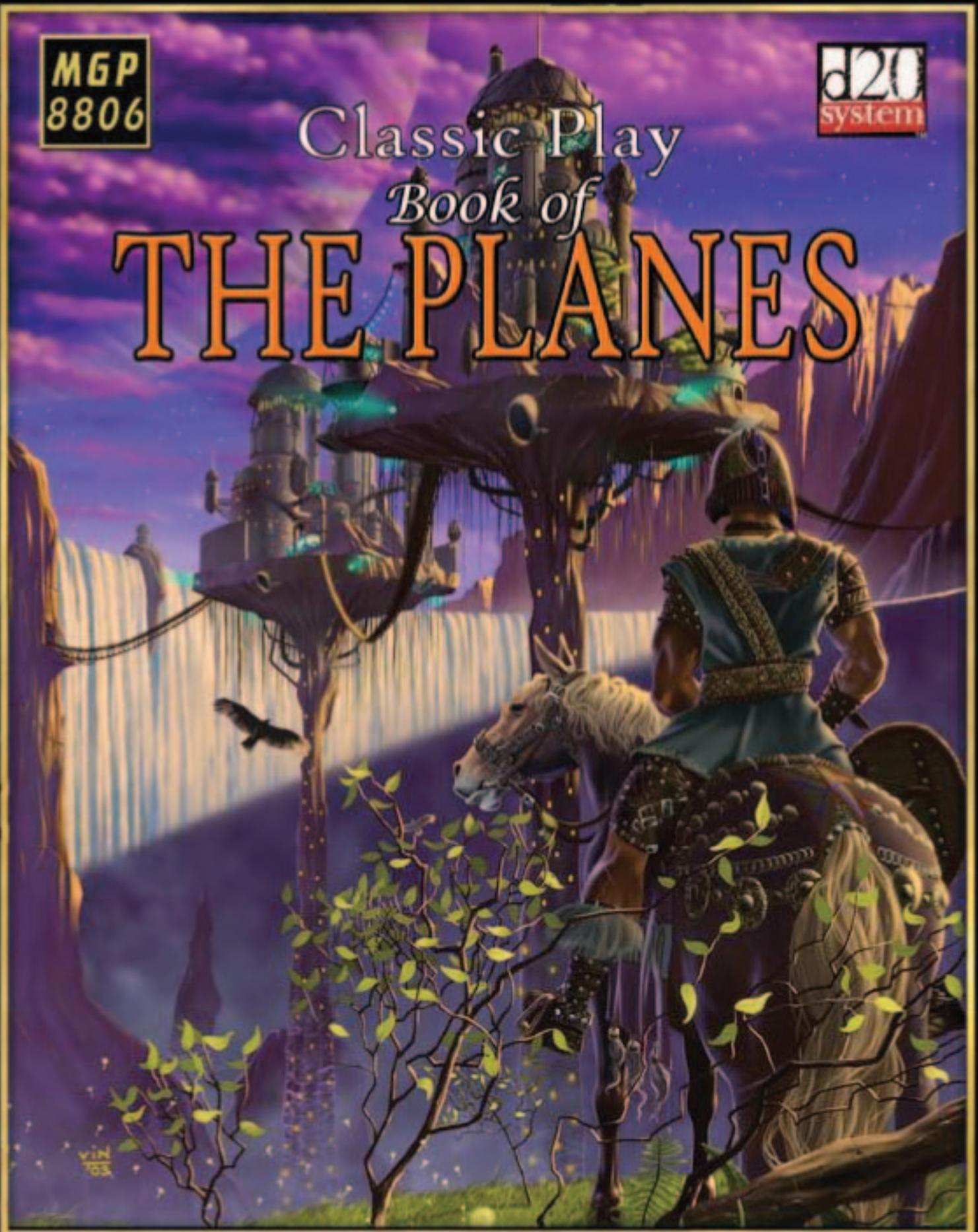


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Classic Play
Book of
THE PLANES



Classic Play

The Book of the Planes

Gareth Hanrahan

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INTRODUCTION

Go beyond the fields we know, into the realms of high fantasy and legend. The planes are a far grander stage for adventure than the mundane wilderness and dungeons of the world. Out there, the characters can walk with the gods themselves, delve into the foundations of the cosmos or quest in the lands of the dead or be the deciding factor in the great wars of Good and Evil.

This is truly a place for heroes.

The Book of the Planes describes the myriad planes of existence in exacting detail, offering encounters, hazards and adventures in dozens of alternative worlds. Beginning with the elemental planes of Earth, Air, Fire and Water, travel outwards through the transitive Ethereal, Shadow and Dream Planes to the wild planes of Positive and Negative Energy. Beyond them, the wide gulf of the Astral Plane and the vast Outer Planes.

Presented herein are ten entirely new outer planes, along with suggestions for how to arrange and integrate them into your campaign cosmology.

- † The Vault of Stars, where travellers walk amid the shining pools on the far side of the night.
- † Tarassein, a shifting land of pure chaos.
- † The dark realm known as Mál, where ancient horrors are awakening.
- † The hellish Infernum.
- † The great Chasm where condemned souls fall.
- † The cold Halls of Order.
- † The Afterworld, the estates of the faithful dead.
- † The bright Firmament, the high heaven.
- † The Questing Grounds, the realm of living stories.

Including rules for each of these planes, according to a set of magical traits, along with the secrets of the art of Planecrafting, this book allows characters to shape their own home planes or wreak havoc by changing the laws of reality.

Travellers do not walk the planes alone, however; there are all sorts of fellow travellers out there, including reality-spanning organisations with their own agendas and conspiracies. Along with advice and new magic for travelling the planes, the wise traveller will consider using one of the Nexus planes: pocket worlds that share borders with a multitude of other planes.

The Classic Play Series

Classic Play is a series of books from Mongoose Publishing, each examining an element of fantasy gaming in glorious detail. Each book contains new rules, new ideas and insightful essays to bring a particular aspect of the game to life in your campaign.



When all you have is a sword that cuts holes in the fabric of reality, everything begins to look like a door.

The inherent problems with such a device are legion, but two present particular difficulties. Firstly, the weapon calls itself *Gyedding* and claims to be the executioner's blade for condemned worlds, and does not like my possession of it at all. Secondly, and this is the more pressing problem, is that it really does not do much to these *abhorei*, or *ancient horrors from beyond the known places*, for those who do not speak the elvish tongue. One cut and they are torn apart by the opening portal, certainly, but they seem to contain multitudes of themselves. Every time I chop one up, another half-dozen form from its death throes in a singularly obscene fashion.

We are very close to being catastrophically outnumbered and overwhelmed. We, by the way, consists of myself, you and Fiac. I do not count the sword because I have grown to hate the damned thing. Fiac is a planewright who really should cast a spell about now.

I should perhaps explain who you are. You are my spell, the spell that I'm composing in my head. Do not think I am some muscle-bound oaf just because I wield *Gyedding* around with élan. You are to be a very special spell, because you are going to survive this. The *abhorei* can track me if I *plane shift*, and they could doubtless track a *sending*. Anyone I contact will soon be beset by this host of horrors following you to their doorstep. So, and here is the clever bit, I am going to impress you onto the magical weave, and you will burst into the brains of sorcerers and seers across the worlds. You will not do much, but you will carry word of the *abhorei*. Assuming, that is, I do not get eaten before I finish designing you, and assuming the *abhorei* do not have the numbers to simultaneously hunt down every target throughout reality – and even if they do, then that will warn people just as well as you might.

Fiac's spell goes off. This little demi plane of ours shuts up tighter than a dwarf's purse – nothing can get in or out. It also begins to unravel the threads that keep the plane together. In a few moments, this whole world will boil away to nothing. The *abhorei* here are going to boil away to nothing too.

They are not especially pleased by this and attempt to make me bleed. My sword would go snicker-snack if it was vorpal, but it just opens more portals to nowhere as it chops through *abhorei*. It sounds sort of like *thuk-FWOOM*.

'You know,' says Fiac casually over a *telepathic bond*, 'there will be a moment just as this demiplane dissolves that it will be open again. If we could open a portal then, we would go...somewhere; and somewhere is better than nowhere.'

'Do you have a *plane shift* left?' I ask rhetorically. I know he does not.

I know he is going to ask me to ask *Gyedding* to open a portal at that precise moment. I know *Gyedding* is going to demand that it be allowed to fulfil its purpose and force me to execute a world – and not a tawdry little demi plane like this one. Thousands of deaths by my hand, another great black blot in the records of the Grey Judges.

Choices, always choices.

I will cast you first, I think.

Then...there is a hell of a good plane next door.

And is not that always that way?

PLANAR TRAITS

Firstly, some definitions. The Games Master should use this information with the discussion of the planes in *Core Rulebook II*.

