

FROM DUNGEONS TO DRIVESPACE

CONVERTING AD&D® MONSTERS TO ALTERNITY ALIENS

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The ALTERNITY® *Gamemaster Guide* contains rules for converting AD&D® characters to the ALTERNITY game system. This appendix allows player character wizards and elves to enter the universe of an Alternity campaign. However no exploration of the interface between fantasy and science fiction would be complete without providing rules for the conversion of AD&D monsters to ALTERNITY aliens. Yet while AD&D characters of human or demihuman origin convert readily to the ALTERNITY rules, monsters present some obstacles. There are important differences in the ways the two game systems handle such things as hit points (durability ratings), weapon damage and armor.

TABLE 1: STRENGTH CONVERSIONS						
Size	T	S	M	L	H	G
Strength	5 (d4+3)	8 (2d4+3)	9 (2d4+4)	13 (2d4+8)	15 (2d4+10)	18 (2d4+13)

TABLE 2: BASE DEXTERITY CONVERSIONS						
Size	T	S	M	L	H	G
Dexterity	14 (2d6+7)	11 (2d6+4)	9 (2d6+2)	8 (2d6+1)	5 (2d4)	3(d4+1)

TABLE 3: DEXTERITY ADJUSTMENTS FOR MOVEMENT RATE						
Move	6 OR LESS	9	12	15	18	24+
Dex. Adj.	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	+3

TABLE 4: CONSTITUTION CONVERSIONS						
SIZE						
HIT DICE	T	S	M	L	H	G
less than 1	1 2 (d4)	4 (d4+2)	6 (2d4+1)	-	-	-
1 to 3	4 (d4+2)	7(2d4+2)	10 (2d4+5)	12 (2d4+7)	-	-
4 to 6	6 (2d4+1)	9 (2d4+4)	12 (2d4+7)	14 (2d4+9)	15 (2d4+10)	16 (2d4+11)
7 to 9	-	12 (2d4+7)	13 (2d4+8)	15 (2d4+10)	16 (2d4+11)	18 (2d4+13)
10 to 12	-	-	15 (2d4+10)	16 (2d4+11)	18 (2d4+13)	20 (2d4+15)
13 and up	-	-	16 (2d4+11)	18 (2d4+13)	20 (2d4+15)	24(2d4+19)

ABILITY SCORES

The ALTERNITY game describes aliens—humanoid or otherwise—in the same format as heroes. Even the most exotic aliens have ratings for Strength, Dexterity, Constitution, etc.

STRENGTH

Strength serves much the same purpose in the ALTERNITY game as it does in the AD&D game, so the conversion is relatively straightforward. Use the size rating of the monster you are converting to determine its Strength score. See **Table 1**.

Naturally, if an AD&D monster's description specifies a

Strength score, use that score to determine the creature's ALTERNITY Strength rating. For example, AD&D minotaurs (Large creatures) are said to have Strength scores of 18. Using the table in the ALTERNITY *Gamemaster Guide*, one sees that minotaurs in ALTERNITY have a Strength rating of 14.

DEXTERITY

Two elements of an AD&D monster's description determine its Dexterity score in the ALTERNITY game: its size and its movement rate. These two factors give a general indication of how quick and agile a monster is. Start by checking the monster's size against **Table 2**.

Once the creature's Dexterity score is determined, check its movement rate. Consult **Table 3** (using the best of the creature's movement rates) and adjust the result accordingly.

CONSTITUTION

Constitution in the ALTERNITY game not only reflects a character's stamina and endurance but also directly determines one's durability, the equivalent of AD&D hit points. Because of this, a monster's size and Hit Dice combine to determine its ALTERNITY Constitution rating. Consult the **Table 4**.

INTELLIGENCE AND PERSONALITY

Intelligence is the one ability score that is universally specified for AD&D monsters. A monster's Personality is directly tied to its Intelligence rating. See **Table 5** for base score conversions.

For a monster's Personality score, subtract one if the creature is solitary (as listed in the Organization entry for the monster). Also, subtract one if its morale rating is 2-7 (Unreliable or Unsteady), and add one if the morale rating is 15 (Champion) or higher.

WILL

An ALTERNITY character's Will measures his or her resolve and intuition, much like the AD&D Wisdom score. To determine a monster's Will score, check its Morale rating and consult **Table 6**.

OTHER CHARACTERISTICS

DURABILITY

The ALTERNITY game's durability rating is rather different from AD&D hit points, for durability does not normally increase as heroes advance in level. While a 10th-level AD&D fighter might have over 60 hit points, modified by a high Constitution score, a 10th-level Combat Specialist in ALTERNITY probably still has the same 12 durability rating generated at character creation, derived directly from the Constitution score of 12. Similarly, while large and powerful monsters might have high durability ratings (for instance, the humpback whale detailed in the *Gamemaster Guide* has durability of 30/30/15/15), smaller monsters with high Hit Dice in AD&D might not have such high ratings. Normally, a monster's durability rating is calculated directly from its Constitution score, just as for characters: Its stun and wound ratings are equal to its Constitution, while its fatigue and mortal ratings are one-half its Constitution (rounded down).

