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DRAGON

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DRAGON

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Digital Publishing

Dragon Editorial

by Steve Winter

When I was a kid in Iowa, we had a rope tied to a tree branch that hung out over the Mississippi River. The tree was atop a low bluff, so from the rope to the water was about a 10-foot drop (but it felt like 30 feet to my 10-year-old self). You could swing out over the water and, as long as you held onto the rope, feel perfectly secure. Or you could relax and swim in the cool, refreshing embrace of the river.

Between those two states, however, was the moment when you were plunging toward the water at ever-increasing speed, flailing your arms and legs and probably screaming your lungs out. That brief interlude was far more thrilling, and more frightening, than the stable conditions that sandwiched it.

Welcome to the digital age. Get ready to let go of that rope.

Publishing was a stable business for centuries. Then along came the digital revolution, and traditional publishing found itself swinging out over the river. Major booksellers are going out of business. Newspaper and magazine publishers are shutting their doors. Everyone is trying to figure out how to convert a traditional publishing business to the web without going broke in the process, and plenty of publishers are going broke in the process. Even those that launched in this brave new age as pure web endeavors are stalling almost as fast they took off.

Every publisher is faced with the decision of when to let go of that rope. Simply hanging on is becoming less of an option all the time. It's not always apparent whether the water is warm or cold, deep or shallow, but it's pretty clear that it's moving swiftly.

The transition from letters and pictures on paper to strings of 1s and 0s in the cloud calls for reexamining a lot of ingrained "truths" about publishing. The one that most closely affects us is this question: what does it mean to "publish a magazine" in digital form?

Much of what people visualize when they think of a magazine has little to do with content but a lot to do with the fact that until the digital age, magazines were always printed on paper. The image of a magazine as an object that lands in your mailbox or newsstand once a month lingers even after paper is removed from the equation.

The screen is not just a sheet of paper in different form. Its possibilities and limitations are wholly its own. Digital delivery is such a game-changer that even the word "magazine" is called into question. Some of you may have noticed that we seldom refer anymore to "*Dragon* and *Dungeon* magazines." Instead, we refer to "*Dragon* and *Dungeon* online." It's emblematic of the situation in electronic publishing that no new word has arisen to replace magazine, even though one is clearly needed. (Simply tacking an "e" onto the beginning of a word is becoming tiresome. We should be able to do better than that.)

We're committed to digital publishing for *Dragon* and *Dungeon* online. This medium offers many possibilities that we've yet to explore and raises questions that we've yet to answer. Is a web-based periodical that publishes stand-alone, unbundled articles still a magazine? If so, it's a different model for the 21st century. If not, then what is it? Regardless of your answer, it's here to stay . . . until the next new form comes along.

We'd like to hear your views on the advantages, disadvantages, and unexplored possibilities of digital publishing, especially regarding *Dragon* and *Dungeon* online. Use the comments field below, or drop into the forum and share your thoughts.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steve". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.



Surely You Joust!

By Alana Joli Abbott

Illustration by Jason Juta

Sir Adriana steadied her lance, looking down the pitch at her opponent. There, on the back of a reptilian beast she'd never encountered before, not in all her travels, was Lord Streyнар, the king's champion.

He was also the man plotting a rebellion against the king.

Adriana felt her horse paw the ground nervously, feeding off Adriana's own nervous energy. This was her chance to make a difference, she knew—to stop the usurper before he had a chance to act. Unless she defeated him, she'd never be able to convince the king of the evidence she and her fellow adventurers had uncovered. With a win under her shield, however, the king would have to listen. She would have proven herself before all the courtiers, before all the kingdom. Streyнар, as

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though he knew her intentions, smiled confidently just before lowering the visor of his helmet. Despite the rules of the tournament, she suspected that if he won, she'd be dead.

The flag dropped and Adriana charged, her mare's hooves pounding the ground toward the center of the pitch. Streynar's mount clawed the ground, leaping into action. Their lances paralyzed, and her heartbeat slowed. The moment of truth was here.

If the dungeon crawl represents the staple of adventuring, it is also the dark, dank, smelly side of the profession. Hours spent away from daylight, days and nights that are interchangeable, dull meals of hard-tack and dried meat—a dungeon crawl might be the most lucrative of an adventurer's missions, but it can also be the pits. Literally.

If you are an adventurer who prefers sunlight to gloom, who favors chivalry and camaraderie over mingling with monsters, a joust might be just what you need to eliminate the dungeon doldrums. Surely, among other noble-minded individuals who take their honor and valor seriously, adventurers have little to worry about aside from winning glory and prizes, right?

Not necessarily.

The dangers in a dungeon are often straightforward: monsters, traps, and hazards that need to be overcome. At a jousting tournament, the dangers are more subtle. A count might be plotting to undermine the king's champion by crippling the champion's horse. Spies from an enemy nation might be planning to ruin the festival as an act of terrorism.

A gathering of so many warriors has great potential for intrigue, as courtiers might persuade champions to overthrow a tyrant—or a benevolent monarch. Or a knight of the old guard simply might not like the adventurers moving into his or her territory, thus taking every opportunity to show that they are out of their element and should crawl back into the dungeons where they belong.

That potential for intrigue also opens up multiple reasons why the heroes would be attending a festival in the first place. It isn't just the monetary prize that leads people to compete in jousts and other chivalric events. Though tournaments are a great place to make—or lose—a fortune and a reputation, they are also a handy place for adventurers to find future employers. What better way to impress a lord who might later need someone to solve a persistent goblin incursion than showing prowess in battle against skilled warriors? In addition to using a tournament to advertise their services, adventurers can find such an event to be an excellent opportunity to track down minstrels, merchants, informants, and entertainers who might know a thing or two about whatever missions the adventurers are trying to solve.

A tournament is also a great place to go shopping. As competitors and delegations from many lands gather to make their names, merchants from those lands also flock to the crowd. Looking for a hard-to-find ritual or discounted magic items? Someone is sure to be selling them. An adventurer hoping to unload a tricky artifact picked up on a previous mission might find someone to take that dangerous item off his or her hands and earn a profit.

FOR THE DM: JOUSTING SKILL CHALLENGE

If you want to introduce the idea of a joust into your game, but your players are not interested in taking on additional feats or tailoring their characters for chivalric competitions, you can create a tournament as a long skill challenge.

Make most of the challenge a part of the preparation stage. Use primary skills such as Intimidate, which adventurers use to shake the confidence of other competitors; Nature, which allows adventurers to choose or prepare a mount; and Perception, which helps identify a treacherous area on the jousting pitch or a flaw in a foe's armor. These skills could open additional uses of Athletics, Heal, Insight, or Streetwise.

The joust itself becomes the final stage of the skill challenge. Each prior success adds a +2 bonus to one final Athletics roll. The DC should be hard for the characters' level, particularly given the number of bonuses that can be earned in the preparation stage. Simulating a joust in this context allows any groups to give themselves something important to do at a tournament—and gives them the possibility of earning an otherwise unlikely victory.

SETTING THE SCENE

Although a major metropolis might host a tournament as a civic event, most tournaments are conducted under the direction of a lord or a lady, who is responsible for the care and feeding of guests—not only the competitors but the spectators as well. Nobles and adventurers, merchants and peasants are all considered a part of the tournament, and the banquets held every night of the competition can be extremely expensive affairs. Only rich nobles host tournaments, and they use the events as a way to show off their wealth and generosity. A host might be required to feed up to six thousand guests for the duration of a tournament, making the event effectively a temporary city. The most important competitors and guests (or those most likely to betray the lord or the lady, given the opportunity) might find themselves housed in the keep along with the noble's family.

However, the best gossip and rumors—and deals on items—happen where the common folk are. The tent city that springs up around the jousting pitch is a place of cheer and color, and the atmosphere tends to be welcoming. Given the necessary diversity of this type of festival, even races that typically are shunned might find themselves side by side with races that usually show them disdain. Peace outside the competition is a necessity; a brawl could disrupt the tournament and bring dishonor to the noble hosting the event. People participating in this kind of unsavory activity could easily find themselves spending the rest of the tournament in the dungeons—or worse.

Between the tent city and the main gate of the noble's keep is the banquet table—actually several tables lined end to end. Placed close to the keep to make it easier for the servants to bring food back and forth, it is heavily laden with food. Meals include delicacies such as oxen, birds stuffed inside each other (from swans to swallows), stags from the noble's forest, meat and sweet pies, and a multitude of sweets. A high table is set aside for the noble, the noble's family, and the most important guests, usually including religious leaders, winners in the competition, and any guests who would be insulted if they were seated with the peasantry.

Though the food is free, conducting oneself properly at dinner can be as much of a challenge as the tournament competition, especially if an adventurer is seated at the high table. A competitor's manners should be impeccable, and his or her conversation should be intriguing. Sometimes, competitors are expected to show off their more refined skills by performing a song or a poem. Fortunately for many warriors who don't have great social skills, it's acceptable to show one's wealth instead by hiring professional entertainers. After dinner come games, such as backgammon and chess, and dancing. Though most of these games are reserved for the upper classes, occasionally merchants and peasants are allowed to participate, breaking down the barriers between ranks for the short duration of the festival.

FOR THE DM: A CHALLENGE OF ETIQUETTE

If you're integrating a bit of intrigue into your game, a tournament can be the perfect place to do it—and the banquet portion of the event can be turned into a skill challenge for uncovering secrets, winning allies, and gaining clues. It can also be an excellent way to introduce threats that impact the adventurers at a later time: if they fail, they may have offended some important characters who can cause trouble for them later.

This is a great chance for social characters to shine and sneaky ones to sit back and observe, or search through the tent city or the noble's keep while the normal residents are occupied.

If you're using the entire tournament as a skill challenge, adventurers could gain successes during the banquet with skills such as Diplomacy, History, and Streetwise.

THE ART OF TILTING

Combat jousting, commonly called tilting or the tilt, is typically the main event at a tournament. Entering the tilt requires the knight or adventurer to put up stakes in advance. Typically, a knight puts up a sword, armor, a shield, a mount, or all of these. Such possessions typically represent the majority of the wealth owned by competitors. Those who can afford to do so might put up cold cash, but risking something so impersonal is seen as less chivalrous than putting up an item that has personal meaning.

In the tent city, competitors in the tilt leave their shields outside the openings of their tents, each one in the charge of a page or a squire. (These aides could be other members of the party or hirelings acquired for this purpose.) The page or squire makes note of any competitors or their hirelings who come by and tap the shield with a sword. This gesture is a challenge to compete; failing to meet that challenge could mean

HEAD SHOTS

Most jousting competitors aim for their opponents' torsos, but one school of training recommends aiming for the head. This is a riskier tactic, since hitting the head is a more difficult shot. The payoff, however, is high: You receive twice the amount of treasure (or number of points, if the tournament is point-based) if you win a joust with a head shot rather than a normal knockdown.

In a joust, the opponent's head has a +5 bonus to AC. A successful head shot gives the target a -2 penalty to the saving throw to avoid being unhorsed.

not only losing face but also losing whatever you've wagered in the competition.

The goal of a joust is to knock your opponent off his or her horse while wielding a lance (longspear). On the pitch, combat happens quickly. The action unfolds like this:

1. Opponents make simultaneous attacks with their spears. Unless the character has an applicable power, this is a melee basic attack, Strength vs. AC, with a longspear (+2 proficiency bonus, 1d10 damage). Roll damage as normal.
2. If a contestant hits with the first attack, he or she rolls a second attack, Strength vs. Fortitude, to try to unhorse the opponent.
3. If the second attack is successful, the target makes a saving throw to remain mounted. On a failure, he or she falls off the mount.

If neither rider is unhorsed, the joust continues with another simultaneous attack (step 1). If both riders are unhorsed at the same time, either the joust is considered a draw or the contest continues as though neither one had been unhorsed.

A joust is over when one and only one competitor is unhorsed at the end of step 3, or when either contestant drops to 0 hit points or fewer. A joust that's part of a tournament is never meant to be a fight to the death.

Some jousters prefer to use a tilting lance, which is a brittle spear that breaks spectacularly on a solid impact. A tilting lance shatters on an unmodified attack roll of 15-20 that results in a hit. A character who shatters one or more tilting lances during a joust gains a +2 bonus to Diplomacy checks or Intimidate checks against those who witness the shattering. The bonus lasts until the end of the encounter.

New Feat

Jousting Charge

Prerequisite: Mounted Combat feat

Benefit: If you hit a target with a charge attack while you are mounted, you can push the target 1 square and then shift 1 square into the square the target vacated.

OTHER CONTESTS

Aside from the main event, a tournament is the site of many other sporting competitions. Two of these, ring jousting and dummy jousting, also require the use of a lance or a tilting lance.

In a ring jousting match, several rings are suspended from different poles along a course; the competitor spears as many rings as possible along the course in the fastest time. Usually the rings are of increasingly smaller size, to make the last ones more difficult to spear than the first ones.

Dummy jousting also tests speed and accuracy. Rather than meeting a live opponent on the jousting pitch, the competitor faces off against a dummy that has a target on one arm and a counterweight on the other. When the lance strikes the target, the dummy swings around; if the competitor isn't quick enough, he or she is struck on the back of the head by the counterweight.

Both of these competitions can be run as individual skill challenges, in which each ring has its own DC or each joust against the dummy counts as a use of a skill. Acrobatics and Nature, representing your agility and your ability to communicate your desires to your horse, are the primary skills involved. The lance's proficiency bonus (+2 in the case of the longspear) should be added to any Acrobatics checks in this competition. Alternatively, one of these events

CHIVALRY OR CHEATING?

What some competitors might consider practical preparations, others see as cheating. Rituals such as Fortify Beast, Bolster Object, Uncanny Strength, and Song of Sustenance, or items such as the *unbroken lance*, are certain to improve your odds, especially if no one else is using magic. But then, if no one else is using magic, this advantage might be considered unfair enough that the host finds your winning dishonorable—and deserving of some time in the stocks.

can be represented by a single skill check in a much larger skill challenge.

These competitions could also be run as combat encounters. The rings might start out as AC 17, with the AC increasing for each progressively smaller-diameter ring. The dummy might be easy to hit (AC 10), but it attacks (+10 vs. Reflex) as an immediate reaction. If the dummy's opponent is hit, he or she must succeed on a saving throw to avoid being unseated (and embarrassed) before the crowd.

Dueling and Jousting

Dueling is a common addition to a jousting tournament, either as a separate event or as a part of the tilt. When one competitor is knocked off a horse during a tilt, the event might continue as the foes face off on foot, switching their lances for swords or other preferred weapons.

As its own event, a duel might involve basic melee competitions or, in rare cases, a challenge between casters, showing off their prowess in combat magic. These activities tend to be given plenty of space,

because spectators enjoy watching the fireworks but don't want to catch any sparks! Dueling can be run as an individual combat, ending at first blood or unconsciousness, or as part of a larger skill challenge, using Athletics to represent brawling or wrestling, or Arcana to represent a challenge of magical power.

Target Shooting

Archery competitions are another tournament staple. Target shooting begins at a range of 6 squares; each target has three concentric rings that determine the number of points awarded on a hit. On each successful hit, the target is moved back an additional 3 squares. This competition can be part of a skill challenge, using Acrobatics to hit the target, or it can be its own event, where the targets have three ACs to represent the different rings. At the closest range, the outer circle has AC 10, the middle ring AC 15, and the bull's-eye AC 20. These ACs increase by 2 for every 3 squares the target is moved back.

WINNING THE KISS

The most prevalent rewards for success in a tournament are the stakes put up by the other competitors—which could be magic weapons or exotic mounts, but often end up being mundane equipment. Beyond that, a generous host is likely to put up a separate prize for the winner of the tournament. Some tournaments allow teams to compete, rewarding points for every event won. Some award points only to individual competitors, making each entrant show his or her talents in diverse fields. In other cases, the noble who's running the show might feel that all competitions but the tilt are irrelevant: the tournament winner is the last jousting standing. Regardless of how it's come by, the purse in these competitions is the equivalent of a quarter of the gold that the adventurers are expected to receive at their current levels.

A nonmonetary reward might be more ephemeral, but more worthwhile. Perhaps the prize is a kiss from a fair youth of high rank. If the noble youth is a spy for an agency you need to make contact with, earning his or her favor might be the only way to pass on secret information—or learn of your next mission. The prize could be a boon from the lord or the lady who hosts the tournament: by virtue of your accomplishments, you are granted a story reward that opens doors for you on future quests. Tournament winners without land of their own might suddenly find themselves with estates and titles, so long as they swear fealty to the lords who granted them.

But the best prize might be the songs that minstrels sing in your honor—and the knowledge that at the next festival, it's rumors about you that will spread like wildfire along the banquet table.

About the Author

Alana Joli Abbott has written several adventure scenarios for RPGA campaigns from Living Kingdoms of Kalamar to Xen'drik Expeditions and *LIVING FORGOTTEN REALMS*. She is a contributor to the award-winning *Serenity Adventures*, as well as a writer of fiction, comics, and history articles. When not rewriting Greek or Norse mythology in her home games, she blogs about writing and mythology on her home page at www.VirgilandBeatrice.com.



Step into the Ring

Sparring, Wrestling, and Other Physical Contests

By Teos Abadia

Illustration by Sam Wood

Bloodied boxers pacing the ring seeking an advantage, heroes battling foes in the tight confines of a gladiatorial arena, and two wrestlers straining to throw one another can make for compelling dramatic scenes. Whether the stakes are gold, freedom, honor, or glory, such contests hearken back to earlier times and reflect our feral beginnings. Hearts beat faster and sweat drips more freely when a physical contest comes to a head. The roar of the crowd and the consequences of victory or defeat heighten the tension, bringing the players and the DM to the edge of their seats.

This article examines how you, as the DM, can build such scenes into adventures. It provides three design frameworks for you to expand on, and it offers rules for using Fortune Cards to add a strategic element.

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DESIGNING A CONTEST

A physical competition has three components, which you determine in the order given below.

1. Premise

Any campaign can feature physical contests. Arenas and gladiatorial combat are commonplace in the DARK SUN® campaign setting. Start your design process by considering why the contest is taking place, who has created the challenge, and who will participate. The following possibilities will help you get started.

Advertised Challenge or Grand Tournament: Boxing and wrestling matches with little bloodshed are common in many societies. They provide a way for heroes to earn coin and gain information. A king, a queen, or some other noble might hold a tournament as part of a festival. A coronation, the anniversary of a famous battle, and a holy day for a deity representing strength or war are all suitable reasons for a grand tournament. The rewards for victory are enticing when they align with player character needs and goals. For example, adventurers who want to restore the name of a family that has fallen can accept a sparring contest in the family's name. In the Dark Sun setting, each city-state and most large villages hold periodic contests.

Ways of the Wild: Barbarians and other primitive communities often require blood sport before accepting a request from outsiders. This might be an important test for heroes traversing the wilderness, in need of supplies, or seeking directions to a foe's lair.

Underground Fighting Den: The first rule of an underground fighting club is not to talk about it, except when you need new combatants. This type of contest works well when the campaign involves criminal elements, such as a city's thieves' guild. It is also an excellent way for characters to infiltrate such an organization, gain information, or sneak into an enemy city.

Personal or Judicial Challenge: A powerful rival could challenge the characters to a contest. Or a transgression against the law might be forgiven if the adventurers can prove their worth and win their freedom. In Dark Sun, the whim of a sorcerer-king's templar or the machinations of a merchant house can easily lead to a physical contest to avoid slavery.

Alternate Combat Resolution: Two kingdoms at war decide on a contest between champions to end the bloodshed. An archenemy near defeat requests a contest and offers information the adventurers need in exchange. If the characters are losing, a foe with a sense of honor might accept the challenge of a duel. This sort of impromptu contest is a great way for a Dungeon Master to turn a total party kill into a second chance.

2. Location

In many cases, the premise of a contest effectively dictates where the contest is held, or at least narrows down the possibilities. A grand tournament, for instance, is typically staged on a parade ground within sight of a castle, with banners proclaiming the names of each noble contestant. An echoing underground chamber illuminated by flickering torchlight and accessed through sewers is perfect for an illicit challenge run by a cult.

Some kinds of contests, such as a match against a longtime rival, could be held in any kind of location. It's possible for the location to be part of the conditions that must be agreed to before the fight. The characters' longtime rival might agree to a contest only if it's in a place of his or her choosing.

3. Rules

Every physical contest is governed by rules that might be an offshoot of the premise or the location. A grand tournament is likely to have more rules than a match in the wilderness against a barbarian champion, where the only rule might be "Don't lose."

The nature of the physical activity you want to feature influences the rules of the contest. An unarmed competition might be a wrestling match, a boxing competition, or a martial arts display. A contest hosted by barbarians might focus on feats of strength, agility, tenacity, and even natural knowledge. A gladiatorial match might require particular weapons and armor or involve specialized combat maneuvers.

Sometimes you can decide the rules of a contest by envisioning how you see the match playing out. Are participants trading blows? Is the contest a combination of hand-to-hand combat and tactical skill? Does the contest resemble an obstacle course?

Of particular importance is how or whether all the characters will participate. If this is a solo contest, can the other characters influence the outcome? They might use skills to convince the crowd to cheer for their ally, use skills to aid their champion between rounds in a boxing match, or wager on the fight to increase the benefit of a victory.

SELECTING A FRAMEWORK

The combination of premise, location, and rules determines the framework that best fits a physical contest—either a combat encounter, a skill challenge, or a hybrid approach.

Combat

A combat encounter makes for a thrilling physical contest. Excellent resources for gladiatorial matches can be found in the *DARK SUN Campaign Setting* (pages 200-202) and in the article [“Fight! Battles in the Gladiatorial Arena”](#) (*Dragon* 368). Follow the normal rules for designing a combat encounter, making note of the following points.

Participants: Traditional combat design works well for a party of four to six characters. A solo combat or one that matches combatants in small groups requires greater care. A melee combat is unlikely to be fair or fun for the player of a character who specializes in ranged attacks. An elite foe that has high defenses and hit points or powers that apply excessive control can all result in too difficult a challenge.

Design Elements: Select terrain and design a map that makes the experience exciting. In the city-state of Urik in Athas, for example, the walls and pillars dotting the arena are covered in jagged and blisteringly hot obsidian. In Raam, one side of the arena is a natural crevasse of tremendous depth. Bring the arena setting to life and consider elements such as ramps and bridges, elevation changes, pits, pools, and difficult, hazardous, or fantastic terrain. Hidden traps, resources such as consumable magic items, and terrain powers (see the article [Tutorial: Terrain Powers](#)) can add to the fun, especially when neither side is aware beforehand that they exist. A match in which combatants start unarmed and must

claim weapons that are lying in the middle of a patch of challenging terrain creates excitement even before the match begins.

Events: Combat contests are more dynamic if minor events take place, adding to the action but not supplanting it. An arena master or a noble might suddenly offer a healing potion to the first contestant to reach a certain location. Perhaps a spectator is thrown from the stands and begs for the characters to provide protection, or a foe on the brink of defeat pleads for mercy.

Victory Conditions: Simply defeating foes in combat can be underwhelming for the players—after all, the characters do this sort of thing all the time. Consider interesting alternatives such as a capture-the-flag scenario (some object must be reached and perhaps brought back to a location) or king of the hill (a position must be reached and held for some specified duration). For an individual match, you could stage a melee scenario in which victory can be achieved by bloodying an enemy, grabbing an opponent for a specific number of rounds, or bull rushing a rival out of the ring.

Skill Challenge

A skill challenge works well for a physical contest when victory depends on several aspects of physical prowess instead of just on combat. An obstacle course, a test of strength and agility, and a competition to make it through the desert alive are all excellent themes for a skill challenge. An Olympic-style wrestling match can use Acrobatics, Athletics, and Endurance to determine pins and throws, while skills such as Insight and Perception can reflect defensive awareness.

Participants and Skills: Any number of participants can be used. Usually, the likelihood of one side having a necessary skill increases with the number of participants on that side. Select enough skills to

provide options for the characters and a reasonable chance of success.

Design Elements: Because monsters tend to have fewer trained skills than player characters, static DCs might be a better option than opposed checks. Doing this also speeds up play and focuses the action on the player characters. If you do use monsters, adjust their trained skills and skill modifiers to expected values for adventurers of the appropriate level.

Consider how certain skills can have varying usefulness throughout the contest, represented by stages of the skill challenge. A martial arts competition might start with a stage to learn about the opponent’s style through History or Streetwise, progress to skills used to gain a tactical advantage such as Insight and Perception, feature several rounds of Acrobatics or Athletics as they engage in the physical contest, require an Endurance check to stave off fatigue, and then conclude with a final Acrobatics or Athletics check.

Advantages: Advantages (see *Rules Compendium*, page 160) should be used in physical contests where the skill challenge has a high complexity. Consider granting advantages with every other success or designing custom advantages based on the situation.

Events: Other events that can unfold during a contest add depth, particularly to obstacle courses and racing contests. A swimming race across a river becomes a thrilling affair when crocodiles are encountered and must be fought or evaded. A character’s attempt to prove his or her worth to a barbaric tribe by surviving a week in the forest becomes more challenging when snow falls on the fifth day. See [“Cross-City Race”](#) in *Dungeon* 176 for more examples of events and complications.

Victory Conditions: Victory is typically determined by a certain number of successes before failures. You could instead compare successes across participants or consider other methods of determining success. For example, a character who pauses

during a race to help someone in need might later be granted two successes by the match organizer for that display of compassion.

Hybrid Approach

A combination of skill challenge and combat elements can capture both the furious blows in a sparring match and the strategic decisions made to gain defensive or offensive advantages. A gladiatorial match might require participants to battle as they climb a cliff face. In the style of Robin Hood's Merry Men, bandits in the forest might challenge a player character to duel with staffs while balancing on a log over a river.

Participants: The hybrid approach to designing a physical contest has the same considerations in this regard as a straight combat encounter or skill challenge. If players can choose between skills and combat or can boost their combat prowess with skills, they gain greater flexibility. For this reason, the hybrid approach allows a wider variety of character builds to compete in a challenge.

Design Elements: The most important consideration on a hybrid contest is how to blend the use of skills with the activity of combat. The best way to do this depends on whether you want the contest to be combat-driven or skill-driven (see the sidebar).

Advantages: Advantages can be especially useful in the hybrid approach. Consider providing

a minor advantage for each successful use of a skill. In hand-to-hand combat a participant might select from a menu of skills, gaining a different advantage from each.

Events: The hybrid approach lends itself well to the use of events. Events can be either combat episodes or skill challenges based on what will introduce a fun change.

Victory Conditions: Victory conditions are driven by the kind of contest you devise. In a skill-driven contest, besting a foe in combat might contribute a success toward the skill challenge. In a combat-driven contest, the successful use of skills helps the combatants land their blows or defend against attacks, making success in the overall battle more likely.