A **Plane** is a space (of any size, from minuscule to infinite) with its own unique physical and metaphysical laws. Planes manifest themselves in several different forms. The **Material Plane** is the ‘normal’ world, the world where the majority of humanity lives, a plane balanced between the four elements. The Material Plane is sometimes referred to as the **Prime Material Plane** or **Prime**.

Close to the Material Plane are the **Elemental Planes**, planes dominated by one of the elements such as Fire or Positive Energy. The Material and Elemental Planes are collectively referred to as the **Inner Planes**.

Beyond the Elemental Planes are the **Outer Planes**, strange places that tend to be dominated by a particular deity, ethos or concept. These Outer Planes are more rarefied and specialised than the Inner Planes. The Outer Planes might include the realm of demons and devils, the **Infernum**, as well as the stronghold of good, the **Firmament**.

Flowing between and connecting the Inner and Outer Planes are the **Transitive Planes**, the regions travellers must pass through to access another plane. The greatest of these is the **Astral Plane**, but they also include the ghost-realm of the **Ethereal Plane** and the dark **Plane of Shadows**.

There are also lesser planes, referred to as **Demi-Planes**, these stand alone or float in the Astral Plane, or are contained within **Pocket planes** if they are inside another, larger plane.

An **Elemental** is a creature composed wholly of one of the elements. An **Outsider** is a creature that comes from a plane other than the Material Plane. A **Native** is a creature on its home plane; a creature outside its home plane is referred to as a **Traveller**.

Two planes can be **Separate**, where there is a third plane (usually a Transitive Plane) between the two;

Coterminous, where they touch at particular points, or **Coexistent** where they overlap completely. For example, the Material Plane is usually **coterminous** with each of the elemental planes, linked to the Plane of Fire in the heart of volcanoes and to the Plane of Water in the depths of the ocean. It is **coexistent** with the Ethereal Plane, as the Ethereal can be accessed from anywhere on the Material Plane. Finally, the Material Plane is **separate** from the Infernum as the vast gulf of the Astral Plane lies between them.

A **Mingling** occurs in a region where two coterminous or coexistent planes bleed into each other and, in such cases, it is possible to move from one to the other without using magic. A **Portal** is an item or place that allows a traveller to travel to another plane. A **Door** is a portal between coterminous or coexistent planes, while a **Gate** is a more powerful variant of a door; it also creates a channel in the transitive plane between the two ends of the gate, allowing the direct linking of two separate planes. Finally, a **Nexus** is a place where multiple planes touch, allowing quick access to numerous portals.

Each plane has a number of **Planar Traits** that describe the properties of these planes. These traits can be manipulated or even permanently changed by cosmic events and especially potent spells.

TRAITS

Each plane has its own properties, rated either from 0 to 20 (a *scale*) or -10 to +10 (an *axis*). These have been studied and codified by sages of many races and spells have been wrought to investigate and alter these properties. For the purposes of this book, the Material Plane has all scales at 10 and all axes at 0. Most scholars use the universally-accessible Astral Plane as the baseline, not the backwater of the Material. The traits are divided into several types:

- † **Physical Traits:** Gravity, Time, Size, Morphic
- † **Environmental Traits:** Life, Weather
- † **Elemental and Energy Traits:** Water/Fire, Earth/Air, Positive/Negative
- † **Alignment Traits:** Good/Evil, Law/Chaos
- † **Magic Traits:** Arcane Intensity, Divine Intensity, Green Intensity
- † **Relation Traits:** Proximity, Accessibility

Each trait has a numeric rating. These ratings are on a curve, not a flat scale – the farther along the scale you go, the bigger the effects of a change from one rating to the next. At certain levels along this scale, different phenomena occur on the plane. For example, if a plane's alignment to Good is high enough, Good characters gain bonuses and Evil characters are penalised.

Some traits have quirks; for example, gravity might pull in a different direction or the benefits of good alignment only work on certain types of creature. These quirks also have a numeric value, for use with Knowledge (the Planes) and Planecrafting (page 228).

'To measure a plane, one summons six demons capable of teleportation – I find succubi to be the most tractable – and say to each of them in turn, 'Go ye with all haste unto the very ends of this earth; on finding it, return here to me.' Should a pair of succubi not return, then that plane is infinite in extent in that direction.'

- Alastherion's Planar Encyclopaedia

PHYSICAL TRAITS

These are the fundamental traits of the plane used to determine its essential nature and place in the universe. Altering the physical traits is extremely difficult, especially as one of the physical traits is the very trait that determines how much the plane can be altered. The physical traits of most planes are very well known and carefully recorded.

Gravity

This is the force that holds a traveller's feet to the ground and drags a drowning man to his death; it makes big things heavy and small things light. On most planes, gravity is directed down towards the ground, but there are exceptions.

Time

The time flow of most planes is a constant, although some are somewhat faster or slower. On planes

'Succubi get bored, too.'

- Traveller's Tales

influenced by Faerie or Chaos, time can run out of joint. For details on handling temporal paradoxes and other issues of time, see Common Problems & Suggested Solutions, page 225.

Size

The physical size of planes varies widely. Some are no larger than a house and, indeed, if extradimensional spaces are counted as planes, then a plane might be no larger than a halfling's pocket. The size of the plane is extremely important when attempting to affect it with magic; the Size trait is squared and then added to the difficulty of any ritual to affect it.

A planar layer is a section of the plane that can have its own individual traits, like a demi-plane, but can be accessed just by mundane travel.

Handling Infinity

Infinity would be relatively easy to handle – it is almost the same as really, really, really big and it is of no consequence to the players whether they are fighting a hundred billion demons or an infinite number of them – if it were not for abilities like *greater teleport*. This allows an arbitrarily large number of entities to act without regard for distance or, to put it another way, it allows the infinitely large number of demons to attack the characters without spending an infinite amount of time travelling the infinite distance to get to them.

For the sake of sanity, infinities should be arranged in such a way that they cancel each other out. An infinite number of demons can be balanced by an infinite number of angels, leaving the characters as the deciding factor. Infinities should also be restricted to the ineffable; leave infinities for the gods to handle where possible. They are supposed to be more spiritual truths than logical impossibilities.

'There are agents of order – the Blind Weavers – who deal with temporal paradoxes and contradictions. They snip whatever is causing the problem out of the planes and throw it into a little pocket dimension. When that pocket dimension fills up, they cut it loose to float off into the Astral or the Far Realms and build a new midden for the unwanted timelines. This means that there have to be planes out there filled with the discarded parts of alternate realities...'

- Traveller's Tales

Gravity Trait Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	<i>Reverse Gravity:</i> Objects push away from each other and matter brought to this plane decays over a period of time (days for most matter, weeks for dense metal and stone) as its constituent parts fly apart. This is identical to the No Gravity trait, but approaching any object requires a Strength check (DC 5 for Medium-size creatures and smaller, DC 8 for Large, DC 10 for Huge, DC 15 for Gigantic, and DC 20 for Colossal or bigger).
-8 to -9	<i>No Gravity:</i> Individuals on a plane with this trait merely float in space.
-5 to -7	<i>Light Gravity:</i> The gravity on a plane with this trait is less intense than on the Material Plane. As a result, creatures find that they can lift more, but their movements tend to be ungainly. Characters on a plane with the light gravity trait suffer a –2 penalty on attack rolls and Balance, Ride, Swim and Tumble checks. All items weigh half as much. Weapon ranges double and characters gain a +2 circumstance bonus on Climb and Jump checks. Strength and Dexterity do not change as a result of light gravity, but what you can do with such scores does change. Falling characters on a light gravity plane take 1d4 points of damage for each 10-ft. of the fall (maximum 20d4).
-3 to -4	<i>Mild Light Gravity:</i> Characters suffer a –1 penalty on attack rolls and Balance, Ride, Swim and Tumble checks. All items weigh three-quarters as much. Weapon ranges increase by half again and characters gain a +1 circumstance bonus on Climb and Jump checks. Falling characters on a mild light gravity plane take 1d6 points of damage for each 10-ft. of the fall (maximum 20d6).
2 to -2	<i>Normal Gravity:</i> Most planes have gravity similar to that of the Material Plane. The usual rules for ability scores, carrying capacity and encumbrance apply. Unless otherwise noted in a description, it is assumed every plane has the normal gravity trait.
3 to 4	<i>Mild Heavy Gravity:</i> Balance, Climb, Jump, Ride, Swim and Tumble checks incur a –1 penalty, as do all attack rolls. All item weights are effectively increased by half, which might affect a character’s speed. Weapon ranges are reduced to three-quarters normal. A character’s Strength and Dexterity scores are not affected. Characters who fall on a mild heavy gravity plane take 1d8 points of damage for each 10-ft. fallen (maximum of 20d8).
5 to 7	<i>Heavy Gravity:</i> The gravity on a plane with this trait is much more intense than on the Material Plane. As a result, Balance, Climb, Jump, Ride, Swim and Tumble checks incur a –2 penalty, as do all attack rolls. All item weights are effectively doubled, which might affect a character’s speed. Weapon ranges are halved. A character’s Strength and Dexterity scores are not affected. Characters who fall on a heavy gravity plane take 1d10 points of damage for each 10-ft. fallen (maximum of 20d10).
8 to 9	<i>Intense Gravity:</i> Balance, Climb, Jump, Ride, Swim and Tumble checks incur a –4 penalty, as do all attack rolls. All item weights are effectively quadrupled, which might affect a character’s speed. Weapon ranges are quartered. A character’s Strength and Dexterity scores are not affected. Characters who fall on an intense gravity plane take 1d20 points of damage for each 10-ft. fallen (maximum of 20d20).
10	<i>Black Hole:</i> Anyone entering this plane without magical protections is crushed to death (DC 50 Fortitude save each round to avoid dying; DC increases by one each round). Not even light can escape; magic can, but the caster must make a Spellcraft check (DC 50) when casting or the gravity collapses the spell before it is finished casting.