TABLE 5: INTELLIGENCE AND PERSONALITY

AD&D InTELLiGEncE	ALTERNITY INTELLIGENCE	ALTERNITY PERSONALITY
Non-(O) 0	0	0
Animal (1)	1 (Animal 1-4 or d4+[0-2])	1 (Animal 1-4 or d4+[0-2])
	2 (Animal 5-9 or d4+[3-7])	2 (Animal 5-9 or d4+[3-7])
	3 (Animal 10-12 or d4+[8-10])	3 (Animal 10-12 or d4+[8-10])
Semi- (2-4)	4 (Animal 13-14 or d4+[11-12])	4 (Animal 13-14 or d4+[11-12])
Low (5-7)	5-6 (2d4+1)	5 (2d4)
Average (8-10)	7-8 (2d4+3)	8 (2d4+3)
Very (11-12)	9 (2d4+4)	9 (2d4+4)
High (13-14)	10 (2d4+5)	10 (2d4+5)
Exceptional (15-16)	11-12 (2d4+7)	11 (2d4+6)
Genius (17-18)	13-14 (2d4+9)	12 (2d4+7)
Supra-genius (19-20)	15-16 (2d4+11)	13 (2d4+8)
Godlike (21+)	17+ (2d4+12 or more)	14 (2d4+9)

For some monsters, you might wish to calculate the durability rating by using 1.5 times its Constitution score as a base (rounding the fraction down). In the *Gamemaster Guide*, this benefit is given to bears, buffalo, elephants, and whales (as well as to werens, a hero race)—all animals with better-than-average toughness. AD&D monsters that are similarly tough might deserve the same benefit.

Undead are a unique case for durability. They are immune to stun and fatigue damage, and mortal damage is treated as wound damage. Thus, undead have only wound ratings, and this rating should be 1.5 times the undead monster's Constitution score.

ACTION CHECK

A character's action check score helps determine initiative in the ALTERNITY game. For most monsters, derive this number by averaging the creature's Dexterity and Intelligence scores (rounding down) and add one. However, for monsters that gain a penalty or bonus to initiative (such as zombies), apply a similar bonus or penalty to the action check score. For zombies, which always attack last in a round in the AD&D rules, subtract two from their (already low) action check scores.

NUMBER OF ACTIONS

Use the creature's Constitution + Will to determine how many actions it can take in a round, according to Table P7 in the *ALTERNITY Player's Handbook*. If a monster possesses a standard claw/claw/bite routine, it should be allowed at least 3 actions in a round. Other monsters can use multiple attacks in a single phase, like a jellyfish's tentacles. For these monsters, the number of actions permitted in the ALTERNITY game is the number of phases they can act in. So a jellyfish capable of 6 attacks in a phase could attack with all six tentacles multiple times in a round if its ability scores allowed it.

MOVEMENT

Movement rates in the ALTERNITY game are expressed in meters per phase (about 3 seconds). Find the monster's AD&D movement rate on the following table to determine its ALTERNITY walk, run, and sprint rates. For creatures with flying or swimming movement rates, find the listed AD&D rate on **Table 7** and read the appropriate column.

TABLE 6: WILL CONVERSIONS

AD&D MORALE	ALTERNITY WILL.
Unreliable (2-4)	4(d4+2)
Unsteady (5-7)	6(d4+4)
Average (8-10)	8(2d4+3)
Steady (11-12)	10 (2d4+5)
Elite (13-14)	12(2d6+5)
Champion (15-16)	13 (2d6+6)
Fanatic (17-18)	14(2d8+5)
Fearless (19-20)	15 (2d8+6)

TABLE 7: MOVEMENT CONVERSION

AD&D MV	SPRINT OR FLY	RUN, SWIM OR GLIDE	WALK OR EASY SWIM
3	8	6	2
6	12	8	2
9	14	10	4
12	18	12	4
15	22	14	4
18	24	16	6
21	28	18	6
24	30	20	8
36	36	24	12
48	48	32	16

For four-legged creatures, shift down one row for walking rate, shift down three rows for running rate, and double the sprint rate. For creatures (such as gorillas) that use their hands to help them walk, shift down one row for running rate and down two rows for sprinting rate.

For example, sahuagin in the AD&D game have a movement rate of 12, swim 24. Their land movement rate of 12 converts to ALTERNITY ratings of Sprint 18, Run 12, Walk 4. Their swimming movement rate of 24 converts to ALTERNITY ratings of Swim 20, Easy Swim 8.

TABLE 8: Damage conversions

DAMAGE TYPE (O/G/A)	DAMAGE Ratings (O/G/A)

s/s/s	Xs/X+1s/X+3s
s/s/w	Xs/X+1s/X-1w
s/w/w	Xs/ X-1w or X w*/X w or X+1 w*
w/w/w	Xw/X+2w/X+3w
w/w/m	Xw/X+2w/Xm . . .

* For the Good rating, use X-1 for bludgeoning attacks, or X for light attacks. For the Amazing rating, use X for bludgeoning attacks, or X+1 for light edged attacks. For example, a bludgeoning attack that causes 1d6 damage on an Ordinary success would inflict 1d6-1 (or 1d4) on a Good success and 1d6 on an Amazing success.