COMBAT-DRIVEN CONTESTS

In a combat-driven hybrid contest, each participant can engage in combat normally. In addition, combatants can use skills to gain advantages.

If a successful skill check is made as a standard action, its benefit should be as significant as the successful use of a power. This sort of contest can work well if participants are not able to use class powers or similar attack powers. A contest might allow only bull rush actions, grab actions, or the use of Acrobatics, Athletics, or Intimidate.

Allowing the use of a skill as part of a move action can be an integral part of a contest focused on traversing terrain, such as a chase. Minor actions are best for skills that provide small benefits. In a duel, a successful Perception check might enable a character to spot a weak spot in the target's defenses.

SKILL-DRIVEN CONTESTS

For a skill-driven hybrid contest, you can follow the design of a typical skill challenge, breaking the challenge into various scenes or stages. In between each, allow for one or more combat actions or combat rounds. Consider the many adventures of Indiana Jones where he intermittently traverses dangerous terrain and dispatches foes (usually minions).

Combat scenes within a skill-driven contest work best when they are fast and furious. Consider a scene in which three minions block the path that the characters must take. A minion might be prepared to cut a rope bridge, giving the characters just one chance to strike first. Or, they might need to find a key that is in one of several baskets. The correct basket also holds a dangerous viper, leading to a bit of combat before they can gain the key.

USING FORTUNE CARDS

Fortune Cards are an excellent addition to a physical contest. They can represent tactics that the characters use during the match. Consider using these optional rules.

Team Deck

Players create a single deck together, choosing options based on their assessment of the challenge. At the beginning of a round, each player draws a card from the team deck. Players can trade cards if desired. The deck should have twenty or more cards so that lasts for the entire contest. You can create a second deck for the opposing team.

Match Deck

Each participant—including the characters' opponents—selects a deck of ten cards. At the beginning of combat, each individual draws the top three cards and places them on the table face up, discarding the rest of the deck. In each round thereafter, the participant can play a card, turning it over after it has been used.

Scenario Deck

The DM selects two to four cards of each category (attack, defense, and tactics) that are especially useful in the match. The cards are placed face up where each participant can view them. Each round on his or her turn, a participant selects one of the cards, turning it over after it has been used.

SAMPLE HYBRID APPROACH: WRESTLING MATCH

Premise: Each year the king grants an audience and a boon to an individual who can best his champion in a wrestling match. The player characters wish an audience to free an ally imprisoned in the king's dungeons.

Location: The match is held in a small ring in the castle's large courtyard. Nobles watch from stands and wager their coin while villagers jostle for position and fervently cheer for the king's champion.

Rules: This is an unarmed wrestling match between two contestants. Either one can win by bloodying the opponent, grabbing the opponent for 3 rounds, or forcing him or her out of the ring.

Participants: One player character and one foe. For a foe we select a brute or a soldier within two levels of the adventurer's level, possessing defenses, skills, and unarmed attacks appropriate for the challenge. Other player characters do not participate directly, but they can influence the outcome (see below).

Design Elements: Using the combat-driven hybrid approach, here's how the contest unfolds.

Before combat, each PC can use History or Streetwise to learn one fact about the king's champion (granting a +1 to initiative for a success).

Opponents face each other in the center of a 20-foot-diameter ring. The crowd's cheering grants the king's champion a +2 power bonus to attack rolls.

Combatants roll initiative. Each round, the participants can use an unarmed attack, a grab, or a bull rush action. While a creature is grabbed, it can be moved only 1 square per round. Additionally, as a minor action, a combatant can make a Bluff, Insight, Intimidate, or Perception check against a moderate DC to gain an advantage. You might

provide a +1 bonus to the skill check if the player provides a vivid description of the tactics his or her character is using. As a move action, a combatant can shift only a single square or use the escape action. You might allow some racial powers or class powers to be used.

At the end of a round, each of the other characters can try to influence the crowd with Diplomacy, Intimidate, or Streetwise checks. Each successful check shifts the power bonus to attack rolls granted by the crowd one step in favor of their ally, and each failed check shifts the bonus farther in favor of the king's champion, to a maximum of +4 in either direction. A character who's not participating might agree on a wager with a noble, using Diplomacy, History, or Insight. Each successful check translates into a greater reward if the king's champion is defeated.

Advantages: Fortune Cards are used with the Scenario Deck option. The first time each round a combatant succeeds on a skill check, he or she chooses one of the Fortune Cards, gaining sole use of the card. A participant can control more than one active Fortune Card, but can use no more than one in a round.

Victory Conditions: Victory is achieved when one combatant is bloodied, is grabbed for three continuous rounds, or is pushed or otherwise forced out of the ring by physical means. If the characters win, they gain an audience with the king, any gold they wagered with the nobles, and a boon. If they fail, the king grants them an audience but demands a service in return.

REWARDS

Victory or defeat should have a story impact on the adventure or the campaign, furthering or setting back the player characters' goals. In addition, a victory should provide a tangible reward. Gold, experience points, a magic item from the organizer, or a boon, such as the glory boons in the *DARK SUN Campaign Setting*, are ideal rewards. The following alternative rewards provide a benefit based on the use of Fortune Cards.

Cunning Victor Level 3+ Uncommon

The crowd idealizes you as a crafty warrior, who knows how to exploit the whims of fate.

Lvl 3 680 gp Lvl 23 425,000 gp
Lvl 13 17,000 gp

Alternative Reward: Glory Boon

Property: You gain a +1 item bonus to Bluff checks.

Level 13: +3 item bonus.

Level 23: +5 item bonus.

Power (Encounter): No Action. *Trigger:* You draw a Fortune Card that you dislike. *Effect:* Discard that card, and draw a new one.

Defensive Training Level 4+ Uncommon

You won't last long if you don't learn to keep your guard up and dodge blows.

Lvl 4 840 gp Lvl 24 525,000 gp
Lvl 14 21,000 gp

Alternative Reward: Glory Boon

Property: You gain a +1 item bonus to Acrobatics checks.

Level 14: +3 item bonus.

Level 24: +5 item bonus.

Property: Rather than drawing a Fortune Card at the start of an encounter, you can choose one defense card from your deck and start the encounter with that card in your hand. After removing the card, reshuffle your deck.

Power (Daily): No Action. *Trigger:* You draw a Fortune Card from the attack or tactics category. *Effect:* You discard the card and draw cards until you get a defense card, discarding all non-defense cards.

Aggressive Training Level 4+ Uncommon

Your tactics are legendary for their devastating nature.

Lvl 4 840 gp Lvl 24 525,000 gp
Lvl 14 21,000 gp

Alternative Reward: Glory Boon

Property: You gain a +1 item bonus to Intimidate checks.

Level 14: +3 item bonus.

Level 24: +5 item bonus.

Property: Rather than drawing a Fortune Card at the start of an encounter, you can choose one attack card from your deck and start the encounter with that card in your hand. After removing the card, reshuffle your deck.

Power (Daily): No Action. *Trigger:* You draw a Fortune Card from the defense or tactics category. *Effect:* You discard the card and draw cards until you get an attack card, discarding all non-attack cards.

Tactical Training Level 4+ Uncommon

Young gladiators seek you out, begging for you to share your insights on the art of combat.

Lvl 4 840 gp Lvl 24 525,000 gp
Lvl 14 21,000 gp

Alternative Reward: Glory Boon

Property: You gain a +1 item bonus to Insight checks.

Level 14: +3 item bonus.

Level 24: +5 item bonus.

Property: Rather than drawing a Fortune Card at the start of an encounter, you can choose one tactics card from your Fortune Card deck and start the encounter with that card in your hand. Then reshuffle your deck.

Power (Daily): No Action. *Trigger:* You draw a Fortune Card from the attack or defense category. *Effect:* You discard the card and draw cards until you get a tactics card, discarding all non-tactics cards.

About the Author

Teos Abadia is an administrator, developer, and author for the [Ashes of Athas](#) organized play campaign, set in the world of the *DARK SUN*® campaign setting. A frequent contributor to a variety of organized play campaigns, and more devoted to Athas than most druids, you can follow Teos's musings on his community blog and on Twitter (@Alphastream). This is his first *Dragon* magazine article.



Character Theme: Fatedancer

By Quinn Murphy

Illustration by Slawomir Maniak

Developing your character into someone who has a rich story can be a fun and rewarding process. You likely already have an idea of what race and what class you want to play, but you might have only a general concept of what his or her life was like before you start playing the character at the gaming table. A theme can help you flesh out your character and provide some interesting options for developing his or her background.

This article details a theme for use with DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Fortune Cards, called the fatedancer.

CHARACTER THEMES

Your character's theme is a career, calling, or identity that describes who he or she is in the world. Just as race and class create basic definitions about who your character is, theme adds a third character component to help refine your story and identity. For example, you might be a halfling rogue who chooses the fatedancer theme, but "halfling fatedancer" might mean many different things. Perhaps your worship of Avandra has gone deeper than most, granting you a special insight into the workings of fate. Or you might be a gambler who has embraced chance so deeply that it favors you. A theme can encompass several unique stories within the same concept.

Theme Features

For detailed information on using themes as part of character creation and rules for how to gain and use theme powers and features, see "Heroes of Nature and Lore" in *Dragon* 399.

Starting Feature: Each theme includes a feature that you gain when you select the theme during character creation.

Additional Features: Most themes offer additional features at levels 5 and 10. You gain an additional feature automatically when you reach the appropriate level; it doesn't replace any of your class features.

Optional Powers: Most of these themes include a number of powers that you add to the ones from which you can choose when you reach the appropriate level. For example, if you're a 6th-level fighter, you can choose a 6th-level fighter utility power or a 6th-level utility power from your theme. You can choose a theme power in place of a class power at any level where a theme power is available.

PLAYING WITH FORTUNE CARDS

Fortune Cards provide opportunities for your character to slightly alter in-game events. For example, a card might provide some temporary damage resistance, grant a bonus on your next attack roll if you charge, or give you a reroll when a certain condition is triggered. If your group doesn't use Fortune Cards yet, you might offer to share some with other players to introduce them to the possibilities. You don't need a lot of cards to have fun with them; even a few boosters should be enough.

You can also use Fortune Cards to enhance role-playing. For example, a monster uses a push effect against you, and you respond with the Stand Firm card (which negates forced movement). When the DM describes how the push effect works, you can in turn explain how you nullify that push.

Building your collection of Fortune Cards also lets you express new aspects of your character or provide detail not covered by other parts of character creation. Take, for example, the dwarf fighter Gurroden. Valiant and reliable, always willing to help his friends in time of need, he is the rock that the rest of his party leans on. Gurroden's character statistics



have already been created, but he can gain an extra layer of personality during play through specific Fortune Cards that fit typical situations or actions he commonly takes. His use of multiple Stand Firm cards represents his steadfastness in and out of combat. Several copies of the Dependability card grant an automatic “take 10” to a poor skill check or ability check, highlighting the fighter's surprising wisdom—he never misses an opportunity to give advice. A few Fair Fight cards (+2 bonus to at-will attack) reflect Gurroden's disdain for fancy combat maneuvers in favor of basic but reliable attacks.

Another example is the halfling rogue Piffen. A playful rogue, Piffen is hard to predict; he often doesn't know what he's doing himself! This character demands a deck with more diversity. For Attack cards, Reckless Onslaught is a good choice, allowing him to reroll an attack (but then fall prone), as well as Mind over Metal (next attack targets Will) and Crafty Strike (+4 bonus to damage against an enemy granting you combat advantage). For Tactics, Piffen's deck has two copies each of Push through the Crowd (move through enemy spaces) and Look at Me! (enemies adjacent to you grant combat advantage to your allies, and you grant combat advantage to enemies that are adjacent to you). Piffen's Defense cards include two copies each of Gambler's Dodge (increase

or reduce damage) and Gambler's Sidestep (raise or lower defenses).

Both Piffen and Gurroden use their cards for tactical advantage, and their choices also let their players express their characters with more depth.

FATEDANCER

Everyone wants good luck, but few have minds broad enough to embrace the whole of fate, sense what is meant to be, and follow that path. Those who do so learn to accept both the best and the worst that the world can offer. Fatedancers understand that what should not happen, cannot happen; the proper way to live is to embrace what must be. By accepting what fate offers, they gain more than peace of mind—everything they do aligns with the true purpose of the world.

To know fate is to dance, for life compels one to quickly move from here to there, from one thought or place or event to another. Though outsiders believe fatedancers to be mercurial at best, random chance does not exist for those who embrace fate, only opportunities taken or missed. The future and the present are always exactly as they should be for fatedancers; such individuals exist in the moment. They get into a lot of trouble because of this stance, but they are usually lucky enough to get out of it. Theirs is the life of a vagabond, taking both good and bad fortune as it comes.

Any adventurer who believes in luck as a force can be a fatedancer. Martial characters most often choose this theme. They do not depend on any external source for their powers, so they are attracted to a path that depends on their own actions. To their minds, reliance on arcane magic or the power of the gods is an attempt to circumvent what should happen.

Bards and rogues also have worldviews that encourage this way of life. Bards weave songs that tell of heroes' fortunes and misfortunes and thus naturally respect the power of fate. A few follow this tendency further and learn to rely on it, even though they also use arcane magic. Rogues approach their

lives with equal parts daring, skill, and luck, but many take to heart the idea that it is better to be lucky than skilled.

Creating a Fatedancer

A fatedancer's relationship with Fortune Cards is different from that of other characters. By choosing this theme, your character has a greater choice of cards to play, as well as abilities that augment and encourage their use. Other characters' Fortune Card decks vary thematically, but a fatedancer can build a deck with a wide variety of cards. Their effects are thus more situational, but your increased hand size and card-drawing abilities let you be better prepared for any situation.

Fatedancers favor no alignment, since a rigid attitude toward life obstructs their adventures and travels. Rare are good-aligned fatedancers, but rarer still are those who are evil. Such agents of chaos follow fortune along its dark edges, to the peril of all nearby.

Starting Feature

Though fatedancers vary widely in their choices and beliefs, after making the decision to connect with and embrace fate, all come to perceive the branches of fortune's road before them. At any moment, many possible actions exist, each with its own outcome. As a fatedancer, you find the best path to follow.

Benefit: You can have up to two Fortune Cards in your hand. You can still play only one in a round, but you can draw a card at the start of your turn if you have fewer than two cards in your hand.

Additional Features

Level 5 Feature

After walking fate's path for some time, you learn the language of fate. It speaks of destiny and truth, choosing your own fortune through bold and clever action.

You learn to see and hear what the universe is telling you and are rarely caught off guard, easily outmaneuvering those who are deaf to fate.

Benefit: You gain a +4 power bonus to passive Perception checks to determine if you are surprised.

Level 10 Feature

You have an uncanny ability to be right where you need to be, when you need to be there. Others believe you to be extremely lucky, but you do not trust to luck—only destiny.

Benefit: Once per encounter, you can discard two Fortune Cards at the start of your turn to search your deck for any one card. Put that card into your hand, then shuffle your deck.

Optional Powers

Following fortune's path makes you more agile and responsive to change.

Level 2 Utility Power

You step into a moment of destiny, considering all possibilities and making the most advantageous choice.

Seize Fate Fatedancer Utility 2

You seize one opportunity, then another.

Encounter

Minor Action **Personal**

Requirement: You must have fewer than two Fortune Cards in your hand.

Effect: Draw two cards from your Fortune Card deck. Put one of those cards into your hand, and discard the other.

Level 6 Utility Power

You grow more accustomed to taking advantage of fortune. For a brief moment, you can immerse your allies in the stream of opportunity.

Flowing Fortune Fatedancer Utility 6

You read the flow of fate, creating a decisive advantage for your allies.

Daily

Minor Action **Close burst 5**

Requirement: You must discard a Fortune Card.

Target: Each ally in the burst

Effect: If the card you discarded was an Attack card, each target gains a +4 power bonus to the next damage roll he or she makes before the end of your next turn. If it was a Tactics card, you slide each target up to 2 squares. If it was a Defense card, each target gains a +2 power bonus to all defenses until the end of your next turn.

Level 10 Utility Power

In desperate times, other adventurers pray to gods or seek arcane aid. You trust to fate, assured that it will protect and guide you through difficult times.

Desperate Chance Fatedancer Utility 10

Fortune smiles broadly on you in troubled times.

Daily

Minor Action **Personal**

Requirement: You must have expended all your encounter attack powers.

Effect: Draw three cards from your Fortune Card deck. Until the end of the encounter, you can have up to three Fortune Cards in your hand. You can still play only one in a round, but you can draw a card at the start of your turn if your hand contains fewer than three cards.

About the Author

Quinn “gamefiend” Murphy has been writing about 4th Edition DUNGEONS & DRAGONS since shortly after its release. He has been published in *Kobold Quarterly* and the Wizards Community Blog, as well as his own website, <http://at-will.omnivangelist.net/>. He is also active on Twitter (@gamefiend).



Class Acts: Assassin

Black Flame Zealot

By Chad Brown

Illustration by Peter Tikos

“Again.”

The instructor’s voice was flat and familiar, and it came from the darkness near the corner of the chamber. Sicari detected a hint of frustration underlying it. Clapping his hands to his sides in a wordless bow, Sicari dropped the practice blade of weighted bone neatly into his scabbard, which was hidden in the folds of his light cloak. Across the room, his target was wrapped in a heavy cloak over loose robes, with a cloth mask covering his face.

The room was intentionally dark, with a pair of guttering torches providing uneven light. Sicari sought to absorb the details—not searching, not looking, but becoming aware. Although he was careful to keep the effort from his face and his posture, Sicari began focusing his ire on the target, feeding the shadow in his own heart. He felt the shadow react and started to use the power it produced. In his mind, shrouds of shadow began to coalesce around the target, when suddenly the masked figure turned, drawing a long, curved blade with both hands. Sicari stepped back, his concentration slipping, and paused. As he reached for his own blade, the figure before him erupted in dark flames.

“Too slow, too late, too little. You must strike while the fire is hot. The time for preparation has gone. The moment is here, now. Summon your will, and strike—or fail.”

THE ORDER OF THE BLACK FLAME

At some point on the precarious path to shadow power, each assassin gives over a portion of his or her soul to the Shadowfell. Assassins continue this practice as they grow in power and experience, binding themselves more closely to the dark reflection of their own sacrificed souls. Many, having started down this path, find it difficult to retrace their steps; some of those do not try. After being bound to shadow, clever assassins learn to infuse their enemies, their weapons, and themselves with the aspects of shadow best suited to their task: the task of killing. Few trust known assassins, so many assassins train and study in secret, honing their abilities through techniques developed and passed on by guilds.

Many assassins strive to become cold, relentless envoys of death, while others are anything but dispassionate in combat. The Order of the Black Flame was a group of like-minded assassins and their allies who dedicated themselves to exploring the idea that fury and hatred are powerful tools in the right hands.

Over the years since its inception, the Order of the Black Flame explored the connections between the assassin and his or her sacrifice to shadow, creating many techniques based on feeding and empowering this dark reflection. These explorations led to the first Black Flame Zealot, an assassin of the order who

IN THE REALMS

The Order of the Black Flame was a known but secretive sect of Kossuth worshipers in Thay, operating before the ravages of the Spellplague. The order claimed as its mandate the destruction of any who gave offense to Kossuth; not even Thay's mighty zulkirs were beyond the order's grasp. After the chaos of the Spellplague and Szass Tam's ascendancy, the secretive order went silent, although rumor suggests that Black Flame Zealots might still practice their shadow arts inside the black ziggurat at Amruthar. Since that time, stories speak of a pair of shadar-kai who, working together, either discovered or carefully reconstructed the secrets once held by the order. Sages agree that the pair spent considerable time in the ruins of Thay's Second Escarpment before leaving for the west; most further agree that the pair was fleeing a great power, variously claimed to be undead, Banites, or devotees of the Church of Kossuth.

After the pair reached the Sea of Fallen Stars, the stories diverge sharply. Some claim that one sacrificed the other for power or jealousy, and others suggest that the remnants of the order eliminated one or both of the shadar-kai. Whatever the truth, the techniques of the Black Flame Zealot spread from several cities along the Sea of Fallen Stars, including Lyrabar, Saerloon, and especially Westgate. The Fire Knives, in particular, are known to recruit and train Black Flame Zealots assiduously. Now assassins' guilds across the world harbor or boast Black Flame Zealots disconnected from the worship of Kossuth.

learned to harness her anger to set aflame the shard of shadow that was lodged in her soul.

For many years the Black Flame Zealots enforced the agenda of the Order of the Black Flame far and wide. Black Flame Zealots can be as stealthy as any assassin, and they are just as capable of using subterfuge to reach a target as more cold-blooded assassins are. When a Black Flame Zealot enters battle, however, he or she sheds the mantle of stealth, channeling fury into burning death for his or her victim. Though the target of a Bleak Disciple or a Night Stalker assassin might be found lifeless in bed, those who fall to a Black Flame Zealot leave only charred and withered remains.

Although the Order of the Black Flame kept close the secrets of the Black Flame Zealot for years, the techniques were not destined to remain hidden forever. As the stories go, a pair of shadar-kai, filled with anger like many of their kin, sought to ferret out the secret techniques of the order. Some of the tales suggest that they infiltrated the order, and others claim that they laid a trap for a zealot and pried the secrets from his or her unwilling tongue.

However the shadar-kai came by them, the methods of the Black Flame Zealot—in part—escaped the Order of the Black Flame. The shadar-kai duo began accepting apprentices, calling themselves the Order of the Black Flame, though none know if they did so to honor or to spite the originators. This new Order of the Black Flame spread some part of the techniques of the Black Flame Zealot before mysteriously disappearing.

What survives today is a fragment of the full training regimen of the Order of the Black Flame: a potent but incomplete collection of techniques for practicing the art of assassination through hatred and fury. The full guild training might someday be recovered, but for now all assassins with anger in their heart can benefit from the techniques it used.

Unleash Your Anger

As an assassin, you are likely distrusted by the world at large. Although you might have begun your training as a Night Stalker or a Bleak Disciple, at some point your anger overwhelmed the cold, calculating methods of those techniques. You might have been recruited from the ranks of a thieves' guild, or perhaps you turned on your former instructors in a burning rage. Whatever the original motivation, you have come to appreciate the potency of chaos and control, and you have mastered your fiery emotions rather than suppressing them. When you enter combat, your anger is plain for all to see.

Following in the footsteps of the Black Flame Zealots, you harness the destructive power of anger and fury, bending it to your will and unleashing it in frightful displays of deadly prowess. You are quick to anger and capable of displays of terrible fury. Although you might take prisoners to further an important goal, you rarely allow your chosen foe to survive. Adherents of this tradition use their force of will and their anger to destroy enemies in shadow and fire. Whenever possible, a foe's remains are burned in whole or in part.

Religion: Assassins who follow the teachings of the Black Flame Zealots often worship deities of fire, including Kossuth in the FORGOTTEN REALMS® setting and the Silver Flame in the EBERRON® setting. As harbingers of death who have intimate contact with the Shadowfell, many assassins revere the Raven Queen.

Although many good temples abhor assassins of any stripe, some devotees take up the teachings of the Black Flame Zealot in spite of their religion's official condemnation.

Races: Shadar-kai eagerly embrace the teachings of the Black Flame Zealot, since they are well acquainted with both the touch of the Shadowfell and the extremes of emotion necessary to excel with the technique.

Most elves find the path of the assassin unpalatable, but a few take satisfaction from the expression of chaos and control inherent to the teachings of the Black Flame Zealot. This satisfaction is especially true of elves from gloaming hearts, where forest groves shrouded in shadow touch the Shadowfell. Dusk elves, rejected by Corellon and filled with zealous hatred for Lolth and the drow, also make worthy assassins.

Many half-orcs who enjoy trickery and deception are drawn to the path of the assassin, but some find their raw fury unsatisfied by the subtlety of *shade form*. These half-orcs might find the technique of the Black Flame Zealot more to their liking.

TECHNIQUES OF THE BLACK FLAME ZEALOTS

Many assassins merge their physical form with the stuff of shadow, and those who survive learn to manipulate and control the process, resulting in *shade form*. The teachings of the Black Flame Zealot take a different approach: Rather than seeking to restrain the infusion of shadow, they instead feed it raw fury and hatred, stoking it as they would a bonfire. These assassins eschew the subtlety of *shade form*, favoring the destructive potential of black flame form instead.

Alternative Class Feature

You can gain the *black flame form* power instead of the *shade form* power. This new power emphasizes damage dealing, whereas *shade form* (and the feats and features related to it) emphasizes damage mitigation and stealthiness.

Black Flame Form

Assassin Utility

The shadows nearby deepen as dark flames erupt from your body, enveloping and protecting you.

Encounter ♦ **Fire, Necrotic, Shadow**

Minor Action **Personal**

Effect: You assume a dark, fiery form that lasts until you make an attack roll or until the end of your next turn. While in this form, you gain resist 5 to all damage, and any creature that hits you with a melee attack takes 5 fire and necrotic damage. When you assume this form, you can use your *assassin's shroud* power once as part of the same action. This use of *assassin's shroud* does not count against the limit on the number of times per round you can use that power.

Level 11: The resistance and damage increase to 10.

Level 21: The resistance and damage increase to 15.

Sustain Minor: The form persists until the end of your next turn.

Assassin Feats

This section includes new feats for the assassin that help support the class's thematic ties to the Black Flame Zealot. However, any assassin might find these feats useful.

Cruel Shroud

Your *assassin's shroud* power reveals more to your keen eyes, allowing you to find weaknesses others might overlook.

Prerequisite: Assassin, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: You have combat advantage against targets subject to your *assassin's shroud* power.

Devastating Shroud

Your lethal shadow attacks leave your foe's weaknesses still exposed to your keen assassin's eye.

Prerequisite: Assassin, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: When you score a critical hit with a shadow attack power, any shrouds you invoked on the target are not removed.

Inexorable Shroud

As the final blow is delivered, your exultation in the death of your chosen foe feeds the shadows surrounding your next victim.

Prerequisite: Assassin, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: If an enemy is reduced to 0 hit points while it is subject to two or more of your shrouds, you can move up to two shrouds to a different enemy within 5 squares of you.

Lethal Shroud

Your intense emotional focus has empowered you to take greater advantage of your assassin's shrouds.

Prerequisite: Assassin, *assassin's shroud* power

Benefit: The damage dealt per shroud when you invoke your shrouds increases from 1d6 to 1d8. This damage increases to 1d8 + 5 at 11th level and 1d8 + 10 at 21st level.

Shadow Reservoir

You tap into the shard of shadow lodged in your soul, channeling energy through your ki focus to empower your attacks.

