival, Concentration, Spellcraft	Staff or wand	Skill	+0	—
56–66	Wandering minstrel	Bard	Alertness, Endurance	Perform, Survival, Know (geography), Know (nature), Spot	Weapon	Influence	+1/2	—
67–79	Nature worshiper	Druid	Sp Focus (Trans), Sp Focus (Conj)	Know (nature), Know (religion), Survival, Spellcraft, Concentration	Staff or wand	Information	+0	—
80–90	Highwayman	Rogue	Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm	Survival, Intimidate, Hide, Move Silently, Bluff	Armor	Information	+1/2	—
91–100	"I walk the earth."	Barbarian or monk	Endurance, Combat Reflexes	Survival, Climb, Hide, Move Silently, Swim	Wondrous item that protects	—	+0	—

Sp Focus = Spell Focus; Know = Knowledge.
1 Indicates a prestige class from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Only available if the class is allowed in the campaign.

Example Religious Ranks

The following ranks are loosely drawn from the Christian church as it existed in the Middle Ages. Accordingly, they won't be appropriate for all the fantasy religions in your game.

Religious Ranks (Highest to Lowest): acolyte, abbot, deacon, priest, high priest, bishop, prelate, archbishop, patriarch, cardinal.

SKILLED BACKGROUND

This background is similar to the academic magic background, except that it represents learning and instruction in subjects not related to magic. Nevertheless, a spellcaster may well select this background if he is interested in studying other topics.

Recognition for skilled background activities is similar to recognition in an academic magic background: degrees and memberships in honorary societies. (Athletes get trophies, functionally similar to military decorations, instead.)

Each activity in this background is associated with a particular skill—the one mentioned first in the entry's Skills column. A character's ranks in that skill provide a bonus on recognition checks.

UNDERWORLD BACKGROUND

The teeming cities of the D&D game world provide opportunities for countless adventures. The activities associated with this background represent moneymaking efforts on the wrong side of the law. A character may operate solo, as part of a small gang, or as part of a large thieves' guild or organized crime family Some characters with underworld backgrounds use a false name to attain the benefits of their reputation while avoiding entanglements with law enforcement.

The underworld offers few chances for formal recognition (reflected by the relatively high recognition check DCs in this background), although some criminal syndicates have ranks and titles. The notion of underworld recognition may not be appropriate for every setting.

Each activity in this background is associated with a particular skill—the one mentioned first in the entry's Skills column. A character's ranks in that skill provide a bonus on recognition checks.

WILDERNESS BACKGROUND

This background is a feature of characters who spend most of their time in the forbidding wilds, far from the comforts of civilization. Because such a character often leads a solitary existences, there's almost no opportunity for recognition. Only a character who undertakes the hunter-gatherer activity has a chance to attain a higher rank (that of chieftain, and it's only attainable once), with ranks in Survival providing a bonus on the recognition check.

CUSTOMIZING BACKGROUNDS

Background selections are like prestige classes: They function best when the DM integrates them tightly into the campaign world. You have a lot of room to modify the background activities described in this section to suit the needs of your campaign and inject the rules with the flavor of your game world. For example, perhaps the city-state of Harleph has elite flail-wielding commandos called the Crimson Guard. The shock trooper activity in the military background could offer a decoration called the Red Braid in the Recognition column, a dire flail in the Gear column, and a +1 in the Reputation column (they are elite, after all).

Illus. by D. Kovacs

This chapter is perhaps the most disparate and fragmented of all the chapters in this book. On the following pages, you'll find a variety of variant systems dealing with armor and defense, combat, damage, death and dying, heroic action, facing in combat, and even the most basic activity in the DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game: rolling dice.

No DM, no matter how enterprising, could realistically hope to include all (or even most) of these variants in the same game—nor should he. Instead, the DM, working with the players, should pick and choose a small number of variants to add, weighing carefully how each one interacts with the rest of the rules used in the game. Try adding the variants one at a time, so that you can assess each one's effect individually, rather than stacking a half-dozen new rules options onto the game simultaneously.

In some cases, the text notes how certain variants might work well (or poorly) when combined in the same game. When used along with the DM's good judgment, this advice can help the DM create a "suite" of variant rules that dramatically change the feel of his campaign.

DEFENSE BONUS

In the standard D&D rules, a character's skill at attacking gets better as he goes up in level—but not so his skill at avoiding attacks. Characters rely on armor and an ever-growing collection of magic items to protect them in combat. But what about campaigns in which it's not common or appropriate for characters to go everywhere in full plate?

This variant system is particularly appropriate for swashbuckling or stealth-based campaigns, for settings in which firearms are common, for seafaring campaigns (in which the characters would rather not wear armor for fear of drowning), or for any other setting in which armor is not worn on a day-to-day basis—even by adventurers.

THE CLASS DEFENSE BONUS

In this variant, every character has a defense bonus based on his character level. The defense bonus applies to Armor Class. However, it does not stack with the character's armor bonus. A character wearing armor gains its armor bonus (including any enhancement to that bonus) or his defense bonus—whichever is higher—but not both. The defense bonus stacks with all other bonuses to AC, including the character's shield bonus, natural armor bonus, and so forth.

Unlike an armor bonus, a defense bonus does improve a character's AC against touch attacks.

A character's defense bonus is derived from his character level and class, as shown on Table 4–1: Defense Bonus. For a multiclass character, use the highest defense bonus of those offered by the character's classes. For example, a 2nd-level barbarian has a defense bonus of +4. If the character gains a level of cleric (becoming a 2nd-level barbarian/1st-level cleric), her defense bonus increases to +7, because the cleric's +7 at 3rd character level is better than the barbarian's +5 at 3rd character level.

Table 4–1: Defense Bonus

Level	A[1]	B[2]	C[3]	D[4]
1st	+2	+3	+4	+6
2nd	+2	+3	+4	+6
3rd	+3	+4	+5	+7
4th	+3	+4	+5	+7
5th	+3	+4	+5	+7
6th	+4	+5	+6	+8
7th	+4	+5	+6	+8
8th	+4	+5	+6	+8
9th	+5	+6	+7	+9
10th	+5	+6	+7	+9
11th	+5	+6	+7	+9
12th	+6	+7	+8	+10
13th	+6	+7	+8	+10
14th	+6	+7	+8	+10
15th	+7	+8	+9	+11
16th	+7	+8	+9	+11
17th	+7	+8	+9	+11
18th	+8	+9	+10	+12
19th	+8	+9	+10	+12
20th	+8	+9	+10	+12

1 Use column A for monk, sorcerer, or wizard.
2 Use column B for bard, ranger, or rogue.
3 Use column C for barbarian or druid.
4 Use column D for cleric, fighter, or paladin.

Illus. by S. Belledin

DEFENSE BONUSES FOR OTHER CLASSES

For classes not mentioned here, determine a character's class defense bonus based on the armor proficiency granted by the class (and only that gained from the class—you can't take an Armor Proficiency feat to improve your defense bonus). Consult Table 4–2 below; the defense bonus progression refers to the indicated column on Table 4–1.

Table 4–2: Defense Bonus for Other Classes

Armor Proficiency	Defense Bonus Progression
None	Column A
Light	Column B
Light and medium	Column C
Light, medium, and heavy	Column D

MONSTER DEFENSE BONUSES

Monsters do not have inherent defense bonuses unless they also have levels in a class or are normally proficient with armor. When calculating a monster's defense bonus to AC, do not include the monster's base HD or level adjustment (if any).

For example, a typical green dragon, mind flayer, or black pudding has no class levels and is not proficient with armor. Such creatures do not get a defense bonus.

If a creature is proficient with one or more types of armor, however, it gains a defense bonus. See Table 4–3: Creature Defense Bonuses.

If a creature has levels in a class, it gains a defense bonus just like any other character with a class. This bonus does not stack with any defense bonus the creature may have from armor proficiency.

For instance, giants are considered proficient with whatever type of armor (light, medium, or heavy) they are described as wearing. Hill giants, described in the *Monster Manual* as wearing hide armor, therefore have a +2 defense bonus (hide armor is a medium armor). Since this is lower than the +3 armor bonus of hide armor, the typical hill giant probably prefers to wear his armor. A 1st-level hill giant barbarian, however, would have a defense bonus of +4, and would benefit from discarding his hide armor (though he'd gain a higher armor bonus by putting on chainmail or a breastplate).

Table 4–3: Creature Defense Bonuses

Armor Proficiency	Defense Bonus
None	+0
Light	+1
Light and medium	+2
Light, medium, and heavy	+4

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: CLASS DEFENSE

Using the defense bonus variant in your game means that sometimes, at least, characters won't want to wear armor—their defense bonus provides them with free protection that's as good as armor. Funds that would otherwise be spent improving a character's armor can instead be spent on other gear, which means the characters' power level will increase slightly.

Characters may still desire the properties of a specific kind of magic armor or of armor special abilities. Be prepared to create new magic items, such as cloaks, robes, vests, or vestments, to support those desires.

Clearly, the class defense system is best for characters who must choose between going unarmored and risking arcane spell failure—sorcerers and wizards in particular. Classes limited to light or medium armor also flourish under this system, since they can multiclass to gain the benefit of a higher defense bonus.

Spells that affect metal are less useful under this system, since metal armor is less common.

Touch attacks are less effective under this system, since most characters' touch ACs are significantly higher than in a standard game.

ARMOR AS DAMAGE REDUCTION

In the abstract combat system of the D&D game, a character's armor defends him by reducing the chance that an attack will deal damage. That system simplifies the realities of battle in order to streamline combat resolution. An attack that fails due to a character's armor or natural armor doesn't really fail to connect, but rather fails to connect with enough force to deal any damage. (That's why touch attacks ignore a character's armor and natural armor—the touch attack only needs to connect to deliver its effect, and need not actually breach the target's armor.)

If you're willing to add a layer of complexity to your combats, consider this variant. In this system, armor reduces the amount of damage dealt by an attack instead of merely turning would-be hits into misses. Armor still prevents some hits outright, but also reduces the deadliness of attacks that do connect. In essence, the system "gives up" some of armor's ability to turn hits into misses in exchange for a small reduction in the damage dealt by any given attack.

ARMOR DAMAGE REDUCTION VALUES

In this system, armor offers two benefits against attacks: an armor bonus to AC, which functions just like the armor bonus in the standard D&D rules but is usually lower in value; and damage reduction. See Table 4–4: Armor and Damage Reduction for the armor bonus and DR values for common armor types. (All other armor statistics, such as maximum Dexterity bonus, armor check penalty, and arcane spell failure chance, are unchanged.)

For armors not covered on Table 4–4, you can determine the new armor values and damage reduction based on the standard D&D armor bonus. To determine the armor's damage reduction, divide the armor's normal armor bonus by 2 (rounding down). To determine the armor's new armor bonus, subtract the DR from the normal armor bonus. For example, studded leather has a normal armor bonus of +3. That gives it a DR of 1/– (half of 3, rounded down) and a new armor bonus of +2 (3 minus 1).

Table 4–4: Armor and Damage Reduction

Armor	Armor Bonus[1]	Damage Reduction
Light armor		
Padded	+1	none
Leather	+1	1/–
Studded leather	+2	1/–
Chain shirt	+2	2/–
Medium armor		
Hide	+2	1/–
Scale mail	+2	2/–
Chainmail	+3	2/–
Breastplate	+3	2/–
Heavy armor		
Splint mail	+3	3/–
Banded mail	+3	3/–
Half-plate	+4	3/–
Full plate	+4	4/–

1 Add any enhancement bonus to this value.

MAGIC ARMOR

An armor's enhancement bonus (if any) increases its armor bonus to AC, but has no effect on the armor's damage reduction. A *+3 chain shirt*, for example, adds +5 to AC and grants damage reduction 2/–.

STACKING DAMAGE REDUCTION

The damage reduction granted by armor stacks with other damage reduction of the same type (that is, damage reduction that has a dash after the number). A 7th-level barbarian wearing a breastplate has DR 3/– (1/– from his class levels and 2/– from his armor). A fighter wearing full plate armor who is the target of a *stoneskin* spell, however, has DR 4/– from the armor and 10/adamantine from the spell (see page 292 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, under Damage Reduction, for rules on characters with multiple types of damage reduction).

SHIELDS

Shields function normally in this variant, granting their full shield bonus to AC. Unlike with armor, a shield's effectiveness is measured wholly by its ability to keep an attack from connecting with your body.

NATURAL ARMOR

A creature's natural armor also provides a modicum of damage reduction. Divide the monster's natural armor bonus (not including any enhancement bonus) by 5 to determine the monster's damage reduction. The same value is subtracted from the monster's natural armor bonus to AC to find the monster's new AC. These calculations are summarized in Table 4–5: Natural Armor and Damage Reduction.

If the creature already has damage reduction, either add the value gained from natural armor (if the existing damage reduction is of the same type) or treat it as a separate DR value (if it is of a different type). See page 292 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for rules on creatures with multiple types of damage reduction.

For example, a mummy normally has a natural armor bonus of +10. This gives it DR 2/–, and its natural armor bonus is reduced by 2 points to +8 (making its AC 18). Since the mummy already has DR 5/– as a special quality, its total damage reduction becomes DR 7/–.

A mature adult red dragon has a natural armor bonus of +24. This gives it DR 4/–, and its natural armor bonus is reduced by 4 points to +20 (making its AC 28). The dragon's existing damage reduction is 10/magic, so the two damage reduction values remain separate.

Finally, a frost giant has a +9 natural armor bonus, so it gains DR 1/– from natural armor. The chain shirt it wears gives it an additional DR 2/–. If that frost giant were a 7th-level barbarian, the barbarian class levels would give it DR 1/–. These three values add up to DR 4/–. The giant's AC would be 20 (10, +8 natural armor bonus, +2 chain shirt).

Table 4–5: Natural Armor and Damage Reduction

Natural Armor Bonus	Damage Reduction	Subtract from Natural Armor
0–4	none	0
5–9	1/–	1
10–14	2/–	2
15–19	3/–	3
20–24	4/–	4
25–29	5/–	5
30–34	6/–	6
35–39	7/–	7
40–44	8/–	8

DAMAGE CONVERSION

In the standard D&D rules, armor reduces the chance of a character taking damage in combat—but that's the limit of its protection. In this variant, armor not only protects in that manner, but also turns fatal blows into less life-threatening hits. Armored characters are often more easily battered into unconsciousness than brought down by lethal damage. It's a system that works well in campaigns with a great deal of combat between armored foes, but in which magical healing is not common. It's also ideal in a world in which ethical or legal standards dictate that subduing or capturing opponents is preferable to killing them.

ARMOR DAMAGE CONVERSION

Armor, in addition to adding a bonus to AC, also converts lethal damage from physical attacks into nonlethal damage. (Shields provide a shield bonus to AC, as normal, but do not convert damage.)

Each time an armor-wearing character is struck by an attack that deals lethal damage, the amount of damage dealt to the character is reduced by an amount equal to the armor bonus (including enhancement) of the armor worn. The character takes an equal amount of nonlethal damage. Damage that is not affected by damage reduction (energy damage and the like) is not converted.

For example, while wearing *+1 full plate* (total armor bonus +9), Tordek is struck by an arrow for 6 points of damage. Since the armor can convert up to 9 points of damage per attack, the entire 6 points is converted from lethal damage to nonlethal damage. Tordek's hit point total remains the same, but he increases his nonlethal damage total by 6 points. Later, a hill giant strikes Tordek for a whopping 22 points of damage. The armor converts 9 points of this damage to nonlethal damage, but the remaining 13 points are deducted from Tordek's hit points.

Nonlethal Damage: An armor-wearing character can ignore nonlethal damage equal to his armor bonus. (In effect, armor grants damage reduction equal to its armor bonus against nonlethal attacks.)

Natural Armor: At your option, you can make natural armor work in the same manner. However, this means that almost no defeated monster is truly dead, which may prove problematic (see the Behind the Curtain sidebar). This rule also interacts strangely with regeneration—since all damage dealt to a creature with regeneration is treated as nonlethal damage, a regenerating creature with armor or natural armor actually takes less damage than normal when using this system. In the case of regenerating creatures, consider eliminating the rule that natural armor works in the same manner.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: ARMOR AS DR

It's pretty easy to see the effect of this variant system: attacks hit more often, but do less damage. What does that really mean?

Low-level combat tends to be less dangerous for armored characters. Although their ACs are lower (and thus their chance of being damaged is higher), this is more than offset by the reduced damage suffered by attacks. A typical goblin warrior, for instance, can barely hurt a character wearing splint mail, because the armor's damage reduction entirely negates the damage dealt by an average hit. Even though the goblin will hit more often, it will likely end up dealing less total damage over the course of a typical battle.

A mid-level fighter in full plate armor must still be cautious when fighting an ogre, but his armor reduces the ogre's average damage by 25% while only increasing its chance to hit by 20%—a net gain for the fighter.

At higher levels, however, the balance shifts back in favor of monsters that deal large amounts of damage per hit. When facing a Huge earth elemental, a fighter in full plate will be hit 20% more often (due to the 4-point reduction in his AC), but his 4 points of damage reduction now only reduces his opponent's average damage by less than 17%. Advantage: elemental. Thus, high-level characters must be more careful when battling monsters with extreme damage-dealing capability.

COMBO: DEFENSE BONUS AND DAMAGE REDUCTION

You can combine the defense bonus variant and the armor as damage reduction variant in a variety of ways to create a more complex system.

Using both systems as written, many characters will wear armor even if the armor bonus provided is lower than the defense bonus gained from class and level. Because the character gets the higher of his defense bonus or armor bonus, the character can wear armor and benefit from its damage reduction while relying on his defense bonus for a higher Armor Class.

If that's not to your liking, you can rule that a character's armor bonus overrides his defense bonus, even if the defense bonus is higher. This forces characters to make a tough choice between having a high AC and having damage reduction.

INJURY

The D&D game's hit point system is an easy and effective way of measuring character health—but it's somewhat abstract. This variant eliminates hit points, and simply determines whether characters are hurt or killed every time they're hit in combat.

DETERMINING INJURIES

When using the injury variant, characters no longer have hit points. Instead, a character's injuries accumulate until he becomes disabled or dying (or staggered or unconscious, if he has taken nonlethal damage).

When a character or creature takes damage, divide the damage dealt by the attack by 5 (rounding up). The result is the damage value of the attack. For example, if you are hit by an attack that deals 12 points of damage, the attack has a damage value of 3 (12 divided by 5, rounded up).

To determine if you are injured, make a Fortitude save to resist injury. The DC is 15 + the damage value.

If you succeed on the save, you suffer no ill effect from the attack.

If you fail the save by less than 10, you have taken a hit. (If the attack dealt nonlethal damage, the hit is a nonlethal hit.) Each hit you take imposes a cumulative –1 modifier on future Fortitude saves to resist injury.

If you fail the save by 10 or more, you are disabled. (If the attack dealt nonlethal damage, you are staggered).

Automatic Success and Failure: A natural 20 on a Fortitude save to resist injury is treated as an automatic success, just as normal. A natural 1 is always treated as if the save failed by 10 or more.

Saving Throw Result	Lethal Damage	Nonlethal Damage
Success	No effect	No effect
Failed by 1 to 9	Hit	Nonlethal hit
Failed by 10 or more	Disabled	Staggered

CONDITION DESCRIPTIONS

Use the descriptions below to determine the game effects from a failed saving throw to resist injury.

Hit

A hit means you have suffered some minor injury. Every hit imposes a cumulative –1 penalty on all Fortitude saves to resist injury.

If a disabled character (see below) suffers a hit, he becomes dying.

Disabled

A disabled character is conscious, but can only take a single move action or standard action each turn (nor can he take full-round actions). He moves at half speed. Taking move actions doesn't risk further injury, but performing any standard action (or any other action the DM deems strenuous, including some free actions such as casting a quickened spell) worsens the character's condition to dying (unless the action involved healing; see below).

If 5 or more points of magical healing are applied to a disabled character, he is no longer disabled.

A character can be both staggered and disabled. Becoming staggered while disabled does not worsen a character's condition to dying. If a staggered and disabled character receives at least 5 points of healing, both conditions are removed.

A disabled character who suffers a hit or a disabled result from an attack becomes dying.

Dying

A dying character is unconscious and near death. Each round on his turn, a dying character must make a Fortitude save (DC 10, +1 per turn after the first) to become stable. Penalties suffered from hits apply to this saving throw.

If the character fails the save, he dies.

If the character succeeds on the save by less than 5, he does not die but does not improve. He is still dying and must continue to make Fortitude saves every round.

If the character succeeds on the save by 5 or more but by less than 10, he becomes stable but remains unconscious.

If the character succeeds on the save by 10 or more, he becomes conscious and disabled.

Another character can improve a dying character's condition to stable by making a DC 15 Heal check as a standard action (this provokes attacks of opportunity).

A dying character who suffers a hit or a disabled result from an attack is killed.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: DAMAGE CONVERSION

With this system, a character still takes as much damage from a hit as in the normal combat rules. Barring any magical healing delivered during the fight, a battle lasts just as long as in a standard game. Since nonlethal damage goes away faster than lethal damage, though, characters can recuperate from their battles relatively quickly, even without magical healing, making this variant ideal for low-magic campaigns.

However, healing spells become potentially doubly effective, since they heal an equal amount of lethal and nonlethal damage.

Nonlethal attacks become much less frightening to armored opponents. A fighter in full plate simply has no fear of unarmed opponents, since they have little chance of injuring him. (Of course, they can still overrun, trip, or grapple him, so he'd be wise to keep an eye on them all the same.)

Another effect is that defeated foes remain alive (and unconscious) unless dispatched after the fight. This can decrease character mortality dramatically—since most characters who fall in battle will be merely unconscious, but not dying—but it also introduces the potentially ugly postcombat scene of the characters feeling it necessary to slit the throats of their unconscious foes. Some characters, particularly paladins or other chivalrous types, may suffer serious moral qualms.

This variant is probably best for campaigns in which it's acceptable for the bad guys to survive a fight. Perhaps a defeated villain's honor prevents him from returning to plague the heroes at a later date, or maybe the style of your setting rewards characters for defeating opponents without killing them outright (such as in a swashbuckling campaign). Otherwise, characters may feel that they are punished for refusing to murder unconscious foes with regularity, since those enemies will almost certainly recover from their injuries and vow vengeance against the PCs. Encounters in the campaign may often involve fighting the same opponents again and again, rather than fighting new monsters and opponents.

Nonlethal Hit

A nonlethal hit means you have been battered and bruised and are in less than top condition. Every nonlethal hit you take imposes a cumulative –1 penalty on your Fortitude saves to resist injury from nonlethal damage. Nonlethal hits do not affect Fortitude saves against lethal damage.

For example, a character with 4 hits and 3 nonlethal hits has a –4 penalty on Fortitude saves to resist injury from lethal damage, but a –7 penalty on saves to resist injury from nonlethal damage.

A staggered character (see below) who suffers a nonlethal hit or becomes staggered as the result of an attack falls unconscious.

Staggered

Being staggered is identical to being disabled (see above), except that if the character's condition worsens, he becomes unconscious instead of dying.

If 5 or more points of magical healing are applied to a staggered character, he is no longer staggered.

A character can be both disabled and staggered. Becoming disabled while staggered does not worsen your condition to unconscious. If a staggered and disabled character receives at least 5 points of healing, both conditions are removed.

A staggered character who suffers a nonlethal hit or a staggered result from an attack falls unconscious.

Unconscious

An unconscious character falls to the floor, helpless and incapable of action. Additional nonlethal hits have no effect on the character. When he recovers one nonlethal hit, he becomes conscious.

HEALING

Over time, or through magical healing, a character can reduce the number of hits he has. Some creatures have special abilities that affect the way in which they heal hits.

Natural Healing

With a full night's rest, a character heals 1 hit per two character levels (minimum 1 hit per night). If he undergoes complete bed rest for 24 hours, he heals a number of hits equal to his character level. Any significant interruption during the rest period prevents the character from healing that night.

Nonlethal hits heal more quickly. A character heals nonlethal hits at a rate of 1 hit per hour per two character levels (minimum 1 hit per hour). If the DM chooses, he can prorate this healing so that it occurs more uniformly. For instance, a 12th-level character heals 6 nonlethal hits per hour; instead, the DM can allow her to heal 1 nonlethal hit per 10 minutes.

Magical Healing

For every 5 points of magical healing administered, a character eliminates 1 lethal hit and 1 nonlethal hit.

Special Healing Abilities

Some creatures have extraordinary or supernatural powers of healing.

Fast Healing: A creature with fast healing can remove 1 lethal hit and 1 nonlethal hit per round per 5 points of fast healing (minimum 1 hit of each type). For example, a vampire spawn has fast healing 2; it can therefore eliminate 1 lethal hit and 1 nonlethal hit per round.

Illus. by R. Spencer

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: INJURY

This variant reduces the minutiae of combat bookkeeping (since characters don't need to track their hit point total). Still, since the system ties survivability to a character's saving throw, higher-level characters are better at surviving injuries than lower-level characters. That said, creatures or effects that deal large quantities of damage can turn a battle very quickly, since a single unlucky save can put a character out of commission.

In this system, a character's class Hit Die becomes less important than his Fortitude save bonus in terms of his ability to withstand damage. This factor reduces the difference between classes—instead of having five shades of ruggedness (represented by five different sizes of Hit Dice), there are only two (classes with good Fortitude saves, such as barbarians, clerics, and fighters, and classes with poor Fortitude saves, such as bards and wizards).

Bonuses on Fortitude saves become immensely important to characters, making options such as the Great Fortitude feat very attractive. Multiclassing between classes with good Fortitude saves can create abusive situations: You might choose to rule that no character can get the 2-point "bump" in a good saving throw more than once (after that, a good save starts at +0 and goes up 1 point every even-numbered level), thus limiting the potential for extensive abuse.

A creature with fast healing may add its fast healing value to Fortitude saves made to become stable when dying. A dying vampire spawn, for example, gets a +2 bonus on its Fortitude saves to become stable.

Regeneration: A creature with regeneration treats all damage as nonlethal, except for specific types of damage, given in the creature's description, that affect it normally (such as a troll's vulnerability to acid and fire). A creature with regeneration can remove 1 nonlethal hit per round per 5 points of regeneration (minimum 1 hit).

SPECIAL DAMAGE DEFENSES

Some creatures have special defenses against damage, such as damage reduction or resistance to energy. Certain spells and effects also provide defenses against damage.

Bonus Hit Points

Effects or abilities that normally give you bonus hit points (such as the Toughness feat or the *aid* spell) instead add to your Fortitude saves to resist injury. For every 5 bonus hit points granted by the effect (round fractions up), add a +1 bonus on the save. For example, Toughness gives you a +1 on Fortitude saves to resist injury.

Extra hit points granted by an increased Constitution score don't add to this save bonus, since your high Constitution already gives you a bonus on your Fortitude saves.

Damage Reduction and Resistance to Energy

Damage reduction adds to your Fortitude save to resist injury. For every 5 points of damage reduction that apply against the incoming attack (round fractions up), add a +1 bonus on the save. For instance, a creature with DR 10/magic gains a +2 bonus on Fortitude saves to resist injury from damage dealt by nonmagical weapons.

Resistance to energy works the same way. A creature with resistance to fire 15 gains a +3 bonus on Fortitude saves to resist fire damage.

Dealing Damage to Objects

Objects can suffer the effects of lethal damage just as creatures can. Nonmagical, unattended objects have a base Fortitude save bonus of +0. A magic item has a Fortitude save bonus equal to +2 + 1/2 its caster level. An item attended by a character makes saving throws as the character (or, in the case of a magic item, uses its own saving throw bonus if better).

Add an object's hardness to its Fortitude saves to resist injury. Furthermore, for every additional inch of thickness beyond the first, an object gains a +1 bonus on its save.

Magic weapons, armor, and shields also add their enhancement bonus to their Fortitude saves against damage.

An object that takes any lethal hits has a cumulative –1 penalty on its future saves to resist injury from lethal damage, just as with characters. An object that is rendered disabled is broken or destroyed instead.

Objects are immune to nonlethal damage and thus don't have to make Fortitude saves to resist injury from attacks that deal nonlethal damage.

Creatures without Constitution Scores

Some creatures, such as undead and constructs, do not have Constitution scores. Creatures without Constitution scores have a +4 bonus on Fortitude saves to resist injury. However, a creature with no Constitution score that becomes disabled is destroyed instead.

Creatures that do not have Constitution scores are immune to nonlethal damage and thus don't have to make Fortitude saves to resist injury from attacks that deal nonlethal damage.

SPECIAL DAMAGE EFFECTS

This system changes the way some special damage effects work.

Coup de Grace

A coup de grace is handled as a normal attack, except that the result of the Fortitude save is treated as one category worse. (The save DC is usually higher than normal, as well, since the coup de grace is considered a critical hit and thus deals extra damage.) On a successful save, the target takes 1 hit (or 1 nonlethal hit, if a nonlethal attack was used). If the save fails by less than 10, the target is disabled (or staggered); and if the save fails by 10 or more, the target is dying (or unconscious).

Massive Damage

There is no massive damage threshold in this variant, since the greater the damage dealt, the higher the chance that a character will become unconscious or dying.

The DM could rule that a Fortitude save to resist injury that fails by 20 or more results in the character being rendered dying (or becoming unconscious, if the damage is nonlethal damage). This introduces the very real possibility that a single hit (such as a critical hit or a sneak attack) can take a character out.

VITALITY AND WOUND POINTS

The vitality and wound points damage system was originally developed for the *Star Wars Roleplaying Game* as a more cinematic method of handling damage than the traditional hit point system. The system allows for characters to improve the amount of punishment they can withstand as they go up in level, while still allowing for a single lucky attack to take down a character.

HOUSE RULE: SLOWER MAGICAL HEALING

The instantaneous nature of magical healing sometimes stretches the imagination a little too thin, even in the highly imaginative world of fantasy roleplaying. I prefer a slightly grittier feel to the game—one that doesn't change things in the long run, but just "feels" a bit more realistic.

When a character is magically healed, the damage, instead of simply going away, is converted to nonlethal damage. The character can then recover from the nonlethal damage normally—usually by just taking a little time to rest. Magic cannot be used to heal nonlethal damage.

This rule slows events down a bit in the game, because characters have to rest between fights. But it also gives the game a more realistic feel, without actually changing the way it works.

—Charles Ryan

VITALITY POINTS

Vitality points are a measure of a character's ability to turn a direct hit into a graze or a glancing blow with no serious consequences. Like hit points in the standard D&D rules, vitality points go up with level, giving high-level characters more ability to shrug off attacks. Most types of damage reduce vitality points.

Characters gain vitality points as they gain levels. Just as with hit points in the standard D&D rules, at each level a character rolls a vitality die and adds his Constitution modifier, adding the total to his vitality point total. (And, just as with hit points, a character always gains a minimum of at least 1 vitality point per level, regardless of his roll or Constitution modifier.) A 1st-level character gets the maximum vitality die result rather than rolling, as shown on Table 4–6 below.

Table 4–6: Vitality Points

Class	Vitality Points at 1st level	Vitality Die
Barbarian	12 + Con mod	d12
Bard	6 + Con mod	d6
Cleric	8 + Con mod	d8
Druid	8 + Con mod	d8
Fighter	10 + Con mod	d10
Monk	8 + Con mod	d8
Paladin	10 + Con mod	d10
Ranger	8 + Con mod	d8
Rogue	6 + Con mod	d6
Sorcerer	4 + Con mod	d4
Wizard	4 + Con mod	d4

WOUND POINTS

Wound points measure how much true physical damage a character can withstand. Damage reduces wound points only after all vitality points are gone, or when a character is struck by a critical hit.

A character has a number of wound points equal to her current Constitution score.

CRITICAL HITS

A critical hit deals the same amount of damage as a normal hit, but that damage is deducted from wound points rather than from vitality points. Critical hits do not deal extra damage; for that reason, no weapon in this system has a damage multiplier for its critical hits.

Any critical hit automatically overcomes a creature's damage reduction, regardless of whether the attack could normally do so.

Most weapons retain their normal critical threat range. If a weapon normally has a critical multiplier greater than ×2, the weapon's threat range expands by 1 point per additional multiplier, as indicated on the table below.

Multiplier	New Threat Range
×3	19–20
×4	18–20
×5	17–20

INJURY AND DEATH

Vitality and wound points together measure how hard a character is to hurt and kill. The damage from each successful attack and each fight accumulates, dropping a character's vitality point or wound point totals until he runs out of points.

Nonlethal Damage

This system doesn't differentiate between lethal and nonlethal damage. Attacks and effects that normally deal nonlethal damage reduce vitality points, except on a critical hit, in which case they reduce wound points.

0 Vitality Points

At 0 vitality points, a character can no longer avoid taking real physical damage. Any additional damage he receives reduces his wound points.

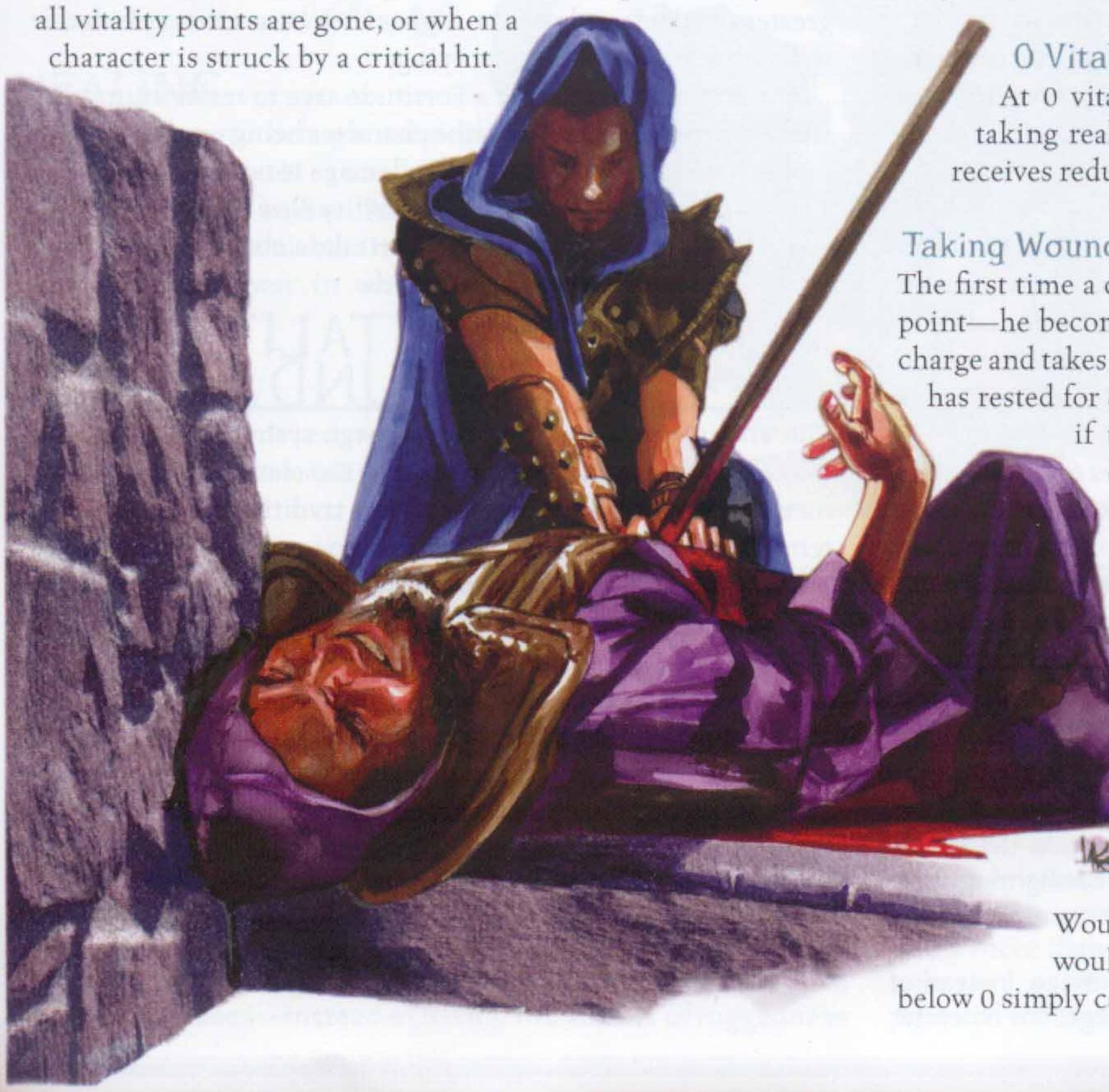
Taking Wound Damage

The first time a character takes wound damage—even a single point—he becomes fatigued. A fatigued character can't run or charge and takes a –2 penalty to Strength and Dexterity until he has rested for 8 hours (or until the wound damage is healed, if that occurs first). Additional wound damage doesn't make the character exhausted.

In addition, any time an attack deals wound damage to a character, he must succeed on a Fortitude saving throw (DC 5 + number of wound points lost from the attack) or be stunned for 1d4 rounds. (During that time, any other character can take a standard action to help the stunned character recover; doing so ends the stunned condition.)

0 Wound Points

Wound points cannot drop below 0; any damage that would cause a character's wound point total to drop below 0 simply causes the character to have 0 wound points.



Illus. by Lakeys

At 0 wound points, a character is disabled must attempt a DC 15 Fortitude save. If he succeeds on the save, he is merely disabled. If he fails, he falls unconscious and begins dying.

Disabled: A disabled character is conscious, but can only take a single move or standard action each turn (but not both, nor can she take full-round actions). She moves at half speed. Taking move actions doesn't risk further injury, but performing any standard action (or any other action the DM deems strenuous, including some free actions such as casting a quickened spell) worsens the character's condition to dying (unless it involved healing; see below).

Dying: A dying character is unconscious and near death. Each round on his turn, a dying character must make a Fortitude save (DC 10, +1 per turn after the first) to become stable.

If the character fails the save, he dies.

If the character succeeds on the save by less than 5, he does not die but does not improve. He is still dying and must continue to make Fortitude saves every round.

If the character succeeds on the save by 5 or more but by less than 10, he becomes stable but remains unconscious.

If the character succeeds on the save by 10 or more, he becomes conscious and disabled.

Another character can make a dying character stable by succeeding on a DC 15 Heal check as a standard action (which provokes attacks of opportunity).

Stable Characters and Recovery

A stable character is unconscious. Every hour, a stable character must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10, +1 per hour after the first) to remain stable.

If the character fails the save, he becomes dying.

If the character succeeds on the save by less than 5, he does not get any worse, but does not improve. He is still stable and unconscious, and must continue to make Fortitude saves every hour.

If the character succeeds on the save by 5 or more, he becomes conscious and disabled.

An unaided stable, conscious character at 0 wound points has a 10% chance to start recovering wound points naturally that day.

Once an unaided character starts recovering wound points naturally, he is no longer in danger of dying.

Recovering with Help: A dying character can be made stable with a DC 15 Heal check (a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity). One hour after a tended, dying character becomes stable, roll d%. He has a 10% chance of regaining consciousness, at which point he becomes disabled. If he remains unconscious, he has the same chance to regain consciousness every hour. Even while unconscious, he recovers wound points naturally, becoming conscious and able to resume normal activity when his wound points rise to 1 or higher.

SPECIAL DAMAGE SITUATIONS

The vitality point system changes the way some special damage effects work.

Coup de Grace

A coup de grace functions normally in that it automatically hits and scores a critical hit (and thus the damage dealt is applied to the target's wound points). If the defender survives the damage, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 10, + the amount of damage dealt) or die.

Massive Damage

The massive damage rule does not apply under this system.

HEALING

After taking damage, a character can recover vitality and wound points through natural healing (over the course of hours or days), or by magic. In any case, a character can't regain vitality points or wound points above his full normal totals.

Natural Healing

Characters recover vitality points at a rate of 1 vitality point per hour per character level.

With a full night's rest, a character recovers 1 wound point per character level (minimum 1 per night), or twice that amount with complete bed rest for 24 hours. Any significant interruption during the rest period prevents the character from healing that night.

Assisted Healing

A character who provides long-term care (see the Heal skill, page 75 of the *Player's Handbook*) doubles the rate at which a wounded character recovers lost vitality and wound points.

Magical Healing

Spells that heal hit point damage work somewhat differently in this system. For spells that heal a variable amount of hit point damage based on a die roll (such as *cure light wounds*),

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: VITALITY AND WOUNDS

Characters using this system should be more wary in combat, which can turn deadly in the space of a few lucky rolls. But they can also bounce back from a fight much more quickly. For that reason, this variant is an ideal system for low-magic campaigns or games where healing is otherwise rare.

A very weak creature in this system tends to be tougher to kill than in a standard D&D game, since its Constitution score is often higher than the number of hit points it might have had. Very big creatures are also more durable, due to their size modifier. This is reflected in the CR adjustments given in the variant rules.

Creatures capable of dealing a large amount of damage on a single hit become significantly more deadly in this system, since a lucky attack roll can deliver a deadly blow to almost any character. For critical hits, consider reducing the additional damage from bonus damage dice (such as a flaming sword or a rogue's sneak attack) to only 1 point per die. (Such attacks deal normal damage on noncritical hits.) That's still pretty scary when fighting a high-level rogue, but not quite as terrifying as facing the possibility of an extra 5 or 10 dice of wound point damage with a successful sneak attack critical hit. You may find other places where damage needs adjustment in this system as well; don't be afraid to tinker when needed to keep your game fun and exciting.

Constitution damage is especially deadly under this variant, since every point of Constitution damage reduces wound points by 1 and every 2 points of damage reduces vitality by a number of points equal to the character's HD. If a character's Constitution is reduced to 0, he dies even if he has wound points remaining.

apply the actual die roll as restored vitality points, and any modifier to the die roll (such as caster level, for *cure* spells) as restored wound points.

For example, *cure moderate wounds* heals 2d8 points of damage, +1 point per caster level (maximum +10). Under this system, a 10th-level cleric could cast it to heal 2d8 vitality points and 10 wound points.

Spells or effects that return a number of hit points not based on a die roll, such as *heal*, apply the healing to lost wound points first, then to lost vitality. For example, an 11th-level cleric casting *heal* has 110 points of healing to apply. If the target has taken 12 points of wound damage and 104 points of vitality damage, the spell heals all the wound damage and 98 points of the vitality damage, leaving the target with only 6 points of vitality damage remaining.

NPCS AND MONSTERS

Vitality points are only granted by the "heroic" classes, such as the character classes in the *Player's Handbook* and various prestige classes. The NPC classes found in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*—adept, aristocrat, commoner, expert, and warrior—grant no vitality points (either at 1st level or thereafter). Such characters have wound points equal to their Constitution score. Thus, a typical 1st-level orc warrior has no vitality points and 12 wound points. All damage dealt to such creatures is applied to their wound points.

Most monsters, on the other hand, have both wound points and vitality points. For Small, Medium, and Large creatures, a monster's wound point total is equal to its current Constitution score. Creatures smaller or larger than that have their wound point total multiplied by a factor based on their size, as indicated on the table below.

Size	Wound Point Multiplier
Fine	×1/8
Diminutive	×1/4
Tiny	×1/2
Small	×1
Medium	×1
Large	×1
Huge	×2
Gargantuan	×4
Colossal	×8

A monster's vitality point total is equal to the number of hit points it would normally have, based on its type and Constitution score. The DM may choose not to assign vitality points to creatures that pose little or no threat to PCs, such as domesticated herd animals.

Creatures without Constitution Scores

Some creatures, such as undead and constructs, do not have Constitution scores. If a creature has no Constitution score, it has no vitality points. Instead, it has wound points equal to the number of vitality points it would have based on its HD and type. Such creatures are never fatigued or stunned by wound damage.

Bonus Hit Points

If a creature would have bonus hit points based on its type, these are treated as bonus wound points. (For example, a Medium construct gets 20 bonus wound points.) The same holds true for any permanent effect that increases a character's hit point total (such as the Toughness feat, which adds 3 to the character's wound point total).

Damage Reduction

Damage reduction functions normally, reducing damage dealt by attacks. However, any critical hit automatically overcomes a creature's damage reduction, regardless of whether the attack could normally do so. For example, a critical hit against a skeleton (DR 5/bludgeoning) overcomes the creature's damage reduction even if it was hit with a weapon that does not deal bludgeoning damage.

Fast Healing

Creatures with fast healing regain vitality points at an exceptionally fast rate, usually 1 or more vitality points per round, as given in the creature's description (for example, a vampire has fast healing 5).

If a creature with fast healing has no Constitution score, fast healing restores lost wound points at the same rate instead. The same doesn't apply to creatures that have no vitality points but do have a Constitution score (such as a human warrior or a domestic animal). Such creatures gain no benefit from fast healing.

Regeneration

All damage dealt to creatures with regeneration is vitality point damage, even in the case of critical hits. The creature automatically heals vitality point damage at a fixed rate per round, as given in the entry (for example, a troll has regeneration 5). A regenerating creature that runs out of vitality points becomes fatigued just as if it had taken wound point damage. Excess damage, however, does not reduce its wound points.

Certain attack forms, typically fire and acid, automatically deal wound damage to a regenerating creature, though it may attempt a Fortitude save (DC 10 + damage dealt) to convert this to vitality damage, which it can regenerate normally. Otherwise, regeneration functions as described in the *Monster Manual* and in individual monster descriptions.

HOUSE RULE: OUT-OF-TURN DODGE

Any time you are about to be attacked, you can give up your next turn to gain a +4 dodge bonus to your AC. You must be able to apply your Dexterity bonus to AC against the attack (so you can't use it when flat-footed, for instance), and you declare this before the attack roll is made. Your initiative does not change; you simply do not take an action on your next turn. You gain this dodge bonus until the next time your initiative comes up after your "skipped" turn.

This rule gives a character the option of defending himself, providing an additional element to combat tactics. It also provides adventurers with addition tactical options, such as a "wolf pack" tactic: When a group attacks a single target, whoever the target retaliates against uses the out-of-turn dodge to aid his AC, while each of the others attacks the opponent on his or her turn.

—Andrew Finch

MONSTER CHALLENGE RATINGS

Increase the CR of any Gargantuan or Colossal creature by +1, unless the creature does not have a Constitution score.

Monsters with fractional CRs move up to the next highest fraction. The kobold (ordinarily CR 1/4) becomes CR 1/3, for example, while the goblin (normally CR 1/2) becomes CR 1.

RESERVE POINTS

This variant gives each character a capacity to recover quickly from injury. This capacity, measured as reserve points, replenishes lost hit points quickly after a fight. Thus, characters may be wounded and near death by the end of a fight but then recover to full strength (or nearly full strength) before the next fight begins.

Reserve points work particularly well in low-magic campaigns or any game in which healing is rare, expensive, or otherwise hard to get.

USING RESERVE POINTS

A character's quantity of reserve points equals his full normal hit point total.

After a character becomes injured (by losing hit points), reserve points begin automatically converting to hit points at the rate of 1 per minute of nonstrenuous activity (such as resting or hiking, but not climbing, swimming, or fighting). Thus, for each minute of nonstrenuous activity, the character regains 1 hit point and loses 1 reserve point.

For example, Tordek has 22 hit points, so he also has 22 reserve points. In a battle with orcs, he takes 6 points of damage, dropping his hit points to 16. After the fight, Tordek's reserve points begin to "convert" to hit points. Over the course of the next 6 minutes, his reserve point total drops by 6 and his hit point total increases by 6, up to his maximum of 22. During the next fight, Tordek takes 24 points of damage, dropping him to –2, and is then dying for 5 rounds before stabilizing, leaving him at –7 hit points. Over the next 16 minutes, his remaining 16 reserve points convert to hit points. After 7 minutes he's conscious but disabled (0 hp). After 8 minutes he's back on his feet (1 hp), and after all 16 minutes he's up to 9 hit points and 0 reserve points.

Nonlethal Damage: Reserve points can also reduce a character's nonlethal damage total. For each reserve point that converts to a hit point, a character also subtracts 1 point from his nonlethal damage. In addition, a character can take a standard action to "spend" a number of reserve points equal to or less than his HD to reduce his nonlethal damage an equal amount. (If a character has the Endurance feat, the DM might choose to make this a move action, to reflect the fact that such characters can more easily persevere through exhausting situations.)

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: RESERVE POINTS

Even though this variant effectively doubles a character's number of hit points, he can't take a beating over and over again without depleting his capacity to recover. Reserve points effectively double the number of hit points a character can lose over the course of multiple fights but do not increase the damage a character can withstand in a single fight.

REPLENISHING RESERVE POINTS

Characters naturally regain lost reserve points at the same rate that they naturally heal lost hit points (see Healing, page 146 of the *Player's Handbook*). If a character receives any magical healing, that healing is applied first to the character's lost hit points. Any excess healing left over after the character's hit points are restored to full normal is applied to increase the character's current reserve point total (up to its normal maximum).

For example, Tordek normally has 22 hit points, but he's down to 9 hp and 0 reserve points. He drinks a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, rolling 2d8+3 and getting a result of 15. The first 13 points replenish his hit points; the remainder go to his reserve points. He now has 22 hit points and 2 reserve points.

CONSTITUTION CHANGES

If a character's Constitution modifier goes up or down, his reserve points go up or down just as his hit points do. If a decrease in Constitution would drop a character's reserve points below 0, any excess reduction is deducted from his current hit points.

MASSIVE DAMAGE THRESHOLDS AND RESULTS

The massive damage rule presented in the *Player's Handbook* is designed for games of heroic fantasy. It maintains the remote possibility that a single blow from a mighty opponent can kill a character, regardless of the character's actual hit points.

Altering the massive damage rules can dramatically change the characters' attitude about combat. A lower threshold (the amount of damage that triggers a Fortitude save to avoid death) makes combat more deadly, perhaps turning any hit into a potentially life-threatening injury. On the other hand, a less deadly result on a failed save (unconsciousness instead of death, for instance) makes combat less dangerous, making a character's current hit point total more important than any single hit.

Here, then, are several alternative massive damage thresholds and results. You can combine different variants to create your own custom system. For instance, you might combine the HD-based threshold variant with the size-based threshold variant to create a massive damage threshold that takes into account both a creature's Hit Dice and size.

Regardless of the variant you use, each player should record his character's massive damage threshold somewhere on the character sheet (to avoid mid-battle calculations), and the DM may want to add massive damage threshold values to monster and NPC statistics blocks for the same reason.

ALTERNATE THRESHOLD LEVELS

The 50-point threshold in the standard D&D rules can be altered in several different ways.

Constitution-Based Threshold: A character's massive damage threshold is equal to his Constitution score. Whenever he takes damage from a single hit that equals or exceeds his current Constitution score, he must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer the effects of massive damage.

If an attack deals hit point damage and also changes the character's Constitution score (such as a strike with a poisoned weapon), apply all effects of the hit before determining whether the damage is enough to trigger the saving throw. For instance, a character with a 14 Constitution is hit by a greatsword coated with black adder venom. The attack deals 12 points of damage,

but the character also fails his Fortitude save against the poison and takes 3 points of Constitution damage. This lowers his Constitution—and hence his massive damage threshold—to 11. Since the damage exceeds the threshold, the character must now make a Fortitude save to avoid the effect of massive damage.

HD-Based Threshold: A character's massive damage threshold is equal to 25, +2 per Hit Die. Whenever a character takes damage from a single hit that equals or exceeds this value, he must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer the effects of massive damage.

For example, a 5th-level human fighter has a massive damage threshold of 35 (25 + [2 × 5]). A fire giant has a massive damage threshold of 55 (25 + [2 × 15]).

Size-Based Threshold: A creature's massive damage threshold is equal to 50, plus or minus 10 points for every size category larger or smaller than Medium. (This variant was originally presented on page 27 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.) Whenever a creature takes damage from a single hit that equals or exceeds this value, it must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer the effects of massive damage.

ALTERNATE SAVE FAILURE RESULTS

Failed massive damage Fortitude save results can be altered in several ways.

Dying Result: Instead of a failed Fortitude save against massive damage resulting in instant death, a failed save results in a character being reduced to –1 hit point. The character becomes dying and unconscious, but can still become stable or be helped by his friends, just like any other character who is reduced to –1 hp.

Near-Death Result: Alternatively, instead of a failed Fortitude save against massive damage resulting in instant death, a failed save results in a character being reduced to –8 hp. The character is very close to death (having only a round or two to become stable or receive help), but isn't automatically killed.

Variable Result: For an added bit of random chance, a character who fails his Fortitude save against massive damage rolls 1d10 to determine his negative hit point total. A roll of 1 to 9 indicates that the character is dying (at –1 hp on a 1, –2 hp on a 2, and so forth). A roll of 10 leaves the character with –10 hit points, which means he is dead.

SCALING THE SAVING THROW

Another way to tweak the massive damage system is to scale the Fortitude save DC based on the damage taken. For every 10 points of damage dealt by an attack in excess of a character's massive damage threshold, increase the Fortitude save DC by 2. This rule functions the same regardless of the threshold you choose to use.

For instance, if you use the standard 50-point threshold, a hit that deals 50 to 59 points of damage requires a DC 15 save, 60 to 69 points DC 17, 70 to 79 points DC 19, and so forth. If you use the Constitution-based threshold, a character with a Constitution of 15 would have to make a DC 15 Fortitude save when taking 15 to 24 points of damage from a single attack, DC 17 for 25 to 34 points, DC 19 for 35 to 44 points, and so on.

COMBINING MASSIVE DAMAGE VARIANTS

The massive damage variants given above can be combined in a number of ways.

To combine the Constitution-based threshold variant with the HD-based system, simply use a character's Constitution score instead of 25 to determine the character's massive damage threshold. For example, a 3rd-level character with a Constitution of 14 has a massive damage threshold of 20 (14 + [3 × 2]). In most cases, this calculation results in a threshold lower than the HD-based threshold but still higher than the Constitution-based threshold—retaining the "grittiness" of the Constitution-based system

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: MASSIVE DAMAGE RULES

The variant systems for massive damage affect the game in different ways.

The Constitution-based threshold variant is deadlier than the standard massive damage system, since the threshold is so much lower. It's best for low-level, low-power games, or campaigns bent on "gritty realism" in combat. You may want to allow characters the option of increasing their thresholds without improving their Constitution scores. For instance, a feat called Improved Damage Threshold that increased a character's damage threshold by 3 would allow a low-Constitution character to increase his massive damage threshold quickly and easily.

Unlike most other massive damage thresholds, the HD-based variant threshold scales up with a character as he gains levels. At lower levels, the threshold is lower than the normal value, but still high enough that it rarely matters. At higher levels, a character's massive damage threshold exceeds the value given in the *Player's Handbook*, increasing such characters' survivability in combat. It favors monsters whose Hit Dice greatly exceed their Challenge Ratings, such as giants and dragons, since their massive damage thresholds will end up higher than those of the characters fighting them.

The size-based threshold variant hurts halfling and gnome PCs, as well as familiars and some animal companions. It generally favors monsters, since monsters tend to be larger than PCs.

The dying save result variant tends to create less deadly combats, since a single save doesn't spell automatic death. Still, a failed save can be just as critical to the tide of battle as in the standard system—a dying character is every bit as useless as a dead one, and is likely to bleed off resources from one or more other characters who attempt to save him from death.

The near-death result variant is almost as deadly as the standard system, but it gives a character a slim chance of surviving. It is particularly suited for heroic campaigns in which characters often find themselves at the brink of death, only to pull back from the edge at the last possible moment.

The variable result system is less deadly than the standard rules (since it allows for the likelihood that a character will survive for at least a few rounds), but removes the predictability of the dying result and near death result variants. A lucky character might be reduced only to –1 hp, while an unlucky character might have mere seconds to survive until passing into the great beyond—if he gets any time at all.

Finally, the scaling saving throw option makes high-level combat particularly dangerous to characters with poor Fortitude saves. Since those characters also tend to have low hit points, combat becomes doubly deadly, since they now must worry about individual attacks from powerful opponents as well as the normal attrition of hit points.

for low- to mid-level characters, while allowing higher-level characters to become braver in combat.

You can easily combine the HD-based system with the size-based variant: Use half of the base value for size instead of 20 to determine the massive damage threshold. For instance, a 1st-level human fighter (a Medium character) has a massive damage threshold of 27 (half of 50 is 25, plus 2 × 1).

You probably shouldn't combine the Constitution-based system with the size-based variant, since the threshold is already low enough that reducing it for Small or smaller characters unduly punishes them.

The alternate save failure results variant can be combined with any of the alternative threshold levels.

DEATH AND DYING

Under the standard D&D rules, unconsciousness and death are predictable states: When a character reaches negative hit points, he goes unconscious. When he reaches –10, he dies.

This variant takes away some of that predictability. No longer does a dying character have a set number of rounds to live. This heightens the tension in combat when one of your allies has fallen, because you don't know exactly when his clock is going to run out.

0 HIT POINTS

With this variant, characters can't be reduced to negative hit points—0 is the minimum. There is no automatic hit point total at which a character dies. Instead, any character who takes damage that reduces his hit points to 0 must make a Fortitude save to avoid falling unconscious or dying.

THE FORTITUDE SAVE

When a character's hit points are reduced to 0, he must attempt a Fortitude save (DC 10, +2 per 10 points of damage dealt by the attack or effect). Success means the character is disabled; failure indicates that he is dying. Failure by 10 or more means the character is dead. (If the character rolls a natural 1, he is dying. Calculate the numeric result; if he missed the DC by 10 or more, he is dead.)

The possible results of the save are as follows.

Disabled: A disabled character is conscious, but can only take a single move or standard action each turn (but not both, nor can she take full-round actions). She moves at half speed. Taking move actions doesn't risk further injury, but if a disabled character takes any standard action (or any other action the DM deems strenuous, including some free actions such as casting a quickened spell), she must succeed on a Fortitude save (against the same DC as the save made when reduced to 0 hit points) to remain disabled; otherwise, she becomes dying after she completes the action. If a disabled character takes any lethal damage, she must make a new Fortitude save (DC 10, +2 per 10 points of damage dealt by the attack or effect), but any result other than dead means the character is now dying. A disabled character who is dealt (or who is currently suffering from) any nonlethal damage becomes unconscious (since the character's nonlethal damage now exceeds his hit points) but does not begin dying.

Dying: A dying character is unconscious and near death. Each round on his turn, a dying character must make a Fortitude save (DC 10, +1 per turn after the first) to become stable.

If the character fails the save, he dies.

If the character succeeds on the save by less than 5, he does not die but does not improve. He is still dying and must continue to make Fortitude saves every round.

If the character succeeds on the save by 5 or more but by less than 10, he becomes stable but remains unconscious.

If the character succeeds on the save by 10 or more, he becomes conscious and disabled.

Another character can make a dying character stable by succeeding on a DC 15 Heal check as a standard action (which provokes attacks of opportunity).

Stable: A stable character is unconscious. Every hour, a stable character must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10, +1 per hour after the first) to remain stable.

If the character fails the save, he becomes dying.

If the character succeeds on the save by less than 5, he does not get any worse, but does not improve. He is still stable and unconscious, and must continue to make Fortitude saves every hour.

If the character succeeds on the save by 5 or more, he becomes conscious and has 1 hit point.

Another character can grant a stable character a +2 bonus on his Fortitude save to remain stable by tending to him for at least 10 minutes during the hour between saves and by making a DC 15 Heal check.

Dead: A dead character's soul immediately departs the body, and getting it back into the body is a major hassle. Unless you have access to powerful divine magic, you can't do much with a dead character except go through his pockets for loose gold pieces.

HEALING

A disabled, stable, or dying character has 0 hit points. Healing that raises her above 0 hit points makes her conscious and fully functional again, just as if she had never been reduced to 0. A spellcaster retains the spellcasting ability she had before dropping to 0 hit points. (Of course, a character suffering from nonlethal damage equal to or in excess of her current hit points must still deal with the ramifications of that state; see Nonlethal Damage, page 146 of the *Player's Handbook*.)

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: DEATH AND DYING

This variant system increases a character's chance of surviving in combat against monsters that deal out tremendous amounts of damage per attack, since any character brought to 0 hit points against such a creature has a chance of survival. It eliminates the fear that every high-level character has faced: taking damage from a creature's attack that knocks him down close to 0 hit points, knowing that a second attack is coming and that it will probably deal enough damage to send him well below –10 hit points.

This variant also reduces some of the swing factor of massive damage, since a single blown save won't make the difference between life and death. In fights against monsters who can routinely deliver 50 or more points of damage per hit—not terribly uncommon at higher levels—this keeps combat from being a grim game of "Who will be the first to roll a natural 1?"

For example, Lidda is smashed by a hill giant's club for 26 points of damage, but she only has 14 hit points left. She is reduced to 0 hit points. She must immediately attempt a DC 14 Fortitude save (base DC 10, +4 because the damage dealt was at least 20 points but less than 30 points). She rolls a 5, so she is unconscious and dying. (Had she rolled any worse, the attack would have killed her outright.)

On her next turn, she must succeed on a DC 10 Fortitude save to become stable. She rolls a 13, which is enough to remain dying but not good enough to become stable. Next round, the DC increases to 11, and she rolls a 16. Since that result exceeds the DC by at least 5 points, Lidda becomes stable but remains unconscious. Assuming that she isn't healed by her friends (or slain by her enemies) in the meantime, she must succeed on a DC 10 Fortitude save 1 hour later to remain stable.

MASSIVE DAMAGE

If a single attack deals sufficient damage to force a saving throw against massive damage (typically 50 points, though if you use a variant system—see Massive Damage Thresholds and Results, above—that amount may vary dramatically), the target of the attack makes a Fortitude save as normal. If the save fails, the target's hit point total is reduced to 0, and he must immediately attempt a second Fortitude save (DC 10, +2 per 10 points of damage dealt by the attack or effect) to determine if he is dead, dying, or merely disabled (as outlined above).

For example, Tordek is blasted by the fiery breath of an old red dragon. Failing his Reflex save, he takes 88 points of fire damage. Thankfully, Tordek wears a *major ring of fire resistance*, which reduces this damage by 20 points to 68. This number is far lower than his current hit points, but is enough damage to trigger a DC 15 Fortitude save due to massive damage (according to the rules in the *Player's Handbook*). Unfortunately, Tordek rolls a natural 1 on the saving throw and is reduced to 0 hit points. He must now attempt a Fortitude save to see if he is merely disabled, dying, or if this attack slays him outright. The DC is 22 (base 10, +12 because the damage dealt is at least 60 points but not 70 points). This time Tordek rolls a 23, which is good enough to remain disabled. Tordek remains conscious, but may attempt only a standard action or a move action (plus free actions) each round, and if he takes a standard action, he must make another DC 22 Fortitude save to remain disabled after taking that action. If he fails that save, or if he takes even a single point of lethal damage, he is rendered unconscious and begins dying (or may be slain outright).

ACTION POINTS

Action points give characters the means to affect game play in significant ways, by improving important rolls or unlocking special abilities. Each character has a limited number of action points, and once an action point is spent, it is gone for good.

ACQUIRING ACTION POINTS

A beginning (1st-level) character starts the game with 5 action points. A character above 1st level starts the game with a number of action points equal to 5 + 1/2 his current character level.

Every time a character advances, he gains a number of action points equal to 5 + 1/2 his new character level. Some prestige classes might allow a faster rate of accrual, at the DM's option.

Action Points and Existing Games

Adding action points to an existing campaign is easy, since characters don't need to make any special changes. Each character simply gains a number of action points equal to 5 + 1/2 his current character level.

NPCs and Action Points

Most NPCs probably shouldn't have action points, due to the added complexity this would create. In the case of important villains or other significant characters, however, the DM may award them an appropriate number of action points to use against the player characters. A number of action points equal to 1/2 the NPC's level is a good baseline.

USING ACTION POINTS

You can spend 1 action point either to add to a single d20 roll, to take a special action, or to improve the use of a feat.

You can spend 1 action point in a round. If you spend a point to use a special action (see below), you can't spend another one in the same round to improve a die roll, and vice versa.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: ACTION POINTS

Action points give players some control over poor die rolls. Although this has little effect in an average encounter, it makes it a little more likely that characters will survive extremely challenging encounters and less likely that a single character will fall to what would otherwise be a balanced foe because of bad luck. A reserve of action points lets even careful players expose their characters to more risks, heightening the game's tension and opening the door to even more heroic action. This variant also makes it less likely that an entire adventuring group will fall victim to one powerful effect, such as *circle of death* or *cloudkill*.

Action points also make it more likely that the use of a character's most potent abilities will be successful. For example, although its overall effect on an encounter might be minimal, few things frustrate a paladin more than missing with a smite attack—an event that becomes less likely when using action points.

That said, action points can also lead characters to routinely get in over their heads (relying on action points to save themselves), and for DMs to unconsciously increase the difficulty of encounters (since characters are more likely to succeed against foes of equal power). This is fine as long as the characters have a reserve of such points to spend—but if they run out, encounters that would otherwise be merely challenging can become incredibly deadly. Keep the number of action points available to your characters in mind when designing encounters.

For DMs who are worried that action points increase the power level of characters without an offsetting cost, there's an easy solution. Just think of each action point as a one-use magic item with a broad range of possible effects. With that analogy, it becomes easy to justify reducing the amount of treasure awarded to balance out the accrual of action points. Note that this is merely a tool for DMs interested in carefully monitoring character power levels; action points should never be for sale.

An action point is roughly equivalent to a magic item worth 100 gp per character level (since the higher a character's level, the more potent the effect).

Add to a Roll

When you spend 1 action point to improve a d20 roll, you add the result of a 1d6 roll to your d20 roll (including attack rolls, saves, checks, or any other roll of a d20) to help you meet or exceed the target number. You can declare the use of 1 action point to alter a d20 roll after the roll is made, but only before the DM reveals the result of that roll. You can't use an action point to alter the result of a d20 roll when you are taking 10 or taking 20.

Depending on character level (see the table below), a character might be able to roll more than one d6 when he spends 1 action point. If so, apply the highest result and disregard the other rolls. A 15th-level character, for instance, gets to roll 3d6 and take the best result of the three. So, if he rolled a 1, 2, and 4, he would apply the 4 to his d20 roll.