TABLE 9: ARMOR RATING

AD&D AC	ALTERNITY ARMOR RATING (L/HI/En)
10	none
9	d6-4/d4-3/d6-5
8	d6-3/d6-4/d4-3
7	d6-2/d4-2/d6-4
6/5	d6-1/d6-2/d4-2
4/3	d6/d4-1/d6-2
2	d6+1/d4/d4-1
1	2d4/d4/d4
0	2d4/d4+1/d4
-1	2d4+1/d4+1/d4+1
-2	2d4+1/d6+1/d4+1
-3/-4	3d4/2d4/d6+1
-5/-6	3d4/2d4+1/d6+1
-7	3d4/3d4/2d4
-8	3d4+1/3d4/2d4
-9	3d4+1/3d4/2d4+1
-10	3d4+1/3d4+1/2d4+1

ATTACKS

In most cases, a monster's natural attacks are derived from its Strength score. A claw/claw/bite routine for an AD&D monster like an ettercap translates into separate claw and bite attack forms, while the monster should be allowed at least 3 actions in a round to use these attacks. For the monster's attack ratings, use its Strength score as a base (for unarmed or melee attacks). If the creature's primary attack is a missile attack, use its Dexterity score instead. If the creature's primary attack is magical or psionic in nature, use the appropriate ability score— see Special Abilities, below.

This base number can be considered the monster's score in

the appropriate broad skill—Unarmed Attack, Melee Weapon, or Ranged Weapon. Then calculate its specialty skill rank in the same way as for converted AD&D player characters: For every two points the creature's THACO is below 20, add one rank in the appropriate specialty skill. Taking the ettercap as an example, its medium size yields a Strength score of 9 for the creature, which then serves as its broad skill rating in Unarmed Attack. Because its THACO is 15 (five points below 20), it has two ranks in Unarmed *Attack-brawl*, yielding an attack rating of 11 /5/2.

For creatures with multiple attack forms, like the ettercap in the example, it adds interest if the monster's attack ratings vary slightly for the different attack forms. Since the ettercap's bite is its most powerful attack, the attack rating for the bite could be one or two points higher than the claw attacks.

Monsters that are not carnivorous and use their natural weaponry only in defense or even unconsciously (a herd animal's trample, for example) are considered untrained in Unarmed Attack. Their attack ratings, then, are half of their Strength scores, rounded down.

The ALTERNITY game specifies damage for weapons and other attacks as three separate values: the result of an Ordinary, Good, or Amazing skill check. So, while a dagger in the AD&D game inflicts 1d4 points of damage against human-sized or smaller opponents, in the ALTERNITY game a dagger inflicts d4w (wound damage) on an Ordinary success, d4+1w on a Good success, and d4+2w on an Amazing success. There are two ways to calculate the damage scores for an AD&D monster in the ALTERNITY game. The first way is simply to find a weapon that is similar to the monster's attack form and use its damage rating. For example, you might decide that the ettercap's claws (1d3 damage in AD&D) are basically the same as daggers, but with a -1 penalty to damage. So their damage ratings in the ALTERNITY game would be d4-1w/d4w/d4+1w. Be sure to include any bonuses or penalties for the monster's Strength score in this figure.

The second, more complicated way, is to directly convert the AD&D damage scores to appropriate values for the ALTERNITY game. To do this, first determine the type of damage the attack inflicts. Bludgeoning attacks cause stun damage on Ordinary and usually on Good successes, and often on Amazing successes as well. Very small and light weapons like shuriken also do stun damage on Ordinary successes. These attack forms never inflict mortal damage.

Pointed or edged attacks otherwise inflict wound damage on Ordinary and Good successes, and usually on Amazing successes as well. Only the heaviest low-tech melee weapons—such as heavy swords, spears, and polearms—or the attacks of a large alien monster inflict mortal damage on Amazing successes. So if a monster's natural attack is a tail slap or other bludgeoning attack, it inflicts stun damage, while a powerful bite or claw attack inflicts wound damage—even mortal damage on an Amazing success.

Next, use **Table 8** to determine the damage of the attack. The letter x in the chart represents the rough equivalent to the attack's AD&D damage rating. In general, the ALTERNITY game tends to use smaller ranges for damage—so a weapon that inflicts 1d6 points of damage in AD&D causes 1d4+1 in the ALTERNITY game—yielding the same average but a smaller range.

DEFENSES

Monsters converted to the ALTERNITY system receive appropriate resistance modifiers from their Strength and Dexterity scores when defending against melee and missile attacks, respectively.

A monster's thick hide or magical defenses can also serve as armor in the ALTERNITY rules. While armor ratings are complex and not necessarily consistent with AD&D armor class, the easiest way to determine a monster's armor rating is by finding its AC on **Table 9**.

SKILLS

The ALTERNITY game uses skills to define the most basic capabilities of a hero, alien, or even an animal. Special powers as well as abilities like climbing, jumping, swimming, or flying are listed as skills. A monster may possess any of a huge range of skills in the ALTERNITY game, reflecting both innate abilities and learned talents.

STRENGTH SKILLS

Armor Operation: A monster that generally fights in heavy armor should know the *combat armor* specialty skill. If the converted monster has access to high technology, it might have the *powered armor* skill also.

Athletics: If the monster has any athletic ability at all, it should have this broad skill. If a monster has a Climb or Jump movement rate listed, it must have the Athletics broad skill as well as the appropriate specialty skills. Giants, noted for their ability to throw boulders, should have the *throw* specialty skill, as should any monster with a throwing

attack.

Heavy Weapons: If you are creating an alien race that shares in advanced technology, its members may learn this skill and its associated specialty skills. At lower technology levels, this skill could conceivably cover the use of siege weaponry or ship-mounted weapons such as catapults (indirect fire) and ballistae (direct fire).

Melee Weapons: Any monster that uses weapons, from an orc to a yuan-ti, should have this broad skill and one or more appropriate specialty skills.