Gravity Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Subjective	+5	<p>Each individual chooses the direction of gravity's pull. Such a plane has no gravity for unattended objects and non-sentient creatures.</p> <p>Characters on a plane with subjective directional gravity can move normally along a solid surface by imagining 'down' near their feet. If suspended in mid-air, a character 'flies' by merely choosing a 'down' direction and 'falling' that way. Under such a procedure, an individual 'falls' 150-ft. in the first round and 300-ft. in each succeeding round. Movement is straight-line only. In order to stop, one has to slow one's movement by changing the designated 'down' direction, again, moving 150-ft. in the new direction in the first round and 300-ft. per round thereafter.</p> <p>It takes a Wisdom check (DC 16) to set a new direction of gravity as a free action; this check can be made once per round. Any character who fails this Wisdom check in successive rounds receives a +6 insight bonus on subsequent checks until he succeeds.</p>
Objective	+3	<p>The direction of gravity is not the traditional 'down' toward the ground. It may be down toward any solid object, at an angle to the surface of the plane itself, or even upward. In addition, objective directional gravity may change from place to place. The direction of 'down' may vary.</p>
Selective	+2	<p>Certain types of object or places are not affected by gravity; this allows for floating islands made of a particular rock or rivers that flow uphill.</p>



Time Trait Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	<i>Utterly Timeless:</i> Time on this plane has stopped. Cause and effect are impossible – nothing can happen here.
-9	<i>Timeless Flow:</i> On planes with this trait, time still passes, but the effects of time are diminished. How the Timeless trait can affect certain activities or conditions such as hunger, thirst, ageing, the effects of poison and healing varies from plane to plane.
-8	One century on the plane equals one round on the Material Plane.
-7	One year on the plane equals one round on the Material Plane.
-6	One day on the plane equals one round on the Material Plane.
-5	One hour on the plane equals one round on the Material Plane.
-4	Fifteen minutes on the plane equal one round on the Material Plane.
-3	Five minutes on the plane equal one round on the Material Plane.
-2	Five rounds on the plane equal one round on the Material Plane.
-1	Three rounds on the plane equal one round on the Material Plane.
0	<i>Normal Time Flow:</i> One round on a plane with normal time equals one round on the Material Plane.
1	One round on the plane equals three rounds on the Material Plane.
2	One round on the plane equals five rounds on the Material Plane.
3	One round on the plane equals five minutes on the Material Plane.
4	One round on the plane equals fifteen minutes on the Material Plane.
5	One round on the plane equals one hour on the Material Plane.
6	One round on the plane equals one day on the Material Plane.
7	One round on the plane equals one year on the Material Plane.
8	One round on the plane equals one century on the Material Plane.
9	<i>Infinite Time Flow:</i> Anyone spending any time on the plane at all is swept forward to the end of time.
10	<i>Utterly Timeless:</i> All possible things happen simultaneously.

Time Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Erratic	+3	Time flows differently during each visit; roll 10+1d10 and -1d10 and add the results to see how time flows for each visit. For example, rolling a +6 and -8 would result in a 10+6-8=8, one round on the plane equals five rounds on the Prime.
Backwards	+7	Time on this plane flows backwards with respect to the rest of the universe. This has no effects on cause and effect within the plane, so characters can act normally. However, it often causes temporal paradoxes when a character leaves the plane.
Pent-up Time	+3	This quirk only affects planes with a negative Time trait. When a traveller leaves these planes for one where time flows normally, conditions such as hunger and ageing occur retroactively.

If the worst comes to the worst and the characters encounter an infinite number of enemies or come into the control of a plane with infinite resources, then distance will be the only limiting factor. If they can

overcome that distance using magic...the game will break at that point. Avoid such a situation to prevent serious logical and logistical headaches.

Size Trait Effects

Intensity	Size of the Plane
0	Less than one inch in diameter.
1	A 5-ft. cube.
2	A 10-ft. cube.
3	A medium-size room.
4	A large house.
5	A huge castle.
6	A castle and surrounding estates – a plane can be self-supporting at this size.
7	Approximately three miles across; a city.
8	Several miles across; the size of a small island.
9	A small barony; 50 or so miles across.
10	A country; 300 miles across. Unique native species may arise.
11	A continent, including surrounding oceans.
12	A world or a land area the size of a world.
13	A solar system; theoretically, the whole space could be filled. There does not have to be empty space between the worlds, so a Dyson-sphere plane could exist.
14	Multiple solar systems.
15	Plane is infinite, but boundaried. If you travel far enough in one direction, you return to your starting point – the plane’s edges wrap around.
16	Plane is infinite, but repetitive. Although the plane is infinite in extent, the geography repeats itself in endless variations on a theme. The same castle with the same guards might be encountered again and again.
17	Plane is infinite in one extent – travel in one direction long enough and you will encounter <i>everything</i> possible in that plane. A plane might be finite along the north-south axis, but infinite to the east and west.
18	Plane is infinite in all extents – you can travel in any direction for infinity.
19	Planar layers are also infinite.
20	Infinity of infinities – the plane has an infinite number of layers, all of which are infinite in extent.

Alternatively: For games that do not need such an epic scale, have the Size trait simply double the size of the plane at Size 10+. So, Size 10=100 miles, 11=200 miles, 12=400 miles, 13=800 miles and so on until Size 20=102,400 miles.

Size Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Strange Shape	+2	The plane is not a flat or spherical world, but something stranger: a tesseract (bigger inside than out), a Mobius loop, a cross, a cathedral-shaped space or something else.
Layer	+3 per layer	The plane has an extra layer beyond the first. A layer normally has the same traits as the rest of the plane, but traits can be added to or removed from a layer without affecting the rest of the plane.

Morphic

The morphic trait measures how alterable the plane is. Those planes with a high morphic trait can be altered by the will of the gods or powerful spells. Extremely morphic planes descend into chaos, as even idle thoughts can reshape the geography in an instant.

The intensity of the morphic trait plays a major part in Planecrafting (see page 228).

Controlling a Highly Morphic Plane

If a plane's Morphic trait is 17 or higher, it may respond to the will of a traveller. A character must make a Wisdom check (DC 16) to establish control or maintain control. Travellers who have already established control in the past get a +6 bonus to this check.

A traveller's zone of control extends for a number of feet equal to his Charisma score. Within the zone of control, the traveller can shape the raw stuff of the plane as if moulding clay, creating air, stone, metal or whatever else is desired. The appropriate Craft skills are needed to produce an item or building; however, a character can shape the contents of one five-foot cube each round.

Objects created by warping chaos melt away if they move out of the traveller's zone of control, if the traveller falls asleep or if taken off the plane. A traveller may make a Wisdom check (DC 20 and the +6 bonus applies) to keep one five-foot by five-foot square from melting while he sleeps.

If two travellers try to mould the same area simultaneously, they should make opposed Wisdom checks to see who wins.

'Not all things yield to the will of the divine,' declared the angel.

I asked him why this should be so, and he replied, 'Because the divine wills it.'

– Revelation of the Ten Thousand

ENVIRONMENTAL TRAITS

The environmental traits of a plane determine what sort of life exists there. Life in a magical universe is endlessly adaptable – creatures can be made of living fire, crawl across the hydrogen ice that accumulates around collapsed stars or endure living in the wrathful

eye of a god. Therefore, the Life trait determines how much native life thrives there. Invasion by travellers or events on the plane can, of course, alter how much life is found on the plane.