Character Level	Action Point Dice Rolled
1st–7th	1d6
8th–14th	2d6
15th–20th	3d6

Special Actions

A character can perform certain tasks by spending an action point. In addition to the actions described below, some prestige classes or feats (see below) might allow the expenditure of action points in order to gain or activate specific abilities, at the DM's option.

Activate Class Ability: A character can spend 1 action point to gain another use of a class ability that has a limited number of uses per day. For example, a monk might spend an action point to gain another use of her stunning fist ability, or a paladin might spend an action point to make an additional smite attack.

Boost Defense: A character can spend 1 action point as a free action when fighting defensively. This gives him double the normal benefits for fighting defensively for the entire round (+4 dodge bonus to AC; +6 if he has 5 or more ranks in Tumble).

Emulate Feat: At the beginning of a character's turn, he may spend 1 action point as a free action to gain the benefit of a feat that he doesn't have. He must meet the prerequisites of the feat. He gains the benefit until the beginning of his next turn.

Extra Attack: During any round in which a character takes a full attack action, he may spend 1 action point to make an extra attack at his highest attack bonus. Action points may be used in this way with both melee and ranged attacks.

Spell Boost: A character can spend 1 action point as a free action to increase the effective caster level of one of his spells by 2. He must decide whether or not to spend an action point in this manner before casting the spell.

Spell Recall: Spellcasters who prepare their spells in advance can spend 1 action point to recall any spell just cast. The spell can be cast again later with no effect on other prepared spells. This use of an action point is a free action and can only be done in the same round that the spell is cast. Spontaneous spellcasters such as sorcerers and bards can spend 1 action point to cast a spell without using one of their daily spell slots. This use of an action point is a free action and can only be done as the spell is being cast.

Stable: Any time a character is dying, he can spend 1 action point to become stable at his current hit point total.

Improving Feats

The use of action points opens up a whole range of possible feats. However, it's easier on characters simply to improve existing feats to take advantage of action points—that way, characters needn't spend their precious feat slots simply to gain the ability to use their action points. Below are a few examples of how actions points can be used with existing feats. Unless otherwise stated, each effect requires a free action to activate and lasts 1 round.

Blind-Fight: You can spend 1 action point to negate your miss chance for a single attack.

Combat Expertise: You can spend 1 action point to double the bonus to Armor Class granted by the feat. For example, if you take a penalty of –3 on your attack roll, you gain a +6 dodge bonus to AC.

Dodge: You can spend 1 action point to increase the dodge bonus granted by the feat to +2. The effect lasts for the entire encounter.

Improved Critical: You can spend 1 action point to double your critical threat range. Since two doublings equals a tripling, this benefit increases your threat range from 19–20 to 18–20, from 17–20 to 15–20, or from 15–20 to 12–20, including the effect of your Improved Critical feat). This benefit stacks with the benefit from Improved Critical, but not with other effects that increase threat range.

Improved Initiative: You can spend 1 action point to double the bonus on initiative checks granted by the feat, from +4 to +8.

Metamagic Feats: You can spend 1 action point to add the effect of any one metamagic feat that you have to a spell you are casting. The spell is cast at its normal level (without any level adjustment because of the feat) and takes no extra time to cast.

Illus. by J. Pavelec

Heighten Spell automatically raises a spell's effective level to the highest level of spell you are capable of casting. For example, if a 7th-level wizard with the Heighten Spell feat casts *burning hands* and spends 1 action point to heighten the spell, the spell is treated as if it were a 4th-level spell in all respects even though the wizard prepared it normally (as a 1st-level spell).

Power Attack: You can spend 1 action point to double the bonus on damage rolls granted by the feat. For example, if you take a penalty of –3 on your attack roll, you add +6 to your damage roll.

Spell Focus: You can spend 1 action point to double the increase to save DCs granted by the feat, from +1 to +2.

Spell Penetration: You can spend 1 action point to double the bonus on caster level checks granted by the feat, from +2 to +4. The effect lasts for the entire encounter.

COMBAT FACING

The combat rules in the *Player's Handbook* intentionally ignore the direction a creature faces. The rules assume that creatures are constantly moving and shifting within their spaces, looking in all directions during a fight. In this variant, facing—the direction your head and body are pointing—makes a big difference in how you move and fight.

This variant makes combat more complex, but it opens up new strategic options for PCs and monsters alike. It's a good choice if your group relishes the tactical complexity of D&D combat and doesn't mind spending a lot of time duking it out with the bad guys. It won't change the power level of your game.

This variant supersedes the standard rules for flanking and creates new conditions for the rogue's use of the sneak attack ability.

FACING DIRECTION

All PCs and most monsters have a facing: the direction to the adjacent square the character or creature is pointing toward. This means that a Medium creature standing in a given square has eight possible facings. The three squares a Small or Medium character is pointing toward are its front area. The three squares behind it are its rear area. The squares to its left and right are its flanks. Larger characters have more squares to deal with, but they still face toward one of eight directions. Their front areas remain the squares in front of them (including those on the front corners); their rear areas remain the squares behind them (including those on the rear corners); and their flanks remain the squares directly to their sides.

For some miniatures, it's obvious which direction they're facing; their faces are pointed in a particular direction, and they're brandishing a weapon in that direction too. But some miniatures look one way and point their weapons another, or it's otherwise unclear which way they're facing. To keep things clear at the gaming table, it's easiest if you mark the front of each miniature with a small dot or arrow on the base. That way everyone knows which way the character represented by the miniature is facing.

Some creatures simply have no facing. See Faceless Creatures, below.

FACING AND MOVEMENT

Facing has some significant effects on movement.

Changing Facing: As you move, you can freely change your facing, rotating your miniature before you step into each new square. In addition, you can change facing at the end of your move. These rules do not apply if your movement is limited to a 5-foot step; see below.

If you do not move during your turn, or if your movement is limited to a 5-foot step, you may change facing once, at any point during your turn, as a free action. You can turn to face any direction you like, but you cannot change facing more than once. (You can also change facing as a move action, however, if you aren't using your move action to do something else.)

Normal Movement: You can move into any square in your front area at the normal movement cost. As you move, you may change your facing as you enter each new square. Make it clear which way you're facing as you move, if it matters (such as when enemies are near), and set your miniature's facing when you're done moving. (If your miniature is on a square base, the corners of the base may extend beyond the miniature's space. That's okay, but remember that regardless of your facing, the size and shape of your space never actually changes.)

Moving Backward or Sideways: In general, you'll usually turn your character in the direction of movement before making a move. (As described above, you may freely make such changes in facing during movement.) However, sometimes you'll want to move without changing your facing, to avoid exposing your flank or rear area to an attack of opportunity while you move. It costs two squares of movement to enter a square on your flank or in your rear area.

HOUSE RULE: LUCK CHECKS

Luck in the D&D game is usually represented entirely by the player's luck, not the character's. If you roll high consistently, you, as a player and a die roller, are lucky, and your character benefits. If you roll low, you're unlucky, and your character suffers. But what if you want to play a character who *is* lucky? How can you do that?

I created a feat called "Lucky." There are no prerequisites, and the benefit is this: Whenever a situation in the game comes up where the result should be random chance (usually something decided by a percentile roll), I have the character make a luck check, which is an unmodified d20 roll. If the roll comes up 15 or higher, the character has gotten lucky.

This can mean one of two things. If the situation I'm trying to resolve is a simple percentage-weight system (such as betting on a coin flip), I increase the percentage chance that the character "wins" by 50%. So a lucky character (a character with the Lucky feat who succeeds on a luck check) actually wins coin flips 75% of the time (two opposed lucky characters cancel each other out). If the situation isn't as clear-cut, I just use my best judgment.

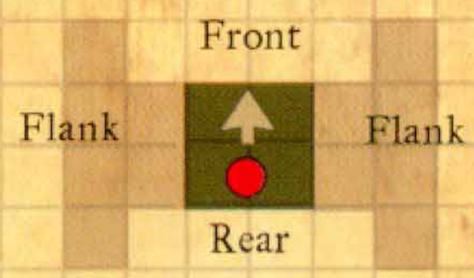
I restrict the use of the Lucky feat in a few ways. First, if a character fails a luck check, I don't let him try another one until the next game session. This keeps people from bugging me with constant requests for luck checks—they like to save them for when they really need them. Second, I only allow one character to make a luck check for any single circumstance. Third, the Lucky feat's application is so dependent on the discretion of the DM that I seldom have more than one or two players in the party select it.

The luck check is a hard rule to adjudicate and requires extra planning. It can be fun. Players of lucky characters seem to enjoy that small extra advantage they get in unusual situations, and those who don't choose the feat don't seem to mind too much.

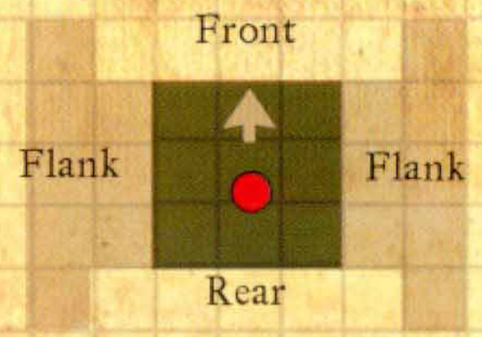
—Ed Stark

Creature Facing by Size

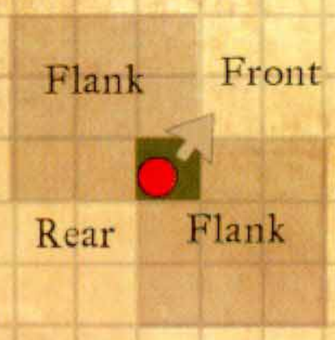
Small and Medium



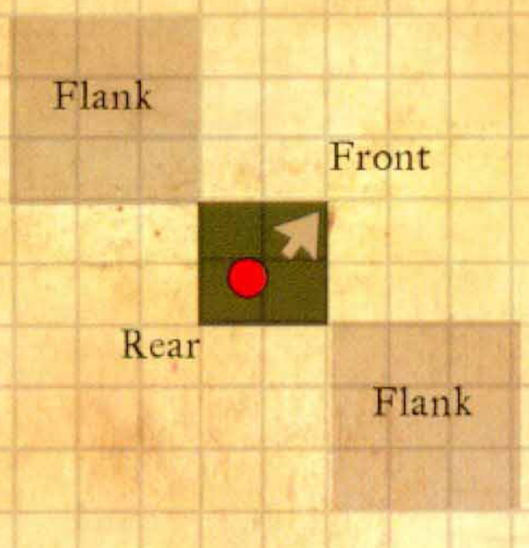
Large



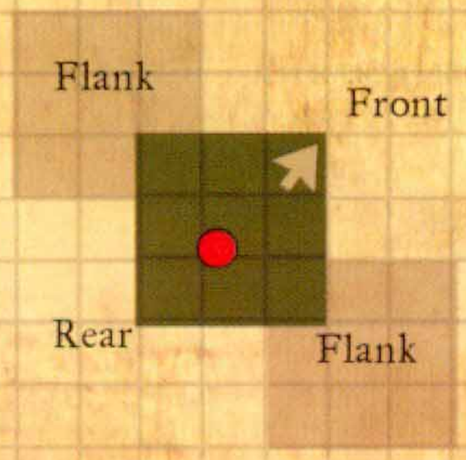
Huge



Small and Medium-Diagonal

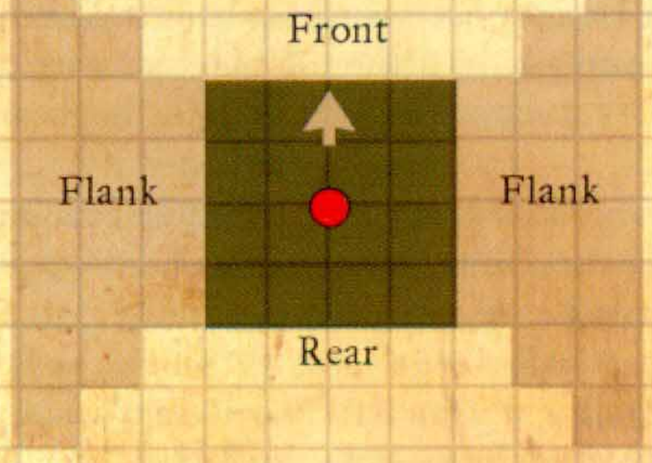


Large-Diagonal

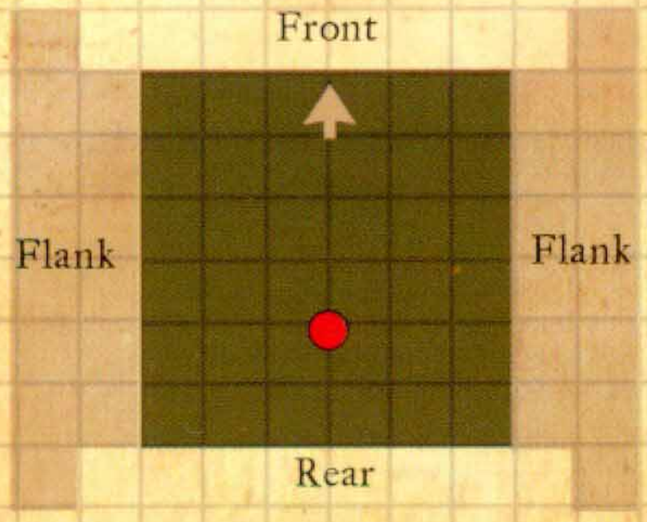


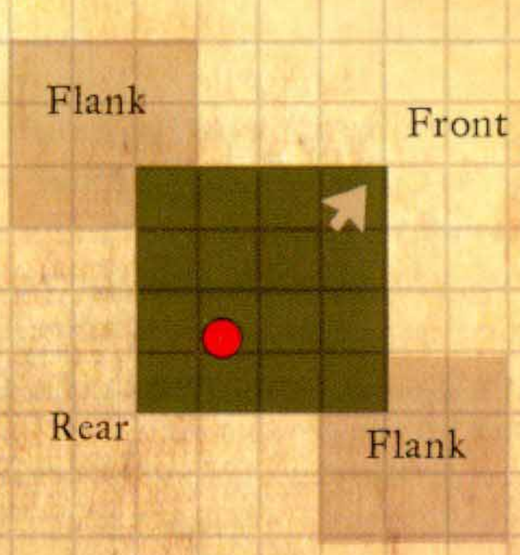
Huge-Diagonal

Gargantuan

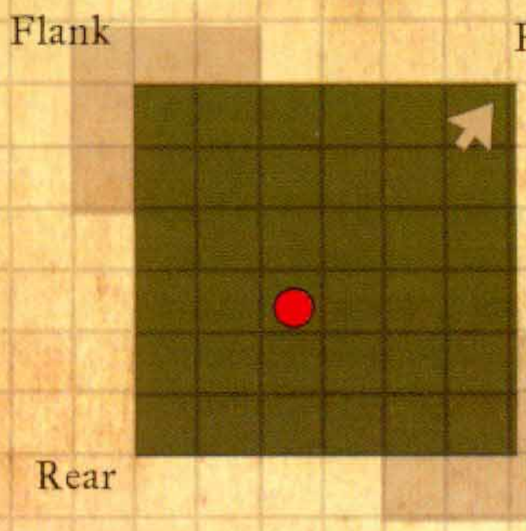


Colossal



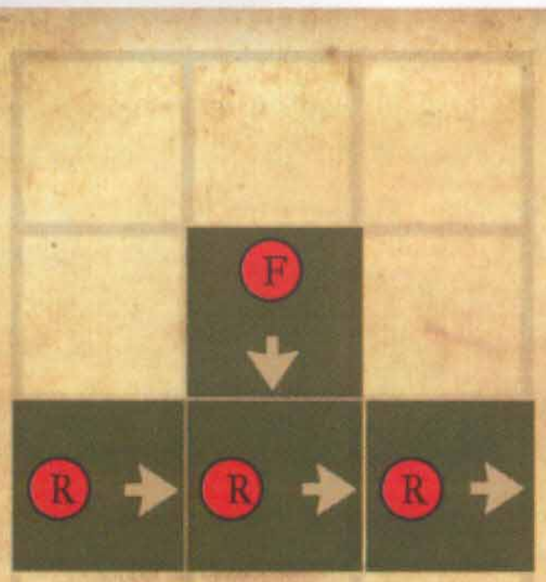


Gargantuan-Diagonal

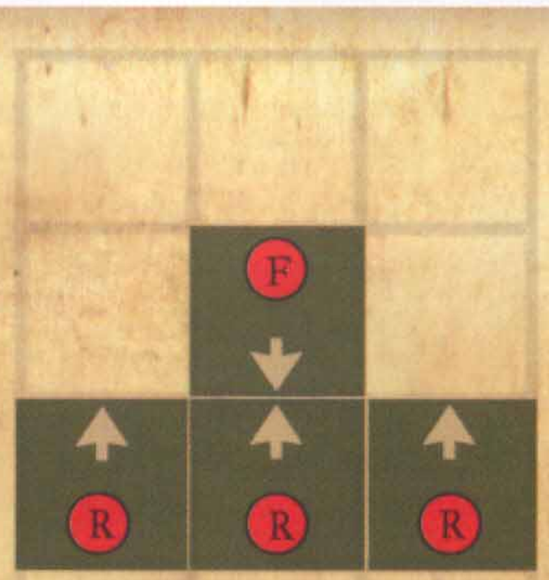


Colossal-Diagonal

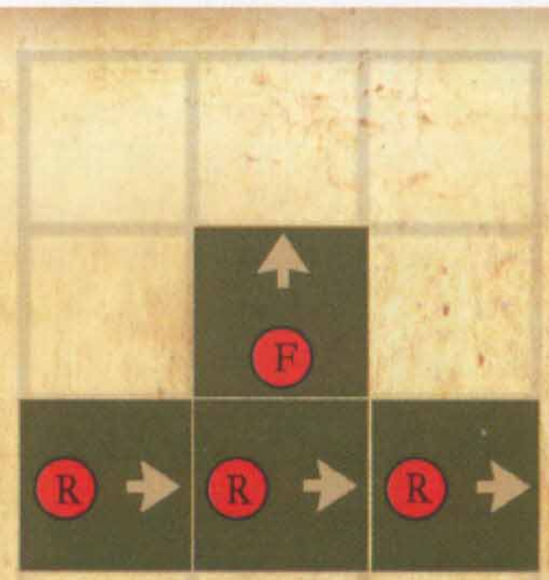
One Square = 5 feet



When the rogue moves past the fighter, she provokes an attack of opportunity. Because the fighter is in her flank area, he gets a +2 bonus on the attack roll.



The rogue can move sideways past the fighter without facing the direction she's moving but it costs her two squares of movement to enter each square. The fighter still gets an attack of opportunity, but he doesn't get the +2 bonus because he's standing in the rogue's front area.



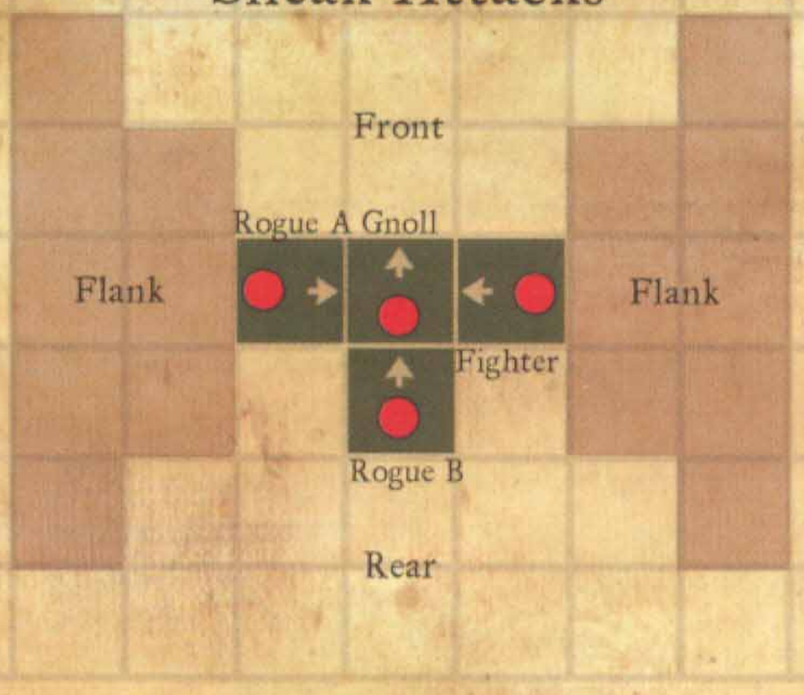
If the rogue moves around the back of the fighter, he can still make an attack of opportunity, but at a -10 penalty because the rogue is in the fighter's rear area. The fighter also gets a +2 bonus because he's in the rogue's flank area when he attacks.

One Square = 5 feet

Attacks of Opportunity

5-Foot Steps: When taking a 5-foot step, you can move into any adjacent square, even squares in your rear or on your flank. You do not change facing when taking a 5-foot step. (You may, however, change your facing once as a free action; see Changing Facing, above.)

Sneak Attacks



Rogue A doesn't get to make sneak attacks against the gnoll, despite the presence of a fighter on the other side of the foe. But both the fighter and rogue A get a +2 bonus on their attacks because they're standing in the gnoll's flank areas.

Rogue B may make sneak attacks against the gnoll as long as she's attacking from one of the gnoll's rear squares. If the gnoll turns to face Rogue B, she'll have to move if she wants to make sneak attacks.

One Square = 5 feet

FACING AND ATTACKING

In general, a character can attack into any square in his front area without penalty. This means that a character making a full attack should consider carefully when he takes his free action to change his facing. For example, if 6th-level Tordek is beset by a bugbear in his front area and a goblin in his rear area, he can attack the bugbear, take his free action to change facing toward the goblin, then attack the goblin. But he can't then change his facing again. He's stuck with his back to the bugbear, which is in his rear area.

Characters who don't want to change their facing to point toward a foe can attack into their flank areas at a –5 penalty and into their rear areas at a –10 penalty.

Characters can make ranged attacks into any square beyond their front area without penalty, as shown in the accompanying diagram. The penalties for making ranged attacks into flank and rear areas are the same as for melee combat.

Opponent Facing

Not only does your facing matter when you're attacking, but the facing of your opponent does as well. If you're attacking from a foe's flank area (or the squares beyond it, if you have a reach weapon or ranged weapon), you get a +2 bonus on the attack roll. You don't need anyone opposite you on the other side of your foe. If you're attacking from a foe's rear area (or the squares beyond it), you get a +4 bonus on the attack roll.

Sneak Attacks

A rogue can strike for sneak attack damage whenever her foe is flat-footed or whenever she's attacking with a melee weapon from the foe's rear area. She doesn't need anyone directly opposite her to get the extra damage. The standard rules for creatures' immunity to sneak attack still apply. For example, a shambling

mound has a rear area, but it's immune to sneak attack damage because it's a plant. Conversely, a phasm doesn't have a front or rear, but you can still deal extra sneak attack damage if you catch it flat-footed.

FACING AND PERCEPTION

It's much easier to see what's going on in your front area, and much easier to sneak around behind someone's back.

Spot Checks: Characters take a –5 penalty on Spot checks to perceive things in their flank area (or beyond) and a –10 penalty on Spot checks in their rear area (or beyond). The Combat Awareness feat (see the sidebar) eliminates this penalty. Faceless creatures (see below) and creatures with the all-around vision ability don't take this penalty.

Readied Actions: You can't ready an action to respond to a trigger that occurs in your rear area if you have to see it happen (such as a doorknob turning). But you can ready an action for a sound-based trigger (such as the click of latch opening).

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

The facing variant requires several other rule changes.

Faceless Creatures

Some creatures have no real facing because they can move, attack, and perceive foes equally well in every direction. All elementals and oozes are faceless. Also, the following monsters are faceless: lantern archon, assassin vine, chaos beast, darkmantle, violet fungus, gibbering mouther, mimic, phasm, will-o'-wisp, xorn, and octopus (including giant octopus).

Faceless creatures can move or attack into any adjacent square, and they can't be flanked or attacked from the rear because they don't have flanks or rears.

Tiny and Smaller Creatures

Tiny and smaller creatures don't have facing. They can move or attack in any direction and are otherwise treated as faceless.

Feats and Class Features

Some feats and class features provide an additional facing-related benefit to characters who have them. Also, the Combat Awareness feat (see the sidebar) affects a character's awareness to his flanks and rear.

Cleave and Great Cleave: The extra attacks granted by these feats can be made into flank areas without penalty, as well as into front areas.

Combat Reflexes: Characters with this feat can make attacks of opportunity into their flank areas without penalty.

Improved Uncanny Dodge: No attacker gets the +2 bonus for attacking into your flank or the +4 bonus from attacking from behind you. Only a rogue four levels higher than you can deal sneak attack damage by attacking from a rear square.

Mounted Combat: Characters with this feat can attack into their steeds' flank areas without penalty while mounted.

Whirlwind Attack: Characters with this feat can attack into any area without penalty.

Spellcasting

Spells and spell-like abilities that have areas such as lines and cones emerge from any grid intersection between the spellcaster's space and his front area. A spellcaster can't target anything in his rear area with a spell.

Flank Attacks

Some monsters have attacks and abilities that reach flank squares as well as front squares. These creatures take no penalty for making these attacks into flank squares.

Beholder/Gauth: Maximum of three eye rays (beholder) or two eye rays (gauth) into each flank area.

Devil, Pit Fiend: Wings.
Displacer Beast: Tentacles.
Dragon: Wings.
Howler: Quills.
Hydra: Bites.
Kraken: Tentacles.
Otyugh: Tentacles.
Roper: Strands.
Squid, Giant: Tentacles.
Scorpion, Monstrous: Sting.

Rear Attacks

Some monsters have attacks and abilities that emerge from or attack into rear squares, not front squares. These creatures take no penalty for making these attacks into rear squares.

Aranea: Web.
Arrowhawk: Electricity ray.
Beholder/Gauth: Maximum of three eye rays (beholder) or two eye rays (gauth) into rear area.
Cloaker: Tail slap.
Demon, Bebilith: Web.
Demon, Marilith: Tail slap.
Devil, Pit Fiend: Tail slap.
Dragon (any): Tail slap or tail sweep (see the Dragon Attacks diagram on the following page.)
Formian (any): Sting.
Lillend: Tail slap.
Manticore: Spikes.
Naga, Dark: Sting.
Nightshade, Nightcrawler: Sting.
Purple Worm: Sting.
Rast: Tail slap, tail touch.
Salamander: Tail slap.
Tarrasque: Tail slap.

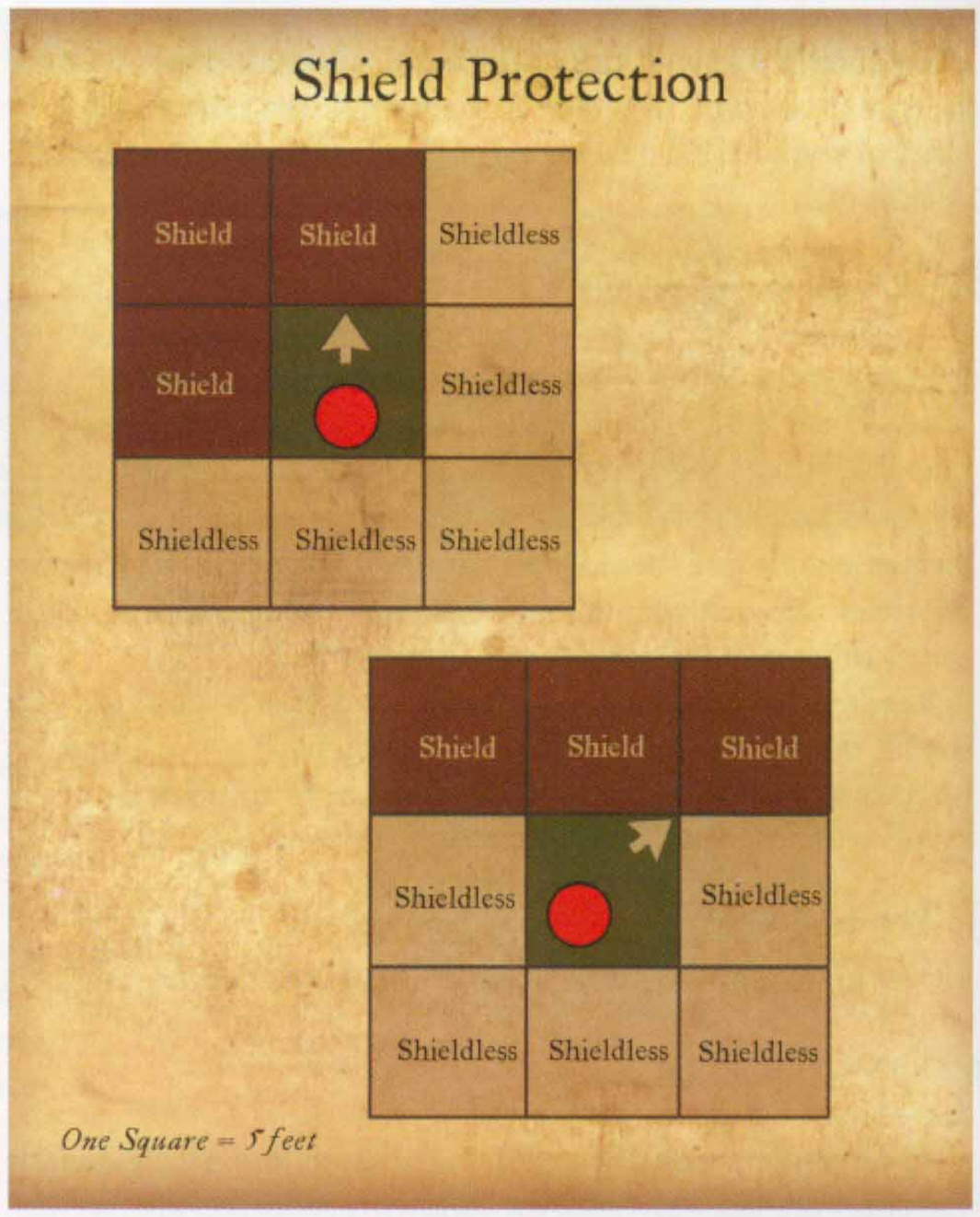
COMBAT AWARENESS [General]

You are so perceptive that you practically have eyes in the back of your head.

Benefit: You take no –5 penalty on Spot checks to notice things in or beyond your flank areas. The penalty to notice things in or beyond your rear area is –5.

Normal: The penalty on Spot checks in or beyond your flank areas is 5; on Spot checks in or beyond your rear area, it's –10.

Special: A fighter may select Combat Awareness as one of his fighter bonus feats (see page 38 of the *Player's Handbook*).



Wyvern: Sting.
Crocodile: Tail slap.
Whale, Baleen: Tail slap.
Whale, Cachalot: Tail slap.
Bee, Giant: Sting.
Wasp, Giant: Sting.

Shields (Optional)

If you're particularly keen on facing, you can add another layer of realism by modeling how shields only protect against attacks from some directions. This "variant to a variant" system introduces a shieldless AC for a character who is attacked from a direction where he can't interpose the shield between himself and the threat. Shieldless AC is easy to figure: Just subtract the AC bonus the shield provides (including its enhancement bonus if it's a magic shield) from the character's normal AC.

A character holding a shield must indicate whether he's wielding it to the left or right. The shield only adds to the character's AC against attacks coming from his front area and the flank area on the shield's side, plus any squares that lie beyond those areas.

The *shield* spell provides a bonus to AC against attacks from the front area only.

HEX GRID

Tactical affairs such as movement and combat are best handled on a grid, but the grid need not be a bunch of squares. This variant replaces the squares with hexagons. (Hex grid paper and mats are available at many hobby stores.)

The primary advantage of this variant is that it eliminates the "every other square counts double" rule for diagonal movement, because it eliminates diagonal movement. Characters simply move from hex to adjacent hex, changing direction as they like. To determine the distance between two hexagons, just count hexes by the shortest path (in most cases, there will be a number of equally short paths).

Using a hex-based grid changes relatively little about the game, but it poses a mapping dilemma for the DM. Most buildings and dungeons are based on 90-degree and 45-degree corners, so superimposing a hex-based grid on a structure leaves the DM with many partial hexagons, not all of which are big enough for a Medium creature. Use this variant only if you're comfortable adjudicating these partial spaces on the fly.

Depending on their size, creatures take up one or more hexagons on the grid, as shown in the accompanying diagram.

Spell areas change to accommodate the hex grid; refer to the diagram on page 130.

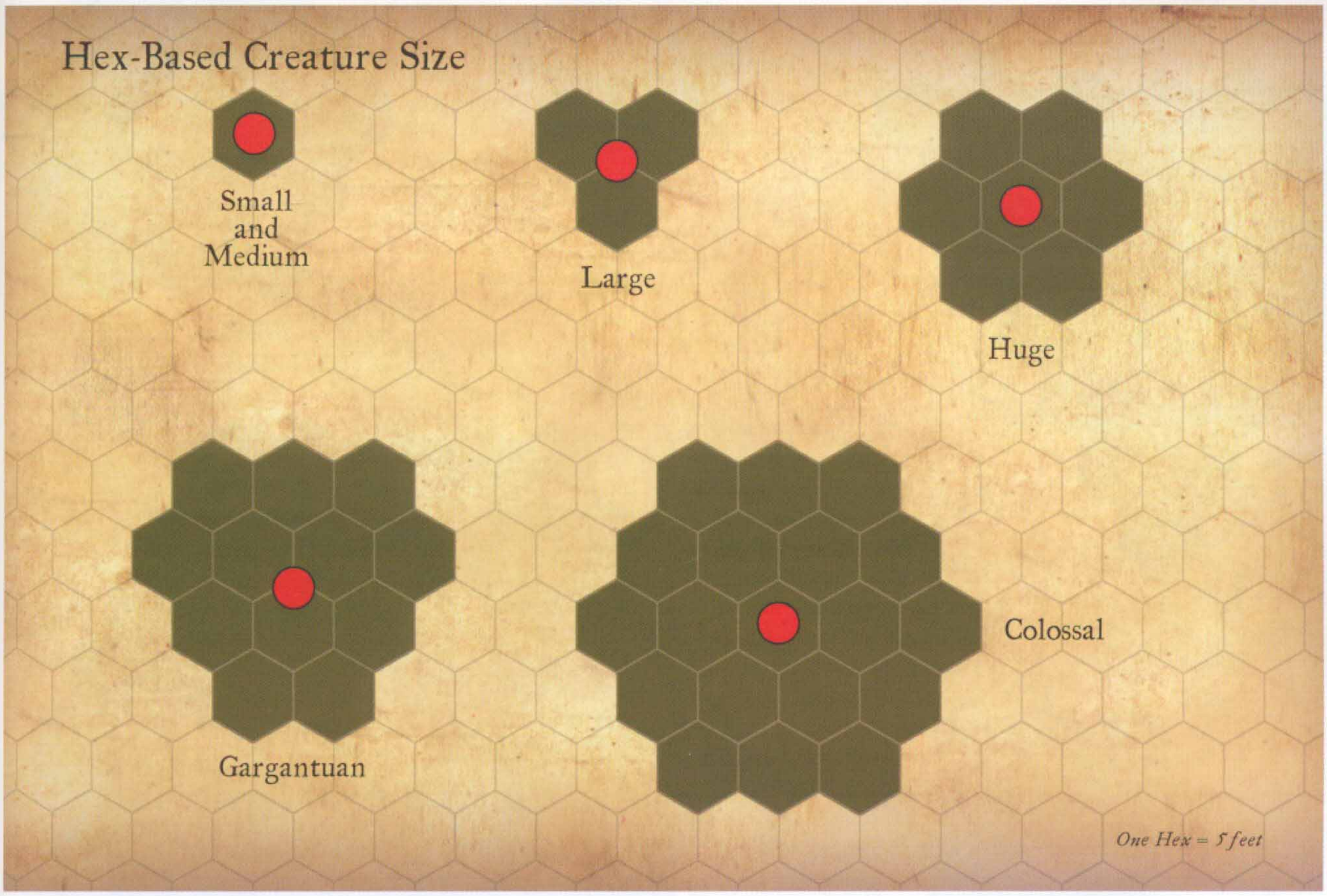
HOUSE RULE: ENHANCEMENT AND TOUCH AC

For a low-level character, touch AC is often not that much lower than regular AC. But for a high-level character, there's often a difference of 5 or even 10 points between regular AC and touch AC. Many spells and effects rely only on the target's touch AC to resist, allowing no save or other form of escape from the effect.

If your characters (not to mention your NPCs) are frustrated at the wide disparity between their regular and touch AC, consider allowing enhancement bonuses to improve a character's or creature's touch AC.

This system isn't a perfect fix, however; big monsters, such as dragons, still tend to have abysmally low touch ACs. But it helps out characters who rely on their magic armor to defend them—those characters whose touch ACs tend to be the lowest.

—Andy Collins



HEXES AND FACING

The hex-grid variant works well in conjunction with the facing variant, giving your D&D game more of the feel of a tactical skirmish wargame. If this suits your gaming group, use the diagram on page xx to determine front, flank, and rear areas according to the facing rules.

VARIABLE MODIFIERS

If static modifiers for attack rolls, checks, and other d20 rolls has made the game too predictable, you can try using variable modifiers instead.

Essentially, the variable modifier system replaces any modifier higher than +1 or lower than –1 with one or more additional dice added to or subtracted from the basic d20 roll.

For example, at 1st level Tordek normally has an attack bonus of +4 when swinging his dwarven waraxe. Instead of rolling 1d20+4 to determine the attack's success, the player would roll 1d20+1d8. The actual modifier added to the 1d20 roll might then be any value from 1 to 8, making the final result much less predictable, even though the average result would remain virtually the same.

Effectively, for every point of bonus or penalty beyond 1, the "die size" of the variable modifier increases by one step, as shown on the tables on page 132.

Starting at a modifier of +11 or –11, the pattern simply repeats every 10 points. A +13 bonus is the same as a +10 bonus (+1d20) added to a +3 bonus (+1d6), and thus the character would roll 1d20 and add 1d20 + 1d6. Similarly, a –15 penalty would be the same as a –10 penalty (–1d20) and a –5 penalty (–1d10) added together. When the Variable Penalties table gives a penalty such as "–(1d20 + 1d10)," it means add together the rolls of the dice inside the parentheses and treat the total as a penalty on the check.

Use variable modifiers only when adjusting the roll of a d20. Don't apply them to damage rolls, hit point rolls, percentile rolls, or any other roll that does not involve a d20.

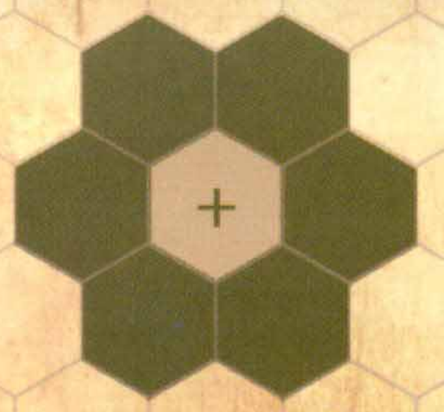
BEHIND THE CURTAIN: VARIABLE MODIFIERS

On average, variable modifiers are about 1/2 point higher or lower than static modifiers—in other words, an average result on a check with a variable bonus is about 1/2 point higher than the same check with a static bonus, while an average result with on a check with a variable penalty is about 1/2 point lower. Since the majority of checks made by player characters have a bonus rather than a penalty, this system is slightly advantageous to player characters. However, it also increases the randomness of the result, and randomness tends to favor monsters over PCs.

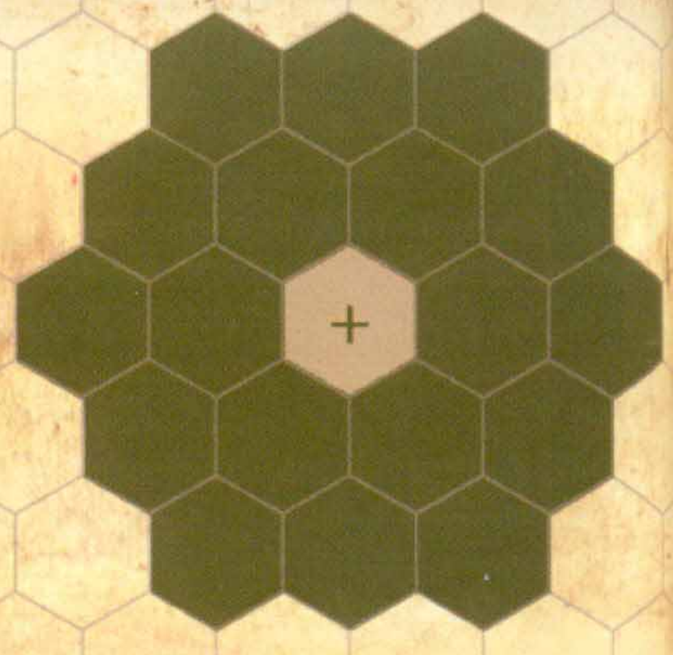
If you use this variant, don't allow players to choose between using variable modifiers and static modifiers on a case-by-case basis. Instead, all d20 rolls should use the variable modifier system. It's possible to allow some characters to use variable modifiers while others use static modifiers, but doing this runs the risk of creating a perception of inequality between characters.

Hex-Based Spell Areas

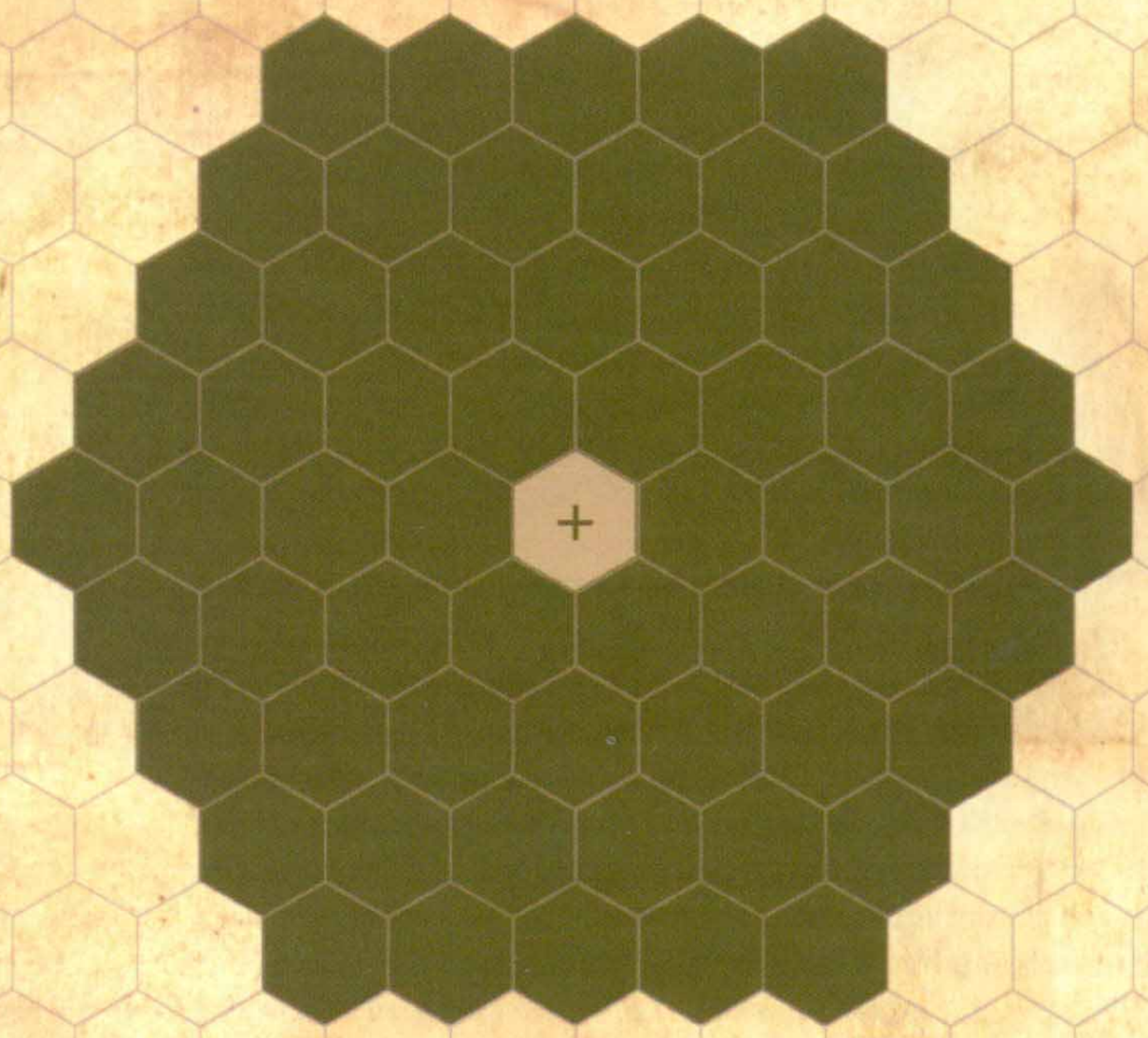
30-Foot Cone



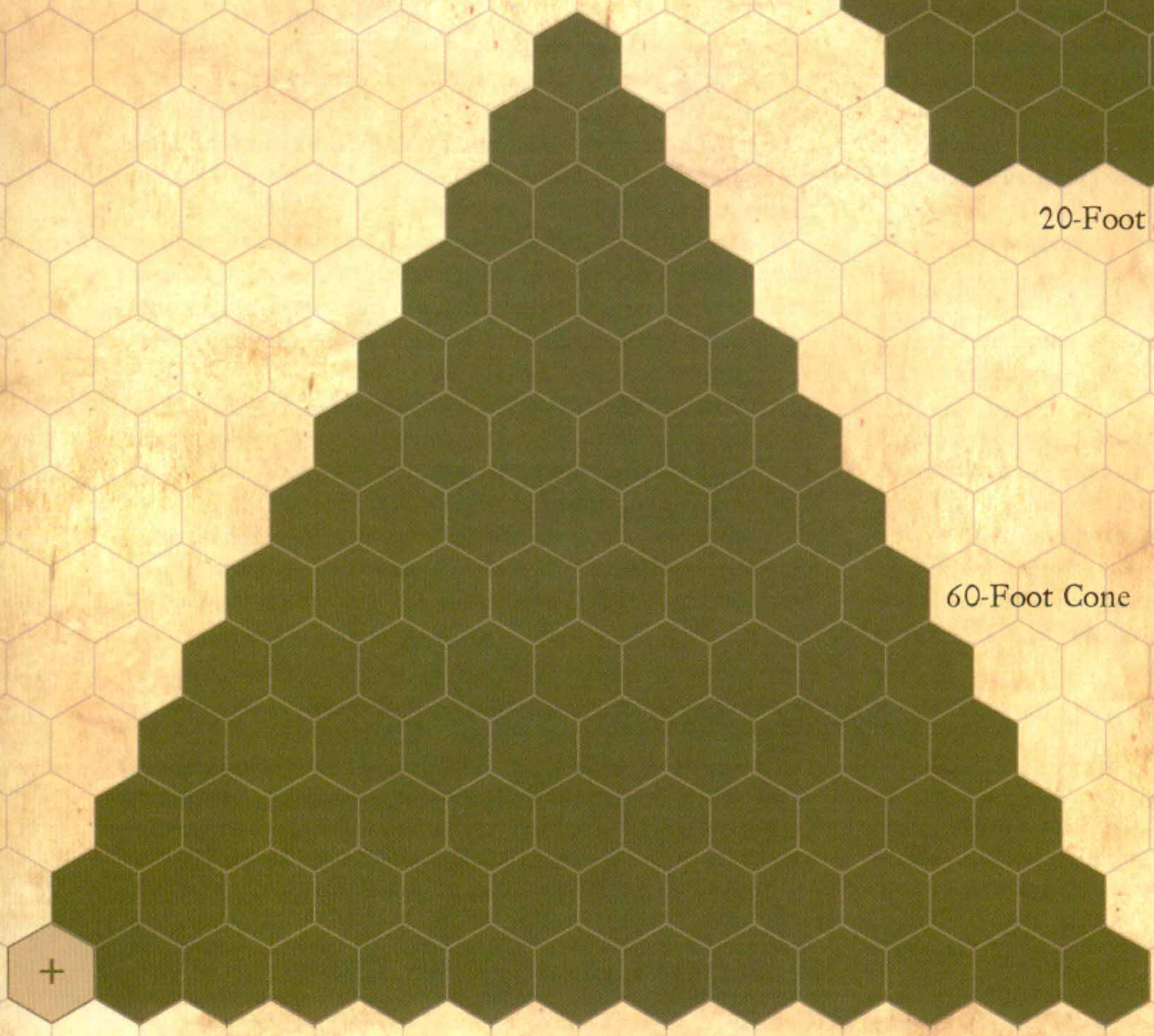
5-Foot Radius



10-Foot Radius



20-Foot Radius



60-Foot Cone

One Hex = 5 feet

Hexes and Facing

Front
Flank
Rear
Flank
Small and Medium

Flank
Front
Rear
Flank
Large

Front
Flank
Flank
Rear
Huge

Front
Flank
Flank
Rear
Gargantuan

Front
Flank
Flank
Rear
Colossal

Flank
Front
Rear
Flank
Gargantuan

One Hex = 5 feet

Variable Bonuses

Static Bonus	Dice	Average Bonus
+1	+1	+1
+2	+1d4	+2.5
+3	+1d6	+3.5
+4	+1d8	+4.5
+5	+1d10	+5.5
+6	+1d12	+6.5
+7	+2d6	+7
+8	+3d4	+7.5
+9	+2d8	+9
+10	+1d20	+10.5
+11	+1d20 + 1	+11.5
+12	+1d20 + 1d4	+13
+13	+1d20 + 1d6	+14
+14	+1d20 + 1d8	+15
+15	+1d20 + 1d10	+16
+16	+1d20 + 1d12	+17
+17	+1d20 + 2d6	+17.5
+18	+1d20 + 3d4	+18
+19	+1d20 + 2d8	+19.5
+20	+2d20	+21
. . . and so on.		

Variable Penalties

Static Penalty	Dice	Average Penalty
–1	–1	–1
–2	–1d4	–2.5
–3	–1d6	–3.5
–4	–1d8	–4.5
–5	–1d10	–5.5
–6	–1d12	–6.5
–7	–2d6	–7
–8	–3d4	–7.5
–9	–2d8	–9
–10	–1d20	–10.5
–11	–(1d20 + 1)	–11.5
–12	–(1d20 + 1d4)	–13
–13	–(1d20 + 1d6)	–14
–14	–(1d20 + 1d8)	–15
–15	–(1d20 + 1d10)	–16
–16	–(1d20 + 1d12)	–17
–17	–(1d20 + 2d6)	–18
–18	–(1d20 + 3d4)	–18.5
–19	–(1d20 + 2d8)	–19.5
–20	–2d20	–21
. . . and so on.		

TAKING 10 AND TAKING 20

Avoid using variable modifiers when a character takes 10 or takes 20 on a skill check. Since those two rules rely on a certain level of predictability, a character who takes 10 or takes 20 should apply the normal static modifier to his roll rather than using the less predictable variable modifier. Otherwise, even simple tasks can become unnecessarily dangerous.

BELL CURVE ROLLS

Here's perhaps the most fundamental variant to the d20 rules: Don't use a d20! Instead, roll 3d6 whenever you would roll a d20, applying bonuses and penalties normally. The possible results when rolling 3d6 (or any other multiple dice) form a bell curve—that is, a range of odds that favors average results much more than extreme results.

RULES FOR ROLLING

This system requires several changes to how rolls are made.

Automatic Successes and Failures: Automatic successes (for attack rolls and saves) happen on a natural 18, and automatic failures on a natural 3. Neither occurs as often as in standard D&D (less than 1/2% of the time as opposed to 5% of the time).

Taking 20 and Taking 10: You can't take 20 using the bell curve variant. Instead, you have two new options: You can take 16, which makes the task take ten times as long, or you can take 18, which makes the task take one hundred times as long. As with the rules for taking 20, you can only take 16 and take 18 when you have plenty of time, when you aren't distracted, and when the task carries no consequences for failure. For a check that normally requires a standard action, taking 16 uses up 1 minute and taking 18 uses up 10 minutes.

The rules for taking 10 remain unchanged.

Threat Range: Because it's no longer possible to roll a natural 19 or 20, the threat ranges of weapons change in the bell curve variant. Refer to the following table.

Old Threat Range	New Threat Range
20	16–18
19–20	15–18
18–20	14–18
17–20	14–18
15–20	13–18

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: THE BELL CURVE

In general, this variant leads to a grittier D&D game, because there will be far fewer very good or very bad rolls. Not only can you no longer roll 1, 2, 19, or 20, but most rolls will be clustered around the average of 10.5. With a d20, every result is equally likely; you have a 5% chance of rolling an 18 and a 5% chance of rolling a 10. With 3d6, there's only one possible combination of dice that results in an 18 (three sixes, obviously), but there are twenty-four combinations that result in a 10. Players used to the thrill of rolling high and the agony of the natural 1 will get that feeling less often—but it may be more meaningful when it does happen. Good die rolls are a fundamental reward of the game, and it changes the character of the game when the rewards are somewhat stronger but much less frequent.

Game balance shifts subtly when you use the bell curve variant. Rolling 3d6 gives you a lot more average rolls, which favors the stronger side in a combat. And in the D&D game, that's almost always the PCs. Many monsters—especially low-CR monsters encountered in groups—rely heavily on a lucky shot to damage PCs. When rolling 3d6, those lucky shots are fewer and farther between. In a fair fight in which everyone rolls a 10, the PCs should win almost every time. The bell curve variant adheres more tightly to that average (which is the reason behind the reduction in CR for monsters encountered in groups).

Another subtle change to the game is that the bell curve variant rewards bonuses relatively more and the die roll relatively less, simply because the die roll is almost always within a few points of 10. A character's skill ranks, ability scores, and gear have a much bigger impact on success and failure than they do in the standard D&D rules.

With the bell curve variant, the narrowest threat range becomes slightly more narrow (4.6% rather than 5%), and the new 14–18 range (16%) falls between the old 18–20 and 17–20 ranges. But because the Improved Critical feat and the *keen edge* spell double threat ranges, characters still improve their weapons in every case, despite the flat spot on the table.

There's no table entry for a threat range of 16–20 because no combination of weapons, feats, and magic can attain it in the standard D&D rules.

MONSTER CHALLENGE RATINGS

Any time creatures are encountered in groups of four or more, reduce their CR by 1. For example, a single troll is CR 5, and two trolls are CR 5 each (and thus a EL 7 encounter). But four trolls are only CR 4 each (making a EL 8 encounter).

Monsters with fractional CRs move down to the next lowest fraction when encountered in groups of four or more; the goblin (ordinarily CR 1/2) becomes CR 1/3, for example.

THE LUCK DOMAIN

The granted power of the Luck domain changes, because simple rerolls aren't as useful in the bell curve variant as they are in the standard rules. When electing to reroll a result, a cleric with access to the Luck domain rolls 4d6 for the reroll (instead of 3d6), dropping the lowest die. For example, if you rolled 2, 5, 6, and 6, you would drop the 2 for a total of 17.

The Luck domain's spells change as well, with *auspicious odds* replacing *protection from energy* at 3rd level and *mass auspicious odds* replacing *break enchantment* at 5th level.

Auspicious Odds

Evocation
Level: Luck 3
Components: V, S, M, DF
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 minute/level; see text
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Whenever making an attack roll, saving throw, ability check, or skill check, the subject rolls 4d6 and drops the lowest single die roll from the total rather than rolling 3d6. If, on a single roll, all four die results are 1s, the spell immediately ends.

Material Component: A copper piece.

Auspicious Odds, Mass

Evocation
Level: Luck 5
Range: Close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature/three levels, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart
Duration: 1 round/level; see text

As *auspicious odds*, except that this spell affects multiple targets and the duration is shorter. If, on a single roll, all four die results are 1s, the spell immediately ends for that subject only, unless it's the caster, in which case it ends for everyone.

PLAYERS ROLL ALL THE DICE

In large combats, players often have little control over the outcome of events when it isn't their turn. This can lead to boredom if a player's attention drifts between his turns, threatening to distance him from the outcome of events.

One method of dealing with this problem is to put more dice rolling into your players' hands. Page 25 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* presents the defense roll variant, in which the player rolls his character's AC against each attack, rather than using the character's standard static AC number. This variant has the drawback of slowing game play (since now every attack requires two rolls to determine success instead of only one).

An option that avoids this drawback is to put all the dice rolling in the hands of the players during combat.

ATTACKING AND DEFENDING

With this variant, PCs make their attacks just like they do in the standard rules. Their opponents, however, do not. Each time an enemy attacks a PC, the character's player rolls a defense check. If that defense check equals or exceeds the attack score of the enemy, the attack misses.

To determine a creature's attack score, add 11 to the creature's standard attack modifier (the number it would use, as either a bonus or penalty to its attack roll, if it were attacking in an ordinary situation using the standard rules). For instance, an ogre has a standard attack modifier of +8 with its greatclub. That means that its attack score is 19.

To make a defense check, roll 1d20 and add any modifiers that normally apply to your Armor Class (armor, size, deflection, and the like). This is effectively the same as rolling a d20, adding your total AC, and then subtracting 10.

Attack Score: 11 + enemy's attack bonus
Defense Check: 1d20 + character's AC modifiers

If a player rolls a natural 1 on a defense check, his character's opponent has scored a threat (just as if it had rolled a natural 20 on its attack roll). Make another defense check; if it again fails to avoid the attack, the opponent has scored a critical hit.

When a PC attacks an opponent, he makes an attack roll against the opponent's AC as normal.

SAVING THROWS AND SAVE SCORES

With this variant, NPCs and other opponents no longer make saving throws to avoid the special attacks of player characters. Instead, each creature has a Fortitude, Reflex, and Will score. These scores are equal to 11 + the creature's Fortitude, Reflex, and Will save modifiers.

Any time you cast a spell or use a special attack that forces an opponent to make a saving throw, instead make a magic check to

Illus. by D. Martin

Illus. by W. England

determine your success. To make a magic check, roll 1d20, add all the normal modifiers to any DC required by the spell or special attack (including the appropriate ability modifier, the spell's level if casting a spell, the adjustment for Spell Focus, and so on).

If the result of the magic check equals or exceeds the appropriate save score (Fortitude, Reflex, or Will, depending on the special ability), the creature is affected by the spell or special attack as if it had failed its save. If the result is lower than the creature's Fortitude, Reflex, or Will score (as appropriate to the spell or special attack used), the creature is affected as if it had succeeded on its save.

Magic Check: 1d20 + spell level + ability modifier + other modifiers

Fortitude Score: 11 + enemy's Fortitude save modifier
Reflex Score: 11 + enemy's Reflex save modifier
Will Score: 11 + enemy's Will save modifier

If a player rolls a natural 20 on a magic check, the creature's equipment may take damage (just as if it had rolled a natural 1 on its save; see Items Surviving after a Saving Throw, page 177 of the *Player's Handbook*).

SPELL RESISTANCE

If a PC has spell resistance, his player makes a spell resistance check against each incoming spell that allows spell resistance. A spell resistance check is 1d20 plus the PC's spell resistance, minus 10.

The DC of this check is equal to 11 + the attacker's caster level, plus any modifiers that normally apply to the attacker's caster level check to overcome spell resistance (such as from the Spell Penetration feat). That value is known as the attacker's caster level score. If the spell resistance check equals or exceeds this number, the spell fails to penetrate the PC's spell resistance.

To beat a creature's spell resistance, a player makes a caster level check (1d20 + caster level) against its spell resistance, just as in the standard rules.

Spell Resistance Check: 1d20 + SR – 10
Caster Level Score: 11 + attacker's caster level + modifiers

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: PLAYERS ROLLING DICE

This variant takes a lot of the work out of the DM's hands, since he no longer needs to make attack rolls, saving throws, or caster level checks to overcome spell resistance for his NPCs and monsters. That can free up his attention for more important things, such as NPC tactics, special spell effects, terrain, and the like.

Conversely, it requires the players to become much more active and aware of what's going on. No longer can players snooze through all the turns but their own: They'll be rolling more dice than ever before—which (among other benefits) gives them the feeling of having greater control over their successes and failures.

One drawback is that it takes away some of the DM's ability to adjust encounters on the fly. Since the DM isn't rolling the dice, he can't fudge a result to give the characters a break (or take one away). Thus, it requires him to be more precise in his estimation of Challenge Ratings and encounter levels.

Illus. by D. Kovacs

This chapter presents variants that affect the way magic works in the campaign, from alternative spellcasting systems to metamagic components to new rules for magic items. Some of these variants, such as the magic rating rules, affect almost all characters throughout their careers. Others, such as the item familiar rules, only affect characters who pursue specific paths.

Several of the options presented here give you tools with which you can personalize and customize your campaign world. For instance, the variant summoning lists enable you to give flavor and personality to a spell, showcasing differences between casters and making each one feel unique.

The variants in this chapter are organized in ascending order of their likely impact on a campaign. The earlier variants, such as magic rating or metamagic components, aren't likely to change the overall game nearly as much as the later variants. Of course, this is hardly a scientific measurement, since every campaign is different, but it gives the DM a general idea of the significance of each variant.

Not all these variants are compatible. In general, each variant tweaks a specific area of the core rules regarding how magic works, but relies on the rest of the rules remaining as written. If you use multiple variants in the same campaign, take care to evaluate how those variants interact with one another.

MAGIC RATING

A character's magic rating measures the power of her spells and spell-like abilities. It replaces caster level for determining range, targets, effect, area, duration, dispel checks, difficulty to dispel, caster level checks to overcome spell resistance, and all other effects of a spell or spell-like ability based on her caster level. It has no effect on extraordinary or supernatural abilities.

MAGIC RATINGS FOR STANDARD CHARACTERS

All character classes have a magic rating, which increases by level much like base attack bonus. For a multiclass character, add up the character's magic ratings from each of her classes to find the character's total magic rating.

For example, a 6th-level wizard/4th-level rogue is treated as a 7th-level caster for determining the range, duration, and other effects of her spells. Her *summon monster* spells last for 7 rounds, her *lightning bolts* inflict 7d6 damage, she rolls 1d20+7 for dispel checks, caster level checks to overcome spell resistance, and so forth. She still doesn't get 4th-level spells (as a normal 7th-level wizard would).

Optional Variant: If the DM wants to discourage multiclassing between classes with very different spell selection, he can rule that magic ratings from arcane spellcasting classes (bard, sorcerer, and wizard) don't stack with magic ratings from divine spellcasting classes (cleric, druid, paladin, and ranger). (Magic ratings from nonspellcasting classes—barbarian, fighter, monk, and rogue—stack with all other magic ratings.) This system results in each character effectively having

two magic ratings: an arcane magic rating and a divine magic rating. Using this variant, a druid would gain more benefit multiclassing into ranger than into bard.

Table 5–1: Magic Rating by Class

Class Level	A[1]	B[2]	C[3]
1st	1	0	0
2nd	2	1	0
3rd	3	1	0
4th	4	2	1
5th	5	2	1
6th	6	3	1
7th	7	3	1
8th	8	4	2
9th	9	4	2
10th	10	5	2
11th	11	5	2
12th	12	6	3
13th	13	6	3
14th	14	7	3
15th	15	7	3
16th	16	8	4
17th	17	8	4
18th	18	9	4
19th	19	9	4
20th	20	10	5

1 Use column A for bard, cleric, druid, sorcerer, and wizard levels.
2 Use column B for monk, paladin, and ranger levels.
3 Use column C for barbarian, fighter, and rogue levels.

MAGIC RATINGS FOR OTHER CLASSES

For classes not mentioned here, use the following guidelines to determine a class's magic rating. The examples are all prestige classes presented in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

Use the first column if the class grants . . .

- +1 spellcaster level more than half the times a level is gained. Examples: arcane trickster, archmage, eldritch knight, hierophant, loremaster, mystic theurge, thaumaturgist.
- Spells of 6th level or higher.

Use the second column if the class grants . . .

- +1 spellcaster level at least once, but no more than half the times a level is gained.
- Spells of up to 5th level. Examples: assassin, blackguard.
- Bonus spells. Example: dragon disciple.
- At least three supernatural or spell-like abilities. Examples: arcane archer, horizon walker, shadowdancer.

For all other classes, use the third column. Examples: dwarven defender, duelist.

MAGIC RATINGS FOR MONSTERS

The same system applies to the spellcasting ability of monsters. Each creature with an Intelligence of at least 1 gains a magic rating based on its type and Hit Dice. As a general rule, a creature of a certain type uses a certain column on Table 5–1 to determine its magic rating (treating the monster's Hit Dice as equivalent to class level for this purpose):

First Column: fey, outsider.

Second Column: aberration, dragon, elemental, undead.

Third Column: animal, construct, giant, humanoid, magical beast, monstrous humanoid, ooze, plant, vermin.

Two exceptions exist to the general rule. First, if a creature has innate spellcasting ability (such as a lammasu) or at least three supernatural or spell-like abilities (such as a yuan-ti), it uses either the column for its creature type or the second column, whichever gives the higher result.

Second, creatures with no Intelligence score (such as vermin, oozes, some undead, and most constructs) have no magic rating. If such a creature somehow gains an Intelligence score (such as by the application of a template that doesn't otherwise change its type), use the third column to determine its magic rating.

If a monster has or gains class levels, the magic rating for that class stacks with the monster's magic rating from Hit Dice (just the way it works for multiclass characters). For example, a hound archon (6 HD outsider) and a dragon turtle (12 HD dragon) both have a magic rating of 6. If either creature gained a level of sorcerer, for example, its magic rating would improve to 7 (thanks to the magic rating of 1 that a 1st-level sorcerer has), and it would cast its spells at an effective caster level of 7th.

The magic rating system has no effect on the caster level of a creature's extraordinary or supernatural abilities. For its spell-like abilities, use the creature's normal caster level as given in its monster description for the starting point, not the magic rating derived from this system.

For example, a hezrou demon's spell-like abilities have a magic rating of 13 (since it casts as a 13th-level caster), rather than a magic rating of 10 (for its 10 HD, from the first column on the table). However, if the hezrou later gains class levels, the magic rating for its spell-like abilities would go up based on the levels gained.