Unarmed Attack: As noted above, this broad skill is the basis for most monsters' natural attack forms. Any predator or monster that uses its attack forms intentionally and skillfully (as opposed to a reflexive defense or an incidental attack like a trample) should possess this broad skill. Many monsters have the *brawl* specialty skill, described above.

DEXTERITY SKILLS

Acrobatics: Any creature with a flying movement rate must have this broad skill, along with the *flight* specialty skill.

Monsters that are particularly agile—such as great cats or monkeys—might also have the Acrobatics skill and possibly another specialty skill (such as *fall*).

Manipulation: Monsters with thieving abilities possess this broad skill and one or more of its specialty skills.

Ranged Weapons, Primitive and Modern: Intelligent monsters that use ranged weapons should have one of these broad skills. Also, monsters with a natural ranged attack form (such as the manticore's spiky tail) have this skill.

Stealth: Many AD&D monsters impose penalties to their opponents' surprise rolls; these should possess the Stealth broad skill at least and possibly one or more of its specialty skills.

Vehicle Operation: Intelligent humanoid monsters may make use of vehicles appropriate to their technology level.

CONSTITUTION SKILLS

Movement: Any monster with an AD&D swimming movement rate automatically possesses the Movement-swim skill. Herd animals and other creatures that travel long distances on a regular basis (including nomads and migratory animals) should possess the Movement broad skill.

Stamina: This broad skill is free to every basic ALTERNITY hero race except the fraal, and it is common among animals, aliens, and monsters as well. Any monster should possess the

broad skill unless the monster description paints it as particularly weak or frail. Particularly hardy creatures could have several ranks of the *endurance* specialty skill as well. Creatures with the special ability to fight even after reaching 0 hit points (such as brown bears) should have the *resist pain* specialty skill.

Survival: Intelligent monsters could well possess the Survival skill, which reflects their ability to live off the land. For natural animals, this ability is assumed and no skill is required.

INTELLIGENCE SKILLS

Creatures below Low intelligence in AD&D terms (5 Intelligence in the ALTERNITY game) have no Intelligence-based skills.

Low-intelligence monsters (ALTERNITY Intelligence 5 or 6) may learn basic Intelligence skills such as *Knowledge-deduce* or *first aid*, *Tactics-infantry tactics*, and *Technical Science-repair* (as listed in the STAR*DRIVE® ALIEN COMPENDIUM™ book).

Creatures above Low intelligence (ALTERNITY Intelligence 7 and above) may learn all other Intelligence skills if appropriate for their society and technological level.

WILL SKILLS

Administration: Monsters with a strong lawful bent and high intelligence might learn this broad skill and its associated specialties. *Administration-bureaucracy* might be essential in dealing with modrons, for example.

Animal Handling: In a world where mounts are more common than vehicles, this skill replaces Vehicle Operation as a free broad skill for humans. It should be fairly common for any race that rides mounts or uses trained animals as guards.

Awareness: This is a common skill, free to every standard alien race and common to all normal animals as well. Unless there's a very good reason for it, any monster converted from AD&D should have the Awareness broad skill and, usually, the *intuition* specialty skill as well. The Perception skill is a good choice for monsters with unusually acute senses.

TABLE 10: MAGIC RESISTANCE

AD&D MAGIC RESISTANCE	ALTERNITY RESISTANCE MODIFIER
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76-100%	+4
51-75%	+3
26-50%	+2
1-25%	+1

Creativity: A luxury of intelligent species, the Creativity skill could be assigned to any monster described as having an artistic bent. For example, the AD&D *MONSTROUS MANUAL*™ book says, “Locathan coral carvings and jewelry are highly valued by art collectors...” While not all locathah have a Creativity-related skill, some do.

Investigate: Creatures like dogs, with innate tracking ability, should possess the *Investigate-track* specialty skill. Intelligent animals, and certainly many monsters, can possess other specialty skills or just the broad skill.

Resolve: *Resolve-physical resolve* is a common characteristic of most animals with ALTERNITY Intelligence scores between 2 and 4. More intelligent monsters might have the broad skill or either of its specialty skills if the monster source describes it as possessing particular fortitude, either of mind or body.

Street Smart: Monsters like meazels, kenku, and other creatures accustomed to life on the fringe of human society should possess this broad skill. Specific individuals with particular ties to criminal organizations or knowledge of illegal practices might possess either specialty skill as well.

Teach: Civilized and intelligent monsters could possess this broad skill on an individual basis.

PERSONALITY SKILLS

Culture: Monsters that live within an organized society—either their own or another race's—might possess *Culture-etiquette* or other related skills. Lycanthropes, doppelgangers, and vampires are examples of monsters that often have call for such skills, while social humanoids like goblins and orcs might be well versed in their own cultures' unique forms of etiquette.

Deception: Any intelligent and reasonably social monster might know the skills of Deception.

Entertainment: Monsters like wolfweres should have *Entertainment-musical instrument* and *sing*. Other monsters with bardlike abilities might possess other specialty skills as well.

Interaction: Every standard alien race except the mechalus receives Interaction as a free broad skill. It should likewise be common among intelligent, social monsters such as orcs,

jgenies, and sahuagin. While minotaurs are not particularly social, they certainly possess the *Interaction—intimidate* specialty skill. Nymphs and dryads might have the *charm* skill, while succubi naturally possess *seduce*. Dragons often have the *bargain* and *intimidate* skills.