Prerequisite: Assassin

Benefit: You gain a +2 feat bonus to damage rolls with shadow attacks made through a ki focus. The bonus increases to +3 at 11th level and +4 at 21st level.

RELICS OF THE ORDER OF THE BLACK FLAME

Techniques and practices were not the only thing to have escaped the secrecy of the Order of the Black Flame. The liberated lore also included descriptions of magic equipment specially created for members of the order.

Bracers of Assassination

Originally used by members of the order, a couple of sets of bracers of assassination have made their way to the marketplace recently. What happened to their original owners? None know, but those interested in the techniques of the Black Flame Zealots might kill for these items.

Bracers of Assassination Level 16+ Uncommon

These dark bronze bracers are covered in a mosaic of red and black stones, depicting a flaming dagger.

Lvl 16 45,000 gp Lvl 26 1,125,000 gp

Item Slot: Arms

Property: When you use an assassin attack power or an assassin paragon path attack power against a target subject to at least three shrouds from your assassin's shroud power, you can score a critical hit on a roll of 19-20.

Level 26: You can score a critical hit on a roll of 18-20.

Embers of Black Flame

The first strand of bone and charcoal *embers of black flame* was created by a zealot of Kossuth named Ibn Idrahim Khayal, with the assistance of a necromancer whose name was purged from all records. When using the *embers of black flame*, Khayal found that even the protections of the zulkirs of Thay could not stop Kossuth's wrath. In battle, Khayal's blade "set afire the very air." Khayal left behind no known records concerning the embers, but the rare witness's description suggests that attacks enhanced by the embers create a lingering trail of dark flame.

The writings of one of his apprentices tell of how Khayal intended to take the secret of the creation of the embers to his death, but such things are temporary obstacles in Thay, and the knowledge found its way back into the world. Recently, the Fire Knives hunted such knowledge, using bribes, threats, and force.

Those using *embers of black flame* for the first time often have visions and dreams of the victims of previous possessors. In some cases, these inspire an obsessive fixation on escaped targets of the former wielder.

Embers of Black Flame Level 10+ Rare

This clattering assortment of charcoal beads and fire-blackened finger bones is strung together into a strand with sinew.

Lvl 10	+2	5,000 gp	Lvl 25	+5	625,000 gp
Lvl 15	+3	25,000 gp	Lvl 30	+6	3,125,000 gp
Lvl 20	+4	125,000 gp			

Implement (Ki Focus)

Enhancement Bonus: Attack rolls and damage rolls

Critical: +1d10 fire and necrotic damage per plus

Property: Fire damage dealt by attacks using this ki focus is also necrotic damage, and necrotic damage dealt by attacks using this ki focus is also fire damage.

Power (Encounter ♦ Fire, Necrotic): No Action. *Trigger:* You hit with a shadow attack power using this ki focus. *Target:* The creature you hit. *Effect:* The target takes ongoing 5 fire and necrotic damage and cannot regain hit points (save ends both).

Level 15 or 20: Ongoing 10 fire and necrotic damage.

Level 25 or 30: Ongoing 15 fire and necrotic damage.

About the Author

Chad Brown has been gaming his whole life. He has worked with the RPGA and is ecstatic to be writing for *Dragon* magazine.

Channel Divinity: Melora

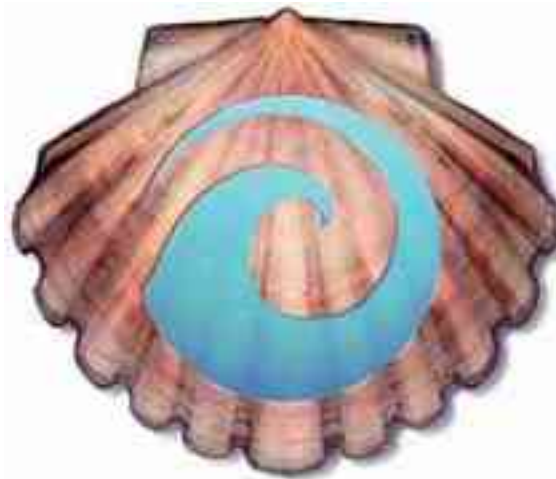
By Tracy Hurley

Illustrations by Kate Laird and Lee Moyer

The mention of Melora strikes fear in the heart of the average city dweller. As the god of the wilderness and the sea, she represents the unfettered savagery of a natural world that does not care what titles its visitors hold or how much gold is in their treasuries. But those who fear her don't truly know her. They forget that her faithful spend years in the wilderness, hunting creatures that threaten both the natural order and the civilized world. An urban resident knows only that Melora seems cold and distant, uncaring of the needs of cities and those who live in them.

It wasn't always this way. At one time, Melora was considered almost a sister of Erathis. The two deities worked together to improve the mortal world in all of its aspects. Melora and her hunters protected the cities as well as the wilderness from aberrants and from deities that craved destruction, such as Baphomet, Gruumsh, and Yeenoghu. Partly as a result of this protection, the cities prospered, and their citizens developed skills, knowledge, and an outlet for their creative urges.

The turning point in their relationship came when, after the Dawn War, Erathis assumed dominion over the minotaurs now that their god Baphomet had been cast into the Abyss (see "Minotaur Origin" in "[Playing Minotaurs](#)," *Dragon* 369.) With her guidance, the minotaurs established the great city of Ruul, which became a model of civilization. But even as



Erathis's followers continued to proselytize inside the city, agents of Baphomet worked in secret to undermine them. When the minotaurs broke from Erathis's fold and Ruul was overrun by the Horned King, Melora and Kord combined their power to reduce Ruul to ruins. The discord that arose between Melora and Erathis because of these events extended to their followers, who began to view one another as adversaries.

The banishment of the gods from the world after the Dawn War had a severe effect on Melora. More than any other god, she was of the natural world.

Her home was the wilderness, and the sea was her playground. Her friends were the primal spirits, who called her Great Mother. Cut off from the world she loved, she withdrew completely for generations, her whispers silenced. She passed the time hunting alone in the Hunting Lands of Arvandor. If it weren't for the sacred task of hunting the abominations that escaped from Carceri, she might have died from heartbreak.

During this time, few continued to worship her other than sailors, fishermen, and elves. Melora reestablished contact with the primal spirits when they renewed her interest in the race that she and Sehanine created together—the halfings, in whom she found a bit of joy. Although Melora still cannot act directly in the world, her followers have noticed her change of heart and begun to embrace her anew.

MELORA'S FAITHFUL

The followers of Melora come from many walks of life, worshiping both her and the primal spirits, and frequently adopting the spirits' custom of calling her the Great Mother. Methods and symbols associated with her worship vary depending on locale and which aspect of her personality a group of followers chooses to emphasize.

In Coastal Areas

Most of Melora's faithful live in and travel between the fishing villages, towns, and cities that dot the sea-coast. Her priests help the inhabitants of this territory understand how to live in harmony with the ocean. The coast is one of the few places where her clerics, as members of the Order of the Sacred Tide, construct permanent temples dedicated to Melora. Members of the order wear light blue cloaks edged with white lamb's wool, bringing to mind the foam at the crest of a wave. These priests prefer holy symbols carved from whalebone, coral, and driftwood—objects that are considered gifts from Melora.

The priests of the Sacred Tide have a variety of duties. They pray for Melora to bring the annual runs of rockfish and blueback and to keep away the blood tides that sicken the population. Before boats and ships leave the safety of the harbor, captains ask the priests to pray for Melora's protection and make offerings of carved bones and shells. They ask for her protection against sea invaders, praying that her waves might take any boat that means them harm.

In addition to these duties, the Order of the Sacred Tide is instrumental to each locale's defenses and politics. When disagreements break out over fishing grounds, especially between those who dwell on land and those that swim beneath the waves, Sacred Tide members negotiate the treaties. They might learn to speak with animals, asking creatures such as dolphins and whales to act as scouts. In other locations, members research rune-inscribed buoys and rocks that serve as an early warning system for tidal waves or invasions.

Background: Sea Chaplain

You have lived a stone's throw from the sea your entire life, learning its secrets. For as long as you can remember, riding the ocean waves or diving beneath the foam felt more natural than walking on land. You can hold your breath longer than anyone you know, and when you sit on the beach at night, you can hear

the ocean breeze whispering to you. Now you spend your days on the open water and in a myriad of ports, helping others deal with the loneliness and dangers of life at sea.

Associated Skills: Endurance, Religion

Associated Quests: Tend to the lost and set them on the path of nature's harmony; build lighthouses to warn sailors of perils; investigate mass beachings of dolphins and whales to ensure nothing sinister is behind them.

In the Wilderness

Whereas Melora's faithful near the sea are organized, those in the wilderness collect in groups of no larger than a dozen members. Part of the reason for this small group size is practical, because small villages on the edge of the wilderness are spread out, and traveling between them is difficult. These followers live in small cabins and survive off the land. They plant gardens of berries, vegetables and legumes if the climate allows, and they practice rituals, potion brewing, and the healing arts. They might spend years in close contact with the primal spirits, learning the name of every tree, bird, and insect. They might keep birds as messengers to warn the other faithful when danger arises. Or they might study and train to become Oak Shields (see below), which they consider a way of acting as Melora's avatars in the world.

The faithful who live in these areas adapt their practices to their locale. They wear garments appropriate to the area, from animal skins in the cold north to grass-woven clothes in the tropical savannas. Their holy symbols vary greatly in form; however, wooden symbols crafted from the three most sacred trees—oak, ash, and hawthorn—are especially prized by those who can create or buy them.

Feat: Nowhere to Hide [Divinity]

Your time in the wild has taught you how to notice creatures without seeing them.

Prerequisite: Channel Divinity class feature, must worship Melora

Benefit: You gain the *nowhere to hide* power.

Nowhere to Hide

Feat Utility

As the sound of your prayer spreads around you, your foes are revealed.

Encounter ♦ Channel Divinity, Divine

Minor Action Close burst 5

Target: Each hidden or invisible enemy in the burst whose Will is equal to or lower than 12 + your level

Effect: Each target becomes visible to you, and grants combat advantage to you until the end of your next turn.

Special: You can use only one channel divinity power per encounter.

Background: Tree Talker

Your parents swear you could climb trees before you learned how to walk. You spent your childhood high in the branches, and for as long as you can remember, the trees whispered to you whenever the breeze moved through their leaves. Sometimes they would warn you of looming danger—a poisonous snake or a mountain cat. At other times, they shared secrets with you, such as who met secretly beneath the poplar the previous night.

Associated Skills: Athletics, Streetwise

Associated Quests: Find and renew a long-forgotten or defiled sacred grove; create a book of trees with names, descriptions, leaves, and pressed flowers of each of the sacred trees, including oak, ash, hawthorn, elm, apple, hazel, alder, elder, yew, holly, and willow.

In Inland Towns and Cities

Melora's faithful avoid towns and cities that aren't along the coast. They consider such places to be dens of wickedness and corruption, out of touch with the natural world. However, a few followers do brave the urban environment, teaching the wisdom of the natural order to any who would listen. These followers

are a reliable source of news from far-flung outposts. Sometimes they work closely with a city's overseers, advocating for parks and for celebrations tied to the seasons. Because city dwellers fear Melora, her faithful in urban areas do not have temples of their own, instead worshipping at temples of other gods, particularly Corellon, Sehanine, and Avandra. Here they hold talks and meetings in the hope that the seeds of their ideas find fertile ground.

The Earthen Guard

One group trying to further Melora's cause in inland cities calls itself the Earthen Guard. Although some people are content to sit and complain about the ever-growing cities and their unending hunger for resources, the Earthen Guard takes action. Members of this group, unlike most of Melora's faithful, are well educated and might be wealthy. They teach people in or near civilized areas how to live in harmony with nature. For trappers and fishermen, they extol the value of releasing or not overhunting animals that are needed to replenish the population, such as small fish and female game. They teach farmers the art of crop rotation. Lumberjacks learn good forestry practices, such as planting five trees for every one they cut.

When education and good practices are not enough to halt or prevent the desecration of nature, the Earthen Guard acts as a militant organization that comes secretly to nature's aid, destroying dams and other earthen works, or attacking lumber camps and mining operations that laid the land bare.

TEMPLES AND SACRED PLACES

Seaside towns and cities are among the few places that host permanent temples dedicated to Melora. In these locales, worship of Melora is so integral to the inhabitants' way of life that these temples serve as meeting houses and schools as well as houses of

worship. In towns far from the coast, Melora's followers eschew formal temples. Instead they plant trees in her name and worship at any local temples to Corellon, Sehanine, or Avandra.

The most sacred places of Melora's worship are found in the wilderness. Melora, like Erathis, loved to build and nurture relationships. Before the Dawn War, she established watches around the world, providing the creatures of nature with a means to communicate with one another. Some sages believe that the remnants of this network can be found throughout the natural world, and that the everspring groves and the standing stones sacred to the primal spirits are part of it. However, Melora's faithful have no idea how to use these objects, and neither Melora nor the primal spirits have revealed how.

SIGNS AND OMENS

Followers of Melora hear whispers of her everywhere. Here are some of the signs her followers find important.

- ◆ After a forest fire, a priest of Melora inspects any stands of unburned trees. If the three most sacred trees—oak, ash, and hawthorn—are each represented, the townspeople decorate the trees with ribbons and wooden wind chimes. Each participant makes a wish when he or she adds a new decoration. If at least three of the wishes come true over the coming year, the local priest of Melora declares the grove sacred.
- ◆ When winds blow through the trees, twisting the leaves on the branches to reveal their lighter-colored undersides, people see it as a warning of an imminent strong storm. The people of the forest refer to leaves in this state as Melora's eyes. Legends speak of a time when Melora wandered through the forest in the form of a gust and used the shifting leaves to spot unnatural creatures such as aberrants and undead.

ENEMIES OF NATURE

Aberrants, abominations, and undead are bent on destroying the natural world. In addition, the following deities and groups of followers are also foes of nature and its protectors, and which Melora's faithful seek to destroy in return.

- ◆ **Baphomet and his followers:** Baphomet once tried to take the nature domain away from Melora, and he still stings from his loss. He continues to corrupt the minotaurs, whispering to them that Melora and Kord are responsible for the destruction of Ruul. His cultists enjoy kidnapping devoted followers of these two deities. They run the victims through Baphomet's maze in honor of the Horned King.
- ◆ **Gruumsh, Yeenoghu, and their followers:** Although Melora understands that destruction is a necessary step in the natural cycle, Gruumsh and Yeenoghu both value destruction for its own sake. Nothing would make them happier than to see everything lie in rot and ruin.
- ◆ **Cryonax:** In the earliest days of creation, Melora defeated this primordial and sent him to a watery prison. Her stone shield, adorned with a powerful rune, seals his prison, giving her mastery over the waves. His primordial followers would love to free him from his prison, especially now that it is an island floating off the coast (*Dragon* 394).
- ◆ **Overzealous followers of Erathis:** Although Melora and Erathis once got along, their followers now sometimes take their differences to an extreme. Worshipers of Erathis who seek to civilize large swaths of nature might become enemies of Melora's followers.

PARAGON PATH

A dedicated few hunt the wilderness and the sea, fanning embers of hatred for those that threaten the natural order. The following paragon path is available to those who worship Melora and swear to protect her domains.

Oak Shield

“As the sturdy oak stands strong against the ravages of unnatural forces, I do the same against those who threaten the wilderness.”

Prerequisite: Any divine class, must worship Melora

For centuries, the Oak Shields have guarded the wild areas of the world. Oak Shields, like their namesake trees, are known for longevity, hardiness, and loyalty. Legends claim that Melora personally trained the first members of the order, providing them with the secrets of using ever-spring groves and standing stones. Ancient sites such as these might hold information on how Melora’s faithful can benefit from them.

Each aspiring Oak Shield studies under a master. Together, the student and the master meditate beneath a sacred oak, seeking enlightenment about the natural world. The student learns to interpret the whispers of the primal spirits and to understand the wisdom of the changing seasons. During this time, he or she comes to appreciate when to stand tall against the wind and when to bend when the wind is too strong. In addition, the student learns about the complexity of the world, how something as simple as a tree can have multiple aspects to its nature. An Oak Shield applies these lessons to his or her life’s work as a guardian of the natural order, remaining steadfast in the face of adversity and providing shelter during the storm.

Oak Shield Path Features

Weather the Storm (11th level): You gain resist 10 lightning and resist 10 thunder. Whenever you are hit by a lightning attack or a thunder attack, one or two allies who are within 5 squares of you and who are not targets of the attack each gain 10 temporary hit points.

Sheltering Boughs (11th level): When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you and each ally within 5 squares of you gain a +2 power bonus to AC and Fortitude until the start of your next turn.

Deep Roots (16th level): You have tremorsense 5 while you are in contact with the ground.

Oak Shield Powers

Steadfast Resolve Oak Shield Attack 11

Your prayers to Melora strengthen your resolve, allowing you to stand your ground.

Encounter ♦ **Divine, Weapon**
Standard Action Melee weapon

Target: One creature

Attack: Highest ability modifier vs. AC

Hit: 2[W] + highest ability modifier damage, and you push the target up to 2 squares.

Effect: You or one ally within 5 squares of you is immune to forced movement until the end of your next turn.

Whirling Leaves Oak Shield Utility 12

Your prayer takes the form of leaves in a strong wind, obscuring you and your allies.

Encounter ♦ **Divine**
Minor Action Close burst 5

Target: You and each ally in the burst

Effect: Each target has partial concealment until the end of your next turn.



Renewing Vines Oak Shield Attack 20

When you raise your weapon, vines launch from the ground, piercing your enemies with poisonous thorns and refreshing your allies.

Daily ♦ **Divine, Poison, Weapon**
Standard Action Close burst 2

Target: Each enemy in the burst

Attack: Highest ability modifier vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2[W] + highest ability modifier poison damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Effect: You and each ally in the burst gain temporary hit points equal to 2 + one-half your level and a +2 bonus to a single saving throw, skill check, or attack roll of his or her choice before the end of the encounter.

About the Author

Tracy Hurley is a freelance game designer and, in her spare time, the writer behind SarahDarkmagic.com. Recent work includes co-writing the “Choose Your Fortunes Wisely” article for the D&D website, co-designing the Lost City sourcebook by Open Design, and contributing to the *Dragon Brigade Roleplaying Game* from Margaret Weis Productions.

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

Dungeon # 401 | D&D Alumni Archive | 7/8/2011



The Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan

D&D Alumni

Bart Carroll

Those who attended **Free RPG Day** a few weeks back might have picked up *Domain of Dread: Hithaven*, the supplement that tied into *Shadowfell: Gloomwrought and Beyond*. In the back of *Hithaven*, you might have noticed the following ad (go ahead and click on it for a better view).



The *Lost Crown of Neverwinter* season for *D&D Encounters* starts up on Wednesday, August 10th. If you run one session during the month of August as a Dungeon Master, you might get your hands on the special bonus adventure: *The Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan*, updated for 4th Edition. (The special bonus adventure will arrive 6-8 weeks later, and because we have limited supplies, this offer is only while supplies last.) Did you miss playing the original? Or did you play it and now dare venture back through this famed tournament module? In either case, read on! We're here to guide you through the famed pyramid as best we can without giving away too much.

Background for the *Hidden Shrine*

Much like *The Ghost Tower of Inverness* (played at the 1979 Detroit Wintercon), *The Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan* was a tournament module for Origins '79. Harold Johnson, according to the conversion's afterword, would finish the final master copy for the convention in an epic 48-hour typing session (with one typo that forever changed Tomoachan to Tamoachan). *Hidden Shrine* would then later be published as the first in the C-series of adventure modules, with "C" denoting "Competition."

Aside from its existence as an early tournament module, *Hidden Shrine* stands out because it provided a setting that deviated from the traditional medieval fantasy of most other adventure modules at the time. As written in the background: "The design of the temple draws heavily on Mayan and Aztec/Toftec mythology and society. Certain historic examples were used as models in designing this module. DMs wishing to expand the ruins of Tamoachan will find it very helpful to use their local library to find out more about these fascinating cultures." How's that for educational?

Further instilling this cultural influence, the module showed a penchant for intricate Mayan/Aztec sounding names, complete with (necessary) pronunciation guides; Tamoachan (TA-mo-a-chan) was Olman for "the home sought after," and its shrine dedicated to Zotzilaha (Zotz-el-a'-a), vampire god of the underworld.



Who Were the Olman?

Originally written by Harold Johnson and Jeff R. Leason, *Hidden Shrine* was staged as part of an ancient ruined city, and it was "...once the northeastern capitol of the Olman empire, which covered much of the southern continent centuries before current history began." The *World of Greyhawk* boxed set would place these distant ruins at the very edge of its map, somewhere within the "savage lands south of the Olman Islands and southeast of the Holds of the Sea Princes."

Stephen Radney-MacFarland designed the conversion, taking care to preserve the original module's sensibilities and challenges (you can read more of this topic in his upcoming *Design & Development* column). Still a ruined temple of the Olman people, their background has been slightly reworked so that now this "...human culture worshiped not only powers from the Astral Sea, but also a collection of primal spirits, fey creatures, vampires, and even monstrosities of the Far Realm. They built city-states that banded together as empires and waged mighty wars against enemies both internal and external. These people were the Olman.

"All that is currently left of the Olman civilization," the new background continues, "are the scattered tribes of their degenerate descendants, now prone to Demogorgon worship and savagery." The *Hidden Shrine* remains one of their derelict structures that still holds "...great treasures and the legendary magic of the Olman. All feature deadly traps and creatures still bound to the dead empire. The *Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan* is one such temple. Dedicated to Zotzilaha, vampire god of the underworld, and built to imprison a powerful Far Realm entity, it is filled with lost secrets and merciless traps."

Secrets and Traps

Speaking of lost secrets and waiting traps (and without giving too much away, for those planning to play through the updated version), *Hidden Shrine*'s design intent was to test the skill and common sense of players. It also remained true to the cultural aesthetics of the fictional Olman.

As far as testing skill, this adventure introduced us to the gibbering moulder and nereid as new monsters, plus it set a plague of traps along the way. Those playing through or running the updated version can see that the update retains a

sense of deadliness (just ask the Nahual, Xilonen, or the steam-spitting dragon). Those who remember the original should also expect renewed threats from the priest-king Tlacaelel (who has reworked origins and is now said to be the true reason for most of the deadly traps and precautions within the shrine), as well as Nanahuatcin ("the pimply one").

When it comes to the Olman culture, several of their trapped ancestral spirits can be encountered throughout the version, including Kalka-Kylla (expanded by SRM as a primal spirit vanquished by Zotzilaha and who is forced to swear service to the vampire and his spawn), Tloques-Popollocas (promoted from "master of the others" to "master of tombs and the night"), and Tecuziztecatl (the "lord of snails"). Other details, such as the statue of the werejaguar, the massive calendar stone, and the pelota court (still marked with the warning: dare not open this pit, lest you meet the challenge of the game) have all returned. What secrets do these details hold when it comes to safely navigating the shrine? We'll leave them for you to discover.

Tecuziztecatl, Lord of Snails

Tecuziztecatl is highly intelligent and a boaster, and it is also itching for a fight after so many years being cooped up in this room. During combat, it says that it is a son of the moon, and announces each attack it is using and how the attack is part of its plan to defeat the characters. If reduced to 55 hit points or fewer, Tecuziztecatl changes its tone...

Tecuziztecatl, Lord of Snails

Level 8 Elite

Large natural magical beast (aquatic)

HP 222; Bloodied 111 Initiative +5

AC 20, Fortitude 22, Reflex 20, Will 19 Perception +11

Speed 5, swim 3 Darkvision

Resist 5 all; Vulnerable 10 fire

Saving Throws +2; Action Points 1

Traits**Truesight**

Tecuziztecatl can see invisible creatures and objects.

Standard Actions**Tentacle** † At-Will*Attack:* Melee 3 (one creature); +13 vs. AC*Hit:* 3d8 + 6 damage.**Bite** † At-Will*Attack:* Melee 1 (one creature); +13 vs. AC*Hit:* 3d10 + 4 damage.**Double Attack** † At-Will*Effect:* Tecuziztecatl makes two melee basic attacks.**Acid Spray (acid)** † Recharge ⑆ ⑆ ⑆*Requirement:* Tecuziztecatl must be bloodied.*Attack:* Close blast 5 (creatures in the blast); +11 vs. Reflex*Hit:* 2d6 + 5 damage, and the target is dazed and slowed until the end of Tecuziztecatl's next turn.**Move Actions****Barrel Through** † Recharge when first bloodied*Effect:* Tecuziztecatl moves its speed, and can enter other creature's spaces. A creature whose space it enters with this movement takes 10 damage. If any creature is in Tecuziztecatl's space when it ends the move, it slides that creature to the nearest square outside its space.**Skills Bluff +8, Diplomacy +8, Insight +11****Str18 (+8) Dex13 (+5) Wis14 (+6)****Con21 (+9) Int17 (+7) Cha8 (+3)****Alignment** unaligned **Languages** Olman

Accessing the Temple

Unlike the *Tomb of Horrors*, *Lost Caverns of Tsojcanth*, or similar adventures -- where you sought the heart of the dungeon to face its ultimate foe and hopefully collect your deserved reward -- *The Hidden Shrine of Tamoachan* started with the tournament characters lost in the jungle and accidentally falling into the dungeon. Your quest was to find your way out, not go farther in.

In the original, the tournament backstory had the adventurers jumping ship to escape the clutches of bounty hunters, effectively being swallowed by the jungle, and falling into the *Hidden Shrine* during a sudden cave-in. The new version keeps the same swift opening scene, where it assumes a bunch of backstory elements so that it can have the adventurers stumble through the jungle. It does so "...like an adventure serial, introducing the story with the action already in progress."

Granted, DMs were always free to improvise as needed. The original included an alternative route into the shrine, requiring adventurers to dig their way inside. But the proposed sudden, breakneck style of play -- plunging the party straight into the shrine -- works to encourage the primary goal: that of escaping the dungeon, rather than exploring it (much like *A4: In the Dungeon of the Slave Lords*, the open tournament module for Gen Con XIII, 1980).

When inside, adventurers had to be cautious of the shrine's unstable condition, with such mainstay spells as *fireball* and *lightning bolt* causing potentially disastrous collapses (with the updated version still threatening a similar danger). Even worse, the lower levels of the shrine were filled with a poison gas, encouraging adventurers to move along at all costs -- to be cautious, but not dawdle -- with characters taking 1d6 damage for every turn spent in the gas.

Not to be outdone, the updated version describes "...a slow-acting but deadly poisonous gas, the effects of which the characters will immediately realize." A short rest or 5 minutes in the gas requires a saving throw; failure costs a healing surge. A long rest in the gas? Death.