Creatures with different caster levels for different abilities use whichever generates the most favorable result by the above rules. For example, a gynosphinx is a 14th-level caster for most of her spell-like abilities but can use any *symbol* spell as an 18th-level caster. She would have a magic rating of 18.

SUMMON MONSTER VARIANTS

The *summon monster* and *summon nature's ally* spells provide effective and versatile options for spellcasters of every level. In addition to their obvious effectiveness during combat, each summoning spell can potentially add further diversity and interesting flavor to groups of conjurers or even individual summoners. This variation might be as simple as allowing a group of conjurers access to monsters of only one alignment or subtype or as complex as creating individualized summoning lists for each spellcaster.

THEMED SUMMONING LISTS

Themed summoning lists provide many interesting possibilities for variant summoners, and they can add a tremendous amount of flavor and character to the spellcasters in your game. With this variant, you choose the monsters available to a spellcaster or to a group of spellcasters by selecting a theme the monsters to be summoned must all share. By selecting different themes for different groups of spellcasters, you give each group's summoning a unique flavor.

To create a variant list, simply start with the list of monsters in the *Player's Handbook* and add and remove creatures of the appropriate power level. This allows an individual spellcaster access to

a much smaller number of monsters at each level, but the spells remain versatile and effective.

Without a goal in mind, however, this procedure tends to create a very haphazard list. Start with a basic concept, or theme, to guide your selection. Choose a theme from those listed below or make one up yourself. Once you have a theme in mind, try to limit your list only to creatures that fit the theme.

Sample themes include alignment (law, chaos, good, or evil), base creature type (such as animal, elemental, fey, or outsider), creature subtype (such as fire or shapechanger), and template (such as celestial or fiendish).

Simply choosing a theme like this doesn't always yield a perfect list, occasionally leaving a level without a suitable monster. As long as you can find a template that fits the theme, though, you can solve this problem. Simply choose a base monster and apply the template that fits the theme, then compare the monster's adjusted CR, Hit Dice, and special abilities to the monsters available at the spell level. If the monster seems to match the power and abilities of the monsters at the same spell level in the *Player's Handbook*, it's probably okay to add that monster to the themed list.

For example, when building the sample list for the Defenders of the World Stone group that is described below, there was only one monster from the existing *summon nature's ally V* list that fit the theme (the Large earth elemental). Although the ankheg is a magical beast not normally subject to a *summon nature's ally* spell, its burrowing and acid spit abilities made it a natural for the list. Adding the earth creature template from *Manual of the Planes* brought the ankheg to the proper power level. In addition, adding the template provided a stronger link with the World Stone and its connection to the Elemental Plane of Earth.

Sample Themed List: Defenders of the World Stone

Atop a broad, gentle slope, the World Stone sits, connecting the Material Plane to the Elemental Plane of Earth. The powerful natural magic of the World Stone stands as an emblem to the stoic power of nature. This power, however, has long attracted those who would exploit it for their own gain rather than use it for the protection of nature. A steadfast group of loyal druids guards the World Stone against such incursions, and it in turn grants them great power to summon earth creatures. If you use this variant in your campaign, druids devoted to defending the World Stone summon the following monsters with *summon nature's ally* spells.

Creature	Template	Alignment	CR
Summon nature's ally I			
Badger	—	N	1/2
Dog	Earth[1]	N	1/3
Summon nature's ally II			
Elemental, Small (earth)	—	N	1
Wolf	Earth[1]	N	1
Summon nature's ally III			
Dire badger	—	N	2
Dire weasel	Earth[1]	N	2
Stone spike[2]	—	N	2
Summon nature's ally IV			
Elemental, Medium (earth)	—	N	3
Earth mephit	—	N	3
Salt mephit	—	N	3
Xorn, minor	—	N	3
Summon nature's ally V			
Ankheg	Earth[1]	N	4
Elemental, Large (earth)	—	N	5
Summon nature's ally VI			
Elemental, Huge (earth)	—	N	7
Rhinoceros	Earth[1]	N	6
Xorn, average	—	N	6
Summon nature's ally VII			
Elemental, greater (earth)	—	N	9
Xorn, elder	—	N	8
Summon nature's ally VIII			
Dune stalker[2]	—	NE	9
Galeb duhr[2]	—	N	9
Summon nature's ally IX			
Elemental, elder (earth)	—	N	11
Unicorn, celestial charger	Earth[1]	NG	14

1 Appears in *Manual of the Planes*.
2 Appears in *Monster Manual II*.

Sample Themed List: The Light of Heavens

A group of clerics following the teachings of Heironeous and Corellon Larethian and some good-aligned conjurers banded together to pursue their common goals. Primarily made up of humans and elves, the organization also include some aasimars and half-celestial creatures. Through the summoning of celestial creatures, this group works to dispel the fear that many have of the practitioners of magic and to bring the Material Plane closer to the ideal of the Upper Planes. Members of the Light of Heavens summon monsters from the custom list given below.

Creature	Template	Alignment	CR
Summon monster I			
Dog	Celestial	LG	1/3
Hawk	Celestial or air[1]	CG	1/3
Porpoise	Celestial	NG	1/2
Summon monster II			
Dog, riding	Celestial	CG	1/2
Eagle	Celestial or air[1]	CG	1/2
Summon monster III			
Dire badger	Celestial	LG	2
Elemental, Small (air or fire)	—	N	1
Hippogriff	Celestial or air[1]	CG	2
Summon monster IV			
Archon, lantern	—	LG	2
Bariaur[2]	—	CG	3
Giant eagle	Celestial or air[1]	LG	4
Lion	Celestial	CG	4
Summon monster V			
Archon, hound	—	LG	4
Brown bear	Celestial	LG	5
Elemental, Medium (air or fire)	—	N	3
Summon monster VI			
Eladrin, bralani	—	CG	6
Elemental, Large (air or fire)	—	N	5
Polar bear	Celestial	LG	6
Summon monster VII			
Elemental, Huge (air or fire)	—	N	7
Guardinal, avoral	—	NG	7
Summon monster VIII			
Elemental, greater (air or fire)	—	N	9
Dire bear	Celestial	LG	9
Summon monster IX			
Elemental, elder (air or fire)	—	N	11
Roc	Celestial or air[1]	LG	11

1 Appears in *Manual of the Planes*.
2 Appears in *Book of Exalted Deeds* and *Manual of the Planes*.

Sample Themed List: Petitioners of Yeenoghu

A loose alliance of savage gnoll adepts, demented human clerics and conjurers, and a handful of desperate spellcasters of more exotic origins pay tribute to Yeenoghu, the Demon Prince of Gnolls. In return for their devotion, Yeenoghu allows them to summon minions directly from his legions of demonic and shadow-infused gnolls and demons. If you use this variant list in your campaign, spellcasters devoted to Yeenoghu summon the following monsters with *summon monster* spells, regardless of their class.

Creature	Template	Alignment	CR
Summon monster I			
Dire rat	Fiendish	CE	1/3
Hawk	Fiendish	CE	1/3
Summon monster II			
Ghoul (extraplanar)	—	CE	1
Gnoll	Fiendish	CE	1
Hyena	Fiendish	CE	1
Summon monster III			
Demon, dretch	—	CE	2
Elemental, Small (earth or fire)	—	N	1
Gnoll, 1st-level fighter	Fiendish	CE	2
Hyena	Shadow[1]	CE	2
Summon monster IV			
Dire hyena (as dire wolf)	Fiendish	CE	4
Dire hyena (as dire wolf)	Shadow[1]	CE	4
Ghast (extraplanar)	—	CE	3
Howler	—	CE	3
Summon monster V			
Elemental, Medium (earth or fire)	—	N	3
Gnoll, 4th-level barbarian	Fiendish	CE	5
Marrash[2]	—	LE	5
Summon monster VI			
Elemental, Large (earth or fire)	—	NN	5
Chaos beast	—	CN	7
Gnoll, 5th-level ranger	Fiendish	CE	6
Summon monster VII			
Elemental, Huge (earth or fire)	—	N	7
Demon, babau	—	CE	5
Gnoll, 7th-level rogue	Shadow[1]	CE	8
Summon monster VIII			
Elemental, greater (earth or fire)	—	N	9
Gnoll, 8th-level fighter	Fiendish	CE	9
Demon, vrock	—	CE	9
Summon monster IX			
Elemental, elder (earth or fire)	—	N	11
Demon, bebilith	—	CE	10
Demon, hezrou	—	CE	11

1 Appears in *Manual of the Planes*.
2 Appears in *Monster Manual II*.

INDIVIDUALIZED SUMMONING LISTS

In this variant, each spellcaster has a unique list of monsters she can summon with any single *summon monster* or *summon nature's ally* spell. When a spellcaster first gains access to a *summon* spell, she chooses one monster from the list. This chosen monster is the only monster she can summon with that spell. The DM is free to choose the means through which characters can add monsters to their summon lists with this variant, but it's important that the method be consistent for all spellcasters. Here are some suggestions for determining when spellcasters may add monsters to their summoning lists.

Add one monster to one summoning list whenever access to a new spell level is gained. Most characters using this option won't have more than a couple of monsters available for each spell. Most favorable for characters with access to a number of *summon* spells (such as clerics and druids).

Add one monster to each summoning list whenever access to a new spell level is gained. Characters using this option have the most monsters available for their lowest-level (or first gained) *summon* spells, and fewer for those spells gained at higher levels. Most favorable for characters with access to a number of *summon* spells (such as clerics and druids).

Add one monster to one summoning list to which the caster has access (or knows, for characters with a limited number of spells known) whenever a new spellcasting level is gained. Similar to the first option, though each list is about twice as long.

Add one monster to each summoning list to which the caster has access (or knows, for characters with a limited number of spells known) whenever a new spellcasting level is gained. Similar to the second option, but each list is about twice as long.

Add a monster to the appropriate summoning list whenever the character witnesses another spellcaster summon that creature. With this variant, the DM might also require a successful Spellcraft check (DC 15 + spell level) to learn how to summon the new creature.

The sample individualized lists presented below were generated using the "add one monster to one summoning list whenever

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: SUMMONING LISTS

A lot of this variant's potential to enrich the game requires that you differentiate summoners along specific lines and assign each a different list, lending a specific flavor to each group. Here are a few ways in which you can categorize spellcasters who use summoning spells.

By wizard specialization (wizard vs. conjurer; other specialist wizards might also have unique lists).

By class (wizard vs. sorcerer, arcane vs. divine, each class, and so on).

By race (dwarves summon earth creatures, elves summon fey creatures, and so on).

By home region (nation, city, plane, and so on).

By current location (for example, when near a volcano, spellcasters summon fire creatures).

By caster alignment.

By gender.

By spellcasting guild.

By individual.

a new spellcasting level is gained" procedure. Both spellcasters gain access to a 9th-level *summon* spell at 17th level. Because of this, it's best for them to simply pick a monster from their highest available list at levels 1st through 17th. However, because the number of 9th-level spells they can cast each day is severely limited, they are often best served by adding monsters to lower-level summoning lists at class levels 18th through 20th. This explains the strange order of levels at the end of the individualized summoning lists. For example, when Caldark Eberkson reaches 18th level, he has access to only two 9th-level spells per day. Although he prepares the *summon monster* IX spell nearly every day, the elder earth elemental is the best possible choice for him in nearly every combat, and adding a new monster to his *summon monster* IX list doesn't help him much. Instead, he adds the celestial dire tiger to his *summon monster* VIII list.

Sample Individualized List: Caldark Eberkson

A dwarf cleric with a penchant for melee combat, Caldark Eberkson has had considerable success in using the first round of combat to summon a physically powerful monster and then wading into combat beside it. Caldark's individualized summoning list is described below.

The list below was constructed using the procedure in which the caster gains access to a new monster on one summoning list each time he gains a level. With Caldark's tactics and personality in mind, the first monster taken at any spell level is a large, physically powerful monster. Subsequent monsters at the same spell level tend to have more versatile movement or spell-like abilities.

Level	Creature	Template	Alignment	CR
Summon monster I				
1st	Badger	Celestial	LG	1/2
2nd	Hawk	Celestial	LG	1/2
Summon monster II				
3rd	Wolf	Celestial	LG	1
4th	Shark, Medium	Celestial	LG	1
Summon monster III				
5th	Black bear	Celestial	LG	2
6th	Elemental, Small (fire)	—	N	1
Summon monster IV				
7th	Lion	Celestial	LG	4
8th	Archon, lantern	—	LG	2
Summon monster V				
9th	Brown bear	Celestial	LG	5
10th	Elemental, Medium (fire)	—	N	3
Summon monster VI				
11th	Dire lion	Celestial	LG	7
12th	Whale, orca	Celestial	LG	7
Summon monster VII				
13th	Elephant	Celestial	LG	9
14th	Guardinal, avoral	—	NG	9
Summon monster VIII				
15th	Earth elemental, greater	—	N	9
16th	Lillend	—	CG	7
18th	Dire tiger	Celestial	LG	10
Summon monster IX				
17th	Earth elemental, elder	—	N	11
19th	Roc	Celestial	LG	11
20th	Guardinal, leonal	—	NG	12

Sample Individualized List: Gwenna Greenbottle

A halfling druid who favors ranged combat from atop her long-time riding dog animal companion, Gwenna Greenbottle prefers to summon mobile monsters capable of keeping up with her mount's speed and fast enough to stay between her and her opponents in the midst of a running battle.

The list below was constructed using the procedure in which the caster gains access to a new monster on one summoning list each time she gains a level. With Gwenna's tactics and personality in mind, the first monster taken at any spell level is a swift animal, usually one capable of flight. Subsequent monsters at the same spell level tend to be larger quadrupeds capable of serving as temporary mounts.

Level	Creature	Template	Alignment	CR
Summon nature's ally I				
1st	Owl	—	N	1/4
2nd	Wolf	—	N	1
Summon nature's ally II				
3rd	Dire bat	—	N	2
4th	Bear, black	—	N	2
Summon nature's ally III				
5th	Eagle, giant	—	NG	3
6th	Dire wolf	—	N	3
Summon nature's ally IV				
7th	Arrowhawk, juvenile	—	N	3
8th	Unicorn	—	CG	3
Summon nature's ally V				
9th	Griffon	—	N	4
10th	Bear, polar	—	N	4
Summon nature's ally VI				
11th	Elephant	—	N	7
12th	Dire bear	—	N	7
Summon nature's ally VII				
13th	Arrowhawk, elder	—	N	8
14th	Elemental, greater	—	N	9
16th	Dire tiger	—	N	8
20th	Djinni (genie)	—	NG	5
Summon nature's ally VIII				
15th	Roc	—	N	9
19th	Dire shark	—	N	9
Summon nature's ally IX				
17th	Earth elemental, elder	—	N	11
18th	Unicorn, celestial charger	—	CG	13

METAMAGIC COMPONENTS

With this variant, casters can produce more potent spells by using a rare and exotic metamagic component in the casting of a spell, in place of the spell's standard material component (or in addition to the spell's other components, if it has no material component).

A spellcaster who uses a metamagic component casts a spell as if a specific metamagic feat had been applied to the spell. The casting process otherwise functions as it would if the character cast the standard version of the spell. For example, Mialee can cast a widened *fireball* by using a 1,900 gp fire opal (the metamagic component) instead of a tiny ball of bat guano and sulfur (the material component). A wizard doesn't need to prepare such a spell as a higher-level spell, and a sorcerer doesn't use a higher-level spell slot or take a full-round action to cast the spell. A spellcaster can use a metamagic component without having the relevant metamagic feat. The spellcaster merely chooses at the moment of casting whether to employ the material component (if any) given in the *Player's Handbook* or the metamagic component given in these variant rules. In either case, the casting process consumes the material component or metamagic component.

A character can't use a metamagic component to add the effect of a metamagic feat to a spell or effect created by a magic item. If a spell has an arcane material component or a divine focus (shown in the spell description as M/DF), then a divine spellcaster must have the relevant metamagic component in addition to his holy symbol. Some spells that have expensive material components can't be made more potent by the use of metamagic components, and a few spells don't have metamagic components because there's no useful way to add the effect of a metamagic feat to them.

SPECIFIC METAMAGIC COMPONENTS

Table 5–2: Metamagic Components presents a list of metamagic components for the spells in the *Player's Handbook*. There's plenty of room to add metamagic components unique to your campaign, because each spell as presented here has only one metamagic component and thus only one metamagic effect associated with it. Doing so is a good way to add specific flavor to your campaign world. Perhaps all your metamagic components are alchemical reagents, or maybe the dwarves in your campaign world use only uncut gems as metamagic components. Truly evil spellcasters might use vile, disgusting metamagic components. Discovering a new metamagic component is also a useful activity for spellcasters who have time for spell research.

The table entries present a wide variety of metamagic components, each belonging to one of the following categories.

Expensive Versions of Existing Material Components

True seeing, for example, requires a rare ointment as a material component. It's easy enough to imagine that by using more ointment, the spell's duration can be extended. Just saying "more of the same" is a fine metamagic component for spells that already have expensive material components. It's also possible to design a metamagic component that's an expensive version of a free material component. *Otiluke's resilient sphere* has a hemispherical piece of clear crystal as its material component. It has no cost, and you could find that piece of crystal in a spell component pouch. The spell's metamagic component is a sphere of pure crystal worth 850 gp—just an expensive version of the material component given in the *Player's Handbook*.

Gems

Many of the spells in the *Player's Handbook* already require expensive gems as material components, and players are used to the idea that powerful magical effects sometimes require gemstones, whether cut or ground into powder. Gems make good metamagic components (from a character's point of view) because they're easy to carry around, they can be found as treasure, and there's the established precedent of gemstones as a source of magic power. They're a particularly good choice for particularly potent metamagic components (ones that maximize, widen, or quicken spells), because a gem can easily be worth 5,000 gp or more.

Jewelry and Art Objects

Jewelry—everything from anklets to headbands—and art objects such as statuettes and carvings also make good choices for metamagic components. It feels appropriately mystical to use a golden medallion as a metamagic component for *hypnotism*, for example. Like gems, jewelry and art objects seem to work well as particularly expensive metamagic components because it's easy to imagine them being worth that much, and they can be found in treasure hoards.

Other Treasure

Occasionally, a weapon or other bit of treasure (usually magical in nature) finds its way onto the metamagic component list when thematically appropriate. For characters who face a lot of well-equipped NPCs, being able to use treasure as a metamagic component is often a useful alternative to simply carting an item back to town to sell it. High-level characters who would ordinarily disdain a weapon with a mere +1 enhancement bonus might think twice if they know it's the metamagic component for a quickened version of *align weapon*.

Plant-Based Metamagic Components

Some spells, especially druid spells, have mushrooms, herbs, or other metamagic components derived from rare plants carefully grown by experts. These metamagic components, often referred to as "druid-tended" items in Table 5–2, have a potential advantage for PCs because some characters might have the ability to grow and cultivate these plants—thereby saving some money.

To grow and harvest a plant-based metamagic component, a character must first sow and tend the seeds, which takes one month per 1,000 gp value (or fraction thereof) of the metamagic component. At the end of that time, the character must make a Profession (herbalist) check (DC 20 + 1 per 1,000 gp value of the metamagic component) in order to harvest the plant successfully. A character can grow multiple metamagic components at a time, but each planting beyond the first one being tended at the same time adds 1 to the DC of all Profession (herbalist) checks made during that time.

Alchemical Metamagic Components

Alchemy provides another traditional source for metamagic components—there's a strong fantasy archetype of the wizard concocting powerful substances in his dank laboratory. An entry on Table 5–2 that contains some form of the word "alchemical" is a metamagic component created by the use of the Craft (alchemy) skill.

When a character sets out to concoct an alchemical metamagic component, the rules in the Craft skill description on pages 70–71 of the *Player's Handbook* apply, except that the calculations are done in gold pieces, not silver pieces. Any new alchemical substance (such as the alchemical dreamwisp dust that is the metamagic component for *sleep*) and anything alchemically treated or alchemically

(*text continues on page 149*)

HOUSE RULE: METAMAGIC AND SORCERERS I

A sorcerer who wants to make better use of his metamagic feats, including the possibility of using Quicken Spell, can treat a metamagic version of a spell as a unique spell known. He must know any metamagic feats he applies to the spell, and he must know the unmodified version of the spell. For example, a 10th-level sorcerer who knows *magic missile* and the Quicken Spell feat can add "quickened *magic missile*" to his list of spells known, counting as his one 5th-level spells.

—James Wyatt

TABLE 5–2: METAMAGIC COMPONENTS

Spell Name	Metamagic Effect	Metamagic Component	Minimum Cost
Acid fog	Extended	Powdered gorgon hoof	940 gp
Acid splash	Enlarged	Rare toad skin	20 gp
Aid	Extended	Specially consecrated water	340 gp
Air walk	Quickened	Stoppered vial of elemental air	3,500 gp
Alarm	Widened	Rare chalk	1,000 gp
Align weapon	Quickened	Weapon with +1 enhancement bonus	2,300 gp
Alter self	Silent and stilled	Mirror with silver filigree	830 gp
Analyze dweomer	Enlarged	Herbs sprinkled on tindertwig	940 gp
Animal growth	Extended	Albino stag horn	790 gp
Animal messenger	Extended	Miniscule collar with golden bell	340 gp
Animal shapes	Extended	Rare variety of mistletoe	1,200 gp
Animate dead	Silent	Blood onyx	570 gp
Animate objects	Enlarged	Gold-spun marionette strings	940 gp
Animate plants	Silent	Rare uprooted sapling	1,100 gp
Animate rope	Enlarged	Brass thread	190 gp
Antilife shell	Widened	Skull with graven runes	3,300 gp
Antimagic field	Widened	Cold iron filings	3,700
Antipathy	Extended	Alum soaked in ancient blood	1,200 gp
Antiplant shell	Extended	Rare oils	640 gp
Arcane eye	Silent	Dire bat fur	640 gp
Arcane lock	Quickened	Platinum dust	2,300 gp
Arcane mark	Silent	Rare paints	20 gp
Arcane sight	Extended	Ground quartz	790 gp
Greater arcane sight	Extended	Ground quartz	1,100 gp
Awaken	Empowered	Specially prepared otyugh dung	1,700 gp
Baleful polymorph	Enlarged	Miniature silver cage	790 gp
Bane	Silent	Miniature clay mask	190 gp
Barkskin	Extended	Heartwood of venerable oak	340 gp
Bear's endurance	Extended	Distilled alcohol	340 gp
Mass bear's endurance	Extended	Distilled alcohol	940 gp
Bestow curse	Heightened +1	Eye of firenewt	720 gp
Bigby's clenched fist	Stilled	Ornate gold knuckles	1,200 gp
Bigby's crushing hand	Stilled	Ornate platinum knuckles	1,400 gp
Bigby's forceful hand	Stilled	Ornate bronze knuckles	940 gp
Bigby's grasping hand	Stilled	Ornate silver knuckles	1,100 gp
Bigby's interposing hand	Stilled	Ornate brass knuckles	790 gp
Blade barrier	Empowered	Slashing weapon with +1 enhancement bonus	2,300 gp
Blasphemy	Heightened +2	Specially prepared feather of an archon's wing	3,100 gp
Bull's strength	Extended	Adamantine powder	340 gp
Mass bull's strength	Extended	Adamantine powder	940 gp
Cat's grace	Extended	Vial of quicksilver	340 gp
Mass cat's grace	Extended	Vial of quicksilver	940 gp
Cause fear	Empowered	Ancient bones ground to powder	700 gp
Chain lightning	Maximized	Fist-sized chunk of magnetic stone	4,350 gp
Changestaff	Extended	*+1 quarterstaff*	2,301 gp
Chaos hammer	Empowered	Protoplasm from Limbo	1,900 gp
Charm animal	Silent	Masterwork whip	301 gp
Charm monster	Quickened	Garnets	4,600 gp
Mass charm monster	Silent	Garnets	1,600 gp
Charm person	Stilled	Rare oils	250 gp
Chill metal	Extended	Glacial spring water	450 gp
Chill touch	Empowered	Gauntlet made of bone	700 gp
Circle of death	Widened	Powder of crushed black pearl	4,850 gp
Clairaudience/clairvoyance	Extended	Quartz	650 gp
Cloak of chaos	Extended	Shield with +1 enhancement bonus	1,153 gp
Clone	—	—	—
Cloudkill	Heightened +2	Distilled chlorine	2,300 gp
Color spray	Silent and stilled	Crushed rubies, diamonds, and sapphires	700 gp
Command	Heightened +3	Carved ivory mask	1,350 gp
Greater command	Extended	Carved ivory mask	1,350 gp
Command plants	Heightened +2	Alchemical defoliant	1,900 gp
Command undead	Extended	Ritually defaced holy symbol of good deity	450 gp
Commune	—	—	—
Commune with nature	Widened (see spell text)	Runic map of area	3,750 gp

Comprehend languages	Extended	Foreign lexicon	250 gp
Cone of cold	Heightened +1	Cone of carved quartz	1,050 gp
Confusion	Widened	Nutshells from treant	3,150 gp
Lesser confusion	Extended	Nutshell from druid-tended beech	250 gp
Consecrate	Extended	Holy water and gold dust	450 gp
Contact other plane	—	—	—
Contagion	Silent	Skull of animal that died from disease	750 gp
Contingency	Extended	Rakshasa hide	1,250 gp
Continual flame	Heightened +1	Ruby dust	500 gp
Control plants	Extended	Alchemical defoliant	1,650 gp
Control undead	Heightened +2	Carved bone mask	3,100 gp
Control water	Extended	Water from the briny deep or sand from the trackless desert	850 gp
Control weather	Extended	Crystal sphere	1,450 gp
Control winds	Heightened +2	Bottled smoke from Elemental Plane of Air	2,300 gp
Create food and water	—	—	—
Create greater undead	—	—	—
Create undead	—	—	—
Create water	—	—	—
Creeping doom	Extended	Rare jungle centipedes	1,450 gp
Crushing despair	Widened	Couatl tears	3,150 gp
Cure critical wounds	Empowered	Alchemical salve	1,900 gp
Mass cure critical wounds	Empowered	Copper loop from Positive Energy Plane	3,900 gp
Cure light wounds	Empowered	Alchemical salve	700 gp
Mass cure light wounds	Empowered	Copper loop from Positive Energy Plane	2,300 gp
Cure minor wounds	Quickened	Alchemical salve	1,375 gp
Cure moderate wounds	Empowered	Alchemical salve	1,100 gp
Mass cure moderate wounds	Empowered	Copper loop from Positive Energy Plane	2,700 gp
Cure serious wounds	Empowered	Alchemical salve	1,500 gp
Mass cure serious wounds	Empowered	Copper loop from Positive Energy Plane	3,100 gp
Curse water	—	—	—
Dancing lights	Extended	Anarchic fireflies from Limbo	25 gp
Darkness	Silent	Coal mined and kept in total darkness	450 gp
Darkvision	Extended	Agate	450 gp
Daylight	Silent and stilled	Alchemical polish	1,500 gp
Daze	Extended	Wool from satyr-tended sheep	25 gp
Daze monster	Quickened	Umber hulk mandible	3,000 gp
Death knell	Heightened +3	Runic funerary blessings	1,950 gp
Death ward	Extended	Henna, which tattoos creature touched	850 gp
Deathwatch	Widened	Black crystal lenses	1,350 gp
Deep slumber	Heightened +2	Alchemical dreamwisp dust	1,500 gp
Deeper darkness	Silent	Oil extracted and kept in total darkness	650 gp
Delay poison	Extended	Specially prepared armadillo scales	450 gp
Delayed blast fireball	Extended	Fire opal	1,450 gp
Demand	Heightened +1	Gold wire and small part of the subject	1,850 gp
Desecrate	Extended	Unholy water and gold dust	450 gp
Destruction	Silent and stilled	Holy or unholy symbol marked with anathema	4,400 gp
Detect animals or plants	Enlarged	Five *+1 arrows*	235 gp
Detect chaos	Silent and stilled	Ground glass lens	700 gp
Detect evil	Silent and stilled	Ground glass lens	700 gp
Detect good	Silent and stilled	Ground glass lens	700 gp
Detect law	Silent and stilled	Ground glass lens	700 gp
Detect magic	Silent and stilled	Short cold iron rod	275 gp
Detect poison	Enlarged	Specially prepared snake tongue	25 gp
Detect scrying	Widened	Jewel-studded domino mask	3,150 gp
Detect secret doors	Extended	Tangle of copper and silver wires	250 gp
Detect snares and pits	Extended	Darkwood divining rod	250 gp
Detect thoughts	*Heightened +2*	*Platinum disc*	*1,100 gp*
Detect undead	Extended	Specially prepared jawless skull	250 gp
Dictum	Heightened +2	Specially prepared protoplasm of a chaos beast	3,100 gp
Dimension door	Quickened	Gold ore mined from Astral Plane	4,600 gp
Dimensional anchor	Extended	Rune-engraved miniature anchor	850 gp
Dimensional lock	Widened	Adamantine weapon	varies
Diminish plants	Enlarged	Masterwork pruning shears	650 gp
Discern lies	*Enlarged*	*Set of golden scales*	*850 gp*
Discern location	—	—	—
Disguise self	Extended	Masterwork greasepaint	250 gp
Disintegrate	Empowered	Trapped voidstone	3,100 gp

Dismissal	*Heightened +2*	*Specially blessed holy symbol*	*2,100 gp*
Dispel chaos	Quickened	Sapphire	5,400 gp
Dispel evil	Quickened	Diamond	5,400 gp
Dispel good	Quickened	Black opal	5,400 gp
Dispel law	Quickened	Yellow corundum	5,400 gp
Dispel magic	*Widened*	*Cold iron statuette*	*2,550 gp*
Greater dispel magic	Widened	Cold iron statuette	4,350 gp
Displacement	Extended	Specially prepared displacer beast teeth	650 gp
Disrupt undead	Enlarged	Dirt from *hallowed* grave	25 gp
Disrupting weapon	Extended	Whetstone made from tombstone	1,050 gp
Divination	—	—	—
Divine favor	Extended	Calligraphic scriptures	250 gp
Divine power	Silent and stilled	Holy symbol made of platinum and gems	1,900 gp
Dominate animal	Enlarged	Adamantine collar	650 gp
Dominate monster	Enlarged	Emerald-studded adamantine collar	1,850 gp
Dominate person	Quickened	Sapphire-studded adamantine collar	5,400 gp
Doom	Heightened +2	Carved doll	700 gp
Drawmij's instant summons	—	—	—
Dream	—	—	—
Eagle's splendor	Extended	Emerald	450 gp
Mass eagle's splendor	Extended	Emerald	1,250 gp
Earthquake	Widened	White granite from Elemental Plane of Earth	5,550 gp
Elemental swarm	Empowered	Rare incense (air), alchemical liquids (water), gems (fire), or mithral ore (earth)	3,900 gp
Endure elements	Extended	*Potion of cure moderate wounds*	300 gp
Energy drain	Empowered	Specially prepared vampire's skull	3,900 gp
Enervation	Empowered	Specially prepared wight's skull	1,900 gp
Enlarge person	Extended	Rare druid-tended beans	250 gp
Mass enlarge person	Extended	Rare druid-tended berries	850 gp
Entangle	Widened	Alchemical fertilizer	1,350 gp
Enthrall	Heightened +2	Golden figurines	1,100 gp
Entropic shield	Quickened	Finely engraved platinum dice	2,200 gp
Erase	Enlarged	Rubber plant sap	250 gp
Ethereal jaunt	Extended	Chunk of ethereal solid	1,450 gp
Etherealness	Extended	Figurine carved from ethereal solid	1,850 gp
Evard's black tentacles	Widened	Nightcrawler essence	3,150 gp
Expeditious retreat	Extended	Rare peppers	250 gp
Explosive runes	Heightened +3	Rare pigments	2,550 gp
Eyebite	Extended	Specially prepared beholder eyestalk	1,250 gp
Fabricate	—	—	—
Faerie fire	Widened	Druid-tended mushrooms	1,350 gp
False life	Extended	Rare alcohol	450 gp
False vision	Widened	Ground jade dust	4,000 gp
Fear	Heightened +2	Pinfeather from giant eagle	1,900 gp
Feather fall	Enlarged	Down from black goose	250 gp
Feeblemind	Heightened +2	Polished obsidian spheres	2,300 gp
Find the path	Extended	Bracelet of lodestone	1,250 gp
Find traps	Extended	Golden magnifying glass	450 gp
Finger of death	Enlarged	Specially embalmed finger	1,450 gp
Fire seeds	Empowered	Druid-tended acorns or berries	2,700 gp
Fire shield (either version)	Extended	Alchemically prepared phosphorus	1,900 gp
Fire storm	Maximized	Cooled lava from erupting volcano	7,000 gp
Fire trap	Heightened +3	Gold dust	1,975 gp
Fireball	Widened	Fire opal	1,900 gp
Flame arrow	Empowered	Carved flint arrowhead	1,500 gp
Flame blade	Extended	Masterwork scimitar	315 gp
Flame strike	Empowered	Brimstone from Elemental Plane of Fire	2,300 gp
Flaming sphere	Enlarged	Powdered cold iron	450 gp
Flare	Silent	Powdered magnesium	25 gp
Flesh to stone	Heighten +2	Medusa head-snake	2,700 gp
Fly	Extended	Feather from albino falcon	650 gp
Fog cloud	Quickened	Cloudy diamonds	3,000 gp
Forbiddance	Empowered	Holy water and rare incenses	4,200 gp plus 1,500 gp per 60 ft. cube
Forcecage	Enlarged	Ruby dust	3,000 gp
Foresight	Extended	A celestial hummingbird's feather	1,850 gp
Fox's cunning	Extended	Garnet	450 gp

Mass fox's cunning	Extended	Garnet	1,250 gp
Freedom	Stilled	*Salve of slipperiness*	1,000 gp
Freedom of movement	Stilled	*Salve of slipperiness*	1,000 gp
Gaseous form	*Stilled*	*Bottled smoke from a volcano's crater*	*650 gp*
Gate	Quickened	Black pearl	8,600 gp
Geas/quest	Extended	Golden armband	850 gp
Lesser geas	Extended	Jeweled armband	1,250 gp
Gentle repose	Extended	Embalming fluid	550 gp
Ghost sound	Heightened +2	Wax from sacred candle	275 gp
Ghoul touch	Extended	Earth from a ghast's lair	450 gp
Giant vermin	Extended	Rare insect parts	850 gp
Glibness	Stilled	Fancy liquor	650 gp
Glitterdust	Widened	Ground topaz	1,950 gp
Globe of invulnerability	Widened	Pearls	3,150 gp
Lesser globe of invulnerability	Widened	Pearls	4,350 gp
Glyph of warding	Heightened +2	Incense and powdered diamond	1,700 gp
Greater glyph of warding	Heightened +2	Incense and powdered diamond	3,100 gp
Goodberry	Empowered	Treant sap	700 gp
Good hope	Extended	Engraved brass torc	650 gp
Grease	Enlarged	Rind of a boar	250 gp
Guards and wards	Heightened +1	Rare incense	1,450 gp
Guidance	Extended	Book of prayers	25 gp
Gust of wind	Widened	Elaborate lacquered fan	1,950 gp
Hallow	Widened	Herbs, oils, and incense	4,750 gp plus extra for spell
Hallucinatory terrain	Heightened +3	Twigs and plants from Arborea	3,150 gp
Halt undead	Heightened +2	Abyssal sulfur	1,500 gp
Harm	Heightened +1	Heart carved from onyx	1,250 gp
Haste	Extended	Rare coffee beans	850 gp
Heal	Heightened +1	Heart carved from alabaster	1,250 gp
Mass heal	*Heightened +1*	*Heart carved from alabaster*	*1,850 gp*
Heal mount	Quickened	Alchemical salve	3,800 gp
Heat metal	Extended	Mithral forge dross	450 gp
Helping hand	Enlarged	Ivory carving of hand	650 gp
Heroes' feast	Extended	Rare spices	1,250 gp
Heroism	Extended	Fine brandy	650 gp
Greater heroism	Extended	Fine whiskey	1,250 gp
Hide from animals	Extended	Stitched velvet blindfold	250 gp
Hide from undead	Heightened +3	Embroidered silk shawl	1,350 gp
Hold animal	Heightened +2	Decorative steel gauntlet	1,100 gp
Hold monster	Heightened +2	Engraved rod of cold iron	2,300 gp
Mass hold monster	Heightened +2	Engraved rod of cold iron	3,900 gp
Hold person	Heightened +2	Engraved ingot of cold iron	1,100 gp
Mass hold person	Heightened +2	Engraved ingot of cold iron	3,100 gp
Hold portal	Quickened	Ebony key	2,200 gp
Holy aura	Extended	Shield with +1 enhancement bonus	1,153 gp
Holy smite	Empowered	Spring water from Elysium	1,900 gp
Holy sword	Extended	Sacred candles	850 gp
Holy word	Heightened +2	Specially prepared fiend's tail	3,100 gp
Horrid wilting	Empowered	Sponge from Elemental Plane of Water	3,500 gp
Hypnotic pattern	Heightened +2	Stick of incense	1,100 gp
Hypnotism	Silent and stilled	Golden medallion	700 gp
Ice storm	Extended	Ivory stick with engraved snowflake pattern	850 gp
Identify	—	—	—
Illusory script	Heightened +4	Rare inks	3,850 gp
Illusory wall	Heightened +2	Sunrod and ground glass lenses	1,900 gp
Imbue with spell ability	—	—	—
Implosion	Extended	Glass statuette	1,850 gp
Imprisonment	Heightened +2	Carved jade sphere	3,900 gp
Incendiary cloud	Extended	Bottled brimstone and sea mist	1,650 gp
Inflict critical wounds	Maximized	Obsidian holy symbol	3,150 gp
Mass inflict critical wounds	Maximized	Obsidian holy symbol	5,550 gp
Inflict light wounds	Maximized	Obsidian holy symbol	1,350 gp
Mass inflict light wounds	Maximized	Obsidian holy symbol	3,750 gp
Inflict minor wounds	Quickened	Obsidian holy symbol	1,375 gp
Inflict moderate wounds	Maximized	Obsidian holy symbol	1,950 gp
Mass inflict moderate wounds	Maximized	Obsidian holy symbol	4,350 gp
Inflict serious wounds	Maximized	Obsidian holy symbol	2,550 gp

Mass inflict serious wounds	Maximized	Obsidian holy symbol	4,950 gp
Insanity	Heightened +1	Distilled water from Limbo	1,450 gp
Insect plague	Extended	Crooked staff with carved runes	1,050 gp
Invisibility	Extended	Janni eyelash	450 gp
Greater invisibility	Extended	Djinni eyelash	850 gp
Mass invisibility	Extended	Efreeti eyelash	1,450 gp
Invisibility purge	Extended	Crystal prism	650 gp
Iron body	Extended	Articulated iron doll	1,650 gp
Ironwood	Extended	Darkwood shaped into the object's form	varies
Jump	Quickened	Mithral springs	2,200 gp
Keen edge	Extended	Whetstone with pyrite veins running through it	650 gp
Knock	Silent	Golden key	450 gp
Know direction	—	—	—
Legend lore	—	—	—
Leomund's secret chest	Extended	Net made of ethereal solid	1,050 gp
Leomund's secure shelter	Extended	Miniscule model of cottage	850 gp
Leomund's tiny hut	Extended	Necklace of crystal beads	650 gp
Leomund's trap	—	—	—
Levitate	Enlarged	Loop of manticore hide	250 gp
Light	Silent	Phosphorescent moss	25 gp
Lightning bolt	Widened	Blue dragon scales	2,550 gp
Limited wish	—	—	—
Liveoak	Extended	Alchemical fertilizer	1,250 gp
Locate creature	Enlarged	Specially tanned hellhound fur	850 gp
Locate object	Enlarged	Forked twig of darkwood	450 gp
Longstrider	Extended	Cobblestone from ancient hippodrome	250 gp
Lullaby	Widened	Fancy resin	725 gp
Mage armor	Extended	Links of mithral chain	250 gp
Mage hand	Enlarged	Monkey's paw	25 gp
Magic circle against chaos	Widened	Specially prepared holy symbol	2,550 gp
Magic circle against evil	Widened	Specially prepared holy symbol	2,550 gp
Magic circle against good	Widened	Specially prepared holy symbol	2,550 gp
Magic circle against law	Widened	Specially prepared holy symbol	2,550 gp
Magic fang	Extended	Specially prepared shark tooth	250 gp
Greater magic fang	Extended	Specially prepared dire shark tooth	650 gp
Magic jar	Extended	Gem or crystal	1,100 gp
Magic missile	Empowered	Two *+3 arrows*	734 gp
Magic mouth	—	—	—
Magic stone	Empowered	Colorful marbles	700 gp
Magic vestment	Extended	Embroidered sash	650 gp
Magic weapon	Extended	Alchemically distilled blood	250 gp
Greater magic weapon	Extended	Alchemically purified blood	750 gp
Major creation	Extended	Phasm essence	1,050 gp
Major image	Heightened +2	Rare pigments	1,500 gp
Make whole	Enlarged	Alchemical adhesive	450 gp
Mark of justice	—	—	—
Maze	Enlarged	Engraved minotaur horn	1,650 gp
Meld into stone	Extended	Carved stone figurine	650 gp
Melf's acid arrow	Empowered	Four masterwork darts	1,200 gp
Mending	Enlarged	Alchemical adhesive	25 gp
Message	Enlarged	Calligraphic inscriptions on vellum	25 gp
Meteor swarm	Maximized	Chunk of meteorite	8,600 gp
Mind blank	Extended	Malachite-studded headband	1,650 gp
Mind fog	Heightened +3	Specially prepared mind flayer tentacle	3,750 gp
Minor creation	Extended	Roper sap	850 gp
Minor image	Heightened +2	Rare pigments	1,100 gp
Miracle	—	—	—
Mirage arcana	Heightened +3	Mirror silvered in Bytopia	3,750 gp
Mirror image	Extended	Miniscule dolls of yourself	450 gp
Misdirection	Heightened +2	Gold wire bent into a creature's silhouette	1,100 gp
Mislead	Heightened +1	Fancy marionette	1,250 gp
Modify memory	Heightened +2	Alchemical smelling salts	1,900 gp
Moment of prescience	Quickened	Fine Elysian wine	7,800 gp
Mordenkainen's disjunction	Enlarged and widened	Trapped voidstone	8,600 gp
Mordenkainen's faithful hound	Extended	Specially prepared blink dog teeth	1,050 gp
Mordenkainen's lucubration	Quickened	Ruby ring	6,200 gp

Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion	Extended	Miniature portal	1,465 gp
Mordenkainen's private sanctum	Extended	Trapped fog from Plane of Shadow	1,050 gp
Mount	Quickened	Specially prepared hair from pegasus or nightmare	2,200 gp
Move earth	Enlarged	Rare soils from Elemental Plane of Earth	1,250 gp
Neutralize poison	Extended	Specially prepared yuan-ti tongue	750 gp
Nightmare	Heightened +2	Rare spices	2,300 gp
Nondetection	Extended	Carved ebony lattice	700 gp
Nystul's magic aura	Heightened +3	Amethyst necklace	1,350 gp
Obscure object	Extended	Chimera scales	550 gp
Obscuring mist	Extended	Silver chalice	250 gp
Open/close	Enlarged	Silver key	25 gp
Order's wrath	Empowered	Gear cog from Mechanus	1,900 gp
Otiluke's freezing sphere	Empowered	Crystal sphere	2,700 gp
Otiluke's resilient sphere	Enlarged	Crystal sphere	850 gp
Otiluke's telekinetic sphere	Enlarged	Crystal sphere	1,650 gp
Otto's irresistible dance	Silent	Embroidered shoes with gold buttons	1,650 gp
Overland flight	Extended	Specially prepared dragon wing-hide	1,050 gp
Owl's wisdom	Extended	Opal	450 gp
Mass owl's wisdom	Extended	Opal	1,250 gp
Passwall	Extended	Golden miniature shovel	1,050 gp
Pass without trace	Extended	Cloak of feathers	250 gp
Permanency	—	—	—
Permanent image	Heightened +2	Rare pigments	2,700 gp
Persistent image	Heightened +2	Rare pigments	2,300 gp
Phantasmal killer	Heightened +1	Nightmarish etchings	850 gp
Phantom steed	Extended	Platinum horseshoe	650 gp
Phase door	Silent	Jasper-studded key	1,450 gp
Planar ally	—	—	—
Greater planar ally	—	—	—
Lesser planar ally	—	—	—
Planar binding	Heightened +2	Silver filigree around *magic circle*	2,700 gp
Greater planar binding	Heightened +2	Gold filigree around *magic circle*	3,500 gp
Lesser planar binding	Heightened +2	Copper filigree around *magic circle*	2,300 gp
Plane shift	Quickened	Silk mantle with moonstones	6,200 gp
Plant growth	Enlarged	Alchemically treated seeds	650 gp
Poison	Maximized	Wyvern poison	3,000 gp
Polar ray	Enlarged	Pale sapphire	1,650 gp
Polymorph	Extended	Druid-tended silkworm cocoon	850 gp
Polymorph any object	Extended	Alchemically purified mercury	1,650 gp
Power word blind	Enlarged	Corundum	1,450 gp
Power word kill	Enlarged	Corundum	1,850 gp
Power word stun	Enlarged	Corundum	1,650 gp
Prayer	Widened	Blessed scriptures on vellum	2,550 gp
Prestidigitation	Enlarged	White silk gloves	25 gp
Prismatic sphere	Heightened +2	Diamonds	3,900 gp
Prismatic spray	Heightened +2	Diamonds	3,100 gp
Prismatic wall	Heightened +2	Diamonds	3,500 gp
Produce flame	Silent	Ring carved from flint	250 gp
Programmed image	Heightened +2	Rare pigments	2,700 gp
Project image	Extended	Distorted mirror	1,450 gp
Protection from arrows	Extended	Piece of bulette hide	450 gp
Protection from chaos	Extended	Powdered platinum	250 gp
Protection from energy	Extended	Spinels of red (fire), black (acid), green (sonic), blue (electricity), or white (cold)	650 gp
Protection from evil	Extended	Powdered platinum	250 gp
Protection from good	Extended	Powdered platinum	250 gp
Protection from law	Extended	Powdered platinum	250 gp
Protection from spells	Extended	Crushed diamond	2,150 gp
Prying eyes	Enlarged	Specially prepared beholder eyestalk	1,050 gp
Greater prying eyes	Enlarged	Specially prepared beholder center eye	1,650 gp
Purify food and drink	—	—	—
Pyrotechnics	Heightened +2	Fire source and alchemical accelerants	1,100 gp
Quench	Enlarged	Water from the extraplanar River Oceanus	650 gp
Rage	Extended	Fine mead	650 gp
Rainbow pattern	Heightened +2	Smoky quartz prism	1,900 gp

Raise dead	—	—	—
Rary's mnemonic enhancer	—	—	—
Rary's telepathic bond	Extended	Dragon eggshells	1,050 gp
Ray of enfeeblement	Enlarged	Ceremonial electrum dagger	250 gp
Ray of exhaustion	Heightened +1	Alchemically distilled perspiration	650 gp
Ray of frost	Enlarged	White marble carved in icicle shape	25 gp
Read magic	Extended	Mineral prism	25 gp
Reduce animal	Heightened +3	Topaz-studded links of iron	1,950 gp
Reduce person	Heightened +3	Turquoise-studded links of iron	1,350 gp
Mass reduce person	Heightened +3	Turquoise-studded links of iron	3,150 gp
Refuge	—	—	—
Regenerate	Empowered	Specially prepared troll blood	3,500 gp
Reincarnate	—	—	—
Remove blindness/deafness	Silent	Pearl-studded circlet	650 gp
Remove curse	—	—	—
Remove disease	—	—	—
Remove fear	Extended	Alchemically prepared war paint	250 gp
Remove paralysis	Enlarged	Burning incense	450 gp
Repel metal or stone	Widened	Druid-tended sapling	5,550 gp
Repel vermin	Widened	Rare snakeskin	3,150 gp
Repel wood	Widened	Miniature jeweled lantern	4,350 gp
Repulsion	Widened	Alchemical-ink tattoo (temporary)	4,700 gp
Resistance	Extended	Silk cloak	25 gp
Resist energy	Extended	Spinel of red (fire), black (acid), green (sonic), blue (electricity), or white (cold)	450 gp
Restoration	—	—	—
Greater restoration	—	—	—
Lesser restoration	Empowered	Alchemical balm	1,100 gp
Resurrection	—	—	—
Reverse gravity	Quickened	Lodestone mined in Pandemonium	7,400 gp
Righteous might	Extended	Ritually prepared holy symbol	1,050 gp
Rope trick	Extended	Rope braided from spider silk	450 gp
Rusting grasp	Empowered	Ornate mithral gauntlet	1,900 gp
Sanctuary	Heightened +2	Jasper necklace	700 gp
Scare	Extended	Ritually prepared bone from corporeal undead	450 gp
Scintillating pattern	Widened	Pearlescent prism	5,550 gp
Scorching ray	Empowered	Ruby from Elemental Plane of Fire	1,100 gp
Screen	Heightened +2	Embroidered gauze scrim	3,500 gp
Scrying	Heightened +3	Alchemically purified nitric acid	3,150 gp
Greater scrying	Heightened +2	Alchemically purified nitric acid	3,100 gp
Sculpt sound	Enlarged	Rare clay	650 gp
Searing light	Maximized	Yellow topaz	2,550 gp
Secret page	—	—	—
See invisibility	Extended	Powdered turquoise	450 gp
Seeming	Heightened +2	Coral figurines	2,300 gp
Sending	—	—	—
Sepia snake sigil	Heightened +2	Powdered amber	2,000 gp
Sequester	Extended	Alchemical ointment	1,450 gp
Shades	Heightened +1	Pearl from Plane of Shadow	1,850 gp
Shadow conjuration	Heightened +1	Pearl from Plane of Shadow	850 gp
Greater shadow conjuration	Heightened +1	Pearl from Plane of Shadow	1,450 gp
Shadow evocation	Heightened +1	Diamond from Plane of Shadow	1,050 gp
Greater shadow evocation	Heightened +1	Diamond from Plane of Shadow	1,650 gp
Shadow walk	Extended	Black tourmaline	1,250 gp
Shambler	Empowered	Rare herbs	3,900 gp
Shapechange	Extended	Aquamarine circlet	1,850 gp
Shatter	Widened	Carved crystal cubes	1,950 gp
Shield	Quickened	Jeweled bracelet	2,200 gp
Shield of faith	Extended	Ritually prepared parchment	250 gp
Shield of law	Extended	Shield with +1 enhancement bonus	1,153 gp
Shield other	Enlarged	Two emerald and platinum rings	550 gp
Shillelagh	Extended	Druid-tended oak club or quarterstaff	250 gp
Shocking grasp	Maximized	Ornate electrum gauntlet	1,350 gp
Shout	Widened	Ornate platinum gong	3,150 gp
Greater shout	Widened	Ornate platinum trumpet	5,550 gp
Shrink item	Extended	Alchemically purified mica	650 gp
Silence	Silent	Silver mask	450 gp

Silent image	Heightened +2	Rare pigments	700 gp
Simulacrum	—	—	—
Slay living	Heightened +3	Obsidian headpiece	3,750 gp
Sleep	*Heightened +2*	*Alchemical dreamwisp dust*	*700 gp*
Sleet storm	Extended	Hollow ivory bottle	650 gp
Slow	Heightened +2	Liquid amber	1,500 gp
Snare	—	—	—
Soften earth and stone	Enlarged	Specially prepared mud from Hades	450 gp
Solid fog	Quickened	Cloudy diamonds	4,600 gp
Song of discord	Widened	Rune-carved conch shell	3,750 gp
Soul bind	—	—	—
Sound burst	Heightened +1	Bone whistle	450 gp
Speak with animals	Extended	Animal mask	250 gp
Speak with dead	Heightened +3	Golden caduceus	2,550 gp
Speak with plants	Extended	Jade-studded mask	650 gp
Spectral hand	Enlarged	Phosphor-limned glove	450 gp
Spell immunity	Extended	Moonstone	850 gp
Greater spell immunity	Extended	Moonstone	1,650 gp
Spell resistance	Extended	Rakshasa claw	1,050 gp
Spellstaff	—	—	—
Spell turning	Empowered	Zircon	3,100 gp
Spider climb	Extended	Drider fur	450 gp
Spike growth	Heightened +2	Carved basalt dagger	1,500 gp
Spike stones	Heightened +2	Carved obsidian dagger	1,900 gp
Spiritual weapon	Enlarged	Masterwork version of weapon	varies
Statue	Extended	Limestone figurine	1,450 gp
Status	Extended	Electrum headband	450 gp
Stinking cloud	Empowered	Sulfur from Elemental Plane of Fire	1,500 gp
Stone shape	—	—	—
Stoneskin	Extended	Diamond dust	1,300 gp
Stone tell	Extended	Stone mask	1,250 gp
Stone to flesh	—	—	—
Storm of vengeance	Empowered	Heartwood from oak split by lightning	3,900 gp
Suggestion	Heightened +2	Druid-tended honey	1,500 gp
Mass suggestion	Heightened +2	Druid-tended honey	2,700 gp
Summon instrument	—	—	—
Summon monster I	Extended	Pearl	250 gp
Summon monster II	Empowered	Pearl	1,100 gp
Summon monster III	Empowered	Pearl	1,500 gp
Summon monster IV	Empowered	Pearl	1,900 gp
Summon monster V	Empowered	Pearl	2,300 gp
Summon monster VI	Empowered	Pearl	2,700 gp
Summon monster VII	Empowered	Pearl	3,100 gp
Summon monster VIII	Empowered	Pearl	3,500 gp
Summon monster IX	Empowered	Pearl	3,900 gp
Summon nature's ally I	Extended	Druid-tended mistletoe	250 gp
Summon nature's ally II	Empowered	Druid-tended mistletoe	1,100 gp
Summon nature's ally III	Empowered	Druid-tended mistletoe	1,500 gp
Summon nature's ally IV	Empowered	Druid-tended mistletoe	1,900 gp
Summon nature's ally V	Empowered	Druid-tended mistletoe	2,300 gp
Summon nature's ally VI	Empowered	Druid-tended mistletoe	2,700 gp
Summon nature's ally VII	Empowered	Druid-tended mistletoe	3,100 gp
Summon nature's ally VIII	Empowered	Druid-tended mistletoe	3,500 gp
Summon nature's ally IX	Empowered	Druid-tended mistletoe	3,900 gp
Summon swarm	Extended	Rune-embroidered red cloth	450 gp
Sunbeam	Widened	Javelin with phosphorus runes	4,950 gp
Sunburst	Widened	Sunstone carved into graven image	5,550 gp
Symbol of death	Heightened +2	Powdered diamond and opal	13,500 gp
Symbol of fear	Heightened +2	Powdered diamond and opal	3,700 gp
Symbol of insanity	Heightened +2	Powdered diamond and opal	8,500 gp
Symbol of pain	Heightened +2	Powdered diamond and opal	3,300 gp
Symbol of persuasion	Heightened +2	Powdered diamond and opal	7,700 gp
Symbol of sleep	Heightened +2	Powdered diamond and opal	3,300 gp
Symbol of stunning	Heightened +2	Powdered diamond and opal	8,100 gp
Symbol of weakness	Heightened +2	Powdered diamond and opal	8,100 gp
Sympathetic vibration	Extended	Set of masterwork tuning forks	1,250 gp
Sympathy	Extended	Crushed pearls	2,150 gp

Tasha's hideous laughter	Enlarged	Masterwork greasepaint	450 gp
Telekinesis	Enlarged	Iron rod with silver filigree	1,250 gp
Teleport	Quickened	Amber and emerald pendant	5,400 gp
Teleport object	Quickened	Amber and emerald bracelet	7,000 gp
Greater teleport	Quickened	Amber and emerald necklace	7,000 gp
Teleportation circle	Extended	Amber dust	2,850 gp
Temporal stasis	Heightened +2	Powdered diamond, emerald, ruby, and sapphire	8,500 gp
Tenser's floating disk	Extended	Flask of mercury	250 gp
Tenser's transformation	Extended	*Potions of bear's endurance, bull's strength, cat's grace,* and *heroism*	1,650 gp
Time stop	Empowered	Specially prepared titan's knucklebone	3,900 gp
Tongues	Extended	Brass model of ziggurat	750 gp
Touch of fatigue	Heightened +2	Wolverine perspiration	275 gp
Touch of idiocy	Silent	Ornate bronze gauntlet	450 gp
Transmute metal to wood	Widened	Finely carved darkwood-and-pearl holy symbol	4,950 gp
Transmute mud to rock	Heightened +1	Alchemically treated clay	1,050 gp
Transmute rock to mud	Heightened +1	Alchemically treated clay	1,050 gp
Transport via plants	Silent	Rare herbs	1,250 gp
Trap the soul	—	—	—
Tree shape	Extended	Shawl woven from druid-tended leaves	450 gp
Tree stride	Silent	Rare herbs	1,050 gp
True resurrection	—	—	—
True seeing	Extended	Eye ointment	1,500 gp
True strike	Quickened	Bow with +1 enhancement bonus	2,330 gp
Undeath to death	Widened	Crushed diamond	4,850 gp
Undetectable alignment	Extended	Embroidered velvet shroud	450 gp
Unhallow	Widened	Herbs, oils, and incense	4,750 gp plus extra for spell
Unholy aura	Extended	Shield with +1 enhancement bonus	1,153 gp
Unholy blight	Empowered	Dust from Hades	1,900 gp
Unseen servant	Extended	Fancy valet's uniform	250 gp
Vampiric touch	Maximized	Specially prepared vampire's fang	2,550 gp
Veil	Heightened +2	Veil spun from electrum thread	2,700 gp
Ventriloquism	Enlarged	Calligraphy on fine parchment, rolled into cone	250 gp
Virtue	Extended	Brass medallion	25 hp
Vision	—	—	—
Wail of the banshee	Enlarged and widened	Trapped banshee essence	8,600 gp
Wall of fire	Extended	Ground phosphorus and magnesium	950 gp
Wall of force	Extended	Any clear gem	1,050 gp
Wall of ice	Extended	Rune-engraved quartz	850 gp
Wall of iron	Enlarged	Alchemically purified iron and gold dust	1,300 gp
Wall of stone	Enlarged	Rune-engraved granite	1,050 gp
Wall of thorns	Extended	Thorns from rare blood-roses	1,050 gp
Warp wood	Enlarged	Switch carved from druid-tended black oak	450 gp
Water breathing	Extended	Ornately carved reed	650 gp
Water walk	Extended	Coral armbands	650 gp
Waves of exhaustion	Widened	Occluded diamond	4,950 gp
Waves of fatigue	Widened	Occluded diamond	2,550 gp
Web	Heightened +2	Ritually prepared drider silk	1,100 gp
Weird	Heightened +1	Nightmarish etchings	1,850 gp
Whirlwind	Extended	Bottled gale-force wind from Elemental Plane of Air	1,650 gp
Whispering wind	Extended	Bottled last breath of a druid	450 gp
Wind walk	Extended	Cloud vapor from Arcadia	1,350 gp
Wind wall	Extended	Specially prepared lillend feather	650 gp
Wish	—	—	—
Wood shape	—	—	—
Word of chaos	Heightened +2	Specially prepared stinger of a formian myrmarch	3,100 gp
Word of recall	Quickened	Ornate emerald holy symbol	7,000 gp
Zone of silence	Widened	Miniature platinum lute with strings cut	3,150 gp
Zone of truth	Heightened +2	Silver and gold gavel	1,100 gp

prepared has a Craft (alchemy) DC of 15. Alchemically distilled metamagic components (for example, see *ray of exhaustion*) have a DC of 20, and alchemically purified metamagic components (see *polymorph any object*) have a DC of 25.

Alchemical metamagic components can take a very long time to make, so they're often a poor choice (from a character's point of view) for particularly expensive metamagic components.

Planar Metamagic Components

Some metamagic components come from places beyond the Material Plane, especially in games where planar travel is common. The planes have exotic substances as well as purer, enhanced versions of common substances, and it makes sense that (for instance) rare soils from the Elemental Plane of Earth might make your *move earth* spell more potent.

Illus. by D. Crabapple

Purity is a major consideration for metamagic components of this sort; obtaining one is not simply a matter of going to the appropriate plane and scooping up a handful of stuff. In general, it takes a day of scavenging and a DC 30 Knowledge (the planes) check to find enough of the relevant raw material in its purest form to serve as a metamagic component. Because there's no raw materials cost, planar metamagic components are a poor choice (from the DM's point of view) for more expensive metamagic components, although this is ameliorated somewhat by the fact that it takes high-level spells to reach other planes, and those other planes are perilous places.

Ritual Metamagic Components

Some items become metamagic components after they have been prepared during a series of ancient rituals. Performing the entire ritual takes one day for every 500 gp (or fraction thereof) of the value of the metamagic component. At the end of that time, the preparer must make a DC 25 Knowledge (religion) check if the component is for a divine spell or a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check if it's for an arcane spell in order to successfully finish the creation process.

Unless the item used for a ritual component has some intrinsic value, ritual metamagic components can be poor choices for powerful metamagic and high-level spells (from the DM's perspective), because a character with enough ranks in the relevant skill need only spend the time to acquire the component.

Fanciful Metamagic Components

The *darkness* spell has a metamagic component of "coal mined and kept in total darkness." While evocative, such an item is not necessarily hard for PCs to obtain—although there's an inherent disadvantage involved because the component can become "spoiled"—a consideration that doesn't affect the other kinds of metamagic components. For instance, if the coal needed for a *darkness* spell (or the oil needed for *deeper darkness*) is ever exposed to light before the spell is cast, it loses its special properties and becomes ordinary. But legends and folk tales are rife with examples of extra power coming from ordinary items handled in a fanciful way. If you use such fanciful metamagic components—which appear on Table 5–2 only rarely—keep a close watch on how they change the economy of the game. If the PCs shy away from adventuring in favor of working as metamagic-component coal miners, the situation is out of hand.

Monster Parts

A few of the metamagic components listed on Table 5–2 are parts of monsters. Some players want their characters to dissect their slain foes, "harvesting" metamagic components for later use and sale.

There's a fair amount of real-world precedent for the notion that some part of a creature's power remains in its body after it's dead. Dozens of real-world cultures have rituals involving animal parts for this very reason. Fantasy literature has a rich tradition of using strange ingredients such as unicorn horns and dragon scales to accomplish great feats of magic.

But harvesting monster parts is not without its problems. From a game balance standpoint, saying a rakshasa hide is worth 1,250 gp is tantamount

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: METAMAGIC COMPONENTS

If you use this variant, you may find that characters are less likely to take metamagic feats because they can just pay for the occasional metamagic effect by using a metamagic component instead. Spellcasters who use metamagic components repeatedly may fall behind the other PCs in terms of wealth, because metamagic components are quite expensive. Although using a metamagic component is more expensive than casting from a scroll with the metamagic version of the spell, a spellcaster gets more bang for her buck with a metamagic component, because she can use her own caster level and ability score to set the spell's parameters such as save DC, damage, and range. Metamagic components give spellcasters more flexibility, because they can either cast a spell normally or get the extra benefit of the metamagic component, and they don't have to decide until the moment spellcasting begins.

Metamagic components are an effective tool for NPC spellcasters in particular, who often have only a few rounds to cast spells before the encounter ends. But because metamagic components are expensive, such NPCs may use up more of their treasure than is typical.

to giving every rakshasa in the game world an extra 1,250 gp in treasure—yet it's treasure that the rakshasa can't use itself (other than in the obvious way). It's also treasure that the PCs can't acquire any way other than killing a rakshasa, as opposed to normal treasure, which the PCs could attain by tricking the rakshasa or driving it off. Requiring the monster parts to be specially prepared ameliorates the problem to a degree—and generally that's what we've done—because it's assumed that much of the cost lies in the special preparation, not the on-site butchery. That pushes the problem into a corner, but it doesn't eliminate it, because a player whose character has enough ranks in Profession (taxidermy) skill may want to know the DC for preparing the metamagic component himself. If monster part harvesting becomes a frequent exercise in your game, carefully monitor the amount of other treasure you give out. But extracting the teeth of the occasional displacer beast won't break the game.

A second and thornier problem is that many players find harvesting monster parts distasteful, and some players who don't mind the idea might play characters who would be aghast at the very notion of cutting up the dead. Not only is the actual harvesting objectionable to some, but it builds in a potential conflict between characters who want to capture their foes (whether for mercy or information) and those who want to slay them and begin dissection. Consider carefully the perspectives of your players and their characters, and think hard about what kind of D&D game you want to run.

If your characters are interested in doing some monster part harvesting themselves, it takes 10 minutes and a DC 15 Profession (taxidermy) check to carefully remove the relevant part, then 1 hour and a DC 20 Profession (taxidermy) check to preserve it so it won't rot or otherwise deteriorate. The embalming materials themselves cost one-tenth of the market price of the finished metamagic component. Unless you use *gentle repose*, the monster's body deteriorates enough after 15 minutes that you can't get a metamagic component from it.

With some monsters, it's obvious how many of a particular part they have—a beholder has only one central eye that can be used for a *greater prying eyes* metamagic component. As a general rule, one monster provides enough substance for a single casting of the relevant spell (such as the dire bat fur needed for *arcane eye* or the chimera scales needed for *obscure object*). In some cases, the number of parts that can be obtained from one creature is obvious by the nature of the monster (one minotaur can supply enough metamagic components for two castings of *maze*, and each of a gorgon's four hooves can be used for separate castings of *acid fog*). If the number of parts obtained is not obvious or doesn't necessarily follow the general rule, assume that one monster can provide up to 1d4 separate parts that are suitable for metamagic components. (This guideline applies to such components as the janni eyelash needed for *invisibility* and the troll blood needed for *regenerate*.)

SPONTANEOUS METAMAGIC

One of the more radical concepts recently introduced to the D&D game is the metamagic feat. These feats allow spellcasters to tinker with their spells' range, area, damage, components required, and even casting time. While such options existed in previous editions of the game, they usually required the caster to use other spells to affect his magic, rather than relying on pure talent.