The Weather trait measures the usual intensity of the natural weather patterns and is usually only meaningful on planes with a Size trait of 11 or less. Larger planes have much more complex weather patterns; the Weather trait can therefore only be used as a guideline in such places.

Life

The higher the Life trait, the stronger the native creatures are and the more of them there are. High-Life planes explode with verdant plant life and are crowded with animals. Low-Life planes are empty wastelands or nightmarish, inhospitable strongholds of death.

'There are no places where intellects do not exist. Intelligence takes bizarre forms of life and unlife across the planes, but it is the way of all things to give rise, however slowly or strangely, to mind.'

– Alastherion's Planar Encyclopaedia

Weather

The Weather trait determines the intensity and frequency of unusual or dangerous weather.

ELEMENTAL TRAITS

The primal forces of the Elemental and Energy planes influence all the planes of existence. All fire comes in some small fraction from the eternal flames; all negative energy is the shadow of the Shadow. Some planes are more closely aligned to one of the Elemental Planes, reinforcing the connection between instances of that element and its primal source.

In large planes (Size 10+), the alignment between the plane and the elemental plane can be a local one, creating unnatural microclimates. An alignment with the Plane of Air might spawn a glacier or wind-whipped frozen region in the midst of warm plains; an alignment with Earth might create towering mountains, while an alignment with Fire results in deserts and dry lands surrounded by plenty.

Morphic Trait Effects

Intensity	Effects
0	<i>Static:</i> These planes are unchanging. Visitors cannot affect living residents of the plane, nor the objects that its denizens possess. Any spells that would affect those on the plane have no effect unless the plane's Static trait is somehow removed or suppressed. Spells cast before entering a plane with the Static trait remain in effect, however. Even moving an unattended object within a static plane requires a Strength check (DC 16). Particularly heavy objects may be impossible to move.
1	Ageing, change and decay are unknown to the inhabitants.
2	<i>Slightly Morphic:</i> This plane can change, but only slowly. Reality moves sluggishly here. The DC for all checks is increased by +10 and all creatures or objects gain damage reduction 10/-.
3	Empires and forces that have been established for millennia control the plane.
4	Change is seen as something undesirable and wrong.
5	<i>Alterable Morphic:</i> On a plane with this trait, objects remain where and what they are unless affected by physical force or magic. You can change the immediate environment as a result of tangible effort.
6	The pace of change here is slightly faster than normal.
7	<i>Synchronicity:</i> The plane warps and folds imperceptibly, magnifying heroic acts. Characters gain a +1 luck bonus to all rolls for every five character levels they have. Monsters receive a similar bonus based on their Challenge Rating.
8	Fate and prophecy become less dependable; each mortal forges his own destiny here.
9	Demi-gods and half-divine beings become more common.
10	<i>Divinely Morphic:</i> Specific unique beings, such as deities or similar great powers, have the ability to alter objects, creatures and the landscape on planes with this trait. Ordinary characters find these planes similar to alterable planes in that spells and physical effort may affect them. These deities may cause such areas to change instantly and dramatically, creating great kingdoms for themselves.
11	Strong servants of the gods or powerful mortal mages looking for their own strongholds often claim such planes.
12	At this level, the plane tends to slip between <i>Magically Morphic</i> and <i>Narrative Morphic</i> at certain times.
13	<i>Magically Morphic:</i> Spells can alter the traits of the plane directly, without the need for ritual magic.
14	<i>Narrative Morphic:</i> The needs of drama and belief shape this plane; it operates according to 'fairytale logic,' not physics. True love literally conquers all here.
15	The Fey claim most planes at this morphic level.
16	Dreams have as much effect on the world as physical actions.
17	<i>Highly Morphic:</i> On a plane with this trait, features of the plane change so frequently that it is difficult to keep a particular area stable. Such planes may react dramatically to specific spells, sentient thought or the force of will. Others change for no reason.
18	There are only a handful of people on such planes: those who have the strength of will to seize control of it. All others are absorbed into the desires and fantasies of these dream-kings. Such planes often fragment into dozens of smaller demi-planes.
19	<i>Sentient:</i> These planes are those that respond to a single thought – that of the plane itself. Travellers would find the plane's landscape changing as a result of the plane's thoughts on the travellers, becoming either more or less hospitable depending on its reaction.
20	<i>Completely Morphic:</i> The plane is catastrophically changed by every event; the flapping of a butterfly's wings might increase the gravity of the plane by a thousand times or summon hosts of angels. Life and sanity are utterly impossible here and these planes usually boil away into the Astral Plane within 1d100 days.

Morphic Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Limited Morphology	+3	The plane's structure can be altered, but only within certain parameters – no trait can be altered by more than + or – 5.
Restricted Morphic	+8	The plane is as morphic as its Morphic trait indicates, but only to a specific group of creatures (only elves, only sorcerers, only the members of the Order of the Star and so on). For everyone else, the plane's Morphic trait is 5.
Seasonally Morphic	+X	The plane's morphic trait varies by up to + or – X at various points during the year. Any time spent at a positive Morphic value must be balanced with time spent at a negative value.

Life Trait Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	<i>Antilife:</i> Not only is this plane inhabited only by the undead, they are all utterly hateful and hostile towards all forms of life. Any life energy is instantly detected by the hosts of wraiths and spectres that choke the skies and living characters will be attacked instantly if not <i>invisible to undead</i> .
-9	Cities of undead; this plane might be a grotesque mockery of normal life, with skeletal farmers sowing dust into empty fields ploughed by zombies.
-8	<i>Dead Plane:</i> There is no life here whatsoever. Undead are the only possible inhabitants.
-7	Only the toughest bacteria survive here.
-6	<i>Wasteland:</i> A handful of survivors live off the decay. The only life present must be carefully tended and protected if it is to endure.
-5	There are large oases of natural native life in the most hospitable areas, but most of the plane is empty.
-4	<i>Sickly:</i> Life exists in many places in the plane, but it is weak and sickly. Reduce the average hit points of all creatures by 2 per Hit Die. Living creatures larger than Large are exceedingly rare.
-3	Life here is superficially healthy, but still fairly widespread. Reduce the average hit points of all creatures by 1 per Hit Die.
-2	<i>Sparse:</i> Life is widespread, but sparse. Plant life exists in scrublands and small copses and vast herds of animals are unknown.
-1	Life is marginally less common than normal, but still almost omnipresent. Choose one biosphere that is normally inhabited – it is empty of life here.
0	<i>Normal:</i> This is the level of life found in most campaign worlds.
1	Life is marginally more common; the density of life found in rich farmlands and forests is everywhere here.
2	<i>Verdant:</i> Vast jungles or rainforests dominate this plane.
3	Life here is unusually strong – increase the average hit points of all creatures by 1 point per Hit Die.
4	<i>Rich:</i> Life is everywhere; even normally unliving items like weapons or buildings might be living creatures here.
5	Large creatures become the norm.
6	<i>Supernaturally Rich:</i> At this level, life is so intense that the inhabitants are much stronger. Apply the Dire template to all animals.
7	Huge creatures become the norm. Giants or titans often dominate such planes.
8	<i>Universal Life:</i> There is no non-living matter in the plane. Even rocks squirm and crawl.
9	As Universal Life, but a low level of intelligence is common to all creatures. This is essentially an animated realm – you can talk to anything.
10	<i>Living Plane:</i> The plane is a single huge life form.

Life Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Intelligent Life	+3	The plane includes a race with an average Intelligence similar to that of humans.
Magical Life	+3	The plane includes a large number of magical beasts and other supernatural creatures.

Weather Trait Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	<i>No Weather Whatsoever:</i> The plane's atmosphere is perfectly still. No water flows, no sun rises or sets. There are no seasons. Even magical spells cannot affect the weather.
-9	The environment is utterly bland and average, lacking even fractional variations in pressure or moisture level.
-8	<i>Artificial Weather Only:</i> The only atmospheric movement is caused by magic or the passage of powerful creatures. Some groups summon air elementals to provide winds and water elementals or <i>gates</i> to the Water Plane for rain.
-7	All water becomes stagnant.
-6	<i>Static:</i> Weather does not change here. While there might still be clouds, storms, winds and other such phenomena, they are as unmoving as mountains and rivers. Meteorology becomes geography.
-5	Seasons become impossible.
-4	<i>Failing Weather:</i> The weather here is slowly growing less and less intense.
-3	No storms or blizzards.
-2	<i>Mild Weather:</i> Weather on this plane is noticeably milder and calmer.
-1	No natural lightning or cyclonic storms.
0	<i>Normal:</i> Average weather for a Material Plane. Obviously, the weather varies from place to place on the plane, but on average it is not especially calm or violent.
1	Flooding becomes common.
2	<i>Violent Weather:</i> Weather on this plane is 50% more violent than normal. Large storms are as common as rain showers.
3	At this level, lightning storms are common enough to be viable as a power source.
4	<i>Constant Violent Weather:</i> The weather here is always violent; storms, blizzards, hurricanes, sandstorms and so on.
5	Common effects at this level include eternal tearing winds, permanent storms or fast floods that engulf the whole plane.
6	<i>Dangerous Weather:</i> The weather here is dangerous enough to deal real damage, up to 1d6 points of damage per round. The exact type and conditions depend on the type of weather. Storms might spit lightning requiring Reflex saves to avoid, acid rain might require protection or Fortitude saves. Non-magical flying creatures become extinct.
7	Most cities are underground or encased. Plant life adapts by taking cover.
8	<i>Very Dangerous Weather:</i> As Dangerous Weather, but can deal up to 1d12 points of damage.
9	Overland travel becomes the stuff of heroism.
10	<i>Atmospheric Chaos:</i> As Very Dangerous Weather, but the nature of the damage changes from minute to minute.