Leadership: Only a race like flinds or lizard kings, which are practically born leaders, possess Leadership or its specialty skills. Individuals of any intelligent, social race might have these skills.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Psionics: Psionics are fairly easy to convert from AD&D to the ALTERNITY game. AD&D psionic powers fall into five disciplines: Clairsentience, Psychokinesis, Psychometabolism, Psychoportation, and Telepathy. Psychokinesis directly translates to the ALTERNITY game's Telekinesis broad skill, Psychometabolism to Biokinesis, Clairsentience to ESP, and Telepathy to Telepathy. Psionic AD&D characters or monsters with access to one of these four disciplines automatically have access to the corresponding ALTERNITY broad skill. You can consider Teleportation (equivalent to AD&D's Psychoportation) a new broad skill in the ALTERNITY game, based on Will and costing 6 skill points, and then create specialty skills to parallel specific AD&D powers. Alternatively, you can assign psychoportive powers to another broad skill, such as Telekinesis.

The example below uses illithids (mind flayers) to illustrate the process of creating new ALTERNITY psionic powers based on AD&D powers. Since illithids possess only a limited number of psychoportive powers in the AD&D game, and two out of three deal with the Astral Plane, which has little relevance in a science-fiction setting, the remaining skill (teleport) is included under the Telekinesis broad skill.

Monsters with spellcasting ability (as opposed to innate spell-like abilities) should be treated exactly like wizards or clerics, using the guidelines in the appendix of the ALTERNITY *Gamemaster Guide*. They have access to either the Arcane Magic FX or Faith FX broad skills, and you should define their spellcasting ability within that framework, as you decide is appropriate for your campaign.

You can define innate spell-like abilities either as magical FX or as Super Power FX. Since these spell-like powers do not require arcane rituals, spoken words, or components, they are actually more like Super Power/Extreme Ability FX than Arcane Magic. See the example of beholders, below, for an illustration of converting special abilities to FX. Note that the cost of the FX skill is irrelevant—since

these are innate abilities, every member of the species possesses the skill even if it can't pay the skill point cost.

MAGIC RESISTANCE

Monsters with magic resistance in AD&D gain an additional resistance modifier in ALTERNITY which reduces the chance of magical FX affecting them. The amount of this resistance modifier is based on the percentage of magic resistance the AD&D monster possesses, as shown on **Table 10**.

THE ILLITHIDS

TSR's 1980 adventure *Expedition to the Barrier Peaks* featured an illustration of a mind flayer in a futuristic uniform, holding an advanced weapon while mind blasting a hapless adventurer. Nine years later, a mind flayer graced the cover of the SPELLJAMMER® boxed set, and illithids in space were a fearsome reality in the AD&D game universe. Perhaps no AD&D monster is more like a science-fiction alien—utterly unlike the humans whose brains they eat, originating on a different world, and relying more on psionics than magic.

Description: Illithids are humanoid aliens distinguished by the four tentacles that frame their suckerlike mouths. Their skin is a hideous mauve color and glistens with thick mucous. Their hands have four fingers, and their feet are webbed, allowing them to swim as fast as they can walk. Their eyes are dead white, and their craniums bulge in an octopoid shape. They dress in flowing robes and cover their bodies completely—including their heads—when dealing with humans.

Encounter: Illithids are deadly foes in combat, even though they shun high-tech weaponry and defenses. Their primary form of attack is their psionic *mind blast*, which they use to stun opponents. When faced with a number of enemies, an illithid uses its *mind blast* to stun as many as possible, then grabs one or two stunned victims and attempts to escape with them. It keeps some victims as slaves and feasts on the brains of others.

When attacking a single, unarmed victim, an illithid often chooses instead to attack with its tentacles. It can use all four tentacles against one opponent in a single phase. A successful hit indicates that all four tentacles have attached to the victim's skull. Note, however, that if a character is wearing any sort of protective headgear, the mind flayer's tentacle

attack automatically fails, or is at least made at a significant penalty. (A CF softsuit hood or any sort of armor that encases the entire body constitutes protective headgear, but a baseball cap would not.) While attached, a tentacle causes no additional damage, and the victim can break its grip with a successful Strength feat check. The tentacles secrete a powerful flesh- and bone-dissolving enzyme that allows them to burrow into the skull of the victim to extract its brain. Once all four tentacles have attached themselves to the victim, they find their way in to the victim's brain and kill him immediately in the following action round.

Habitat/Society: Illithids are highly intelligent beings with well-developed psionic powers. They communicate exclusively via telepathy, though they often punctuate their thoughts with waving tentacles. Their goals as a species include the complete domination of the known galaxy and the subjugation of all other species to their will. They view other races as fodder and slave labor.

For all their monstrous evil, illithids are an advanced and civilized race. They dole out bits of their technology to their assimilated subjects while jealously guarding any secrets that would make their slaves less manageable. They also practice extensive genetic manipulation of their subjects, breeding ideal slave societies over generations.

Illithids dwell on dark worlds or in deep subterranean caverns, avoiding the light of any star. They keep large numbers of slaves in thrall by psionically sapping their willpower. Their society is governed by an elder-brain, a sentient, psionic pool that contains the brains of those mind flayers that have gone before.

See the AD&D *MONSTROUS MANUAL* and the *MONSTROUS ARCANA™* sourcebook *The Illithiad* for more information about illithid society and culture.

In the AD&D SPELLJAMMER® campaign setting, illithids are active traders and a powerful force among the multi-racial community of space. In an ALTERNITY campaign, illithids could easily play a similar role in a universe populated with a large number of alien species.