However, this new option comes with a significant cost, particularly for those casters who prepare spells (such as clerics, druids, and wizards). Such characters must plan in advance which spells they wish to use their metamagic feats on, and prepare those spells in the appropriate higher-level spell slot. This requirement forces the character to guess which spells will be needed in which situations. If a caster anticipates being grappled, a stilled spell would be extraordinarily valuable—but which one? If a character expects to be sneaking around, she should consider using Silent Spell on one or more of her spells—but how many? In many cases, these choices are for naught, since the caster ends up using her silent *magic missile* in ordinary combat, or her enlarged *fireball* in a space too small to take advantage of the expanded range.

Characters who don't prepare spells in advance (such as bards and sorcerers) have a distinct advantage in that they can choose to use their metamagic feats "on the fly"; that is, at the time of casting. The cost is an extended casting time (making Quicken Spell a useless option for such characters), but this cost is rarely balanced with that paid by other spellcasters.

The two variant systems described below give more variety and options to the metamagic-using spellcaster. With either of these variants, a spellcaster doesn't have to prepare metamagic versions of her spells in advance (if she normally prepares spells) or spend full-round actions to cast metamagic spells (if she doesn't prepare spells). Nor do metamagic spells take up higher-level spell slots.

Instead, the "cost" for using a metamagic feat is applied in one of two different manners. The first applies the cost as additional

HOUSE RULE: METAMAGIC AND SORCERERS II

Some players in my game who run sorcerers feel they get shortchanged by the rules for metamagic feats. They don't like spending a full-round action to use the few metamagic feats they know, and they especially don't like being not able to use the Quicken Spell feat. I came up with a solution that works for me.

I allow sorcerers who know metamagic feats to "reserve" (essentially, prepare) spell slots for use with metamagic feats they know. For example, a 10th-level sorcerer can cast three 5th-level spells and five 4th-level spells per day (plus a bunch of lower-level spells). I let him mark any or all of those slots (or any others he has) as reserved for use with particular metamagic feats. He might say that one of his 5th-level slots is a Quicken Spell slot and two of his 4th-level spell slots are reserved for Empower Spell. I rule that it takes 15 minutes per spell slot for the sorcerer to reserve these slots.

The sorcerer, when he reserves the slots, does not have to specify the exact spells that occupy them. He has, of course, designated the level of the spell: Only a 0- or 1st-level spell can fill up the Quicken Spell slot—it could be *magic missile*, *mage armor*, or any other 1st-level spell he knows. Empower Spell adds two levels to a spell's effective level, so empowered versions of 2nd-level spells occupy the 4th-level slots. If the sorcerer changes his mind later in the day, he can "unreserve" the slots by taking 15 minutes of time per slot to do so. Otherwise, the slots remain reserved until the sorcerer either casts spells using those slots or sleeps for a night, resetting all his spell slots to normal.

—*Ed Stark*

spell slots. The second restricts the number of times per day the feat can be used.

Regardless of the variant you use, the Insidious Magic and Tenacious Magic feats (both from the FORGOTTEN REALMS® *Campaign Setting*) don't use the normal metamagic rules. Since they automatically affect all of a caster's spells, they never require higher-level slots or have any limit on the maximum spell level affected.

For both of these variants, the prerequisites for selecting a metamagic feat, and the effects of the feat itself, remain the same as given in the feats' descriptions (except when otherwise noted).

DAILY USES

With this variant, a character who selects a metamagic feat gains three daily uses of that feat that she can opt to use "on the fly" without previous preparation, increased spell level, or extended casting time. The character must decide when casting the spell if she wishes to apply the effect of one of her metamagic feats to the spell.

The maximum level of spell to which a caster can apply a metamagic feat is equal to the maximum spell level she is capable of casting (based on her level and ability scores), minus the spell level adjustment of the metamagic feat. If the result of this calculation is less than 0, the character can't apply the metamagic feat to any of her spells.

For instance, a 5th-level wizard is normally capable of casting spells of up to 3rd level. If she chooses to apply her Silent Spell metamagic feat (which uses a spell slot one level higher than normal) to a spell, the maximum level of spell that she can apply it to is equal to 3 minus 1, or 2nd. Thus, she may make any of her 0-, 1st-, or 2nd-level spells silent. If she had the Maximize Spell feat, she could apply it only to 0-level spells (since a maximized spell is normally cast as a spell three levels higher, and 3 minus 3 is 0). Quicken Spell would be of no use to this wizard, since she couldn't even apply it to 0-level spells.

A caster can apply more than one metamagic feat to a spell, or even the same metamagic effect more than once (if allowed by the feat's description). However, to determine the maximum level of spell that can be so affected, add together all the spell level adjustments given for the various feats. A 9th-level wizard could enlarge and empower any spell of 2nd level or lower (since her maximum spell level is 5th, and the total spell level adjustment for Empower Spell and Enlarge Spell is 3). If a feat may be applied more than once to the same spell (such as Empower Spell), each application counts as one of the caster's three daily uses.

Each time a character selects a metamagic feat, she gains three daily uses of that feat. Multiple selections of the same feat are cumulative. For instance, if a caster selects Empower Spell twice, she may use the feat six times per day rather than three.

In this variant system, the Heighten Spell feat functions slightly differently from other metamagic feats. You may use the Heighten Spell feat to increase a spell's effective level (for purposes of such factors as save DCs and so on) up to the maximum spell level you are capable of casting. For instance, a 3rd-level cleric could heighten a 0- or 1st-level spell to 2nd level, while a 17th-level druid could heighten a 0- through 8th-level spell to 9th level. The spell is treated as a spell of that level for purpose of save DC and similar effects, but doesn't require a higher-level spell slot.

EXTRA SPELL SLOTS

With this variant, a caster must expend extra spell slots in order to apply the effects of a metamagic feat. These spell slots must be of a level equal to or higher than that of the spell being modified by the metamagic feat. In essence, the character pays for the metamagic effect by "using up" other spells of the same or higher level. The caster need not prepare the metamagic version of the spell ahead of time, and the spell's actual level and casting time are unchanged from normal.

The number of extra spell slots required is equal to the spell level adjustment of the feat. For example, a wizard who wants to cast a quickened *magic missile* would expend the *magic missile* spell, plus four additional spells of 1st level or higher.

If the caster has more than one spellcasting class, all extra spell slots expended must come from the same spellcasting class as the spell to be modified. A 7th-level cleric/4th-level wizard who wants to cast a maximized *cure moderate wounds* can't spend any of her wizard spell slots—they all must be from her cleric spellcasting ability.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: SPONTANEOUS METAMAGIC

The first variant limits the immediate effect of a metamagic feat on a character's power level, just as in the standard rules. A character who picks up Quicken Spell can't immediately begin quickening her most powerful spells—she must initially be content using the feat only on her weakest spells. Again as with the standard rules, the variant establishes a default "minimum caster level" for each feat, since the feats are useless until a caster is capable of casting spells of high enough level to take advantage of the metamagic feat.

Unlike in the standard rules, however, a character with a metamagic feat need not weigh the value of a metamagic-affected spell against a spell of a higher level. The caster doesn't have to decide whether she'd rather have an empowered *magic missile* or a normal *lightning bolt*, since the empowered *magic missile* doesn't require a higher-level spell slot than normal.

A character using the first variant—particularly one who must prepare spells ahead of time—almost certainly uses her metamagic feats much more often than she would without the variant. At first, it may seem as if the character has gained significant power, but that's to be expected when a new option becomes available. Ultimately, the limit of daily uses keeps this new ability from getting out of hand, and the simple fact that the character had to spend a feat slot to gain the ability in the first place is still a balancing factor.

The second variant is both more and less restrictive than either the standard version of metamagic or the first variant. On one hand, a character who relies on metamagic feats to boost her spell power goes through her available spells at a dramatically faster rate. A spellcaster who isn't careful could find her entire spell selection drained by a single battle!

On the other hand, this variant allows a spellcaster to apply metamagic feats to her most powerful spells right away. A 9th-level caster who picks up Quicken Spell can quicken even her 5th-level spells—but at a cost of four additional 5th-level spell slots, which few 9th-level spellcasters have. This means that metamagic feats have a more dramatic effect on combat, as characters "juice up" their most powerful spells from the moment they select the feat.

A character may only expend bonus spells from school specialization on spells of that school (so an evoker could spend her bonus 3rd-level evocation spell to pay for a metamagic feat applied to another evocation spell, but not to a spell of any other school). She can't expend domain spells to pay for a metamagic feat's added spell slot cost, even if the spell is a domain spell.

In the case of the Heighten Spell feat, a caster expends one additional spell slot for each effective level she wishes to add to the spell. To heighten a *fireball* to the equivalent of a 5th-level spell, a caster must expend two extra spell slots of 3rd level or higher.

A caster can apply more than one metamagic feat to a spell, or even the same metamagic effect more than once (if allowed by the feat's description). She must simply pay the additional cost in spell slots. For instance, a wizard casting a stilled and silent *invisibility* spell would spend two spell slots in addition to the *invisibility* spell: one for Still Spell and a second for Silent Spell.

If a caster doesn't have enough remaining spell slots to cast the metamagic spell, she can't apply that metamagic effect to the spell.

COMBINING THE VARIANTS

You could combine the two metamagic variants presented above. Using a combined system, a metamagic-enhanced spell would cost additional slots (as noted in the second variant), but the caster would have a maximum spell level to which she could apply her metamagic feats (as in the first variant). This combined approach limits the immediate effect of metamagic feats in the game (because of the spell level limit) while simultaneously assigning a very real cost to their use (additional spell slots).

SPELL POINTS

The spell point system presented here allows casters to more freely pick and choose which spells they cast each day.

Every spellcaster has a reserve of spell points based on class and level (see Table 5–3: Spell Points Per Day). Characters also gain bonus spell points from a high ability score (just as a normal spellcaster would gain bonus spells from a high ability score; see Bonus Spell Points and Bonus Spells, below). These spell points provide the magical power behind the caster's spells: She spends a number of spell points appropriate to the spell's level to cast the spell (see Casting Spells, below). Once spent, spell points are expended until the caster has sufficient time to rest and prepare new spells (see Preparing Spells, below).

Table 5–3: Spell Points per Day

Level	Bard	Cleric, Druid, Wizard	Paladin, Ranger	Sorcerer
1st	0	2	0	3
2nd	0	4	0	5
3rd	1	7	0	8
4th	5	11	0	14
5th	6	16	0	19
6th	9	24	1	29
7th	14	33	1	37
8th	17	44	1	51
9th	22	56	1	63
10th	29	72	4	81
11th	34	88	4	97
12th	41	104	9	115
13th	50	120	9	131
14th	57	136	10	149
15th	67	152	17	165
16th	81	168	20	183
17th	95	184	25	199
18th	113	200	26	217
19th	133	216	41	233
20th	144	232	48	249

PREPARING SPELLS

With this variant, spellcasters still prepare spells as normal (assuming they normally prepare spells). In effect, casters who prepare spells are setting their list of "spells known" for the day. They need not prepare multiple copies of the same spell, since they can cast any combination of their prepared spells each day (up to the limit of their spell points).

HOUSE RULE: DAILY SPELL LIST

This variant spontaneous casting system is designed for spellcasters who normally prepare their spells in advance (including clerics, druids, paladins, rangers, and wizards). A spellcaster using this variant prepares the same number spells per spell level as normal. However, instead of preparing the exact combination of spells that she can cast that day (such as two *magic missile* spells and one *mage armor* spell for a 2nd-level wizard with Int 14), the spellcaster prepares a list of spells for each spell level from which she can spontaneously cast as she chooses.

For example, that 2nd-level wizard with Int 14 would prepare four different 0-level spells and three different 1st-level spells. During the day, she can cast any combination of those four 0-level spells a total of four times, and any combination of those three 1st-level spells a total of three times. In effect, the character's list of prepared spells is treated like a sorcerer's list of spells known.

Unlike what a sorcerer can do, a spellcaster using this system can't cast a lower-level spell in place of a higher-level spell. If you use this variant, decide whether clerics and druids retain their normal spontaneous casting options (*cure* or *inflict* spells for clerics, *summon nature's ally* spells for druids). You can either rule that the character must prepare the spell in question to have it available for spontaneous casting, or that such spells are always available for spontaneous casting (as if the character prepared it "for free").

Bards and sorcerers obviously can't use this system, since they already have their own spontaneous casting method. For bards, that's not a big deal—their spellcasting powers are only a portion of their class features, so no real change is merited. Sorcerers still have an advantage over wizards in that they can cast more spells per day, but the versatility gained by the wizard definitely infringes on the sorcerer's power level. To compensate, consider granting the sorcerer one additional spell per day for every spell level except his highest. A 1st-level sorcerer would thus be able to cast one extra 0-level spell each day, while a 6th-level sorcerer would be able to cast one additional 0-, 1st-, and 2nd-level spell.

In the last 2nd Edition AD&D campaign I ran, I incorporated this spontaneous casting variant rule for all spellcasters in the campaign. In some ways, the system looks similar to the method a sorcerer uses to cast his daily allotment of spells, but it allows greater flexibility than that typically enjoyed by a sorcerer.

—Andy Collins

For example, Mialee the 4th-level wizard has an Intelligence score of 16. When using the spell point system, she would prepare four 0-level spells, four 1st-level spells (three plus her bonus spell for high Int), and three 2nd-level spells (two plus her bonus spell for high Int). These spells make up her entire list of spells that she can cast during the day, though she can cast any combination of them, as long as she has sufficient spell points.

Bonus Spell Points and Bonus Spells

Any spellcaster who would normally receive bonus spells for a high ability score receives bonus spell points instead. In effect, the character can simply cast more of her spells each day.

To determine the number of bonus spell points gained from a high ability score, first find the row for the character's ability score on Table 5–4: Bonus Spell Points. Use whichever ability score would normally award bonus spells for the character's class (Wisdom for clerics and druids, Intelligence for wizards, and so forth).

Next, find the column for the highest level of spell the character is capable of casting based on her class level (even if she don't have a high enough ability score to cast spells of that level). At the point where the row and column intersect, you find the bonus spell points the character gains. This value can change each time her ability score undergoes a permanent change (such from an ability score increase due to character level or one from a *wish* spell) and each time her level changes.

For example, Mialee the 4th-level wizard has an Intelligence score of 16 and is capable of casting 2nd-level spells. The number on Table 5–4 at the intersection of the 16–17 row and the 2nd column is 4, so Mialee has 4 extra spell points to spend each day (in addition to the 11 points she gets for being a 4th-level wizard). If Mialee's Intelligence were increased to 20 because of a *fox's cunning* spell or a *headband of intellect +4*, she wouldn't gain any additional bonus spell points, since those effects produce temporary changes, not permanent changes. However, when she reaches 5th level, her bonus spell points would increase from 4 to 9 (since she is now capable of casting 3rd-level spells and thus uses that column), and her overall total would increase from 15 to 25.

A character who would normally receive bonus spells from a class feature (such as from wizard specialization or access to a domain) can instead prepare extra spells of the appropriate levels, domains, and/or schools. The character doesn't get any extra spell points (and thus can't cast any more spells than normal), but the added flexibility of being able to use the bonus spell more than once per day makes up for that.

Table 5–4: Bonus Spell Points

	— Bonus Spell Points (by Maximum Spell Level) —									
Score	0	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	7th	8th	9th
12–13	—	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
14–15	—	1	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
16–17	—	1	4	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
18–19	—	1	4	9	16	16	16	16	16	16
20–21	—	2	5	10	17	26	26	26	26	26
22–23	—	2	8	13	20	29	40	40	40	40
24–25	—	2	8	18	25	34	45	58	58	58
26–27	—	2	8	18	32	41	52	65	80	80
28–29	—	3	9	19	33	51	62	75	90	107
30–31	—	3	12	22	36	54	76	89	104	121
32–33	—	3	12	24	38	56	78	104	119	136
34–35	—	3	12	27	48	66	88	114	144	161
36–37	—	4	13	28	49	76	98	124	154	188
38–39	—	4	16	31	52	77	110	136	166	200
40–41	—	4	16	36	57	84	117	156	186	220
42–43	—	4	16	36	64	91	124	163	208	242
44–45	—	5	17	37	65	101	134	173	218	269
46–47	—	5	20	40	68	104	148	187	232	283
48–49	—	5	20	45	73	109	153	205	250	301
50–51	—	5	20	45	80	116	160	212	272	323
and so on . . .										

For instance, a specialist wizard can prepare one extra spell from the chosen school of each spell level that she can cast. A cleric can prepare one domain spell (chosen from among his domain spells available) of each spell level that he can cast.

For example, if Mialee were an evoker, she could prepare one additional spell per level, but that spell would have to be from the evocation school. Once it is prepared, she can use that spell just like any of her other spells, casting it as often as she has spell points.

Another example: At 1st level, Jozan the cleric gains a bonus 1st-level spell, which must be selected from one of his two domains. Once it is prepared, he can use that domain spell just like any of his other spells, casting it as often as he has spell points.

For class features that grant bonus spells of a nonfixed spell level (such as the dragon disciple's bonus spells), the character instead gains a number of bonus spell points equal to twice the highest spell level he can cast, minus 1 (minimum 1 point) each time he gains a bonus spell. This is a fixed value—it doesn't increase later as the character gains levels—though later rewards may be larger as appropriate to the character's spellcasting ability.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: SPELL POINTS

The spell point system dramatically expands the versatility of a spellcaster. Since she's no longer tied to using a specific number of spell slots, she can much more easily adapt to situations. In effect, spell points make all classes work more like the sorcerer, and make the sorcerer (or bard) work even more like the sorcerer. In general, spellcasters become more powerful—though they aren't capable of casting any spell they couldn't cast before, they are now capable of casting more high-level spells per day and more of whichever spells they need. If a 15th-level cleric needs to cast *heal* a dozen times during an adventure, he can do that (though not much else).

One balancing factor is the cost for casters to increase the damage dealt by their spells. This cost helps to maintain balance between spells of different level. If you didn't have to pay more for a 9d6 *lightning bolt* than for a 5d6 *lightning bolt* (a 3rd-level spell costing 5 spell points), then the 9d6 *lightning bolt* would cost barely more than half as much as a 9d6 *cone of cold* (a 5th-level spell costing 9 spell points), even though both spells deal equal damage.

If you use this variant, consider adding other game elements that influence (or are influenced by) spell points. These might include magic items that grant (or cost) spell points, feats that grant bonus spell points (or make certain spells cost fewer spell points to cast), special abilities that drain spell points from casters, and so forth.

For example, a 4th-level fighter/4th-level sorcerer who gains a level of dragon disciple gets a bonus spell. Since the character is capable of casting 2nd-level spells, she receives 3 bonus spell points ($2 \times 2 = 4$, $4 - 1 = 3$).

Spontaneous Spellcasting

Characters who cast all their spells spontaneously—such as bards and sorcerers—don't have to prepare spells. They can cast any spell they know by spending the requisite number of spell points.

Characters with the ability to cast a limited number of spells spontaneously (such as druids, who can spontaneously cast a *summon nature's ally* spell in place of another spell of the same level) are always treated as having those spells prepared, without spending any spell slots to do so. Thus, they can cast such spells any time they have sufficient spell points.

Under this system, the Healing domain becomes a relatively poor choice for good-aligned clerics, since they gain less of a benefit for that domain. See Spontaneous Divine Casters in Chapter 2: Classes for ways to solve that dilemma.

Regaining Spell Points

Spellcasters regain lost spell points whenever they could normally regain spells. Doing this requires the same amount of rest and preparation or concentration time as normal for the class. Without this period of rest and mental preparation, the caster's mind isn't ready to regain its power. Spell points are not divorced from the body; they are part of it. Using spell points is mentally tiring, and without the requisite period of rest, they do not regenerate. Any spell points spent within the last 8 hours count against a character's daily limit and aren't regained.

CASTING SPELLS

Each spell costs a certain number of spell points to cast. The higher the level of the spell, the more points it costs. Table 5–5: Spell Point Costs describes each spell's cost.

Table 5–5: Spell Point Costs

Spell Level	Spell Point Cost
0	0[1]
1st	1
2nd	3
3rd	5
4th	7
5th	9
6th	11
7th	13
8th	15
9th	17

1 0-level spells cost no spell points to cast. If a spellcaster is capable of casting 0-level spells, she can cast a number of 0-level spells each day equal to three + the number of spell points gained by that class at 1st level.

Spellcasters use their full normal caster level for determining the effects of their spells in this system, with one significant exception. Spells that deal a number of dice of damage based on caster level (such as *magic missile*, *searing light*, or *lightning bolt*) deal damage as if cast by a character of the minimum level of the class capable of casting the spell. Spells whose damage is partially based on caster level, but that don't deal a number of dice of damage based on caster level (such as *produce flame* or an *inflict* spell) use the spellcaster's normal caster level to determine damage. Use the character's normal caster level for all other effects, including range and duration.

For example, a *fireball* deals a number of dice of damage based on the caster's level, so when cast by a wizard using this system, it deals 5d6 points of damage (as if cast by a 5th-level wizard, which is the minimum level of wizard capable of casting *fireball*). A sorcerer who casts the same spell deals 6d6 points of damage, since the minimum level of sorcerer capable of casting *fireball* is 6th.

A character can pay additional spell points to increase the dice of damage dealt by a spell. Every 1 extra spell point spent at the time of casting increases the spell's effective caster level by 1 for purposes of dealing damage. A character can't increase a damage-dealing spell's caster level above her own caster level, or above the normal maximum allowed by the spell.

For example, even at 7th level, Mialee's *lightning bolts* deal only 5d6 points of damage (just like a 5th-level wizard) unless she spends extra spell points. If she spends 1 extra spell point (making the *lightning bolt* cost 6 points rather than 5), the spell deals 6d6 points of damage. A second extra spell point would increase the damage to 7d6 points, but she can't spend more points than this, since her caster level is only 7th. Were she 10th level or higher, she could spend a maximum of 5 extra spell points on this spell, raising the damage up to 10d6, the maximum allowed for a *lightning bolt* spell.

Similarly, her *magic missile* spell only shoots one missile unless she spends extra spell points. An extra 2 spell points increases the caster level from 1st to 3rd, granting her one additional missile. She can spend a maximum of 6 additional spell points in this manner, increasing her effective caster level to 7th for damage purposes and granting her a total of four missiles. If she were 9th level or higher, she could spend a maximum of 8 extra spell points, granting her five missiles (just like a 9th-level caster).

METAMAGIC AND SPELL POINTS

In the spell point system, a DM has two options for how to adjudicate metamagic effects. In either case, casters need not specially prepare metamagic versions of their spells—they can simply choose to apply the metamagic effect at the time of casting. Doing this does not increase the spell's casting time.

The first option is to apply an additional spell point cost to any spell cast with a metamagic feat. This option allows a character maximum flexibility in her choice of spellcasting. Effectively, the character must pay for the spell as if it were a higher-level spell, based on the adjustment from the metamagic feat. If the metamagic effect(s) would increase the spell's effective level above what she is capable of casting, she can't cast the spell in that way.

For example, at 7th level Mialee is capable of casting 4th-level spells. She could empower a 2nd-level spell, or still a 3rd-level spell, or empower and still a 1st-level spell. She couldn't empower a 3rd-level spell or still a 4th-level spell (since doing either of those things would raise either spell's effective spell level to 5th).

The spell's caster level for purposes of damage-dealing effects (see above) doesn't change, even if the metamagic effect increases the minimum caster level of that spell. For instance, a quickened *fireball* still deals damage as if cast by a 5th-level caster unless the caster chooses to pay additional spell points to increase the caster level.

For example, if Mialee empowered her *magic missile*, it would cost her 5 spell points (as if it were a 3rd-level spell) but would shoot only one missile and deal (1d4+1 × 1.5) points of damage.

If she spent an additional 6 spell points (for a total of 11), the caster level of the *magic missile* would increase to 7th, and the spell would shoot four missiles dealing a total of (4d4+4 × 1.5) points of damage.

The second option is simpler but less flexible. In this option, each selection of a metamagic feat allows a character to apply the feat's effects three times per day at no additional spell point cost. The normal limit for maximum spell level applies (a 7th-level wizard can't empower any spell higher than 2nd level, for instance).

You could even combine these options, allowing a spellcaster with a metamagic feat to use the feat three times per day for free, but any additional uses in the same day would cost extra spell points. Only choose this combination approach if you're comfortable with characters throwing around a lot of metamagic spells.

MULTICLASS SPELLCASTERS

A character with nonstacking spellcasting ability from multiple classes (such as a cleric/wizard) has a separate pool of spell points for each spellcasting class. Such characters may only spend spell points on spells granted by that class. Bonus spell points from a high ability score apply to each pool separately, even if the same ability score is tied to more than one spellcasting class. In the rare situations when a character has prepared or knows the same spell in two different slots (such as a druid/ranger preparing *delay poison* as both a 2nd-level druid spell and a 1st-level ranger spell), the character can cast the spell using either pool of spell points, but the spell is treated as being cast by a caster of the level of the class from which the spell points are drawn.

For example, a 5th-level cleric/2nd-level bard has 15 spell points (plus bonus spell points for high Wisdom) for his cleric spells and 0 spell points (plus bonus spell points for high Charisma) for his bard spells. When he casts *cure moderate wounds*, the points for that spell must be drawn from his pool of cleric spell points. If he knows *cure light wounds* as a bard spell and has also prepared it as a cleric spell, he may cast it either as a cleric or as a bard. As a cleric spell, the spell is cast at 5th level and heals 1d8+5 points of damage; as a bard spell, it is cast at 2nd level and heals 1d8+2 points of damage.

MISCELLANEOUS ISSUES

When a character would lose a spell slot (such as from gaining a negative level), he instead loses the number of spell points required to cast his highest-level spell.

Spells that allow a character to recall or recast a spell don't function in this system. (It doesn't make any sense to have a spell that gives you more spell points, since you're either paying more than you get, getting nothing, or getting more than you paid.) Items that function similarly can work, but differently—they restore a number of spell points required to cast a spell of that level. A *pearl of power* for 3rd-level spells, for instance, would restore 5 spell points to a character's pool of available points when activated.

SPELL POINT VARIANT: VITALIZING

In the vitalizing system, spellcasters can potentially cast a great number of spells in a day, but every spell cast is a potential burden on the caster's health and vitality. Reaching for and directing magical energy is a dangerous and taxing exercise, at least as difficult as heavy labor or prolonged exertion.

This variant of the spell point system does not change the way a character prepares spells, casts spells, regains spell points, or any of the other rules from that system. However, the spellcaster's pool of spell points represents a physical, not just mental, limit on his spellcasting power.

When a spellcaster's spell point pool falls to half of his maximum or less, he becomes fatigued.

When his spell points drop to one-quarter of his maximum or less, he becomes exhausted.

For example, at 1st level Jozan the cleric has 3 spell points (2 from his level, +1 bonus point for high Wisdom). He enters a fight by casting *bless* on his allies, spending 1 of his 3 spell points. Doing this has no ill effect on Jozan, since he still has more than half of his maximum spell points remaining. If, during the fight, he then casts *divine favor*, spending another spell point, he now becomes fatigued, since he has only one-third of his spell points remaining. After the fight, he spontaneously casts *cure light wounds* on Tordek, spending his last spell point. Not only has he exhausted his spells for the day, but he has exhausted his body as well.

HOUSE RULE: SIMPLIFIED NPC SPELLCASTERS

I enjoy running high-level NPC spellcasters because they have the potential to challenge and surprise my players. Sometimes, however, I feel as if I'm not playing the evil wizard or vile cleric up to his or her potential. These characters are supposed to be incredibly intelligent or at least frighteningly intuitive, yet when I choose their spells before the adventure begins, I can't always anticipate choices my players will make. So I cheat . . . just a bit.

When I create a villainous NPC spellcaster who prepares spells, I write down the spells the character has prepared, but only the top two or three levels' worth. Then I pick one or two spells of every level lower than that to simulate spells my evil wizard, cleric, or druid would like to focus on. Finally, I record the number of spell slots, by level, the character has left open. I allow my NPC to use these slots to cast spells "on the fly," assuming that my incredibly intelligent or wise mastermind prepared "just the right spell" for whatever situation might come up. Here's how a sample NPC 9th-level wizard's spell selection might look, assuming an Intelligence score of 22:

Wizard Spells Prepared (4/6/6/4/3/2; save DC 16 + spell level): 0—*daze*, 3 open slots; 1—*hold portal, magic missile, protection from good*, 3 open slots; 2—*alter self, detect thoughts, false life*, 3 open slots; 3—*fireball, hold person*, 2 open slots; 4—*globe of invulnerability, lesser, ice storm, polymorph*; 5—*cloudkill, baleful polymorph*.

No spells are duplicated. Some spells (particularly lower-level ones) might not be big combat spells, but probably fit into the theme of the character or the situation. I want my NPC to be flexible, but not overpowering. He can still cast *magic missile* four times if he wants, but not six.

If I give metamagic feats to an NPC, I don't let him cast metamagic spells "on the fly." Those spells require special preparedness, so if I want my NPC wizard to have a stilled *teleport* or a quickened *magic missile*, I put it in an appropriate spell slot.

—*Ed Stark*

Illus. by J. Thomas

Recovering Spell Points

In the vitalizing system, spellcasters must rest to recover their spell points and restore their physical well-being. A character's spell point total is tied directly to his level of fatigue. If an exhausted character rests for 1 hour, he becomes fatigued—and his spell point total rises to one-third of his normal maximum (round fractions down). A second hour of rest increases the spellcaster's spell point total to two-thirds of his maximum. It takes another 6 hours of rest to replenish the last one-third of his spell points and shake the physical effects of the spellcasting. Spells that remove fatigue and exhaustion (such as *heal* and *restoration*) leave the recipient with a spell point total equal to two-thirds of his normal maximum.

As in the standard rules, a spellcaster must rest for a full 8 hours before preparing a fresh allotment of spells for the day. Even if an exhausted spellcaster regains his lost energy and spell points, he can't change the spells he has prepared without 8 hours of rest.

Mundane Fatigue: If a spellcaster is subjected to some other effect that would make him fatigued or exhausted, he loses spell points accordingly. If he becomes fatigued, his spell point total drops to one-half his normal maximum (round down), and if he becomes exhausted, his spell point total drops to one-quarter his normal maximum.

Optional Vitalizing Variants

As a further variant of this system, all spellcasters gain bonus spell points based on their Constitution scores rather than the ability score that normally grants bonus spells. This variant reflects the idea that spellcasting power is tied to the caster's physical health. It also essentially requires spellcasters to have two high ability scores, though most spellcasters are happy to have a high Constitution score anyway.

A second optional variant would allow a spellcaster to exceed his normal pool of spell points, but at great personal risk. Doing so successfully requires a Concentration check (DC 20 + spell level). Each time a character casts a spell for which he does not have sufficient spell points and subsequently fails the Concentration check, he takes both lethal and nonlethal damage equal to the level of the spell cast. A desperate (or unwary) spellcaster can literally cast himself into unconsciousness in this manner.

RECHARGE MAGIC

In this variant, spellcasters don't have a hard limit on spells per day. Instead, it takes time to gather the magical energies required to cast a spell of a particular level, so characters must wait a number of rounds, minutes, or hours before casting such a spell again. Spells with an instantaneous duration or a duration measured in rounds can be cast dozens of times per day. Longer-duration spells cast outside of combat have recharge times measured in minutes or hours.

At its heart, the recharge magic variant is simple: A well-rested spellcaster can cast any spell he knows or has prepared, but then either rolls a die to find out how many rounds must pass before spells of that level become available again (if it's a general recharge spell) or loses access to that spell for a specified time (if it's a specific recharge spell). Spell slots are never expended; they just become temporarily unavailable.

Recharging doesn't require any actions and doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. As long as a spellcaster is alive, he naturally recharges his energy.

With this variant, all spellcasters effectively become spontaneous casters like sorcerers, choosing a spell each round from a list. For sorcerers and bards, the list is fixed (just as it is for sorcerers and bards who aren't using the variant), but other spellcasters set their available menu of spells when they prepare spells for the day. With the recharge variant, there's no reason to

prepare the same spell in more than one slot. Because sorcerers and bards don't have the flexibility of choosing a new menu of spells each day, their general recharge times are shorter.

Some classes, such as the cleric and the druid, have limited spontaneous spellcasting ability. Such a character can convert any spell on his daily list into the appropriate spell (such as either *cure wounds* or *inflict wounds* for a cleric, or *summon nature's ally* for a druid), but doing so replaces the converted spell on the cleric's daily list with the spell cast in its place. This happens only once per spell level, because after that point the relevant *cure* or *inflict* spell appears on the spell list as if it had been prepared.

This variant distinguishes two kinds of spells: spells with general recharge time (usually no more than a few rounds) and spells with specific recharge times (which range from minutes to hours).

Recharge Times for Other Spells

Table 5–7: Spell Recharge Times includes all spells described in the *Player's Handbook*. Each one is indicated as having either a general recharge time, a specific recharge time measured in minutes or hours, or a notation that the spell is prohibited to casters when this variant is used. For spells from other sources that are not mentioned here, use those on the table as a guide, keeping the following in mind.

Combat-oriented and short-duration spells (those lasting up to 1 round per level) typically have a general recharge time. Conversely, spells with longer durations have specific recharge times (the longer the duration, the longer the recharge time).

Any spell with an expensive material component or an XP component has a general recharge time.

Enchantments usually have a specific recharge time ranging from 30 minutes to 12 hours. This limitation prevents characters from simply charming everyone in the tavern in the space of a few minutes.

Spells that build things have a specific recharge time measured in hours.

Divinations typically have a specific recharge time, often in the neighborhood of 6 hours, to prevent their abuse in the hands of curious characters.

Powerful illusions and permanent "trap"-type spells have specific recharge times of 12 hours to 1 day, unless they're expensive to cast.

GENERAL RECHARGE SPELLS

Spells that have general recharge times are those cast in combat, those with longer casting times, and those with an experience point or expensive material component. Once a character has cast a general recharge spell, he can't cast another spell of that level until a number of rounds have passed.

Table 5–6: General Recharge Times tells how many rounds must pass after the casting of a general recharge spell before another spell of that level becomes available.

Table 5–6: General Recharge Times

Spell Level	Bard, Sorcerer	Cleric, Druid, Paladin, Ranger, Wizard
Highest possible	1d4+1 rounds	1d6+1 rounds
Second highest possible	1d4+1 rounds	1d6+1 rounds
Third highest possible	1d4 rounds	1d4+1 rounds
Fourth highest possible	1d4 rounds	1d4+1 rounds
Fifth highest possible	1d3 rounds	1d4 rounds
Sixth highest possible	1d3 rounds	1d4 rounds
Seventh highest possible	1 round	1d3 rounds
Eighth highest possible	1 round	1d3 rounds
Ninth highest possible	0	1 round
Tenth highest possible	0	1 round

For example, Mialee is a 4th-level wizard. Her 2nd-level spells (the highest possible level she can cast) and 1st-level spells (the second highest possible level she can cast) take 1d6+1 rounds to recharge, and her 0-level spells (the third highest possible level she can cast) take 1d4+1 rounds to recharge. When she attains 5th level, her 3rd-level and 2nd-level spells take 1d6+1 rounds to

HOUSE RULE: RECHARGING MAGIC ITEMS

If your character has a favorite staff or wand, chances are you worry about the day when it finally expends its last charge. The fighter doesn't fret about such things with his sword, so why should you?

To recharge a charged magic item, a character needs a small supply of materials (including the charged item itself). The creator must also meet all prerequisites for crafting the item from scratch, including the proper item creation feat. Determine the cost involved by following this process:

First, pay 10% of the item's base price (not including any costly material components or XP costs) as an up-front cost. This expense reflects the fact that recharging a charged item is more costly than simply constructing a new one. (If your charged item has no more than 10% of its charges left, you're almost certainly better off simply crafting a new item.) This expense has no effect on the time required to recharge the item.

Second, determine what percentage of the item's maximum charges (or allowable uses) have been expended. For wands and staffs, subtract the charges remaining from 50, then multiply the result by 2. A *wand of magic missile* with 19 charges remaining, for instance, has used 62% ($50 - 19 = 31$; $31 \times 2 = 62$) of its maximum charges. For other items with charges or limits on their use, subtract the number used from the maximum number, then divide by the maximum number. A *chime of opening* can be used 10 times when fully powered, so a chime with 3 uses remaining has used 70% ($10 - 3 = 7$; $7 / 10 = .70$) of its maximum.

Third, multiply this percentage by the base price of the item. This expense represents the cost of materials needed for recharging the item. Recharging a magic item requires one day per each 1,000 gp of the material cost determined in this step. Pay any XP costs as appropriate for an item of this (reduced) price.

It's faster and (usually) cheaper to recharge a charged item than to craft or buy a new one. The advantage to this variant is that it allows characters to better manage their resources. On the other hand, when recharging charged items is more economical than buying new items or laying in a supply of potions or scrolls that replicate the same spell, you may find characters disdaining those options. One of the balancing factors of charged items is the high up-front cost (in comparison to potions and scrolls), and this variant erodes that factor. If you notice your characters ignoring potions and scrolls in favor of recharging magic items, you may want to limit access to this variant.

—Andy Collins

recharge and her 1st- and 0-level spells take 1d4+1 rounds to recharge. (Specific recharge spells have their own recharge times that don't match these values.)

Another example: Hennet the 10th-level sorcerer casts *fireball* in the first round of a fight. Once he casts the spell, he rolls 1d4 to determine his recharge time. He rolls a 2, so he must wait 2 rounds before he regains access to 3rd-level spells. In the following round, he casts *teleport*, one of his highest-level spells. Rolling a 4 on 1d4, Hennet is dismayed to learn he must wait 5 (1d4+1) rounds before he can *teleport* again. In the next round, he casts *magic missile*, rolling 1d3 afterward and getting a result of 1 for a 1-round recharge time. In the following round, Hennet regains access to his 3rd-level spells, so he can cast another *fireball* if he likes, or he can cast *magic missile* again (because the 1-round recharge time for his 1st-level spells has elapsed).

Metamagic and General Recharge Spells

Spellcasters who prepare spells simply put the metamagic versions of the spells they want in the appropriate spell slots, and they're cast at their effective level. For example, casting a quickened *magic missile* forces a spellcaster to recharge her 5th-level spells, not her 1st-level spells. Sorcerers and bards take a full-round action to add metamagic to any spell they know, and casting that spell forces a recharge of the effective level of the metamagic spell. For example, an extended *haste* spell cast by a sorcerer would require a recharge roll for a 4th-level spell.

SPECIFIC RECHARGE SPELLS

Most long-duration utility spells have specific recharge times so spellcasters can't just cast them on everyone they meet. These might range from a mere 5 minutes (for *bull's strength*) to 4 hours (for *teleport*) to a full day, or 24 hours (for *wind walk*). A specific recharge time is the time that must elapse before a character can cast that particular spell again; he can cast another spell of the same level in the following round if he likes.

Metamagic and Specific Recharge Spells

Not only do specific recharge spells use higher slots if metamagic feats have been applied to them, but each +1 to the effective level of the spell doubles the recharge time. For example, a silent *charm person* spell takes up a 2nd-level spell slot and has a specific recharge time of 2 hours.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: RECHARGE MAGIC

This is a high-powered variant, because spellcasters can cast their staple combat and healing spells all day long. This means that the PCs face almost every encounter fully healed, and rarely do spellcasters have their spell lists significantly depleted. Spellcasters may have some specific-recharge utility and protective spells that they won't be able to cast before every fight, but they always have access to their highest-level combat and healing spells. And it's those spells that largely comprise a spellcaster's contribution toward overcoming a given encounter.

As with most high-powered variants, recharge magic works only if every spellcaster in the campaign is using it, including powerful NPC spellcasters. A recharge-variant lich, for example, is a terror for high-level PCs to behold.

As the DM, you have to plan for a party of PCs that can adventure all day long, beginning every fight in a more or less fully rested state. This prospect can be thrilling for players, who no longer have to face the disappointment of a retreat to town just when they're on the cusp of the adventure's climax. But when PCs don't need to retreat to heal and prepare new spells, the DM ends up running more encounters per game session, which means a measure of extra preparation.

As a rule of thumb, a group of four PCs that includes two recharge variant spellcasters can handle encounters of an Encounter Level equal to the characters' average level +2. The fights will be exciting ones; every room in the dungeon becomes as perilous as a typical adventure's climax. But the PCs face each one with full resources, so the denizens of the dungeon can't defeat them through depletion and attrition. If your group likes knock-down, drag-out, set-piece battles, the recharge magic variant lets you fight more of them.

Characters attain new levels faster in terms of both player time at the gaming table and character time in the game world. You can regard this as an additional benefit, or you can reduce experience point awards across the board to compensate.

The recharge magic variant makes spellcasters stronger overall, and it makes nonspellcasters stronger if you assume they're getting fully healed after every encounter. But in some respects it makes them weaker as well. Even the most powerful wizard can't cast two *fireball* spells in consecutive rounds with this variant. The *teleport* spell has a specific recharge time of 4 hours, so a character can't teleport someplace, cast a spell, then teleport away again (unless he uses *word of recall* or *greater teleport* for one of the legs of the journey). Strategies that rely on repeated use of the same spell aren't viable if the spell in question has a specific recharge time. Depending on the strategy, its chance of success might improve or worsen if a character is relying on a general recharge spell. In short, the recharge variant gives casters a lot more power in exchange for slightly less flexibility with regard to general recharge spells and significantly less flexibility with regard to specific recharge spells.

There's an obvious way for characters to compensate for the diminished flexibility: scrolls. In general, scrolls become more useful in the recharge variant game world, so they may be more prevalent. Conversely, wands are somewhat less useful, because every spellcaster can crank out his staple spells dozens of times. When a character can cast *lightning bolt* fifty times in the space of an hour, that fully charged *wand of lightning bolt* is much less impressive. If you use the recharge magic variant, consider reducing the percentages of minor and medium wands on Table 7–1 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* by 5% and increasing the percentages of minor and medium scrolls by the same amount.

One less obvious change posed by this variant is that lower-level spells retain more importance for high-level spellcasters. With the general recharge rules, even the most potent spellcaster can't use her best spells more than two or three times in a major fight. Spells two, three, or four levels below the maximum get cast while the spellcaster waits for the heavy artillery to get reloaded.

As the DM, you have to contend with other subtle changes wrought by this variant. Monsters with spell-like abilities usable at will are diminished somewhat, because true spellcasters can cast spells so frequently. Monsters with spell-like abilities aren't actually weaker—and their Challenge Ratings needn't go down as a result—but they feel less special and more like spellcasters with a static spell list.

Table 5–7: Spell Recharge Times

Spell Name	Recharge Time
Acid fog	General
Acid splash	General
Aid	5 minutes
Air walk	1 hour
Alarm	4 hours
Align weapon	5 minutes
Alter self	4 hours
Analyze dweomer	General
Animal growth	General
Animal messenger	6 hours
Animal shapes	24 hours
Animal trance	General
Animate dead	General
Animate objects	General
Animate plants	General
Animate rope	General
Antilife shell	General
Antimagic field	General
Antipathy	General
Antiplant shell	General
Arcane eye	General
Arcane lock	1 hour
Arcane mark	General
Arcane sight	30 minutes
Greater arcane sight	30 minutes
Astral projection	General
Atonement	General
Augury	6 hours
Awaken	General
Baleful polymorph	General
Bane	General
Banishment	General
Barkskin	1 hour
Bear's endurance	5 minutes
Mass bear's endurance	30 minutes
Bestow curse	General
Bigby's clenched fist	General
Bigby's crushing hand	General
Bigby's forceful hand	General
Bigby's grasping hand	General
Bigby's interposing hand	General
Binding	General
Blade barrier	General
Blasphemy	General
Bless	30 minutes
Bless water	General
Bless weapon	5 minutes
Blight	General
Blindness/deafness	General
Blink	General
Blur	5 minutes
Break enchantment	1 hour
Bull's strength	5 minutes
Mass bull's strength	30 minutes
Burning hands	General
Call lightning	General
Call lightning storm	General
Calm animals	General
Calm emotions	General
Cat's grace	5 minutes
Mass cat's grace	30 minutes
Cause fear	General
Chain lightning	General
Changestaff	6 hours
Chaos hammer	General
Charm animal	1 hour
Charm monster	1 hour
Mass charm monster	1 hour
Charm person	1 hour
Chill metal	General
Chill touch	General
Circle of death	General
Clairaudience/clairvoyance	General
Cloak of chaos	General
Clone	General
Cloudkill	General
Color spray	General
Command	General
Greater command	General
Command plants	1 hour
Command undead	1 hour
Commune	6 hours
Commune with nature	6 hours
Comprehend languages	4 hours
Cone of cold	General
Confusion	General
Lesser confusion	General
Consecrate	30 minutes
Contact other plane	6 hours
Contagion	General
Contingency	General
Continual flame	General
Control plants	30 minutes
Control undead	30 minutes
Control water	1 hour
Control weather	General
Control winds	4 hours
Create food and water	24 hours
Create greater undead	General
Create undead	General
Create water	30 minutes
Creeping doom	General
Crushing despair	General
Cure critical wounds	General
Mass cure critical wound	General
Cure light wounds	General
Mass cure light wounds	General
Cure minor wounds	General
Cure moderate wounds	General
Mass cure moderate wounds	General
Cure serious wounds	General
Mass cure serious wounds	General
Curse water	General
Dancing lights	General
Darkness	4 hours
Darkvision	6 hours
Daylight	4 hours
Daze	General
Daze monster	General
Death knell	General
Death ward	5 minutes
Deathwatch	4 hours
Deep slumber	General
Deeper darkness	24 hours
Delay poison	6 hours
Delayed blast fireball	General
Demand	30 minutes
Desecrate	30 minutes
Destruction	General
Detect animals or plants	General
Detect chaos	General
Detect evil	General
Detect good	General
Detect law	General
Detect magic	General
Detect poison	5 minutes
Detect scrying	General
Detect secret doors	General
Detect snares and pits	General
Detect thoughts	General
Detect undead	General
Dictum	General
Dimension door	General
Dimensional anchor	General
Dimensional lock	24 hours
Diminish plants	4 hours
Discern lies	6 hours
Discern location	6 hours
Disguise self	4 hours
Disintegrate	General
Dismissal	General
Dispel chaos	General
Dispel evil	General
Dispel good	General
Dispel law	General
Dispel magic	General
Greater dispel magic	General
Displacement	General
Disrupt undead	General
Disrupting weapon	5 minutes
Divination	6 hours
Divine favor	5 minutes
Divine power	5 minutes
Dominate animal	General
Dominate monster	12 hours
Dominate person	12 hours
Doom	General
Drawmij's instant summons	General
Dream	General
Eagle's splendor	5 minutes
Mass eagle's splendor	30 minutes
Earthquake	12 hours
Elemental swarm	1 hour
Endure elements	6 hours
Energy drain	General
Enervation	General
Enlarge person	5 minutes
Mass enlarge person	30 minutes
Entangle	General
Enthrall	General
Entropic shield	30 minutes
Erase	General
Ethereal jaunt	30 minutes
Etherealness	30 minutes
Evard's black tentacles	General
Expeditious retreat	30 minutes
Explosive runes	24 hours
Eyebite	General
Fabricate	4 hours
Faerie fire	General
False life	30 minutes
False vision	24 hours
Fear	General
Feather fall	General
Feeblemind	General
Find the path	4 hours
Find traps	30 minutes
Finger of death	General
Fire seeds	1 hour
Fire shield	General

Fire storm	General
Fire trap	24 hours
Fireball	General
Flame arrow	General
Flame blade	General
Flame strike	General
Flaming sphere	General
Flare	General
Flesh to stone	General
Fly	5 minutes
Fog cloud	General
Forbiddance	General
Forcecage	General
Foresight	1 hour
Fox's cunning	5 minutes
Mass fox's cunning	30 minutes
Freedom	General
Freedom of movement	1 hour
Gaseous form	5 minutes
Gate	General
Geas/quest	General
Lesser geas	General
Gentle repose	General
Ghost sound	General
Ghoul touch	General
Giant vermin	30 minutes
Glibness	4 hours
Glitterdust	General
Globe of invulnerability	General
Lesser globe of invulnerability	General
Glyph of warding	General
Greater glyph of warding	General
Goodberry	6 hours
Good hope	30 minutes
Grease	General
Guards and wards	24 hours
Guidance	5 minutes
Gust of wind	General
Hallow	General
Hallucinatory terrain	6 hours
Halt undead	General
Harm	General
Haste	General
Heal	General
Mass heal	General
Heal mount	General
Heat metal	General
Helping hand	6 hours
Heroes' feast	24 hours
Heroism	1 hour
Greater heroism	30 minutes
Hide from animals	4 hours
Hide from undead	4 hours
Hold animal	General
Hold monster	General
Mass hold monster	General
Hold person	General
Mass hold person	General
Hold portal	5 minutes
Holy aura	General
Holy smite	General
Holy sword	General
Holy word	General
Horrid wilting	General
Hypnotic pattern	General
Hypnotism	General
Ice storm	General
Identify	General
Illusory script	General
Illusory wall	24 hours
Imbue with spell ability	General
Note: You can't recast this spell or prepare another spell in that slot until the subject uses the imbued spell.	
Implosion	General
Imprisonment	General
Incendiary cloud	General
Inflict critical wounds	General
Mass inflict critical wounds	General
Inflict light wounds	General
Mass inflict light wounds	General
Inflict minor wounds	General
Inflict moderate wounds	General
Mass inflict moderate wounds	General
Inflict serious wounds	General
Mass inflict serious wounds	General
Insanity	General
Insect plague	5 minutes
Invisibility	5 minutes
Greater invisibility	General
Mass invisibility	30 minutes
Invisibility purge	30 minutes
Iron body	30 minutes
Ironwood	12 hours
Jump	5 minutes
Keen edge	1 hour
Knock	5 minutes
Know direction	General
Legend lore	General
Leomund's secret chest	General
Leomund's secure shelter	12 hours
Leomund's tiny hut	12 hours
Leomund's trap	24 hours
Levitate	5 minutes
Light	1 hour
Lightning bolt	General
Limited wish	General
Liveoak	12 hours
Locate creature	4 hours
Locate object	30 minutes
Longstrider	24 hours
Lullaby	General
Mage armor	6 hours
Mage hand	General
Magic circle against chaos	4 hours
Magic circle against evil	4 hours
Magic circle against good	4 hours
Magic circle against law	4 hours
Magic fang	5 minutes
Greater magic fang	6 hours
Magic jar	General
Magic missile	General
Magic mouth	24 hours
Magic stone	5 minutes
Magic vestment	6 hours
Magic weapon	5 minutes
Greater magic weapon	6 hours
Major creation	12 hours
Major image	General
Make whole	6 hours
Mark of justice	General
Maze	General
Meld into stone	4 hours
Melf's acid arrow	General
Mending	6 hours
Message	General
Meteor swarm	General
Mind blank	12 hours
Mind fog	6 hours
Minor creation	6 hours
Minor image	General
Miracle	12 hours
Mirage arcana	General
Mirror image	30 minutes
Misdirection	6 hours
Mislead	General
Modify memory	General
Moment of prescience	6 hours
Mordenkainen's disjunction	General
Mordenkainen's faithful hound	6 hours
Mordenkainen's lucubration	Spell is prohibited
Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion	6 hours
Mordenkainen's private sanctum	24 hours
Mount	6 hours
Move earth	1 hour
Neutralize poison	1 hour
Nightmare	General
Nondetection	6 hours
Nystul's magic aura	24 hours
Obscure object	24 hours
Obscuring mist	General
Order's wrath	General
Otiluke's freezing sphere	General
Otiluke's resilient sphere	General
Otiluke's telekinetic sphere	General
Otto's irresistible dance	General
Overland flight	6 hours
Owl's wisdom	5 minutes
Owl's wisdom, mass	30 minutes
Passwall	6 hours
Pass without trace	6 hours
Permanency	General
Permanent image	24 hours
Persistent image	30 minutes
Phantasmal killer	General
Phantom steed	6 hours
Phase door	12 hours
Planar ally	24 hours
Greater planar ally	24 hours
Lesser planar ally	24 hours
Planar binding	24 hours
Greater planar binding	24 hours
Lesser planar binding	24 hours
Plane shift	General
Plant growth	24 hours
Poison	General
Polar ray	General
Polymorph	30 minutes
Polymorph any object	12 hours
Power word blind	General
Power word kill	General
Power word stun	General
Prayer	5 minutes
Prestidigitation	General
Prismatic sphere	General
Prismatic spray	General
Prismatic wall	General

Produce flame	General
Programmed image	12 hours
Project image	General
Protection from arrows	6 hours
Protection from chaos	5 minutes
Protection from energy	1 hour
Protection from evil	5 minutes
Protection from good	5 minutes
Protection from law	5 minutes
Protection from spells	4 hours
Prying eyes	General
Greater prying eyes	General
Purify food and drink	5 minutes
Pyrotechnics	General
Quench	General
Rage	5 minutes
Rainbow pattern	General
Raise dead	General
Rary's mnemonic enhancer	Spell is prohibited
Rary's telepathic bond	4 hours
Ray of enfeeblement	General
Ray of exhaustion	General
Ray of frost	General
Read magic	General
Reduce animal	6 hours
Reduce person	30 minutes
Mass reduce person	30 minutes
Refuge	General
Regenerate	General
Reincarnate	General
Remove blindness/deafness	General
Remove curse	General
Remove disease	General
Remove fear	General
Remove paralysis	General
Repel metal or stone	General
Repel vermin	4 hours
Repel wood	General
Repulsion	General
Resistance	5 minutes
Resist energy	1 hour
Restoration	General
Greater restoration	General
Lesser restoration	General
Resurrection	General
Reverse gravity	General
Righteous might	5 minutes
Rope trick	6 hours
Rusting grasp	5 minutes
Sanctuary	5 minutes
Scare	General
Scintillating pattern	General
Scorching ray	General
Screen	24 hours
Scrying	General
Greater scrying	6 hours
Sculpt sound	6 hours
Searing light	General
Secret page	12 hours
See invisibility	4 hours
Seeming	24 hours
Sending	General
Sepia snake sigil	24 hours
Sequester	24 hours
Shades	General
Shadow conjuration	General
Greater shadow conjuration	General
Shadow evocation	General
Greater shadow evocation	General
Shadow walk	24 hours
Shambler	24 hours
Shapechange	4 hours
Shatter	General
Shield	30 minutes
Shield of faith	30 minutes
Shield of law	General
Shield other	24 hours
Shillelagh	30 minutes
Shocking grasp	General
Shout	General
Shout, greater	General
Shrink item	24 hours
Silence	30 minutes
Silent image	General
Simulacrum	General
Slay living	General
Sleep	General
Sleet storm	General
Slow	General
Snare	12 hours
Soften earth and stone	6 hours
Solid fog	General
Song of discord	General
Soul bind	General
Sound burst	General
Speak with animals	30 minutes
Speak with dead	30 minutes
Speak with plants	30 minutes
Spectral hand	30 minutes
Spell immunity	1 hour
Greater spell immunity	1 hour
Spell resistance	30 minutes
Spellstaff	24 hours
Spell turning	4 hours

Countering and Dispelling

If a spell with a specific recharge time is used to counter or dispel another spell, the specific recharge time does not apply. Instead, treat the spell as a general recharge spell of that level.

For example, if a 5th-level cleric casts *deeper darkness* to dispel a *daylight* spell, he can cast another 3rd-level spell (including *deeper darkness*) 1d6+1 rounds later. If he instead casts *deeper darkness* to darken a passageway, he can't use *deeper darkness* again for 24 hours, but his other 3rd-level spells are available to be cast.

LEGENDARY WEAPONS

This variant is a simple rule system that allows the abilities of weapons to improve along with those of their wielders. A character wielding a legendary weapon—whether that weapon is a sword, axe, bow, or even a magic staff—is eligible for one of the scion prestige classes presented below. As long as the wielder does not adopt the prestige class, the legendary weapon is simply a magic item with a small enhancement bonus (usually +1 or +2, or sometimes as high as +3 for truly powerful legendary weapons). But by taking levels in the prestige class, a character can unlock and utilize the weapon's more advanced powers. Commonly, the wielder gains access to a suite of weapon-appropriate feats, special abilities tied to the weapon's purpose, or even magical enhancements to the character's own skills and abilities.

In every case, the scion prestige class associated with a particular weapon defines which of its abilities the wielder is eligible to benefit from. The descriptions of sample legendary weapons later in this section detail the specific abilities of each weapon. Thus, every scion is different, even with only four variations of the prestige class to choose from.

SCIONS

Scions come in as many varieties as there are legendary items, but each one falls into one of four distinct groupings based on the intended wielder of the item. Each sample weapon described in this section is tied to one of the following prestige classes (and the weapon description immediately follows the prestige class description).

Battle Scion: This prestige class is for the wielders of legendary weapons made for the hands of fighters, barbarians, rangers, monks, and the occasional paladin.

Faith Scion: This prestige class is meant for characters who wield legendary weapons of divine power for clerics, druids, and paladins.

Spell Scion: This class is for characters who wield legendary weapons designed for use by arcane spellcasters, such as wizards, sorcerers, and sometimes bards.

Swift Scion: This class is for those who wield legendary weapons that make use of or improve the wielder's stealth, speed, or dexterity (in the general sense). Rogues are excellent candidates for this class, as are bards, rangers, and the occasional monk.

Rules and Restrictions

None of the scion prestige classes grant a character any new weapon or armor proficiencies. Thus, it is entirely possible for a

Spider climb	1 hour
Spike growth	6 hours
Spike stones	6 hours
Spiritual weapon	General
Statue	6 hours
Status	24 hours
Stinking cloud	General
Stone shape	6 hours
Stoneskin	General
Stone tell	30 minutes
Stone to flesh	General
Storm of vengeance	General
Suggestion	30 minutes
Mass suggestion	30 minutes
Summon instrument	General
Summon monster I	General
Summon monster II	General
Summon monster III	General
Summon monster IV	General
Summon monster V	General
Summon monster VI	General
Summon monster VII	General
Summon monster VIII	General
Summon monster IX	General
Summon nature's ally I	General
Summon nature's ally II	General
Summon nature's ally III	General
Summon nature's ally IV	General
Summon nature's ally V	General
Summon nature's ally VI	General
Summon nature's ally VII	General
Summon nature's ally VIII	General
Summon nature's ally IX	General
Summon swarm	General
Sunbeam	General
Sunburst	General
Symbol of death	General
Symbol of fear	General
Symbol of insanity	General
Symbol of pain	General
Symbol of persuasion	General
Symbol of sleep	General
Symbol of stunning	General
Symbol of weakness	General
Sympathetic vibration	12 hours
Sympathy	General
Tasha's hideous laughter	General
Telekinesis	General
Teleport	4 hours
Teleport object	4 hours
Greater teleport	4 hours
Teleportation circle	General
Temporal stasis	General
Tenser's floating disk	6 hours
Tenser's transformation	General
Time stop	4 hours
Tongues	1 hour
Touch of fatigue	General
Touch of idiocy	General
Transmute metal to wood	6 hours
Transmute mud to rock	6 hours
Transmute rock to mud	6 hours
Transport via plants	4 hours
Trap the soul	General
Tree shape	24 hours
Tree stride	24 hours
True resurrection	General
True seeing	General
True strike	5 minutes
Undeath to death	General
Undetectable alignment	24 hours
Unhallow	General
Unholy aura	General
Unholy blight	General
Unseen servant	6 hours
Vampiric touch	General
Veil	12 hours
Ventriloquism	5 minutes
Virtue	5 minutes
Vision	6 hours
Wail of the banshee	General
Wall of fire	General
Wall of force	General
Wall of ice	General
Wall of iron	12 hours
Wall of stone	12 hours
Wall of thorns	General
Warp wood	5 minutes
Water breathing	4 hours
Water walk	4hours
Waves of exhaustion	General
Waves of fatigue	General
Web	5 minutes
Weird	General
Whirlwind	General
Whispering wind	30 minutes
Wind walk	24 hours
Wind wall	General
Wish	General
Wood shape	6 hours
Word of chaos	General
Word of recall	General
Zone of silence	24 hours
Zone of truth	30 minutes

scion to be not proficient with his legendary weapon unless he independently takes the necessary weapon proficiency feat.

In addition to meeting the prerequisites for the appropriate prestige class (which are dictated by the weapons themselves), a character wishing to adopt a scion class must also abide by certain other rules and restrictions.

Weapon Specialization: A scion who does not meet the fighter level prerequisite for the Weapon Specialization feat may still select that feat, but only for the type of weapon (such as martial or exotic) that his legendary weapon is.

A scion who qualifies for the appropriate Weapon Specialization feat normally (that is, who has all the normal prerequisites for the feat) may select and apply the feat to any type of weapon.

Losing a Legendary Weapon: Legendary weapons should never become permanently lost, for fate has a way of bringing them back to their rightful wielders. On a more practical level, the loss of a legendary weapon means that the character who has invested levels in the associated prestige class is denied most of the class's special abilities until the weapon is regained, because the abilities are specifically tied to the weapon. Thus, as the DM, you must try to ensure that the weapon and its wielder do not stay separated for long—unless, of course, the purpose of the adventure is to recover the weapon. In most cases, the weapon should turn up at the end of an encounter, or should be near enough at hand that the wielder need only make a reasonable effort to reclaim it.

Destroying a Legendary Weapon: Each legendary weapon has its own hardness and hit points. Treat the item as if it had a greater hardness and more hit points based on its maximum possible enhancement bonus, even if the wielder has not yet qualified to benefit from that high a bonus.

That said, under ordinary circumstances, legendary weapons do not break: Any attempt to sunder such an item automatically fails, and the weapon is treated as having immunity to all effects that could otherwise destroy it (such as a *disintegrate* spell, a dragon's breath weapon, and so on).

If an attacker is foolish enough to attempt to sunder a legendary weapon, the combatants should still make the opposed attack rolls, however. If the scion wins, the scion may immediately deal damage to the attacker's weapon as though the scion had initiated the attack.

The only exception to this rule is if the person attacking the legendary weapon is herself wielding a legendary weapon. In this case, the attacker may deal damage to the defender's weapon if she wins the opposed attack roll. However, the defender also immediately makes his own sunder attempt against the attacker's legendary weapon. If the defender wins this second opposed roll, he may deal damage to the attacker's weapon—even if his own weapon was damaged or destroyed by the attacker.

Repairing a broken legendary weapon should never be easy. It should be the result of an epic quest, perhaps involving aid from other planes, arduous rituals, and perilous voyages.

Gaining Additional Legendary Weapons: If the wielder of a legendary weapon somehow gains another legendary weapon linked to the same scion prestige class, she may only use the weapon as would a character with no levels in the weapon's associated prestige class, and she may not transfer the benefits of her

scion levels to the new weapon. If she were to acquire a weapon linked to a different scion prestige class, she could begin advancing levels in the scion prestige class for that weapon, assuming that she meets the requirements.

The level of commitment that a legendary weapon demands from its wielder does not allow her to split her attention between two or more such weapons simultaneously. Thus, the owner of two legendary weapons must choose which commitment she wishes to focus on with each new character level, by virtue of her prestige class selection.

Ex-Scions: A wielder who no longer meets the prerequisites of his scion prestige class loses the ability to access the special abilities of his legendary weapon (as noted in the sample weapons below) that correspond to actual scion levels. He retains the basic features of the prestige class as given in its description (base attack bonus, base save bonuses, and even spellcaster levels, when appropriate), but the weapon supplies only the magical abilities it would grant to any wielder. Likewise, a scion who no longer possesses his legendary weapon (because of loss, destruction, theft, or some other reason) loses all the benefits that the weapon granted (though he still retains the basic features of the class). An ex-scion may not progress in the prestige class until he corrects the problem, either by once again meeting the requirements of the class or by regaining the weapon.

This restriction does not prevent a scion from taking levels in another class, or from using the abilities already gained as a scion while he does so. Unless the new class in some way violates the scion prerequisites (such as by requiring a different alignment), or the weapon's description specifies penalties for advancing in another class, then the only drawback to pursuing a different class is that the scion is not gaining new powers from the weapon.

BATTLE SCION

A battle scion has earned the right to fight with a particular legendary weapon, either because the weapon is an ancestral heirloom or because he upholds the principles for which the weapon was originally created. While characters of any class can eventually qualify for the battle scion class, those who wield weapons professionally—fighters, barbarians, rangers, and paladins—are ideal candidates.

No two battle scions are identical, by virtue of the weapons that grant them access to this prestige class. One scion might wield an heirloom weapon that provides him with the abilities needed to uphold the family's honor. Another could be the scourge of an evil temple, using his legendary sword to prove that might does indeed make right. Yet another could be wielding an axe, hammer, or staff dedicated to his profession, or to his race, with abilities that draw on the strengths thereof.

For all the powers his sword grants him, a battle scion isn't terribly different from any other fighter, barbarian, ranger, or paladin who uses his share of the treasure to upgrade his favorite weapon every so often. What really sets him apart is the fact that his weapon is leading him toward a particular destiny, if only by shaping his future advancement choices.

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

To qualify to become a battle scion, a character must fulfill the criteria given in his particular weapon's entry. (For an example, see *Dragonblade*, below.)

Class Skills

The battle scion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

TABLE 5–8: THE BATTLE SCION

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Bonus feat
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	—
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	—
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Bonus feat
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	—
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	—
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Bonus feat
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	—
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	—
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Bonus feat

Class Features

The following are class features of the battle scion prestige class. A legendary weapon associated with the class provides a unique set of additional special abilities, which are detailed in the weapon's description. (For an example, see *Dragonblade*, below.) These abilities accrue in addition to those already noted in the Special column on Table 5–8. However, because those abilities are functions of the weapon rather than the wielder, they are lost if the legendary weapon that granted them is lost. The features mentioned on Table 5–8 are retained even if the weapon is lost.

Bonus Feats: At 1st level, a battle scion receives a bonus feat. Thereafter, he gains an additional bonus feat at 4th, 7th, and 10th level. These bonus feats must be drawn from the list of feats noted as fighter bonus feats on Table 5–1: Feats, page 90 of the *Player's Handbook*. A battle scion must still meet all prerequisites to take a bonus feat.