A Final Secret

In the original *Hidden Shrine*, Zotzilaha's name is barely mentioned in passing. The temple ruin, which offers final escape from the shrine itself, is decorated with an image of a giant bat, which might well have represented Zotzilaha in his bat form. Otherwise, nothing of this vampire god is ever really known. Not so in the updated version. As hinted in the conclusion, a seed for DMs allows them to continue the adventure and bring back more of the Olman and their culture: "Even though Zotzilaha has long been absent from this place, the vampire still exists." Additionally, he still cares about the treasures within his *Hidden Shrine*!



Monster Vault: Threats to the Nentir Vale

As a special addendum, let's look at a list we pulled together of our top five monsters that are returning to the game in *Monster Vault: Threats to the Nentir Vale*.



5. Mooncalf: Set between the moonbeast (a ferocious, tenacious, and thoroughly horrifying adversary; seeing one can send strong adventurers fleeing for their lives) and the moonrats (lunar light has an insidious effect on these creatures, making them smarter, stronger, and more ferocious than any rat ought to be), the mooncalf appeared in the 3rd Edition *Monster Manual II*. Lovecraftian in appearance, mooncalves were otherworldly monstrosities that, according to rumor, flew down to earth from the dark side of the moon. In the Monster Vault, their natures are equally strange; they now travel from the Far Realm to terrorize the Nentir Vale every eight years during the period of a single lunar cycle.



4. Boggle: Steve Townshend waxed eloquently on the [boggle's origins](#). In doing so, he covered not only the 1st Edition *Monster Manual 2* version, but also tackled the older traditions of fantasy and folklore. Precursors to the ethereal filchers (even more frustrating), boggles have ranked high among the game's hated pickpockets, reaching through dimension doors to steal characters' hard-won loot. Not even the viscous, nonflammable oil they secreted from their pores could save them after a wronged adventurer finally tracked them down.



3. Penanggalan: You might notice a 1st Edition *Fiend Folio* feel to this creature. Strange and wholly disturbing, a penanggalan was originally "...a female vampire-type undead of fearsome power and nauseating appearance." Disguised as a helpful stranger by day, the penanggalan's head and guts detached from her body to fly about in search of a victim to charm and upon which to feed at night. (Where did the designers come up with such a foul concept? From [mythology](#).) The *Monster Vault* version expands on the penanggalan's backstory and also provides a state for the bodiless head if it's encountered on its own!



2. Hound of Ill Omen: Another 1st Edition *Fiend Folio* beast, the hound of ill omen appeared mainly to foretell the doom of characters who seriously offended their deity ("...for example by a flagrant act out of alignment..."). In other words, they were in-game warning signs displayed by the DM. They also might have incorporated parts of the Hound of the Baskervilles, inevitables, and Steve Townshend's reimagining of [the catoblepas](#). The updated version brings back the hounds' ominous appearance as harbingers of death, but also allows characters to better interact with them.



1. Peryton: The peryton comes from the 1st Edition *Monster Manual*, where we once wondered at these odd hybrids: "They are omnivorous creatures of the weirdest appearance, likely the result of the same type of experimentation as brought about the owlbear." Although the owlbear's true origins might have come from a dime store toy purchased in Lake Geneva, the peryton has its first mention in Jorge Luis Borge's *Book of Imaginary Beings* (complete with man-shaped shadow). We're thrilled to see its return to the game, and with our latest *Creature Competition* focused on hybrids, we're also pleased to call the peryton its honorary host!

Honorable Mentions: Cadaver collector, wandering tower, and Mages of Saruun (from the *Thunderspire Labyrinth*).

Bart Carroll



Bart Carroll is neither the result of genetic experimentation by some insane wizard, nor a nightmarish creature loathsome beyond description (though he has been called both); a medium natural humanoid, he joined Wizards of the Coast in the spring of 2004. Originally producing their licensed property websites (including *Star Wars* and G.I. Joe), he transitioned to the D&D website, where he's remained part of the D&D Insider Team. In this role, he generates website content in support of the 4th Edition line of products, the online magazines, and the gamer lifestyle—of which he is an extremely proud adherent.



Nerathi Legends: Merindaelion, Barony of the Emerald Blade

By Richard Baker

Illustration by Bernadette Carstensen

Cartography by Adam Gillespie

“A beautiful land and a people favored by fortune, but don’t let the glittering waters dazzle your eyes—dark perils gather in the Barony of the Emerald Blade, and old evil stirs in the shadows of the forest.”

At the eastern end of the great Altaran Peninsula lies an expanse of dense green forests and sparkling white sands—Merindaelion, the realm of the Emerald Blade. A small domain in comparison to the neighboring Kingdom of Tithinia or the Duchy of Solandir, Merindaelion is home to a unique people. Elves and humans have blended and mingled in these beautiful lands more than anywhere else in the world, giving rise to a bold, handsome, and independent people known the world over as great adventurers and seafarers.

Situated on the western shores of the Sunrise Sea, the Emerald Blade Barony has long been a land with its eyes turned outward. The merchants and trading

guilds based in Merindaelion’s ports flourish under the relaxed laws of the barony, and hundreds of ships from all over the world call here. Unlike with the large trading houses of Sarthel and other such centers, the merchants of the Emerald Blade are mostly private shipowners and individual speculators. In troubled times, they are quick to turn to piracy, making up for lost or interrupted trade by sending their ships and crews out to take what they can by force. As long as the baron’s share is paid, the authorities are happy to set loose Emerald Blade privateers on the coasts of Tithinia, Numoth, Relis Vullin, and sometimes even the kingdom of Rethmil.

Merindaelion’s merger of human and elven culture took shape one thousand years ago, when the great elven kingdom of Solaneillon entered its final decline. In those days, hordes of gnolls from the Sand Sea and the Desert of Black Stone posed a constant, ever-growing threat to the fading power of the elves. The rulers of Solaneillon took into their service human warriors from the vigorous tribes of southern

Kelarnil to stem the tide of monstrous incursions, and afterward rewarded them with land to settle in the realm's northern wildlands. The elves who lived in these lands were at first bitterly opposed to the growing number of human settlers. But as the strength of Solaneillon waned, the bravery of the humans, along with their sheer numbers, proved decisive in standing up to the monstrous hordes. When Solaneillon broke apart into smaller states six hundred years ago, a charismatic half-elf noble named Althier Merind succeeded in uniting the human towns and elven forest-holds of northern Solaneillon into a single realm, establishing the Barony of Merindaelion. Since Althier's time, House Merind has ruled over the realm with a permissive hand.

The heirloom of House Merind is Althier's enchanted sword *Perifal*, the work of an ancient eladrin master smith. This hand-and-a-half sword is forged from an alloy of adamantine that glitters with a deep, metallic green color; the hilt is wrapped in supple leather made from hide taken from the throat of a green dragon. The blade is depicted on every banner, standard, and sail of the barony as a vertical, crosslike design flanked by sleek, feathered wings. This is the "emerald blade" from which Merindaelion derives its nickname.

POWER STRUCTURE

The Emerald Blade Barony was originally a league of allied nobles, of which the Baron of Nesmalen was the highest-ranking and most powerful member. In the years since Althier Merind successfully united the disparate fiefs into Merindaelion, the barony has drawn together, taking on the functions (if not the titles) of a kingdom.

Baron Geras Merind

The heir of House Merind holds the titles of Baron of Nesmalen and Protector of Merindaelion. He or she commands the realm's army, heads the baronial administration, and is primarily responsible for conducting foreign affairs. The authority of the baron and baronial officers is limited when dealing with matters of justice and taxation within the boundaries of other lords' fiefs; the peers of Merindaelion are

skeptical of giving the baron more power, and they have guarded their own prerogatives jealously.

The current baron is Geras Alsarien Merind, a half-elf of thirty-five who ascended to his post when his father was assassinated one year ago. Before his accession he was a restless and troublesome heir apparent, adventuring incognito through nearby lands and dallying with more than a few females along the way. Although Geras dislikes the burdens of the throne and misses his freewheeling days, he has



proven to be a bold and cunning leader, who has won great favor with most of his people. Notably, he has instituted a series of reforms and recalls to root out corruption and incompetence in the baronial administration. Unfortunately for Geras, his crusading has earned him some powerful enemies, and some say he has been marked for the same fate as his father—it's only a matter of when.

The Peers of the Realm

Merindaelion's peerage is a patchwork of small noble fiefs with a variety of titles of uncertain precedence. There are approximately twenty baronets, seigneurs, and lords or dames, plus a number of independent holds and free towns that are part of no lord's domain. The more powerful of the nobles hold fiefs as impressive as House Merind's own and have strong claims on the barony's throne due to old marriages with the royal house.

Lord Kinimar: The lord of Anduiros, the second-largest city in the realm, Kinimar is a cousin of Geras Merind. He is an ambitious and calculating forty-year-old human known for his talents as a sorcerer. He entertains schemes of unseating House Merind and installing his own House Fhalton as the ruling family in Merindaelion.

Baronetess Sefini: Hotheaded and impetuous, Sefini is a striking young female half-elf who reigns over the pirate haven of Talon Bay. She is sometimes called the Corsair Queen, and for good reason—Talon Bay is the home of a large and raucous corsair flotilla. Sefini chafes under what she sees as the overly heavy hand of Baron Geras, and constantly tests the limits of baronial authority with brazen acts of piracy.

The Forest Lords: Seven of Merindaelion's ranking peers hold no towns or castles, but instead represent noble elf clans of the forested interior. Each Forest Lord governs a clan, a house, or a tribe of elves and their retainers, watching over unsettled

territories in the forested hills. The Forest Lords and their people serve as a crucial first line of defense against incursions from Tithinia and Iron Circle spies. The Forest Lords do not maintain a permanent residence, roaming from season to season between various natural refuges and shelters (some of which are more comfortable and secure than any human nobleman's tower). A contingent of Forest Lords often visits the court at Nesmalen, quietly advising the young baron on elven concerns and interests.

The Yuan-ti

An ancient enemy lurks in the caverns and the forests of the wild southern borderlands of the Emerald Blade Barony—the dreadful yuan-ti. The yuan-ti once battled the elven realm of Solaneillon for supremacy of eastern Altara, and were defeated. Down through the long centuries they have stirred from time to time, erupting in turn against the dragonborn warriors of Arkhosia, the proud lords of Nerath, and now the half-elves, elves and humans of Merindaelion.

NESMALEN AT A GLANCE

A fortresslike haven harboring scores of ships, this small city is the capital of the Emerald Blade Barony.

Population Mix: Approximately 8,000 people, most of them humans or half-elves, live in Nesmalen. Several times that number live in the fields and towns along the River Nes and the shores of Emerald Bay. Halflings, elves, shifters, and dragonborn make up the nonhuman population.

Government: Nesmalen is ruled by a lord mayor appointed by the baron. The city and its surrounding lands are the historical demesne of House Merind, but the baron, as the ranking noble of the realm, delegates oversight of local affairs to various officials. The current lord mayor is an old, officious male halfling named Tarren Thistler. Lord Mayor Tarren makes a great show of any civic ceremony and never misses a chance to give a speech, but otherwise governs lightly.

Commerce: Nesmalen's major industries are shipbuilding, woodworking, and the production, dyeing, and embroidering of textiles such as silk and cotton. The major food crops are brown rice, fruit, nuts, beans, and other crops that do well in

warm, humid conditions. In addition, every kind of seafood can be found in the markets and is a daily part of the residents' diet. Nesmalen imports metalwork, wine, grain, and leather.

Defenses: Emerald Blade Keep is a large fortress that commands the harbor, but Nesmalen's first line of defense is its excellent war fleet of twelve sturdy dromonds with iron-beaked rams. The city is otherwise unwalled. In addition to the dromond crews, the Keep is defended by two hundred fifty elite foot soldiers and the order of wizards known as the Mages of the Emerald Star.

Inns and Taverns: Nesmalen is renowned for its excellent fare and comfortable inns. The White Sail Inn caters to visiting shipowners and captains, offering good food and safe lodgings overlooking the harbor. Travelers of more modest means can choose the Storm Gull near the wharves, where one's stay might be marked by brawling, robbery, and the occasional murder. The House of Swans, a mile outside town on a forested hilltop overlooking the Nes, caters to elves and other people who have refined tastes.

EXPLORING THE BARONY

The Emerald Blade Barony lies in a region of warm, heavily forested hills marked by steep, rugged ridges. The area is not truly mountainous and isn't an actual jungle, but the terrain forms a significant barrier against attacks from the west or south. A small amount of the land is under cultivation, mostly in the valley of the River Nes and the gentle coastal plain around Anduiros. The interior can grow warm and humid in the summers, but the coast remains temperate from the ever-present sea breezes.

Nesmalen

The largest city in the Emerald Blade Barony is Nesmalen, located where the River Nes meets the northern arm of Emerald Bay. Nesmalen is a scenic city, with whitewashed walls and colorful tiled roofs glittering among the green, forested hillsides. Its shipyards turn out the finest vessels on the western shores of the Sunrise Sea, and its warehouses are filled with



goods from all over the world. A picturesque headland above the harbor is home to Emerald Blade Keep, the stronghold and palace of House Merind and the seat of Baron Geras.

Nesmalen is a reasonably safe city, although not without its intrigues and dangers. Yuan-ti spies and abominations lurk in its sewers and catacombs, along with audacious gangs of thieves and a persistent cult dedicated to the two-headed demon prince Demogorgon.

Anduiros

Anduiros is the second city of the Emerald Blade Barony. It lies on an expanse of flat farmland in the heart of the realm, ringed by cotton fields and orchards. The city is the center of the barony's timber industry, producing highly valued hardwoods in its sawmills. Because it stands on open ground, Anduiros is protected by a city wall, the most extensive to be found in Merindaelion.

In the past, the human lords of Anduiros feuded bitterly with the elven clans of the forest, and in all Merindaelion this is the place where humans and elves remain most at odds; few elves live here, and Anduirosans harbor suspicions about elven influence over the barony's affairs. Anduiros is the domain of Lord Kinimar Fhalton, a cousin of the baron and the most powerful and ambitious of the realm's nobles.

Nesgard Keep

Located at the head of the valley of the River Nes, Nesgard Keep blocks the only practicable invasion route into the Emerald Blade Barony from the west. The castle's construction began early in the reign of Baron Halvar Merind, father of Baron Geras, and proceeded in several stages—first a watchtower, then a small keep, and finally an encircling wall, providing accommodations for a garrison of four hundred

Emerald Blade soldiers. The commander of the fortress is High Captain Sinnovhan el-Moirad, an elf swordsman of great accomplishment and one of the realm's Forest Lords.

Nesgard Keep is also notable for its proximity to the ruins of an Arkhosian school of war-sorcerers. The hilltop academy was destroyed by demons fifteen centuries ago, and dark powers still lurk in the catacombs and vaults beneath the academy's crumbling towers.

Lighthouse of Saris

The elves of ancient Solaneillon built a tower on the northernmost point of Cape Saris to guide passing ships through the shallows of the straits. After the original tower fell into disuse, the Nerath Empire raised a new lighthouse and stronghold on the same location two hundred years ago. The Nerathi are now long gone; Emerald Blade soldiers staff the lighthouse and guard the small town at the tower's base. Powerful trebuchets on the tower can throw fifty-pound stones, posing a serious threat to any hostile vessels venturing too close.

Faldrin Vale

In the highest and most inaccessible hills of Merindaelion lies a valley of wild and sinister beauty—Faldrin Vale. Moss-grown trees, flowering vines, and ancient standing stones mark the vale as a region where the Feywild lies close to the mortal world. The woods are haunted by dryads, centaurs, and sometimes darker and more dangerous fey; this forest is perilous for mortals, and even elves tread carefully in Faldrin. The vale lies at the heart of the Forest Lords' domains, and it serves as a meeting place and mustering ground for Merindaelion's nonhuman denizens. The forests surrounding Faldrin Vale are protected by mazes of brambles and enchanted glades that can capture travelers and send them into a deep slumber that lasts for days.

ADVENTURES IN THE EMERALD BLADE BARONY

Merindaelion is a generally peaceful realm, but that doesn't mean adventure is hard to find.

Letter of Marque: The heroes obtain a letter of marque—the authorization to outfit themselves as privateers and take to the seas in search of booty. Privateers are allowed to take only ships of enemy lands, but the Saris Strait is rich with Iron Circle merchant vessels full of gold and other treasure.

Serissalmar: At one time the enemy of ancient Solaneillon, this great yuan-ti ruin lies half buried in the forests of southern Merindaelion. Long before the rise of Bael Turath and Arkhosia, the yuan-ti lords of Serissalmar and their armies of conjured demons fought against the elf and eladrin realms of the area. They were finally defeated, but demons and other dark powers still haunt the ruined city, and secret yuan-ti strongholds lie hidden beneath the nearby hills.

The Tower of Dal Beriod: The encroachment of the Iron Circle has pushed Baron Geras to fortify his western frontier. One hero is appointed a royal warden and given a writ to occupy the long-abandoned watchtower of Dal Beriod, clear the area of harpies and ogres, and establish a new fief on the border.

Rebellious Lord: With the secret support of the Iron Circle, Lord Kinimar of Anduiros launches an attempt to unseat the baron and claim the throne. Kinimar's spies and sympathizers pose a serious threat in the capital already, but Geras needs concrete evidence of Iron Circle involvement before he can move against his cousin.

Thaliessal

On the seabed thirty miles northeast of Nesmalen lies one of the ancient wonders of the world: the ruins of the coral city of Thaliessal, once home to a realm of sea elves. Thaliessal lies in a broad region of reefs and shallows, rarely more than a hundred feet in depth. Forests of kelp surround its walls, and in a few places its highest spires break the surface, offering explorers a place to moor their ships while they venture into the more accessible buildings nearby. Thaliessal was ruled by a prince who gave his fealty to the elven kingdom of Solaneillon, and a great deal of commerce took place between the land elves and the sea elves in the days of the kingdom's glory.

Thaliessal withdrew from Solaneillon when humans began to settle the nearby shores. After the elven kingdom collapsed, the sea elves' realm became embroiled in desperate wars against demon-summoning sahuagin. Three hundred years ago, sahuagin hordes sacked Thaliessal and slew many of its people. The survivors abandoned their ancient capital and scattered to smaller holds and refuges in nearby seas. To this day, great treasure lies hidden in the vaults and temples of the coral city—but sea demons guard the deeps, and sahuagin prowl the shallows.

New Feat: Thaliessan Blood

In centuries past the sea elves of Thaliessal intermarried with the other elves (and on rare occasions, the humans) who inhabited the lands that would become Merindaelion. Consequently, a large number of half-elves and elves of the Emerald Blade Barony count sea elves of Thaliessal among their ancestors.

Prerequisite: Half-elf

Benefit: You are considered an aquatic creature. You have a swim speed of 5, you can breathe underwater, and in aquatic combat, you gain a +2 bonus to attack rolls against nonaquatic creatures.

About the Author

Richard Baker is an award-winning game designer who has written numerous adventures and sourcebooks, including *Manual of the Planes™*, the *DARK SUN® Campaign Guide*, and the *D&D® GAMMA WORLD™ Roleplaying Game*. He's a *New York Times* bestselling author of *FORGOTTEN REALMS®* novels such as *Condemnation*, the Last Mythal trilogy, and the *Blades of the Moonsea* series. Rich is currently the Design Manager for the *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®* game at Wizards of the Coast.

First Impression

By Shelly Mazzanoble

Illustrations by William O'Connor, Doug Chaffee, Greg Harper, and Jim Roslof



The other day I horrified myself by starting a sentence with the phrase “When I was a kid . . .”

I mean, seriously? I’m *that* old already?

The impetus was a friend who posted a picture on Facebook of a pay phone with the caption “What is this thing?”

I directed my co-workers’ attention to the picture. “Do you remember having to use a pay phone?” I asked. “And always having change with you in case of emergency?”

“I remember having a calling card,” Laura said. “And the number was like 79 digits long. I had to memorize every one of them because my mom was afraid if I wrote the number down, someone might steal it.”

I can’t remember what it was like before I had an iPhone, let alone a cell phone. I swear if I’m not operating heavy machinery or asleep, I’m on that thing Googling the lyrics to a Def Leppard song or looking up how many calories are in a microbrew. (Don’t do that. It’s not a “feel good” number.) And what did we do before the Internet?

“We used encyclopedias,” Chris said.

“And microfiche machines,” Chuck added. “In a library.”

“What’s a library?” we asked.

Naturally, we old-timers began to trip down memory lane with our walkers and canes, rehashing how rough it was back in our day. No GPS, no digital cameras, no *Glee*!

“Back in my day I actually had to get up to change the TV channel,” I said. “What a pain that was.”

“Back in my day I had to actually push a vacuum around the floor,” Laura said. “Can you imagine life before Roomba?”

“Back in my day, I had to roll up a D&D character with a pencil and paper,” Chuck said, pressing pause on his iPod Shuffle. “And do my own math.”

“Ew!” I said. “How old are you?”

“We didn’t have Dungeon Tiles, so we had to draw our maps on graph paper,” Chris said. “That is, if we bothered using a map.”

“But how did you know where you were?” I asked.

“The DM told you,” Chuck said.

“Haven’t you ever heard of *show, don’t tell*?” I asked. “I like seeing where my mini is on a map. You know, just in case there’s a well I decide to shift down into.”

“Oh, we didn’t use minis,” Chuck said. “At least not as tactically as we do today.”

“And as your current Dungeon Master, I can assure you,” Chris added, “that seeing the well won’t prevent you from falling in it. I’m just saying.”

This was crazy talk. Kind of like Grandpa walking all those miles to school in the snow.

“But how did you know how many feet the monsters were away from you? Or if there was a large boulder you could be hiding behind? Or which allies were standing next to you?”

Chuck cleared his throat. “As an ally who is often standing next to you and your burning hands, I



assure you, seeing your allies won't prevent you from frying them in your blasts."

"You guys are making this up," I insisted. "How did you ever know what was going on?"

Chuck and Chris answered in unison. "Because the DM told you."

"With his voice," Chuck added. "We didn't need fancy visual aids back then."

"It was all about using your imagination," Chris added wistfully. "And dumb luck."

"Sometimes the dice were kind," Chuck added. "And sometimes they weren't, and your character died."

Character death? Egads! I mean, I know it happens, but with the exception of Kevin my playtest

barbarian, I've managed to avoid it. These guys were acting like loving and losing was all part of the game.

"It was," Chris said. "And it was awesome."

I lost them to a back-and-forth rally of "remember when" stories. Oh, sure, I've heard similar tales of yore. Mostly I thought these stories were the memories of twelve-year-old boys, retold by men in their thirties. Of course they have fond recollections. They remember riding bikes and wearing parachute pants the same way. But still . . . there is always *something* about the way people wax on about the earlier editions of D&D, and I'm not entirely sure it just has to do with a time before microwaves and YouTube. (And yes, kids, there was a time before microwaves and YouTube. Shut up.)

A few days later I was leveling up Willamena, my D&D Encounters mage (with the Character Builder. I don't even own a pencil, thank you very much.) Willamena is a very entitled mage with fancy at-will spells and a party that shields her from most of the damage. That's all fine and good, but Chris and Chuck's stroll down Mordenkainen's Lane got me wondering what life was like for Willamena's wizardly ancestors.

And then it occurred to me. Just because D&D is in its fourth edition, it doesn't mean I can't go back in time. Heck, people play all of the editions all of the time.

"Hey, Chris," I said, interrupting the slide-animating process of his PowerPoint presentation. "When's the last time you ran a first edition game?"

His brow furrowed as he pondered this. "I don't know. Long time ago, I guess."

"How would you feel about running a game now?"

Chris looked from his PowerPoint that was due in about 45 minutes to me, then back to the screen.

"Oh, not *now* now," I clarified. "I just mean soon. I want to see what life was like for a wizard back then."

He rubbed the palms of his hands together—which, after a couple of years of playing in his D&D games, I know means he's really, really excited.

"Well, first off, you wouldn't be a wizard," he said. "You would be a magic user."

"That's rather generic," I said. "Kind of like calling your job 'slide animator' or mine 'Gossip Girl recapper' or 'microwave popcorn burner.' That's just a small part of what we do here."

"What else does Willamena do besides use magic?" Chris asked.

"Well," I began. Curse my short-term memory issues. What else *has* she done? "She can raise familiars from the dead. And she can eliminate pesky stains from your robes with a simple—"

"By using magic," Chris said, smiling. "But who cares? I'd love to run you through a game. In fact, I'll



even set aside some time to help you roll up a character. The old-fashioned way,” he added.

Uh-oh. Better get a pencil.

By the time the Character Builder was released, I was already playing D&D, so to roll up Astrid, my 3.5 elf sorceress, I did it the “old-fashioned way.” There were lots of pencil shavings, dice, and seemingly complicated and random algorithms involved, so yeah, I had it rough, too. Sort of. Okay, my DM at the time had it rough trying to explain not only what an ability modifier was, but also how to calculate it. I asked a lot of “Why are we doing that?” and he answered with a lot of “Because that’s how it is.” (More proof that my mom would make a fabulous Dungeon Master.)

Fortunately, I have a tad bit more knowledge of D&D, so Chris doesn’t have it so tough when we meet up at lunch to create my first edition magic user. She’s going to be level 8 to play in the adventure Chris has planned.

“Her name is Majeka Magicmaker,” I say. “And I love her.”

Chris nods his head. “That’s a very first edition name. What’s her race?”

I decide on elf, since it’s most familiar to me, but a gray elf because it’s the most unfamiliar of my elfen choices.

If we had more time, Chris could have unearthed his first edition goldenrod character sheets from the overflowing Rubbermaid bins in his basement. He apparently has Smithsonian-caliber relics stashed in there. Instead, we make do with the character sheets he made using Excel.

“Not very old-school,” he admits, “but it will work in the interest of time.”

Even an Excel character sheet is bizarre in first edition. System shock? Resurrect survival? Paralyzation poison? This stuff can’t all be relevant, can it?

“What the heck is a henchman?” I ask. “Is that like a familiar?”

“Not really. They’re basically followers of your character who perform services in exchange for money, food, lodging.”

“I totally want a henchman,” I say. “How do I get one?”

“You’re not getting any henchmen,” Chris says. “Not in my game.”

“But I’m entitled to them,” I explain, pointing to the box on the character sheet. The character sheet he made, I might add. “Majeka needs an entourage. She has trunks and trunks of robes and bracers and a plethora of those exploding carnations she pins on her lapel.” (I’m still having a hard time grasping this whole “magic user” classification.)

Chris knows me pretty well, so in the interest of time he offers a treaty.

“Fine. You can have henchmen, but they’re not coming on the adventure. They have to stay home and tend to the garden and draw you a bath and plan your wardrobe or whatever. Let’s move on.”

Chris instructs me to pull out my d6s. Lots of them. Majeka’s abilities are dependent on the fate of these dice.