ILLITHID GAME DATA

STR 9 (2d4+4)

DEX 9 (2d6+2)

CON 13 (2d4+8)

INT 14 (2d4+9)

WIL 13 (2d6+6)

PER 13 (2d4+8)

Durability 13/13/6/6

Action check: 13+/12/6/3

Move: Sprint 18, run 12, walk 4, easy swim 4, swim 12

Actions: 3

Reaction score: Ordinary/3

Last Resorts: 0

Psionic energy points: 13

ATTACKS

Tentacles (x4) 13/6/3 d4-2w/d4w/d4-2m LI/0

Mind blast 18/9/4 d4+2s/d6+2s/d8+2s psionic attack

DEFENCES

no resistance modifier vs. melee attacks

no resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks

+4 resistance modifier vs. magical FX

Armor: d6-1 (LI), d6-2 (HI), d6-1 (En)

Athletics [9]; Unarmed Attack [9]-*brawl* [13]; Movement [13]-*swim* [14]; Stamina [13]; Knowledge [U]-*deduce* [15]; Life Science [14]-*genetics* [15]; Awareness [13]-*intuition* [14]; Resolve [13]; Deception [13]; Interaction [13]-*bargain* [14], *intimidate* [15]; ESP [14]-*mind reading* [16]; Telekinesis [13]-*levitation* [15]; Telepathy [13]-*contact* [15], *datalink* [14], -| *mind blast* [18], *mind shield* [15], *suggest* [15].

Alternatively, illithids could be the dominant race of the campaign. They could be at the head of a star-spanning empire, with hundreds of worlds and races enslaved by their evil minds. In a contemporary or near-future campaign, the first agents of this illithid empire could have just arrived at Earth. In a far-future campaign, the heroes could be freedom fighters among the illithids' slaves.

As described in *The Illithiad*, illithids in the AD&D game have created a wide variety of technological devices powered by psionic energy. In the ALTERNITY game, these biomechanical devices would fit perfectly as advanced technology, and illithids could possess a special form of cybertech that relies on psionic energy and illithid mucous to function. Illithids might have invented AI computers with a vial of fluid from an elder brain as the core of the CPU, and NIJacks would certainly rely on the psionic attunement of illithid mucous.

ILLITHID PSIONIC SKILLS

Illithids are the true masters of psionic power, possessing a range of skills and abilities that surpasses that of any other Mindwalkers in the universe. Although they do not generally learn Biokinesis and its specialty skills, they are adept at the other branches of psionic power and have developed a wide variety of speciality skills beyond those listed in the ALTERNITY® *Player's Handbook*. These skills, all adapted from the descriptions in *The Illithiad*, are described below. They are, by no means, the only skills illithids might possess, so Gamemasters should feel free to devise new ones regularly.

INTELLIGENCE SKILLS	
Skill Name	Cost
ESP	5
Mind reading	3
WILL SKILLS	
Skill Name	Cost
Telekinesis	6
Control body*	3
Levitation	2
Pyrokinesis*	4
Teleport*	4
PERSONALITY SKILLS	
Skill Name	Cost
Telepathy	5
Awe	2
Contact	3
Datalink*	4
Domination*	4
Intrusive taste link*	2
Microcosm*	3
Mind blast*	4
Mind shield	2
Suggest	3

Skills marked with an asterisk (*) cannot be used untrained.

WILL SKILLS

CONTROL BODY

Psionic specialty, cost 3 Extended duration

With this power, an illithid can psionically manipulate the body of another creature as if the victim were a marionette. The illithid makes a skill check (counting the victim's Will resistance modifier and any addition to that modifier based on the target's Resolve—*mental resolve* skill), but success at this check does not guarantee the success of the power.

Victims can use their Resolve—*physical resolve* skills in an attempt to wrest control of their bodies back from the illithid. Victims can continue trying to regain control each action round. Each skill check is made with a penalty based on the success of the illithid's *control body* skill roll: Ordinary, +1 step penalty; Good, +2 step penalty; Amazing, +3 step penalty.

If the *control body* power is successful, the illithid gains basic control over the victim's legs and arms, causing them to move in an awkward, jerky fashion. The illithid can force the victim to attack, though these attacks are made with a +3 step penalty. The illithid gains no control over the rest of the victim's body besides the limbs. The victim can still speak freely and is completely aware of his or her surroundings.

The illithid must remain within 80 yards of the victim to maintain control.

TELEPORT

Psionic Specialty, cost 4

This power allows an illithid to instantly transport itself and its clothing and equipment from one location to another. The illithid must be able to picture the destination with reasonable accuracy, assuming a certain amount of familiarity with the location. Modifiers to the skill check apply based on the distance traveled and the amount of gear the illithid carries (above its own body mass, of course).

Distance	Modifier
10 meters	-1
100 meters	0
1000 meters	+1
10 kilometers	+2
100 kilometers	+3
1000 kilometers	+4
10,000 kilometers	+5
Interplanetary	+9
Mass carried	Modifier
> 20% illithid's mass	0
illithid's mass	+2
300% illithid's mass	+4

PERSONALITY SKILLS

AWE

Psionic Specialty, cost 2
Extended duration.

Victims affected by this power regard the illithid user with a mixture of fear and respect. The illithid seems dangerously powerful, and the affected creatures avoid the illithid if possible. They seek out the first opportunity to escape the illithid's presence and do not attack it unless they are forced to.

pays the cost in psionic energy points.

DOMINATION

Psionic Specialty, cost 4 Extended duration.