Dragonblade

Reputedly carved from the fang of a great wyrm red dragon, the bastard sword known as *Dragonblade* has served many masters over the centuries, from bloodthirsty warlords to treasure-seeking adventurers. It is a legendary weapon that provides many benefits to its wielder, but most of the benefits apply only if the wielder has levels in the battle scion prestige class.

Requirements: Any character can wield *Dragonblade* as a +2 *bastard sword* and also gain the benefit of the bravery special ability described below. A battle scion who wields *Dragonblade* gains additional special abilities if the character fulfills the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +9.

Skills: Knowledge (arcana) 6 ranks.

Feats: Improved Critical (bastard sword), Iron Will.

Attributes: *Dragonblade* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points: 20/55.

Caster Level: 15th.

Value: To any character other than a battle scion who meets the above requirements, *Dragonblade* appears to be worth as much as a Medium +2 *bastard sword* that grants the bravery special ability (market price 14,335 gp).

Special Abilities: *Dragonblade* provides a number of special abilities to its wielder, depending on the character's class level in the battle scion prestige class (see the table below).

Initial Abilities: When first acquired, *Dragonblade* functions as a *+2 bastard sword*. Anyone who wields it, whether a battle scion or not, also benefits from the bravery ability (see below).

Abilities Granted by Dragonblade

Battle Scion Level	Ability Gained
—	Bravery
1st	Bane (dragons)
2nd	Resistance to energy 10
3rd	Enhancement bonus +3 (+5 against dragons)
4th	Intimidating presence
5th	Resistance to energy 20
6th	Enhancement bonus +4 (+6 against dragons)
7th	Dodge bonus
8th	Resistance to energy 30
9th	Frightful presence
10th	Enhancement bonus +5 (+7 against dragons)

Bravery (Ex): The wielder of *Dragonblade* has immunity to a dragon's frightful presence ability. All allies within 30 feet of the wielder gain a +4 morale bonus on saves against the frightful presence of dragons.

Bane (Dragons) (Su): When wielded by a battle scion, *Dragonblade* gains the bane (dragons) special ability. Its enhancement bonus is treated as 2 points higher when attacking a dragon, and it deals an extra 2d6 points of damage on a successful strike against a dragon.

Resistance to Energy (Su): Once per day, when a battle scion of 2nd level or higher wielding *Dragonblade* is dealt at least 1 point of damage from any type of energy (acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic), the scion gains resistance 10 to that form of energy for 1 hour thereafter (including against the damage that activated the ability). For example, if the scion were engulfed in a *fireball*, the resistance would immediately take effect, reducing the damage taken by the *fireball* (and any other source of fire damage for the next hour) by 10 points.

Once the energy type is determined, it cannot be changed for the current use of the ability. If two or more types of energy strike the scion simultaneously, he may select the energy type against which his resistance protects.

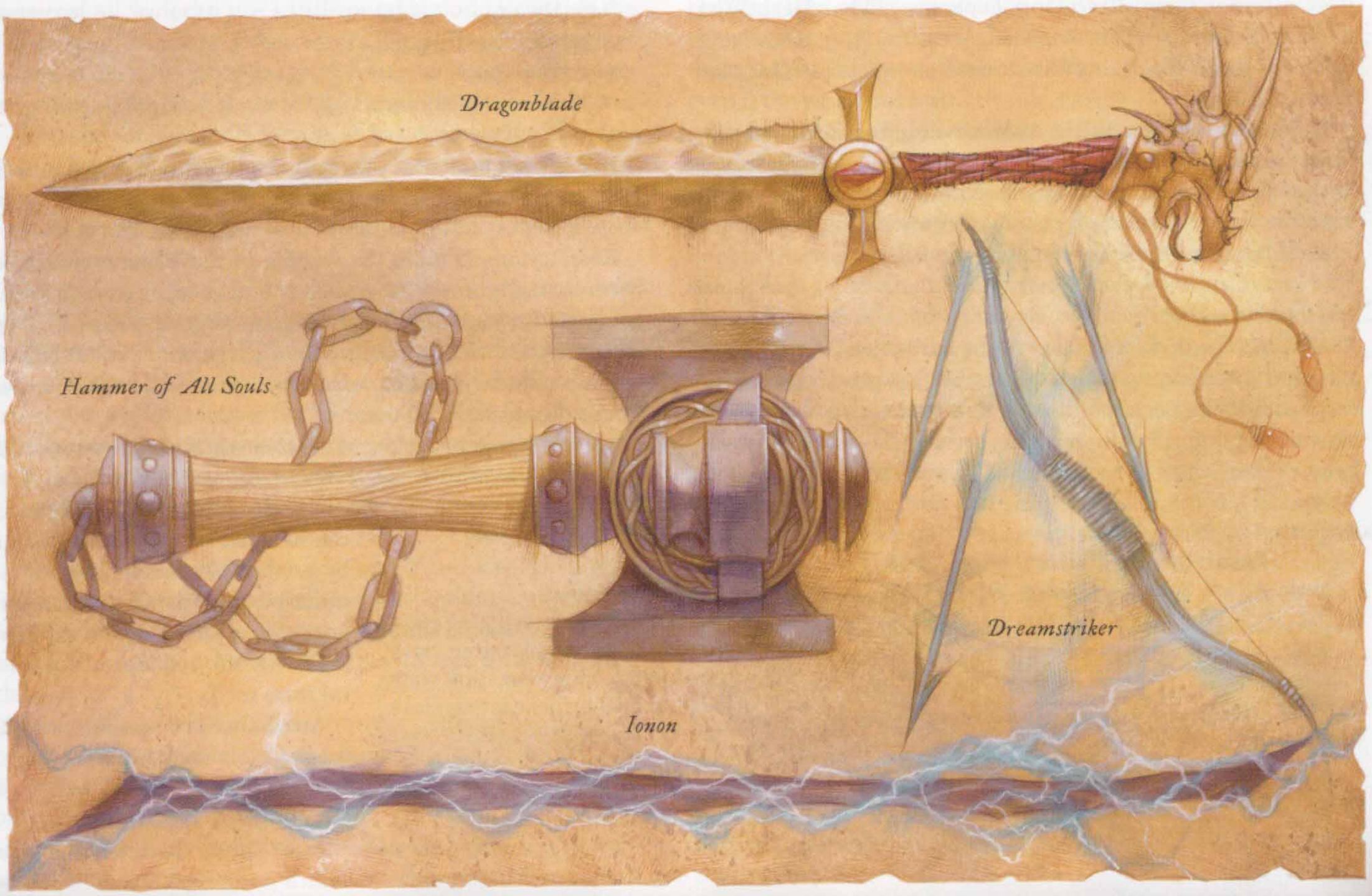
When a battle scion attains 5th level, the resistance granted by this ability increases to 20 points. At 8th level, it increases to 30 points.

Intimidating Presence (Ex): A battle scion of 4th level or higher wielding *Dragonblade* may add his class level as a bonus on Intimidate checks made against dragons (or one-half his class level as a bonus on Intimidate checks made against nondragons).

Dodge Bonus (Ex): At 7th level and higher, a battle scion wielding *Dragonblade* gains a +2 dodge bonus to Armor Class against creatures at least two size categories larger than himself.

Frightful Presence (Ex): A battle scion of 9th level or higher wielding *Dragonblade* can unsettle foes with his mere presence. This ability takes effect automatically whenever the scion attacks or charges. Creatures within a radius of 60 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer Hit Dice than the scion's character level.

A potentially affected creature that succeeds on a Will save (DC 10 + class level + scion's Cha modifier) remains immune to that scion's frightful presence for one day. On a failure, creatures with 4 or less HD become panicked for 4d6 rounds and those with 5 or more HD become shaken for 4d6 rounds. Even dragons can be affected by the scion's frightful presence.



Illus. by W. England

THE FAITH SCION

A faith scion wields his legendary blade in the name of his deity—or, in the case of a druid, in the service of nature. A legendary weapon usually comes into the hands of a faith scion either as a gift from his religious order or as a blessing from his deity. Because of the divine nature of these weapons, clerics, druids and paladins are ideally suited for this prestige class, though other classes can also qualify.

A divinely influenced legendary weapon should be rare and unique. Certainly no deity would create multiple copies of one weapon as a matter of course, and few religious orders can afford to do so. Thus, each weapon should grant different abilities, except in special cases. For example, duplicate weapons might be created especially to combat the enemies of a church, or perhaps to destroy (or create) undead. A divine legendary sword of an order devoted to healing might even be less a weapon than an instrument for easing the suffering of others.

A faith scion usually has high status within his religious order. His possession of a legendary weapon implies that he has the favor of his deity, or that he is more in tune with nature than others of his order, in the case of a druid. Depending on the alignment of his deity, though, his ownership of the weapon could be construed as an invitation to try to take it from him.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a faith scion, a character must fulfill the criteria given in his particular weapon's entry. (For an example, see *Hammer of All Souls*, below.)

Class Skills

The faith scion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Spellcraft (Int), and Survival (Wis).

Domains and Class Skills: A cleric who gains additional class skills from his domain can treat those skills as class skills for the faith scion class. See Deity, Domains, and Domain Spells, page 32 of the *Player's Handbook*, for more information.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the faith scion prestige class. A legendary weapon associated with the class provides a unique set of additional special abilities, which are detailed in the weapon's description. (For an example, see the *Hammer of All Souls*, below.) These abilities accrue in addition to those already noted on Table 5–9. However, because those abilities are functions of the weapon rather than the wielder, they are lost if the legendary weapon that granted them is lost. The features mentioned on Table 5–9 are retained even if the weapon is lost.

Spells per Day/Spells Known: At each faith scion level, a character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if he had also gained a level in a spellcasting class to which he belonged before adding the prestige class level. If the character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a faith scion, the player must decide to which class to add each faith scion level for the purpose of determining spells per day and spells known.

Special Abilities: Faith scion levels stack with other class levels for determining the effectiveness of the following abilities: animal companions, lay on hands, *special mount*, turn or rebuke undead, wild shape (including additional daily uses or increased range of sizes or creature types), and wild empathy. For instance, a 5th-level druid/6th-level faith scion could assume wild shape four times per day (including Tiny creatures), and would add 11 (plus Cha modifier) to his wild empathy checks. His animal companion would be treated as that of an 11th-level druid.

Hammer of All Souls

The *Hammer of All Souls* is said to have been crafted by Moradin Dwarffather himself in the image of his own weapon, *Soulhammer*. It symbolizes the glory of the dwarven race.

Requirements: Any character can wield the *Hammer of All Souls* as a +2 *adamantine warhammer* and also gain the benefit of the Craft bonus and lore of souls special ability described below. A faith scion who wields the *Hammer of All Souls* gains additional special abilities if the character fulfills the following criteria.

Race: Dwarf.

Alignment: Lawful good.

Base Attack Bonus: +7.

Skills: Craft (armorsmithing) or Craft (weaponsmithing) 10 ranks.

Feats: Armor Proficiency (heavy), Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (warhammer).

Spells: Ability to cast *protection from evil* as a divine spell.

Restrictions: Should the wielder of the *Hammer of All Souls* become an alignment other than lawful good, or attack a lawful good, lawful neutral, or neutral good-aligned dwarf, he loses all special abilities granted by the faith scion prestige class. To regain these abilities, the scion must receive an *atonement* spell from a dwarf cleric of Moradin.

Maintenance: A wielder of the *Hammer of All Souls* must strike the hammer against an anvil at least once every seven days. Failure to perform this task reduces the hammer's enhancement bonus by 1. Multiple failures are not cumulative (that is, if the hammer goes two weeks without striking an anvil, the reduction does not increase to 2).

Attributes: The *Hammer of All Souls* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points: 30/76.

Caster Level: 15th.

Value: To any character other than a faith scion who meets the above

TABLE 5–9: THE FAITH SCION

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Spells per Day/Spells Known
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

requirements, the *Hammer of All Souls* appears to be worth as much as a Medium +2 *adamantine warhammer* that grants the Craft bonus and lore of all souls special ability (market price 21,812 gp).

Special Abilities: The *Hammer of All Souls* provides a number of special abilities to its wielder, depending on the character's class level in the faith scion prestige class (see the table below).

Initial Abilities: When first acquired, the *Hammer of All Souls* functions as a +2 *adamantine warhammer.* Anyone who wields it, whether a faith scion or not, also benefits from the Craft bonus and lore of souls ability (see below).

Abilities Granted by the Hammer of All Souls

Faith Scion Level	Ability Gained
—	Craft bonus
—	Lore of souls
1st	Smite evil 1/day
2nd	Fortitude of souls +2
3rd	Throw and return
4th	Enhancement bonus +3
5th	Smite evil 2/day
6th	Fortitude of souls +4
7th	Enhancement bonus +4
8th	Fortitude of souls +6
9th	Smite evil 3/day
10th	Enhancement bonus +5

Craft Bonus (Ex): The owner of the *Hammer of All Souls* gains a +5 insight bonus on all Craft checks related to stone or metal.

This bonus increases by an additional +1 for every faith scion class level gained, including 1st level.

Lore of Souls (Su): Three times per day, the owner of the *Hammer of All Souls* can use a full-round action to consult the knowledge of his dwarven ancestors. This gives the character a bonus on any one Knowledge check (made as part of the action) equal to his faith scion level (if any) + his Wisdom bonus (if any). (At the DM's discretion, if the Knowledge check is directly related to dwarvenkind, the bonus granted by the character's faith scion level is doubled.) The check is treated as a trained skill check, even if the character has no ranks in that Knowledge skill.

Smite Evil (Su): Once per day, a faith scion wielding the *Hammer of All Souls* may smite evil with an attack. The attack may be a melee attack or a ranged attack, but must be delivered by the *Hammer of All Souls.* The wielder adds 4 to his attack roll and deals 2 extra points of damage per faith scion level. If the wielder accidentally smites a creature that is not evil, the smite has no effect, but the ability is still used up for that day.

A wielder may use this ability twice per day at 5th level and three times per day at 9th level.

Fortitude of Souls (Su): A faith scion of 2nd level or higher wielding the *Hammer of All Souls* derives endurance from the support of his ancestors, gaining a +2 enhancement bonus to Constitution. At 6th level, the bonus increases to +4, and at 8th level to +6.

Throw and Return (Su): Three times per day, a faith scion of 3rd level or higher wielding the *Hammer of All Souls* can treat the weapon as a throwing returning weapon (see the special ability descriptions on pages 225 and 226 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). Activating this ability is a free action, and it lasts for 1 round.

THE SPELL SCION

Sometimes a magic weapon is not so much a weapon as a magic device in the shape of a weapon. The spell scion is the ideal wielder for a legendary weapon of this sort. Spellblades and similar items are weapons of significant arcane power, and their wielders often have great magical destinies. Such a character might wield a fey sword, or a demon blade, or a magic staff that is actually an important symbol of his or her arcane order.

Wielding an arcane legendary weapon is a great responsibility because the weapon contains so much magical power. Arcane spellcasters who recognize a particular weapon usually afford the wielder more respect—or perhaps fear—than they might another of their ilk who was not so equipped.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a spell scion, a character must fulfill the criteria given in her particular weapon's entry. (For an example, see *Ionon*, below.)

Class Skills

The spell scion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Profession (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

The following are class features of the spell scion prestige class. A legendary weapon associated with the class provides a unique set of additional special abilities, which are detailed in the weapon's description. (For an example, see *Ionon*, below.) These abilities accrue in addition to those already noted on Table 5–10. However, because those abilities are functions of the weapon rather than the wielder, they are lost if the legendary weapon that granted them is lost. The features mentioned on Table 5–10 are retained even if the weapon is lost.

Spells per Day/Spells Known: At each spell scion level, the character gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class level. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). If the character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a spell scion, the player must decide to which class to add each spell scion level for the purpose of determining spells per day and spells known.

Ionon, the Burning Staff

Created by a wizard from pure elemental fire, *Ionon* is a conduit between the wielder and the Elemental Plane of Fire. The staff is made of polished obsidian and is wreathed at all times in wispy blue-white flame. This flame deals no damage to the wielder.

Requirements: Any character can wield *Ionon* as a *+1 flaming/+1 flaming quarterstaff* and also gain the benefit of the resistance to fire special ability described below. A spell scion who wields *Ionon* gains additional special abilities if the character fulfills the following criteria.

Alignment: Any nonlawful.

Skills: Knowledge (arcana) 5 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 5 ranks, Spellcraft 10 ranks.

Feats: Empower Spell.

Spells: Ability to cast 4th-level arcane spells, including at least three spells with the fire descriptor.

Special: Must have been reduced to –1 or less hit points on at least one occasion from a hit that dealt fire damage.

Table 5–10: The Spell Scion

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Spells per Day/Spells Known
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	+1 level of existing arcane spellcasting class

Restrictions: If *Ionon* is grasped by a creature with vulnerability to cold, the weapon's flame goes out temporarily. This renders all the staff's special abilities (except for its enhancement bonus) inactive. The creature grasping the staff takes 1 point of fire damage in every round when the weapon remains grasped.

Maintenance: *Ionon* must be kept in a warm environment to remain at full power. If the staff spends at least 1 hour in an area where the temperature is below 50°F, its flame goes out temporarily. This renders all the staff's special abilities (except for its enhancement bonus) inactive. This loss of special abilities can be postponed by dealing at least 5 points of fire damage to *Ionon* every hour. (Damage dealt to the staff "counts" for this purpose even if the staff actually takes no damage, such as because of its hardness.)

Attributes: *Ionon* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points: 14/45.

Caster Level: 15th.

Value: To any character other than a spell scion who meets the above requirements, *Ionon* appears to be worth as much as a Medium *+1 flaming/+1 flaming quarterstaff* that grants the resistance to fire ability (market price 24,600 gp).

Special Abilities: *Ionon* provides the following special abilities to its wielder, depending on the character's class level in the spell scion prestige class (see the table below).

Initial Abilities: When first acquired, *Ionon* functions as a *+1 flaming/+1 flaming quarterstaff*. Anyone who wields it, whether a spell scion or not, also benefits from the resistance to fire ability (see below).

Abilities Granted by Ionon

Spell Scion Level	Ability Gained
—	Resistance to fire 5
1st	Resistance to fire 10, empowered spells
2nd	Recall spell 1/day
3rd	*Fire shield*
4th	Resistance to fire 20
5th	Enhancement bonus +2/+2, recall spell 2/day
6th	*Plane shift*
7th	Resistance to fire 30
8th	Recall spell 3/day
9th	Enhancement bonus +3/+3
10th	Immunity to fire

Resistance to Fire (Ex): The wielder of the staff gains resistance to fire 5, even if she has no levels in the spell scion class.

A spell scion who wields the staff gains resistance to fire 10. At 4th level, the resistance improves to 20, and at 7th level to 30. This resistance does not stack with any other resistance to fire the wielder may have.

Empowered Spells (Su): Three times per day, a spell scion wielding *Ionon* can empower (as the Empower Spell feat) any arcane spell she casts that has the fire descriptor. She may apply this effect to any spell whose level is equal to or less than her spell scion level, and may even apply it to spell-like abilities cast by the staff itself. Activating this power is a free action and has no effect on the spell's level or its casting time.

Recall Spell (Su): As a free action, a spell scion of 2nd level or higher can recall any arcane spell she has just cast, as long as that spell has the fire descriptor, up to a maximum spell level equal to her spell scion level. She either restores that spell to her list of prepared spells (if she prepares spells) or regains that spell slot (if she does not prepare spells). She may only recall a spell cast in the same round that she uses this ability.

This ability can be used once per day at 2nd level, twice per day at 5th level, and three times per day at 8th level.

Fire Shield (Sp): Once per day, when wielded by a spell scion of 3rd level or higher, *Ionon* can wreathe the wielder in a warm *fire shield* of blue flames.

Enhancement Bonus (Ex): When *Ionon* is wielded by a spell scion of 5th level or higher, the staff's enhancement bonus improves from +1/+1 to +2/+2. The bonus increases to +3/+3 when the wielder attains 9th level as a spell scion.

Plane Shift (Sp): Once per day, *Ionon* can transport a spell scion of 6th level or higher to the Elemental Plane of Fire, just as if it had cast *plane shift*. Additional willing characters can accompany the scion, as described in the *plane shift* spell. The effect is more accurate than normal for *plane shift*, delivering the scion 5 to 500 yards (not miles) from her intended destination. The spell scion must have her own method of return, since *Ionon* provides no return trip.

Immunity to Fire (Ex): At 10th level, a spell scion wielding *Ionon* gains immunity to fire.

THE SWIFT SCION

Some legendary weapons are meant for the hands of the quick and the silent. A swift scion might inherit her weapon or acquire it "by accident," but the weapon is no less part of her destiny than is the legendary weapon of any other scion. Characters of any class can become swift scions, but rogues, bards, rangers, and monks benefit most from the special abilities of the legendary weapons associated with this class.

Swift scions wield their weapons for a wide variety of purposes. A rogue may use it to supplement her income, while a monk might merely seek to master its use. A bard could draw upon the power of her weapon's rich history to enhance her music, while a ranger might use it as part of the hunt. Of all legendary weapons, the ones associated with the swift scion class are the most focused in their application. Each tends to favor rogues, monks, rangers, or bards specifically, rather than a broad range of classes as the other legendary weapons do.

Hit Die: d6.

Requirements

To qualify to become a swift scion, a character must fulfill the criteria given in her particular weapon's entry. (For an example, see *Dreamstriker*, below.)

Class Skills

The swift scion's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Swim (Str), Tumble (Dex), and Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Table 5–11: The Swift Scion

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Bonus class skill
2nd	+1	+1	+3	+0	Bonus special ability
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+1	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+1	—
5th	+3	+1	+4	+1	Bonus class skill
6th	+4	+2	+5	+2	Bonus special ability
7th	+5	+2	+5	+2	—
8th	+6	+2	+6	+2	—
9th	+6	+3	+6	+3	—
10th	+7	+3	+7	+3	Bonus special ability

Class Features

The following are class features of the swift scion prestige class. A legendary weapon associated with the class provides a unique set of additional special abilities, which are detailed in the weapon's description. (For an example, see *Dreamstriker*, below.) These abilities accrue in addition to those already noted on Table 5–11. However, because those abilities are functions of the weapon rather than the wielder, they are lost if the legendary weapon that granted them is lost. The features mentioned on Table 5–11 are retained even if the weapon is lost.

Bonus Class Skill: At 1st level, 5th level, and 9th level, a swift scion may choose an additional class skill from the following list: Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Decipher Script (Int), Disable Device (Dex), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (all skills, taken individually) (Int), Sleight of Hand (Dex), Speak Language (Int), Spellcraft (Int), Survival (Wis), and Use Magic Device (Cha). Once designated, that skill is considered a class skill for the swift scion prestige class.

Bonus Special Ability: At 2nd level, 6th level, and 10th level, a swift scion may choose an additional special ability from the following list. She may select the same ability more than once if desired, and the effects stack where appropriate.

Arcane Spells per Day/Spells Known: A swift scion may gain a number of new spells per day and spells known (if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class to which she belonged before adding the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (metamagic or item creation feats, and so on). If the character had more than one spellcasting class before becoming a swift scion, the player must decide to which class to add each swift scion level for the purpose of determining spells per day and spells known.

Bardic Music: A swift scion may choose to gain an extra two daily uses of the bardic music ability (as described on page 29 of the *Player's Handbook*), provided that she already has the ability. She doesn't gain any new bardic music abilities, nor do her existing bardic music abilities improve in effectiveness.

Fast Movement (Ex): If a swift scion has an enhancement bonus to her speed from a class feature, she may choose to increase this enhancement bonus by 10 feet. This enhancement bonus follows the same rules as her existing enhancement bonus to speed (for instance, a monk who selects this feature only benefits from the enhancement bonus when wearing no armor).

Improved Bardic Knowledge: A swift scion can choose to gain a +4 bonus on bardic knowledge checks. (If the character doesn't have the bardic knowledge class feature, this benefit has no effect.)

Improved Evasion (Ex): A swift scion may choose to gain the improved evasion ability (as described on page 42 of the *Player's Handbook*), provided that she already has the evasion ability.

Improved Favored Enemy: If a swift scion has at least one favored enemy (see page 47 of the *Player's Handbook*), the bonus gained on damage rolls and certain skill checks against any one favored enemy improves by +2. The character doesn't gain any additional favored enemies by selecting this ability.

Improved Unarmed Damage: If a swift scion has the Improved Unarmed Strike feat, she may choose to increase the damage dealt by her unarmed strikes. Treat this as if the character's monk level had increased by four. For instance, a 6th-level monk/2nd-level swift scion who selects this ability would increase her unarmed strike damage from 1d8 to 1d10. (If the character has no monk levels, she gains unarmed damage as a 4th-level monk.)

Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex): If a swift scion has the uncanny dodge class feature, she may select improved uncanny dodge. Her swift scion levels stack with her levels in other classes that grant uncanny dodge to determine the minimum rogue level required to flank the character. (See page 26 of the *Player's Handbook* for details.)

Sneak Attack: If a swift scion has the sneak attack ability, she may choose to increase the extra damage it deals by 2d6 points.

Swift Tracker (Ex): If a swift scion has the Track feat, she may select this special ability. A swift scion with this ability can move at her normal speed while following tracks without taking the normal –5 penalty. She takes only a –10 penalty (instead of the normal –20) when moving at up to twice normal speed while tracking.

Trap Sense: If a swift scion has the trap sense ability, she can take this special ability to increase her bonus on Reflex saves and to AC against traps by 1.

Dreamstriker

A cabal of halfling clerics created the bow called *Dreamstriker* long ago. Since then, it has been passed down along a line of elite rangers and rogues, but was recently lost when its wielder was slain while away from her village.

Requirements: Any character can wield *Dreamstriker* as a +2 *composite shortbow* (+2 Str bonus) and also gain the benefit of the stealth special ability described below. A swift scion who wields *Dreamstriker* gains additional special abilities if the character fulfills the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +6.

Skills: Hide 10 ranks, Move Silently 10 ranks.

Feats: Point Blank Shot, Far Shot, Stealthy.

Special: The wielder must be of Small size.

Restrictions: *Dreamstriker* does not grant its stealth ability to a wielder who is not of Small size, though its enhancement bonus is still effective.

Attributes: *Dreamstriker* has the following attributes.

Hardness/Hit Points: 15/55.

Caster Level: 15th.

Value: To any character other than a swift scion who meets the above requirements, *Dreamstriker* appears to be worth as much as a Small *+2 composite shortbow* (+2 Str bonus) that grants the stealth ability (market price 10,525 gp).

Special Abilities: *Dreamstriker* provides a number of special abilities to its wielder, depending on the character's class level in the swift scion prestige class (see the table below).

Initial Abilities: When it is first acquired, *Dreamstriker* functions as a *+2 composite shortbow* (+2 Str bonus). Any Small character who wields it, whether a swift scion or not, also benefits from the stealth ability (see below).

Stealth (Su): The wielder of *Dreamstriker* may use her Wisdom bonus (if any) as a bonus on her Hide and Move Silently checks.

Abilities Granted by Dreamstriker

Swift Scion Level	Ability Gained
—	Stealth
1st	*Invisibility*
2nd	Ghost touch
3rd	Ephemeral presence (trackless)
4th	Enhancement bonus +3
5th	Dreamstrike arrows
6th	Greater invisibility
7th	Enhancement bonus +4
8th	Ephemeral presence (scentless)
9th	Etherealness
10th	Enhancement bonus +5

Invisibility (Sp): A swift scion wielding *Dreamstriker* can become invisible once per day as a free action. The effect lasts for 1 round per class level.

For a swift scion of 6th level or higher, the invisibility granted by this power is the equivalent of *greater invisibility.* The duration remains 1 round per class level.

Ghost Touch (Su): When *Dreamstriker* is wielded by a swift scion of 2nd level or higher, any arrow fired from the bow can damage incorporeal creatures as if it had the ghost touch special ability.

Ephemeral Presence (Su): A swift scion of 3rd level or higher bearing *Dreamstriker* leaves no trail and cannot be tracked.

At 8th level, a swift scion bearing the weapon no longer gives off a scent. Creatures with the scent ability cannot detect her presence by means of that ability, nor can she be tracked by scent.

Enhancement Bonus (Ex): When *Dreamstriker* is wielded by a swift scion of 4th level or higher, the bow's enhancement bonus improves from +2 to +3. The bonus increases to +4 at 7th level and +5 at 10th level.

Dreamstrike Arrows (Su): Three times per day (but no more than once per round), a swift scion of 5th level or higher can fire a special arrow from *Dreamstriker.* The arrow strikes as a touch attack (ignoring armor, shield, and natural armor bonuses to AC). The arrow deals only half the normal damage, but the damage dealt is Wisdom damage, not hit point damage. Bonus damage dice, if any, do not apply to the damage dealt by a dreamstrike arrow.

Etherealness (Su): At 9th level or higher, a swift scion bearing *Dreamstriker* can become ethereal for up to 10 rounds per day (which need not be spent all at one time) Activating this power, or deactivating it to become material, is a standard action.

ITEM FAMILIARS

Like the legendary weapons rules (see above), the item familiars variant system presents a method by which a character, even a nonspellcaster, can find himself linked to a particular magic item for a large part of his career. These items gradually gain in power and sentience, and often fulfill small roles similar to those of living familiars, but sometimes they become powerful entities in their own right.

To utilize these rules, the character must choose the following new feat.

ITEM FAMILIAR [General]

Choose a permanent magic item that you possess. You establish a link to that magic item, and the item improves in capability as you gain levels.

Prerequisite: A character must be at least 3rd level to take this feat.

Benefit: By establishing a link to a particular item, you enable that item to gain power as you gain levels. The exact nature of the item and the powers are described in the following text.

Special: If you ever lose the chosen item (have it removed from your possession for a continuous period of more than one day per level) or if the item is destroyed, you automatically lose 200 XP per level as well as all benefits derived from possessing the linked item (plus any resources you put into the item). If you recover the item, you regain these XP. You may replace a lost or destroyed item familiar after you have advanced one level, as if you were gaining an item familiar for the first time.

TYPES OF ITEM FAMILIARS

An item familiar must be a permanent magic item. Typically, it tends to be a magic weapon (such as a sword, axe, or bow), a rod (one that does not depend on charges for its powers), or a ring with a permanent magical power. The DM may allow for various wondrous items to be item familiars, and in such a case can adapt the following rules fairly easily.

In order to be an item familiar, a magic item must:

—Have a price of at least 2,000 gp.

—Be usable by the character (if it is a weapon, the character must be proficient with the appropriate category of weapon).

—Have a permanent magical effect that the character can (and knows how to) use.

Keep in mind that the item only needs to meet the basics of this criteria. The magic item may have functions the character cannot currently use, and once the item is linked to the character he can separate from it for short periods of time without any harm.

Intelligent Items

The *Dungeon Master's Guide* has rules for intelligent magic items. Virtually any permanent magic item can be intelligent, and pages 268–271 include guidelines for introducing and using such creations in your game.

This variant system does not depend on the item in question being intelligent, but any item familiar created eventually *becomes* intelligent. Item familiars normally become intelligent gradually, however, which lessens the complexity of the standard rules for intelligent items.

BONDING TO AN ITEM FAMILIAR

When a character selects an item and chooses the Item Familiar feat, the character establishes a permanent, supernatural bond to

the item familiar. This bond can be suppressed by an *antimagic field* or similar effect, but it cannot be dispelled.

Once the character has become bonded to the magic item, the item may gain additional powers or intelligence. The character can also begin investing abilities into the item, using the item familiar to improve her own capabilities.

Use Table 5–12: Item Familiar Abilities to determine what, if any, abilities the item familiar gains based on its owner's character level.

Table 5–12: Item Familiar Abilities

Character Level	Ability
1st	Invest life energy; invest skill ranks; invest spell slots
7th	Sapience; senses; communication
10th	Special ability
14th	Special ability
18th	Special ability
21st or higher	One additional special ability per three character levels above 20th

Invest Life Energy

A character of 6th level or lower may invest a portion of her life force into her item familiar, receiving bonus XP in return. These XP are actually part of the item, however, so if the item is lost or destroyed, the character loses not only the bonus but a quantity of her existing XP as well.

When a character chooses to invest her life energy into her item familiar, her current XP total and all future XP awards increase by 10%. However, if the character loses the item, she loses all bonus XP gained, plus an additional 200 XP per character level.

For example, Mialee, a 6th-level character with 19,000 XP, chooses to invest her item familiar, a ring, with some of her life energy. She adds 1,900 XP (10% of 19,000) to her XP total, so she now has 20,900 XP. If she goes on an adventure and earns another 1,000 XP, she actually gains 1,100 XP (1,000 + 10% of 1,000), increasing her total to 22,000 XP, which makes her a 7th-level character.

If she then loses the ring, she would lose the 2,000 XP gained from the investiture (the 1,900 XP she received originally plus the bonus 100 XP she earned later), plus an additional 1,400 XP (200 XP per level), for a total loss of 3,400 XP. This loss would reduce her XP total to 18,600 and her character level to 6th.

Invest Skill Ranks

Whenever a character with an item familiar gains skill points, she may choose to put some or all of those skill points into her item familiar. She assigns the skill points normally, but notes that they now reside in the item familiar. For every 3 ranks she assigns to the item familiar, she gains a +1 bonus that she can apply to any single skill. This bonus can be applied to a skill in which she already has maximum ranks. She can apply multiple bonuses to the same skill, but she may not have more points of bonus in a skill than she has ranks.

If the character loses the item familiar, is separated from it for one day per level (see the Item Familiar feat description), or if the item familiar is destroyed, these skill points and the bonuses related to them are lost.

For example, Mialee has just achieved 7th character level, and she takes a level of wizard. Because of her high Intelligence score, she gains 7 skill points. She assigns 1 skill point to each of the following skills:

Concentration
Decipher Script*
Knowledge (arcana)*
Knowledge (dungeoneering)*
Knowledge (nobility and royalty)*
Knowledge (the planes)*
Spellcraft*

She uses an asterisk to note that 1 rank for each of six skills resides in her ring. Since that adds up to a total of 6 skill ranks in the ring, she gains two +1 bonuses she can apply to any skill. She decides to assign both bonuses (a total of +2) to her Concentration skill. Mialee only has 1 rank in the cross-class skill Spot. If she had desired, she could have applied a single +1 bonus to that skill, but not both.

Invest Spell Slots

Only spellcasters may choose to use this option. A character with an item familiar may choose to invest a single spell slot in her familiar and gain a bonus spell slot in return. The single spell slot must be of the highest spell level she can cast, and the bonus spell slot is always two levels lower than the slot invested in the item. As the caster gains (or loses) levels, the spell slot invested in the item changes so that it is always of the highest spell level she can cast, and the bonus spell slot also changes accordingly, remaining two levels lower than that.

If a spellcaster does not have a spell slot two levels lower than the highest spell level she can cast (if she can cast only 0- and 1st-level spells), she cannot use this option.

As with all other investiture options, if the item familiar is lost or destroyed, so are both spell slots.

For example, as a 7th-level wizard, Mialee can cast 4th-level spells. She chooses to invest one 4th-level spell slot in her ring. The ring gains an additional 2nd-level spell slot, which Mialee can use as long as she has the ring in her possession. When Mialee attains 9th level, the spell slot assigned to the ring automatically becomes a 5th-level spell slot, and the bonus slot becomes a 3rd-level spell slot instead of a 2nd-level one.

Sapience

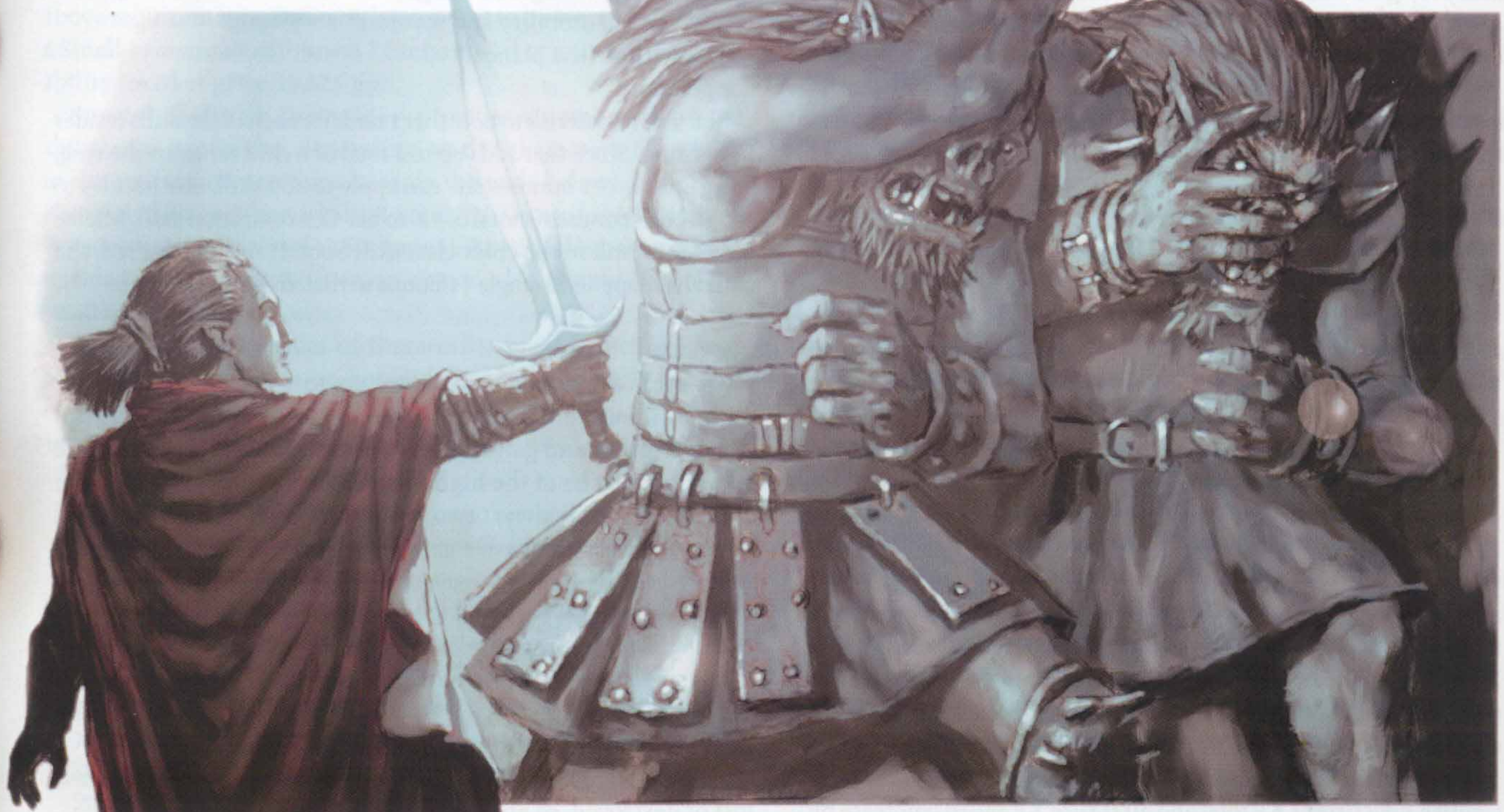
If a character with an item familiar is at least 7th level, the item gains rudimentary sapience. It gains Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. Two of these scores (player's or DM's choice) are 10 and one is 12. The item familiar also gains an Ego score (see Item Ego, page 270 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). This last score should not come into play very often—an item familiars is completely loyal to its master, unless its master radically changes alignment or one or the other is affected by some strange compulsion.

Senses

If a character with an item familiar is at least 7th level, the item can see and hear in a 60-foot radius as if it were a creature. It does not normally make Spot or Listen checks separately from its master, but its master gains the benefit of the Alertness feat while wielding the item.

Communication

If a character with an item familiar is at least 7th level, the item begins to communicate with the master using basic emotions or feelings. The item may try to tell the master of danger, for example, by putting forth a feeling of fear. It can only communicate in this manner while being worn or carried by its master.



Illus. by S. Tappin

Special Ability

When an item familiar's master reaches 10th level, and at every four levels thereafter, the master chooses a new special ability for the item from the following list. Once an ability is chosen, it becomes a permanent part of the item (unless otherwise specified). Some abilities have prerequisites.

Armor, Shield, or Weapon Special Ability: An item familiar empowered with this special ability gains an ability equivalent to a +1 bonus (as found on Table 7–5, 7–6, or 7–14 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), such as the light fortification, bashing, or defending special ability. This ability contributes to the overall enhancement bonus of the item and its value but does not cost the master of the familiar any gold pieces or time. This ability may be used in conjunction with the normal rules for improving an existing magic item (see Improving an Item Familiar, below, and Adding New Abilities, page 288 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*). A character may select this special ability multiple times, each time enabling her familiar to gain a different ability equivalent to a +1 bonus.

Prerequisite: The item familiar must be a type of magic armor, a magic shield, or a magic weapon.

Cantrips/Orisons: An item familiar empowered with this special ability can cast 0-level spells. The familiar may cast any spell invested in it as a standard action (or longer, as defined by the spell's casting time) as long as the spell does not have an expensive material component or an XP component. The item familiar need not provide any verbal or somatic components, and it need not provide any material components that cost less than 1 gp. It has access to all the 0-level spells from any single class spell list of the master's choice (taking into account any alignment restrictions against casting spells of a certain class or alignment subtype). It can cast a number of 0-level spells per day as if it were a sorcerer of the master's character level (though the master does not have to be a spellcaster). The item familiar uses its own ability scores to determine spell save DCs but can cast its 0-level spells only on its master's order. The master may use a free action on her turn to issue these orders, or she may give a number of contingency orders (such as "If I fall unconscious, cast *cure minor wounds* on me") equal to one more than her Charisma modifier (minimum one).

Greater Power: An item familiar empowered with this special ability gains any single greater power listed on the Intelligent Item Greater Powers table, page 270 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The item uses this power as described, at the master's command. A character may select this special ability multiple times, each time applying it to a different greater power.

Prerequisite: An item must have at least one lesser power (see below) for every greater power it is given. The master must spend the amount of gold pieces given in the Base Price Modifier column of the Intelligent Item Greater Powers table to purchase the greater power. The process of empowering an item in this way takes 24 hours.

Greater Senses: An item familiar empowered with this special ability gains blindsense out to 30 feet.

Prerequisite: The item familiar must already have the improved senses special ability (see below).

Improved Senses: An item familiar empowered with this special ability gains darkvision out to 60 feet.

Increased Sapience: An item familiar empowered with this special ability gains +4 to any single ability score and +2 to its other two scores. The item can now communicate telepathically in a recognizable language with the master out to 120 feet and can speak audibly in Common. It can speak, read, and understand one

additional language per point of Intelligence bonus. A character may select this special ability multiple times, each time improving all three of the item's ability scores and increasing the number of languages it can speak, read, and understand.

Lesser Power: An item familiar empowered with this special ability gains any single lesser power listed on the Intelligent Item Lesser Powers table, page 269 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The item uses this power as described, at the master's command. A character may select this special ability multiple times, each time applying it to a different lesser power.

Prerequisite: The master must spend the amount of gold pieces given in the Base Price Modifier column of the Intelligent Item Lesser Powers table to purchase the lesser power. The process of empowering an item in this way takes 24 hours.

Special Purpose and Dedicated Power: An item familiar empowered with this special ability gains a special purpose and a dedicated power chosen by its master (see the Intelligent Item Purpose and Special Purpose Item Dedicated Powers tables on page 270 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

An item familiar usually displays more flexibility in how it carries out its special purpose than a standard intelligent item, especially if its purpose conflicts with its master. However, if a master (especially one who gave the item a special purpose in the first place) consistently acts against the item's special purpose, the item has even more leverage for keeping the "master" in line. An item familiar can temporarily sever the link between item and master, essentially shutting down access to any abilities invested in the item plus all its normal magical abilities, as if the item had been lost or destroyed. The item only reestablishes the link if it is convinced the master is committed to helping it fulfill its special purpose.

No item familiar may have more than one special purpose and one dedicated power.

Prerequisite: The master must spend the amount of gold pieces given in the Base Price Modifier column of the Special Purpose Item Dedicated Powers table to purchase the dedicated power. The process of empowering an item in this way takes 24 hours.

Spell Use: An item familiar empowered with this ability may cast any spell invested in it as a standard action (or longer, as defined by the spell's duration) as long as it does not have an expensive material component or an XP component. The item familiar need not provide any verbal or somatic components, and it need not provide any material components that cost less than 1 gp. The item familiar must meet the ability score prerequisites for the spell but casts the spell at the master's level. The item familiar may cast the spell only on the master's order (as described in Cantrips/Orisons, above). If an item familiar casts an invested spell, it is as if the master cast it for purposes of spells per day and preparation.

Prerequisite: The item must have an invested spell slot of the appropriate spell level (see Invest Spell Slots, above), and the master must have the ability to cast 3rd-level spells.

ITEM FAMILIAR ALIGNMENT

An item familiar gains its master's alignment and, if the character changes alignment, it generally changes alignment accordingly. However, if this alignment change would be in direct conflict with the item familiar's special purpose (if any), the item does not change alignment, and it immediately severs the link between itself and its master. The link can only be reestablished when the master changes to a nonconflicting alignment.

If an item familiar changes to an alignment that would preclude it using some of its powers not tied to a special purpose, the change in alignment takes place, no severing of the link occurs, and the item cannot use those powers until its alignment becomes compatible again. For example, if a neutral good rod has the ability to cast druid cantrips and the rod becomes lawful good, it loses that ability. If a *holy avenger* item familiar becomes nonlawful, it loses all the abilities it had for being a *holy avenger* but remains a *+2 cold iron longsword* and retains its other item familiar abilities.

IMPROVING AN ITEM FAMILIAR

An item familiar can be improved as other magic items can be. By spending gold pieces (and time and experience points, assuming the character is the one doing the work), a character can add new abilities to her item familiar. If a character links herself to a +1 longsword, for example, it only costs 6,000 gp (or 3,000 gp and 240 XP) to add another +1 of enhancement bonus or, perhaps, a special ability that is equivalent to a +1 bonus (such as spell storing or flaming). The character can accomplish this even without having the requisite item creation feats.

This type of improvement has nothing to do with the master's character level, though it may affect the item's eventual Ego score.

INHERITING AN ITEM FAMILIAR

Sometimes characters die, after which other characters pick up and use their items; this turn of events is an integral part of the D&D game.

When a character finds or somehow comes into possession of another character's item familiar, two results can occur.

An Ego Contest Ensues: An item familiar normally resists being picked up and used by another character. If the item familiar has an Ego score, it automatically tries to resist being wielded by anyone other than its linked master, even if the link has been severed (possibly because the master is dead). The rules for Ego conflicts can be found under Items against Characters, page 271 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Normally, an intelligent item resists its owner only when a conflict of personality or purpose ensues. An item familiar assumes that any use of it by someone other than its linked (or previously linked) master is a conflict, and so it resists every time the new owner attempts to make use of it.

If the new owner wins the Ego contest, he can wield the item safely for 1 hour but cannot access any of the abilities the item familiar gained through its link (such as invested XP, skill ranks, or spell slots, or any special abilities it has that aren't simply a feature of the magic item). An item familiar may talk to its new owner (if it has that capability), but it feels at best unfriendly and could be extraordinarily hostile. If an item familiar's alignment matches that of its new owner, the item familiar may become less hostile over time but always forces Ego contests when possible.

The New Owner Can Attempt a Link: The new owner can attempt to link to the item by selecting the Item Familiar feat (assuming he meets the prerequisite). What occurs next depends on his character level compared to the character level of the highest-level previous owner.

New Owner Is Same or Higher Level: The link succeeds. The new owner gains all the benefits of the abilities of the item familiar, and the item familiar's alignment changes to match that of its new master. If the item familiar had invested skill ranks and/or spell slots, those investments become accessible to the new owner, adding to his totals. If the item familiar has spell slots, the new master can access them only if he could already cast spells of the appropriate levels.

New Owner Is Lower Level: The link partially succeeds. The alignment of the item familiar changes to match that of its new master, and the new owner can use all the item familiar's special abilities and powers. However, the new master cannot benefit from any invested skill ranks or spell slots until his character level equals or exceeds that of the item familiar's highest-level previous owner.

True Inheritance

A character may willingly pass on an item familiar. This transfer can be accomplished while the owner is alive, or it can be stipulated as part of a last will and testament if the owner dies. If a living character willingly passes on an item familiar to a new owner with a matching alignment, an Ego contest immediately ensues, but the new owner gains a +10 circumstance bonus on the check. If the new owner wins, the item familiar does not force an Ego contest again unless the new owner does something to violate her alignment or to obstruct the item's special purpose (if any). The item familiar does not actually have a new master until the new owner selects the Item Familiar feat, but it cooperates with its new owner.

AWAKENING POWERS AND ABILITIES

Rather than giving a player free rein to choose an item familiar's special abilities, the DM may decide to create items with "sleeping" abilities that can only be awakened by having characters link themselves to them. In such cases, the Dungeon Master retains more control over what new abilities and strange items get introduced into his game, but he does limit the likelihood of characters taking the Item Creation feat.

The DM may wish to mix and match awakening abilities with allowing characters to choose new abilities for their familiars. This system can support both concepts.

INCANTATIONS

Incantations are like spells, but they can be cast by characters who are not spellcasters. This variant enables characters who know the correct ritual gestures and phrases for an incantation to achieve powerful magic effects. Incantations don't use spell slots, you don't have to prepare them ahead of time, and you can use an incantation an unlimited number of times per day.

Incantations have drawbacks: They're time-consuming to cast, and success isn't assured. They are often expensive, and some require additional participants to complete the ritual. Some incantations work only under certain specific conditions, such as during a full moon.

Most important among the drawbacks, an incantation rarely fades away quietly if the caster fails to perform the ritual correctly. Instead it reverses itself on the caster, explodes with a cascade of magical energy, or weakens the barrier between worlds, enabling hostile outsiders to emerge onto the Material Plane.

This variant gives a measure of magical power to nonspellcasters, but the incantations themselves are usually too specific in effect to increase a character's power in the general sense. Because many incantations require academic skills such as Knowledge, the characters best equipped to cast them are often spellcasters anyway.

Incantations provide a useful way to introduce powerful magical effects in a lower-level game under controlled conditions. PCs will still use spells rather than expensive, risky incantations whenever they can. Incantations are also more specific than spells, so the DM can introduce them into the game without worrying that they'll spread beyond the immediate situation. If you want characters in your low-level game to take a brief sojourn to Ysgard, you can introduce the incantation *Hrothgar's journey*. Because it requires the construction of a thatched hut in the middle of a forest and works only during the winter solstice, you don't have to worry about the characters exploring the Outer Planes whenever they get the urge. If you gave low-level PCs easy access to the *plane shift* spell, on the other hand, they could wander the planes until they ran afoul of the first outsider more powerful than they are (which is almost any outsider).

DISCOVERING INCANTATIONS

Obscure tomes and spellbooks filled with mystical ramblings, descriptions of magic theory, ordinary arcane spells, and utterly useless or incomprehensible magical writing often hide the instructions for performing incantations. In those dusty volumes, diligent readers can find incantations with real power—magical recipes that provide step-by-step instructions for achieving a powerful effect.

If the characters have access to a well-stocked library of magical information, finding a set of instructions for a particular incantation requires a successful Knowledge (arcana) check with a DC 10 lower than the DC for casting the incantation. Just being aware of the existence of a particular incantation requires a Knowledge (arcana) check with a DC 15 lower than the incantation's casting DC.

CASTING AN INCANTATION

At its simplest, casting an incantation is akin to preparing and cooking something according to a recipe. You must have the ingredients in hand, then use your skill in cooking to perform each step in order. In game terms, this means having the required incantation components, then succeeding on a number of skill checks—often Knowledge (arcana) checks—during the incantation's casting time.

Each incantation description tells how many successful skill checks are required to cast the incantation. Unless otherwise specified, the caster makes a skill check every 10 minutes. If checks involving more than one skill are required, the checks may be made in any order, as desired by the caster. Failing one skill check means that 10 minutes have gone by, and the incantation is in danger of failing. If two skill checks in a row are failed, the incantation fails. Each incantation has a consequence associated with failure. Even if the incantation fails, the casting still consumes all the components (including expensive material components and experience points).

Because of the unusual outcomes possible on a failure, the DM may choose to make these skill checks in secret. Doing this prevents the player of the caster from knowing whether an incantation has succeeded or failed. If the consequence of failure is immediate

HOUSE RULE: NO SPELL RESISTANCE AGAINST ENERGY DAMAGE

In my campaign, spell resistance does not work against energy-attack spells. Spell resistance cannot counter any energy damage dealt by a spell, though it still applies against any other effects of the spell. This rule promotes the use of popular energy-attack spells, such as *fireball* and *lightning bolt*, while still allowing spell resistance to stop those annoying save-or-die spells.

—Andrew Finch

and severe (such as death resulting from a failed *fires of Dis* incantation), the effect is obvious, and concealing it serves no purpose.

Many incantations have a backlash component, which is an ill effect suffered by the caster at the conclusion of the casting or upon failure of the incantation (see Backlash, below).

Saves and Spell Resistance

If an incantation allows a save, the formula to calculate the save is included in the incantation's description. For checks to overcome spell resistance, divide the incantation's skill check DC by 2 to get the effective caster level for the spell resistance check. For example, the caster of a *fires of Dis* incantation (DC 23) would add +11 to a d20 roll when attempting to overcome the spell resistance of the target.

Interrupting Incantations

Incantations take a long time to cast, but they aren't as delicate and exacting as traditional spells. Casting an incantation does not provoke an attack of opportunity, and a caster can even pause the ritual for a short time in order to fight, cast a spell, or take some other action. For each round the incantation is interrupted, the DC of all subsequent skill checks to complete the casting increases by 1. Time spent during the interruption of an incantation does not count toward the incantation's casting time.

Taking 10

As long as the caster of an incantation is not threatened or distracted, he may take 10. Incantations with backlash components or similarly harmful aspects count as threats that prevent the caster from taking 10. A caster may never take 20 when attempting to complete an incantation.

INCANTATION COMPONENTS

Most incantations require components not unlike those of spells, including verbal, somatic, focus, and material components. In addition, some require secondary casters (abbreviated SC in the Components line of a description), or cause some sort of backlash (abbreviated B), or cost the caster some amount of experience points (abbreviated XP).

Secondary Casters

Some incantations require multiple participants to have any hope of succeeding. These secondary casters are indispensable to the success of the incantation. However, no matter how many people are gathered in the dark room, chanting with candles, only one character—most commonly the one with the highest modifier in the relevant skill—is the primary caster who makes the relevant checks. Secondary casters can't help the primary caster succeed by means of the aid another action, but their presence is required for certain aspects of the ritual nonetheless.

Often, an incantation is hosted with more than the minimum number of casters. If the primary caster or a secondary caster is killed or disabled, one of these bystanders can step into a role.

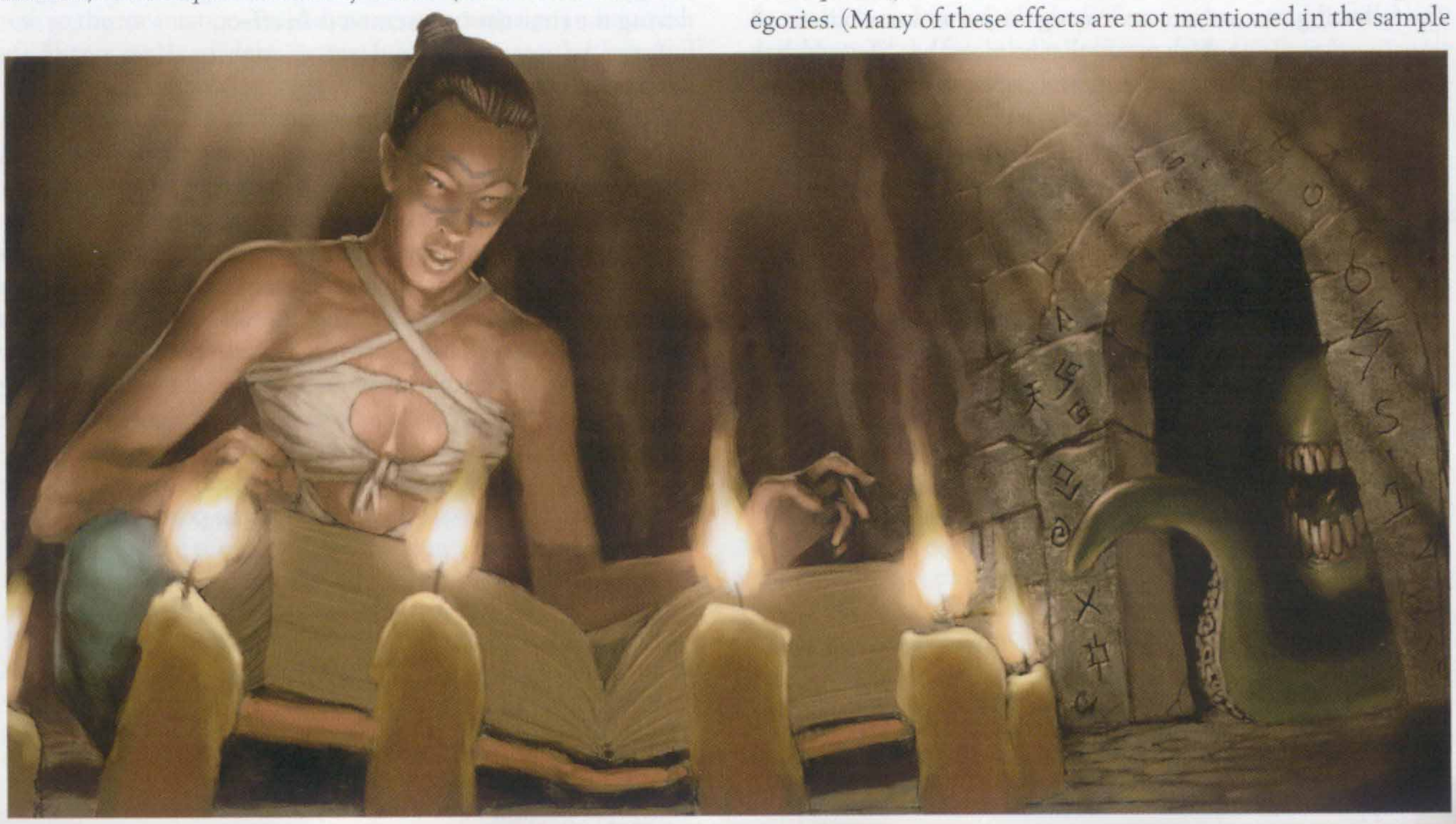
If an incantation requires a check involving a skill other than Knowledge (arcana), any secondary caster can make that check if he or she has a higher skill modifier than the primary caster. Casters who favor the *Hrothgar's journey* incantation, for example, keep bards on hand if they aren't highly skilled in Perform (oratory) themselves.

Backlash

Some incantations damage or drain the caster in some way when they are cast. They have a backlash component: damage, negative levels, or some other effect. The caster experiences the backlash effect regardless of the success or failure of the incantation.

FAILED INCANTATIONS

When two skill checks in a row result in failure (whether or not they're made by the same character), the incantation as a whole fails. The character who failed the second check experiences the effect indicated in the incantation's description. In general, the consequences of failure can be divided into the following categories. (Many of these effects are not mentioned in the sample



Illus. by S. Tappin

incantations that follow; they are provided here for use in incantations that could be developed for a campaign.)

Attack: A creature is called from elsewhere to battle the caster (and often any bystanders and secondary casters). The incantation's description tells the DM what Challenge Rating the creature should have, how it behaves, and how long it persists.

Augment: The incantation was supposed to weaken or destroy its target, but it makes the target more powerful instead. An incantation that deals damage might heal its target or cause it to grow in power, for example.

Betrayal: The incantation seemingly succeeds, but the subject of the incantation (or, in rare cases, the caster) undergoes a dramatic alignment change. Over the next 1d6 minutes, the subject's alignment becomes the extreme opposite of what it was previously (for instance, lawful good becomes chaotic evil, or chaotic neutral becomes lawful neutral; a neutral subject randomly becomes lawful good, lawful evil, chaotic good, or chaotic evil). The subject generally tries to keep its new outlook a secret.

Damage: Either the caster or the target takes damage as the consequence of failure.

Death: Someone—usually the caster or the target—dies. Some incantations allow a saving throw to avoid this consequence of failure.

Delusion: The caster believes the incantation had the desired effect, but in fact it had no effect or a very different one.

Falsehood: The incantation (typically a divination) delivers false results to the caster, but the caster believes the results are true.

Hostile Spell: The caster of the incantation is targeted by a harmful spell. The incantation description gives the specific spell, save DC, and other particulars.

Mirrorcast: The incantastion has the opposite effect of what was intended.

Reversal: The incantation affects the caster rather than the intended target.

SAMPLE INCANTATIONS

The following incantations are among the better-known incantations in existence—which means that no more than a few eldritch scholars know about them. Characters can learn of their existence during the course of an adventure by making a Knowledge (arcana) check (see Discovering Incantations, above).

Call Forth the Dweller

Divination
Effective Level: 6th
Skill Check: Knowledge (arcana) DC 20, 6 successes
Failure: Falsehood
Components: V, S, M, F, XP, B
Casting Time: 60 minutes
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

This incantation contacts the enigmatic, extradimensional being known as the Dweller on the Threshold, an entity that imparts knowledge about its specific obsession: doors and other entrances.

To cast *call forth the Dweller*, the caster must inscribe forty-two mystic symbols around an open doorway, then begin the chants and supplications required for the incantation.

If the incantation succeeds, an image of the Dweller—an inky mass of tentacles and mouths—appears on the other side of the doorway. The Dweller on the Threshold truthfully answers any questions it is asked about a particular door. For example, the Dweller can provide a magical password that unlocks a door, indicate how to disarm a trap on a door, reveal the weaknesses of a door's guardian, or describe the room that lies beyond the door. Its answers are clear and fairly specific, if somewhat terse. The caster may well appreciate such concise answers, because one of the forty-two symbols inscribed around the doorway during the casting of the incantation fades away with each word the Dweller on the Threshold speaks—and when all the symbols are gone, the Dweller disappears.

If the caster asks the Dweller on the Threshold a question that doesn't involve doors, the Dweller responds with a cutting insult, often about something the caster thought was secret. Each word of the insult likewise makes a symbol disappear from the perimeter of the doorway.

The exact nature of the Dweller on the Threshold is shrouded in mystery. Some contend that it is somehow connected to Vecna, god of secrets, although no one has ever found conclusive evidence that the Dweller on the Threshold is evil.

Option: If the doorway used as the focus is one that the Dweller has been asked about in the past, the caster gains a +4 bonus on the Knowledge (arcana) checks during the incantation. For example, if Mialee uses *call forth the Dweller* to learn about the Gateway to Despair, then when she reaches the Gateway, she can use the Gateway as the focus and gain a +4 bonus when she uses the incantation to ask about the Arches of Certain Doom.

Failure: If the caster fails two consecutive Knowledge (arcana) checks, the Dweller on the Threshold gleefully lies, employing falsehoods that demonstrate its inclination toward mischief and cruelty.

Material Component: Forty-two mystic symbols inscribed around the perimeter of the focus doorway (requiring materials costing 500 gp). As described above, these symbols gradually disappear during the time the incantation is in effect.

Focus: An open doorway large enough to allow a Medium creature to pass through it.

XP Component: 400 XP.

Backlash: After speaking with the Dweller on the Threshold, the caster is exhausted.

Campaign Use: This incantation is an obvious solution for characters who are "stuck" by an especially impenetrable door. The exhaustion backlash makes it less likely they immediately try the door after casting the incantation, and the XP cost ensures that they won't try to use *call forth the Dweller* on every door they face. If you introduce this incantation in your game, you're giving the PCs occasional access to a powerful divination. But because it's rather specific, it doesn't make the characters more powerful. Typically, getting through a door lands PCs in trouble more quickly than if they were unable to pass the portal.

Fires of Dis

Conjuration (Calling)
Effective Level: 6th
Skill Check: Knowledge (arcana) DC 23, 6 successes; Knowledge (religion) DC 23, 2 successes; Knowledge (the planes) DC 23, 1 success
Failure: Death
Components: V, S, M, XP, SC, B

Casting Time: 90 minutes
Range: Touch
Effect: 80-ft.-radius burst centered on caster
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Reflex half (DC 19 + caster's Cha modifier)
Spell Resistance: Yes

This incantation, dreamed up by insane cultists, opens a fell rift between the Material Plane and Dis, the fiery second layer of the Nine Hells. This rift brings about a massive conflagration that destroys almost everything in the immediate area, then releases a powerful devil who capers over the smoldering ruins and begins to rampage across the countryside. The *fires of Dis* ignite everything they touch—except for the caster, who is transported to Dis as the result of the incantation's backlash.

When the incantation is complete, the *fires of Dis* fill an 80-foot-radius spread around the caster's former location, dealing 18d6 points of fire damage (Reflex half) to all creatures and objects. Additionally, everything flammable in that radius is now on fire (as described in Catching on Fire, page 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

In the following round, a pit fiend comes through the rift, which then closes. The creature begins to destroy everything in sight.

Failure: Death of the character who failed the second consecutive skill check.

Material Component: Rare unguents and dark alchemical concoctions worth 5,000 gp.

XP Component: 1,000 XP.

Backlash: The caster is knocked unconscious and transported to Dis (no save).

Extra Casters: Six required; they chant choruses and supplications to various dark deities throughout the incantation.

Campaign Use: Obviously, the backlash component is significant enough that most PCs will not seriously consider casting this incantation. But even a low- to mid-level character has a decent chance of making all the skill checks without failing twice in a row, so the incantation could show up in a campaign in a number of different circumstances. For instance, the PCs may be tipped off that suicidal cultists are trying to bring the *fires of Dis* to their city, and they have to disrupt the incantation. The *fires of Dis* might also have a place in a mystery adventure, where the PCs must discover who stole rare alchemical compounds. A routine investigation takes on new urgency when the PCs find out that the missing vials can be the material component for a *fires of Dis* incantation.