First and second rolls grants me 16s, which I promptly assign to Intelligence and Wisdom. I hate having dumb characters.

“Hey, look at that!” I say. “I’m good at first edition!”

The next three rolls are 12, 10, and 10. See? I’m pretty much rocking this edition.

I sit quietly while Chris looks up my bonuses in a chart in the Player’s Handbook. I suspect this too is in the interest of time. Shelly of the 1980s would probably muddle her own way through this book and like it. I assign the rest of my numbers to my remaining abilities. So I’m not the most agile elf. So what?

Next Chris instructs me to do something I’ve never done before.

“Get your percentile die.”

“I have no idea what you’re asking me to do.”

He hands me the die that I’ve kept in my bag for six years and never once rolled.

“For real?” I ask. “I always wondered what that thing was for.”

Because Majeka is very intelligent, Chris explains she has a 65% chance of knowing the spells she chooses. Again, this makes little sense to me.

“So, unlike Willamena who just puts spells in her spellbook and uses them, Majeka might not even have the option of learning them?”

“Well she may have *tried* to learn one and failed, or just never had the opportunity to learn it because no one taught her,” Chris says. “But maybe your DM knows there’s a spell you’re after and somehow the scroll winds up in treasure the party finds.”

Now that's pretty cool. Cooler than some silly armor or a sword my wizard can't use anyway. I'm happy with what spells Majeka knows. She clearly paid attention in magic-user school and is a pro at casting old standbys like *magic missile* and *burning hands* and soon-to-be favorites like *ice storm* and *wall of fire*. The best part is the instructions on how to hold your hands to correctly cast *burning hands*—a W formation with your thumbs touching one another. I've been doing it wrong all this time.

"Yeah, there was lot of roleplaying back then," Chris says.

Just when I think I'm all tough girl with my *wall of fire* and *mirror image*, Chris lets me in on another first-edition quirk.

"These aren't at-will spells. You use one once and it's gone."

"Like until the next encounter?"

"Like until you relearn it so you can cast it the next day. Use them wisely, grasshopper."

I'm still getting used to this whole every-spell-is-like-a-daily-spell thing when Chris throws me another doozy.

"Oh, and monsters can attack you while you're casting a spell," he says. "Each spell takes a certain amount of time to cast, and during that time you become very noticeable. I should probably mention that."

"Excuse me?" In my world it's always been I pull out a spell, cast it, roll the die and boom. Done. The bad guys never see it coming. "I realize this is more first grade than first edition, but it's my turn. They can try to hit me on *their* turn."

"They will then, too," Chris says. "It was dangerous to be a magic user back then. You were a huge target."

"I'm glad to see magic users figured out a more efficient way of casting spells their ancestors could benefit from." What were they doing, anyway? Pulling out their chemistry sets and reading the instructions?

Finally we get to equipment.

"Think carefully about what you're packing," he says. Chris actually makes me think about what I'm bringing along. "There's a limit to what you can carry, and you don't know how long you'll be gone."

"Jeez, you and the airlines!"

The days of stuffing everything you own in your checked luggage are over. I do manage to get a *ring of protection*, a *wand of lightning*, *bracers of defense*, and a bitchin' elven cloak and boots, though.

"Now you can only pack enough rations for one week," Chris explains. "And you're out adventuring for nine days, so you better hope someone in the party has a small appetite."

"Or they have a big appetite so they're nice and plump when I'm forced to eat them."

Chris stares at me. "That's gross. And aren't you a vegetarian? Now for the fun part: Let's figure out your Armor Class."

Again he consults a chart, factors in my bracers and my ring, and comes up with a . . .



“Two.”

Say what?

“How the heck am I two? At eighth level! Oh, no, Chris, you messed up! If I got stung by a bee, I’d be toast!”

He laughs. “Ah, that’s the beauty of first edition. The lower your Armor Class, the better. Ever hear of THACO?”

Indeed I have, but it didn’t make any sense until Chris showed me the chart on my new character sheet. And it still doesn’t make a lot of sense.

“So to hit Armor Class 2 I need to roll a 17 or higher?” I ask.

“Correct.”

“So why wouldn’t the armor class just be 17 instead of some arbitrary number?”

Chris pats my head. “Because that’s the way Gary Gygax wrote it to be.”

He packs up his musty, dog-eared, and much loved first edition, leaving me to wrap my head around the fact that a -7 Armor Class is way better than a 10. And monsters have no regard for initiative order. And there won’t be any maps, or minis, or protection from evil when I’m trying to cast a spell.

“Be ready this Friday after work,” he says. “Oh, and you might want to bring friends.”

Right, friends. Majeka isn’t going out there alone. She’ll need to round up a party.

When I get back to my desk, I overhear Laura and Chuck arguing about the merits of *Labyrinth* versus *Ladyhawke*.

“For real?” I ask. “You guys are still debating cheesy 80s movies?”

“I guess we’re feeling nostalgic,” Chuck says.

Ahh . . . I think Majeka may have just met the rest of her party.

“Well, you’re in luck,” I say, pulling out my dice and sharpening my pencils. “Bust out your Aqua Net and peg your jeans. We’re going back in time.”



About the Author

There’s a 75% chance that Shelly Mazzanoble turned this column in on time, an 85% chance next month’s will be later, and a 95% chance that she is all caught up on *The Real Housewives of New York*.



Wizard

Illustrations by William O'Connor and Steve Ellis

This article has been revised to include player feedback submitted to playtesting@wizards.com. These changes include revisions to many powers. Thank you for participating in the playtest process!

Why This Is the Class for You: You like to master the battlefield and control your enemies, while also having the tools to handle any situation you face.

Some things no person is meant to know, some powers no mortal should ever wield, and some mysteries are best left buried in the lost manuscripts. Common wisdom advises all this, yet wizards have little use for such quaint warnings and plunge headlong into the occult without fear. For this reason, most people fear wizards, or if they don't fear them, they at least steer clear of them—for who knows what magic they work in their laboratories or what terrible secrets they have unearthed? If wizards notice such an attitude, they pay it no heed or, perhaps, cultivate it to keep the uninitiated from peering too closely at the forces these magicians wield.

A wizard, it has been said, is an arcane scion, a gifted individual trained in the mystical arts who accesses the power that permeates the cosmos and molds it into useful and often destructive forms. A wizard's approach to magic is one of scholarship and accomplishment. To a wizard, there is no easy path to power; there is only research, discipline, and intellect. Those who circumvent the proper order, such as the dubious warlocks and their untamed cousins the sorcerers, pervert magical energy—or, worse, are ruled by it. For this reason wizards guard their secrets well, teaching their lore only to those worthy candidates who have both the mental acuity and the strength of will to use it. The wizard's traditions are passed down to promising students through apprenticeship or in an arcane academy's classrooms.

Although wizards have a reputation for being pedantic scholars, more concerned with preserving moldering books than with what goes on outside their tower walls, the truth is that many of them venture into the world as adventurers. Magical treasures litter the world, and in those items are secrets to growing one's power. Wizards expand their minds through arcane lore they find, improve their

other abilities with each item recovered, and awaken new spellcasting abilities the longer they pursue the adventuring life.

The mage and the arcanist are two types of wizards. The mage appears in *Heroes of the Fallen Lands*. The arcanist first appeared in the *Player's Handbook* as the wizard.

ARCANIST

Arcane Controller: You command eldritch forces, shaping them into spells designed to blast your enemies, bring them under your thumb, twist their senses, and impede their movement.

Key Abilities: Intelligence; Constitution, Dexterity, or Wisdom

An arcanist is a powerful wizard who forgoes specialization to explore and use all that arcane magic has to offer. Rather than bind themselves to a particular school, as mages do, arcanists experiment with a wide range of magical effects from evocation to necromancy and everything in between. Considered dilettantes by their mage counterparts, arcanists see diverse study as a boon because it broadens their ability to deal with a variety of situations, by always having the proper spell on hand.

The arcanist is a generalist and a theorist. This path of arcane study focuses more on a broader understanding of principles instead of specific techniques relating to schools. To an arcanist, how he or she casts a spell is far more important than what sort of spell is used. Many arcanists follow their imagination as to what spells they might learn and which they might use on any given day, rather than adhering to the dictates of academia.

Arcanist Traits

Hit Points: You start with hit points equal to 10 + your Constitution score. You gain 4 hit points each time you gain a level.

Bonus to Defenses: +2 to Will

Healing Surges per Day: 6 + your Constitution modifier

Armor Proficiencies: Cloth

Weapon Proficiencies: Dagger, quarterstaff

Implement Proficiencies: Orbs, staves, wands

Class Skills: Arcana (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Dungeoneering (Wis), History (Int), Insight (Wis), Nature (Wis), Religion (Int)

Trained Skills: Arcana, plus three more from the list of class skills

Like mages, arcanists gravitate to the adventuring life because it gives them the chance to discover interesting new spells and rituals to add to their spellbooks. Though they might lack focus, arcanists prove themselves equal to their school-specialist counterparts in both learning ability and application of that knowledge, and are counted as valued members of any expedition.

CREATING AN ARCANIST

This section walks you through the steps of creating an arcanist. As you make choices at each step, consider how those choices relate to your character's personality, backstory, and goals.

Consult the three class tables, one for each tier of play, for a summary of what you gain as you advance in level.

Race

Choose your race. Eladrin and human are particularly good choices for an arcanist.

Eladrin Legends claim that Corellon revealed the secrets of arcane magic to the eladrin people, who in turn shared their knowledge with other races. Their keen intellect and quick reflexes make eladrin eminently suited to become wizards. Furthermore, the magical tradition that pervades eladrin culture fosters talent and provides guidance for talented apprentices.

Many eladrin arcanists focus their study on the military applications of magic. These war wizards form the core of every eladrin city's defenses, and it falls to them to disperse and annihilate enemies with blasts of arcane power. Some leave the city to carry the battle to their enemies, such as orcs, drow, and lycanthropes.

Most eladrin arcanists follow Corellon, the father of arcane magic. Some, especially those who travel widely throughout the natural world, turn to Ioun.

Human Some of the greatest wizards in the world have been human. Mordekainen, Bigby, Tenser, Otiluke and others of their ilk were among the first of their race to master the arcane arts, and thus their names are still spoken with reverence. Human arcanists of today follow in these innovators' steps, trying to perfect their spells and their methods so they might join them as legends. Humanity's innate versatility leads many humans to diversify in their training and look beyond the bounds of a particular school of magic.



An eladrin wizard studies his spellbook

Many humans learn their craft from established arcanists, usually spending some number of years studying as an apprentice. The master wizard parcels out lessons in exchange for the apprentice's labor. Mixing potions, sweeping floors, and clearing out cobwebs defines many an apprentice's early life. Bit by bit, though, the lessons start to sink in, and the apprentice learns how to control simple cantrips and later more powerful spells.

Human arcanists tend to favor the worship of Ioun, the goddess of knowledge and skill, because they see talent and study as the critical components of mastering spells.

Arcane Implement Mastery

Although arcanists draw spells from the same schools studied by other wizards, what sets them apart is their extensive focus and mastery over implements. An arcanist who casts spells through an orb can exert greater control over his or her foes, while another armed with a wand can direct spells with terrifying precision.

Choose one of the following forms of Arcane Implement Mastery. See page 5 for details on their benefits.

Orb of Imposition Arcanists who want to exert greater control over their enemies favor the orb. Channeling arcane energy through such an implement magnifies its power, making certain effects harder to resist and letting your magic linger longer. Manipulating an orb in this way requires discipline and a keen attention to detail; thus you will need a high Wisdom score to get the most from this choice.

Staff of Defense The staff symbolizes strength and power. This implement serves best those arcanists who look to their defenses first. An arcanist with a staff can protect himself or herself against enemy attack, and at an instant's notice the arcanist can channel its power to raise a potent shield to protect body or mind. Such energy requires health and vigor, so a high Constitution score will serve you well if you choose the staff.

Wand of Accuracy Battle arcanists prefer wands for their unequaled accuracy. A wand focuses magic and guides it to wherever its wielder desires. It is a precise tool and thus requires a steady hand to use it properly. Make sure you have a high Dexterity score to fully realize your wand's benefits.

Ability Scores

Determine your ability scores. Make Intelligence your highest score, since it is your attack ability and it is crucial to mastering higher and more complex forms of arcane magic. Your arcane implement choice determines your second-highest ability score. Wisdom is important for arcanists who use orbs, since it makes it harder for enemies to overcome your spells. If you chose the staff, Constitution helps boost your defenses when you come under attack and also increases your hit points. Finally, mastery of the wand allows you to add your Dexterity modifier to one attack roll every encounter, helping you hit when it's most important to do so.

You increase two ability scores of your choice by 1 each when you reach certain levels: 4th, 8th, 14th, 18th, 24th, and 28th. In addition, all your ability scores increase by 1 at 11th and 21st levels.

Your other ability scores help flesh out your character's personality and background. A good Charisma might paint you as a traveling wizard, one who relied on equal parts magic and deception, subterfuge, and perhaps even larceny to survive. A high Strength runs counter to the stereotype of a wizard. You might have been a laborer or even a warrior-in-training before taking up the wizard's vocation.

Skills

At 1st level, you have training in Arcana. In addition, you choose three more trained skills from the following list of class skills: Diplomacy, Dungeoneering, History, Insight, Nature, and Religion.

Your skill choices can define your character's background, describing the circumstances of your training and the experiences you had before becoming an adventurer. Dungeoneering and Nature both suggest training in the field. Diplomacy and Insight could arise from spending time in the Feywild as a courtier in an eladrin court. Religion and History both speak to a more scholarly approach to your studies; you might have spent a great deal of time examining old manuscripts.

Class Features and Powers

Note which class features and powers you gain at 1st level, as specified on the Arcanist Heroic Tier table on page 5.

When choosing your at-will, encounter, and daily powers, think about the choice you made for Arcane Implement Mastery. Orb of Imposition aids arcanists who prefer to exert greater battlefield control, so *cloud of daggers* and *thunderwave* are good choices for at-will powers. For your encounter power, consider *icy terrain*, and *sleep* is a fine daily power.

Arcanists who chose Staff of Defense tend to have a more diverse selection of powers, with a greater emphasis on personal protection. *Ray of frost* keeps enemies from closing in on you, while *thunderwave* can push them back when they do. *Ray of enfeeblement* is a good choice for your encounter power, while *flaming sphere* serves well for your daily power.

Finally, if you chose Wand of Accuracy, look to aggressive spells with an eye on damage. *Ray of frost* and *scorching burst* are both good choices for at-will powers. *Burning hands* helps you clear a path for your allies, while *acid arrow* can deliver a punishing attack against a critical opponent.

Feats

Choose one feat at 1st level. You gain an additional feat at every even-numbered level, plus a feat at 11th and 21st levels.

Heroes of the Fallen Lands and *Heroes of the Forgotten Kingdoms* introduce the concept of feat categories to associate similar feats into groups, making the selection process easier. Feats from the implement training category help you make the

most of the implement you wield while also boosting your accuracy and damage. The quick reaction category offers feats to let you act early in the round and set the combat's tone. Finally, don't overlook the vigilant reflexes category. These feats can help you avoid attacks so you can outlast your enemies.

Equipment

You have proficiency with cloth armor. You have proficiency with the following weapons: dagger and quarterstaff. However, your use of arcane magic for offense and defense means you have little need for weapons and armor.

You have 100 gp with which you can purchase equipment. Your first need is an arcane implement of the type appropriate to your mastery (orb, staff, or wand). Beyond that, you don't need armor or weapons, so invest in adventuring gear and components to power your rituals. Unless you have a staff, which can double as a weapon, it never hurts to pick up a dagger in case you are cornered.

Defenses and Hit Points

Calculate your defenses using your ability modifiers. In addition, you gain a +2 bonus to Will.

You start with hit points equal to 10 + your Constitution score. You gain 4 hit points each time you gain a level. You have a number of healing surges per day equal to 6 + your Constitution modifier.

Alignment and Final Details

At this point, you should have all the mechanical details of your character determined. There are a few more decisions to make.

Pick an alignment, which represents a basic outlook on the world that helps shape how your character acts. Did you hope to help the world and improve lives through your magical study? You're probably lawful good or good. If you sought power as its own end, you are likely unaligned.

Finally check with your DM to see where you are from in the campaign setting, the people you already know, and what your current situation is. It also helps to spend a few minutes working out how or if you know the other player characters.

HEROIC ARCANIST

Dusty tomes and strange ingredients defined your training. Years spent cloistered in a laboratory and under a master's critical eye prepared you for the trials ahead by giving you a solid foundation on which you built your magical talents. The heroic tier offers incredible opportunities to increase your prowess, and you will add to your learning in a rapid fashion. Husband your power, however, for your resources are not without limit. One error can mean the difference between life and death.

ARCANIST HEROIC TIER

Total XP	Level	Feats Known	Class Features and Powers
0	1	1	Arcane Implement Mastery Arcanist's Spellbook Cantrips Ritual Casting At-will powers Encounter power Daily powers
1,000	2	+1	Utility powers
2,250	3	–	Encounter power
3,750	4	+1	Ability score increase
5,500	5	–	Daily powers
7,500	6	+1	Utility power
10,000	7	–	Encounter power
13,000	8	+1	Ability score increase
16,500	9	–	Daily powers
20,500	10	+1	Utility powers

Level 1: Arcane Implement Mastery

Where some wizards focus their training on a particular school of magic, arcanists concentrate on the implements of their power. Such dedicated training allows arcanists to develop techniques to coax all they can from their magical tools.

Benefit: You gain one of the benefits described below, depending on your choice of Arcane Implement Mastery.

Orb of Imposition The orb is a polished sphere usually made from crystal, glass, metal, stone, or even wood. Magic channeled through an orb has lasting power and can help you maintain control over your targets.

Benefit: Once per encounter while you are holding an orb, you can take a free action on your turn to gain one of the following two effects.

- ◆ *Saving Throw Penalty:* Choose one creature that is suffering an effect that was caused by one of your wizard powers and that a save can end. That creature takes a penalty to its next saving throw against that effect. The penalty equals your Wisdom modifier.
- ◆ *Extended Duration:* Choose an effect that was created by one of your wizard at-will powers and that is set to end at the end of your current turn. The effect instead ends at the end of your next turn.

Staff of Defense One of the more identifiable implements used by wizards, the staff enjoys great popularity for its defensive quality. Nearly all staves are fashioned from rare wood favored for its mystical properties.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to AC while holding a staff.

In addition, once per encounter while you are holding a staff, you can use an immediate interrupt to gain a bonus to all defenses against one attack. The bonus equals your Constitution modifier. You can decide to use this ability after the DM has told you how much damage the attack is going to deal to you.

Wand of Accuracy A wand gives an arcanist unequaled accuracy and finesse when he or she casts a spell. Wooden wands are common, though ivory, bone, and metal are common too.

Benefit: Once per encounter, you can take a free action to gain a bonus to a single attack roll made with a wand. The bonus equals your Dexterity modifier.

Level 1: Arcanist's Spellbook

You possess a spellbook, a book full of mystic lore in which you store your daily and utility powers and your rituals.

Daily and Utility Powers: Your spellbook also holds your wizard daily attack powers and wizard utility powers (not including your cantrips). You begin with two daily attack powers in your spellbook, one of which you can use on any given day. Each time you gain a level that lets you select a wizard daily attack power or a

wizard utility power, choose two different powers of that type at that level and add them to your book.

After each extended rest, you can prepare a number of daily attack powers and utility powers according to what you can use per day for your level (see the Wizard Powers Prepared per Day table). You can't prepare the same power twice on the same day.

If you replace a power because of gaining a level or through retraining, the previous power vanishes from your spellbook and is replaced by the new power.

Rituals: Your book also contains three 1st-level rituals of your choice that you have mastered.

At 5th level, and again at 11th, 15th, 21st, and 25th level, you master two more rituals of your choice and add them to your spellbook. When you choose the rituals, they must be your level or lower.

Capacity: A typical spellbook has 128 pages. Each power takes up 1 page. A ritual takes up a number of pages equal to its level.

WIZARD POWERS PREPARED PER DAY

Level	Daily	Utility
1	1	—
2-4	1	1
5	2	1
6-8	2	2
9	3	2
10-15	3	3
16-21	3	4
22-30	3	5

Level 1: Cantrips

The basic tricks of magic are known as cantrips, and they are the first spells that a beginning wizard learns. The formula underlying a cantrip is so simple that each cantrip can be committed to memory and used at will once you have mastered it.

Benefit: You gain four cantrips of your choice.

Ghost Sound Useful for creating diversions both in and out of combat, *ghost sound* can help you distract other creatures with the sound of mysterious footsteps, a brawl coming from around a corner, or any other sound you can imagine.

Ghost Sound Wizard Utility

With a wink, you create an illusory sound that emanates from a distant location.

At-Will ♦ **Arcane, Illusion**

Standard Action **Ranged 10**

Target: One object or unoccupied square

Effect: You cause a sound as quiet as a whisper or as loud as a yelling or fighting creature to emanate from the target. You can produce nonvocal sounds such as the ringing of a sword blow, jingling armor, or scraping stone. If you whisper, you can whisper quietly enough that only creatures adjacent to the target can hear your words.

Light With a *light* cantrip at your disposal, you need never worry about carrying torches, lanterns, or oil.

Light Wizard Utility

With a wave of your hand, you cause a bright light to appear on the tip of your staff, upon some other object, or in a nearby space.

At-Will ♦ **Arcane**

Minor Action **Ranged 5**

Target: One object or unoccupied square

Effect: The target sheds bright light until the end of the encounter or until you use this power again. The light fills the target's space and all squares within 4 squares of it. Putting out the light is a free action.

Mage Hand When you first took up the often dangerous study of alchemy, *mage hand* allowed you to mix reagents and volatile components from a safe distance. In lost ruins or the throne rooms of dukes and kings, this minor magic has even more uses.

Mage Hand

Wizard Utility

You gesture toward a nearby object, and a spectral hand lifts it into the air and moves it where you want.

At-Will ♦ Arcane, Conjunction**Minor Action** Ranged 5

Effect: You conjure a spectral, floating hand in an unoccupied square within range. The hand lasts until the end of your next turn or until you use this power again. If you are holding an object when you use this power, the hand can move the object into a pack, a pouch, a sheath, or a similar container and simultaneously move any one object carried or worn anywhere on your body into your hand. While the hand persists, you can take the following actions.

Minor Action: The hand picks up or manipulates an object weighing 20 pounds or less. It can hold only one object at a time.

Move Action: The hand moves up to 5 squares in any direction, carrying the object it holds.

Free Action: The hand drops the object it is holding.

Sustain Minor: The hand persists until the end of your next turn.

Prestidigitation This catch-all cantrip is an arcanist's best friend. The mundane chores and tasks you were burdened with as an apprentice were made easier by this beginner's magic, but *prestidigitation* continues to make itself useful to you as you begin your adventuring career.

Prestidigitation

Wizard Utility

You perform an amusing magical trick, such as creating a dancing wisp of light, freshening a wilting flower, making a coin invisible, or warming a cold drink.

At-Will ♦ Arcane**Standard Action** Ranged 2

Effect: Use this cantrip to accomplish one of the effects given below:

- ♦ Change the color of items in 1 cubic foot.
- ♦ Create a harmless sensory effect, such as a shower of sparks, a puff of wind, faint music, or a strong odor.
- ♦ Clean or soil items in 1 cubic foot.
- ♦ Instantly light (or snuff out) a candle, a torch, or a small campfire.
- ♦ Chill, warm, or flavor up to 1 pound of nonliving material for up to 1 hour.
- ♦ Make a small mark or symbol appear on a surface for up to 1 hour.
- ♦ Produce out of nothingness a small item or image that exists until the end of your next turn.
- ♦ Make a small, handheld item invisible until the end of your next turn.

Special: You can have as many as three *prestidigitation* effects active at one time. Nothing you create with this cantrip can deal damage, serve as a weapon or a tool, or hinder another creature's actions. This cantrip cannot duplicate the effect of any other power.

Level 1: Ritual Casting

Arcanists rely on spells to defeat their enemies and find solutions to the various challenges they encounter during their travels. In addition, arcanists are the undisputed masters of magical rituals.

As you gain levels, you automatically gain access to new rituals, but you can also buy new rituals or acquire them during your adventures. Higher-level rituals let you seal or open doors, view places or people from a distance, or open portals to other places.

Benefit: You gain the Ritual Caster feat as a bonus feat, allowing you to use magical rituals.

Level 1: At-Will Powers

The world is a dangerous place, and wizards, for all their learning, are just as susceptible to its perils. To protect yourself during your travels, you learned basic combat spells that can frustrate or destroy your foes.

Benefit: You gain two 1st-level wizard at-will attack powers of your choice.

Cloud of Daggers Master wizards teach this spell to help their apprentices control their magic, focus it, and wield it as a weapon. *Cloud of daggers* demonstrates your skill by creating several magical blades and directing them against anyone that comes too close.

Cloud of Daggers

Wizard Attack 1

You create a small cloud of whirling daggers of force that relentlessly attack creatures in the area.

At-Will ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Force, Implement, Zone**Standard Action** Area 1 square within 10 squares**Target:** Each creature in the square**Attack:** Intelligence vs. Reflex**Hit:** 1d6 + Intelligence modifier force damage.**Level 21:** 2d6 + Intelligence modifier force damage.

Effect: The power's area becomes a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn or until you end it as a minor action. Any creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes force damage equal to your Wisdom modifier (minimum 1). A creature can take this damage only once per turn.

Magic Missile One of the most famous wizard spells ever devised, *magic missile* is a staple in almost every wizard's arsenal. What the spell lacks in strength,

it compensates for with unparalleled accuracy. Neither the heaviest armor nor the toughest hide offers any defense against this spell.

Magic Missile

Wizard Attack 1

A glowing blue bolt of magical energy hurtles from your finger and unerringly strikes your target.

At-Will ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Force, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 20

Target: One creature

Effect: 2 + Intelligence modifier force damage.

Level 11: 3 + Intelligence modifier force damage.

Level 21: 5 + Intelligence modifier force damage.

Special: If the implement used with this power has an enhancement bonus, add that bonus to the damage. In addition, you can use this power as a ranged basic attack.

Ray of Frost As part of their training, arcanists learn to call forth elemental forces and bind them with arcane power. *Ray of frost* is a valuable teaching tool in that it helps an apprentice contain and direct elemental cold where he or she wills. That the spell has combat applications is just an added boon.

Ray of Frost

Wizard Attack 1

You fire a blisteringly cold ray of white frost at your foe, slowing its movement.

At-Will ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d6 + Intelligence modifier cold damage, and the target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Level 21: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier cold damage.

Scorching Burst Finesse has its place in magic, but so does brute force. *Scorching burst* is a simple and effective attack spell that lets you call forth a spire of elemental fire down on your enemies.