Weather Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Weather Feature	+X	The plane includes a well-known and powerful permanent weather system; the value and power of the system equals half the difference between the plane’s Weather Trait and the desired weather system. For example, producing Dangerous Weather (16) on a Normal Weather (10) plane is a +3 quirk.

Aligning with one element causes an equal disconnection with the opposing element. The oppositions are as follows:

Fire opposes Water – Water opposes Fire.
 Earth opposes Air – Air opposes Earth.
 Positive opposes Negative – Negative opposes Positive.

A plane can be *aspected* (a lesser connection) or *dominated* (a greater connection) to a particular element or energy. The influence of the element on its aspected plane is quite subtle, and is generally only of interest to magicians and creatures of that element. The effects on a dominated plane, on the other hand, are quite obvious to all.

For all the elements and energies, the following rules apply:

Aspected: All spells with the appropriate elemental or energy descriptor count as being cast by a character one level higher if, for example, a *fireball* cast by a 5th level character deals 6d6 points of damage. Creatures with the appropriate type gain one extra hit point per Hit Die. Creatures with the opposing elemental type lose one hit point per Hit Die while in the aspected plane. Opposing spells are unaffected.

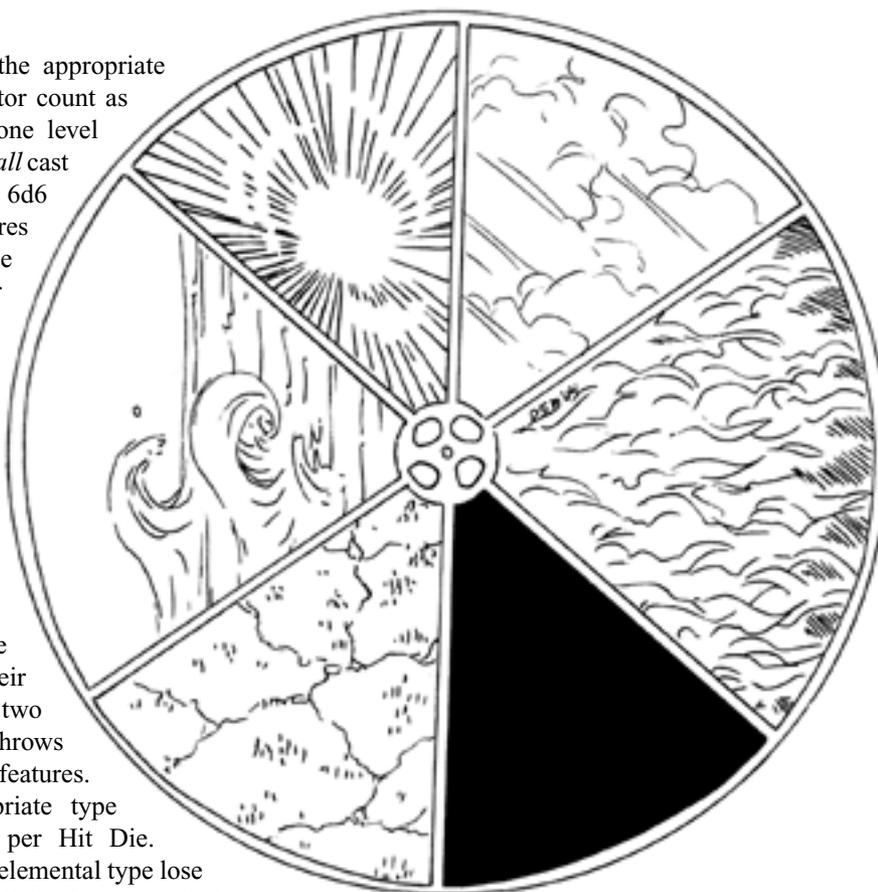
Dominated: All spells with the appropriate elemental or energy descriptor are Empowered as per the Metamagic feat and have their effective level increased by two for the purposes of saving throws and other level-dependent features. Creatures with the appropriate type gain two extra hit points per Hit Die. Creatures with the opposing elemental type lose two hit points per Hit Die while in the aspected plane.

“Behold,” said the angel, “I have here a platter of earth, a breath of air, an urn of water and a tongue of flame. With these things, I forge all that is.”

- Revelation of the Ten Thousand.

Opposing spells require a spell slot one level higher than normal – an ordinary *fireball* needs a fourth level spell slot on a water-dominated plane.

Note that all creatures with the Undead type count as being aligned with Negative energy.



Native Elementals

Obviously, the Elemental Planes are dominated by the appropriate element. This makes elementals considerably more dangerous on their home planes – not only as they have more hit points per Hit Die, but the opposing spells that are especially effective against them take higher-level spell slots.

Water/Fire Axis

The most physically dramatic of the elemental axes, the Water/Fire axis is a major determinant in what sort of life exists on the plane. Too much Water and only aquatic creatures can thrive there. An excess of fire means that only elementals, energy beings, and creatures with tough, flame-retardant hides can dwell on the plane.

Earth/Air Axis

The Earth/Air axis has relatively little impact on a plane except at the extremes. Unlike the Water/Fire axis, a plane can be aligned to Air or Earth and still greatly resemble the common Material Plane.

Negative/Positive Axis

Planes biased towards any kind of energy are rare. At the lower levels of intensity, Positive bias helps the denizens of a plane greatly and such places are bastions of life and strength. Highly Positive planes are much more dangerous, as the frames of most creatures are simply too fragile to handle that much life energy and creatures can be consumed by the exultant energies of their own spirits.

Negatively biased planes are dangerous, even at the lowest levels of intensity. Living creatures of all kinds have their life force sapped by these planes, while the undead thrive. Highly Negative planes are more inhospitable than the heart of the Fire Plane.

ALIGNMENT TRAITS

Good and evil, law and chaos are more than philosophical statements; they are forces in reality just as fundamental as gravity and time. These traits cross at neutrality.

Just like the elemental and energy axes, a plane can be mildly aligned to a particular alignment or strongly aligned to it. Neutrally-dominated planes are rare and often represent a conscious effort on the part of their inhabitants to devote themselves to *balance* above all else. Any mildly neutral world with a Good/Evil or Law/Chaos trait of 10 can be made strongly neutral.

Mildly Aligned: Creatures who have an alignment opposite that of a mildly aligned plane take a –2 penalty on all Charisma-based checks.