Hrothgar's Journey

Conjuration (Teleportation)
Effective Level: 6th
Skill Check: Knowledge (arcana) DC 20, 2 successes; Perform (oratory) DC 20, 4 successes
Failure: 5d6 points of fire damage to caster
Components: V, S, M, SC, B
Casting Time: 60 minutes
Range: Touch
Target or Targets: Caster plus four to twelve other creatures
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless) (DC 16 + caster's Cha modifier)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

Hrothgar's journey is an incantation based on the tale of Hrothgar, a powerful barbarian hero from ages past. When the poetic epic of Hrothgar is recited in the stifling heat of a sweat lodge during the winter solstice, the orator and his listeners receive the same final reward that Hrothgar did: a one-way trip to Ysgard's plain of Ida, where they can drink and make merry with the greatest warriors of myth.

To cast the incantation, the caster must construct a small, windowless hut in the middle of the forest, then build a bonfire in the hut's center. At least four and up to twelve others accompany the caster into the hut. Then the flames are lit and the telling of the tale of Hrothgar begins.

Because the bonfire is large and the hut is small, the atmosphere inside quickly gets stiflingly hot. This is the incantation's backlash; unlike most backlash components, it affects the incantation's other targets as well as the caster. Any creature inside the hut must make a Fortitude save every 10 minutes or suffer the effects of severe heat (as described in Heat Dangers, page 303 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Just as the tale of Hrothgar approaches its conclusion (near the end of the casting time), the bonfire's flames light the hut on fire, which creates a great deal of smoke but no additional heat or damage. If the final skill check succeeds, the flames consume the hut's roof and walls, revealing the plain of Ida on the plane of Ysgard (see page 158 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

Material Component: A windowless, thatched hut in a forest.

Backlash Component: Severe heat.

Extra Casters: Four required; they provide the dialogue for other characters in the epic of Hrothgar.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: CREATING INCANTATIONS

It's important to realize that this system for creating incantations is meant as a starting point, not the last word. Anytime you apply multiple modifiers to a single DC, the potential for accidental consequences or intentional abuse is there.

To keep incantations under control in your campaign, avoid creating incantations with skill check DCs lower than 20. Furthermore, you should emphasize how much faster, easier, and safer spells are than incantations. Every incantation you create should have at least one component that's difficult for the caster to deal with, such as an XP cost, an expensive material component, or a significant backlash component. Because incantations don't require spell slots—or even spellcasting ability—you need to make sure that characters can't simply cast incantations repeatedly, stopping only to sleep.

Incantations are most effective when they're specific; they should always be more narrowly focused than spells that accomplish similar tasks. The *planar binding* spell, for example, can trap and compel service from any elemental or outsider with 12 HD or less. A comparable incantation, *Xecilgarasp among the bones,* would call one specific bebilith named Xecilgarasp for a specific job: guarding a tomb. If ordered to do anything else, Xecilgarasp attacks the caster instead. And if Xecilgarasp ever dies while guarding a tomb, the incantation is thereafter useless. The *Xecilgarasp among the bones* incantation is just as powerful as the *planar binding* spell in the specific instance it was designed for, but it has limited or no utility beyond that.

Campaign Use: Hrothgar's journey is well within the reach of mid-level PCs, especially bards. Of all the Outer Planes, Ysgard is perhaps the most hospitable to PCs and the easiest to work into an ongoing campaign, so the incantation may be a good way to whet the players' appetite for planar travel without opening up the entire cosmology. In the hands of NPCs, *Hrothgar's journey* can be an escape route for the barbarian raiders the characters have been chasing for months. Or a mischievous NPC bard can beckon the PCs into a warm hut on a cold winter's night, promising them a wondrous reward if they just listen to a tale. . . .

CREATING NEW INCANTATIONS

Making unique incantations for your campaign is a tricky balancing act. Incantations are intentionally constructed to be much more idiosyncratic than spells are. And because incantations hinge on skill checks, it's possible for a character to get access to powerful magic before he—or the campaign—is ready for it. The following guidelines will help you balance the benefit of an incantation with its negative aspects, and also determine how difficult the incantation is to cast.

1. Determine School: When you design an incantation, first decide which school or schools the incantation would fit into if it were a spell. Each school has a specific DC, which serves as the base skill check DC for the incantation you're designing. Consult the descriptions of the schools of magic in Chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook* if you aren't sure which school an incantation should belong to. If you're designing an incantation that could qualify for more than one school, choose the most important one to provide the base DC. Other schools add one-third their DC to the total. For example, the *fires of Dis* incantation has conjuration as its most important school (because of the pit fiend it calls) and evocation as a second school (because of the fiery burst it creates). Thus, the *fires of Dis* incantation has a base DC of 41 (30 + 11) for all skill checks made during its casting.

Each summary below specifies the range, target, duration, and other aspects of an incantation associated with a particular school.

Abjuration: DC 32; Range: Close; Target: One or more creatures, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart; Duration: Minutes; Saving Throw: Will negates; Spell Resistance: Yes.

Conjuration: DC 30; Range: Close; Target: One creature; Duration: Hours (Instantaneous for teleportation subschool); Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless); Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless).

Divination: DC 30; Range: Long; Target: Personal; Duration: Minutes; Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: No.

Enchantment: DC 32; Range: Close; Target: One living creature; Duration: Minutes; Saving Throw: Will negates; Spell Resistance: Yes.

Evocation: DC 34; Range: Medium; Area: 5-ft.-wide bolt or 20-ft.-radius burst; Duration: Instantaneous; Saving Throw: Reflex half; Spell Resistance: Yes.

Illusion: DC 32; Range: Touch; Target: One living creature or 20 cu. ft. of matter; Duration: Minutes; Saving Throw: Will disbelief; Spell Resistance: No.

Necromancy: DC 34; Range: Close; Target: One or more creatures or corpses; Duration: Instantaneous; Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: No.

Transmutation: DC 32; Range: Medium; Target: One creature or 20 cu. ft. of matter; Duration: Rounds; Saving Throw: Fortitude half (often harmless); Spell Resistance: Yes.

2. Modify DC: Next, determine modifications to the base DC based on the specifics of your ritual; see the table below for a list of general factors and how they change the skill check DC. Increasing the base range of an incantation, for example, is a factor that increases the DC. Reducing the duration of an incantation, on the other hand, is a factor that reduces the DC.

General Factors for Incantations

Factor	Check DC Modifier
Skill Checks	
Requires checks involving more than one skill	–1
Requires a skill not on wizard class skill list	–1
Casting Time	
1 hour between checks	–1
Casting time is restricted (only during full moon, for example)	–4
Casting time is severely restricted (only during lunar eclipse, for example)	–8
Range	
Touch to close/close to touch	+2/–2
Close to medium/medium to close	+2/–2
Medium to long/long to medium	+2/–2
Area	
Doubling area/halving area	+3/–3
Target	
Unwilling target must be helpless	–2
Limited targets (by HD, creature type, and so on)	–3
Single target to multiple targets	+4
Duration	
Rounds to minutes/minutes to rounds	+2/–2
Minutes to hours/hours to minutes	+4/–2
Hours to days/days to hours	+6/–2
Days to permanent or instantaneous/permanent or instantaneous to days	+10/–4
Focus and Material Components	
Expensive material component (500 gp)	–1
Expensive material component (5,000 gp)	–2
Expensive material component (25,000 gp)	–4
Expensive focus (5,000 gp)	–1
Expensive focus (25,000 gp)	–2
XP Component	
Per 100 XP (max 1,000 XP)	–1
Extra Casters	
10 or fewer secondary casters	–2
11–100 secondary casters	–6
101 or more secondary casters	–10
Backlash	
Per 2d6 points of damage	–1
Caster is exhausted	–2
Per negative level caster gains	–2
Caster reduced to –1 hp	–3
Caster infected with disease	–4
Backlash affects secondary casters too	–1

3. Set Level: Finally, set the effective level of the incantation. Incantations are like 6th- through 9th-level spells, so you can set the effective level of the incantation by comparing what the incantation does to what spells of that level can accomplish. The effective level determines a number of aspects of the incantation: how many total successes are required, the exact save DC of the incantation, and sometimes the incantation's precise range and duration.

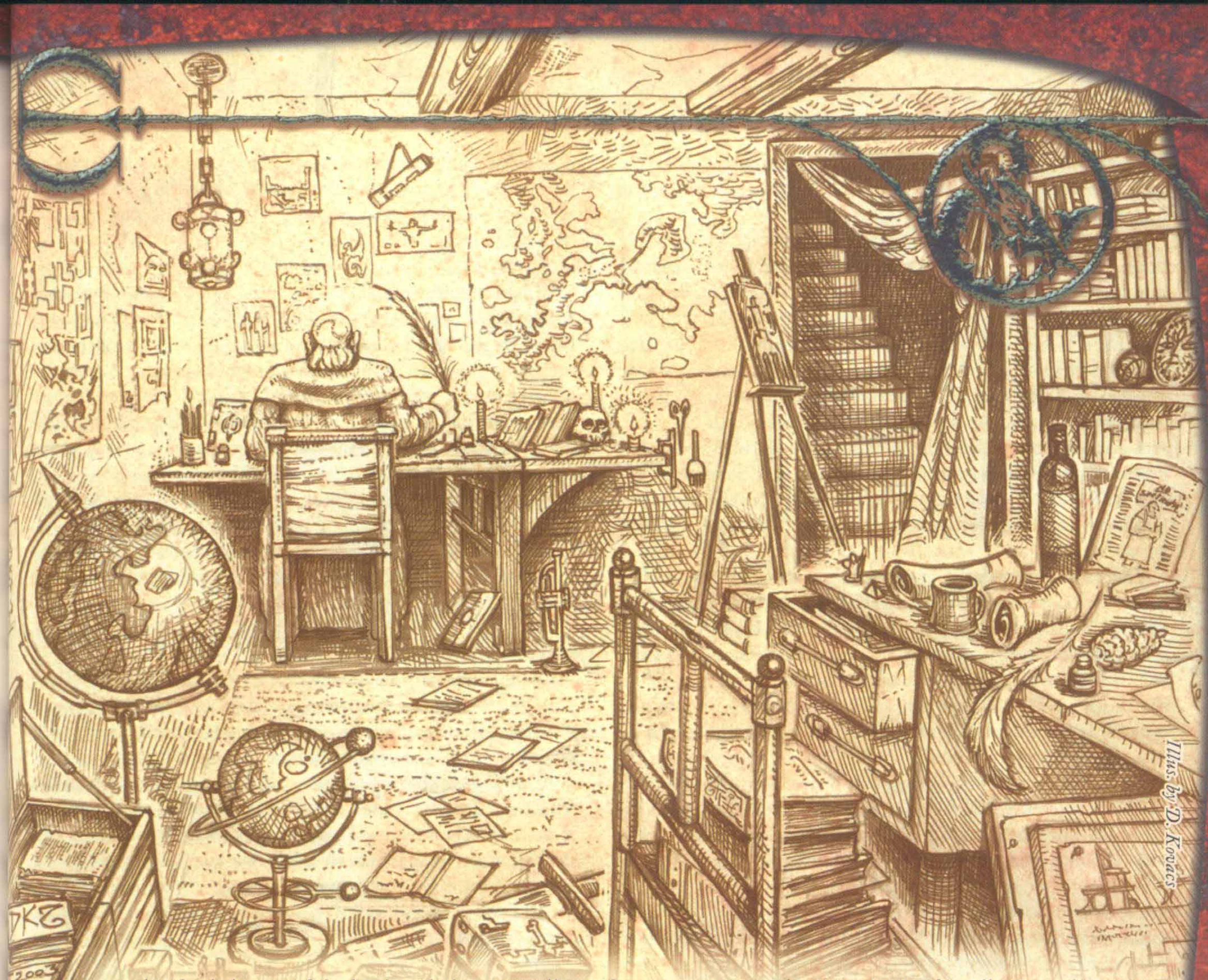
Total Successes: Equal to the incantation's effective level.

Save DC: 10 + incantation's effective level + caster's Cha modifier.

Duration and Range: Assume a caster level of twice the incantation's level, using the same formula a spell would. For example, an incantation with a duration of "minutes" would last 12 minutes if it's effectively a 6th-level spell. The same incantation with a range of medium can affect a target up to 220 feet away.

CAMPAIGNS

CHAPTER SIX



Illus. by D. Kovacs

This final chapter of the book includes a miscellany of variant rules and subsystems that affect the way a campaign works. These variants don't change individual characters or tactics, but instead represent shifts in either the way the world works—such as the rules for honor, taint, or sanity—or how the game handles certain behind-the-scenes elements (such as experience points).

As wide-reaching effects, these variants each have the ability to change your game in ways both dramatic and subtle. Many suggest new options for character classes, feats, spells, magic items, and other modular elements of the game. If you include one of more of these variants, consider supplementing it with options for the characters to more fully interact with the variant rule(s). For instance, the reputation rules lend themselves to the creation of feats, spells, and magic items that enhance or detract from an individual's reputation score; you can either design these yourself or work with your players to come up with interesting options.

CONTACTS

This system codifies a phenomenon commonplace in most long-term campaigns: the friendly bartender, gruff weaponsmith, or absentminded sage who points the PCs in the right direction, passes along important clues, or offers unusual skills and knowledge.

With this variant, the PCs have one or more unnamed contacts marked on their character sheets for later use. A player can define a contact for his character at any point during the game, giving the PC access to a friendly NPC. This variant is particularly appropriate in campaigns that feature mysteries, intrigue, and lots of character interaction. It's especially effective in the hands of a DM who doesn't mind improvising new NPCs on the spur of the moment.

For example, when a character needs an inscription translated from the Pranatese language, an invitation to the Lord's Pageant, or the services of a master in Craft (gemcutting), the player tells the DM that he wants to define one of his character's contacts for the purpose. Then the DM describes how the contact came about, from the character's point of view: "You buy your lute strings from Otto Garrelbench, who is the husband of a Pranatese woman, Ku'vatha. She remembers you as one of the musicians who performed at their wedding feast, and is happy to do you a favor." In game terms, Ku'vatha has a friendly attitude toward the PC that continues unless the character does something to change the relationship. She is willing to translate the inscription, and she may perform a similar service on other occasions as time goes on. The player notes on the character sheet that one of his character's contacts has been defined as Ku'vatha Garrelbench, a speaker and writer of the Pranatese language.

NPCs AND CONTACTS

While all defined contacts are friendly NPCs, that doesn't mean that all friendly NPCs are defined contacts. The contact variant is intended to supplement,

not replace, other social interactions with noncombatant NPCs. It gives a player a chance to insert a minor character into the ongoing drama.

Defined contacts should be among the campaign's most stable characters. Unless the characters are completely obtuse or have remarkable misfortune, the minor characters they define as contacts aren't going anywhere. They're generally available wherever they happen to live, and they usually have the time and inclination to help their friend the PC. Major NPC characters—those defined entirely by the DM—are off limits as contacts. A player can't just say, "I want to define the queen as a contact."

A contact won't risk life or livelihood on the PC's say-so, but a contact makes some sacrifices for a friend. For example, a contact will burn the midnight oil translating an ancient text or sneak the key to the pantry out of the castle (as long as it's back by morning).

There's an inverse relationship between the contact's importance in the ongoing campaign and the amount of help she can provide. In other words, if you choose the mayor as your contact, sometimes he's too busy to see you at a moment's notice, but he's very helpful when you get an audience. Beppo the cobbler, on the other hand, practically lives in his shop on Water Street—making him available day or night—but the ways in which he can aid you are more limited.

TYPES OF CONTACTS

Contacts come in three varieties: information contacts, influence contacts, and skill contacts.

Information Contacts

Information contacts are useful for what they know. They're the ones who hear all the rumors—and they can discern which ones are true. Some just have an uncanny sense of what's going on in their neighborhood or town, such as the grumpy bartender, the talkative fruit merchant, and the watch captain who has seen it all. Other information contacts have more focused interests, such as the army sergeant who knows all about troop movements, the fence who is privy to every major theft in the city, or the scribe assigned to write down every utterance of the high cleric-prophets.

An information contact is generally a commoner or an expert with one-third the class levels of his PC friend. It's okay to give such a character a few levels in another class such as wizard, rogue, or fighter if it's reasonable for someone in the contact's position to have this experience. Most information contacts spend their skill points on interaction skills such as Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Sense Motive.

Influence Contacts

Influence contacts are useful because of who they know or who they are associated with. While a player can't define the queen as his character's contact, he can define one of her chambermaids as a contact. The maid doesn't have a broad store of information, and she doesn't have any skills the PCs might need. But she might be able to put in a good word with the queen, and she can certainly make introductions between the PC and the rest of the queen's domestic staff. The purpose of an influence contact is to enable and smooth talks with more important, but less friendly, NPCs.

An influence contact has one-quarter the class levels of his PC friend, almost always in an NPC class (adept, aristocrat, commoner, expert, or warrior) unless the character is in an environment such as a wizard's academy where almost everyone has specific class levels.

Skill Contacts

Skill contacts are useful for what they do. Some skills—especially categories of Craft, Profession, and Knowledge—are rarely possessed by PCs. Skill contacts have those skills in abundance, so they're useful when characters need a smith to repair a lance, an honest broker to appraise a giant pearl, or a herald who can identify the helmed knight displaying a two-headed wyvern on her standard. A special category of the skill contact is the linguist, who can tell you what "Bree-Yark!" means in Goblin.

A skill contact is generally an expert with half as many levels as his PC friend. He has maximum ranks in the skill he is best at, and his highest ability score is in the key ability for the skill in question. A skill contact always has the Skill Focus feat related to his field of specialty.

OBTAINING CONTACTS

Player characters automatically gain contacts as they rise in level; see Table 6–1, below. When a PC obtains a new potential contact, he must select what type of contact it is (information, influence, or skill), but doesn't define it further until it's needed.

A multiclass character gains contacts according to his class level in each of his classes, regardless of what his character level is. For example, a 3rd-level bard/2nd-level barbarian gains a new contact when he reaches 6th level if he takes 4th level in bard, but not if he takes 3rd level in barbarian.

TABLE 6–1: CONTACTS

Level	A[1]	B[2]	C[3]	D[4]
1st	—	—	—	—
2nd	1st	—	—	—
3rd	—	1st	—	—
4th	2nd	—	1st	—
5th	—	—	—	1st
6th	3rd	2nd	—	—
7th	—	—	—	—
8th	4th	—	2nd	—
9th	—	3rd	—	—
10th	5th	—	—	2nd
11th	—	—	—	—
12th	6th	4th	3rd	—
13th	—	—	—	—
14th	7th	—	—	—
15th	—	5th	—	3rd
16th	8th	—	4th	—
17th	—	—	—	—
18th	9th	6th	—	—
19th	—	—	—	—
20th	10th	—	5th	4th

1 Use column A for bard levels.
2 Use column B for cleric, paladin, and rogue levels.
3 Use column C for fighter and sorcerer levels.
4 Use column D for barbarian, druid, monk, ranger, and wizard levels.

REPUTATION

In this system, every character gains a reputation of one sort or another as his career progresses, expressed as a reputation bonus. While a character might try to take advantage of his

reputation from time to time, usually the character's reputation precedes him—whether he wants it to or not.

Reputation enhances noncombat interaction between characters by providing bonuses to certain skill checks. Those who recognize a character are more likely to help him or to do what he asks, provided the character's reputation is a positive influence on the NPC or monster that recognizes him. A high reputation bonus makes it difficult for a character to mask his identity, which can be a problem if he's trying not to be noticed.

FAME OR INFAMY

What a character's reputation represents lies in the character's interaction with the NPCs or monsters. Most characters with a high reputation bonus (+4 or higher) are considered well known within their profession or social circle. Whether this notoriety has a positive or negative effect depends on the point of view of the person who recognizes the character.

Nom de Plumes and Secret Identities

If a character successfully uses the Disguise skill or illusion magic to mask his identity, then what he accomplishes while disguised doesn't affect his reputation score for good or ill.

A character may adopt a nom de plume (as Robin Hood did) or wear a mask or other costume (as Zorro did) during his adventures. If so, the character tracks reputation separately for his true identity and his alter ego (much as comic-book heroes do). If the Crimson Cavalier needs to sneak out of town after embarrassing the captain of the guard, what better way to do so than by simply removing his mask, hiding his weapons in an oxcart, and departing while in his secret identity of Beppo the Dung-Merchant?

REPUTATION CHECKS

Most of the time, a character doesn't decide to use his reputation. The DM decides when a character's reputation is relevant to a scene or encounter. At the moment it becomes pertinent, the DM makes a reputation check for an NPC or monster that might be influenced in some fashion due to the character's notoriety.

A reputation check is equal to 1d20 + the character's reputation bonus + the NPC or monster's Int modifier. The DM may substitute a Knowledge skill bonus for the Int modifier if he decides the character's past activities apply to a particular field. For example, if the character were a cleric, Knowledge (religion) might be appropriate. Additional modifiers that might apply include the following.

Character is famous, known far and wide with either a positive or negative connotation	+10
NPC or monster is part of character's profession or social circle	+5
Character has some small amount of fame or notoriety	+2

The standard DC of a reputation check is 25. If the NPC or monster succeeds on the reputation check, he or she recognizes the character. That recognition grants a bonus, or penalty, on certain subsequent skill checks, depending on how the NPC or monster reacts to the character.

SKILL CHECKS

When an NPC or monster with an Intelligence score of 5 or higher has a positive opinion of a character's reputation, the character gains a bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, Gather Information, and Perform checks equal to his reputation bonus.

When an NPC or monster with an Intelligence score of 5 or higher has a negative opinion of a character's reputation, the character gains a penalty on Bluff and Intimidate checks equal to his reputation bonus.

The bonus or penalty on these skill checks applies only when a character is interacting with an NPC or monster that recognizes the character. Others present in the encounter are unaffected by the character's reputation.

Illus. by R. Spencer

NPC REPUTATIONS

Players decide how their characters act. Sometimes, however, it's appropriate for a DM to call for a skill check using an interaction skill affected by reputation. For example, an NPC might use Bluff to lie to player characters who, in turn, use Sense Motive to detect the lie. If an NPC tries to intimidate a player character, the DM can use the NPC's Intimidate check to determine which characters see the NPC as intimidating and which don't. Similarly, a Diplomacy check can tell the DM which characters find an NPC persuasive and which do not. At other times, players may want to know if their characters recognize a particular NPC or monster. A reputation check can help DMs in these situations.

The reputation check to see if a player character recognizes an NPC or monster is the same as described above. However, the DM should make the skill check privately and keep the actual result secret. Doing this prevents players from using reputation checks as a form of radar for measuring the importance of every NPC they encounter.

Modify the results of NPCs' and monsters' interaction skill checks by their reputation bonuses when they interact with characters who recognize them.

CALCULATING REPUTATION

A player character has a reputation score based on his class levels; Table 6–2, below, summarizes this information for the eleven character classes in the *Player's Handbook* and the five NPC classes from the *Dungeon Master's Guide*.

A multiclass character has a reputation score according to his class level in each of his classes, regardless of what his character level is. For example, an 8th-level barbarian/6th-level cleric has a reputation score of +3 (+2 from his barbarian levels, +1 from his cleric levels). His score increases to +4 when he reaches 15th level if he takes 7th level in cleric, but not if he takes 9th level in barbarian.

For a class not mentioned on this table, determine the associated reputation score by assigning the class to a column with classes of a similar sort. (For instance, the assassin class probably has the same reputation score as the rogue, and the blackguard would be equivalent to the paladin.)

Table 6–2: Reputation Scores

Level	A[1]	B[2]	C[3]	D[4]
1st	+0	+0	+0	+1
2nd	+0	+0	+0	+1
3rd	+0	+0	+1	+1
4th	+0	+1	+1	+1
5th	+1	+1	+1	+2
6th	+1	+1	+1	+2
7th	+1	+1	+2	+2
8th	+1	+2	+2	+2
9th	+2	+2	+2	+3
10th	+2	+2	+2	+3
11th	+2	+2	+3	+3
12th	+2	+3	+3	+3
13th	+3	+3	+3	+4
14th	+3	+3	+3	+4
15th	+3	+3	+4	+4
16th	+3	+4	+4	+4
17th	+4	+4	+4	+5
18th	+4	+4	+4	+5
19th	+4	+4	+5	+5
20th	+4	+5	+5	+5

1 Use column A for commoner levels.
2 Use column B for barbarian, druid, monk, ranger, rogue, and warrior levels.
3 Use column C for cleric, fighter, sorcerer, wizard, adept, and expert levels.
4 Use column D for bard, paladin, and aristocrat levels.

REPUTATION-BASED FEATS

The following feats can modify reputation bonuses.

Low Profile (General)

You are less famous than others of your class and level, or you wish to maintain a less visible presence than others of your station.

Benefit: Reduce your reputation bonus by 3 points.

Special: You can't select both the Low Profile feat and the Renown feat. You're either famous or you're not.

Renown (General)

You have a better chance of being recognized.

Benefit: Increase your reputation bonus by 3 points.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: WHO'S AFFECTED BY REPUTATION?

Hard and fast rules for how far a character's reputation spreads are more trouble than they're worth; whether reputation applies in any situation is best left up to the DM. But in general, the "radius" of a character's reputation slowly increases as she attains higher levels.

For example, a low-level character's reputation score might apply only in her small town and the immediate surrounding countryside. Perhaps, by the time she reaches around 10th level, everyone in the province might have heard of her exploits. When she gets to 15th level or thereabouts, anyone in the country or region might know of her.

But what happens if she then visits the planar city of Sigil? She's never been to the place before, and most Sigil residents have never been to the Material Plane, so her reputation doesn't follow her there. But once she accomplishes something (often an adventure) that earns her a measure of fame in Sigil, her reputation "radius" expands to encompass that city. Not only do Sigil residents tell tales of her most recent adventure, some might be curious enough to find out what she accomplished on the Material Plane before coming to the City of Doors.

With the event-based reputation variant, a character who is a newcomer to her location has a reputation score of 0 until she earns at least a 1/2-point increase by succeeding on an adventure in that location. Once she has done so, she gains the benefit of her full reputation score. (Don't track a character's reputation separately for different areas—people have either heard of her, or they haven't.)

When using level-based reputation increases, a character is entitled to benefit from her full reputation score once she has been in her new location for at least one level's worth of adventuring, even if the adventures themselves didn't bring her any reputation increases.

Special: You can't select both the Low Profile feat and the Renown feat. You're either famous or you're not.

EVENT-BASED REPUTATION

Rather than determining reputation increases purely by class levels, the DM can enhance characters' reputations based on the characters' actual adventures. At an adventure's conclusion, he can hand out awards to the characters who were known to have participated, representing how much more famous (or infamous) their recent actions have made them.

This variant doesn't change much about the game (beyond what the reputation variant does in general). Characters have a slight incentive to choose adventures that earn them more fame, because their later social interactions will be more likely to succeed. But reputation is a double-edged sword in the D&D game, because it can turn into notoriety with a simple twist of the plot. The same peasants who buy the PCs drinks at the tavern one night might try to turn them in for a reward a week later after the sheriff frames the PCs for murder.

If the characters earned public acclaim for ending a threat to the community's safety, award each PC a 1-point increase in his or her reputation score at the adventure's conclusion. If the accolades came from a narrower circle of people, such as the merchants of Gilburton or the druids of Deepwood, then each character gets a 1/2-point increase. (A single 1/2-point increase has no effect on reputation-related skill checks, but two such increases combine to provide a full 1-point increase.) If what the characters accomplished in the adventure directly affected, or came to the attention of, only a few (or no) other people, the PCs don't get a reputation boost.

This determination is obviously a judgment call. For guidance, the DM can consult the following lists of adventure ideas (the same ones mentioned on pages 44–45 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*), organized according to how much effect the successful completion of the adventure would have on the PCs' reputation scores. If the adventure situation in your game is similar to a particular idea on the list, then the possible reputation award should be similar as well. (To generate an adventure idea randomly from these lists, roll d% and consult the appropriate entry.)

1 Reputation Point if Handled Successfully

d%	Adventure Idea
01	Thieves steal the crown jewels.
02	A wizard's guild challenges the ruling council.
03	Racial tensions rise between humans and elves.
04	Two orc tribes wage a bloody war.
05	A nearby kingdom launches an invasion.
06	A prophecy foretells of coming doom unless an artifact is recovered.
07	Sahuagin are being driven out of the sea to attack coastal villages.
08	An antidote to a magic poison must be found before the duke dies.
09	A recently recovered artifact causes arcane spellcasters' powers to go awry.
10	An evil tyrant outlaws nonofficially sanctioned magic use.
11	All the dwarves in an underground city have disappeared.
12	A kingdom known for its wizards prepares for war.
13	At the eye of the storm that tears across the land a massive citadel floats.
14	A major city faces a siege by a force of humans, duergar, and gnolls.

1/2 Reputation Point if Handled Successfully

d%	Adventure Idea
15	A dragon flies into a town and demands tribute.
16	Wealthy merchants are being killed in their homes.
17	The statue in the town square is found to be a petrified paladin.
18	Cultists are kidnapping potential sacrifices.
19	Goblins riding spider eaters have been attacking the outskirts of a town.
20	Local bandits joined forces with a tribe of bugbears.
21	A blackguard organizes monsters in an area.
22	Miners have accidentally released something awful that once was buried deep.
23	A mysterious fog brings ghosts into town.
24	Slavers continue to raid a local community.
25	A fire elemental escapes from a wizard's lab.
26	Bugbears demand a toll on a well-traveled bridge.
27	Two well-known heroes fight a duel.
28	An ancient sword must be recovered to defeat a ravaging monster.
29	Ogres kidnap the mayor's daughter.
30	A shapechanged mind flayer is gathering mentally controlled servitors.
31	A plague brought by wererats threatens a community.
32	Gravediggers discover a huge, ghoul-filled catacomb under the cemetery.
33	Various monsters have long preyed upon people from within the sewers of a major city.
34	Vampires prey upon a small town.
35	Barbarians begin tearing up a village in a violent rage.
36	Giants steal cattle from local farmers.

Illus. by R. Sardinha

37	Unexplained snowstorms bring winter wolves into an otherwise peaceful area.
38	Evil mercenaries begin constructing a fortress not far from a community.
39	An ancient curse turns innocent people into evil murderers.
40	Mysterious merchants sell faulty magic items in town and then attempt to slink away.
41	An evil noble puts a price on a good noble's head.
42	Colossal vermin stray out of the desert to attack settlements.
43	A community of gnomes builds a flying ship.
44	Thieves steal a great treasure and flee into *Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion*.
45	The high priest is an illusion.
46	A bulette is tearing apart viable farmland.
47	A infestation of stirges drives yuan-ti closer to civilized lands.
48	A huge fire of mysterious origin threatens treants in the woods.
49	Evil nobles create an adventurers' guild to monitor and control adventurers.
50	Suddenly, all the doors in the king's castle are warded with *arcane lock* and *fire trap*.
51	A certain type of frog, found only in an isolated valley, fall like rain on a major city.
52	Barge pirates make a deal with a covey of hags and exact a high toll to use the river.

0 Reputation Points if Handled Successfully

d%	Adventure Idea
53	The tomb of an old wizard has been discovered.
54	A caravan of important goods is about to leave for a trip through a dangerous area.
55	A gate to the Lower Planes threatens to bring more demons to the world.
56	The holy symbol of a high priest is missing.
57	An evil wizard has developed a new type of golem.
58	Someone in town is a werewolf.
59	A *mirror of opposition* created an evil duplicate of a hero.
60	New construction reveals a previously unknown underground tomb.
61	A wizard is buried in a trap-filled tomb with her powerful magic items.
62	An enchanter compels others to steal for him.
63	The keys to disarming all the magic traps in a wizard's tower disappeared.
64	A wizard needs a particularly rare spell component found only in the deep jungle.
65	A map showing the location of an ancient magic forge is discovered.
66	An emissary going into a hostile kingdom needs an escort.
67	A haunted tower is reputed to be filled with treasure.
68	A lonely mountain pass is guarded by a powerful sphinx denying all passage.
69	A druid needs help defending her grove against goblins.
70	Gargoyles are killing giant eagles in the mountains.
71	Adventurers exploring a dungeon have not returned in a week.
72	The funeral for a good fighter is disrupted by enemies he made while alive.
73	A huge dire wolf, apparently immune to magic, organizes the wolves in the wood.
74	An island at the center of the lake is actually the top of a strange, submerged fortress.
75	Buried below the Tree of the World lies the Master Clock of Time.
76	A child wanders into a vast necropolis, and dusk nears.
77	A strange green smoke billows out of a cave near a mysterious ruin.
78	Mysterious groaning sounds come from a haunted wood at night.
79	A sorcerer attempts to travel ethereally but disappears completely in the process.
80	A paladin's quest for atonement leads her to a troll lair too well defended for her to tackle alone.
81	A new noble seeks to clear a patch of wilderness of all monsters.
82	Clerics resurrect a long-dead hero only to discover she's not what they thought.
83	A sorrowful bard tells a tavern tale of his imprisoned companions.
84	A halfling caravan must pass through an ankheg-infested wilderness.
85	An innocent man, about to be hanged, pleads for someone to help him.
86	The tomb of a powerful wizard, filled with magic items, has sunk into the swamp.
87	Someone is sabotaging wagons and carts to come apart when they travel at high speed.
88	A jealous rival threatens to stop a well-attended wedding.
89	A woman who mysteriously vanished years ago is seen walking on the surface of a lake.
90	An earthquake uncovers a previously unknown dungeon.
91	A wronged half-elf needs a champion to fight for her in a gladiatorial trial.
92	People grow suspicious of half-orc merchants peddling gold dragon parts in the market.
93	Undead shadows vex a large library, especially an old storeroom long left undisturbed.
94	An absentminded wizard lets her *rod of wonder* fall into the wrong hands.
95	The door into an abandoned house in the middle of town turns out to be a magic portal.
96	Two parts of a magic item are in the hands of bitter enemies; the third piece is lost.
97	A clutch of wyverns preys upon shepherds as well as sheep.
98	Evil clerics gather in secret to summon a monstrous god to the world.
99	A huge gemstone supposedly lies within an ancient ruined monastery.
100	Lizardfolk riding dragon turtles sell their services as mercenaries to the highest bidder.

From the above lists, it's clear that site-based adventures in which the PCs function as explorers don't usually earn reputation awards. Few people care that four brave people cleared a grown-over ziggurat full of monsters, because they probably didn't know about the ziggurat out in the wilderness to begin with, much less that it was full of monsters.

Adventures that affect only a few people likewise don't earn reputation awards, unless the people in question are themselves celebrities. But adventures that affect an entire town or small region are worth 1/2 point, and adventures that affect a large city or nation are worth a full 1 point.

The nature of the danger that is overcome is important, too. Merely annoying or mysterious dangers, such as green

Illus. by W. England

smoke coming from a cave (entry 77 on the list above) or a series of sabotaged wagons (entry 87), don't enhance PC reputations as much as dangers that create widespread panic and mayhem.

Also, regardless of the severity of the danger, if those who benefited from the PCs' success weren't aware of the peril from which the PCs saved them, then the characters' reputation award is 1/2 point apiece at best.

HONOR

Honor is a measuring stick that reflects a person's worth in society, trustworthiness, decency, and loyalty.

Honor can be used as a tool, similar to alignment, for defining characters. In the extreme case, it can replace alignment. A game that defines a character's outlook based on his honor rather than his alignment can still feature conflicts between good and evil, or law and chaos; however these concepts are ideals rather than phenomena detectable by spells.

You may choose to use honor as an actual game mechanic, tracking numbers that change according to the characters' individual accomplishments. Alternatively, you may choose to avoid mechanics, just as the alignment system in the *Player's Handbook* avoids them.

Using honor in your game requires a campaign with understood codes of behavior. Individuals who act within the proper code are considered honorable by others. Those who act outside their code are considered dishonorable, and not to be trusted. As the DM, you are responsible for creating these codes of honor. Several examples appear later in this section.

MECHANICAL HONOR

This system proposes a way to determine a starting honor score for each character, and how a character's actions affect his honor score thereafter.

Starting Honor

A character's alignment determines his starting honor score, with lawful alignments tending to have higher scores than chaotic or neutral, and good alignments tending to have higher scores than evil or neutral.

Alignment	Starting Honor Score
Lawful good	25
Neutral good	20
Chaotic good	15
Lawful neutral	20
Neutral	10
Chaotic neutral	5
Lawful evil	15
Neutral evil	5
Chaotic evil	0

Modifiers	
Ancestral hero[1]	+2
Ancestral failure[2]	–2

1 A hero among one's ancestors could be a successful merchant, a creator of spells or items, a victorious leader, the founder of a thriving community, someone god-touched, or someone who was the focus of a great prophecy.
2 A failure among one's ancestors could be an unsuccessful merchant, the founder of a failed community, a defeated leader, a traitor, a rebel, an exile, a villain, or someone who was the focus of an evil prophecy.

Earning Honor

Honor comes from action, not inaction. While a character can lose honor by not acting, he cannot gain honor by refusing to act. Actions that increase one's honor score vary, depending on the individual character's code (see Sample Codes of Honor, below). Some examples of actions and their impact on a character's honor score appear below.

Action	Increase in Honor Score
Acquiring property	+1
Avenging murder of family member	+5
Completing an assigned task	+3
Completing a great deed	+5
Defeating an archenemy	+2
Defeating a superior opponent of the same class	+1
Defeating monsters	+1/CR above character level
Escaping prison	+5
Fulfilling an oath	+2
Fulfilling a family debt	+7
Giving a valuable gift to an NPC	+1
Granting a favor to an NPC	+1
Healing, curing, or restoring NPCs	+1
Heroic death	+10
Leading a force to victory	+5
Making a masterwork item	+1
Saving the life of another at the risk of the character's life	+5
Serving a powerful person	+2
Pulling a humiliating prank on an enemy	+1
Removing a curse	+1
Showing mercy to the fallen	+1
Winning a contest	+1

Losing Honor

Depending on the character's code of honor, dishonorable actions—those that reduce one's honor score—may include any of the examples below.

Action	Decrease in Honor Score
Accused of a crime	–4
Banished	–5
Breaking an oath	–4
Convicted of a crime	–10
Failing an assigned task	–3
Killing unarmed or helpless foes	–5
Losing a contest	–1
Losing a masterwork or magic item	–1
Losing to an inferior opponent of the same class	–2
Murder of a family member	–3
Overindulgence in food or drink	–2
Ownership of a dishonorable weapon or item	–4
Rash or improper social behavior	–2
Refusing a contest	–2
Refusing your master	–3
Requesting a favor	–2
Taken prisoner	–10
Taking a bribe	–1
Treason	–30

Benefits of Honor

It is important to remember that the benefits of honor only apply when interacting with someone who shares the same or similar honor code. Refer to the following table, using the row that relates to your honor score, when you interact with someone of that sort.

When an honorable paladin interacts with an assassin or rogue, no matter how honorable, the benefits change to penalties.

Honor Score	Effect
Honor –1 to –4	A +2 circumstance bonus on Bluff checks when the target is behaving honorably.
Honor –5 to –9	The previous effect and a –1 penalty on Will saves when the consequence of failing the save would bring dishonor on the character.
Honor –10 to –19	The previous two effects and a +2 circumstance bonus on Intimidate checks.
Honor –20 or less	The previous three effects and a –2 Leadership score modifier for cruelty (see page 106 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).
Honor 0	No benefit or penalty.
Honor +1 to +4	A +2 circumstance bonus on Sense Motive checks when the target is behaving dishonorably.
Honor +5 to +9	Previous benefit and a +1 circumstance bonus on Will saves when the consequence of failing the save would bring dishonor on the character.
Honor +10 to +19	Previous two benefits and a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy checks.
Honor +20 or more	Previous three benefits and a +2 Leadership score modifier for great renown (see page 106 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).

FREE-FORM HONOR

Here are some guidelines for determining a character's honor according to the character's actions or according to alignment.

Measuring Free-Form Honor

No game mechanic measures or tracks a character's honor in this system, just as no game mechanic measures or tracks a character's alignment. Honor functions as a tool for developing a character's identity, not as a straitjacket. As part of creating a character, a player should decide whether he intends to play the character as a paragon of virtue, a dishonorable scoundrel, or something in between—perhaps someone who struggles to live honorably but too often succumbs to temptation. As a general guideline, consider these five "ranks" of honor.

Honorless: An honorless character does not adhere to any code, and mocks such codes as irrelevant ideals. Such a character cannot be trusted, for betrayal comes as naturally to this person as breathing. An honorless character is usually both chaotic and evil.

Untrustworthy: Codes are an inconvenience to untrustworthy characters, who see them as tools best used to manipulate others. Such a person would betray almost anyone in the right circumstances, but can usually be relied on to come to the aid of his guild, clan, club, or other association. With self-interest taking precedence above all, such characters are usually chaotic or neutral, and often evil.

Honorable in Action: A character may act according to a code of honor even though his heart and mind are not in it. Subordinating one's own interests to those of a group is difficult for

such a character, and living up to the ideals of his code is a constant struggle. With each successful bout against temptation, however, the character's resolve grows stronger. This minimum standard of honor usually represents a neutral alignment, with leanings toward law.

Honorable in Thought: A highly honorable character does not doubt his code or its demands. Such a person, while not free from temptation, easily overcomes it. The difficulty comes when the character is forced to bend rules, however slightly—because doing this is a challenge for the highly honorable character. Such characters are usually lawful neutral.

Honorable in Soul: A paragon of honor cannot be swayed from the call of duty to family, clan, guild, or other association. To even question the honor of such a character is unthinkable. Characters so immersed in honor are selfless, completely devoted to their association, and willing to give up their lives for the safety and security of others. They are usually lawful neutral or lawful good.

Benefits of Honor

Under a free-form system, the DM must determine how much a character benefits from honor. A character who is honorable in soul should benefit more than an untrustworthy or honorless character, for example. Someone with an opposing code of honor reacts differently to a character than one with a similar code.

Potential benefits of honor include the following.

- A +1 Leadership score modifier for fairness and generosity (see page 106 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*).
- A +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy checks.
- A +2 circumstance bonus on Sense Motive checks when the target is behaving dishonorably.
- A +1 circumstance bonus on Will saves when the consequence of failing the save would bring dishonor on the character.

At the DM's discretion, other known associates of a character with a reputation for honorable behavior may also receive the bonus.

If you're also using the reputation rules (see the previous section of this chapter), you can apply a bonus on reputation checks based on a character's status as an honorable or dishonorable person.

Illus. by T. Jarvis

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: HONOR AND ALIGNMENT

Lawful neutral and lawful good characters are generally what people think of when they imagine honorable characters. Honor is about obeying a code, either because a character wants to live up to society's expectations for the rewards that doing so provides, or because something inside her compels her to live in accordance with a set of beliefs. Thus, it is possible to be chaotic and still live in a way that society considers honorable.

Good-aligned characters have many reasons to live honorably. Good, as the *Player's Handbook* points out, implies altruism, respect for life, and a concern for the dignity of sentient beings. Such characters are often compelled by their own hearts to live according to an honor code.

Evil is a slightly more complex issue. Lawful evil characters may behave honorably toward their followers and associates because doing so furthers their cause. They may even treat respected foes with honor, while oppressing everyone else. Neutral evil characters are likely only to see honor in treating their associates and followers with fairness and generosity, provided those people are necessary for the neutral evil character's cause. Chaotic evil characters, however, use honor as a way to trick others. While they and their associates may possess no honor of their own, they understand what it is and how to manipulate others through it.

FAMILY HONOR

A common concept in games and fiction that involve honor codes is family honor. The idea is that characters can "inherit" some portion of their family's reputation for honor, or dishonor.

When using family honor under the mechanical system, a character's starting honor score can be affected by several factors related to the family's status (honorable or dishonorable), alignment, and preference for a particular class, as shown below.

Honorable Family	Honor Score Modifier
Same alignment as family	+2
Alignment same as family's in one dimension	+1
Class favored by family	+1
Alignment opposed in one dimension	–1
Alignment opposed in two dimensions	–2
Class opposed to family	–1

Dishonorable Family	Honor Score Modifier
Same alignment as family	–2
Alignment same as family's in one dimension	–1
Class favored by family	–1
Alignment opposed in one dimension	+1
Alignment opposed in two dimensions	+2
Class opposed to family	+1

For example, Regdar comes from an honorable family and a long line of fighters. Since he is also a fighter, his starting honor score gets a +1 increase. His alignment is the same as that of the majority of his family members, so his starting honor score gets an additional +2 increase.

Hero Builder's Guidebook contains five tables in the section titled Creating Your Personal History that have information useful in a mechanical honor system. They are Table 6: Family Private Ethics, Table 7: Family Public Ethics, Table 8: Family Religious Commitment, Table 9: Family Reputation, and Table 10: Family Political Views. These family characteristics, if used in the game, affect a character's starting honor score as shown below.

	Honor Score Modifier
Family's public reputation beneath contempt	–2
and private ethics untrustworthy or evil	–2
Family's public reputation beyond reproach	+2
and private ethics fair or good	+2
Family's public reputation undeserved	
and private ethics fair or good	–2
and private ethics untrustworthy or evil	+2
Family enmity with state religion	–2
Family open heretics (cumulative with above)	–2
Family part of state religion	+2
Family strongly committed to state religion	
(cumulative with above)	+2
Family reputation good	+1
Family reputation outstanding	+2
Family reputation mostly bad	–1
Family reputation bad	–2
Family is part of the government	+2
Family strongly supports government	
(cumulative with above)	+2
Family loyal opposition to government	+0
Family dissidents	–2
Family radicals	–4

When using the free-form honor system, the categories defined under Measuring Free-Form Honor also apply to families. Characters who are as honorable as their families, or more honorable, get more honor benefits (see Benefits of Honor) than those who are less honorable than their families.

SAMPLE CODES OF HONOR

Here are some codes of honor drawn from fiction and history.

Bushido

Bushido is the code of the samurai from ancient Japan. Many books have been written about how a samurai should live, including the *Go Rin No Sho* (Book of Five Rings) and the *Hagakure*. According to one version of the code, a samurai must possess the following seven virtues.

Gi (honesty and justice): A samurai deals openly and honestly with others and cleaves to the ideals of justice. Moral decisions do not come in shades of gray, only right and wrong.

Yu (heroic courage): A samurai never fears to act, but lives life fully and wonderfully. Respect and caution replace fear.

Jin (compassion): A samurai takes every opportunity to aid others, and creates opportunities when they do not arise. As a powerful individual, a samurai has a responsibility to use that power to help others.

Rei (polite courtesy): A samurai has no reason to be cruel, and no need to prove his strength. Courtesy distinguishes a samurai from an animal, and reveals one's true strength.

Meyo (honor): A samurai's conscience is the judge of his honor. The decisions he makes and how he carries them out are a reflection of his true nature.

Makoto (complete sincerity): When a samurai has said that he shall perform an action, it is as good as done. He need not make promises; speaking and doing are as if the same.

Chugo (duty and loyalty): A samurai feels responsible for his actions and their consequences, and loyal to the people in his care. A samurai's loyalty to his lord is unquestionable and unquestioning.

Code of the Knight Protector

The Knight Protectors, a loose organization of chivalric-minded warriors described in *Complete Warrior*, hold to this code of honor. It makes a fine code for lawful knights.

Courage and enterprise in obedience to the Order.
Defense of any mission unto death.
Respect for all peers and equals; courtesy to all lessers.
Combat is glory; battle is the true test of self-worth; war is the flowering of the chivalric ideal.
Personal glory above all else in battle.
Death before dishonor.

Omerta

The "code of silence" of the Cosa Nostra isn't codified or written down. It makes a good code for a thieves' guild or other criminal organization. One interpretation is as follows.

Do what you're told by your superiors.
Always look out for ways to make money for the Family.
Do not hide or hold back money from the Family.
Respect your elders in the Family, and in the Organization in general.
Never let a debt go unpaid.
Never be late paying your debts.
Don't get caught.
If you do get caught, keep your mouth shut.

Paladin's Code

The *Player's Handbook* offers the following code of conduct for paladins.

Never commit an evil act.
Respect legitimate authority.
Act with honor (don't lie, don't cheat, don't use poison, and so on).
Help those who need help (provided they do not use the help for evil or chaotic ends).
Punish those that harm or threaten innocents.

Don't Tread on Me

This relatively short code of honor works well for barbarians, fighters, and rangers.

I won't be wronged.
I won't be insulted.
I won't be laid a hand on.
I don't do these things to others, and I require the same from them.

Thieves' Code

"Honorable" thieves in a guild might abide by a code similar to this one.

Never steal from another member of the guild.
Never perform another thief's assigned task or "steal" jobs from another thief.
Never let your own jobs interfere with the guild's jobs.
Don't attract attention to the guild, especially not the attention of the town fathers.
10% of the take from your jobs goes to the guild; you keep the rest.
100% of the take from guild-assigned thefts goes to the guild, and maybe you get a taste.
Don't kill anyone in the commission of a job, except in self-defense. It attracts too much attention.

TAINT

Some places and items are so evil that exposure to them marks, or taints, a character in a very real and difficult-to-cleanse way. Taint is evil. It is a corruption so deep it warps the very plane of reality. A weapon used to slaughter thousands of innocents, a forest grown on land soaked in the blood of an evil deity, a book bound in the flesh of an archfiend for his own horrible purposes, and the presence of an evil deity are all sources of taint. Then, of course, there are rings. . . .

TAINT AND ALIGNMENT

One way of using this variant system is to replace alignment with taint. As a way of describing characters, taint works somewhat differently, since the standard alignment system uses sets of opposites (law vs. chaos, good vs. evil) and taint has no opposite. You're either tainted, or you're not.

In such a system, tainted characters are "evil," considered a threat to common people and, in sufficient numbers, to entire nations. Characters without taint may act altruistically or selfishly, kindly or cruelly, generously or miserly, as their personalities dictate. An evil monster has a taint score equal to one-half its Charisma score, with evil undead getting a +1 modifier and evil outsiders a +2 modifier.

Alternatively, taint can be used in addition to alignment. While characters with a minor amount of taint aren't necessarily evil, they probably are. The more taint they acquire, the more evil they become. The DM should monitor taint carefully and provide a warning when a character disregards its effect, just as he would when a character acts outside his alignment.

If you include taint in your campaign, you can add a *detect taint* spell to the cleric's spell list. If you are not using alignment, change the paladin's *detect evil* ability to *detect taint*.

The *detect taint* spell or spell-like ability is identical to *detect evil*, except that it detects the presence of taint within a creature or object. When determining the power of a tainted aura, refer to the table in the *detect evil* spell description (page 219 of the *Player's Handbook*). Find the creature or object's taint score on the row for "Cleric of an evil deity"; the aura's power corresponds to the column in which the taint score is contained.

BECOMING TAINTED

Initial exposure to a tainted place or tainted object gives a character 1d3 points of taint.

For every 24 hours spent in a tainted place, or spent carrying a tainted object, a character must make a Fortitude saving throw. The base DC is 10, +5 for every consecutive 24 hours of exposure. Multiple simultaneous exposures (such as carrying a tainted weapon in a tainted place) increase the DC by +5 per source of exposure every 24 hours. If the character fails his saving throw, his taint score increases by 1.

Because of their good Fortitude saves, most barbarians, fighters, monks, paladins, and rangers resist taint better than members of other classes. Bards, rogues, sorcerers, and wizards are much more susceptible to taint.

Taint-Absorbing Items

Some natural substances absorb taint and thus protect those who are exposed to carry them. Examples include a pure jade rod the size of a human finger, a sheet of vellum prepared from a year-old lamb, an intricately carved piece of lightning-struck oak, or a silk sash. The DM can create other examples appropriate to the campaign as well. Regardless of the shape or substance of the item, taint-absorbing items cost 100 gp each.

As an item absorbs taint, it darkens, softens, and gradually rots away over seven days. During that time, it absorbs all taint to which the carrier is exposed. Possessing multiple taint-absorbing items at the same time can protect a character for longer than seven days, but the benefit does not accumulate indefinitely, as shown on the following table.

Items Possessed	Days of Protection
1	7
2	12
3	15
4	16
5	15
6	12
7 or more	1

Evil and Taint

Simply having an evil alignment is no defense against taint—it is too profound an effect for personal beliefs or moral codes to ward it off. Only undead and creatures with the evil subtype can ignore taint.

Of course, you may choose for evil creatures to become tainted by good. You can create sacred places and objects in

your campaign that taint evil characters as well. You could say that creatures with the good subtype are immune to the effects of taint in such sacred places, but those sacred places would rot away creatures of the evil subtype.

Alternatively, you could inflict taint according to the conflict between law and chaos, along with or instead of taint associated with the good-vs.-evil conflict.

Alternative Saving Throws

Often, fantasy literature portrays characters who delve into ancient, lost, or forbidden knowledge as becoming warped by their exposure to such knowledge. In campaigns with the same conceit, the Fortitude saving throw makes sense. However, you could easily use a Will saving throw instead to determine whether a character picks up taint. This would mean that bards, clerics, sorcerers, and wizards develop a resistance to taint as they go up in levels (because of their good Will saves), but other classes would have a much harder time resisting.

Whether a Fortitude save or a Will save is used, clerics, druids, and monks are equally resistant to taint, which supports the genre conceit of horrible secrets hidden in inaccessible temples and monasteries. Rogues are vulnerable either way, explaining how thieves often appear in the genre as unwittingly releasing horror on the world when they steal something that was better left lost and protected.

TAINTED PLACES

When a character casts an evil spell in a tainted area, treat the caster as +1 caster level for spell effects that depend on caster level. When a character casts a good spell in a tainted area, treat the caster as –1 caster level for spell effects that depend on caster level. These changes in caster level have no effect on spells known, spells per day, or highest level of spell available.

If you are using *Manual of the Planes*, entire planes may inflict taint. Mildly aligned planes inflict taint as outlined in Becoming Tainted (see above). On strongly aligned planes, the saving throw DC increases by +5 every 12 hours instead of every 24 hours.

EFFECTS OF TAINT

A character's taint score applies as a penalty to his Constitution and Wisdom scores. Thus a character with a 16 Constitution and a 14 Wisdom who acquires a taint score of 4 has an effective Constitution of 12 and an effective Wisdom of 10. These penalties reflect the taint's impact on the character's physical and mental health.

Characters who embrace taint (see below) and make use of it can ignore some of these penalties. Though it reduces ability scores, the effect of taint is not treated as ability damage, ability drain, or any other penalty to an ability score that can be removed by magic.

A tainted character experiences the Constitution and Wisdom penalties in a variety of ways, from mild nausea, joint pain, or disorientation to rotting flesh, severe skeletal warping, and irresistible murderous urges. The lists of effects below are categorized according to whether a character is mildly, moderately, or severely tainted. A character who has lost 25% of his Constitution to taint is mildly tainted. A character who has lost 50% of his Constitution to taint is moderately tainted. A character who has lost 75% of his Constitution to taint is severely tainted. The effects on the list are primarily meant as role-playing features, though the DM can apply minor game-related modifiers to represent some of these effects if he so chooses.

Taint Effects

Mild

- Occasional nausea or vomiting
- Pain in joints
- Hair goes white
- Mild paranoia
- Disorientation
- Increased aggressiveness
- Mild hallucinations
- Phlegmy, wracking cough
- Eyelid swells, obscuring vision
- Pale, grayish, dead complexion
- Sunken eyes, cracked lips
- Skin seeps greasy, yellowish "sweat"
- Skin thickens, cracks, and turns leathery

Moderate

- Bones begin to warp and thicken
- Black, lichenlike growth across skin itches incessantly
- Reddened, burnlike sores and scars
- Eye clouds or blood vessels break, obscuring vision
- Lips shrink back from gums
- Gums swell, bleed, and rot
- Bleeding from eyes, nose, mouth, ears, or lips
- Hair falls out
- Uncontrollable seizures that wrack the body with spasms
- Eruption of painful sores
- Sores ooze blood, pus, foul-smelling ooze, spiders or insects, thick pasty substance, maggots, or acidic green slime
- Hears voices of evil spirits
- Severe paranoia
- Fits of uncontrollable, disturbing laughter
- Disregard for hygiene and cultural mores

Severe

- Flesh of nose rots away, leaving skull-like openings
- Mutated, deformed fingers, toes, leg, arm, head, ear, eye, or teeth begin to grow on inappropriate parts of the body, then shrivel, rot, and eventually fall off
- Spine twists, back hunches
- Severe warping of skeleton; skull enlarges and deforms
- Great swollen growths on the body
- Lungs eaten away from inside—wet, labored, and painful breathing
- Eye falls out, leaving gaping socket that glows with eerie green light
- Skin peels off in papery sloughs at the slightest touch, leaving raw, red flesh beneath
- Fingers or toes begin to web and fuse
- Irresistible murderous urges
- Reduced to primitive behavior
- Eats inedible or still-living things

If a character's Constitution score reaches 0 from the effects of taint, he dies—and 1d6 hours later he rises as a hideous, evil creature under the control of the DM. What sort of creature he becomes depends on his character level before dying.

Character Level Before Death	Transforms Into
2nd or lower	Ghoul
3rd–5th	Ghast
6th–8th	Wraith
9th or higher	Bodak[1]

1 Advance the bodak until its HD equals the character's level before death.

As terrible as the effects of taint are upon the living, they are even worse upon the dead. Any creature that dies while exposed to taint animates in 1d4 hours as an undead creature, usually a zombie of the appropriate size. Burning a corpse protects it from this effect.

Embracing Taint

Once a character's taint score reaches 10 (assuming he is still alive), he may seek out forces of great evil and pledge himself to their cause. Often evil cults, temples of evil deities, and the militaries of evil warlords eagerly accept such pledges, giving the character access to new sources of power (see Tainted Prestige Classes, below).

CLEANSING TAINT

It is possible to remove taint from characters in several ways, including through the use of spells, the performance of good deeds, and cleansing in a sacred spring. Taint cannot be removed unless the tainted character wants to be cleansed.

Spells

The following spells can reduce taint scores when cast outside tainted areas. No character can have his taint score reduced by any particular spell more than once per day (though different spells can reduce taint if cast on the same character in the same day).

Atonement: This spell can remove taint, but with limits. First, it always requires a quest. Second, the caster decides how much taint to remove when casting *atonement*, up to a maximum equal to the caster's level. This use of *atonement* costs the caster 500 XP. *Atonement* can reduce a taint score to 0.

Heal: This spell reduces a character's taint score by 1 point per three caster levels, but it cannot reduce a taint score below 1.

Miracle, wish: These spells cannot remove taint except by duplicating the effects of other spells mentioned here.

Remove curse, remove disease: These spells reduce a character's taint score by 1 point, but they cannot reduce a taint score below 1.

Restoration: This spell reduces a character's taint score by 1 point per four caster levels, but it cannot reduce a taint score below 1.

Greater restoration: This spell reduces a character's taint score by a number of points equal to the caster level of the cleric casting greater restoration. *Greater restoration* can reduce a taint score to 0.

Good Deeds

Simple good deeds are not enough to remove taint. A character wishing to reduce his taint score through good deeds must undertake a particular ritual under the guidance of one of his deity's clerics. The ritual prepares the character to undertake the deed.

Each deity's faith has a list of ritual good deeds that the faithful may perform to prove their dedication to their deity. For example, the faithful of St. Cuthbert may choose to put on garments sacred to their faith (and which identify their faith to anyone who sees them) and patrol a particular part of their home as part of the militia or city guard. Adventuring is never part of a good deed, and a character who undertakes an adventure prior to completing his good deed must begin again with the ritual.

Deeds must be repeated every day for a week. Upon completion, the character's taint score is reduced by 1 point. The character may continue the deed for another week to continue losing taint, or may return to the temple to undertake the ritual again and begin a different deed.

Alternatively, deeds may be quests undertaken on behalf of the deity. After the quest ends, the character's taint score is reduced by 1 point per week required to complete the quest.

Good deeds may reduce a character's taint score to 0.

Sacred Spring

Springs sacred to a particular deity or cause are located in remote regions, requiring long and dangerous travel to reach. For each day a character spends resting and cleansing himself at a sacred spring, his taint score is reduced by 1 point. A characters using this method to reduce his taint score can undertake no activities other than resting, eating, sleeping, and normal conversation.

Cleansing at a sacred spring may reduce a character's taint score to 0.

Cleansing Places and Objects

Clerics may use *hallow* to remove taint from an area, but it takes time. The spell must remain intact for a year and a day to remove the taint from the area. If, during that time, an opposing character casts *unhallow* on some or all of the area, the effort is lost and must be reinstated by another casting of *hallow*. (The *hallow* spell only affects a 40-foot-radius area, so large areas may require many clerics working simultaneously to completely guard them.)

Unintelligent items left in a *hallowed* area for a year and a day lose their taint. Items that have an Intelligence score (and are thus treated as constructs for this purpose) can only be cleansed by using the spells mentioned above.

TAINTED PRESTIGE CLASSES

The two prestige classes presented here use taint as a source of power. Depending on your campaign, certain taint scores (or lack thereof) could be prerequisites for other published prestige classes, such as the alienist or the blood magus (both from *Tome and Blood*).

TAINTED SORCERER

Tainted sorcerers find an easy path to tremendous magical power. Young wizards frustrated at the slow pace of their studies, old scholars chafing at the limitations of traditional magic, peasant folk-magic practitioners, even those who wage endless battle against unspeakable evil and thus succumb to taint—for all these spellcasters, taint offers a way to overcome obstacles that the sanctioned magic of the world cannot provide. At the mere cost of the character's soul. . . .

Tainted sorcerers come from a variety of backgrounds. Many are sorcerers or wizards—some inexperienced, some quite advanced—who stumble across or seek out the forbidden secrets of taint in arcane libraries. Others are adepts who learn tainted magic from an older practitioner. Some are clerics or druids of evil cults who learn from their elders, in the same way that their cult has passed on knowledge for centuries.

NPC tainted sorcerers are everywhere, though they usually hide very carefully.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To qualify to become a tainted sorcerer, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any nongood.
Base Will Save: +4.
Skills: Concentration 8 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 4 ranks.
Spells: Ability to cast 1st-level spells.
Taint: Character's taint score must be 4 or higher.
Special: Must have learned the basics of taint magic from a tainted sorcerer of at least 4th level, or must have summoned a demon or devil to gain instruction.

Class Skills

The tainted sorcerer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Disguise (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier

Class Features

The following are class features of the tainted sorcerer.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Tainted sorcerers are proficient with all simple weapons. They are not proficient with any type of armor or shield. Armor of any type interferes with a tainted sorcerer's arcane gestures, which can cause her spells to fail (if those spells have somatic components).

Spells per Day/ Spells Known: When a new tainted sorcerer level is gained, the character gains new spells known and spells per day as if she had also gained a level in a spellcasting class she belonged to before she added the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. This essentially means that she adds the level of tainted sorcerer to the level of whatever other spellcasting class she has, then determines spells known, spells per day, and caster level accordingly.

Blood Component: A tainted sorcerer must use blood in place of any spell's material component (if the spell has no material component, ignore this cost). She has two choices for a source of blood: herself or someone else.

If she uses her own blood, the minor knife cut to draw the requisite blood is a free action that becomes a normal part of casting the spell. Using this ability deals 1 point of damage to the tainted sorcerer, but the character does not need to make a Concentration check to successfully cast the spell, despite the wound.

Substituting blood for a costly material component requires drawing a greater amount of blood. A tainted sorcerer deals more damage to herself when drawing a large amount of blood, as shown on the table below. Also, when using blood to replace a costly component in this way, the tainted sorcerer must make a Concentration check (DC 10 + damage taken + spell level) to successfully cast the spell.

Component Cost	Damage Dealt
50 gp or less	5
51gp–300 gp	11
301 gp–750 gp	17
751 gp or more	23

If the tainted sorcerer draws someone else's blood to use as a material component, the rules given above generally apply. If the source of blood is willing (or helpless) and is adjacent to the tainted sorcerer, she can make a minor knife cut to obtain a small amount of blood as a free action during the casting of the spell. (If the source is not willing or helpless and not adjacent, how long it takes to draw blood depends entirely on the circumstances.)

No single source of blood can be used to replace a costly material component unless the character or creature's current hit point total is high enough to absorb all the damage without falling below –10. For example, the blood of an orc with 6 hit points remaining is not sufficient to replace a component that costs 301 gp or more, because the orc cannot take the necessary 17 points of damage before it is dead.

Taint Suppression: While a tainted sorcerer is likely to accumulate a high taint score over the course of her life, this taint is not immediately obvious to onlookers. A tainted sorcerer's taint manifests in mental effects—insanity, rage, and nightmares—and in internal physical effects. If a tainted sorcerer is split open, the character's internal corruption is obvious: Her body is full of bloody pus and strange growths, even internal limbs. If a tainted sorcerer enters a tainted area, her corruption immediately manifests externally as well. Barring these two conditions, it is impossible to detect a tainted sorcerer based on appearance.

A tainted sorcerer no longer applies her taint score as a penalty to her Constitution, and only applies one-half her taint score as a penalty to her Wisdom.

Tainted Metamagic: A tainted sorcerer who learns metamagic feats can apply them by paying an additional cost in blood. By draining blood, a tainted sorcerer can enhance her spells without using a higher-level spell slot. The cost is a number of points of Constitution damage equal to the spell slot adjustment of the metamagic feat. Thus, casting an empowered

Illus. by M. Nelson

Tainted sorcerer

Table 6–3: The Tainted Sorcerer

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day/Spells Known
1st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Blood component, taint suppression, tainted metamagic, tainted spellcasting	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+1	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+1	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+2	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+2	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+2	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+3	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+3	—	+1 level of existing spellcasting class

vampiric touch spell costs a tainted sorcerer 2 points of Constitution damage, because an empowered spell uses up a spell slot two levels higher than normal. A tainted sorcerer cannot enhance a spell to a level higher than she can cast by this means. For example, a tainted sorcerer must be at least a 9th-level caster to cast an empowered *vampiric touch* spell (or at least 10th level, if the character is casting as a sorcerer), since the empowered spell requires a 5th-level spell slot.