Scorching Burst

Wizard Attack 1

You create a vertical column of golden flames that burns all within.

At-Will ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Fire, Implement

Standard Action Area burst 1 within 10 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage.

Level 21: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage.

Thunderwave Despite your best efforts to stay behind the front line, the enemy will reach you at times. These instances are when *thunderwave* comes in handy. When you cast this spell, you send shock waves through the ground and your foes to drive them away from you.

Thunderwave

Wizard Attack 1

You lash your foes with a wave of thunderous power.

At-Will ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement, Thunder

Standard Action Close blast 3

Target: Each creature in the blast

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d6 + Intelligence modifier thunder damage, and you push the target a number of squares up to your Wisdom modifier.

Level 21: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier thunder damage.

Level 1: Encounter Power

Learning your at-will powers trained your mind to accept even greater quantities of arcane power. Thus prepared, you have learned to cast a few more complicated and draining spells.

Benefit: You gain a 1st-level wizard encounter attack power of your choice.

Burning Hands Cowardly pack fighters such as goblins and kobolds see your lack of armor and weapons as an excuse to mob you. This spell shows them the error of their ways. Fanning your fingertips before you, you blast jets of flame that can wipe out a dozen or more minions and leave stronger foes quaking.

Burning Hands

Wizard Attack 1

A gout of flame erupts from your hands and scorches nearby foes.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Fire, Implement

Standard Action Close blast 5

Target: Each creature in the blast

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Chill Strike Many encounter powers trace their origin to simpler spells. Although they have many similarities with these spells in application and function, they reveal what happens when an arcanist invests more energy into his or her elementary attacks. *Chill strike* resembles *ray of frost* in application, but instead of merely slowing an enemy down, you numb its body and mind with biting cold.

Chill Strike

Wizard Attack 1

You hit your foe with a bolt of frigid purple energy, reducing its ability to act for a moment.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Miss: The target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Force Orb Nearly every wizard learns to manipulate force using arcane magic. This fact is evidenced in the *magic missile* spell that so many wizards master. Those arcanists who have a talent for shaping force find new and effective ways to use it in battle. *Force orb*, for example, enables you to compress arcane energy into a magical sphere, which you hurl to explode amid your enemies.

Force Orb

Wizard Attack 1

You hurl an orb of magical force that bursts against your enemy, throwing off razor-sharp shards that cut nearby foes to ribbons.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Force, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 20

Primary Target: One creature or object

Primary Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier force damage, and you make the secondary attack.

Secondary Attack

Area burst 1 centered on the primary target

Secondary Target: Each enemy in the burst other than the primary target

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier force damage.

Icy Terrain You focus your energy to drain heat from the landscape, causing temperatures to plunge and ice to form over the ground. This spell lets you shape the battlefield to your advantage by slowing your opponent's advance while clearing away your weaker foes.

Icy Terrain

Wizard Attack 1

You coat the ground with a treacherous patch of ice that freezes and hampers your foes.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Implement, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 1 within 10 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d6 + Intelligence modifier cold damage, and the target falls prone.

Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn or until you end it as a minor action. The ground of the zone is difficult terrain.

Ray of Enfeeblement Although many arcanists concern themselves with the power of the cosmos, there are some whose intellectual curiosity leads them to dark places. The Shadowfell, for necromancers and their ilk, holds great promise, since vast reservoirs of dark energy are there for the taking. *Ray of enfeeblement* draws this shadowy force and projects it through an arcane ray. Those touched by its fell power find their strength sapped.

Ray of Enfeeblement

Wizard Attack 1

You point three fingers at your foe, curling them like talons. Weird green mist streams from your enemy's flesh, carrying away its strength.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Implement, Necromancy, Necrotic

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier necrotic damage, and the target is weakened until the end of your next turn.

Miss: Half damage.

Level 1: Daily Powers

The final lesson you learned as an apprentice was to cast some of the most potent spells available to wizards. These spells are so powerful that they leave you drained each time you use them.

Benefit: You add two 1st-level wizard daily attack powers of your choice to your spellbook.

Acid Arrow Prince Brightflame, called Melf or Perelay, created this spell long ago. A warrior-wizard of great power and fame, he led the Knights of Luna to victory in the defense of his people. Brightflame's innovations established many of the tactics still used by eladrin war wizards today. *Acid arrow* exemplifies his aggressive style. He would often open a battle using this signature spell to signal his allies to attack when they heard his target's screams.

Acid Arrow

Wizard Attack 1

You call out an arcane word and fire an arrow of green, glowing liquid that bursts against your foe and sends out a spray of sizzling acid.

Daily ♦ Acid, Arcane, Evocation, Implement

Standard Action **Ranged 20**

Primary Target: One creature

Primary Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier acid damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and ongoing 2 acid damage (save ends).

Effect: Make the secondary attack.

Secondary Attack

Area burst 1 centered on the primary target

Secondary Target: Each creature in the burst other than the primary target

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d8 + Intelligence modifier acid damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

Flaming Sphere Most wizards can call forth elemental fire, but only a talented few can shape it into stable forms they can use in battle. *Flaming sphere* lets you draw a measure of this roiling flame and contain it in a spheroid shape. Then you can command it to strike where you will, harrying enemies pinned down by your allied defenders or cutting a fiery path through ranks of minions.

Flaming Sphere

Wizard Attack 1

You conjure a rolling ball of fire and control where it goes.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Conjunction, Evocation, Fire, Implement

Standard Action **Ranged 10**

Effect: You conjure a Medium flaming sphere in an unoccupied square within range. The sphere occupies its square, and it lasts until the end of your next turn. Any creature that starts its turn adjacent to the sphere takes 1d4 + Intelligence modifier fire damage. As a move action, you can move the sphere up to 6 squares.

When the sphere appears, it immediately makes the following attack. While the sphere persists, you can use a standard action to command it to make the attack.

Target: One creature adjacent to the sphere

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage.

Sustain Minor: The sphere persists until the end of your next turn.

Freezing Cloud Arcanists deserve their reputation for being dangerous.

Many spells they learn, especially those favored by war wizards, wreak untold harm on their enemies, scorching with fire, freezing with cold. What makes these spells dangerous is that they make no distinction between friend or foe, so a wizard who studies them must be cautious about their use. *Freezing cloud* sends forth raw elemental cold that either freezes your foes at once or drains away their vitality.

Freezing Cloud

Wizard Attack 1

You launch an icy pellet from your hand that explodes in a cloud of icy mist around your foes.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Implement, Zone

Standard Action **Area burst 2 within 10 squares**

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn or until you dismiss it as a minor action. Any creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 5 cold damage (a creature can take this damage only once per turn).

Sustain Minor: The zone persists until the end of your next turn.

Sleep Legends tell of mortals who have stumbled into the Feywild and slept for hundreds of years. Such stories build on elements of the truth, for the eladrin are known for their tendency to incapacitate threats they have no immediate need to destroy. This spell is only a pale reflection of the potent magic of the fey, but it lets you dispense with troublesome foes in a bloodless manner.

Sleep

Wizard Attack 1

You exert your will against your foes, seeking to overwhelm them with a tide of magical weariness.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Charm, Enchantment, Implement

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Will

Hit: The target is slowed (save ends).

First Failed Saving Throw: The target is unconscious instead of slowed (save ends).

Miss: The target is slowed (save ends).

Level 2: Utility Powers

Your cantrips hint at the ways you can employ magical energy. As you hone your ability with battle magic, you learn to use other spells to protect you or help you control your circumstances.

Benefit: You add two 2nd-level wizard utility powers of your choice to your spellbook.

Expeditious Retreat This spell's name comes from its most common use, allowing a wizard to slip away safely as foes press in. However, many wizards use this spell for offense, pushing daringly into the midst of their foes.

Expeditious Retreat

Wizard Utility 2

Your form blurs as you hastily withdraw from the battlefield.

Daily ♦ Arcane

Move Action Personal

Effect: You shift up to twice your speed.

Feather Fall This spell ensures that you or an ally never has to fear a fall. Even though *feather fall* has limited application, many wizards who prepared it have thanked their foresight when confronted by a rapid and unexpected descent.

Feather Fall

Wizard Utility 2

You or a creature you choose falls gently, like a feather.

Daily ♦ Arcane

Free Action Ranged 10

Trigger: You fall, or a creature within 10 squares of you falls.

Target: The triggering creature

Effect: The target takes no damage from the fall, and consequently does not fall prone at the end of it.

Jump Arcanists are not normally known for their athletic prowess. With the right spells, however, they can compete with some of the best. *Jump* can give you a boost when leaping over an obstacle or a hazard. Sometimes it's better used to sacrifice your own move and let an ally spring forward and engage the enemy.

Jump

Wizard Utility 2

You or another creature you choose can suddenly leap great distances.

Encounter ♦ Arcane

Move Action Ranged 10

Target: You or one creature

Effect: The target makes an Athletics check as a free action to jump with a +10 power bonus. The target can move as many squares as the check allows and is considered to have a running start.

Shield *Shield* is a potent defensive spell whose benefit remains dormant until you need it.

Shield

Wizard Utility 2

You throw up your hand, and a shield of arcane energy springs into existence, protecting you against imminent attacks.

Encounter ♦ Arcane

Immediate Interrupt Personal

Trigger: You are hit by an attack.

Effect: You gain a +4 power bonus to AC and Reflex until the end of your next turn.

Level 3: Encounter Power

Your spellcasting talent improves after several adventures. You now have ability and will enough to use multiple encounter attack powers in the same encounter.

Benefit: You gain a new wizard encounter attack power of your level or lower.

Color Spray You fling multicolored sand at your enemies, and when the granules pick up the light, they explode in brilliant colors. Your enemies recoil from the brightness and are left shaking their heads to clear away the spots before their eyes. An enemy dazzled by *color spray* is powerless to react to dangers around it, so your allies can move in to press their attacks with impunity.

Color Spray

Wizard Attack 3

A brilliant blast of flashing colors springs from your outstretched fingers, knocking nearby enemies senseless.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement, Radiant

Standard Action Close blast 5

Target: Each creature in the blast

Attack: Intelligence vs. Will

Hit: 1d6 + Intelligence modifier radiant damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Fire Shroud Many spells that arcanists wield today trace their origin to the battlefields of the past. An eladrin war wizard used *fire shroud* as a last resort against drow enemies when they cut their way through her defenders. As her foes fought against the spreading flames, she slipped away unharmed.

Fire Shroud

Wizard Attack 3

With a subtle gesture, you wreath nearby enemies in flames.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Fire, Implement

Standard Action Close burst 3

Target: Each enemy in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d8 + Intelligence modifier fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Icy Rays Another evolution of a simpler spell, *icy rays* calls forth elemental cold and focuses it into pale beams perfect for freezing your enemies in place. Like any spell that slows or pins down enemies, this spell can keep enemy soldiers away from your front lines to buy your allies the time they need to cut down the softer foes first.

Icy Rays

Wizard Attack 3

You fire two bolts of brilliant blue-white energy that freeze your enemies in place for a short time.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One or two creatures

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier cold damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of your next turn.

Miss: The target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Shock Sphere When you hurl this orb of arcane power, you balance the high number of potential targets against the need to avoid hitting your allies with a deadly burst of lightning. Use this spell in concert with forced movement that pushes your foes together, or to get the drop on enemies in a confined space.

Shock Sphere

Wizard Attack 3

You hurl a crackling orb of lightning that explodes at a point you designate, engulfing all nearby creatures in its electric embrace.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement, Lightning

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 10 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier lightning damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Level 4: Ability Score Increase

Your constant training hones your body and mind.

Benefit: You increase two ability scores of your choice by 1.

Level 5: Daily Powers

The more you practice your art, the better you become at drawing magical energy to power your spells. You increase your arsenal with new daily attack powers.

Benefit: You add two new wizard daily attack powers of your level or lower to your spellbook.

Bigby's Icy Grasp The archmage Bigby is best known for the various "hand" spells that bear his name. Legend holds that he recorded scores of these spells in the much-sought volume titled *Manual of Powers Beyond Life*. The more famous spells have been copied from the original tome and found their way into wizards' spellbooks across the known world. *Bigby's icy grasp* fashions a flexible hand from ice. While it is present, you can direct it to snatch your enemies and bind them in its grasp.

Bigby's Icy Grasp

Wizard Attack 5

You conjure a giant floating hand made of chiseled ice that clutches a foe and freezes it.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Cold, Conjunction, Evocation, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 20

Effect: You conjure a 5-foot-tall hand of ice in an unoccupied square within range. The hand lasts until the end of your next turn. When the hand appears, it immediately makes the following attack. While the hand persists and doesn't have a creature grabbed, you can use a standard action to command it to make the attack again or a move action to move it up to 6 squares.

Target: One creature adjacent to the hand

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage, and the hand grabs the target. The hand uses your Fortitude or Reflex if the target attempts to escape. You can end the grab as a free action.

Sustain Minor: The hand persists until the end of your next turn, and a creature grabbed by the hand takes 1d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage.

Fireball The most famous evocation spell ever devised, *fireball* is known—and feared—by people who have never even seen it cast. Whether turning a gang of orc or goblin warriors to cinders in the blink of an eye, or used as the catalyst that unleashes an inferno in a tinder-dry building, *fireball* is a potent addition to any arcanist's storehouse of magic.

Fireball

Wizard Attack 5

A globe of orange flame coalesces in your hand. You hurl it at your enemies, and it explodes on impact.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Fire, Implement

Standard Action Area burst 3 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 4d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Stinking Cloud The noxious yellow vapors created by the *stinking cloud* spell spread out from their point of origin, swirling around and poisoning creatures in their midst. This spell is particularly dangerous, since it attacks everyone caught in its area.

Stinking Cloud

Wizard Attack 5

You call forth a thick cloud of bilious yellow vapors. The foul fumes overwhelm any creature within.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Implement, Poison, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier poison damage.

Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn. The zone is heavily obscured. Any creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 5 + your Intelligence modifier poison damage (a creature can take this damage only once per turn). As a move action, you can move the zone up to 6 squares.

Sustain Minor: The zone persists until the end of your next turn.

Web The usefulness of *web* is instantly apparent when you snare several foes in a mass of sticky strands. This webbing anchors itself on any surface it can, holding fast for as long as you need it to. The spell is ideal for cutting off avenues of retreat, slowing pursuers, and catching mobile enemies. Once you snare a foe, concentrate your attacks against that enemy before it can escape.

Web

Wizard Attack 5

You create a giant web of thick magical strands that hangs in midair, trapping those within it.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Implement, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: The target is immobilized (save ends).

Effect: The burst creates a zone of difficult terrain that lasts until the end of the encounter. Any creature that ends its movement in the zone is immobilized (save ends).

Level 6: Utility Powers

You are always learning, always studying new forms of magic to help build your catalog of spells useful both on and off the battlefield.

Benefit: You add two new wizard utility powers of your level or lower to your spellbook.

Dimension Door You remain acutely cognizant of your lack of armor and hit points compared to your allies. When a fight goes against you, repositioning yourself with *dimension door* can prove more valuable than making any magical attack.

Dimension Door

Wizard Utility 6

You trace the outline of a doorway in front of you, step through the portal, and reappear somewhere else nearby.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Teleportation**Move Action** **Personal****Effect:** You teleport up to 10 squares.

Disguise Self An illusion created by the *disguise self* spell can mask your appearance and let you become anyone you want to be. Whether you're infiltrating an enemy encampment or evading pursuers, only the most dedicated scrutiny will pierce your disguise.

Disguise Self

Wizard Utility 6

With a snap of your fingers, you suddenly look like someone else.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Illusion**Minor Action** **Personal**

Effect: You make yourself, your clothing, and your equipment look different. You can take on the appearance of any creature of similar build and size, including a specific individual whom you've seen. You gain neither the abilities or mannerisms of the chosen form, nor the tactile or audible properties of your form or gear. For example, if you took on the illusion of a dwarf fighter in plate armor, anyone touching you would realize you weren't wearing plate armor, and you would not clank, creak, or jingle as you walked. The illusion lasts for 1 hour, although you can end it as a minor action. You must keep the same appearance for the entire duration.

Anyone who attempts to see through your ruse makes an Insight check opposed by your Bluff check, and you gain a +5 power bonus to your check.

Dispel Magic One of the oldest of all spells is also one of the most useful. Your foes' magic is a threat only while it lasts. With *dispel magic* at your disposal, you can negate the continuing effects of a spell, prayer, or other power.

Dispel Magic

Wizard Utility 6

You send out a ray of crackling arcane energy that destroys a magical effect created by an opponent.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Implement**Standard Action** **Ranged 10****Target:** One conjuration or zone**Attack:** Intelligence vs. the Will of the creator of the conjuration or the zone**Hit:** The conjuration or zone is destroyed. All its effects end, including those that normally last until a target saves.

Invisibility The most potent combat illusion lets you summon up an image of nothing at all. A nearby creature of your choice seems to disappear, but only your sustained concentration can maintain its invisibility for very long.

Invisibility

Wizard Utility 6

A creature you choose vanishes from sight.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Illusion**Standard Action** **Ranged 5****Target:** You or one creature

Effect: The target becomes invisible until the end of your next turn. If the target makes an attack, the invisibility ends.

Sustain Standard: If the target is within 5 squares of you, the invisibility persists until the end of your next turn.

Levitate Positioning is crucial to an arcanist's success on the battlefield.

When faced with several enemies at once, you can use *levitate* to lift yourself clear of their attacks and reach a better vantage point. The spell's other applications are obvious. Don't rely on this spell too much, though. While you are hovering, your unsteadiness makes you vulnerable to missile fire.

Levitate

Wizard Utility 6

You rise off the ground a short distance.

Daily ♦ Arcane**Move Action** **Personal**

Effect: You move up to 4 squares vertically and hover there until the end of your next turn. While aloft, you are unsteady, taking a -2 penalty to AC and Reflex. If some effect, such as a pit opening below you, causes you to be more than 4 squares above the ground, you drop down to 4 squares above the ground. You do not take damage from such a fall. When the levitation ends, you descend to the ground without taking falling damage.

Sustain Move: You move up to 3 squares up or down or 1 square horizontally, and you hover there until the end of your next turn. You cannot go higher than 4 squares above the ground.

Wall of Fog Arcanists are adept at changing battlefield conditions to suit their allies. *Wall of fog* is an excellent defense against enemy artillery. With a word, you conjure thick fog that impairs visibility. Simply drop the wall on the battle's edge, and your enemies will have little choice but to close in for hand-to-hand combat.

Wall of Fog

Wizard Utility 6

You create a billowing wall of gray fog that obscures vision.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Conjuration

Standard Action Area wall 8 within 10 squares

Effect: You conjure a wall of fog that lasts until the end of your next turn. The wall can be up to 4 squares high. The wall is heavily obscured and blocks line of sight.

Sustain Minor: The wall persists until the end of your next turn.

Level 7: Encounter Power

Your practical experience with battle magic pays off with new breakthroughs in your research. You expand your combat options with a new encounter power.

Benefit: You gain a new wizard encounter attack power of your level or lower.

Fire Burst Sibling to the more famous *fireball*, this spell demonstrates your growing ability to call forth elemental energy and hurl it against your foes. Like many destructive spells, *fire burst* covers a wide area, but it does so at the expense of any allies in its area. Use this spell early to catch as many foes as you can.

Fire Burst

Wizard Attack 7

You send a fiery red bead streaking toward your foes, then make it burst into a great ball of magical flame.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Fire, Implement

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 3d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Lightning Bolt One of the most famous evocation spells, *lightning bolt* lashes out against only the targets you choose, avoiding the collateral damage of *fireball* and other less forgiving spells. Use this spell against creatures that stay in the thick of combat against your allies.

Lightning Bolt

Wizard Attack 7

Brilliant strokes of blue-white lightning erupt from your outstretched hand.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement, Lightning

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One, two, or three creatures

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier lightning damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Spectral Ram Few enemies can withstand your magical might when it's expressed as the *spectral ram* spell. This power lets you seize your enemy and fling it about. It's particularly useful for dealing with enemies that are close to overpowering your allies, since it gives your companions time to regroup.

Spectral Ram

Wizard Attack 7

You seize your foe with unseen magical force and bash it against the ceiling and walls before hurling it to the ground.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Force, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d10 + Intelligence modifier force damage, and you push the target up to 3 squares and knock it prone.

Miss: You push the target up to 3 squares.

Winter's Wrath Wizards can create their own weather by manipulating the magical energy flowing through their environment. This violent spell releases just enough elemental cold to wreak havoc in an area. Winds and snow swirl while temperatures plunge.

Winter's Wrath

Wizard Attack 7

You raise your hand, and an icy blizzard rains down mercilessly upon an area you designate.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Implement, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 10 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage.

Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn or until you dismiss it as a minor action. The zone is lightly obscured, and any creature that starts its turn in the zone takes cold damage equal to your Intelligence modifier. A creature can take this damage only once per turn.

Level 8: Ability Score Increase

You reap the reward of constant challenge by increasing your physical and mental well-being.

Benefit: You increase two ability scores of your choice by 1.

Level 9: Daily Powers

You have almost reached the top of the heroic tier, and new power is again your reward for your efforts.

Benefit: You add two new wizard daily attack powers of your level or lower to your spellbook.

Ice Storm Few evocation spells are as visually impressive as *ice storm*. With a shout, you call down a pounding gale of fist-sized hailstones that can rend flesh from bone. In the aftermath, you leave the ground a frozen morass as a stark reminder of your power.

Ice Storm

Wizard Attack 9

A shower of bitterly cold hailstones pummels a wide swath of ground and covers the area in ice.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Implement, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 3 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 2d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Effect: The burst creates a zone of difficult terrain that lasts until the end of the encounter.

Lightning Serpent This unusual spell causes arcane lightning to leap from your hand and swell in size and shape to strike at a distant foe. As it moves, it assumes an almost lifelike quality that is fully evidenced when it sinks its venomous fangs into your enemy.

Lightning Serpent

Wizard Attack 9

A crackling bolt of lightning springs from your hand and leaps at a foe, taking serpentine form as it strikes.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement, Lightning, Poison

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d12 + Intelligence modifier lightning damage, and the target is slowed and takes ongoing 5 poison damage (save ends both).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Mordenkainen's Sword Mordenkainen might be the most famous wizard to have ever lived. Among his many contributions to the arcane arts were several spells that created something from nothing. *Mordenkainen's sword* is one of his better-known innovations, particularly useful for pressing enemies who hide behind the front ranks. Once you create the shimmering blade, it takes little effort to guide its strikes and thus gives you an extra ally on the battlefield.

Mordenkainen's Sword

Wizard Attack 9

You invoke a sword of crackling golden force that slashes and stabs furiously at a foe.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Conjuration, Evocation, Force, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 10

Effect: You conjure a sword of force in an unoccupied square within range, and it lasts until the end of your next turn. You then make the following attack. As a move action, you can move the sword adjacent to another creature within range.

Target: One creature adjacent to the sword

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier force damage.

Sustain Minor: The sword persists until the end of your next turn, and you make the attack again.

Wall of Fire A popular defensive spell with strong offensive applications, *wall of fire* lets you create an area of roiling fire. The spell can encircle your companions and punish enemies who draw too close, or you can use it to block exits and prevent foes from escaping. It's useful against ranged attackers since it blocks line of sight. If enemies want to continue their movement, they must pass through the flames and endure the worst of their heat.

Wall of Fire

Wizard Attack 9

*A blazing wall of flame erupts from the ground at your command.***Daily** ♦ Arcane, Conjunction, Fire, Implement**Standard Action** Area wall 8 within 10 squares**Effect:** You conjure a wall of fire that lasts until the end of your next turn. The wall can be up to 4 squares high. Any creature that starts its turn adjacent to the wall takes 1d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage. Any creature that enters the wall or starts its turn there takes 3d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage (a creature can take this damage only once per turn). The wall blocks line of sight. Each square of movement that includes one or more squares of the wall costs 3 extra squares of movement.**Sustain Minor:** The wall persists until the end of your next turn.

Level 10: Utility Powers

Having reached the peak of the heroic tier, you develop spells to give you and your allies a decided advantage on the battlefield.

Benefit: You add two new wizard utility powers of your level or lower to your spellbook.

Arcane Gate Your mastery of the battlefield is made more complete by *arcane gate*, which opens up a temporary portal controlled by the power of your mind.

Arcane Gate

Wizard Utility 10

*You open a dimensional rift connecting two nearby locations.***Daily** ♦ Arcane**Minor Action** Ranged 20**Effect:** You create a dimensional rift between two unoccupied squares in range. The rift lasts until the end of your next turn. Until the rift ends, the two squares are effectively adjacent to each other, but for movement only.**Sustain Minor:** The rift persists until the end of your next turn.

Blur First perfected by the legendary combat casters of old, the *blur* spell wraps you in an arcane shroud that shields you from your enemies' sight.

Blur

Wizard Utility 10

*You cloak yourself with a shimmering aura, making your outline almost impossible to discern.***Daily** ♦ Arcane, Illusion**Minor Action** Personal**Effect:** Until the end of the encounter, you gain a +2 power bonus to all defenses, and you are invisible to enemies 5 squares or more away from you.

Mirror Image The protective quality of this spell has made it a popular choice for many wizards throughout the long ages. Each duplicate it creates is an opportunity for an enemy's attack to be deflected from you. The spell's magic can be sufficient to keep you from harm until help comes your way.

Mirror Image

Wizard Utility 10

*Three duplicate images of you appear, imitating your actions perfectly and confusing your enemies.***Daily** ♦ Arcane, Illusion**Minor Action** Personal**Effect:** Three duplicate images of yourself appear in your space, and you gain a +6 power bonus to AC. Each time an attack misses you, one of your duplicate images disappears, and the bonus granted by this power decreases by 2. When the bonus reaches 0, all your images are gone and the power ends. Otherwise, the effect lasts for 1 hour.

Resistance Having long worked with various forms of arcane energy, you have gained insight into how to protect yourself or another from any of them.

Resistance

Wizard Utility 10

*You make yourself or another creature resistant to a particular kind of damage.***Daily** ♦ Arcane**Minor Action** Ranged 10**Target:** You or one creature**Effect:** Choose acid, cold, fire, force, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant, or thunder. The target gains resistance to that damage type until the end of the encounter. The resistance equals your level + your Intelligence modifier.

PARAGON ARCANIST

The heroic tier's trials have taught you much. You expanded your knowledge, expanded your power, and developed your talents through the challenges and battles you fought. You are now prepared to face new and more powerful dangers in the paragon tier and to further your understanding of arcane magic's true potential.

At 11th level, you choose a paragon path (see pages 30-34 for a selection of wizard paragon paths).

