

Common Effects for Paths to grant

This is a listing of the most common and/or generalizable effects granted by Paths at a given Step, for use in guiding the creation of homebrew Paths. Note that this listing is not comprehensive; many Paths grant abilities at certain Steps that are not in this guide, or that break the guidelines presented here. These are not mentioned either because they are not easily generalized into a flexible rule that can be used for a wide variety of Paths (ie, they fit only a narrow thematic niche), or because they are obvious outliers/exceptions to the usual pattern and thus not suitable for use as a guide for making balanced homebrew. If you're making a Path with some thematic similarities to an existing Path in published material, it would be good to look at the published Path to see if it has any unusual effects not listed here that you might adopt for your own Path. For example, Path of Travel gives +5 ft speed at most of its Steps, but since "move fast" is a fairly niche concept for a Path I have not listed that here. But if you're making a homebrew Path where fast movement would be very appropriate, you would do well to refer to Path of Travel to see how that sort of effect fits into the design of Path Steps.

Also, note that at Steps III-V, you can usually, as a rule of thumb, give an ability that would normally be the full benefit granted at the immediately preceding Step as only half of the benefit (ie, in place of one of the two spells that comprise the benefit granted at most Path Steps). For example, the errata'd form of Path of Death grants Turning 1/combat/Step along with a level 5 spell at Step IV, where such Turning is (as evidenced by Path of Beasts) normally a Step III ability on its own and Step IV usually gives one level 5 and one level 6 spell.

Step I

- +5 bonus to a specific skill
- Feat (entry-level)
 - Use some caution with this; because the first Step of a Path can be obtained by taking a feat (Blessed), giving access to a feat with the first Step of a Path can be potentially abusable. In particular, avoid giving Spellcasting feats, as Blessed is itself a Spellcasting feat and thus taking Blessed to take a Step on a Path that grants a Spellcasting feat essentially allows a caster to take a feat they want but get double the bonus to their spell save DCs from it. Also, you should never, ever, ever give any additional benefit along with a feat (yes, even though Path of the Wilderness does so), since this makes Blessed worth more than its feat value if taking the first step in such a Path.
- At-will casting of 2 level 0 spells, plus a small additional benefit
 - Examples of additional benefit: Immunity to flash or bang damage; Resistance = Step against a very uncommon damage type/source; +Step bonus to a specific save
- Resistance = 3x Step to each of two exotic (ie, not lethal, subdual, or stress) damage types

Step II

- Two spells each 1/scene of level 1-2

- Ideally one level 1 and one level 2, but two spells of same level may be used if necessary to best fit the concept of the Path
- One spell may be replaced with one of the following benefits:
 - Ability to convert melee & unarmed damage to a specific type
 - +1 to a specific or random attribute
 - Turn characters of a specific type 1/combat
 - Beguiling (or NPC quality of comparable value)

Step III

- Two spells each 1/scene of level 3-4
 - Ideally one level 3 and one level 4, but two spells of same level may be used if necessary to best fit the concept of the Path
 - One spell may be replaced with a 20% discount on
- Feat (particularly if continuing a chain begun at an earlier Step)
- Turn characters of specific type 1/combat/Step
- Class ability gained at level 3 or 4 of a base class (ie, C or D slot ability)

Step IV

- Two spells each 1/scene of level 5-6
 - Ideally one level 5 and one level 6, but two spells of same level may be used if necessary to best fit the concept of the Path
 - One spell may be replaced with +1 to specific or random attribute
- Feat (particularly if continuing a chain begun at an earlier Step)
- Roll twice and take better result for checks with specific skill
- Resistance 4 to broad & common damage source (eg, metal weapons, unarmed/natural attacks)
- Class ability gained at level 6 in a base class (ie, E or E_{odd} slot ability) – not actually used in any published Path, but a reasonable assumption given that Step III can grant C and D slot abilities and Step V can grant E_{even} and F slot abilities.

Step V

- Two spells each 1/scene of level 7-8
 - Ideally one level 7 and one level 8, but two spells of same level may be used if necessary to best fit the concept of the Path
 - One spell may be replaced with +2 to specific or random attribute
- Class ability gained at level 9 or 10 in a base class (ie, E_{even} or F slot ability)