A tainted sorcerer without a Constitution score cannot use this ability.

Tainted Spellcasting (Su): Rather than using a key ability score for spellcasting, a tainted sorcerer uses her taint score. To cast a spell, a tainted sorcerer must have a taint score at least equal to the spell's level. Tainted sorcerer bonus spells are based on a number equal to the character's taint score + 10, and saving throws against tainted sorcerer spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + the tainted sorcerer's taint score.

A tainted sorcerer accumulates taint for casting her spells. All spells a tainted sorcerer casts are evil spells. She must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + spell level) or increase her taint score by 1.

Level Advancement: The power of taint is seductive. Once a character has tasted its attractions, it is hard to resist. Whenever a tainted sorcerer gains a new level and wishes to advance a level in some other class, she must succeed on a Will saving throw (DC 10 + taint score). If she fails the saving throw, she must advance her tainted sorcerer level. If she succeeds on this saving throw, she can advance a level in some other class.

TAINTED WARRIOR

When a character's taint threatens to exceed the capacity of his body and soul to contain it, he may become possessed by its evil power and transformed into a creature of taint. Such characters feel an irresistible urge to travel to regions of taint, often walking until their feet bleed, slaughtering anyone in the way. The lucky ones are killed by adventurers, militias, or monsters. The unlucky ones are guided by evil cults of Erythnul and Hextor and become transformed into living servants of evil.

Most tainted warriors were barbarians, fighters, or rangers before their taint overcame them, although a member of any race or character class can adopt this prestige class. Clerics, druids, sorcerers, and wizards are usually seduced by the tainted sorcerer class instead.

NPC tainted warriors are found near regions of taint, often serving as commanders for small groups of evil humanoids.

Hit Die: d12.

Requirements

To qualify to become a tainted warrior, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any nongood.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Taint: Character's taint score must be 10 or more.

Special: Character must locate and join a temple devoted to an evil deity.

Class Skills

The tainted warrior's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Table 6–4: The Tainted Warrior

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Taint suppression
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Damage reduction 1/good
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Tainted strike 1/day
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Damage reduction 2/good
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	—
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Damage reduction 3/good
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Tainted strike 2/day
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Damage reduction 4/good
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	—
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Damage reduction 5/good

Class Features

The following are class features of the tainted warrior.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Tainted warriors do not gain any additional weapon or armor proficiencies.

Taint Suppression: By definition, a tainted warrior is overwhelmed with taint, but this taint is not immediately obvious to onlookers. A tainted sorcerer's taint manifests in mental effects—delirium, anger, and cruelty—and in internal

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: TAINT

Taint can be added to campaigns fairly seamlessly. It's generally best to limit the number of places and items that can impart taint, to reduce the bookkeeping load on players and the DM.

Taint makes evil a physical threat to the well-being of characters. It can have a lasting impact on characters, even killing those who remain exposed too long.

physical effects. If a tainted warrior is split open, the internal corruption is obvious: His body is full of vile liquids and distorted growths, even internal limbs. If a tainted warrior enters a tainted area, his corruption immediately manifests externally as well. Barring these two conditions, it is impossible to detect a tainted warrior based on appearance.

A tainted warrior no longer applies his taint score as a penalty to his Constitution, and only applies one-half his taint score as a penalty to his Wisdom.

Damage Reduction (Ex): At 2nd level, a tainted warrior gains damage reduction 1/good. The value of the character's damage reduction increases by 1 point at every even-numbered level thereafter.

Tainted Strike (Ex): A tainted warrior of 3rd level or higher can infuse a melee attack with the power of his taint. The character adds his taint score to the damage dealt by the melee attack, and the target's taint score increases by 1.

If a tainted warrior strikes a creature immune to the effects of taint (such as an undead creature or a creature with the evil subtype), the tainted strike has no effect.

A tainted warrior can use this ability once per day upon attaining 3rd level and one additional time per day for every four levels gained thereafter.

Tainted warrior

Illus. by D. Crabapple

SANITY

This variant system allows you to introduce an element of dark horror into your Dungeons & Dragons game. In campaigns using these rules, characters gain a new attribute called Sanity. This statistic functions like an ability score in some ways, but it has its own unique mechanics that represent the character's descent from a stable and healthy mental state into confusion, dementia, and mental instability. As a character encounters monsters, witnesses horrible acts, masters forbidden knowledge, or casts spells, his Sanity score, and his corresponding ability to function as a normal member of his race, deteriorates. This gradual descent is balanced in part by the powers that characters gain each time they overcome a horrific foe or grow in skill and expertise, but even as those characters grow in power, they know or fear that an even greater peril lies ahead—the threat of becoming permanently insane.

WHAT IS SANITY?

Sanity is the natural mental state of ordinary life. Normal mental balance is endangered when characters confront horrors, entities, or activities that are shocking, unnatural, and bewildering. Such encounters cause a character to lose points from his Sanity score, which in turn risks temporary, indefinite, or permanent insanity. Mental stability and lost Sanity points can be restored, up to a point, but psychological scars may remain.

Insanity occurs if too many Sanity points are lost in too short a time. Insanity does not necessarily occur if Sanity points are low, but a lower Sanity score makes some forms of insanity more likely to occur after a character experiences an emotional shock. The character's Sanity may be regained after a few minutes, recovered after a few months, or lost forever.

A character may regain Sanity points, and even increase her Sanity point maximum. However, increasing a character's ranks in the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill always lowers her maximum Sanity by an equal amount.

SANITY POINTS

Sanity points measure the stability of a character's mind. This attribute provides a way to define the sanity inherent in a character, the most stability a character can ever have, and the current level of sane rationality that a character preserves, even after numerous shocks and horrid revelations.

Sanity is measured in three ways: starting Sanity, current Sanity, and maximum Sanity. Starting and current Sanity cannot exceed maximum Sanity.

Starting Sanity

A character's starting Sanity equals his Wisdom score multiplied by 5. This score represents a starting character's current Sanity, as well as the upper limit of Sanity that can be restored by the Heal skill (see The Heal Skill and Mental Treatment, later in this section). After creation, a character's current Sanity often fluctuates considerably and might never again match starting Sanity. A change in a character's Wisdom score changes his starting Sanity in terms of what treatment with the Heal skill can restore. Current Sanity, however, does not change if Wisdom rises or falls.

Current Sanity

A character's current Sanity score fluctuates almost as often as (and sometimes much more often than) his hit points.

Making a Sanity Check: When a character encounters a gruesome, unnatural, or supernatural situation, the DM may require the player to make a Sanity check using percentile dice (d%). The check succeeds if the result is equal to or less than the character's current Sanity.

On a successful check, the character either loses no Sanity points or loses only a minimal amount. Potential Sanity loss is usually shown as two numbers or die rolls separated by a slash, such as 0/1d4. The number before the slash indicates the number of

Sanity points lost if the Sanity check succeeds (in this case, none); the number after the slash indicates the number of Sanity points lost if the Sanity check fails (in this case, between 1 and 4 points).

A character's current Sanity is also at risk when the character reads certain books, learns certain types of spells, and attempts to cast them. These Sanity losses are usually automatic (no Sanity check is allowed); the character who chooses to undertake the activity forfeits the indicated number of Sanity points.

In most cases, a new Sanity-shaking confrontation requires a new Sanity check. However, the DM always gets to decide when characters make Sanity checks. Confronting several horribly mangled corpses at one time or in rapid succession may call for just one Sanity check, while the same corpses encountered singly over the course of several game hours may require separate checks.

Going Insane: Losing more than a few Sanity points may cause a character to go insane, as described below. If a character's Sanity score drops to 0 or lower, she begins the quick slide into permanent insanity. Each round, the character loses another point of Sanity. Once a character's Sanity score reaches –10, she is hopelessly, incurably insane. The Heal skill can be used to stabilize a character on the threshold of permanent insanity; see The Heal Skill and Mental Treatment, below, for details.

A DM's description of a Sanity-shaking situation should always justify the threat to a character's well-being. Thus, a horde of frothing rats is horrifying, while a single ordinary rat usually is not (unless the character has an appropriate phobia, of course).

Maximum Sanity

Ranks in the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill simulate a character's comprehension of aspects of the dark creatures at the edges of reality. Once gained, this horrible knowledge is never forgotten, and the character consequently surrenders mental equilibrium. A character's Sanity weakens as his comprehension of these hidden truths increases. Such is the way of the universe.

A character's current Sanity can never be higher than 99 minus the character's ranks in the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill. This number (99 minus Knowledge [forbidden lore] ranks) is the character's maximum Sanity.

LOSS OF SANITY

Characters ordinarily lose Sanity in a few types of circumstances: when encountering something unimaginable, when suffering a severe shock, after casting a spell or when learning a new spell, when being affected by a certain type of magic or a particular spell, or when reading a forbidden tome.

Encountering the Unimaginable

When people perceive creatures and entities of unspeakable horror, this experience costs them some portion of their minds, since such creatures are intrinsically discomforting and repellent. We never lose awareness of their slimy, fetid, alien nature. This instinctive reaction is part and parcel of humans, elves, dwarves, and other humanoid races. In this category, we can include supernatural events or agents not always recognized as specifically devoted to these dark gods, such as hauntings, zombies, vampires, curses, and so on.

Table 6–5: Sanity Loss from Creatures provides some default Sanity loss values for encountering creatures, based on their type and size. These are only default values—the DM can and should adjust individual monsters he deems more or less horrible than others of their size. An aasimar, for instance, hardly presents a Sanity-shaking sight, and should probably be treated as a humanoid rather than an outsider. On the other hand, a vargouille—a Small outsider appearing much like a flying, bat-winged head—might provoke a much more visceral reaction than other Small outsiders.

In addition, certain types of monstrous behavior might force additional Sanity checks, much like those described under Severe Shocks, below. For instance, a mind flayer is an unnerving sight, but watching one consume the brain of your best friend should certainly force another check, with losses appropriate to the situation.

In most D&D games, no character should need to make a Sanity check when encountering an elf, dwarf, or other standard humanoid race from the *Player's Handbook*, or for encountering domesticated or otherwise commonplace animals. In some cases, even humanoid races such as orcs and goblins might be so common as to not cause Sanity loss either.

Specific Monsters and Sanity: Some monsters have additional or variant special abilities when using the Sanity variant.

Allip: The allip's madness ability causes the loss of 2d6 Sanity points rather than the normal effect.

Derro: The derro's madness ability protects these creatures from any further Sanity loss. Sane derro (especially derro player characters) track Sanity points normally.

Monstrous Characters and Sanity: In most cases, the DM does not need to keep track of a monster's Sanity score, but

IT CAME FROM CTHULHU

In the early 1900s, H.P. Lovecraft wrote a collection of stories and novellas that explored the idea that our understanding of the world and the laws of science represented but a fraction of the true secrets of the universe. What if, as Lovecraft proposed through his work, our vision of reality was but a veneer under which great, nearly unfathomable evil lurked? Inspired by these dark yet fascinating ideas, the *Call of Cthulhu* roleplaying game provided a way for roleplayers to explore the horrible and fascinating world of the Cthulhu Mythos, introducing the Sanity mechanic as a way to measure the effects of exposure to this great evil on a character's mind.

The Great Old Ones: Central to Lovecraft's Mythos, the Great Old Ones are godlike beings of unimaginable power and unspeakable evil. In Lovecraft's vision, they are so far outside human understanding that even the knowledge of their existence can shatter a healthy mind, and their actions are so far beyond our own definitions of morality that the acts of evil committed by humanity cannot even compare in scope to their dark desires. It is these dark gods and their multitude of servants that the characters must face. Although these dark entities are too powerful to ever overcome, the brave and lucky can sometimes thwart the plans of their minions and prevent them from gaining more of a foothold on our reality.

Forbidden Lore: The Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill presented in this variant represents knowledge of the dark beings that Lovecraft and other writers envisioned lurking at the edges of reality. In the *Call of Cthulhu Roleplaying Game*, this skill was called the Cthulhu Mythos skill.

Table 6–5: Sanity Loss from Creatures

	Monster Size						
Monster Type	Up to Tiny	Small	Medium	Large	Huge	Gargantuan	Colossal
Aberration, dragon, ooze, outsider, undead	1/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d10	1d4/1d10	1d6/1d10	1d6/2d10
Elemental, fey, plant, vermin	0/1d4	1/1d4	1/1d6	1/1d8	1/1d10	1d4/1d10	1d4/2d6
Construct, giant, magical beast, monstrous humanoid	0/1	0/1d4	0/1d6	1/1d6	2/2d6	2/2d6	3/3d6
Animal, humanoid	0/0[1]	0/1[1]	0/1[1]	0/1d4[1]	0/1d4	0/1d4	0/1d6

1 Only animals or humanoids of truly bizarre or ferocious appearance force such a check.

sometimes, especially when in the hands of a player, monsters need Sanity scores just as other characters do.

Although most campaigns that use the Sanity variant limit players to creating characters from the races described in the *Player's Handbook*, it's still easy to envision a world where one or two monstrous races are so common or so integrated into the culture of other races that the DM wants to present them as viable player character options. In these cases, the monsters available as player character races should never provoke a Sanity loss from other characters or NPCs, and these creatures should have a Sanity score and track their Sanity losses just like characters made with the *Player's Handbook* races. A monster should never lose Sanity for seeing others of its race (spectres don't lose Sanity when encountering other spectres, and so on). In all cases, what causes Sanity loss for a specific creature is in the hands of the DM.

Severe Shocks

A shocking sight of a more mundane nature can also cost Sanity points. Severe shocks include witnessing an untimely or violent death, experiencing personal mutilation, losing social position, being the victim of treachery, or whatever else the Dungeon Master decides is sufficiently extreme. The following list gives some examples of severe shocks, and the Sanity loss each one provokes.

Sanity Lost[1]	Shocking Situation
0/1d2	Surprised to find mangled animal carcass
0/1d3	Surprised to find human corpse
0/1d3	Surprised to find human body part
0/1d4	Finding a stream flowing with blood
1/1d4+1	Finding a mangled human corpse
0/1d6	Awakening trapped in a coffin
0/1d6	Witnessing a friend's violent death
1/1d6	Seeing a ghoul
1/1d6+1	Meeting someone you know to be dead
0/1d10	Undergoing severe torture
1/d10	Seeing a corpse rise from its grave
2/2d10+1	Seeing a gigantic severed head fall from the sky
1d10/d%	Seeing an evil deity

1 Loss on a successful check/loss on a failed check.

Casting Spells

Magic relies on the physics of the true universe. By casting spells, characters visualize the unimaginable, warping their minds to follow alien ways of thought. These visualizations wound the mind. Although spellcasters expose themselves to such traumas voluntarily, they are shocks all the same.

In this variant, casting a spell drains a certain amount of Sanity. This rule represents the fact that spellcasting forces the mind into strange patterns and thought processes with which it is poorly equipped to deal. The DM can choose from the three options presented in the table below, deducting a low, moderate, or extreme number of Sanity points from a character who casts a spell. In a campaign featuring low Sanity loss, a spellcaster is rarely penalized for casting a spell, especially if the DM also chooses to give characters Sanity resistance (see the sidebar) in such cases. In a campaign featuring moderate Sanity loss, spellcasters face a slightly higher risk of insanity than members of other classes, even if they have Sanity resistance. When using this option, players should, for the most part, choose spellcasting levels only as multiclass options. In a campaign featuring extreme Sanity loss, spellcasters have a difficult time participating in adventures regularly because they find it hard to use their classes' primary abilities without soon going insane.

Table 6–6: Sanity Loss from Spellcasting

Spell Level	Low Sanity Loss	Moderate Sanity Loss	Extreme Sanity Loss
1st	1	2	1d6
2nd	2	4	2d6
3rd	3	6	3d6
4th	4	8	4d6
5th	5	10	5d6
6th	6	12	6d6
7th	7	14	7d6
8th	8	16	8d6
9th	9	18	9d6

In addition to the guidelines presented for each campaign option above, the DM is free to impose additional modifiers on the Sanity loss caused by spells of a certain type, a certain school, or even individual spells. Here are some example conditions that a DM could choose to incorporate into a game.

—Abjurations cost 1 less Sanity point to cast.

—Divine spells cost 5 additional Sanity points to cast.

—Druids suffer only half the Sanity loss from spellcasting (round fractions up).

—Healing spells drain no Sanity when cast.

—The *invisibility* spell, and any variation thereof, costs 1 additional Sanity Point to cast.

—Necromancy spells cost 2 additional Sanity points to cast.

—Spellcasters of some classes follow the guidelines of one campaign option, while spellcasters of other classes follow the guidelines of another campaign option.

Learning Spells

Learning spells, like casting them, exposes a character to unknowable secrets and can damage and warp the mind. In this variant, whenever a spellcaster learns a new spell, he loses Sanity points. In most cases, the Sanity loss is equal to the spell's level, but if the spell is included in a tome of forbidden knowledge (see below), the loss can be greater.

The rules for Sanity loss for learning spells work fine for wizards, sorcerers, and other arcane spellcasting classes that learn spells one at a time or in small groups, but this loss can easily overwhelm a cleric, druid, or other divine spellcaster who gains

a new spellcasting level (thereby "learning" an entire level's worth of new spells all at once). In such a case, the player and the DM should work together to determine a specific number of spells learned once access to a new spellcasting level is gained. When in doubt about how many spells to allow a spellcaster to learn at any given level, the spell acquisition rate of the wizard class serves as a good baseline.

DMs wanting to add Sanity rules to a magic-rich campaign, or those wishing to preserve more of the flavor of a normal D&D game, can allow any spellcaster to learn a small number of spells at each level without losing any Sanity.

Sanity-Affecting Magic

The following types of magic and specific spells have different or additional effects when the Sanity variant is in use. For the effects of healing spells and magical means of recovering sanity, see Restoring Sanity with Magic, later in this section.

Fear Effects: Whenever a spell, creature, or other factor produces a fear effect that causes its target to become shaken, frightened, or panicked, replace the saving throw to avoid the effect (if applicable) with a Sanity check. On a failed check (and sometimes even on a successful one), the subject loses a number of Sanity points rather than experiencing the normal effect of the magic. The table below provides a summary of the Sanity loss associated with each spell that has the fear descriptor:

Spell	Sanity Loss on Failed Check	Sanity Loss on Successful Check
Bane[1]	—	—
Cause fear	1d6	1
Doom	1d6	—
Fear	2d6	1
Phantasmal killer[2]	—	—
Scare	1d6	1
Symbol of fear	2d6	—
Weird[2]	—	—

1 *Bane* works normally because its effect is less severe than that of the shaken condition.

2 *Phantasmal killer* and *weird* work normally because those spells do not produce a shaken, frightened, or panicked effect. (The DM could rule that a Sanity check takes the place of the Fortitude save to avoid dying from fear; in such a case, failing the check results in permanent insanity.)

In this variant, *remove fear* does not automatically suppress an existing fear effect on its subjects, but if it is cast on a creature that lost Sanity because of a fear effect within the last 24 hours, that Sanity loss is halved (to a minimum of 1 point) and the creature's current Sanity is adjusted accordingly.

Illusions: Illusions, when they are believed, cause Sanity loss just as if the real horrific monster or event were present. The DM can reduce the Sanity loss caused by illusions (or eliminate it entirely) if such spells appear frequently in the campaign.

Bestow Curse: When using the Sanity variant, this spell can cause a Sanity check rather than a Will save. If the victim fails the Sanity check, he loses 3d6 points of Sanity. Unlike normal Sanity loss, this number is also subtracted from the character's maximum Sanity. Magic that removes the curse (such as *remove curse* or *break enchantment*) can restore the character's normal maximum Sanity, but separate magic or the use of the Heal skill is required to restore the character's current Sanity.

Contact Other Plane: When using the Sanity variant, characters casting this spell risk a lost of Sanity instead of Intelligence and Charisma. Whenever a character casts this spell, she must make a Sanity check. If the check fails, the character loses Sanity depending on the plane that the character was trying to contact, according to the table below. Unlike the Intelligence and Charisma reduction caused by the normal version of this spell, the Sanity loss does not go away after a week—the loss is permanent until restored by another spell or through the use of the Heal skill.

Plane	Sanity Loss
Elemental Plane (appropriate)	1
Positive/Negative Energy Plane	1
Astral Plane	2
Outer Plane (demideity)	1d6
Outer Plane (lesser deity)	2d6
Outer Plane (intermediate deity)	3d6
Outer Plane (greater deity)	4d6

Commune: When using the Sanity variant, replace this spell's XP cost with a Sanity check (1d6/3d6), made as a free action immediately after the spell's duration expires.

Insanity: Instead of experiencing this spell's normal effect, characters who fail the saving throw to resist the spell become permanently insane as described in this variant (but suffer no Sanity loss).

Moment of Prescience: In addition to the spell's normal benefits, a character with an active *moment of prescience* effect can make one Sanity check as if his current Sanity equaled his maximum Sanity. The character need not use the effect on the first Sanity check he is required to make, but he must choose whether or not to use this benefit before making any Sanity check during the spell's duration.

SANITY RESISTANCE

The Sanity mechanic was originally created to mimic the effect that the unspeakable horrors of the Cthulhu Mythos would have on normal folk from a world much like our own. Since D&D characters live in a world of magic and monsters, however, the DM might want to make them less susceptible to Sanity loss caused by encountering strange creatures (see Table 6–5: Sanity Loss from Creatures) by allowing them to have a measure of Sanity resistance, which is tied to one of two attributes.

Each character can be allowed to have Sanity resistance equal to his character level. Alternatively, each character can be allowed to have Sanity resistance equal to his Wisdom modifier. (Obviously, the second alternative will produce lower Sanity resistance figures in most cases.) This number is the amount of Sanity loss a character can ignore when he encounters a creature that requires a Sanity check.

The DM may decide that Sanity resistance also applies to certain kinds of severe shocks (although it might not apply to personally horrific experiences, such as seeing a close friend die) and to the casting or learning of spells.

Table 6–7: Example Forbidden Tomes

Examination Period	Knowledge (arcana) DC to Understand Tome	Number of Spells Contained in Tome	Initial Sanity Loss	Sanity Loss upon Completion	Knowledge (forbidden lore) ranks gained
1 week	20	0	1	1d4	1
1 week	20	1	1d4	1d4	1
1 week	25	2	1d4	2d6	1
2 weeks	25	1d4	1d6	2d6	2
2 weeks	25	1d6	1d10	2d6	2
2 weeks	25	3	1d6	2d6	2
2 weeks	30	1d6+1	1d6	2d6	3
3 weeks	20	1d4+1	1d10	2d6	2
3 weeks	25	1d6	1d6	2d10	2
3 weeks	30	1d4+5	1d10	3d6	3

Status: In addition to the spell's normal effect, the caster can sense whenever the subject suffers Sanity loss, temporary insanity, indefinite insanity, or permanent insanity during the spell's duration.

Summon Monster: If a character summons a monster that causes Sanity loss by means of a *summon monster*, *summon nature's ally*, *planar binding*, or *planar ally* spell, he suffers the usual Sanity loss for casting the spell and must also make a Sanity check because of the monster's presence.

Symbol of Insanity: Instead of experiencing this spell's normal effect, characters who fail the saving throw to resist the *symbol* become permanently insane as described in this variant (but suffer no Sanity loss).

Reading Forbidden Tomes

Obscure tomes add ranks to a character's Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill and teach arcane spells. Studying and comprehending these books causes all that we know to become

FORBIDDEN KNOWLEDGE

The Sanity rules assume that some knowledge is so alien to human understanding that simply learning of its existence can shatter the psyche. While magic and nonhuman races form an everyday part of a D&D character's life, even a seasoned adventurer cannot conquer or understand some things. Knowledge of these secrets and creatures is represented by a new skill that goes hand in hand with a character's Sanity score: Knowledge (forbidden lore).

This type of knowledge permanently erodes a character's ability to maintain a stable and sane outlook, and a character's current Sanity can never be higher than 99 minus the modifier the character has in the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill. This number (99 minus Knowledge [forbidden lore] ranks) is the character's maximum Sanity.

KNOWLEDGE (FORBIDDEN LORE) (NONE)

You know That Which Should Not Be Known. You have had horrible supernatural experiences and read forbidden tomes, learning truly dark secrets that have challenged everything you thought you knew. Since these revelations defy logic or commonly accepted fact, it does not matter how intelligent or wise you are when using this skill—only how much exposure to these dark secrets themselves you have experienced.

Check: Answering a question about the horrible deities and secrets that lurk at the edges of reality has a DC of 10 (for really easy questions), 15 (for elementary questions), or 20 to 30 (for difficult or really tough questions). Unlike in other fields of study, there are almost no really easy questions associated with this dark knowledge.

You can use this skill to identify monsters and their special powers or vulnerabilities. In general, the DC of such a check equals 10 + the monster's HD. A successful check allows you to remember a bit of useful information about that monster. For every 5 points by which your check result exceeds the DC, the DM can give another piece of useful information.

The DM can decide which monsters are subject to the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill and which monsters are subject to one of the Knowledge skills described in the *Player's Handbook*. For example, the DM may rule that Knowledge (the planes) is still the relevant skill for learning or knowing about outsiders, rather than allowing them to be iedntified by Knowledge (forbidden lore). However, in most campaigns that use the Sanity variant, aberrations and oozes should be able to be identified by Knowledge (forbidden lore) rather than by Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (dungeoneering) respectively.

Action: Usually none. In most cases, making a Knowledge check doesn't take an action—you simply know the answer or you don't.

Try Again: No. The check represents what you know, and thinking about a topic a second time doesn't let you know something that you never learned in the first place.

Special: You cannot gain ranks in this skill by spending skill points. You can only gain ranks by reading forbidden tomes or having experiences with horrible creatures. Each rank you gain in this skill permanently reduces your maximum Sanity by 1 point: The more you know about the horrible truths underlying reality, the less capable you are of leading a normal life.

A character's first episode of insanity (that is, an occurrence of temporary or indefinite insanity) bestows 2 ranks in the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill, thereby lowering his maximum Sanity by 2 points. Each time a character fails a Sanity check and endures another episode of insanity, he gains an additional rank in Knowledge (forbidden lore).

For example, Caldark has 1 rank of Knowledge (forbidden lore) after reading a strange manuscript. She then steps outside, sees a chaos beast, and goes indefinitely insane, her raving mind failing to understand the strange creature she has encountered. Since she has never gone insane before, her player adds 2 ranks of Knowledge (forbidden lore) to Caldark's character sheet. Now Caldark's Maximum Sanity is 96 (99 minus 3 ranks of Knowledge [forbidden lore]).

You cannot take the Knowledge (forbidden lore) skill during character creation. However, the skill has no maximum rank; your level does not limit the number of ranks in Knowledge (forbidden lore) that you can acquire.

like shadows. The burning power of a greater reality seizes the soul. Whether we try to retreat from the experience or hunger greedily for more, it destroys our confidence in what we once believed, opening us up to the all-encompassing truths of dark deities.

For each such book encountered, the DM must set the examination period, the Knowledge (arcana) DC to understand it, the number of spells contained in it, the Sanity loss that occurs upon beginning the examination, the Sanity loss that occurs upon completion of the examination, and the ranks of Knowledge (forbidden lore) gained from studying the book. While the DM is free to set these parameters at any values that he feels are appropriate for the campaign or adventure, Table 6–7: Example Forbidden Tomes provides some suggested combinations of each of these parameters.

GETTING USED TO AWFULNESS

Never underestimate the ability of the sentient mind to adapt, even to the most horrific experiences. Reading and rereading the same bit of disturbing text or seeing the same horrible image over and over eventually provokes no further loss of Sanity. Within a reasonable interval of play, usually a single session of the game, characters should not lose more Sanity points for seeing monsters of a particular sort than the maximum possible points a character could lose from seeing one such monster. For instance, the Sanity loss for seeing a single human zombie is 1/1d6. Thus, in the same game day or in the same play session, no character should lose more than 6 Sanity points for seeing any number of zombies. Keep in mind that the interpretation of "reasonable interval" must vary by DM and situation. When it feels right, the DM should rule that the horror is renewed and points must be lost again.

Learning or casting spells never becomes a normal occurrence. No matter how many times a character casts a spell, no matter what the time interval between castings may be, the Sanity loss is always the same. This point is also true for anything that a character does willingly. For example, if brutally murdering a friend costs 2/1d10 Sanity, this loss is incurred each time, even if the character loses the maximum possible points (10) after the first such murder he commits.

This insane wizard is a sight to behold

TYPES OF INSANITY

Character insanity is induced by a swift succession of shocking experiences or ghastly revelations, events usually connected with dark gods, creatures from the Outer Planes, or powerful spellcasting.

Horrifying encounters can result in one of three states of mental unbalance: temporary, indefinite, and permanent insanity. The first two, temporary insanity and indefinite insanity, can be cured. The third, permanent insanity, results when a character's Sanity points are reduced to –10 or lower. This condition cannot be cured.

Temporary Insanity

Whenever a character loses Sanity points equal to one-half her Wisdom score from a single episode of Sanity loss, she has experienced enough of a shock that the DM must ask for a Sanity check. If the check fails, the character realizes the full significance of what she saw or experienced and goes temporarily insane. If the check succeeds, the character does not go insane, but she may not clearly remember what she experienced (a trick the mind plays to protect itself).

Temporary insanity might last for a few minutes or a few days. Perhaps the character acquires a phobia or fetish befitting the situation, faints, becomes hysterical, or suffers nervous twitches, but she can still respond rationally enough to run away or hide from a threat.

A character suffering from temporary insanity remains in this state for either a number of rounds or a number of hours; roll d% and consult Table 6–8: Duration of Temporary Insanity to see whether the insanity is short-term or long-term. After determining the duration of the insanity, roll d% and consult either Table 6–9 or 6–10 to identify the specific effect of the insanity. The DM must describe the effect so that the player can roleplay it accordingly. Ideas for phobias and episodes of insanity are described later in this chapter.

Illus. by W. England

Table 6–8: Duration of Temporary Insanity

d%	Temporary Insanity Type	Duration
01–80	Short-term	1d10+4 rounds
81–100	Long-term	1d10×10 hours

Table 6–9: Short-Term Temporary Insanity Effects

d%	Effect
01–20	Character faints (can be awakened by vigorous action taking 1 round; thereafter, character is shaken until duration expires).
21–30	Character has a screaming fit.
31–40	Character flees in panic.
41–50	Character shows physical hysterics or emotional outburst (laughing, crying, and so on).
51–55	Character babbles in incoherent rapid speech or in logorrhea (a torrent of coherent speech).
56–60	Character gripped by intense phobia, perhaps rooting her to the spot.
61–65	Character becomes homicidal, dealing harm to nearest person as efficiently as possible.
66–70	Character has hallucinations or delusions (details at the discretion of the DM).
71–75	Character gripped with echopraxia or echolalia (saying or doing whatever those nearby say or do).
76–80	Character gripped with strange or deviant eating desire (dirt, slime, cannibalism, and so on).
81–90	Character falls into a stupor (assumes fetal position, oblivious to events around her).
91–99	Character becomes catatonic (can stand but has no will or interest; may be led or forced to simple actions but takes no independent action).
100	Roll on Table 6–10: Long-Term Temporary Insanity Effects.

Table 6–10: Long-Term Temporary Insanity Effects

d%	Effect
01–10	Character performs compulsive rituals (washing hands constantly, praying, walking in a particular rhythm, never stepping on cracks, constantly checking to see if crossbow is loaded, and so on).
11–20	Character has hallucinations or delusions (details at the discretion of the DM).
21–30	Character becomes paranoid.
31–40	Character gripped with severe phobia (refuses to approach object of phobia except on successful DC 20 Will save).
41–45	Character has aberrant sexual desires (exhibitionism, nymphomania or satyriasis, teratophilia, necrophilia, and so on).
46–55	Character develops an attachment to a "lucky charm" (embraces object, type of object, or person as a safety blanket) and cannot function without it.
56–65	Character develops psychosomatic blindness, deafness, or the loss of the use of a limb or limbs.
66–75	Character has uncontrollable tics or tremors (–4 penalty on all attack rolls, checks, and saves, except those purely mental in nature).
76–85	Character has amnesia (memories of intimates usually lost first; Knowledge skills useless).
86–90	Character has bouts of reactive psychosis (incoherence, delusions, aberrant behavior, and/or hallucinations).
91–95	Character loses ability to communicate via speech or writing.
96–100	Character becomes catatonic (can stand but has no will or interest; may be led or forced into simple actions but takes no independent action).

Successful application of the Heal skill (see The Heal Skill and Mental Treatment, below) may alleviate or erase temporary insanity.

Temporary insanity ends either when the duration rolled on Table 6–8 has elapsed, or earlier if the DM considers it appropriate to do so.

After an episode of temporary insanity ends, traces or even profound evidence of the experience should remain. No reason exists why, for instance, a phobia should depart from someone's mind as quickly as a warrior draws his sword. What remains behind after a brief episode of temporary insanity should exert a pervasive influence on the character. The character may still be a bit batty, but her conscious mind once again runs the show.

As a variant rule, if the amount of Sanity lost exceeds the character's current Wisdom score, consider the temporary insanity to always be of the long-term variety.

Indefinite Insanity

If a character loses 20% (one-fifth) or more of her current Sanity points in the space of 1 hour, she goes indefinitely insane. The DM judges when the impact of events calls for such a measure. Some DMs never apply the concept to more than the result of a single roll, since this state can remove characters from play for extended periods. An episode of indefinite insanity lasts for 1d6 game months (or as the DM dictates). Symptoms of indefinite insanity may not be immediately apparent (which may give the DM additional time to decide what the effects of such a bout of insanity might be).

Table 6–11: Random Indefinite Insanity is provided as an aid to selecting what form a character's indefinite insanity takes. (The mental disorders mentioned on this table are explained later in this section.) Many DMs prefer to choose an appropriate way for the insanity to manifest, based on the circumstances that provoked it. It's also a good idea to consult with the player of the afflicted character to see what sort of mental malady the player wishes to roleplay.

The state of indefinite insanity is encompassing and incapacitating. For instance, a schizophrenic may be able to walk the streets while babbling and gesticulating, find rudimentary shelter, and beg for enough food to survive, but most of the business of the mind has departed into itself: She cannot fully interact with friends, family, and acquaintances. Conversation, cooperation, and all sense of personal regard have vanished from her psyche.

It is possible for characters with indefinite insanity to continue to be played as active characters, depending on the form their madness takes. The character may still attempt to stumble madly through the rest of an adventure. However, with her weakened grasp on reality, she is most likely a danger to herself and others.

As a general rule, a character suffering from indefinite insanity should be removed from active play until she recovers. At the DM's discretion, the player of the character might be allowed to use a temporary character until the end of the story. Whether this "stand-in" character is an incidental NPC in the adventure, a character of the same level as the rest of the group, one or two levels below the rest of the characters, or even a

1st-level character, is up to the DM. Different DMs have different ways of handling this transition.

If a character goes indefinitely insane near the end of an adventure, the DM may decide to set the next adventure to begin after the insane character has recovered.

Characters suffering from indefinite insanity are in limbo, unable to help themselves or others. The Heal skill can be used to restore Sanity points during this period, but the underlying insanity remains.

After recovery, a victim retains definite traces of madness. For example, even though a character knows he is no longer insane, she might be deathly afraid of going to sleep if her insanity manifested itself in the form of terrifying nightmares. The character is in control of her actions, but the experience of insanity has changed her, perhaps forever.

Table 6–11: Random Indefinite Insanity

d%	Mental Disorder Type
01–15	Anxiety (includes severe phobias)
16–20	Dissociative (amnesia, multiple personalities)
21–25	Eating (anorexia, bulimia)
26–30	Impulse control (compulsions)
31–35	Mood (manic/depressive)
36–45	Personality (various neuroses)
46–50	Psychosexual (sadism, nymphomania)
51–55	Psychospecies
56–70	Schizophrenia/psychotic (delusions, hallucinations, paranoia, catatonia)
71–80	Sleep (night terrors, sleepwalking)
81–85	Somatoform (psychosomatic conditions)
86–95	Substance abuse (alcoholic, drug addict)
96–100	Other (megalomania, quixotism, panzaism)

Permanent Insanity

A character whose Sanity score falls to –10 goes permanently insane. The character becomes an NPC under the control of the Dungeon Master.

A character with permanent insanity may be reduced to a raving lunatic or may be outwardly indistinguishable from a normal person; either way, she is inwardly corrupted by the pursuit of knowledge and power. Some of the most dangerous cultists in the world are characters who have become permanently insane, been corrupted by forbidden knowledge, and "gone over to the other side."

A character might be driven permanently insane by forces other than dark gods or forbidden knowledge. In such cases, moral corruption need not necessarily occur. The DM might decide to consider different sorts of permanent insanity, rolling randomly or choosing from among the mental disorders on Table 6–11: Random Indefinite Insanity, above.

A character who has gone permanently insane can never be normal again (in some campaigns, a permanently insane character can be cured with the aid of powerful magic). She is forever lost in her own world. This need not mean a lifetime locked away from society, merely that the character has retreated so far from reality that normal mental functions can never be restored. She might be able to lead, within restricted bounds, a more or less normal life if kept away from the stimulus that triggers strong responses in her individual case. Yet a relapse may come quickly. Her calm facade can be destroyed in seconds if even the smallest reminder of what it was that drove her mad disturbs her fragile equilibrium. In any event, the eventual fate of a permanently insane character is a matter for individual Dungeon Masters and players to decide.

GAINING OR RECOVERING SANITY

A character's Sanity score can increase during the events of a campaign. Although a character's Sanity score can never exceed 99 minus her Knowledge (forbidden lore) ranks, her maximum Sanity and current Sanity can exceed her starting Sanity.

Level Advancement: A character's current Sanity can become higher than her starting Sanity as a result of gained levels: Whenever a character gains a new level, she rolls 1d6 and adds the result to her current Sanity. Some DMs may feel such self-improvement to be antithetical to this variant's dark tone, and thus may not allow it. Others may allow it if the player can roll over her character's current Sanity points after the character gains a level. Most Dungeon Masters should find the question to be of no consequence, since characters continue to go insane regardless of how many Sanity points they gain. This is a point for players to be aware of, but not to worry about.

Story Awards: The DM may decide to award increases in character's current Sanity if they foil a great horror, a demonic plan, or some other nefarious enterprise.

Mental Therapy

To give useful mental therapy, a therapist must have the Heal skill. Intensive treatment can return Sanity points to a troubled character. However, Sanity points restored in this manner can never cause the patient's Sanity score to exceed her starting Sanity or maximum Sanity, whichever is lower. A character can have only one healer at a time. See The Heal Skill and Mental Treatment sidebar for a detailed description of how this works.

Such treatment can also be used to help a character snap out of an episode of temporary insanity (for example, from an acute panic attack). It does not speed recovery from indefinite insanity, but it can strengthen a character by increasing her Sanity points.

Recovery from indefinite insanity only comes with time (typically, 1d6 months). It is not dependent upon the character's Sanity points and is not connected to them. A character can be sane with 24 Sanity points and insane while possessing 77 Sanity points.

VARIANT RULE: INSANE INSIGHT

At the DM's option, a character who has just gone insane may have an insight into the situation or entity that provoked the insanity. The player needs to make a DC 15 Wisdom check to gain the insight. Information provided by this sudden burst of awareness is up to the DM, but it may include something about a creature's origin or a fact about its nature (feeding habits, natural habitat, weakness), a clue to the identity of a murderer at a murder scene, or some hint at a location of great importance.

Restoring Sanity with Magic

The way that Sanity loss and magic healing interact can greatly affect the feel of your game. At one extreme, the DM can rule that magic can easily cure Sanity loss, in which case Sanity becomes little more than a specialized version of "mental hit points" that includes some neat side effects (insanity). In such a case, characters can usually restore themselves to full Sanity with a day or two of rest and spellcasting.

At the other extreme, the campaign might be structured so that magical healing can do little or nothing to restore Sanity, and even powerful divine spellcasters capable of curing the most deadly physical malady shy away from those encounters that might drain away Sanity points. The spells that can potentially restore Sanity points are discussed below. The DM should feel free to choose which of these spell effects are present in the game, but once established, these effects should not be changed in mid-campaign.

Atonement: Although this spell does not usually restore Sanity, it can be used in those rare cases when a character's own actions inadvertently lead to an evil act that causes the character to lose Sanity points. If a *quest* or *geas* is combined with the *atonement* spell, Sanity points are not restored until the task is completed. A successful use of the *atonement* spell can restore all Sanity lost through the direct result of the evil acts for which the character atones.

Calm Emotions: This spell cannot restore Sanity directly, but it can temporarily mitigate the effects of temporary or permanent insanity. While the spell is in effect, the targets act calmly and ignore behavior changes caused by Sanity loss.

Heal: In addition to its normal effects, *heal* restores 10 Sanity points and removes all forms of temporary insanity.

Mind Blank: While the spell is in effect, the subject is immune to Sanity loss.

Miracle: This spell can restore a character to maximum Sanity even if his current Sanity has dropped to –10. *Miracle* even heals permanent insanity.

Restoration: If the caster chooses, *restoration* can restore 1d6 Sanity points per two levels to the target creature (max 5d6) instead of having its normal effect.

Restoration, Greater: If the caster chooses, *greater restoration* can restore the target creature to its maximum Sanity instead of having its normal effect.

Restoration, Lesser: If the caster chooses, *lesser restoration* can restore 1d4 Sanity points to the subject instead of having its normal effect.

Wish: This spell can restore a character to maximum Sanity even if his current Sanity has dropped to –10. *Wish* even heals permanent insanity.

Wish, Limited: This spell can restore a character to maximum Sanity even if his current Sanity has dropped to –10. *Limited wish* does not heal permanent insanity.

Alchemical Treatments

In the real world, psychiatric drugs play a key role in the modern treatment of many mental disorders. Although psychiatric drugs were administered to patients in the early part of the 20th century, only in the 1940s and later were they broadly and consistently effective in treating the symptoms of emotional trauma.

In a fantasy game, the DM should decide whether rare herbs and alchemical substances can provide the same benefits that modern psychiatric drugs can deliver. It is quite believable, for example, that the Red Wizards of Thay in the FORGOTTEN REALMS *Campaign Setting* discovered alchemical means of isolating substances that affect the mind in profound ways, offering many of the same benefits of modern medicine. Therefore, the DM need only decide how easily he wants characters to overcome Sanity loss and insanity effects. Once the desired tone of the campaign is known, the DM can determine whether alchemical treatment is available. The Sanity variant assumes that skilled alchemists can create substances that offer the same benefits that psychiatric drugs can provide.

As long as a character can afford the correct herbs and alchemical substances and is able to ingest them, the symptoms of indefinite insanity can be ignored. Ingesting these alchemical

THE HEAL SKILL AND MENTAL TREATMENT

The Sanity rules presented here provide a new use for the Heal skill, allowing trained healers to help characters recover lost Sanity points. The DC and effect of a Heal check made to restore lost Sanity depend on whether the therapist is trying to offer immediate care or long-term care.

Immediate Care: When someone suffers an episode of temporary insanity, a therapist can bring him out of it—calming his terror, snapping him out of his stupor, or doing whatever else is needed to restore the patient to the state she was in before the temporary insanity—by making a DC 15 Heal check as a full-round action.

A therapist can also use immediate care to stabilize the Sanity score of a character whose current Sanity is between –1 and –9. On a successful DC 15 check (requiring a full-round action), the character's Sanity score improves to 0.

Long-Term Care: Providing long-term care means treating a mentally disturbed person for a day or more in a place away from stress and distractions. A therapist must spend 1d4 hours per day doing nothing but talking to the patient. If the therapist makes a DC 20 Heal check at the end of this time, the patient recovers 1 Sanity point. A therapist can tend up to six patients at a time; each patient beyond the first adds 1 hour to the total time per day that must be devoted to therapy. The check must be made each day for each patient. A roll of 1 on any of these Heal checks indicates that the patient loses 1 point of Sanity that day, as she regresses mentally due to horrors suddenly remembered.

Variant—Knowledge (Mental Therapy): A new skill called Knowledge (mental therapy) can serve as the primary way to treat those who have suffered Sanity loss. Knowledge (mental therapy) is a Wisdom-based skill that cannot be used untrained. If you use this variant, characters with the Heal skill can only offer immediate care, and cannot offer long-term care. The Knowledge (mental therapy) skill allows both types of treatment.

Note: If magical means of restoring Sanity are present in the campaign, the Knowledge (mental therapy) skill is generally not worth including as a separate skill, because characters are better off simply using magic rather than devoting precious skill points to such a narrow-focus skill. If magic cannot restore Sanity, the ability to restore Sanity by other means is much more important, and Knowledge (mental therapy) should probably exist as a separate skill.

substances and drugs does not make a character immune or even particularly resistant to further Sanity losses. A DC 25 Craft (alchemy) check is needed to accurately prepare the correct herbs and substances and administer the correct dosage.

Long-term alchemical treatment can restore lost Sanity points, just as use of the Heal skill can. For each month the character takes an accurately prescribed psychiatric medication, she regains 1d3 Sanity points. As with treatment through the Heal skill, long-term drug therapy can never raise a character's current Sanity above her starting Sanity.

A character cannot regain Sanity from both treatment with the Heal skill and alchemical treatment in the same month.

Drugs and Sanity

Drugs in the D&D game follow many of the same rules as poisons, allowing the imbiber saving throws to resist their initial and secondary effects. *Delay poison*, *neutralize poison*, and similar effects negate or end a drug's effects, but they do not restore hit points, ability damage, or other damage caused by the substance.

A creature that willingly takes a drug automatically fails both saving throws. It is not possible to intentionally fail the initial save but attempt to save against the secondary effect, or vice versa. Save DCs are provided for situations in which a character is unwillingly drugged.

Drugs also have some uses in treating insanity. The drugs described below all affect a character's Sanity to some extent.

For more details on drugs and advice on appropriate inclusion of drugs in a campaign, see *Book of Vile Darkness* or *Lords of Darkness*.

Sample Drugs

Below are examples of drugs that can be introduced into a campaign; many of them are effective against some sorts of mental disorders. Table 6–12 provides some specifics for each drug, and the text description for each one provides the following additional information.

Initial Effect: The effect of the drug if the initial Fortitude saving throw is failed.

Secondary Effect: The effect of the drug if the secondary Fortitude saving throw is failed 1 minute after ingestion.

Side Effect: The side effect (if any) that occurs immediately upon taking the drug.

Overdose: What (if anything) constitutes an overdose and its effect on the character.

Table 6–12: Drugs

Name	Type	Price	Craft (Alchemy) DC	Addiction Rating[1]
Arthorvin	Ingested DC 12	5 gp	25	Low
Carthagu	Ingested DC 13	5 gp	25	Low
Mertoran leaf	Ingested DC 13	10 gp	25	Negligible
Zixalix	Ingested DC 16	15 gp	25	Medium

1 Discussed in the following section.

Arthorvin

A fragrant gray powder made from rare magical plants, the drug called arthorvin is an appropriate alchemical treatment for anxiety, mood disorders, and dissociative disorders.

Initial Effect: 1 point of Charisma damage.

Secondary Effect: The user is in a calm, peaceful mental state for 2d4 hours and gains a +1 alchemical bonus on Will saves.

Side Effect: Arthorvin causes a general dulling of the imbiber's emotions and reactions. While the drug is in effect, the user takes a –1 penalty on all initiative checks.

Overdose: n/a.

Carthagu

Carthagu is a thin green tea served warm. It is an appropriate alchemical treatment for impulse control problems, eating disorders, and sleep disorders.

Initial Effect: 2 points of Strength damage.

Secondary Effect: Carthagu soothes a wide range of mental disorders, providing relief from the symptoms of the indicated disorders for up to 8 hours.

Side Effect: n/a.

Overdose: n/a.

Mertoran Leaf

When mertoran leaf is dried, treated, and chewed, it provides appropriate alchemical treatment for personality disorders, and substance abuse disorders.

Initial Effect: 1 point of Dexterity damage.

Secondary Effect: The user becomes more confident, gaining a +2 alchemical bonus to Charisma for 1 hour.

Side Effect: While the drug is in effect and for 12 hours thereafter, mertoran leaf relieves the most severe symptoms of the listed disorders.

Overdose: n/a.

Zixalix

A potent combination of many rare herbs and alchemical substances, zixalix provides appropriate alchemical treatment for somatoform disorders, psychotic disorders (including schizophrenia), and psychosexual disorders.

Initial Effect: 1d4 points of Intelligence damage.

Secondary Effect: Zixalix staves off the most severe symptoms of the indicated disorders.

Side Effect: n/a.

Overdose: If more than three doses are taken in a 24-hour period, the imbiber takes 1d4 points of Constitution damage.

Drug Addiction

Drug addiction functions much like diseases as described in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The characteristics of certain forms of addiction are summarized on the table below. Upon initial exposure (any time a character imbibes or applies a drug with an addiction rating), the character must succeed on a Fortitude save or become addicted. Instead of having an incubation period as a disease does, a drug has a satiation period, which is the length of time a single dose remains effective in a character's system. Addiction, if not satisfied by further doses of the drug, proceeds like a disease—the character takes ability damage each day unless he succeeds on a Fortitude save.

Addictions

Addiction Rating	Fort DC	Satiation Period	Damage
Negligible	4	1 day	1d3–2 Dex (can be 0)
Low	6	10 days	1d3 Dex
Medium	10	5 days	1d4 Dex, 1d4 Wis
High	14	1 day	1d6 Dex, 1d6 Wis, 1d6 Con
Extreme	25	1day	1d8 Dex, 1d8 Wis, 1d6 Con, 1d6 Str

Addiction Rating: Each drug is rated according to its addictive potential, from lowest (negligible) to highest (extreme). Sometimes, an individual's long-term addiction raises a drug's addiction rating for that individual. Drugs with a negligible rating are not subject to this change. Stronger drugs increase their addiction rating by one step for every two full months a character remains addicted to the drug. A character who recovers from an addiction and later becomes addicted again to the same drug does so at the addiction rating the drug had just prior to his earlier recovery.

Satiation: Each time a user takes a drug to which he is addicted, he is satiated and staves off withdrawal symptoms for the period of time indicated on the table. Whenever the satiation period expires before the user takes another dose, the DC of the Fortitude save to resist damage (see below) increases by 5. The dose that causes a character to becomes addicted counts for the purpose of tracking the satiation period.

Damage: An addicted user who is not satiated takes the indicated amount of ability damage each day unless the character succeeds on a Fortitude saving throw.

Recovery: If a character makes two successful saving throws in a row, he has fought off his addiction and recovered, and takes no more damage from withdrawal symptoms.

A *lesser restoration* or *restoration* spell might negate some or all of the ability damage caused by an addiction, but the next day the victim may take more ability damage if he continues to fail his Fortitude saves. *Remove disease* immediately causes a user to recover from an addiction, but it does not heal ability damage. *Greater restoration* or *heal* causes recovery and restores all ability damage from the addiction.

TREATMENT OF INSANITY

Temporary insanity ends so quickly that schedules of treatment are essentially pointless; it runs its course soon enough that one merely need protect a deranged character from further upset or harm. On the other hand, treatment of permanent insanity has no real meaning. By definition, a permanently insane character never recovers, no matter how good the therapist or the facility. Thus, indefinite insanity is the only form of mental illness that might be addressed by intervention and treatment.

After 1d6 months, if undisturbed by further trauma and with the agreement of the Dungeon Master, an indefinitely insane character finds enough mental balance to reenter the world. Three kinds of nonmagical care may help the character regain Sanity points during this recovery period. When choosing among them, the DM and player should consider the character's resources, her friends and relatives, and how wisely she has behaved in the past. In most campaigns, the magical treatments described above (see Restoring Sanity with Magic) allow the character to reenter play after a shorter time or with less expense.

Private Care

The best care available is at home or in some friendly place (perhaps a small church or the home of a wealthy friend) where nursing can be tender, considerate, and undistracted by the needs of competing patients.

If mental healing or alchemical medications are available, roll d% for each game month that one or the other is used. A result of 01–95 is a success: Add 1d3 Sanity points for either mental therapy or alchemical medications, whichever is used (a character cannot benefit from both in the same month). On a result of 96–100, the healer fumbles the diagnosis or the character rejects the alchemical treatments. She loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress is made that month.

Institutionalization

The next best alternative to private care is commitment to a good insane asylum, but these are extremely rare in most D&D campaigns, if they are present at all. DMs are free to rule that institutionalization is simply not available.

In those campaigns that include such institutions (usually located within the bounds of a temple devoted to a deity of healing), asylums may be said to have an advantage over home care in that they are relatively cheap or even a free service provided by a government or a powerful church. These institutions are of uneven quality, however, and some may be potentially harmful. Some are creative places of experiment and magic-assisted therapy, while others offer mere confinement. In any setting, concentrated and nourishing treatment by strangers is rare.

Therapy using the Heal skill is usually the only treatment available, but in most cases, primitive institutions offer no treatment at all. Sometimes an institution can convey an uncaring sense that undermines the useful effects of alchemical medications, leaving the character with a sense of anger and loss. He is likely to be distrustful of the organization and its motives. Escape attempts are common by inmates, even in the most enlightened fantasy settings.

Roll d% for each game month a character is in the care of an institution. A result of 01–95 is a success; add 1d3 Sanity points if therapy with the Heal skill was available, or 1 Sanity point if no treatment was present. On a result of 96–100, the character rebels against the environment. He loses 1d6 Sanity points, and no progress can be made that month.

Wandering and Homeless

If no care is available, an insane character may become a wandering derelict struggling for survival. Such a wanderer gains no Sanity points unless he is able to join a group of the homeless and find at least one friend among them. To find a friend after joining such a group, the character can make a DC 15 Charisma check once per month. If a friend appears, the character recovers 1 Sanity point per game month thereafter.

For each game month during which an insane character lives as a derelict, roll d%. On a result of 01–95, the character survives. On a result of 96–100, the character dies as the result of disease, exposure, or violence.

MENTAL DISORDERS

The DM should choose how characters in the campaign world think and therefore talk about insanity before play begins. In many fantasy games, the term "insane" serves as an all-encompassing term that represents everything an inhabitant knows or understands about the full spectrum of mental disorders. In others, different forms of insanity may be identified for what they are.

This section offers descriptions of many specific mental disorders. Where appropriate, suggested modifiers to characters' attack rolls, saves, and checks are also given.

Anxiety Disorders

Even a seasoned adventurer feels anxious before braving a dragon's cave, and the farmers in the village might worry that their crops will not survive until harvest. These fears are a normal, natural

part of living in a danger-filled environment such as a D&D campaign setting, but in some cases these anxieties overwhelm an individual, causing inactivity, distress, and even severe behavioral problems. When fear and anxiety overwhelm a character for a prolonged period of time, the character suffers from an anxiety disorder. The most common forms of anxiety disorders are described below.

Generalized Anxiety Disorder: The character suffers from a variety of physical and emotional symptoms that can be grouped into certain categories.

Motor Tension: Jitteriness, aches, twitches, restlessness, easily startled, easily fatigued, and so on. All attack rolls, Fortitude and Reflex saves, and all checks involving Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution take a –2 penalty.

Autonomic Hyperactivity: Sweating, racing heart, dizziness, clammy hands, flushed or pallid face, rapid pulse and respiration even when at rest, and so on. All attack rolls, saves, and checks take a –2 penalty.

Expectations of Doom: Anxieties, worries, fears, and especially anticipations of misfortune. All attack rolls, saves, and checks take a –2 morale penalty.

Vigilance: Distraction, inability to focus, insomnia, irritability, impatience. All Will saves and checks involving Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma take a –4 morale penalty.

Panic Disorder (Panic Attack): This illness is marked by a discrete period of fear in which symptoms develop rapidly. Within minutes palpitation, sweating, trembling, and difficulty in breathing develop, strong enough that the victim fears immediate death or insanity. Burdened with the recurrence of these episodes, she fears their return. This reaction often leads to agoraphobia (see below).

Agoraphobia (Fear of Open Places): The character becomes very nervous outside familiar surroundings and must make a DC 15 Will save in order to leave home or engage socially. May be linked to panic disorder (see above) or to a related phobia (see below), such as uranophobia (fear of the sky), baraphobia (fear of loss of gravity), or xenophobia (fear of strangers).

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder: This illness manifests in one of two main forms, obsessive thoughts or compulsive actions; some characters exhibit both.

Obsessions: The character cannot help thinking about an idea, image, or impulse incessantly, often involving violence and self-doubt. These ideas are frequently repugnant to the character, but they are so strong that during times of stress she may be unable to concentrate on anything else, even if doing so is necessary for her survival. Obsessive impulses can be very dangerous when combined with auditory hallucinations, since the "voices" may urge the character to take some dangerous or hostile course of action.

Compulsions: The character insists on performing ritual actions, such as touching a doorway at left, right, and top before passing through it. Though she may agree that the actions are senseless, the need to perform them is overpowering and may last for 1d10 rounds. Even in times of great stress, the character may ignore her survival in order to perform the actions.

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder: After a traumatic event, perhaps even years later, the character begins to relive the trauma through persistent thoughts, dreams, and flashbacks. Correspondingly, the character loses interest in daily activities. She may return to normal once the memories have been thoroughly explored and understood, but that process may take years.

Phobia or Mania: A character afflicted by a phobia or a mania persistently fears a particular object or situation. She realizes that the fear is excessive and irrational, but the fear is disturbing enough that she avoids the stimulus.

Phobia: A DC 15 Will check is required for a character to be able to force herself into (or remain within) the presence of the object of her phobia, and even then the character takes a –2 morale penalty as long as the object of fear remains. In severe cases, the object of the phobia is imagined to be omnipresent, perhaps hidden—thus, someone with severe acrophobia (fear of heights) might be frightened when in an enclosed room on the upper story of a building, even if there were no window or other way to see how high up the room was. As many phobias exist as one cares to notice or name—the lists provided below cover merely some of the more common phobias that might affect D&D characters.

Mania: Manias are rarer than phobias. A character affected by a mania is inordinately fond of a particular stimulus and takes great pains to be with it or near it. When the character's

Illus. by Lakeys

sexuality is involved, the mania may be termed a fetish. Thus, teratophobia would be an inordinate fear of monsters, while teratophilia would be an unhealthy (possibly sexual) attraction to them. See the following lists of phobias for ideas on what sorts of disorders could manifest as manias.

Real-World Phobias: The following list provides examples of phobias from the real world that lend themselves to inclusion in a D&D campaign.

Certain real-world phobias can easily be broadened to include monstrous creatures and specific magic effects in a fantasy environment. For example, ophidiophobia (fear of snakes) could be extended to include yuan-ti and other snakelike creatures, or ichthyophobia (fear of fish) could be extended to include aquatic creatures with fishlike qualities, such as the locathah and the sahuagin.

Phobia	Fear of . . .
Acrophobia	heights (formerly known as vertigo)
Aerophobia	wind
Agoraphobia	open places
Ailurophobia	cats
Androphobia	men (males)
Astrophobia	stars
Autophobia	being alone
Bacteriophobia	bacteria ("germs")
Ballistophobia	bullets
Bathophobia	deep submerged places
Bibliophobia	books
Blennophobia	slime
Brontophobia	thunder
Cenophobia	empty rooms
Chionophobia	snow
Claustrophobia	enclosed spaces
Demophobia	crowds
Dendrophobia	trees
Entomophobia	insects
Equinophobia	horses
Gephyrdrophobia	crossing bridges
Gynephobia	women (females)
Hamartophobia	sinning or making an error
Haphephobia	being touched
Heliophobia	sunlight or the sun
Hematophobia	blood or bleeding
Hydrophobia	water
Hypnophobia	sleep
Iatrophobia	doctors (healers)
Ichthyophobia	fish
Maniaphobia	going insane
Monophobia	being alone
Musophobia	mice (and rats)
Necrophobia	dead things
Nyctophobia	night or nightfall
Odontophobia	teeth
Onomatophobia	a certain name, word, or phrase
Ophidiophobia	snakes
Ornithophobia	birds
Pediphobia	children
Phagophobia	eating
Phonophobia	noise, including one's own voice
Pyrophobia	fire
Scotophobia	darkness
Spectrophobia	mirrors
Taphephobia	being buried alive
Teratophobia	monsters
Thalassophobia	the sea
Tomophobia	surgery
Uranophobia	the heavens ("the horrible gaping sky!")
Vermiphobia	worms
Xenophobia	foreigners or strangers
Zoophobia	animals

Fantastic Phobias: With some imagination and a little knowledge about how "phobia" terms are formed (most come from ancient Greek words), it's possible to come up with a list of phobias tailored to a fantasy setting. The following list is provided as a starting point.

Phobia	Fear of . . .
Arcuophobia	bows
Aurophobia	gold
Aberraphobia	aberrations and creatures with tentacles
Bogyphobia	demons and goblins
Demonophobia	demons
Dracophobia	dragons
Confodiophobia	being stabbed
Faephobia	fey
Gigaphobia	giants and Large or larger creatures
Hadephobia	hell
Hagiophobia	saints and holy relics
Hierophobia	priests and sacred items
Incantophobia	enchantment and mind control
Iophobia	poison
Manaphobia	magic
Materiophobia	constructs
Myxophobia	oozes
Naturaphobia	nature and druids
Planarphobia	outsiders and extraplanar creatures
Plantaphobia	plants and plant creatures
Phantasmaphobia	specters or ghosts
Pneumatophobia	incorporeal creatures
Uranophobia	heaven (esp. divine magic)

Dissociative Disorders

Individuals suffering from dissociative disorders cannot maintain a complete awareness of themselves, their surroundings, or time. The disorder often involves some great previous trauma that is too terrible to remember. Characters who have gone insane from an encounter with powerful monsters often suffer from some form of dissociative disorder.

Dissociative Amnesia (Psychogenic Amnesia): This is the inability to recall important personal information, brought on by a desire to avoid unpleasant memories. The character must make a DC 20 Will save to recall such details or the cause of the amnesia. Since the horror of evil creatures and disturbing truths is the probable cause of this amnesia, as an optional rule the DM may choose to reset the character's Knowledge (forbidden lore) modifier to +0 and her maximum Sanity to 99 while this disorder holds sway: The horror returns only when the character's memories do.

Dissociative Fugue: The character flees from home or work and cannot recall her past. Once the flight halts, the character may assume an entirely new identity.

Dissociative Identity Disorder (Multiple Personality Disorder): The character appears to harbor more than one personality, each of which is dominant at times and has its own distinct behavior, name, and even gender. The player needs to keep track of the character's different personalities. (Each one has the same ability scores and game statistics, but different goals, outlooks, and attitudes.)

Eating Disorders

These disorders can be incredibly debilitating and even lead to starvation. They are conditions that may continue for many years, sometimes continually endangering the patient.

Anorexia Nervosa: The character has an overpowering fear of becoming fat and consequently loses weight, as well as taking Constitution damage (at a rate of 1d8 points per week). Even when she is no more than skin and bones, the character continues to see herself as overweight. Without intervention, she may literally starve herself to death.

Bulimia Nervosa: The character frequently eats large amounts of food during secret binges. An eating episode may continue until abdominal distress or self-induced vomiting occurs. Feelings of depression and guilt frequently follow such episodes.

Impulse Control Disorders

These disorders include compulsive gambling, pathological lying, kleptomania (compulsive stealing), and pyromania (the compulsion to set fires).

Intermittent Explosive Disorder: The character is recognizably impulsive and aggressive, and at times gives way to uncontrollable rages that result in assault or destruction of property.

Mood Disorders

These disorders affect the victim's attitude and outlook. Mild mood disorders can be almost impossible to detect without prolonged contact with an individual, but severe disorders usually have noticeable symptoms.

Depression: Symptoms of this illness include changes in appetite, weight gain or loss, too much or too little sleep, persistent feeling of tiredness or sluggishness, and feelings of worthlessness or guilt, leading in severe cases to hallucinations, delusions, stupor, or thoughts of suicide. All attack rolls, saves, and checks take a –4 morale penalty. A predisposition to use alcohol or other mood-altering substances in an attempt at self-medication exists. A character suffering from severe chronic depression may give up virtually all effort from feelings of hopelessness—for example, deciding not to get out of bed for two years.

Mania: The character has a fairly constant euphoric or possibly irritable mood. Symptoms include a general increase in activity, talkativeness, increased self-esteem to the point of delusion, decreased need for sleep, being easily distracted, willingness for dangerous or imprudent activities such as reckless driving, delusions, hallucinations, and bizarre behavior. All attack rolls, saves, and checks take a –4 morale penalty A predisposition to use alcohol or other substances in an attempt at self-medication exists.

Bipolar Mood Disorder: The character oscillates between mood states, sometimes staying in one mood for weeks at a time, sometimes rapidly switching from one to another. Also known as manic depressive.

Personality Disorders

These long-term disorders have almost constant effects on a character's behavior, making it difficult for him to interact with others and often making him unpleasant to be around as well. This is an important point to keep in mind when roleplaying—few players want to spend time with another player character suffering from a personality disorder.

In game terms, the character takes a –4 penalty on all Charisma-based checks. In addition, the attitudes of NPCs the character encounters are shifted in a negative direction. When the table on page 72 of the *Player's Handbook* is used to determine NPC atitudes, the player must make a Charisma check for the character. On a successful check, the attitude of the NPC in question shifts one step toward hostile; on a failed check, the attitude of the NPC in question shifts two steps toward hostile.

Personality disorders are classified in the following categories.

Antisocial: Short-sighted and reckless behavior, habitual liar, confrontational, fails to meet obligations (job, bills, relationships), disregards rights and feelings of others.

Avoidant: Oversensitive to rejection, low self-esteem, socially withdrawn.

Borderline: Rapid mood shifts, impulsive, unable to control temper, chronic boredom.

Compulsive: Perfectionist, authoritarian, indecisive from fear of making mistakes, difficulty expressing emotions.

Dependent: Lacks self-confidence; seeks another to look up to, follow, and subordinate herself to ("codependent").

Histrionic: Overly dramatic, craves attention and excitement, overreacts, displays temper tantrums, may threaten suicide if thwarted.