ARCANIST PARAGON TIER

Total XP	Level	Feats Known	Class Features and Powers
26,000	11	+1	Ability score increase Paragon path features
32,000	12	+1	Paragon path feature
39,000	13	—	Encounter power
47,000	14	+1	Ability score increase
57,000	15	—	Daily powers
69,000	16	+1	Paragon path feature Utility powers
83,000	17	—	Encounter power
99,000	18	+1	Ability score increase
119,000	19	—	Daily powers
143,000	20	+1	Paragon path feature

Level 11: Ability Score Increase

Your improved physical and mental prowess highlights your entrance into the paragon tier.

Benefit: Each of your ability scores increases by 1.

Level 11: Paragon Path Features

The paragon path you choose provides you with one or more features that you gain right away.

Benefit: You gain features associated with your paragon path.

Level 12: Paragon Path Feature

As you begin your climb through the paragon tier, you gain another ability from your paragon path

Benefit: You gain a feature (typically a utility power) associated with your paragon path.

Level 13: Encounter Power

The threats you face now dwarf those you overcame in the heroic tier. You turn your attention to developing a new spell to meet the challenges ahead.

Benefit: You can gain a new wizard encounter attack power of your level or lower. If you do so, this new power must replace one of the encounter attack powers you already have from your class (usually your lowest-level encounter attack power).

Frostburn An unlikely fusion of fire and ice is what makes this spell so powerful. Hurling the unstable mass created by the spell into your enemies' midst causes it to explode in a wave of flame-tinged ice, perfect for thwarting any resistance your foes might have to either fire or cold. The energy released by *frostburn* transforms an area into an unstable region where flame freezes and ice burns.

Frostburn

Wizard Attack 13

You whisper a word of elemental power and hurl a flaming ball of ice. Waves of fire and ice explode outward from the point of impact.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Fire, Implement, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d6 + Intelligence modifier cold and fire damage.

Effect: The burst creates a zone of difficult terrain that lasts until the end of your next turn or until you dismiss it as a minor action. Any creature that starts its turn in the zone takes 5 cold and fire damage.

Mesmeric Hold Your voice, aided by potent magic, burns your command to halt into a creature's mind, wreaking havoc with its thoughts and making it helpless to resist your will.

Mesmeric Hold

Wizard Attack 13

You command your foes to remain still, holding them in place.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Charm, Enchantment, Implement, Psychic

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One, two, or three creatures

Attack: Intelligence vs. Will. You gain a +4 power bonus to the attack roll if you target only one creature.

Hit: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of your next turn.

Miss: The target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Prismatic Burst Your enemies have nothing that you cannot take away. Focusing your study on unlocking light's destructive potential, you create a brilliant sphere and hurl it to a spot where it detonates in a flash of burning radiance. You can do little to shield your allies from the blinding burst, so you must be careful when and where you use this spell.

Prismatic Burst

Wizard Attack 13

You lob a fist-sized orb of pulsating white light among your enemies, blasting them with rays of multicolored light.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement, Radiant

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Will

Hit: 3d6 + Intelligence modifier radiant damage, and the target is blinded until the end of your next turn.

Miss: Until the end of the target's next turn, creatures have partial concealment against the target.

Thunderlance No elemental force is beyond your ken. With the slightest gesture, you let loose a thunderous blast to smash through your enemies and drive them back. As potent as this spell is, you must be close to your foes to use it effectively. It is often a good defensive spell, helping you keep foes at bay, but is also just as useful to force enemies into zones and clouds created by your other spells, such as *web* or *wall of fire*.

Thunderlance

Wizard Attack 13

A thunderous pulse of concussive energy rolls from your hand, throwing your enemies back.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement, Thunder

Standard Action Close blast 5

Target: Each creature in the blast

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 4d6 + Intelligence modifier thunder damage, and you push the target up to 4 squares.

Miss: You push the target up to 4 squares.

Level 14: Ability Score Increase

Each new challenge only makes you stronger in body and mind.

Benefit: You increase two ability scores of your choice by 1.

Level 15: Daily Powers

As you progress through the paragon tier, you face ever greater challenges. To meet these dangers, you master even more powerful arcane attack powers.

Benefit: You can add up to two new wizard daily attack powers of your level or lower to your spellbook. If you do so, each new power must replace one of the daily attack powers you already have from your class (usually one of your lowest-level daily attack powers).

Bigby's Grasping Hands The various spells that Bigby created are unified by a common theme. Each spell conjures a magical hand that the caster can direct and use to make attacks. In some case, Bigby's sense of humor comes through, such as when two magical hands crash a pair of enemies into one another.

Bigby's Grasping Hands

Wizard Attack 15

Two hands of glowing golden force materialize, grab a couple of your foes, and slam them together.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Conjuration, Evocation, Force, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 10

Effect: You conjure two 5-foot-tall hands of force, each in a different unoccupied square within range. The hands occupy their squares, and they last until the end of your next turn.

When the hands appear, you make the following attack with each hand. While a hand persists, you can use a move action to move the hand to a square adjacent to a creature within range and command the hand to attack that creature. In addition, if each hand has a creature grabbed during your turn and the creatures are within 5 squares of each other, you can use a standard action to slam the hands together, pulling each of the creatures 2 squares to squares adjacent to each other, and those creatures each take $2d10 + \text{Intelligence modifier}$ force damage. Each hand then returns to its original square, pulling its grabbed creature with it.

Target: One creature adjacent to the hand

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: $2d10 + \text{Intelligence modifier}$ force damage, and the hand grabs the target. The hand uses your Fortitude or Reflex if the target attempts to escape.

Sustain Minor: The hands persist until the end of your next turn.

Blast of Cold Where its cousin *cone of cold* is useful for taking enemies alive, *blast of cold* has no room for mercy. You manipulate the latent sentience lurking within the elemental cold you create and direct it to scourge your foes with killing frost that binds them in clinging ice.

Blast of Cold

Wizard Attack 15

You emit a wave of supernatural cold that freezes your enemies in place.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Implement

Standard Action Close blast 5

Target: Each enemy in the blast

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: $6d6 + \text{Intelligence modifier}$ cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Otiluke's Resilient Sphere Although Otiluke is not as well known as Mordenkainen or Bigby, his contributions to magic cannot be understated. Otiluke's interests focused on spheres, especially those created from force. His most famous spell, perhaps because of its dual applications, is *Otiluke's resilient sphere*. You can use it to imprison an enemy and thus take it out of the fight, or as a barrier to protect yourself from attacks.



The eladrin wizard assails an angel of valor with a sudden blast of cold

Otiluke's Resilient Sphere

Wizard Attack 15

You trap your enemy in a transparent, immobile globe of impenetrable force.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Conjuration, Evocation, Force, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex. If you target yourself or a willing ally, you automatically hit.

Hit: You conjure a sphere of force that encompasses the target's space until the end of your next turn. While in the sphere, the target is immobilized and cannot attack anything outside its space. Creatures outside the sphere cannot attack the target, and the sphere blocks objects and creatures attempting to pass through it. The sphere can be attacked. It has 100 hit points, and attacks against it hit automatically.

Sustain Minor: The sphere persists until the end of your next turn.

Miss: The target is immobilized (save ends).

Prismatic Beams Originating from the same theories that led to both *color spray* and *prismatic burst*, this spell creates a burst of shimmering, intertwined, multicolored beams that spring from your hand and lance into your enemies. The magic imbuing the rainbow of colors targets every aspect of your foes from their endurance to their minds, and finds a way through any defense to deliver a punishing magical assault.

Prismatic Beams

Wizard Attack 15

Scintillating beams of rainbow-colored light spring from your outstretched hand, affecting your foes in unpredictable ways.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Fire, Implement, Poison

Standard Action Close blast 5

Target: Each enemy in the blast

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude, Reflex, and Will. You make a single attack roll and use it against each defense.

Hit (Fortitude): Ongoing 10 poison damage (save ends).

Hit (Reflex): 2d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage, and ongoing 5 fire damage (save ends).

Hit (Will): The target is dazed (save ends).

Wall of Ice Principally a defensive spell, *wall of ice* proves it is more than a simple barrier when creatures draw too close to its surface. The murky ice drains heat and life from anyone who comes near and thus forces enemies to find some other way through or around the wall.

Wall of Ice

Wizard Attack 15

A wall of glittering, jagged ice appears at your command.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Cold, Conjunction, Implement

Standard Action Area wall 12 within 10 squares

Effect: You conjure a solid wall of ice in unoccupied squares. The wall can be up to 6 squares high, and it lasts for 1 hour or until it is destroyed.

Any creature that starts its turn adjacent to the wall takes 2d6 + Intelligence modifier cold damage. The wall blocks line of sight and prevents movement. No creature can enter a square containing the wall.

The squares of the wall can be attacked. Each square has your defenses, and each has 50 hit points as well as vulnerable 25 fire. Any creature that makes a melee attack against the wall takes 2d6 cold damage.

Level 16: Paragon Path Feature

You are now in the upper half of the paragon tier. To mark this status, you gain a new feature of your paragon path.

Benefit: You gain a feature associated with your paragon path.

Level 16: Utility Powers

As your mastery of battle magic evolves, so does your ability to wield other useful forms of magic. Such spells help you contend with the various challenges that still lie ahead.

Benefit: You add two new wizard utility powers of your level or lower to your spellbook.

Displacement Many spell-crafting wizards of yore drew their inspiration from the creatures they encounter. With this power, you become like the displacer beast. When an enemy closes in, you can thwart its attack with an illusion that makes you appear to be somewhere you're not.

Displacement

Wizard Utility 16

You make yourself or an ally seem to be standing somewhere else, avoiding an enemy's attack.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Illusion

Immediate Interrupt Ranged 5

Trigger: A ranged or a melee attack hits you or an ally within 5 squares of you

Effect: The attacker must reroll the attack roll and use the new result.

Fly When melee foes close in, this spell allows you to soar to safety, ready to unleash potent magic from above.

Fly

Wizard Utility 16

You leap into the air and are borne aloft on wings of magic.

Daily ♦ Arcane

Standard Action Personal

Effect: You gain a fly speed of 8 until the end of your next turn. When the fly speed ends, you float to the ground without taking falling damage.

Sustain Minor: The fly speed persists until the end of your next turn.

Greater Invisibility A more powerful version of *invisibility*, this power lets you conceal an ally at an even greater range.

Greater Invisibility

Wizard Utility 16

With a wave of your hand, you or another creature nearby fades away, becoming invisible.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Illusion

Standard Action Ranged 20

Target: You or one creature

Effect: The target is invisible until the end of your next turn or until it attacks.

Sustain Minor: If the target is in range, the invisibility persists until the end of your next turn.

Stoneskin Without the benefit of armor, arcanists draw on their magical expertise to protect themselves. *Stoneskin* is one of the more famous efforts in this regard. It gives your flesh the appearance and durability of stone.

Stoneskin

Wizard Utility 16

With an arcane word and a sprinkle of diamond dust, you imbue yourself or an ally with skin as hard as granite.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Transmutation

Standard Action Melee touch

Target: You or one ally

Effect: The target gains resist 10 to all damage until the end of the encounter.

Level 17: Encounter Power

Your achievements with arcane magic continue to mount as you add an even more powerful spell to your repertoire.

Benefit: You can gain a new wizard encounter attack power of your level or lower. If you do so, this new power must replace one of the encounter attack powers you already have from your class (usually your lowest-level encounter attack power).

Combust On speaking this incantation, you call forth elemental fire. This untamed energy latches onto nearby creatures and causes them to erupt in flames. Like many similarly aggressive spells, *combust* targets all creatures in its area, so use it to soften up your opponents before the battle is truly joined.

Combust

Wizard Attack 17

You cause several foes to burst into flame.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Fire, Implement

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 5d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Crushing Titan's Fist Another potent spell designed to destroy several enemies, *crushing titan's fist* works by thickening the arcane energy flowing through an area into constricting bands of force. For as long as the effect lingers, the area is practically impassable.

Crushing Titan's Fist

Wizard Attack 17

You clench your fist, crushing your enemies within a huge, invisible grip of force.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Force, Implement, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 3d8 + Intelligence modifier force damage, and the target is immobilized until the end of your next turn.

Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn or until you dismiss it as a minor action. Each square of movement that includes one or more squares of the zone costs 4 extra squares of movement.

Force Volley It's believed that *force volley* was another one of Mordenkainen's creations, since he developed much of what is known today about magical force. A more powerful version of *magic missile*, this spell creates numerous darts of force and sends them smashing into your foes. You can also concentrate these missiles against a single target to be practically assured of a hit.

Force Volley

Wizard Attack 17

Silvery missiles spring from your fingertips and streak across the battlefield, striking your enemies with a staggering impact.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Force, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 20

Target: One, two, or three creatures

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex. You gain a +4 power bonus to the attack roll if you target only one creature.

Hit: 3d6 + Intelligence modifier force damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Ice Tomb This spell lets you trap an enemy in a block of solid ice. *Ice tomb* is useful for dealing with enemy spellcasters, since it has a long range and shuts down the enemies' attacks. While the ice is thawing, your allies can converge to make the kill.

Ice Tomb

Wizard Attack 17

You target your enemy with a freezing ray that briefly traps it in an icy sarcophagus.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Implement

Standard Action Ranged 20

Target: One creature

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 3d10 + Intelligence modifier cold damage. Until the end of your next turn, the target is stunned and outside line of effect for all attacks.

Miss: The target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Level 18: Ability Score Increase

You are a true paragon of physical and mental achievement.

Benefit: You increase two ability scores of your choice by 1.

Level 19: Daily Powers

Near the end of the paragon tier, your spells achieve a level of destruction and potency unlike anything you have ever before seen.

Benefit: You can add up to two new wizard daily attack powers of your level or lower to your spellbook. If you do so, each new power must replace one of the daily attack powers you already have from your class (usually one of your lowest-level daily attack powers).

Acid Wave Your incantation creates a globular mass of undulating fluid that swells in size until you reach the crescendo, at which point it collapses in a terrible wave. The caustic fluids dissolve flesh and bone and keep working even after the initial splash. Once the wave is created, you have little control over whom it strikes, so must be cautious when using it around your companions.

Acid Wave

Wizard Attack 19

You throw out your hands and send a wave of caustic acid over your enemies. The acid continues to burn long after the wave passes.

Daily ♦ Acid, Arcane, Evocation, Implement

Standard Action Close blast 5

Target: Each creature in the blast

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 5d6 + Intelligence modifier acid damage, and ongoing 10 acid damage (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and ongoing 5 acid damage (save ends).

Cloudkill The vile mist rising from fissures in the ground is born from the natural vapors drawn from the Underdark's depths. Once summoned, they gather into a killing cloud that spreads out in all directions, often large enough to cover a significant portion of the battlefield. The vapor finds ways to poison any creature it touches.

Cloudkill

Wizard Attack 19

Yellow-green vapors emerge from the ground with a hiss, forming a thick, toxic cloud.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Implement, Poison, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 5 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 1d10 + Intelligence modifier poison damage.

Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn. Any creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 10 + your Intelligence modifier poison damage (a creature can take this damage only once per turn). As a move action, you can move the zone up to 3 squares.

Sustain Minor: The zone persists until the end of your next turn.

Disintegrate Foes that recognize evocation magic take steps to defend against the types of damage that such spells often channel. One casting of *disintegrate* demonstrates the futility of this strategy. Although he did not create the spell, the mighty wizard Emirikol the Chaotic is said to have perfected its use as he destroyed many foes—as well as any underlings that were foolish enough to displease him.

Disintegrate

Wizard Attack 19

A brilliant line of ravening green energy bursts from your pointing finger. Where the emerald beam touches, flesh and bone disappear in a puff of gray dust.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement
Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature or object

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex. You automatically hit an unattended object with this power.

Hit: 4d10 + Intelligence modifier damage, and ongoing 10 damage (save ends).

Aftersave: Ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

Miss: 2d10 + Intelligence modifier damage, and ongoing 5 damage (save ends).

Evard's Black Tentacles The dark wizard Evard devised many dangerous spells by blending arcane and shadow magic. *Evard's black tentacles* is his best known spell, both dreadful in aspect and effective at ensnaring enemies. It coalesces raw shadow into grasping tentacles that grab and tear your foes to pieces.

Evard's Black Tentacles

Wizard Attack 19

Wriggling, ebon tentacles of necrotic energy erupt from the ground, grasping toward every creature within reach.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Implement, Necrotic, Nethermancy, Zone
Standard Action Area burst 3 within 10 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d10 + Intelligence modifier necrotic damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Effect: The burst creates a zone of difficult terrain that lasts until the end of your next turn. Whenever a creature enters the zone, you can use an opportunity action to make the attack against that creature.

Sustain Minor: The zone persists until the end of your next turn, and each creature within the zone takes 10 necrotic damage.

Level 20: Paragon Path Feature

You gain the capstone ability of your paragon path at 20th level.

Benefit: You gain a feature (typically a daily attack power) associated with your paragon path.

EPIC ARCANIST

Throughout the heroic and paragon tiers, you met many threats, and you proved you were equal to them all. Your experience and training carried you through these challenges to prepare you to seize the destiny that awaits you at the end of the epic tier. You are now among the most powerful wizards the world has ever known.

When your wizard reaches 21st level, he or she takes on an epic destiny. This epic destiny represents the grand finale of your adventuring career, and like your paragon path, it grants a set of related features and powers.

ARCANIST EPIC TIER

Total XP	Level	Feats Known	Class Features and Powers
175,000	21	+1	Ability score increase Epic destiny feature
210,000	22	+1	Utility powers
255,000	23	–	Encounter power
310,000	24	+1	Ability score increase Epic destiny feature
375,000	25	–	Daily powers
450,000	26	+1	Epic destiny feature
550,000	27	–	Encounter power
675,000	28	+1	Ability score increase
825,000	29	–	Daily powers
1,000,000	30	+1	Epic destiny feature

Level 21: Ability Score Increase

You have become an epic hero, and your physical strength and mental acuity have expanded beyond normal mortal limits.

Benefit: Each of your ability scores increases by 1.

Level 21: Epic Destiny Feature

Your epic destiny provides you with one or more class features that you gain when you select that destiny.

Benefit: You gain a feature associated with your epic destiny.

Level 22: Utility Powers

By ascending into the epic tier, you gain access to new spells that can shape reality to suit your needs.

Benefit: You add two new wizard utility powers of your level or lower to your spellbook.

Mass Fly This spell was first cast by planar wizards exploring the unpredictable reaches of the Elemental Chaos, but its utility in combat is what makes it valuable. With the power of flight at your command, you and your allies can easily gain the advantage over land-bound foes.

Mass Fly

Wizard Utility 22

White motes of light fly from your fingertips and swirl about, lifting you and your allies off the ground and granting each of you the power of flight.

Daily ♦ Arcane

Standard Action Close burst 5

Target: You and each ally in the burst

Effect: Each target gains a fly speed of 8 until the end of your next turn. When the fly speed ends, each target floats to the ground without taking falling damage.

Sustain Minor: The fly speed persists until the end of your next turn.

Mordenkainen's Mansion As Mordenkainen worked to become an archmage, he found the rigors of travel annoying. To provide comfort and security, he developed a powerful spell to shelter himself and his companions from any dangers they might face on their quests. Using this spell ensures that your nightly rest will never again be troubled.

Mordenkainen's Mansion

Wizard Utility 22

You trace the outline of a door, and a shimmering portal appears, leading to a space accessible only by you and your allies.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Conjuration

Standard Action Melee touch

Effect: You conjure a spacious extradimensional dwelling that can hold up to fifty Medium creatures. It is reached through a single doorway that you trace on a surface or in the air. Only you and those you designate can pass through it. You can close the entrance and make it invisible after you enter the mansion, and only someone inside the mansion can open the portal once it's closed. The mansion contains comfortable furnishings and enough food and drink to satisfy its denizens. The furniture and food disappear if removed from the mansion. The mansion lasts for 8 hours, and any creatures still in the mansion when the power ends reappear in unoccupied squares outside the entrance portal.

Time Stop The relentless advancement of time is a reality that even the gods cannot fully control. However, as you advance into the epic tier, you learn a small measure of temporal mastery that lets you act at lightning speed compared to your foes. Make use of this power at the beginning of combat, using your extra standard actions to cast utility powers that can set up your eventual victory.

Time Stop

Wizard Utility 22

Everything around you slows to a halt, frozen in time. Then, after a few moments, everything starts to speed up again, returning to normal time.

Daily ♦ Arcane

Minor Action Personal

Effect: You gain two extra standard actions, which you must use before the end of your turn. You can't use these extra actions to make attacks.

Level 23: Encounter Power

As you climb through the epic tier, your mastery over arcane magic becomes more and more secure.

Benefit: You can gain a new wizard encounter attack power of your level or lower. If you do so, this new power must replace one of the encounter attack powers you already have from your class (usually your lowest-level encounter attack power).

Acid Storm Favored by no-nonsense wizards who delight in their enemies' suffering, *acid storm* summons a vile black cloud that spills green droplets capable of eating through anything they touch. Like many destructive spells, *acid storm* is blind to your allies and melts anyone in its path. It's an effective way to eliminate enemies that are sequestered in hard-to-reach places, since they can't see out of it to continue their attacks.

Acid Storm

Wizard Attack 23

You create a thick, black cloud of acid droplets that burns everything inside it.

Encounter ♦ Acid, Arcane, Evocation, Implement, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 4 within 10 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 4d6 + Intelligence modifier acid damage.

Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn or until you dismiss it as a minor action. The zone is heavily obscured and blocks line of sight. Any creature that enters the zone or starts its turn there takes 10 acid damage (a creature can take this damage only once per turn).

Chain Lightning Few spells can produce as much destruction in a single casting as *chain lightning*. Used early in combat, this spell can deliver a decisive opening blow against a powerful enemy leader while thinning the ranks of its minion allies. Kept in reserve until late in the battle, *chain lightning* can wipe out an entire wounded enemy force, lashing out at targets across the battlefield.

Chain Lightning

Wizard Attack 23

From your fingertips springs a stroke of blinding purple-white lightning that leaps from one enemy to another.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement, Lightning

Standard Action Ranged 20

Primary Target: One creature

Primary Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 4d6 + Intelligence modifier lightning damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Effect: Make the secondary attack.

Secondary Attack

Secondary Target: One or two creatures within 5 squares of the primary target

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 2d6 + Intelligence modifier lightning damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Effect: Make the tertiary attack.

Tertiary Attack

Tertiary Target: Each enemy within 20 squares of you that was not a primary or a secondary target

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 1d6 + Intelligence modifier lightning damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Thunderclap Your smallest gesture creates a resounding thunderclap that knocks your enemy senseless. Perfect for dealing with enemy spellcasters, leaders, and elite foes, this spell levels the playing field and gives your allies a chance to rally and renew their attack.

Thunderclap

Wizard Attack 23

You create a peal of thunder that rolls across the battlefield and slams into a foe, disorienting it for a short time.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement, Thunder

Standard Action Ranged 20

Target: One creature

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d10 + Intelligence modifier thunder damage, and the target is stunned until the end of your next turn.

Miss: The target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

Level 24: Ability Score Increase

The threats of the epic challenges you face are countered by the perfection of your body and mind.

Benefit: You increase two ability scores of your choice by 1.

Level 24: Epic Destiny Feature

Your epic destiny continues to transform you, granting you abilities and talents that are beyond the merely mortal.

Benefit: You gain a feature associated with your epic destiny.



A dwarf wizard

Level 25: Daily Powers

The foes arrayed against you in the epic tier compel you to develop more powerful and effective spells.

Benefit: You can add up to two new wizard daily attack powers of your level or lower to your spellbook. If you do so, each new power must replace one of the daily attack powers you already have from your class (usually one of your lowest-level daily attack powers).

Elemental Maw This spell coalesces a small portion of the Elemental Chaos. Elemental substance exudes from it and swirls in a vortex that sucks in and destroys everything in its reach. Natural laws offset the effect after a few moments, but until the maw closes, it pulls everyone nearby into it. Those pulled inside reappear a moment later, far worse off for the experience.

Elemental Maw

Wizard Attack 25

You call up a spinning vortex of elemental energy that draws your enemies inside. It then spits them out where you direct, fallen and reeling.

Daily ♦ Acid, Arcane, Cold, Fire, Implement, Lightning, Teleportation, Thunder, Zone Standard Action Area burst 4 within 20 squares

Effect: The burst creates a zone of difficult terrain that lasts until the end of your next turn. Any creature that enters the origin square of the zone or starts its turn there takes 10 acid, cold, fire, lightning, and thunder damage (a creature can take this damage only once per turn). You must teleport the creature to a square within 20 squares of you that is outside the zone. The creature then falls prone, and it is dazed until the start of your next turn.

When the zone appears, make the following attack.

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 6d6 + Intelligence modifier acid, cold, fire, lightning, and thunder damage, and the target is pulled up to 2 squares toward the zone's origin square.

Miss: Half damage.

Maze The *maze* spell casts an enemy into an extradimensional labyrinth of your making. To escape, your foe must pit its mind against your will and navigate the confusing passages until it can find a way out. The power is best used to imprison a troublesome opponent while your allies mop up its underlings.

Maze

Wizard Attack 25

You trap an enemy in an extradimensional vault resembling a maze, which holds the foe until it can figure out how to escape. Where the foe vanished, a faintly glowing sigil hovers in the air.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Enchantment, Implement, Psychic

Standard Action Ranged 10

Target: One creature

Attack: Intelligence vs. Will

Hit: 3d12 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage.

Effect: The target is removed from play. At the end of each of its turns, the target makes an Intelligence check against your Will. On a success, the target returns to play in the space it last occupied or in the nearest unoccupied space of its choice, if that space is occupied. On each failure, the target gains a cumulative +5 bonus to the check.

Necrotic Web This power takes the *web* spell to new heights (or depths).

The strands of this web drain the energy of any creature it ensnares as the victim struggles to break free.

Necrotic Web

Wizard Attack 25

You cover your enemies in a giant web made from strands of black, life-draining energy.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Implement, Necromancy, Necrotic, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 3 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 4d6 + Intelligence modifier necrotic damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Effect: The burst creates a zone of difficult terrain that lasts until the end of the encounter. Any creature that starts its turn in the zone takes 4d6 necrotic damage, and is slowed (save ends).

Prismatic Spray When you cast *prismatic spray*, you create a sudden bright light. The spell's magic separates the light into colors that can poison, burn, or disorient any enemy exposed to them. This spell's full effect is revealed when you hit a target with several colors at once.