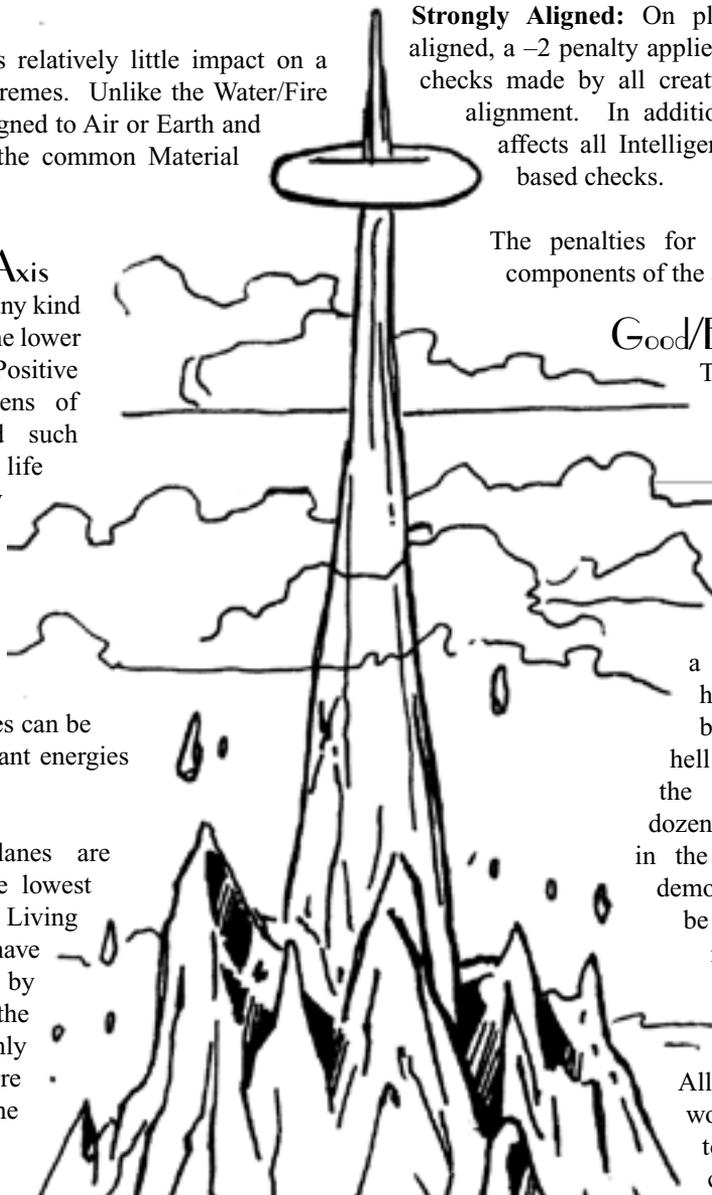
Strongly Aligned: On planes that are strongly aligned, a –2 penalty applies on all Charisma-based checks made by all creatures not of the plane's alignment. In addition, the –2 penalty also affects all Intelligence-based and Wisdom-based checks.

The penalties for the moral and ethical components of the alignment trait do stack.

Good/Evil Axis

The clash between good and evil dominates the politics and wars of the planes. Between these two forces there can be no compromise, no negotiated peace; at best, there is a watchful balance and a continual smouldering hostility. When war breaks out, the hosts of hell swarm up to lay siege to the gates of heaven and dozens of planes are deluged in the blood of angels and demons. One day, there will be a great and final war and in that apocalypse one side or the other will prove the stronger.

All the wars on all the worlds are just overtures to that eschatological conflict.



Water/Fire Axis Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	The entire plane is liquid. Non-sentient solids liquefy within 1d10 rounds unless in the possession of a creature.
-9	Elemental pockets liquefy within a year of entering the plane.
-8	<i>Water-Dominated:</i> Planes at this level are mostly liquid. Visitors who cannot breathe water or reach a pocket of air will likely drown. Those made of fire take 1d10 points of damage each round.
-7	95% or more of the plane's volume is filled with liquid.
-6	Combustion becomes impossible outside of specially built chambers. Fire is almost mythical.
-5	<i>Water-Aspected:</i> Natural portals to the Plane of Water occur everywhere at this level. Only a few tiny islands break above the surface of a vast, plane-girdling ocean.
-4	Fires cannot exist in the open; the only flames are in protected hearths.
-3	Rainstorms become permanent.
-2	Large continents become impossible.
-1	Slightly biased towards Water. Large rivers and seas are common.
0	<i>Balanced:</i> This plane is equally balanced between Fire and Water.
1	Slightly biased towards Fire. Flames burn for 25% longer here.
2	Average temperature is above 110°. Water becomes uncommon.
3	Flames now burn without consuming their fuel.
4	Average temperature is above 140°. Pillars of flame are common features.
5	<i>Fire-Aspected:</i> Natural portals to the Plane of Fire occur everywhere at this level. Water becomes a rare and treasured substance.
6	The heat deals 1d10 points of fire damage each round to all travellers.
7	Flames deal 2d10 points of damage every round to unprotected travellers.
8	<i>Fire-Dominated:</i> Individuals take 3d10 points of fire damage every round they are on a Fire-dominant plane. Those that are made of water take double damage each round.
9	No elemental pockets can exist here for more than a month. Individuals take 6d10 points of damage per round.
10	The plane is a conflagration hot enough to burn anything, even abstract concepts. Travellers take 10d10 points of damage each round.

Water/Fire Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Common Pockets	+2	The plane includes numerous pockets of Earth or Air.
Opposing Pockets	+2	The plane includes numerous pockets from the other side of the axis – a Fire-dominant plane includes Water pockets.



Earth/Air Axis Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	The plane is a perfectly solid block of stone, without so much as a hair's breadth of empty space.
-9	There is no surface – all space in the plane is underground.
-8	<i>Earth-Dominant:</i> Planes with this trait are mostly solid. Travellers who arrive run the risk of suffocation if they do not reach a cavern or other pocket within the earth. Worse yet, individuals without the ability to burrow are entombed in the earth and must dig their way out (5-ft. per turn). Creatures of the Air subtype are uncomfortable on Earth dominant planes because these planes are tight and claustrophobic to them. But they suffer no inconvenience beyond having difficulty moving
-7	95% of the plane is solid rock.
-6	Lichens become the only widespread form of plant life.
-5	<i>Earth-Aspected:</i> Massive underground caverns and tunnel networks make up most of the terrain on the plane; the surface is mostly choked by slowly drifting dust clouds and seas of shale.
-4	Floating islands of rock begin to crowd the sky. Most civilisations are underground or on these floating rocks.
-3	Spires and arches of stone drive up high into the atmosphere. It is possible to climb above the sky.
-2	Large mountains become the norm.
-1	Slightly biased towards Earth. The terrain is slightly rockier.
0	<i>Balanced:</i> This plane is equally balanced between Earth and Air.
1	Slightly biased towards Air. Winds are 10% stronger.
2	Flying creatures become more common.
3	Floating islands dot the skies.
4	Large empty gulfs in the land are a common terrain feature; flight is the only way to travel large distances.
5	<i>Air-Aspected:</i> Flying creatures are dominant. Underground complexes are rare.
6	Seas and oceans become rare; continents float free in the air, divided by wide stretches of empty sky.
7	Clouds are now the major geographical feature used by navigators.
8	<i>Air-Dominant:</i> Mostly open space, planes with this trait have just a few bits of floating stone or other elements. They usually have a breathable atmosphere, though such a plane may include clouds of acidic or toxic gas. Creatures of the Earth subtype are uncomfortable on Air-dominant planes because they have little or no natural earth to connect with. They take no actual damage, however.
9	The sheer blueness of the sky is becomes extremely disorientating. Pockets of other elements sublimate into gases within a year.
10	The entire plane is gaseous. Non-sentient solids sublimate within 1d10 rounds unless in the possession of a creature.

Earth/Air Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Common Pockets	+2	The plane includes numerous pockets of Fire or Water.
Opposing Pockets	+2	The plane includes numerous pockets from the other side of the axis – an Earth-dominant plane includes Air pockets.

Positive/Negative Axis Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	Games Masters are encouraged to come up with their own extremes.
-9	Even death may die here. There is nothing beyond this level.
-8	<i>Negative-Dominant:</i> Each round, those within must make a Fortitude save (DC 25) or gain a negative level. A creature whose Negative levels equal its current levels or Hit Dice is slain, becoming a wraith. The <i>death ward</i> spell protects a traveller from the damage and energy drain of a Negative-dominant plane.
-7	Hope is forgotten.
-6	Dreaming becomes impossible.
-5	<i>Negative-Aspected:</i> Living creatures not protected by a <i>death ward</i> take 1d6 points of damage per round. At 0 hit points or lower, they crumble to ash.
-4	Undead now greatly outnumber the living.
-3	Such places are bastions of death, destruction and despair.
-2	Undead are common.
-1	Slightly biased towards the Negative.
0	<i>Balanced:</i> This plane is equally balanced between Life and Death.
1	Slightly biased towards the Positive.
2	Paladins become more common than fighters.
3	Disease no longer exists.
4	Such places are bastions of heroism, healing or hedonism.
5	<i>Positive-Aspected:</i> Colours are brighter, fires are hotter, noises are louder and sensations are more intense as a result of the Positive energy swirling through the plane. All individuals in a Positive-dominant plane gain Fast Healing 2 as an extraordinary ability.
7	Pain is almost forgotten here.
6	Undead cannot enter the plane without protection.
7	Pain is almost forgotten here.
8	<i>Positive-Dominant:</i> A creature on a major Positive-dominant plane must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to avoid being blinded for 10 rounds by the brilliance of their surroundings. Simply being on the plane grants Fast Healing 5 as an extraordinary ability. In addition, those at full hit points gain five additional temporary hit points per round. These temporary hit points fade over the course of 1d20 rounds after the creature leaves the major Positive-dominant plane. However, a creature must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) each round that its temporary hit points exceed its normal hit point total. Failing the saving throw results in the creature exploding in a riot of energy, killing it.
9	Creatures have Fast Healing 10. Inanimate objects awaken within 1d10 rounds of entering the plane.
10	Games Masters are encouraged to come up with their own extremes.