An illithid can use this psionic power to bend others to its will, implanting mental commands into its victim's mind. If the illithid's skill check is successful (counting the victim's Will resistance modifier), it can control a single victim's actions for as long as the illithid has psionic energy points to expend in maintaining the power.

INTRUSIVE TASTE LINK

Psionic Specialty, cost 2 Extended duration.

A perfect reflection of the illithids' twisted world view, this power creates a sensory link between the illithid and one or more target creatures. The illithid may link to one creature per phase, at a cost of 2 psionic energy points each. Once linked, whatever the illithid tastes, the linked creatures taste as well. Illithids practice a social entertainment called "performance eating," and this power is most often used by practitioners of this art to enhance the experience of the onlookers. However, other illithids use it as a form of torture: While eating the brain of one human, they force the victim's companions or even the victim himself to share the taste.

MICROCOSM

Psionic Specialty, cost 3 Extended duration.

This power plunges the victim into a pleasant fantasy world of his own imagining. Sensory input from the real world is completely shut off—the victim experiences only what he or she desires, the sensations of an idyllic but illusory world. The victim believes that he or she has actually been transported to this dream-scape, unless something causes the individual to believe that what he or she is experiencing is false. In this case, the victim can attempt one *Resolve*—*mental resolve* skill check to break free from the sensory prison.

While in the microcosm, the victim cannot be roused by external stimuli, since no sensory information (shouting, slapping, smelling salts) can penetrate the walls of the psionic power. The victim stands catatonic while under the power's influence. This reverie lasts as long as the illithid

BEHOLDER FX

Treat the spell-like abilities of a beholder's eleven eyes as Super Power FX, as described below.

ANTI-MAGIC RAY ((GREAT EYE)

(Super Power, Extreme Ability: INT; Amazing quality, base cost 15

When a beholder activates this ray, no magic functions within its effect. This includes Arcane Magic and Faith FX, as well as any Super Power FX that the GM rules are magical in nature. The FX of a beholder's other eyes are affected by the Anti-Magic Ray. The ray is 125 meters long and extends in a 90° cone from the front of the beholder.

CHARM PERSON (EYE 1)

Super Power, Extreme Ability: PER; Good quality, base cost 8

This ray allows the beholder to bring one human or humanoid alien under its influence. The charmed person treats the beholder as a trusted ally, though he does not obey the beholder's orders unquestioningly. The range of the ray is 100 meters. The victim's Will resistance modifier applies to the skill roll.

CHARM MONSTER (EYE 2)

Super Power, Extreme Ability: PER; Good quality, base cost 8

Similar to the Charm Person ability, this ray works on a single nonhumanoid alien creature. The range of the ray is 50 meters. The victim's Will resistance modifier applies to the skill roll.

SLEEP (EYE 3)

Super Power, Extreme Ability: WIL; Good quality, base cost 8

This ray, with a range of 25 meters, puts a single target of level 4 or less (or an alien with a Con of 8 or less) into a deep sleep. The victim's Will resistance modifier applies to the skill roll.

TELEKINESIS (EYE 4)

Super Power, Extreme Ability: WIL; Amazing quality,

base cost 12

Similar to the psionic specialty of *psychokinetics*, this ray (range 80 meters) allows the beholder to move and manipulate objects weighing up to 110 kg. The beholder can manipulate only one object at a time but can move it with pinpoint precision.

FLESH TO STONE (EYE 5)

Super Power, Extreme Ability: WIL; Amazing quality, base cost 14

Using this ray, a beholder can transform a living (or dead) creature of flesh (Series I life) into stone. The victim's Constitution resistance modifier applies to the skill roll. Beholders use this power not only in self-defense but also as an art form. They can reverse the effect of the ray at will. The ray's range is 25 meters.

DISINTEGRATE (EYE 6)

Super Power, Extreme Ability: DEX; Amazing quality, base cost 15

This ray completely obliterates matter within its 15-meter range. The beholder can instantly destroy a single creature with the ray (the victim's Dexterity resistance modifier applies to the skill roll in this case) or obliterate a 3-meter cube of unliving matter.

FEAR (EYE 7)

Super Power, Extreme Ability: PER; Good quality, base cost 10

Creatures touched by this ray instantly turn and sprint away from the beholder for 6 action rounds. The victim's Will resistance modifier applies to the skill roll. The range is 15 meters.

SLOW (EYE 8)

Super Power, Extreme Ability: WIL; Good quality, base cost 8

This ray imposes a +3 step penalty to the affected creature's action check roll and reduces the victim's maximum number of actions by half. The victim can only move at half normal speed and suffers a +2 step penalty to all skill rolls. Opponents targeting the affected creature in melee or ranged combat gain a -2 step bonus. The victim's Will resistance modifier applies to the skill roll. The range is 120 meters.

CAUSE WOUNDS (EYE 9)

Super Power, Extreme Ability: DEX; Good quality, base cost 10

This deadly ray inflicts 2d4w/2d4+1w/2d6w points of damage to its target. The victim's Dexterity resistance modifier applies to the skill roll. The ray's range is 45 meters.

DEATH RAY (EYE 10)

Super Power, Extreme Ability: DEX; Amazing quality, base cost 15

With a range of 30 meters, this ray instantly snuffs out the life force of its target. The victim's Dexterity resistance modifier applies to the skill roll.