HOUSE RULE: PUZZLES AND HINTS

Like many DMs, I put puzzles in my adventures that I want the players to work on at the table. These puzzles often tax the players' knowledge and intuition, as opposed to the characters'. If I put together an elaborate "chessboard" puzzle, for example, I might not want the solution found in just a few die rolls. It's unsatisfying.

However, it's also not fair for me to take the resources of a character away from the player. If you're playing an 18 Intelligence, 18 Wisdom character, your character is pretty smart and intuitive and should have some sort of leg up solving puzzles (though I've met plenty of intelligent people who can't even solve a crossword). It's just like encounter skills: If I set up a roleplaying/negotiation opportunity and you've spent a ton of ranks on the Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Bluff skills, I'd better allow you to make the occasional die roll.

Here's how I split the difference. Whenever I construct a puzzle, I pick a few skills that I think would be applicable to solving the puzzle. If the puzzle has weird runes in it, I might choose Knowledge (arcana), Decipher Script, and/or a particular language (say, Dwarven). If a character has ranks in any of those skills, or knows how to speak Dwarven, I allow the player at some time during the puzzle-solving process to make a skill check or ability check. I only allow one such check per character. Depending on the total, I give the player a hint. I won't solve the puzzle for the party outright this way, but I give them enough of a clue to keep the puzzle fun and interesting.

This, of course, restricts the sorts of puzzles I use in my game. Normally, I construct multistage puzzles with several possible solutions to each level that I can see (and the players almost always figure out one or two solutions I *don't* see). This means that I can give some pretty useful clues to those characters who roll high enough without spoiling the puzzle for the players or myself.

—Ed Stark

Narcissistic: Exaggerated sense of self-importance, craves attention and admiration, considers others' rights and feelings as of lesser importance.

Passive-Aggressive: Procrastinator, stubborn, intentionally forgetful, deliberately inefficient. Sabotages own performance on a regular basis.

Paranoid: Jealous, easily offended, suspicious, humorless, secretive, vigilant; exaggerates magnitude of offenses against oneself, refuses to accept blame.

Schizoid: Emotionally cold, aloof, has few friends; indifferent to praise or criticism.

DMs should realize that, while these traits may work for an interesting NPC from whom the players must extract information or a favor, their antisocial nature makes them ill-suited for members of an adventuring party.

Psychosexual Disorders

Recognizable disorders of this type include transsexualism (a belief that one is actually a member of the opposite sex), impaired sexual desire or function, nymphomania and satyriasis (inordinate and uncontrollable sexual appetite in women and men, respectively), and paraphilia (requirement of an abnormal sexual stimulus, such as sadism, masochism, necrophilia, pedophilia, exhibitionism, voyeurism, fetishism, or bestiality).

Most of these disorders could make players of the afflicted characters uncomfortable and thus are not appropriate for most roleplaying groups, although they can make for striking (if unpleasant) NPCs.

Psychospecies Disorders

These disorders are specific to fantasy environments and involve the victim of one believing that she is a different type of creature. A victim might believe that she is a construct (and therefore immune to critical hits) or any other creature type that she has encountered. When a victim has a psychospecies disorder associated with a creature that has specific weaknesses (for example, a human thinking he's a vampire), then the victim's behavior changes become more noticeable (such as a fear of holy symbols and sunlight).

Schizophrenia and Other Psychotic Disorders

A psychotic character experiences a break with reality. Symptoms can include delusions, hallucinations, and cognitive impairment. In general, only alchemical substances or magic can treat these kinds of disorders. Note, however, that many psychotic characters suffer from the delusion that nothing is wrong with them, and hence they feel no need to take their medication.

Schizophrenia (Schizophreniform Disorder, Dementia Praecox): A schizophrenic character's attention span and ability to concentration are greatly diminished; to reflect this, use only one-half of the character's normal skill modifier on any skill check requiring attentiveness (such as Disable Device, Spot, Search, Open Lock, and of course Concentration). Symptoms include bizarre delusions, paranoia, auditory hallucinations ("hearing voices"), incoherent speech, emotional detachment, social withdrawal, bizarre behavior, and a lack of the sense of self.

A schizophrenic character may fit into one of the following categories.

Undifferentiated: Impaired cognitive function, emotional detachment.

Disorganized: Inappropriate behavior, shallow emotional responses, delusions, hallucinations.

Catatonic: Mutism (loss of ability to talk), extreme compliance, absence of all voluntary movements, complete immobility ("statuism").

Paranoid: Delusions of persecution, illogical thinking, hallucinations.

Symptoms from more than one type can occur in the same individual, along with mood disorders (see above). For example, catatonic schizophrenics sometimes have manic episodes of extreme activity alternating with periods of complete withdrawal. Schizophrenia brought on by sudden stress is called acute schizophrenia; characters who go insane and babble of vast global conspiracies usually are diagnosed as suffering from "acute paranoid schizophrenia."

Other Psychotic Disorders: By some definitions, all severe mental illnesses are classified as psychoses, including mood disorders, dementia, and anxiety disorders. This section deals with some of the interesting behavioral syndromes that may turn up in your game.

Amok—"Running amok," an outburst of violence and aggressive or homicidal behavior directed at people and property. Amnesia, return to consciousness, and exhaustion occur following the episode. During a killing spree, the character utilizes whatever weapons are on hand.

Boufee Detirant—Sudden outburst of aggressive, agitated behavior and marked confusion, sometimes accompanied by visual and auditory hallucinations or paranoia.

Brain Fag—Impaired concentration and feelings of fatigue, pains in the neck and head, a sense that worms are crawling inside one's head.

Ghost Sickness—Weakness, loss of appetite, feelings of suffocation, nightmares, and a pervasive feeling of terror, attributed as a sending from witches or malign otherworldly powers.

Piblokto—"Arctic madness," wherein the afflicted rips off clothing and runs howling like an animal through the snow.

Susto—A variety of somatic and psychological symptoms attributed to a traumatic incident so frightening that it dislodged the victim's spirit from her body.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: SANITY

Because it affects the way that characters interact with the creatures and objects that they encounter on their adventures in many different and profound ways, this variant, perhaps more than any other in *Unearthed Arcana,* can alter the entire feel of a campaign. If you adopt this variant in your campaign, the largest change will most likely be one of tone (this applies to an even greater extent if you adopt the entire Cthulhu Mythos that the variant is based on). As in the *Call of Cthulhu Roleplaying Game,* characters feel more vulnerable, for no matter how powerful they become, the dark gods are always greater. Religion is not only a source of comfort or succor, but also a dangerous enemy. (In those games that use the Cthulhu Mythos, religion seldom provides any succor at all.) Characters are suspicious, even paranoid, for a seemingly innocent commoner could secretly serve a cult. And yet, with such dark challenges come the opportunities for greater heroism.

Taijin Kyofusho—"Face-to-face" phobia, an intense anxiety when in the presence of other people; fearfulness that one's appearance, odor, or behavior is offensive.

Voodoo Death—Belief that a hex or curse can bring about misfortune, disability, and death through some spiritual mechanism. Often the victim self-fulfills the hexer's prophecy by refusing to eat and drink, resulting in dehydration and starvation.

Wacinko—Anger, withdrawal, mutism, and immobility, leading to illness and suicide.

Wendigo Syndrome—The afflicted believes she is a personification of the Wendigo, a cannibalistic creature with an icy heart.

Shared Paranoid Disorder (Shared Delusional Disorder, *Folie a Deux*): The character takes on the delusional system of another paranoid individual from being in close contact with that person.

Sleep Disorders

These disorders include insomnia (character has difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep) and narcolepsy (character frequently falls asleep, almost anywhere and at inappropriate times). Characters performing demanding tasks such as engaging in combat or casting a spell may, when stressed, need to make DC 15 Concentration checks to stay awake and not put themselves in a dangerous situation.

Night Terrors: A sleeping character wakes after a few hours of sleep, usually screaming in terror. Pulse and breathing are rapid, pupils are dilated, and hair stands on end. The character is confused and hard to calm down. Night terrors are similar to ordinary nightmares, but much more intense and disruptive.

Somnambulism: Sleepwalking. As with night terrors, this behavior occurs in the first few hours of sleep. An episode may last up to 30 minutes. During the episode, the character's face is blank and staring, and she can be roused only with difficulty. Once awake, she recalls nothing of the activity.

Somatoform Disorders

A somatoform disorder may be diagnosed when a character experiences physical symptoms that cannot be explained by an actual physical injury or disease.

Somatization Disorder: The character suffers from a physical ailment or diseaselike effect, with symptoms ranging from dizziness and impotence to blindness and intense pain. The Heal skill cannot identify any physical cause for the symptoms, and magical healing has no effect. The victim does not believe that her symptoms represent a specific disease. All attack rolls, saves, and checks take a –2 penalty.

Conversion Disorder: The character reports dysfunctions that suggest a physical disorder but, though they are involuntary, the symptoms actually provide a way for the victim to avoid something undesirable or a way to garner attention and caring, a condition called Munchausenism. Symptoms range from painful headaches to paralysis or blindness. With the condition known as Reverse Munchausenism, a character projects ill health onto others and may even arrange injuries or illnesses for them so that she can thereafter take care of them. All attack rolls, saves, and checks take a –2 penalty.

Hypochondriasis: Character believes she suffers from a serious disease. No physical cause for reported symptoms can be found, but the character continues to believe that the disease or condition exists, often with serious consequences to her normal life.

Body Dysmorphic Disorder: Character suffers from perceived flaws in appearance, usually of the face, or of the hips or legs. Behavior may alter in unexpected ways to cover up the flaws or to calm anxieties.

Substance Abuse Disorder

A character with a substance abuse disorder finds solace in using a drug, becomes addicted to it, and spends much time maintaining, concealing, and indulging the habit. Drugs include alcohol, amphetamines, cocaine, hallucinogens, marijuana, nicotine, opium (especially morphine and heroin), sedatives, and more fantastic substances present in the campaign world (see Sample Drugs, earlier in this section).

A character under the sway of such a substance should feel the personal struggle daily. Will saving throws might be used to resist or succumb symbolically to cravings, especially just before periods of stress (for example, just before a confrontation or likely battle with evil cultists). All attack rolls, saves, and checks take a –2 morale penalty because of withdrawal symptoms. Sanity losses could occur from binges or bad trips. Some characters might find that drugs promote communication with alien entities and deities, and that dreams about them become ever more vivid and horrifying, Conversely, such substances might function as medications, deadening a character's fears and offering temporary defenses against Sanity loss.

Other Disorders

Other disorders exist in common parlance, but most of these are actually symptoms or specific instances of disorders already mentioned above. These include quixotism (seeing the supernatural everywhere, even in the most mundane surroundings), panzaism (seeing the most extraordinary events as ordinary and rational), and megalomania (delusions of power, wealth, fame, and ability). Use or ignore these as suits your campaign, or invent new categories of madness to reflect the chaos that lies just below the brittle surface of Lovecraft's world.

A PSYCHIATRIC GLOSSARY

The following words are defined in terms of a real-world understanding of insanity; some of them (illusion, for example) have different meanings in a D&D game context. As with all aspects of the Sanity variant, DMs need to determine how each race and culture within the campaign world views insanity and how capable each race and culture is of treating mental disorders in order to know which of these words might come into play.

Affect: The external expression of a patient's mood (sadness, anger, joy, fear). May be inconsistent with patient's mood, depending on the disorder.

Anorexia: Loss or decrease of appetite.

Catatonia: Various strong motor anomalies, for instance catatonic stupor (slowed activity to the point of immobilization); ceraflexibilitas (the victim can be molded into strange postures that are maintained), and catatonic excitement (agitated, purposeless movements).

Compulsion: The need to perform certain actions repetitively, including various personal rituals, dipsomania, kleptomania, nymphomania, satyriasis, trichotillomania (pulling out hair), and so on.

Delirium: A reversible syndrome of bewilderment, restlessness, confusion, and disorientation, associated with fear and hallucinations, all caused by some underlying medical condition.

Delusion: A firmly fixed false belief, one not based in reality. It can be bizarre, as in schizophrenia, or systematized, as in delusional disorders.

Dementia: A loss of cognitive function, often first manifesting in memory loss.

Depersonalization: A subjective feeling of being unreal, or unfamiliar to self.

Derealization: A subjective feeling that the environment is strange or unreal; for instance, feeling the world to be a stage or a two-dimensional painting.

Dissociation: Confusion over one's sense of self and identity.

Formication: The feeling that insects are crawling all over one's body, a tactile hallucination caused by cocaine and delirium tremens.

Hallucination: A perception of a sensory stimulus in the absence of sensory stimuli; for instance, seeing or hearing someone who isn't there.

Illusion: The misperception of a sensory stimulus; for instance, seeing the rustling branches of a tree as tentacles.

Logorrhea: Copious, coherent, logical speech.

Mania: A mood characterized by elation and increased activity.

Mood: A pervasive feeling that is experienced internally.

Neurosis: Symptoms of depression, anxiety, or the like arising from stress. A neurosis is less severe than a psychosis. A neurotic character may still be able to function; a psychotic one generally cannot.

Obsession: An idea or thought that constantly intrudes into one's consciousness.

Paranoia: Persistent, consistent, plausible, and ingenious delusions of persecution or jealousy. New information always seems to support the increasing threat of some great conspiracy. Paranoia is more a symptom than a disorder, because it can appear in schizophrenia, mania, and so on

Psychosis: Severe mental illness in which the character experiences thoughts and perceptions that are out of touch with reality. A psychosis is more severe than a neurosis.

Somnambulism: Sleepwalking.

Somnolence: Abnormal drowsiness.

Synthesia: Sensation caused by another sensation; for instance, seeing sound.

Tic: Involuntary spasmodic motor movement.

Trailing Phenomenon: Perceptual abnormality associated with hallucinogens in which moving objects are seen in a series of discrete discontinuous images.

Trance: Focused attention and altered consciousness, usually seen in hypnosis, dissociative disorders, and ecstatic religious experiences.

TEST-BASED PREREQUISITES

Prestige classes and feats use traditional D&D prerequisites: skill ranks, specific feats, and other game statistics. But the master of the assassins' guild doesn't really know whether you have 4 ranks in the Disguise skill. He'd be at least as impressed with your ability to disguise yourself if you had a sky-high Charisma, Skill Focus (Disguise) and 5 ranks in Bluff, a *hat of disguise*, or the supernatural ability to change shape (possessed by the doppelganger and the rakshasa, among others). Similarly, no one in the game world can tell whether a potential dwarven defender has the Toughness feat or not. Prerequisites that rely on game statistics rather than visible "realities" of the game world can break the verisimilitude of the world in your imagination.

To make prerequisites seem more "real," this variant changes them to actual tests that would be observable in the game world. The assassins' guild, for example, might require potential members to sneak past the castle guards (employing Hide and Move Silently), infiltrate the queen's banquet (using Disguise), and poison the wine of a minor noble (thus killing someone for no other reason than to join the assassins). It certainly helps to have 4 ranks in Disguise and 8 ranks each in Hide and Move Silently, but the observable result is what the assassins judge.

Test-based prerequisites have two big advantages. First, they encourage character variety and player cleverness. Any PC who wants to become an arcane archer can dream up a dozen ways to gain an edge in the "Twelve Arrow Challenge" competition, and maybe he succeeds even if he has a base attack bonus of only +5. It's entirely arbitrary to keep out a would-be arcane archer who has a Dexterity of 20 but accept an archer with a Dexterity of 13 and the Weapon Focus (longbow) feat. The first character is a much better archer, and the prestige class should recognize that. The second advantage to test-based prerequisites is that they help immerse the player in the game world. It's more exciting if a would-be hierophant's goal is "I want to earn a Pact with the Heavens" rather than "I need 15 ranks in Knowledge (religion)."

Because the existence of a test implies that there's an NPC administering the test, these new prerequisites work best if the prestige classes in your campaign are tied to specific organizations. For feats, test-based prerequisites work best if PCs must train as described on page 197 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* (and thus find an instructor) to get new feats.

Employing test-based prerequisites means that a character taking a test spends some time at the gaming table trying to earn access to the prestige class or feat. If a test is elaborate or time-consuming, the other players at the game table might get bored. A short single-player session before or after the main game session is often a good way to take care of a test. Another risk with a test-based prerequisite is that it relies at least to a degree on the fall of the dice. If a player with her heart set on becoming a loremaster has a run of bad luck during the Examination of Ineffable Lore, she might resent the extra obstacle you've placed in her character's way. Conversely, a lucky set of die rolls can potentially give a PC access to a prestige class or feat much earlier than would otherwise be possible.

PRESTIGE CLASS TESTS

The following tests are examples of test-based prerequisites for the prestige classes in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. Because this variant relies heavily on the guiding hand of the DM, these tests won't be appropriate in all campaigns.

Arcane Archer: The Test of the Twelve Arrows. The applicant must cast *magic weapon* on the provided bow, then take twelve *+1 arrows* into a specially tended part of the forest. Before night falls, she must slay a wild boar, use magic to capture an owl, and bring down the albino stag without hitting any of the other stags in the herd. The applicant fails if the tasks aren't completed by nightfall or if she runs out of arrows.

Arcane Trickster: Fleece the Police. First, the applicant must intentionally get arrested for unlawful magic use, displaying his flashiest spells while the arcane tricksters watch him surreptitiously. That night in jail, the applicant receives a confusing, seemingly contradictory map, which he must figure out (Decipher

Script DC 17). The relevant parts of the map show the layout of the precinct building. If the applicant can escape, he is welcomed into the ranks of the arcane tricksters. This test is made more difficult by the fact that the guards take away all the applicant's gear.

Archmage: The Counterspell Test of Kal'thra. An archmage visits the applicant unannounced and proposes a counterspell battle. The archmage casts 5th-, 6th-, and 7th-level spells from all eight schools, and the applicant must successfully identify and counter as many as he can. To be accepted among the archmages, the applicant must have a perfect score on identification and must successfully counter at least one 7th-level spell and one spell from each of at least five different schools.

Assassin: The Test of *Corvu u Khalai*—"Eliminate, then replace." Contacted by an anonymous letter, the applicant is given the name of a well-known functionary in the noble court, often the chamberlain, troubadour, or court wizard. The applicant must sneak into the castle on the night of the full moon, kill the target, and then impersonate him. The test is a success if the applicant walks out of the castle disguised as the target when the gates open in the morning, carrying the target's head in a satchel.

Blackguard: Break the Weapon, Bind the Contract. Below the palace is a chamber forgotten by most: the prison of Vulthex, a bearded devil of unsurpassed evil. A would-be applicant must slip past the clay golem that wanders the prison complex and convince Vulthex to agree to a nonlethal duel. Vulthex is fascinated with questions of mortal faith, so even a basic understanding of religion (Knowledge [religion] DC 12) impresses him greatly. Vulthex wields a glaive, and anyone who can break it has earned the right to call himself a blackguard.

Dragon Disciple: Ritual of Essence Distillation. Fundamentally, becoming a dragon disciple is a question of heritage. But a ritual exists that, when performed properly, can awaken the blood of one's draconic heritage. Performing the 12-hour ritual requires the ability to speak Draconic and a successful DC 18 Knowledge (arcana) check. At three points during the ritual, the applicant must release some of his stored magical energy (expend a spell slot, in other words).

Duelist: Crossed Swords at Noon. This one's simple—to become a duelist, you have to beat an existing duelist in a fair duel before a crowd in the town square. But the duelists are in on a secret that the applicant usually isn't: The battle may be won with blades, but the duelists are judging the applicant's worthiness based on the acclaim of the crowd. The battle is to surrender, not death, and the NPC duelist surrenders when reduced to one-third of her hit points or less.

Dwarven Defender: The Tunnel of Implacable Stone. The dwarven defenders take the applicant deep into the bowels of the earth, give him his weapon of choice (but no other gear), and order him to start a timed run up a steeply sloping tunnel to the surface. Along the way, he faces a series of fights with progressively larger earth elementals, but after each fight, he earns a piece of equipment: first armor, then a shield, then perhaps a healing potion, and so on. Between fights, the applicant must run uphill, striving for the surface. If he survives the fights with the elementals and makes it out of the tunnel in time, he becomes a dwarven defender.

Eldritch Knight: Tourney of the Grand Eagle. Every year, the eldritch knights have a two-day tournament in a tent city they magically create outside the city walls. On the first day, applicants go through an archery contest, a duel with swords, and another duel using a melee weapon of each applicant's choosing. (The duels are to unconsciousness, and clerics are on hand to heal the gravely wounded.) On the second day, applicants engage in a series of spellcasting duels—everything from fights between summoned monsters to games of counterspelling one-upsmanship. Using a complex scoring system, the eldritch knights select two applicants to join their order at sunset of the second day.

Hierophant: Pact with the Heavens (or Depths). First, the would-be hierophant calls an outsider allied with his faith (traditionally by means of an extended *lesser planar ally* spell). The ally

Illus. by J. Pavelec

Illus. by D. Roach

tests the applicant's knowledge of his religion (Knowledge [religion] DC 25) and asks for a demonstration of the applicant's spellcasting potency. If the ally is impressed, it intercedes on the applicant's behalf, and the new hierophant receives an indisputable sign of his deity's favor.

Horizon Walker: The Red Lodge. The test for entrance to the horizon walkers is simple: find the door to the clubhouse. The Red Lodge isn't exactly secret—clues to its location are scattered across dozens of maps—but it's located in a remote wilderness location and magically protected against divinations and *teleport* spells. The applicant has to learn where the Red Lodge is, then get there under her own power.

Loremaster: Examination of Ineffable Lore. To become a loremaster, an applicant must first impress the existing loremasters by giving them either a magic item or an original spell that the applicant created herself. Then the loremasters pose a question or riddle of unsurpassed difficulty, which the applicant has one game month to solve. It's an open-book, open-magic test—without restrictions on the means the applicant may use to solve the riddle posed by the loremasters. When the applicant returns with the correct answer, the loremasters reveal that they didn't know the answer themselves, then congratulate the applicant on her original contribution to their accumulated store of knowledge.

Mystic Theurge: Journey of the Two Tests. The applicant must travel to a far-off city to study at a particular arcanists' college, passing their examination with a DC 16 Knowledge (arcana) check. Then the applicant goes to the mountaintop Citadel of the Theurges, where he meditates and learns from the priests there. Finally, he receives a divine vision in which a representative of his deity or alignment questions him about matters of faith (answering correctly requires a DC 16 Knowledge [religion] check).

Shadowdancer: Audition in Darkness. On a dimly lit stage in an abandoned theater, the applicant must dance well enough to impress the judges sitting unseen in the audience (a DC 15 Perform [dance] check). Even if she passes the dance audition, she hears a cry of "Get her!" and dozens of guards rush the stage. She must escape the labyrinthine theater any way she can, employing stealth and combat prowess. She isn't allowed to attack the guards directly, but she can make ripostes (attacks of opportunity, in other words) if she gets the chance. If she gets out of the theater, she's welcomed into the troupe of shadowdancers with a great revel.

Thaumaturgist: Duel of the Servants. After calling a planar ally, the would-be thaumaturgist visits the vine-covered ruins of an ancient temple. A high-level thaumaturgist meets the applicant and his ally there, then begins casting his own *lesser planar ally* spell. During the 10 minutes it takes the thaumaturgist to

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: TEST-BASED PREREQUISITES

So why don't all prestige classes employ test-based prerequisites? It's a matter of control that highlights a fundamental difference between the job of the game designer and the job of the DM. The D&D rules use the prerequisites they do because they're based on predictable numbers. No character can have a base attack bonus higher than her character level, for example, or more ranks in a skill than her character level + 3. For the game designer, that predictability is an important balancing tool, ensuring that no character gets access to a prestige class or feat so early that it makes the game less fun.

But as the DM, you don't have to have to worry about millions of possible characters, just the specific ones in your campaign. You can predict your players better than anyone else, both in terms of what appeals to them and what means they use to achieve those ends. And you are the architect of the game world. If a PC becomes an eldritch knight by "cheating" on the entrance test, the knights might kick him out and update their test to close the loophole—just as a real-world organization would.

cast his spell, the applicant can cast whatever spells he wishes on his own planar ally. Then the allies of the thaumaturgist and the applicant battle. The thaumaturgist's ally yields when reduced to 20% or less of its full normal hit points. If the applicant's ally wins, he's eligible to join the ranks of the thaumaturgists.

FEAT TESTS

The tests described below are examples of what an instructor might demand from a PC before teaching a particular feat. As with the prestige class tests above, they won't be appropriate for all campaigns.

Not every feat with a prerequisite has a test associated with it, because many of the requirements are either very simple (base attack bonus of +1, for example), or they are tied to a specific tree of feats (Power Attack is a prerequisite for Cleave, for example). The best candidates for feat tests are feats at the top of their respective feat trees (those that have other feats as prerequisites but are not themselves prerequisites) and feats available only to higher-level characters, because those feats represent specialized training that only the most accomplished can hope to complete.

Great Cleave: Test of the Death-Dealer. The applicant must run headlong into battle against a numerically superior foe (often goblins, kobolds, or low-level soldiers), using his Cleave feat in 3 consecutive rounds and dropping a second foe on at least two of those occasions. That performance sufficiently impresses the instructor, who offers to teach the applicant Great Cleave.

Greater Two-Weapon Fighting: Tempest of Steel. The applicant must deal at least 6 points of damage to each of five gladiators (AC 13), all in the same round.

Greater Weapon Focus and Greater Weapon Specialization: Seek the Master. The applicant must find a reputed master of her chosen weapon, then survive for 5 rounds in a duel against the master. The master sets the conditions of the duel, which can be safe or deadly, depending on the alignment and inclination of the master.

Improved Critical: Anatomists' Examination. The trainer sets up an array of cadavers or butcher's meat swinging from ropes. The applicant must strike each one a single time, aiming for a particularly vulnerable point (AC 20). The trainer accepts any applicants who can hit at least six of the targets over the course of 4 rounds. Magic weapons aren't allowed.

Improved Precise Shot: Test of the Shield Maiden. The applicant must hit an elusive, armored target (AC 24 because it's using the total defense action) without hitting the shield-wielding assistant who stands between the applicant and the target. The applicant gets three chances and must hit with two. Magic weapons and ammunition aren't allowed.

Manyshot: Attack the Caravan. The applicant must hit seven out of nine bullseye targets (AC 18) mounted on the back of wagons 30 feet away, and she has only 3 rounds to do so. Any sort of magical assistance is acceptable, except for *haste* spells and weapons with the speed special ability.

Shot on the Run: Gauntlet of Cudgels. The applicant must move down the middle of a 120-foot long path lined on both sides with cudgel-wielding soldiers. At the end of the path is a target (AC 10), which the applicant must hit with four arrows or other projectiles before 30 seconds pass. Magic weapons and ammunition aren't allowed.

Snatch Arrows: Become the Bullseye. The applicant must stand in one spot as an archer shoots ten arrows at him, one per round. He must successfully deflect at least half of the arrows (and survive the damage from the rest).

Whirlwind Attack: Warrior Unscathed. The instructor surrounds herself with four assistants in the center of the dojo. The applicant must successfully hit the instructor three times with spring attacks without suffering so much as a scratch from the instructor or her assistants. (Most applicants opt to fight defensively and use Combat Expertise to improve their Armor Class.)

DESIGNING YOUR OWN TESTS

The tests described above tend to reward the same feats, ability scores, and other character aspects that standard prerequisites do. That's a useful starting point for tests you might design based on published prestige classes or high-level feats: Imagine what kinds of activities would be significantly easier for characters who possess the relevant feat or other attribute defined as a prerequisite.

For prestige classes based on organizations you've designed yourself, you have a lot more freedom. Answer this question: What would impress the leader of the organization enough to offer membership? Then construct a test just as the leader would, making it hard enough to keep membership fairly exclusive. Consider how applicants might bend or break the rules of the test—both as the leader and as the DM. Anything the leader would reasonably anticipate works its way into the rules of the test. If you see a potential "cheat" that the leader of the organization wouldn't anticipate, then either design a completely different test or leave the loophole open—whichever is more likely to lead to an interesting story.

Try to keep tests fairly simple, because they're essentially solo affairs. You don't want to leave the rest of the PCs waiting impatiently while one character works his way through a test. As an exception, you can design a test so complex or difficult that the relevant PC can't complete it alone—the rest of the PCs must help, and completing the test becomes a full-fledged adventure. This technique works best when partnered with other rewards (usually treasure or the chance to do a good deed or settle an old score) for the PCs who aren't taking a test.

For example, you could design a multiple-part riddle for a would-be loremaster that takes the PCs from the city to an ancient, ruined temple, then to the City of Brass where they must bargain with an efreeti lord. The wizard PC gets the chance to become a loremaster, the cleric PC can reclaim the temple for his deity, the rogue gets a chance to sneak into the treasure vaults of the efreet, and the fighter gets out of the city, where he's wanted for a murder he didn't commit. Everyone has a motivation to help the wizard with her riddle.

LEVEL-INDEPENDENT XP AWARDS

This variant replaces Table 3–2: Experience and Level-Dependent Benefits (page 22 of the *Player's Handbook*) as a way of easing the DM's job of adventure design and the task of experience-point calculation at the end of a game session.

Use the following table to determine when characters gain new levels, rather than Table 3–2 in the *Player's Handbook*.

To advance to a new level beyond 20th, a character needs to gain double the amount of XP he needed to advance from two levels below his current level to one level below his current level.

For example, to advance from 20th level to 21st level, a character needs to gain double the amount of XP he needed to advance from 18th level to 19th level. Since he needed to add 500,000

Table 6–13: Alternative Experience Point Progression

Character Level	XP	Class Skill Max Ranks	Cross-Class Skill Max Ranks	Feats	Ability Score Increases
1st	0	4	2	1st	—
2nd	1,000	5	2-1/2	—	—
3rd	3,000	6	3	2nd	—
4th	6,000	7	3-1/2	—	1st
5th	10,000	8	4	—	—
6th	16,000	9	4-1/2	3rd	—
7th	24,000	10	5	—	—
8th	36,000	11	5-1/2	—	2nd
9th	52,000	12	6	4th	—
10th	76,000	13	6-1/2	—	—
11th	110,000	14	7	—	—
12th	160,000	15	7-1/2	5th	3rd
13th	220,000	16	8	—	—
14th	320,000	17	8-1/2	—	—
15th	440,000	18	9	6th	—
16th	640,000	19	9-1/2	—	4th
17th	890,000	20	10	—	—
18th	1,300,000	21	10-1/2	7th	—
19th	1,800,000	22	11	—	—
20th	2,600,000	23	11-1/2	—	5th

XP to go from 18th to 19th level (1,800,000 minus 1,300,000), he needs 1,000,000 XP (500,000 × 2) to go from 20th level to 21st level (2,600,000 XP to 3,600,000 XP).

Experienced players may be alarmed—the XP totals on Table 6–13 are big numbers. But XP awards per monster are commensurately larger (see Table 6–14: Experience Award [Single Monster], below). Regardless of a character's level relative to the rest of the party, he gets the same numerical XP award, so the math at the end of the night is a lot easier. Table 2–6 on page 38 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* is no longer used. Monsters just have flat XP awards, which are divided up among the participants.

For example, a frost worm (CR 12) is worth 19,000 XP. If four characters defeat it, they each earn 4,750 XP (19,000 divided by 4), regardless of their level.

It still takes thirteen encounters or so to attain a new level. There's still an automatic catch-up feature for PCs who lag behind the rest of the group; that 4,750 XP for the frost worm represents 8% of the experience points required to attain 13th level, but 14% of the experience points required to reach 11th level.

Table 6–14 gives the award for a typical monster of each CR, irrespective of character or party level.

Table 6–14: Experience Award (Single Monster)

Monster CR	XP Award	Monster CR	XP Award
1	300	11	14,000
2	600	12	19,000
3	900	13	29,000
4	1,200	14	38,000
5	1,800	15	58,000
6	2,400	16	77,000
7	3,600	17	120,000
8	4,800	18	150,000
9	7,200	19	230,000
10	9,600	20	310,000

For monsters beyond CR 20, simply double the XP reward for a monster of that CR minus 2. For instance, a CR 22 monster is worth twice as much as a CR 20 monster, or 620,000 XP.

CRAFTING MAGIC ITEMS

If you use this XP system, note that the XP costs paid by characters to create magic items will represent a much smaller fraction of their total XP, and thus creating magic items becomes much less "expensive" overall. If you believe this to be problematic for your campaign, consider increasing the XP cost for crafting magic items as detailed in the table below.

Magic Item XP Costs

Market Price	XP Multiplier
2,000 gp or less	×1
2,001 gp to 20,000 gp	×2
20,001 gp to 200,000 gp	×4
200,001 gp or more	×10

HOUSE RULE: XP BONUS POOL

I use this rule to award bonus experience points to players based on clever ideas, roleplaying their characters especially well, and, frankly, entertaining the group. It's a pretty easy rule to write, but can be difficult to adjudicate.

Before running an adventure, I go through the text and highlight particularly difficult player-oriented elements. I make sure I know when they're coming, and if anyone particularly distinguishes themselves during the solving of these problems, I put a check mark by the character's name on a sheet. When someone does something particularly inventive or interesting in any situation, they get a check mark, too. In the rare case where someone really obstructs play, I might erase a mark.

At the end of the session (I always award XP by session), I count up the total amount of XP to be awarded, and I total up the number of marks by each person's name. I multiply the total XP award by 75% and divide that out equally (assuming everything else about the session was equal). The other 25% of available XP goes into a bonus pool.

When I divvy out the XP in the bonus pool, I give the largest percentage of bonus XP to the character with the most marks by his or her name and the least to the character with the least marks. If possible, I try to make sure everyone gets some bonus XP, even though it might not be a lot, and I always tell players why their characters got any bonus XP. "Good job with that puzzle trap by the dungeon door," or even, "Hey, great job roleplaying your character's grouchiness when the high priest was healing everyone for free." The whole group knows who is getting what percentage of the bonus XP, but I find, at least with my group, that everyone generally agrees with the awards.

If you use this rule, it's important to make sure not to show favoritism. When I first introduced it at my table, I actually made sure that I never gave the same character the highest bonus payout more than twice in a row. Basically, I elevated the bar for the PCs in the third session and tried to encourage others to strive for the higher payout. It has worked very well, but I can see how in some groups the competition might cause problems.

—Ed Stark

Illus. by R. Sardinha

XP COSTS

Spells with an XP component also undergo a change in this variant, since the costs for those spells are set using the standard D&D experience point rules. The table below gives a quick conversion to help calculate the XP costs for spells when using this XP variant. Simply multiply the normal XP cost by the multiplier given in the table to find the new XP cost for the spell.

Spell XP Costs

Spell Level	XP Multiplier
1st–3rd	×1
4th–6th	×2
7th–8th	×4
9th or higher	×10

For example, the *commune* spell (a 5th-level cleric spell) normally costs 100 XP to cast. When using this XP system, it costs 200 XP, or twice as much. The *wish* spell, a 9th-level spell, costs ten times the normal amount of XP to cast (50,000 instead of 5,000).

Use a similar formula to recalculate anything else that applies an XP cost. Divide the character's level by 2 and treat it as if it were a spell level, using the table above to find the proper multiplier.

BEHIND THE CURTAIN: LEVEL-INDEPENDENT XP

DMs who use this variant gain flexibility in two areas: individual monster design and encounter design. Because you're assigning specific XP awards to monsters, you don't have to restrict yourself to the numbers that appear on the table. If you think a monster you've designed is CR 7-1/2, you can simply give out 4,200 XP for defeating it. At higher levels, the numbers on the table should suffice because it's hard to discern a meaningful difference between a CR 18 monster and a CR 18-1/2 monster. But at lower levels, the flexibility is potent because you can fill in the gap between CR 1 and CR 2 (which otherwise represents a 100% power increase) and between CR 2 and CR 3 (a 50% power increase).

This variant also makes it easier to design encounters with mixed groups of monsters. Rather than combining monsters of different CRs, then consulting a table to figure out what the Encounter Level (EL) is, simply add up the XP award for each monster until you reach the XP total you want. For example, if you want to create an average encounter for 15th-level characters, put enough monsters in the encounter to total roughly 58,000 XP (the amount the PCs would earn for a single CR 15 monster).

As with the standard experience point system, the DM should closely watch the experience awards for large numbers of weak creatures, which often provide little or no meaningful challenge to characters.

Afterword: When Worlds Collide

You've read all the variants in this book, and you have a problem: You want to use them all—plus some you've thought up yourself. What's an overly creative DM to do?

Roleplaying opens infinite possibilities. The DM's most rewarding task is creating a world, the setting for a campaign, the place where adventures happen. The nature of this world is limited only by the DM's imagination—and most DMs are a pretty imaginative bunch.

Sometimes too imaginative. What do you do when you have more variants bubbling around in your head than there will ever be time for? Especially when other factors intrude—such as school, work, or family—there's rarely time to even run one campaign well, much less the three others bouncing around in your brain at any given moment.

There seem to be only two possible options in this situation. One is to switch among campaigns as rapidly as your players want, so that—over the course of several months—you might get to run perhaps a single adventure in each of these different campaigns. The problem with this option is that there's no continuity—because each campaign is separate from the others, player characters seldom advance in level, and none of the campaigns experiences any real development.

The other option combines variant ideas into a single campaign—one that includes a number of different worlds, each with its own flavor and rules. Whether it takes the form of a single group of adventurers going on a wild ride through the multiverse or somehow creates a link between different heroes on different worlds, a world-spanning campaign seems to be the solution to the problem. Of course, it has a few problems of its own.

Three different campaign models allow this kind of world-hopping: the World-Spanning Organization model, the Shifting Worlds model, and the Eternal Champion model (with thanks to Michael Moorcock).

THE WORLD-SPANNING ORGANIZATION

In this campaign model, the PCs are members of an organization that sends them on missions to different worlds or dimensions. They go from world to world by means of interplanar travel, using powerful teleportation devices or gates (magical or pseudoscientific in nature) or some sort of magic flying ship. The heroes are equipped with spells or devices that allow them to speak and understand the languages of the worlds they visit. The organization briefs the heroes on their mission, the culture and customs of the world they are about to visit, and dangers they might face. Probably, the heroes make every attempt to fit in with the natives in terms of their clothing, appearance, and behavior, assisted by other agents in the organization.

The PCs' missions might be completely unrelated to each other, but a more fulfilling campaign emerges from a unifying theme. Perhaps this world-spanning organization specifically combats the menace of another such organization. Plane-shifting githyanki or mind flayers prove excellent enemy agents for such a campaign. This doesn't mean that the PCs must fight mind flayers at every turn—much of the time the enemy functions behind the scenes, and the heroes have to find their way through complex webs of deception and trickery, as well as overcome potential legions of minions and allies, before uncovering their true opposition.

The clearest advantage of this campaign model is that the player characters are a constant in every adventure. Each player has a character who gains experience and advances in level over the course of the campaign, which is an important part of what makes a campaign rewarding for players. Since members of a world-spanning organization conceivably come from any known world, the PCs can be a crazy amalgam of races and classes—anything allowed in any published or unpublished campaign setting. A wizard from Faerûn (the world of the FORGOTTEN REALMS campaign setting) can adventure side by side with a gladiator from the desert world you invented yourself and a minotaur from the battlefields of Ysgard. With your approval, characters can explore more unusual races and classes, and in this way even help to develop more worlds for your campaign to reach.

The world-spanning organization should have a base, or at least a lone agent, on each world that the PCs visit. This agent can provide the PCs with background information on their mission and the world itself, exchange currency for them, help them get equipment and clothing so they can fit in, and act as a go-between for communication with their higher-ups in the organization. If transportation between worlds relies on teleporting gates, this agent can be the guardian and operator of a gate on his world.

Of course, once in a while you might force the PCs to visit unexplored territory, which can be an adventure in itself. While pursuing their primary goal, they would also have the task of collecting notes on the culture and politics of the world, to help brief the next agents who visit it. Without an agent to brief them, they have to acquire currency and clothing on their own. They might end up becoming the organization's resident experts on such a world and find themselves frequently reassigned there.

Generally, a campaign based around a world-spanning organization allows the PCs to experience (and you to create) a large variety of worlds without necessarily exploring any one in great depth. The heroes might return again and again to some worlds—hotbeds of enemy activity, or simply worlds they're very familiar with. But for the majority of adventures, you only need to create the most basic outlines of a situation, the circumstances surrounding it, and a bit about the world and its population.

Sample World-Spanning Organization: The Peregrines

Here's an example of a PC party made up of members of a world-spanning organization. The characters are members of the Peregrines, a religious order of knights who travel from world to world while engaged in a holy war against the githyanki. They include:

—Sergei, a human cleric from a dark, gothic world overtaken by vampires.

—Kellra, a human psychic warrior who fought as a gladiator on a desert world.

—Gerson, a minotaur ranger from a world where he once was a human king.

—Darkshifter, a halfling shadowdancer from a world resembling ancient Rome.

—Tax, a half-elf wizard/rogue from a world of constant night.

When players are this imaginative in how they define their characters, the DM can use the input to develop a collection of original worlds to use in the campaign, in addition to any

published campaign worlds available. As the players add more detail to their characters' backgrounds, the DM can glean key information about these new worlds, and plenty of adventure ideas as well. Perhaps one or more characters will have "homecoming" adventures.

SHIFTING WORLDS

A shifting worlds campaign adds a strong element of mystery to the basic world-spanning idea. Rather than being voluntary agents of a world-spanning organization, the PCs seem to shift between worlds against their will and with no clear purpose. At unpredictable times, one reality dissolves around them, to be replaced by a different one. What's more, the heroes themselves change to adapt to their new reality.

A campaign like this begins with an ordinary party of PCs—all drawn from one campaign world and following its rules for character creation and equipment. At some point that you determine—it might be after a single adventure, or in the middle of one, or after a year or so of real time when you're getting tired of the campaign—the characters get shifted to a new world. The characters should remain similar in most respects but change enough to be noticeable to the players. For example, a wizard from Faerûn who found himself shifted to a world where psionics are powerful might undergo some minor physical changes, find his ability scores boosted somewhat, discover a new psionic talent, and—most important—figure out how his spells interact with the mental magic of the new world. But he remains essentially the same character, despite these profound changes. You should alter skills and languages so they are relevant in the new campaign world. Characters shifted to a new reality should usually find that they understand the language being spoken around them and know the basics one needs to get by in this new society.

It's possible to declare that the PCs, after they have shifted, forget their previous reality completely, believing that they have always lived in the world they now occupy. Possible—but very difficult to roleplay. It's certainly easier to let the PCs be as confused and mystified as their players are. In fact, the reason why shifting between worlds occurs can and should be one of the great mysteries of the campaign—the heroes may be determined to figure out what's been causing them to move from world to world.

A shifting worlds campaign grows most interesting as the PCs gradually realize that their diverse adventures on different worlds have actually all been part of a larger cosmic drama. The heroes' ultimate opponent could be an incredibly powerful lich with minions scattered across the multiverse. The heroes might never encounter this creature, and they might only theorize about its existence after years of battling its minions in numerous adventures on a multitude of different worlds. Then, finally, when they are ready to confront their long-time enemy, or even after they have destroyed it, they might learn that a powerful force of good—a solar, perhaps, or maybe even a demigod—has been shifting them from world to world as unwitting agents in a cosmic struggle against the lich.

Like the world-spanning organization model, a shifting world campaign allows players to feel a sense of continuity in their characters. Though the characters change somewhat, key factors (including experience points) remain constant, and the heroes makes definite progress through an ongoing campaign. Unlike the earlier model, however, a shifting worlds campaign also allows you to shift between game systems. Your adventurers from Faerûn might suddenly find themselves in modern-day London. Without too much work, you can convert the characters over to the *d20 Modern* rules and proceed with the action.

A campaign based on this model works best if the shifts from world to world are a little less frequent than in the world-spanning organization model. Thus you need to put more effort into detailing each world, since the heroes will spend some significant amount of time there. The greatest benefit is that you move from campaign world to campaign world without the baggage of a complex planar cosmology or the vast network of a world-spanning organization.

THE ETERNAL CHAMPION

Michael Moorcock, as a fantasy and science fiction writer, was not content to spend his time in a single "campaign world." The key aspect of Moorcock's multiverse is that multiple universes connect.

One city, Tanelorn, exists in all universes at all times. And the Eternal Champion—one hero with multiple identities—appears in one universe as Elric, in another as Corum. This idea of the Eternal Champion forms the basis of a third model for a campaign that spans worlds.

A heroic fantasy campaign presupposes heroic player characters—people whose deeds make a difference for the forces of good in the world. As heroes, then, suppose that they too have counterparts in every universe—heroes whose fates are linked with theirs, though their names, faces, races, and classes might all be different. The way to accomplish this in a campaign is with a character tree.

With the character tree idea, each player generates three different characters who all advance in level together, though only one character is active at a time. In an Eternal Champion campaign, each of these heroes exists in a different universe, a different campaign world. So, rather than having a single character move from world to world, as in the two earlier models, the scene of the adventures moves, but the characters are different in each one. Each time one of a player's heroes advances in level, the others do as well.

This campaign model can threaten the players' sense of continuity. All the heroes are still advancing in level, which is an improvement over unlinked adventures that jump from campaign to campaign, but they are still distinct characters. To minimize the discontinuity, each of a single player's characters should be similar in essential personality and characteristics. They are, after all, manifestations of the same cosmic heroic archetype. For example, one player might play a wizard in the Greyhawk setting, a librarian in a gothic setting, and a computer hacker in a modern-day setting, all with similar traits—nearsightedness, perhaps, and a kindly, wise disposition. Each character's ability scores should be close to those of the others, if not the same. The characters have different backgrounds, naturally, but there should be key points of convergence—being an orphan, perhaps, or some other formative experience that they have in common.

The other way to maintain the players' sense of continuity is to introduce common themes and threads into the different heroes' adventures. Just as each hero is a manifestation of a universal heroic archetype, their adventures follow archetypal themes as well. They might not face a single common enemy whose influence extends across the multiverse (such as the lich suggested in

the shifting worlds model), but the heroes should recognize their enemies as different expressions of the same evil. Naturally, you need to balance this distant echo among adventures, reinforcing the continuity of the campaign with the need to avoid repetition, providing the heroes with fresh challenges.

Naturally, in a campaign modeled after the Eternal Champion idea, the heroes on one world are mostly unaware of their counterparts on other worlds. They might have dreams that suggest the others' exploits in distant dimensions—especially if some bit of knowledge possessed by one hero is essential to another—but certainly not conscious memories of their alter egos. If you decide to create a place like Moorcock's Tanelorn, which somehow exists in every dimension, then the heroes might (after a long and arduous quest to reach this mysterious place) at least hear tales of their counterparts' adventures, if not actually meet them face to face. The quest to find this nexus of the multiverse could be a climactic finale to a campaign, with different segments of the quest being played out by different groups of heroes until all the groups finally reach their goal simultaneously.

An Eternal Champion campaign probably requires the greatest amount of work for each campaign world. It's probably best not to use more than three or four worlds, with the same number of heroes on each player's character tree.

Sample Eternal Champion: Kellra's Character Tree

Beginning with the character named Kellra from the Peregrines (see above), let's turn the gladiator into an Eternal Champion with three additional manifestations. The other worlds in the campaign are a Viking setting, a gothic setting, and a near-future cyberpunk setting that uses the *d20 Modern* rules. Here's what Kellra's counterparts in these other universes might be like.

—Krythling, a Viking warrior with troll blood. Shunned by her people and raised among trolls, Krythling has always been a warrior, though she has never fought for anyone's amusement (unlike her gladiator counterpart Kellra).

—Kellira, a monster hunter in the gothic setting. Kellira's family was slaughtered by a werewolf while Kellira was having a secret tryst with a young man in her village. She is driven by a single-minded obsession for revenge that alienates anyone who would get close to her.

—Kelly, a cyber-enhanced ex-soldier. Like Kellra, she is a gladiator of sorts, earning her living by supplying bloody entertainment in the filthy streets of her metropolis home.

NEXT STEPS

Once you've chosen a model for a world-spanning campaign, the next key step is to create at least some of the worlds for your heroes to visit and deciding which rules apply there. Of course, you can use published campaign settings for any or all of the worlds involved in a world-spanning campaign. You can also adapt settings from novels or movies you have enjoyed; the world-spanning aspect of the campaign might also give you a little more freedom in choosing your source material. If you want to try out the metamagic components variant (see Chapter 5), just send the characters to a world where it works. When they return, their metamagic components lose their power—or, like Prometheus, the characters bring the new knowledge back with them.

—David Noonan, from a concept by James Wyatt

Illus. by Lakeys

Kellira, Krythling, and Kelly

VARIANT CHECKLIST

Put a check next to each variant used in the campaign. Put any special limitations, additions, or other information that players need to use the variant under Notes. Use the blank lines for additional variants or house rules used in the campaign.

Chapter 1: Races

✔	Page	Variant Name	Notes
____	6	Aquatic Races	_____
____	8	Arctic Races	_____
____	11	Desert Races	_____
____	13	Jungle Races	_____
____	16	Races of Air	_____
____	16	Races of Earth	_____
____	17	Races of Fire	_____
____	17	Races of Water	_____
____	18	Reducing Level Adjustments	_____
____	19	Bloodlines	_____
____	32	Racial Paragon Classes	_____
____	___	_____	_____
____	___	_____	_____
____	___	_____	_____

Chapter 2: Classes

✔	Page	Variant Name	Notes
____	48	Totem Barbarian	_____
____	49	Bardic Sage	_____
____	50	Divine Bard	_____
____	50	Savage Bard	_____
____	50	Cloistered Cleric	_____
____	51	Druidic Avenger	_____
____	51	Thug	_____
____	52	Monk Fighting Styles	_____
____	53	Paladin Variants	_____
____	55	Planar Ranger	_____
____	55	Urban Ranger	_____
____	56	Wilderness Rogue	_____
____	56	Battle Sorcerer	_____
____	57	Domain Wizard	_____
____	59	Specialist Wizard Variants	_____
____	64	Spontaneous Divine Casters	_____
____	65	Favored Environment	_____
____	66	Whirling Frenzy	_____
____	66	Level Check Turning	_____
____	67	Planar Banishment	_____
____	67	Aspect of Nature	_____
____	69	Prestige Bard	_____
____	70	Prestige Paladin	_____
____	71	Prestige Ranger	_____
____	72	Gestalt Characters	_____
____	76	Generic Classes	_____
____	___	_____	_____
____	___	_____	_____
____	___	_____	_____

Chapter 3: Building Characters

✔	Page	Variant Name	Notes
____	79	Alternative Skill System	
____	81	Complex Skill Checks	
____	86	Character Traits	
____	91	Character Flaws	
____	92	Spelltouched Feats	
____	94	Weapon Group Feats	
____	97	Craft Points	
____	100	Character Background	
____	___	_____	
____	___	_____	
____	___	_____	

Chapter 4: Adventuring

✔	Page	Variant Name	Notes
____	109	Defense Bonus	
____	111	Armor as Damage Reduction	
____	112	Armor Damage Conversion	
____	113	Injury System	
____	115	Vitality and Wound Points	
____	119	Reserve Points	
____	119	Massive Damage	
____	121	Death and Dying	
____	122	Action Points	
____	124	Combat Facing	
____	128	Hex Grid	
____	129	Variable Modifiers	
____	132	Bell Curve Rolls	
____	133	Players Roll All the Dice	
____	___	_____	
____	___	_____	
____	___	_____	

Chapter 5: Magic

✔	Page	Variant Name	Notes
____	135	Magic Rating	
____	136	Summon Monster Variants	
____	139	Metamagic Components	
____	151	Spontaneous Metamagic	
____	153	Spell Points	
____	157	Recharge Magic	
____	162	Legendary Weapons	
____	170	Item Familiars	
____	174	Incantations	
____	___	_____	
____	___	_____	
____	___	_____	

Chapter 6: Campaigns

✔	Page	Variant Name	Notes
____	179	Contacts	
____	180	Reputation	
____	185	Honor	
____	189	Taint	
____	191	Tainted Prestige Classes	
____	194	Sanity	
____	210	Test-Based Prerequisites	
____	213	Level-Independent XP Awards	
____	____	_____	
____	____	_____	
____	____	_____	

Dungeon Master's Guide Variants

✔	Page	Variant Name	Notes
____	22	Roll Initiative Each Round	
____	23	Sapient Mounts	
____	24	Striking the Cover	
____	25	Automatic Hits and Misses	
____	25	Defense Roll[1]	
____	27	Clobbered	
____	27	Massive Damage Based on Size[1]	
____	27	Damage to Specific Areas	
____	27	Weapon Equivalencies	
____	28	Instant Kill	
____	28	Softer Critical Hits	
____	28	Critical Misses (Fumbles)	
____	33	Skills with Different Abilities	
____	34	Critical Success or Failure	
____	35	Saves with Different Abilities	
____	36	Spell Roll[1]	
____	36	Power Components	
____	37	Summoning Individual Monsters[1]	
____	39	Free-Form Experience	
____	40	Faster or Slower Experience	
____	70	What Disabling a Device Means	
____	130	Upkeep	
____	214	New Magic Items	
____	290	Separate Ability Loss	
____	297	Nonmagical Psionics	
____	303	Less Lethal Falls	

1 See related variants in this book.

OPEN GAME LICENSE Version 1.0a

The following text is the property of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and is Copyright 2000 Wizards of the Coast, Inc. ("Wizards"). All Rights Reserved.

1. Definitions: (a)"Contributors" means the copyright and/or trademark owners who have contributed Open Game Content; (b)"Derivative Material" means copyrighted material including derivative works and translations (including into other computer languages), potation, modification, correction, addition, extension, upgrade, improvement, compilation, abridgment or other form in which an existing work may be recast, transformed or adapted; (c) "Distribute" means to reproduce, license, rent, lease, sell, broadcast, publicly display, transmit or otherwise distribute; (d)"Open Game Content" means the game mechanic and includes the methods, procedures, processes and routines to the extent such content does not embody the Product Identity and is an enhancement over the prior art and any additional content clearly identified as Open Game Content by the Contributor, and means any work covered by this License, including translations and derivative works under copyright law, but specifically excludes Product Identity. (e) "Product Identity" means product and product line names, logos and identifying marks including trade dress; artifacts; creatures characters; stories, storylines, plots, thematic elements, dialogue, incidents, language, artwork, symbols, designs, depictions, likenesses, formats, poses, concepts, themes and graphic, photographic and other visual or audio representations; names and descriptions of characters, spells, enchantments, personalities, teams, personas, likenesses and special abilities; places, locations, environments, creatures, equipment, magical or supernatural abilities or effects, logos, symbols, or graphic designs; and any other trademark or registered trademark clearly identified as Product identity by the owner of the Product Identity, and which specifically excludes the Open Game Content; (f) "Trademark" means the logos, names, mark, sign, motto, designs that are used by a Contributor to identify itself or its products or the associated products contributed to the Open Game License by the Contributor (g) "Use", "Used" or "Using" means to use, Distribute, copy, edit, format, modify, translate and otherwise create Derivative Material of Open Game Content. (h) "You" or "Your" means the licensee in terms of this agreement.

2. The License: This License applies to any Open Game Content that contains a notice indicating that the Open Game Content may only be Used under and in terms of this License. You must affix such a notice to any Open Game Content that you Use. No terms may be added to or subtracted from this License except as described by the License itself. No other terms or conditions may be applied to any Open Game Content distributed using this License.

3. Offer and Acceptance: By Using the Open Game Content You indicate Your acceptance of the terms of this License.

4. Grant and Consideration: In consideration for agreeing to use this License, the Contributors grant You a perpetual, worldwide, royalty-free, non-exclusive license with the exact terms of this License to Use, the Open Game Content.

5. Representation of Authority to Contribute: If You are contributing original material as Open Game Content, You represent that Your Contributions are Your original creation and/or You have sufficient rights to grant the rights conveyed by this License.

6. Notice of License Copyright: You must update the COPYRIGHT NOTICE portion of this License to include the exact text of the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any Open Game Content You are copying, modifying or distributing, and You must add the title, the copyright date, and the copyright holder's name to the COPYRIGHT NOTICE of any original Open Game Content you Distribute.

7. Use of Product Identity: You agree not to Use any Product Identity, including as an indication as to compatibility, except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of each element of that Product Identity. You agree not to indicate compatibility or co-adaptability with any Trademark or Registered Trademark in conjunction with a work containing Open Game Content except as expressly licensed in another, independent Agreement with the owner of such Trademark or Registered Trademark. The use of any Product Identity in Open Game Content does not constitute a challenge to the ownership of that Product Identity. The owner of any Product Identity used in Open Game Content shall retain all rights, title and interest in and to that Product Identity.

8. Identification: If you distribute Open Game Content You must clearly indicate which portions of the work that you are distributing are Open Game Content.

9. Updating the License: Wizards or its designated Agents may publish updated versions of this License. You may use any authorized version of this License to copy, modify and distribute any Open Game Content originally distributed under any version of this License.

10. Copy of this License: You MUST include a copy of this License with every copy of the Open Game Content You Distribute.

11. Use of Contributor Credits: You may not market or advertise the Open Game Content using the name of any Contributor unless You have written permission from the Contributor to do so.

12. Inability to Comply: If it is impossible for You to comply with any of the terms of this License with respect to some or all of the Open Game Content due to statute, judicial order, or governmental regulation then You may not Use any Open Game Material so affected.

13. Termination: This License will terminate automatically if You fail to comply with all terms herein and fail to cure such breach within 30 days of becoming aware of the breach. All sublicenses shall survive the termination of this License.

14. Reformation: If any provision of this License is held to be unenforceable, such provision shall be reformed only to the extent necessary to make it enforceable.

15. COPYRIGHT NOTICE
Open Game License v 1.0 Copyright 2000, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

System Reference Document Copyright 2000-2003, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Rich Baker, Andy Collins, David Noonan, Rich Redman, Bruce R. Cordell, based on original material by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.

Modern System Reference Document Copyright 2002, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Authors Bill Slavicsek, Jeff Grubb, Rich Redman, Charles Ryan, based on material by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, Peter Adkison, Bruce R. Cordell, John Tynes, Andy Collins, and JD Wiker.

Swords of Our Fathers Copyright 2003, The Game Mechanics.

Mutants & Masterminds Copyright 2002, Green Ronin Publishing.

Unearthed Arcana Copyright 2004, Wizards of the Coast, Inc.; Andy Collins, Jesse Decker, David Noonan, Rich Redman.

Index

abjurer variants 59
academic magic background 101, 102
action points 122
addiction (to drugs) 203
Additional Favored Class (feat) 100
air elemental bloodline 25
alchemical treatments (for insanity) 202
alignment, honor and 187
  taint and 189
aquatic races 6
arctic races 8
aristocratic background 102
armor as damage reduction 111
armor damage conversion 112
background (of a character) 100
barbarian, totem 48
barbarian, variant 58
bard, divine 50
bard, prestige 69
bard, savage 50
bard, variant 58
bardic sage 49
battle scion 164
battle sorcerer 56
bell curve rolls 132
black dragon bloodline 22
bloodline, random determination 30
blue dragon bloodline 22
brass dragon bloodline 22
bronze dragon bloodline 23
call forth the Dweller (incantation) 176
celestial bloodline 20
character background 100
character flaws 91
character traits 86
class defense bonus 109
cleric, cloistered 50
cleric, variant 58
cloistered cleric 50
cloud giant bloodline 27
codes of honor 188
Combat Awareness (feat) 127
combat facing 124
complex skill checks 81
condition descriptions (injury variant) 113
conjurer variants 60
contacts 179
copper dragon bloodline 23
craft points 97
creature facing by size 125
cross-cultural background 103
damage conversion 112
death and dying 121
defense bonus 109
demon bloodline 21
desert races 11
devil bloodline 21
divine bard 50
diviner variants 60
djinni bloodline 26
domain wizard 57
doppelganger bloodline 22
Dragonblade (legendary weapon) 164
Dreamstriker (legendary weapon) 169
drow paragon 32
drugs and sanity 203
druid, variant 58
druidic avenger 51
dwarf paragon 33
dwarves, aquatic 7
  arctic 9
  desert 11
  earth 16
  jungle 13
earth elemental bloodline 25
efreeti bloodline 26
elf paragon 35
elves, aquatic 7
  arctic 9
  desert 11
  fire 17
  jungle 14
enchanter variants 60
event-based reputation 183
evoker variants 62
expert (generic class) 77
facing (in combat) 124
  attacks of opportunity 126
  by creature size 125
  dragon attacks 128
  shield protection 128
  sneak attacks 126
facing, hexes and 131
faith scion 166
fame or infamy 181
family honor 188
favored enemy variant 65
feat tests 213
feats, item creation 99
feats, spelltouched 92
feats, weapon group 94
fey bloodline 26
fighter, variant 58
fire elemental bloodline 25
fire giant bloodline 27
fires of Dis (incantation) 176
flaws (of characters) 91
forbidden tomes 198
free-form honor 186
frost giant bloodline 27
general recharge spells 158
generic classes 76
gestalt characters 72
githyanki bloodline 28
githzerai bloodline 28
gnome paragon 36
gnomes, air 16
  aquatic 7
  arctic 9
  desert 12
  jungle 14
goblins, air 16
  aquatic 7
  arctic 9
  desert 12
  jungle 14
gold dragon bloodline 23
government background 103, 104
green dragon bloodline 24
hag bloodline 28
half-dragon paragon 37
half-elf paragon 39
half-elves, aquatic 7
  arctic 10
  desert 12
  fire 18
  jungle 14
half-orc paragon 40
half-orcs, aquatic 8
  arctic 10
  desert 12
  jungle 14
  water 18
halfling paragon 42
halflings, aquatic 8
  arctic 10
  desert 12
  jungle 15
  water 18
Hammer of All Souls (legendary weapon) 166
Heal skill and mental treatment 202
healing (death and dying variant) 121
healing (injury variant) 114
healing (vitality and wound points variant) 117
hex grid 128
hex-based creature size 129
hex-based spell areas 130
hexes and facing 131
hill giant bloodline 28
hobgoblins, fire 17
honor 185
honor and alignment 187
Hrothgar's journey (incantation) 177
human paragon 43
humans, aquatic 8
illusionist variants 63
incantations 174
indefinite insanity 200
influence contacts 180
information contacts 180
injuries, determining 113
insanity, treatment of 204
  types of 199
Ionon (legendary weapon) 167
item creation feats 99
Item Familiar (feat) 170
item familiars 170
janni bloodline 27

jungle races 13
Knowledge (forbidden lore) 198
kobolds, aquatic 8
  arctic 10
  desert 13
  earth 17
  jungle 15
legendary weapons 162
level adjustments, reducing 18
level-based skills 81
level-independent XP awards 213
Low Profile (feat) 182
luck checks 124
Luck domain (bell curve variant) 133
lycanthrope bloodline 28
magic items, recharging 158
magic rating 135
magic, restoring sanity with 202
maritime background 104
massive damage (death and dying variant) 122
massive damage thresholds and results 119
mechanical honor 185
mental disorders 204
mental therapy 201
mercantile background 104, 105
metamagic components 139
metamagic and spell points 155
metamagic, spontaneous 151
military background 105, 106
minotaur bloodline 29
monk variants 52
monk, variant 58
monster defense bonuses 110
natural armor and damage reduction 111
necromancer variants 63
NPC reputations 182
ogre bloodline 29
orc paragon 44
orcs, arctic 10
  desert 13
  jungle 15
  water 18
paladin variants 53
paladin, prestige 70
paladin, variant 58
paragon classes 32
permanent insanity 201
planar ranger 55
players roll all the dice 133
prestige class tests 210
prestigious character classes 69
psychiatric glossary 209
puzzles and hints 207
races of air 16
races of earth 16
races of fire 17
races of water 17
rage variant 66
ranger, planar 55
ranger, prestige 71
ranger, urban 55
ranger, variant 58
recharge magic 157
recharging magic items 158
red dragon bloodline 24
religious background 106
Renown (feat) 182
reputation 180
reserve points 119
rogue, variant 58
rogue, wilderness 56
sample incantations 176
sanity 194
sanity resistance 197
savage bard 50
scions 162
silver dragon bloodline 24
skill checks, complex 81
skill contacts 180
Skill Knowledge (feat) 81
skill systems, alternative 79
skilled background 107, 108
slaad bloodline 29
sorcerer, battle 56
sorcerer, variant 58
special damage defenses (injury variant) 115
special damage effects (injury variant) 115
specialist wizard variants 59
specific recharge spells 159
spell points 153
  metamagic and 155
spell scion 167
spellcaster (generic class) 77
spelltouched feats 92
spontaneous divine casters 64
spontaneous metamagic 151
stone giant bloodline 28
storm giant bloodline 28
summon monster variants 136
summoning lists, individualized 138
  themed 136
swift scion 168
taint 189
tainted sorcerer 191
tainted warrior 193
temporary insanity 199
test-based prerequisites 210
thug (fighter variant) 51
tiefling paragon 45
titan bloodline 29
totem barbarian 48
traits (of characters) 86
transmuter variants 63
troll bloodline 30
turning undead variants 66, 67
underworld background 107, 108
urban ranger 55
Urban Tracking (feat) 56
vampire bloodline 30
variable modifiers 129
vitality points 116
vitalizing (spell point variant) 156
warrior (generic class) 78
water elemental bloodline 25
weapon group feats 94
white dragon bloodline 24
wild shape variant 67
wilderness background 108
wilderness rogue 56
wizard, domain 57
wizard, variant 58, 59
wound points 116
XP awards, level-independent 213
yuan-ti bloodline 30

Illus. by D. Martin

Unlock A Wellspring of Knowledge

This supplement presents an inexhaustible source of new rules to introduce into your Dungeons & Dragons® game. Inside are ideas, options, and alternatives to the standard D&D rules you can choose from to fit your campaign's style of play. From variant classes, races, feats, and abilities to alternate spellcasting systems, combat and campaign options, *Unearthed Arcana* offers a tremendous array of material for you to explore.

To use this supplement, a Dungeon Master also needs the *Player's Handbook*™, *Dungeon Master's Guide*™, and *Monster Manual*™.
A player needs only the *Player's Handbook*.

d20 system

Visit our website at **www.wizards.com/dnd**

ISBN 0-7869-3131-0
53495
9 780786 931316
EAN
U.S. $34.95 **881560000** Printed in the U.S.A.