The Good/Evil axis is also known as the Moral Axis.

Law/Chaos Axis

The great conflict between law and chaos, between order and entropy, is older by far than the clash between good and evil. Before anything could reason, before morality could be conceived of, the crystalline structures of law and the bubbling metamorphoses

of chaos were sliding through the universe, shaping and unshaping all that existed. Law seeks to bring structure to all that exists, to lock all creation into a single grand design that would open the gates to infinitely higher and larger lattices of order. Chaos desires the precise opposite – to collapse all that is into random sparks and fluctuations of energy and matter, to transform the universe into a vast incomprehensible potentiality.

“Which is mightier, good or evil?”

‘That is for you to decide, said the angel.’

- Revelations of the Ten Thousand.

It is perhaps a paradox then that even the lords of law and chaos must contain a tiny sliver of the nature of the other. Pure law cannot exist while chaos exists, while pure chaos lacks any direction. This forced symbiosis is sometimes all that keeps the worlds from being frozen in order or sliding into chaos.

MAGICAL TRAITS

Magic varies wildly across the planes. Arcane energy surges through the weave of worlds, to have its threads plucked and rewoven by wizards or channelled by sorcerers. The presence or attention of a deity can greatly enhance the prayers of clerics, while the strength of the ‘green shadow’ of druids on a plane gives its followers power.

Metamagic and the Magical Trait

At higher levels of magical intensity, the plane offers a number of ‘free’ metamagic levels to casters of a particular type of magic. For example, on a plane with +3 metamagic, a character can use three levels of metamagic feats each round, even if he possesses no such feats. He could make a spell Silent, Still and Enlarged (one level each, for a total of three levels of metamagic) or Empowered and Extended (two levels and one level). The character does not have to possess these feats in order to use the free levels.

Some planes have more specific effects; all divine spells might be specifically made Silent in the Monastery of the Silent Monks.

Arcane

Of all the forms of magic, it is arcane magic that varies the most. The power of magic flows like quicksilver through the planes, pooling in certain areas and

‘Changes in the strength of the arcane weave can affect the required valences of the more complex spells or produce metamagical effects beyond the normal capacity of the wizard.’

- Alastherion’s Planar Encyclopaedia

draining away from others. Places of magical strength are rarely peaceful; if a plane enhances magical power, it is quickly claimed by dozens of warring wizards and sorcerers. If one arcanist is victorious, he takes the plane as his own personal domain, but more often, the plane is reduced to a smoking ruin after decades of vicious magical battles.

Bardic magic is also affected by this trait, as is (to a lesser extent) creativity and art in general. Magic is an art form, after all.

‘Most men get drunk on wine; mages get drunk on the weave of the world. Both are dangerous.’

- Traveller’s Tales

Divine

Some worlds are like panes of clear glass, through which the bright light of the divine can pass with perfect and undiminished beauty. Planes that are close to the inhabitation of a particular god are bathed more intensely in that god’s power. Other realms are choked with doubt and confusion and clerics are cut off from the greater blessings of their deities. Most Material Planes are equally transparent to all gods and no deity can give unusual powers to their followers.

Few of the other planes are as perfectly balanced.

The Divine trait affects the spells of clerics and paladins.

Green

Every living thing casts the Green shadow. Invisible bright tendrils of life extend like roots through the world, forming shapes and totems of power. The druids draw on these totems, honouring them and making sacrifices to them to shape their magic. In some worlds, the Green shadow is bright, full of vitality and strength. In other worlds, there is not enough life to form a strong shadow and the Green is wan, as bitter and hungry as winter.

The Green trait affects the spells of druids and rangers.

RELATION TRAITS

The Relation traits for a plane are special. While a plane has only one rating for each of the other traits,

Good/Evil Axis Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	At this level of goodness, purity of soul overwhelms the material world. Those who are not perfectly good are hurled out of the plane (if redeemable) or destroyed (if not). Those who are perfectly good merge with the plane. Beyond this, the mind cannot fathom and the heart cannot know.
-9	All things are full of <i>agape</i> .
-8	<i>Strongly Aligned to Good</i> . Negative emotions – jealousy, hate, unrighteous anger – are unthinkable to natives.
-7	Aasimars are born naturally at this level.
-6	Heroism and self-sacrifice are instinctive.
-5	<i>Mildly Aligned to Good</i> : Those not aligned to Good suffer a –2 penalty on all Charisma-based checks.
-4	Paladins and good-aligned clerics become the most numerous characters.
-3	75% or more of the population are good. Crime becomes rare.
-2	A nice place to live...
-1	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
0	<i>Mildly Neutral or Strongly Neutral</i> : A plane only becomes Strongly Neutral if there is a genuine commitment to actively balancing the cosmic scales there, as opposed to merely indecision.
1	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
2	Not a nice place to live. Petty acts of malice are common.
3	75% of the population are evil. These planes tend to descend into brutal, bloody anarchy or despotic regimes.
4	Blackguards, assassins and evil clerics become the most numerous characters.
5	<i>Mildly Aligned to Evil</i> : Those not aligned to Evil suffer a –2 penalty on all Charisma-based checks.
6	Causing pain, suffering and sorrow become instinctive to all natives of the plane.
7	Tieflings are born naturally at this level.
8	<i>Strongly Aligned to Evil</i> : Positive emotions – generosity, compassion, self-sacrifice – are unthinkable to natives.
9	All things are full of wickedness.
10	At this level of evil, impurity of soul overwhelms the material world. Those who are not perfectly evil are hurled out of the plane (if they are somewhat impure) or destroyed (if pure). Those who are perfectly evil merge with the plane. Beyond this, the soul cannot endure and the heart cannot tolerate.

it has a Relation trait rating for every other plane. In reality, the vast majority of planes have the same Relation trait ratings – Proximity 0 (Separate) and Accessible Through Magic.

Proximity

The Proximity trait measures how close two planes are to each other. This relationship is not purely spatial; currents in a transitive plane or a massive astral conduit can connect planes. The Proximity trait

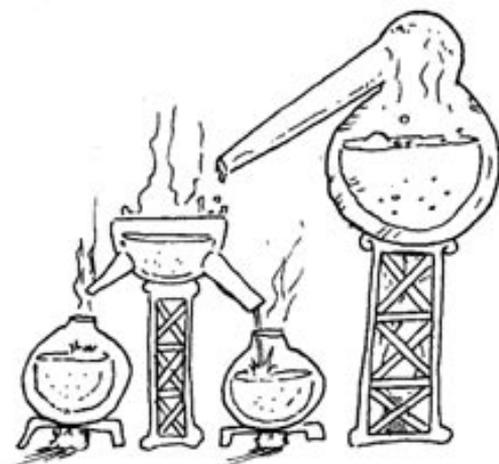
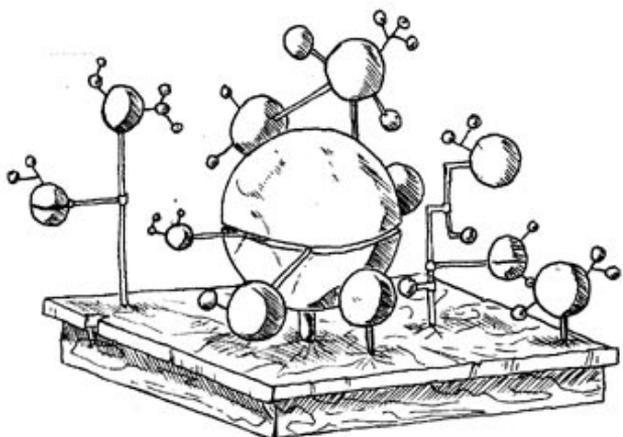
begins at Separate – the two planes are not connected at all. As the trait rises in intensity, the planes grow closer together until they merge.

Accessibility

The Accessibility trait measures how easy it is to transit to the plane. Highly accessible planes can be visited just by casting *plane shift* or even just by walking there. Other planes require travellers to use keys or more potent spells.