Prismatic Spray

Wizard Attack 25

*A dazzling spray of multicolored light springs from your hands, enveloping your enemies.***Daily** ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Fire, Implement, Poison**Standard Action** Close blast 5**Target:** Each enemy in the blast**Attack:** Intelligence vs. Fortitude, Reflex, and Will. You make a single attack roll and use it against each defense.**Hit (Fortitude):** The target is slowed and takes ongoing 15 poison damage (save ends both).**Hit (Reflex):** 3d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage, and ongoing 15 fire damage (save ends).**Hit (Will):** The target is stunned (save ends).

Level 26: Epic Destiny Feature

At 26th level, your epic destiny provides you with a another ability.

Benefit: You gain a feature (typically a utility power) associated with your epic destiny.

Level 27: Encounter Power

Nearing the end of the epic tier, you come to rely on a new spell that reinforces your ability to control the battlefield and the enemies you face.

Benefit: You can gain a new wizard encounter attack power of your level or lower. If you do so, this new power must replace one of the encounter attack powers you already have from your class (usually your lowest-level encounter attack power).

Black Fire The supernatural flames created by the *black fire* spell recall those that burn in the City that Waits, Moil, the lost city on the edge of oblivion. Many sages claim that Acererak himself created this spell, for the flames it creates burn not just the flesh but also the very soul.

Black Fire

Wizard Attack 27

*A blast of crackling black fire erupts from your hand, charring your foes' flesh and burning their souls.***Encounter** ♦ Arcane, Fire, Implement, Necromancy, Necrotic**Standard Action** Close blast 5**Target:** Each enemy in the blast**Attack:** Intelligence vs. Reflex**Hit:** 6d6 + Intelligence modifier fire and necrotic damage.**Miss:** Half damage.

Confusion In an echo of the magic of the Feywild from which this spell was crafted, *confusion* allows you to impose your will upon an enemy. A more powerful form of control than mere domination, this spell lets you force your foe to move and attack, leaving it out of position and vulnerable.

Confusion

Wizard Attack 27

*You magically compel your enemy to attack its ally.***Encounter** ♦ Arcane, Charm, Enchantment, Implement, Psychic**Standard Action** Ranged 20**Target:** One enemy**Attack:** Intelligence vs. Will**Hit:** 3d10 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage.**Effect:** At the start of the target's next turn, you can use a free action to slide it a number of squares equal to its speed. It then makes a basic attack against a creature of your choice as a free action.

Forcecage You have learned to mold force into any shape you wish. Rather than batter an enemy with a brutal barrage, you ensnare it in a prison of invisible energy. A foe so imprisoned is helpless to avoid your allies when they move in for the kill.

Forcecage

Wizard Attack 27

*You erect an invisible cage of unbreakable bars of force around your foe, trapping it momentarily.***Encounter** ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Force, Implement**Standard Action** Ranged 20**Target:** One creature**Attack:** Intelligence vs. Reflex**Hit:** 3d10 + Intelligence modifier force damage. The target is confined in the forcecage until the end of your next turn. While confined, it is immobilized, grants combat advantage, and cannot gain line of effect against nonadjacent enemies.**Miss:** Half damage, and the target is slowed until the end of your next turn.

Level 28: Ability Score Increase

Training, practice, and experience have molded your abilities. Even as you near your final destiny, you continue to hone your talents for the tests you will soon face.

Benefit: You increase two ability scores of your choice by 1.

Level 29: Daily Powers

The end of the epic tier is in sight, and your mightiest spells are the very powers of the gods themselves.

Benefit: You can add up to two new wizard daily attack powers of your level or lower to your spellbook. If you do so, each new power must replace one of the daily attack powers you already have from your class (usually one of your lowest-level daily attack powers).

Greater Ice Storm Overwhelming force is sometimes the only answer for a tenacious enemy. *Greater ice storm* improves on the spell's earlier version by calling down punishing hailstones and gripping your enemies with cold. Even after the torrent stops, the ground is slick with ice.

Greater Ice Storm

Wizard Attack 29

You mount a storm of bitterly cold hailstones that pummels a wide swath of ground and covers the area in ice.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Cold, Evocation, Implement, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 5 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 4d8 + Intelligence modifier cold damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is slowed (save ends).

Effect: The burst creates a zone of difficult terrain that lasts until the end of the encounter.

Legion's Hold The more magic you gather, the more formidable you become. *Legion's hold* is evidence of your great prowess, since it lets you command nearly every enemy on the battlefield. With just a softly spoken word, your mental power crushes your enemies, halting their progress and scourging their thoughts while they stand fast, reeling from your psychic assault.

Legion's Hold

Wizard Attack 29

Your eyes darken, becoming black orbs as you command your enemies to stop in their tracks.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Charm, Enchantment, Implement, Psychic

Standard Action Close burst 20

Target: Each enemy in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Will

Hit: 2d10 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and the target is dazed and immobilized (save ends both).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is immobilized (save ends).

Meteor Swarm The height of destructive wizardry, *meteor swarm* allows you to evoke a fiery cataclysm from the heavens. This spell is indiscriminate in its effects, so beware of including your allies in the conflagration.

Meteor Swarm

Wizard Attack 29

Fiery orbs rain down from above, shrieking loudly as they fall. They smash into your foes, obliterating them in a storm of fire.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Fire, Implement

Standard Action Area burst 5 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 8d6 + Intelligence modifier fire damage.

Miss: Half damage.

Level 30: Epic Destiny Feature

Your epic destiny is fully realized, and you reach the heights of fame and accomplishment for which you have been striving so long. You are mortal no longer!

Benefit: You gain a feature associated with your epic destiny.

WIZARD PARAGON PATHS

The wizard paragon paths reflect different arcane traditions and specialties found in the world. Some introduce new tactics, while others offer new resources.

BATTLE MAGE

Prerequisite: Wizard

You didn't leave behind the thrill of battle when you took up the mantle of wizard, so why should you stand back and let the fighters have all the fun? You have developed skills and techniques that have turned you into a true battle mage, ready to deal damage up close and personal or from afar, depending on the situation and how the mood strikes you. You have even learned of a technique for using arcane energy to temporarily stave off death—and you can't wait to try it out in battle.

Level 11: Arcane Riposte

Imbued with magical might, your hands bristle with arcane energy in the heat of battle. Your enemy realizes its mistake too late when you lash out, shaping the energy into cold, fire, force, or lightning. It scourges the enemy you would punish.

Benefit: When a creature provokes an opportunity attack from you, you can make an opportunity attack with one of your hands (Intelligence + 4 vs. Reflex). The bonus increases to +6 at 21st level. Choose cold, fire, force, or lightning. On a hit, the attack deals 1d8 + Intelligence modifier damage of that type.

Level 11: Battle Mage Action

You can shape magical energy into destructive spells. When you call on greater arcane power, you find it easy to direct your next spell where it can achieve the greatest effect.

Benefit: When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you also gain a +4 bonus to attack rolls until the start of your next turn.

Level 11: Forceful Retort

You are comfortable on the battlefield, at home both when casting spells and when blowing enemies to bits. If your enthusiasm attracts unwanted attention, you can respond with a pulse of destructive energy to fling back your foes.

Benefit: You gain the *forceful retort* power.

Forceful Retort

Battle Mage Attack 11

The power and certainty of your words knock your enemies off their feet.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Force, Implement

Standard Action Close burst 1

Target: Each enemy in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d8 + Intelligence modifier force damage, and you can push the target 1 square and knock it prone.

Level 12: Arcane Rejuvenation

Blasting enemies right and left often puts you in danger. To safeguard against an untimely end, you hold back magical energy to heal your wounds if you find yourself overwhelmed.

Benefit: You gain the *arcane rejuvenation* power.

Arcane Rejuvenation

Battle Mage Utility 12

In a bad spot, you draw on arcane energy to help you stay on your feet.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Healing

Immediate Interrupt Personal

Trigger: You drop to 0 hit points or fewer.

Effect: You regain hit points equal to your level + your Intelligence modifier.

Level 16: Battle Edge

You concentrate on the battle at hand. If an injury disrupts your concentration, you lash out with a swift and destructive counterattack.

Benefit: When you first become bloodied in an encounter, you can use an at-will power of yours as an immediate reaction.

Level 20: Closing Spell

One of the mightiest powers known to wizards, *closing spell* calls down raw elemental destruction that only intensifies if your other resources are drained.

Benefit: You gain the *closing spell* power.

Closing Spell**Battle Mage Attack 20**

You save the best for last—a devastating display of pure elemental power that your enemies aren't likely to see again.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Implement; **Varies****Standard Action** Area burst 3 within 20 squares**Special:** Choose cold, fire, lightning, or thunder. Your choice determines the power's damage type.**Target:** Each enemy in the burst**Attack:** Intelligence vs. Reflex**Hit:** 3d10 + Intelligence modifier damage of the chosen type, or 8d10 + Intelligence damage of that type if you have no other daily attack powers remaining.**Miss:** Half damage.

BLOOD MAGE

Prerequisite: Wizard

You have learned to combine your blood with arcane formulas to cast more powerful spells. Your blood is your life, but it is also your source of power. Few wizards travel this route to arcane mastery, because it is a path steeped in pain and soaked in blood. But you have embraced the way of blood and magic, and you have become more powerful because of it.

Level 11: Blood Action

You can draw deep on the magic flowing through your blood to exceed your normal limitations, putting more lethality into your next strike.

Benefit: When you spend an action point to make an attack, each target hit by the attack takes ongoing 10 damage (save ends).

Level 11: Bolstering Blood

Pain is power. Your suffering adds weight to your spells, improving their potency at the expense of your own vitality. When you slash yourself, the blood released mingles with arcane magic to intensify your spell's effects.

Benefit: You learn to turn your own pain into additional pain for your enemies. When you use a wizard encounter attack power, a wizard daily attack power, or a blood mage attack power that deals damage, you can, once per turn as a free action just prior to using the power, deal either a minor wound or a severe wound to yourself.

A minor wound deals 1d10 damage to you.

A severe wound deals 2d10 damage to you.

You then gain a bonus to the power's damage rolls. The bonus equals the damage you dealt to yourself.

Level 11: Blood Pulse

Your blood becomes the instrument of your foes' demise. You call on its essence and unveil its destructive potential in the midst of your enemies.

Benefit: You gain the *blood pulse* power.

Blood Pulse**Blood Mage Attack 11**

A mote of crimson plasma springs from your hand, streaks across the battlefield, and detonates amid your enemies, covering them in a blood-red shroud.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Implement**Standard Action** Area burst 3 within 20 squares**Target:** Each enemy in the burst**Attack:** Intelligence vs. Will**Hit:** 2d6 + Intelligence modifier damage. Until the end of your next turn, the target takes 5 damage for every square it moves willingly.

Level 12: Soul Burn

With this spell, you sacrifice your long-term health for greater access to arcane energy. When you use *soul burn*, you feel new energy lancing through you as your blood begins to surge.

Benefit: You gain the *soul burn* power.

Soul Burn**Blood Mage Utility 12**

You trade your recuperative ability for more arcane power.

Daily ♦ Arcane**Minor Action** Personal**Effect:** You spend a healing surge. Instead of regaining hit points, you regain the use of one encounter power you have already used during this encounter.

Level 16: Burning Blood

Your very vitality is a weapon. When you pause to recover from your injuries, your foes shriek from mental anguish, while those touched by your magic erupt in eldritch flames.

Benefit: When you use your second wind, each enemy within 10 squares of you takes ongoing 10 fire damage (save ends), but only if that enemy is subject to an effect that a save can end.

Level 20: Destructive Salutation

You have mastered the power in your blood and discovered how to tap its greatest strength. With *destructive salutation*, you channel this energy to assail your enemies' minds, leaving the victims savaged and hampered by your dark magic.

Benefit: You gain the *destructive salutation* power.

Destructive Salutation

Blood Mage Attack 20

You greet your enemies with a psychic wave that scrambles their minds and leaves them dazed.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Implement, Psychic

Standard Action Area burst 3 within 20 squares

Target: Each enemy in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Will

Hit: 4d6 + Intelligence modifier psychic damage, and the target takes ongoing 10 psychic damage and is dazed (save ends both).

Miss: Half damage, and the target is dazed until the end of your next turn.

SPELLSTORM MAGE

Prerequisite: Wizard

To you, the arcane energy flowing through the world is like a raging storm that only you can see. Moreover, you can shape and control this storm to accomplish amazing things. The storm consists of individual spells, like each drop of rain in the maelstrom, and you can pluck these spells free and direct them as you will. You are a spellstorm mage, and you stand among the arcane torrent and use it to enhance the power that you wield.

Level 11: Extra Damage Action

You learn to tap into the eldritch storm, to make its strength your own. In doing so, you visit wild and destructive magic upon your foes.

Benefit: When you spend an action point to take an extra action, you gain a power bonus to the damage rolls of your standard action attacks during this turn. The bonus equals one-half your level.

Level 11: Storm Cage

This spell calls forth the arcane storm, manifesting it where you will. Enemies in its midst are trapped in the maelstrom, with lightning striking and thunder booming from all sides. Spellstorm mages often use *storm cage* early to keep enemies in position for their next destructive spell.

Benefit: You gain the *storm cage* power.

Storm Cage

Spellstorm Mage Attack 11

You trap your enemies in a cage made of lightning and filled with roaring thunder.

Encounter ♦ Arcane, Conjuration, Implement, Lightning, Thunder

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 20 squares

Target: Each creature in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Reflex

Hit: 4d6 + Intelligence modifier lightning and thunder damage.

Effect: You conjure a wall in the 16 outer squares of the burst (forming a square enclosure). The wall is 1 square high. Any creature that enters the wall or starts its turn adjacent to it takes 10 lightning damage (a creature can take this damage only once per turn). Each square of movement that includes 1 or more squares of the wall costs 1 extra square of movement. The wall does not grant cover or concealment. It lasts until the end of your next turn.

Level 11: Storm Spell

If arcane magic is the seething maelstrom you envision it to be, the power you wield must come from the storm and return to it when used. You test this theory by drawing energy from the storm to replenish your resources.

Benefit: Once per day, you can reach into the spellstorm and extract an arcane power that you have already used so that you can use it again. Make a Wisdom check. The result indicates the kind of arcane power that you can extract. You can choose to extract an arcane power associated with a lower result than the result you rolled.

1-10: Arcane encounter utility power.

11-15: Arcane encounter attack power.

16-20: Arcane daily utility power.

21 or Higher: Arcane daily attack power.

Level 12: Sudden Storm

You manifest the eldritch storm so that it forms into a raging squall. The swirling winds and lashing rains hamper your foes' movement and visibility.

Benefit: You gain the *sudden storm* power.

Sudden Storm

Spellstorm Mage Utility 12

With a wave of your hand, you create an area of torrential rain and wind.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Zone

Standard Action Area burst 2 within 20 squares

Effect: The burst creates a zone that lasts until the end of your next turn. The zone is difficult terrain and lightly obscured. As a move action, you can move the zone up to 5 squares.

Sustain Minor: The zone persists until the end of your next turn.

Level 16: Storm Fury

It might be that the arcane storm you envision is in fact within yourself, and only through focus and study are you able to contain it. Indeed, when you suffer an injury, elemental lightning bursts out from you to scorch your foes.

Benefit: When you first become bloodied in an encounter, you unleash a burst of arcane energy that deals 5 + your Wisdom modifier lightning damage to each enemy within 10 squares of you.

Level 20: Maelstrom of Chaos

This power creates an insidious storm of force that singles out your foes, rips through them, and flings them about until the storm abates.

Benefit: You gain the *maelstrom of chaos* power.

Maelstrom of Chaos

Spellstorm Mage Attack 20

Arcane winds and a hailstorm of force energy surrounds you, battering your enemies and teleporting them from one place to another.

Daily ♦ Arcane, Evocation, Force, Implement, Teleportation

Standard Action Close burst 5

Target: Each enemy in the burst

Attack: Intelligence vs. Fortitude

Hit: 3d8 + Intelligence modifier force damage, and you can teleport the target to a square in the burst.

Miss: Half damage.

WIZARD OF THE SPIRAL TOWER

Prerequisite: Wizard, proficiency with the longsword

You have decided to adopt the traditions of the Spiral Tower, the arcane teachings of the followers of Corellon. This decision links your use of arcane power firmly to the Feywild and the arcane-focused eladrin traditions. As a wizard of the Spiral Tower, you carry a longsword that emulates the one carried by Corellon and glows with the arcane beauty of the Feywild, and the secrets of the Feywild become pages in your spellbook.

Level 11: Corellon's Implement

Wizards of the Spiral Tower uphold traditions established by Corellon himself. To honor their benefactor, the wizards master the longsword. The blade is more than a weapon, however; it is the implement through which they channel magic.

Benefit: You gain proficiency with the longsword as an implement. In addition, if you have the Arcane Implement Mastery class feature, the benefits you gain from that feature for one implement, such as a staff or a wand, can be used with a longsword.

Level 11: Spiral Tower Action

You learn to hold arcane energy in your weapon, retaining it for future use. When the need is great, you can reclaim this energy to power one of your spells.

Benefit: You can spend an action point to regain the use of one wizard encounter attack power that you have already used during this encounter, instead of taking an extra action.

Level 11: The One Sword

You emulate Corellon by using sword and spell in concert, channeling the magic of the Feywild through your weapon to enhance your attacks.

Benefit: You gain the power *the one sword*.

The One Sword

Wizard of the Spiral Tower Attack 11

*Your blade flashes with the twilight power of the Feywild as you strike your foe.***Encounter** ♦ Arcane, Enchantment, Weapon**Standard Action** Melee weapon**Target:** One creature**Attack:** Intelligence vs. Reflex**Hit:** 2[W] + Intelligence modifier damage. Make the secondary attack against the target.**Secondary Attack****Attack:** Intelligence vs. Will**Hit:** The target is dazed until the end of your next turn, and this power is not expended.

Level 12: Shape the Dream

With your blade, you slice through fate's strands to alter your fortunes. What might have taxed your mind is now no more than a fleeting memory.

Benefit: You gain the *shape the dream* power.**Shape the Dream**

Wizard of the Spiral Tower Utility 12

*You alter reality slightly, so that an attack your foe assumed it had made didn't actually happen.***Daily** ♦ Arcane**Immediate Interrupt** Personal**Trigger:** You are hit by an attack against your Will.**Effect:** The attack has no effect on you.

Level 16: Radiant Censure

Corellon favors the wizards of the Spiral Tower, for they uphold his ancient magical teachings. This blessing reveals itself when an enemy attacks your mind, as Corellon scourges the offending creature with radiant energy.

Benefit: When an enemy attacks your Will, the enemy takes radiant damage equal to your Charisma modifier (minimum 1).

Level 20: Corellon's Blade

This power imbues your longsword with the ability to emulate Corellon's weapon. With a single sweep, you attack all nearby foes and twist reality to dismiss them from your presence.

Benefit: You gain the *Corellon's blade* power.**Corellon's Blade**

Wizard of the Spiral Tower Attack 20

*You swing your glowing longsword around you, striking nearby enemies with the flat of the blade and banishing them into the Feywild.***Daily** ♦ Arcane, Enchantment, Radiant, Weapon**Standard Action** Close burst 1**Target:** Each enemy you can see in the burst**Attack:** Intelligence + 4 vs. Will**Hit:** 3[W] + Intelligence modifier radiant damage. In addition, the target is removed from play until the end of your next turn. When the target returns to play, it appears in its former space, or if that space is occupied, the target appears in the nearest unoccupied space (its choice).**Miss:** Half damage.

Addendum:

Wizard Updates in Brief (*Player's Handbook*)

Name	Page	Change
Orb of Imposition (Class Feature)	157	The free action you take must be on your turn.
Arcanist's Spellbook	158	Renames class feature from "Spellbook" to avoid confusion.
Cloud of Daggers	159	Adds the zone keyword.
Chill Strike	159	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Force Orb	160	Clarifies that the secondary attack is an area burst.
Icy Terrain	160	Clarifies that the ground of the zone is difficult terrain. Adds the zone keyword.
Ray of Enfeeblement	160	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Acid Arrow	160	Makes the secondary attack part of the Effect instead of the Hit entry, and clarifies that the secondary attack is an area burst.
Flaming Sphere	160	The damage in the Effect now occurs at the end of a creature's turn, not at the start.
Freezing Cloud	160	Increases the power's damage from 1d8 to 2d8. The Effect now creates a zone. A creature can take the zone damage only once per turn. Adds a Sustain entry. Adds the zone keyword.
Icy Rays	161	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Stinking Cloud	161	A creature can take the Effect entry damage only once per turn. Changes the zone damage to a static amount instead of a damage roll. The zone is heavily obscured.
Levitate	162	Clarifies that Sustain duration does not persist until the end of the encounter.
Fire Burst	162	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Spectral Ram	163	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Winter's Wrath	163	Adds the zone keyword.
Wall of Fire	163	Creatures can take damage from the wall only once per turn.
Frostburn	164	Adds the zone keyword.
Mesmeric Hold	164	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Prismatic Burst	164	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Thunderlance	164	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Bigby's Grasping Hands	164	Clarifies what happens when the wizard uses a standard action to slam the hands together.
Prismatic Beams	165	The spell's area is now a blast, and the Fortitude attack now deals only ongoing damage.
Combust	166	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Crushing Titan's Fist	166	The Effect now creates a zone. Adds the zone keyword.
Ice Tomb	166	Adds a Miss entry to the power.

Name	Page	Change
Cloudkill	166	Reduces the power's burst area from 5 to 3. The power's damage has been increased. A creature can take the zone damage only once per turn. Changes the zone damage to a static amount instead of a damage roll. The zone is heavily obscured.
Mordenkainen's Mansion	167	Removes the teleportation keyword.
Acid Storm	167	The Effect now creates a zone, and the damage now occurs at the end of a creature's turn, not at the start. Adds the zone keyword.
Thunderclap	167	Adds a Miss entry to the power. This power's damage has been increased.
Elemental Maw	167	The Effect now creates a zone, adding the zone keyword. Updates the power's formatting to tighten order of effects. Updates the zone's damage to a static amount instead of a damage roll, and can be taken only once per turn. All damage is of the listed damage types. Clarifies that you must teleport the target outside of the zone.
Maze	168	Tightens the removed from play language. The Intelligence check is made at the end of the target's turn. Removes the teleportation keyword.
Necrotic Web	168	Tightens the zone language. Changes the immobilization from the Effect entry to a slow.
Prismatic Spray	168	The spell's area is now a blast, and the Fortitude attack now deals only ongoing damage. Removes the fear keyword.
Black Fire	168	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Forcecage	168	Adds a Miss entry to the power.
Arcane Riposte	169	Attacks Reflex, instead of AC.
Closing Spell	169	Reduces the power's burst from 5 to 3. Makes it easier to deal the bonus damage by tying it to daily attack powers only, not daily powers of any kind.
Bolstering Blood (Path Feature)	169	The bonus to damage is against only one target.
Burning Blood (Path Feature)	169	Updates and combines the feature's effects: revises the damage type from psychic to fire and makes it ongoing damage, but requires the target to be suffering an effect that a save can end.
Destructive Salutation	170	Reduces the power's damage from 6d6 to 4d6. Changes stunned to dazed in the Hit and Miss entries.
Extra Damage Action	170	The damage bonus now applies only to your next attack.
Storm Cage	170	The wall's damage in the Effect occurs at the end of a creature's turn, not at the start, and a creature can take this damage only once per turn.
Corellon's Implement (Path Feature)	171	Clarifies proficiency wording and how this feature interacts with Arcane Implement Mastery.
Spiral Tower Action	171	The feature now applies only to attack powers.
Shape the Dream	171	Clarifies that the triggering attack has no effect on you but also is not cancelled. Removes the implement keyword.
Corellon's Blade	171	Removes the teleportation keyword.
Wizard Powers	–	Updates powers with school of magic keywords as appropriate. These additions are not noted in the previous changes.

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PINDEFRAU

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THE CRITICAL HIT

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A Rogues Tale - Part 1; The Deepening Dark

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1



NOW, I'M NOT AN INTROSPECTIVE GUY. BUT WITH THIS GHOUL BREATHING DOWN MY NECK, I GOTTA WONDER HOW WE GOT HERE IN THE FIRST PLACE.



OH YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT. STILL, LOOTING A DEAD NECROMANCER'S CRYPT IS MADNESS. IF I RECALL IT WAS ALL THAT CRAZY DWARF, GRIFF'S IDEA.



TAE, DON'T YOU DIE ON US!



'CAUSE WHEN THIS IS OVER, I'M GOING TO SKIN YOU ALIVE FOR BRINGING US HERE!

HAVE I MENTIONED YOU'VE GOT BEAUTIFUL EYES?

UGH, GODS! JUST GET UP!



OK, SO IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN MY IDEA. I MIGHT'VE EVEN KNOWN THE PLACE WAS HAUNTED. BUT WHO EVER SAID THERE'S HONOR AMONG THIEVES?



A Rogues Tale Part 1: The Deepening Dark

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GOTTA BE CAREFUL WITH SPOOLS. ONE SCRATCH AND YOU'LL BE FROZE UP LONG ENOUGH FOR THEM TO TURN YOU INTO AN ALL DAY BUFFET. I MAY NOT BE THE BEST WITH A SWORD, BUT I'M FAST... FASTER THAN THEIR CLAWS. I MANAGE TO TAKE DOWN A COUPLE IN THE MELÉE.



THIS LOOKS LIKE THE LAST OF THEM FOR NOW...

WNOOO! YEAH! SPOOLS DON'T GOT NOTHIN ON THIS GUY! DID YOU SEE THAT?!



WHAT IN THE NINE HELLS IS WRONG WITH YOU?

WHAT? I DONT...

YOU DON'T WHAT? DON'T SEE WHAT YOU DID WRONG? HOW ABOUT GETTING US SURROUNDED BY UNDEAD! YOU COULD HAVE BOTTEN US ALL KILLED!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WE WERE PRE-PARED...



WE'VE GOT A CLERIC!

I'VE NEVER SEEN A GOOD CLERIC THAT'S SO... VULGAR. NOT TO MENTION PUN-SENT.

HELLO THERE! WHAT'S A PURTY GEN LIKE YOU DOIN' IN A PLACE LIKE THIS?



I NEVER SAID HE WAS "GOOD!" BESIDES, DON'T I GET A "THANKS, T, FOR ALL THIS GREAT LOOT YOU FOUND US?"!

THUMP



UH... GUYS? IT SOUNDS LIKE OUR PROBLEMS JUST GOT A WHOLE LOT BIGGER...

BOOM



Alignments

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it's them!

huh?

Guild ATROX,
they're recruiting...
You should apply!

the initiation that kills
600 hopefuls a month?
... no thanks



pff... do you might die?
omg! we're Adventurers!
We face death
EVERY DAY!

hmm...
you're right



I may not
get another
chance..

g'luck!

35 seconds later..



that went well...
...up until the point you
VOMITED all over them

It just slipped out..