BEHOLDER GAME DATA

STR 9 (2d4+4)

DEX 7 (2d6)

CON 15 (2d4+10)

INT 12 (2d4+7)

WIL 14 (2d8+5)

PER 11 (2d4+4)

Durability 15/15/7/7

Move: Fly 8, Glide 6

Reaction score: Marginal/3

Action check: 11+/10/5/2

Actions: 3

Last Resorts: 0

FX Energy: 20

ATTACKS

Bite 15/7/3 2d4w/2d4+2w/2d4m LI/0

Ray FX—see below

DEFENSES

No resistance modifier vs. melee attacks

No resistance modifier vs. ranged attacks

Anti-magic ray dissipates magical FX

Armor: *body*: d6+3 (LI), d4+2 (HI), d6 (En) *eyes*:

d6-2 (LI), d4-2 (HI), *d6-A* (En) *eyestalks*:

d6+1 (LI), d4 (HI), d4-1 (En)

SKILLS

Unarmed Attack [*9*]-*brawl* [15]; Acrobatics [*7*]-*flight* [10], *zero-g training* [9]; Stamina [15]; Knowledge [*12*]-*deduce* [14]; System Operation [12]; Technical Science [12];

Awareness [*14*]-*intuition* [15], *perception* [17]; Creativity -*architecture* [15] or *sculpture* [15]; Investigate -*interrogate* [16]; Resolve [*14*]-*physical* [16], *mental* [15]; Deception [11]; Interaction [11]-*intimidate* [13]; Super Power FX (see separate sidebar).

THE BEHOLDER

Along with illithids, beholders are among the most "alien" of AD&D monsters and, like the mind flayers, are well suited to a science fiction (or science fantasy) campaign.

Description: Beholders are completely alien creatures, appearing as large spheres about 1 to 1.5 meters in diameter. The beholder's body is dominated by a large central eye and a toothy mouth, and the body is crowned with ten smaller eyes attached to flexible eyestalks. Their hide is covered with plates similar to hard gray plastic. They move by a form of levitation, thanks to a lighter-than-air gas that collects in pockets within their cartilaginous skulls. Their natural ability to levitate makes them comfortable in zero-gravity conditions.

Encounter: A beholder's body consists of four key regions: the body, the central eye, the eyestalks, and the ten small eyes atop the eyestalks. Each region has different levels of protection (reflected in the different armor ratings listed in the sidebar), and each also holds a certain amount of the beholder's durability. When a character attacks a beholder without specific intent to hit any particular part of the creature's body, roll a d20 on the following table to determine where the blow lands.

Damage inflicted to the eyestalks and their attached eyes (each of which has 4 stun points and 4 wound points) does not affect the beholder as a whole. The beholder can easily survive the loss of all its eyestalks and regenerates one lost eyestalk per week. Mortal damage inflicted to the eyestalks is treated as wound damage and does not threaten the life of the beholder at all. Of course, if the beholder is killed, the eyestalks are killed as well.

Naturally, characters can make called shots to hit a specific part of the beholder's body, suffering a +4 step penalty to their skill check. Note that a successful called shot in this case does not inflict more damage (like the "Dead-Eye Shot" described in the *ALTERNITY Game-master Guide*).

Each of the beholder's eyes possesses a special magical power, described in the sidebar as Super Power FX. If attackers are within a 90° arc of each other around the beholder, the creature can bring d4 of its smaller eyes to bear on them. If targets are in a 180° arc, it can use d6 eyes, d8 if they are in a 270° arc, and all ten if it is attacked from all sides. The beholder can only use its central eye's ray against attackers in front of it. In zero-g situations,

beholders tend to float so that attackers are "above" them, allowing them to bring all 10 small eyes to bear.

Habitat/Society: Beholders are loathsome and hateful, attacking species they consider inferior (all other species) without provocation. Their greatest hatred, however, is reserved for other beholders who do not live up to their standards of physical perfection. (Every beholder considers itself and its brood, who all appear identical, to be the embodiment of physical perfection.) The slightest variation in appearance—a different color plating or eye, a miniscule difference in the size of the central eye—is cause for extermination. The resultant warring among different beholder hives may be the one factor that prevents them from overrunning the universe.

Beholders live in hives on starships or in planet-bound cavern complexes. The beholder "hive mothers" lead these communities and can control ordinary beholders. See the *MONSTROUS MANUAL* book and the *MONSTROUS ARCANA* sourcebook I, *Tyrant* for more information about beholder society and culture. Beholders, despite relying on telekinesis for fine manipulation, are masters of ship construction and other technical tasks. They are more advanced in their development of mechanical devices (including starships) than computers and the like. They shun cybertech as a corruption of the pure natural form of the beholder, but some rogue beholders have been known to carry a virtual arsenal of cyber gear. Other beholders consider these cyberneticists to be the worst of all abominations, since they have chosen their deformity.

Beholder genetic makeup is prone to mutation. The statistics presented in the sidebar may vary drastically among individual beholders. Different strains of the beholder race may vary not only in appearance, but in the powers possessed by their various eyes and in other abilities.

TABLE 11: BEHOLDER HIT LOCATION

ROLL	LocA+ion AKEPOR^	DU
1-15	Body d6+3 (LI), d4+2 (HI), d6 (En)	10
16-17	Central Eye d6-2 (LI), d4-2 (HI), d6-4 (En)	5/5
18-19	Eyestalk d6+1 (LI), d4 (HI), d4-1 (En)	4/4
20	One smaller eye d6-2 (LI), d4-2 (HI), d6-4 (En)	

James Wyatt designed his first ALTERNITY campaign (before the game was released!) around the idea of Earth being assimilated into an illithid empire.