Law/Chaos Axis Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	The whole plane exists in a single equation. Anyone entering such a plane is either integrated into the equation (if sufficiently lawful) or opposed with overwhelming force (if deemed an undesirable random factor).
-9	Entropy ceases; all things now tend towards order. Broken things repair themselves, buildings grow out of materials.
-8	<i>Strongly Aligned to Law:</i> All laws are now physical laws; theft is as difficult as flying without wings. Crystal of all kinds is especially common.
-7	The plane becomes organised; rivers flow in straight lines, forests in orchards and so on.
-6	Lawfulness becomes the dominant ethos, even among animals.
-5	<i>Mildly Aligned to Law:</i> Those not aligned to Law suffer a -2 penalty on all Charisma-based checks.
-4	Advanced clockworks and other machinery become common.
-3	Societies become self-organising, rapidly creating their own laws.
-2	Civilisations here are noticeably more lawful.
-1	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
0	<i>Mildly Neutral or Strongly Neutral:</i> A plane only becomes Strongly Neutral if there is a genuine commitment to actively balancing the cosmic scales there, as opposed to merely indecision.
1	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
2	Large civilisations become rare.
3	Anarchic communes or warlords are the most common forms of government.
4	Logic tends to fail here; intuition is a better guide.
5	<i>Mildly Aligned to Chaos:</i> Those not aligned to Chaos suffer a -2 penalty on all Charisma-based checks.
6	Chaos becomes the dominant ethos, even among animals.
7	The landscape warps and changes randomly.
8	<i>Strongly Aligned to Chaos:</i> The laws of physics change randomly here.
9	Reality fails. Small bubbles of order exist, but most of the plane is random chaos.
10	The whole plane exists in bubbling nuclear chaos. Anyone entering such a plane is either absorbed into the madness (if sufficiently chaotic) or opposed with overwhelming force (if unpalatable).



Arcane Trait Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	<i>Dead Magic:</i> A plane with the Dead Magic trait functions in all respects like an <i>antimagic field</i> spell for the purposes of arcane and bardic magic. Divination spells cannot detect subjects within a Dead Magic plane, nor can a spellcaster use <i>teleport</i> or another spell to move in or out of it. The only exceptions to the ‘no magic’ rule are permanent planar portals, which still function normally.
-9	Magical beasts and other creatures with supernatural abilities die within 1d10 hours of entering this plane. 2 nd level arcane spells cannot be cast.
-8	<i>Impeded Magic:</i> Arcane spells and spell-like abilities are more difficult to cast on planes with this trait. To cast a spell, the caster must make a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + the level of the spell). If the check fails, the spell does not function but is still lost as a prepared spell or spell slot. If the check succeeds, the spell functions normally. 3 rd level arcane spells cannot be cast.
-7	4 th level arcane spells cannot be cast. Poetry is unknown.
-6	5 th level arcane spells cannot be cast. Songs are rare.
-5	6 th level arcane spells cannot be cast. Sorcerers sicken on arrival on the plane.
-4	7 th level arcane spells cannot be cast. <i>Binding</i> and <i>geases</i> become undependable.
-3	8 th level arcane spells cannot be cast.
-2	9 th level arcane spells cannot be cast. Wizards become rarer.
-1	Certain extremely powerful spells and effects fail.
0	<i>Normal Magic:</i> Arcane magic works as described in <i>Core Rulebook I</i> .
1	Magicians become slightly more common.
2	+1 metamagic
3	Simple magical items become more common; most cities have continual lights, flying guards and so on.
4	+2 metamagic
5	Wizardry becomes the preferred art of the nobility. Almost everyone has a level or two of sorcerer or wizard.
6	+3 metamagic
7	Sorcerers are born naturally here, even to those not of the blood.
8	+4 metamagic
9	Everyone on the plane is an arcane spellcaster.
10	+5 metamagic

Arcane Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Wild Magic	+3	On a plane with the Wild Magic trait spells and spell-like abilities function in radically different and sometimes dangerous ways. Any spell or spell-like ability used on a Wild Magic plane has a chance to go awry. The caster must make a level check (DC 15 + the level of the spell or effect) for the magic to function normally. For spell-like abilities, use the level or HD of the creature employing the ability for the caster level check and the level of the spell-like ability to set the DC for the caster level check.
Focussed Magic	+3	The plane’s Arcane trait only affects one particular school of magic; it is at 10 for other schools. This quirk can be taken multiple times; each time it affects a different school of magic.

Divine Trait Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	<i>Dead Magic:</i> A plane with the Dead Magic trait functions in all respects like an <i>antimagic field</i> spell for the purposes of divine spells. Divination spells cannot detect subjects within a Dead Magic plane, nor can a spellcaster use <i>teleport</i> or another spell to move in or out of it. The only exceptions to the ‘no magic’ rule are permanent planar portals, which still function normally.
-9	Without <i>remove disease</i> , plagues become more widespread. 2 nd level divine spells cannot be cast.
-8	<i>Impeded Magic:</i> Divine spells and spell-like abilities are more difficult to cast on planes with this trait. To cast a spell, the caster must make a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + the level of the spell). If the check fails, the spell does not function but is still lost as a prepared spell or spell slot. If the check succeeds, the spell functions normally. 3 rd level divine spells cannot be cast.
-7	4 th level divine spells cannot be cast. Most prayers go unheard.
-6	5 th level divine spells cannot be cast.
-5	6 th level divine spells cannot be cast. Atheism rises.
-4	7 th level divine spells cannot be cast. Divine intercessions become rare.
-3	8 th level divine spells cannot be cast. Churches lose a great deal of influence.
-2	9 th level divine spells cannot be cast. Faith becomes rarer.
-1	Most local priests are not clerics; they are experts in Knowledge (religion). True clerics are scarce and their powers seen as wondrous.
0	<i>Normal Magic:</i> Divine magic works as described in <i>Core Rulebook I</i> .
1	Clerics become more common. The church’s influence grows.
2	+1 metamagic
3	Prayers are often answered.
4	+2 metamagic
5	Divine revelation becomes common.
6	+3 metamagic
7	Emanations of the divine (celestials, angels and so on) often manifest on the plane.
8	+4 metamagic
9	Everyone on the plane is a divine spellcaster.
10	+5 metamagic



Divine Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Focussed Magic	+3	The plane’s Divine trait only affects clerics of a particular god or ethos; it is at 10 for other gods and beliefs. This quirk can be taken multiple times; each time it affects a different god or ethos.

Green Trait Effects

Intensity	Effects
-10	<i>Dead Magic:</i> A plane with the Dead Magic trait functions in all respects like an <i>antimagic field</i> spell for the purposes of druidic spells. Divination spells cannot detect subjects within a Dead Magic plane, nor can a spellcaster use <i>teleport</i> or another spell to move in or out of it. The only exceptions to the ‘no magic’ rule are permanent planar portals, which still function normally.
-9	2 nd level druidic spells cannot be cast.
-8	<i>Impeded Magic:</i> Druidic spells and spell-like abilities are more difficult to cast on planes with this trait. To cast a spell, the caster must make a Spellcraft check (DC 20 + the level of the spell). If the check fails, the spell does not function but is still lost as a prepared spell or spell slot. If the check succeeds, the spell functions normally. 3 rd level druidic spells cannot be cast.
-7	4 th level druidic spells cannot be cast. The wilderness begins to fail.
-6	5 th level druidic spells cannot be cast. Fey become extinct.
-5	6 th level druidic spells cannot be cast.
-4	7 th level druidic spells cannot be cast. Fey become rare.
-3	8 th level druidic spells cannot be cast. Barbarian tribes become less common.
-2	9 th level druidic spells cannot be cast. The great wildernesses diminish.
-1	Fey and magical beasts become less common.
0	<i>Normal Magic:</i> Druidic magic works as described in <i>Core Rulebook I</i> .
1	Druids become more common. The borders between civilisation and wilderness become blurred.
2	+1 metamagic
3	Religion is more often found in woodland glades than in cathedrals.
4	+2 metamagic
5	Fey and magical beasts become common.
6	+3 metamagic
7	Most major zones of life (forests, oceans) become sentient.
8	+4 metamagic
9	Everyone on the plane is a druidic spellcaster.
10	+5 metamagic

Proximity Trait Effects

Intensity	Effects
0	<i>Utterly Separate:</i> The two planes are divided by the wide gulf of at least one transitive plane.
1-2	A single gate exists between the two planes, manifesting only when rare conditions occur on the transitive plane.
3-4	The greatest scholars of one plane have heard of the other.
5-6	A handful of gates exist between the two planes.
7-8	<i>Co-terminus:</i> The two planes touch at multiple special places, where natural portals may exist between the two.
9-10	Portals between the two planes appear whenever conditions on one plane mirror those on the other (portals to Fire in the hearts of volcanoes, for example)
11-13	The planes are now usually <i>aspected</i> or <i>mildly aligned</i> to each other.
14-15	<i>Co-existent:</i> The two planes touch at every point.
16-17	The planes are now usually dominated by or strongly aligned to each other.
18-19	Portals between the planes open randomly throughout both planes.
20	<i>Merged:</i> The two planes are merging into one.

Proximity Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Moving Planes	+X	The plane's proximity to another plane varies. It changes by twice the value of X over time. Any time spent at a Positive proximity value must be balanced with time spent at a negative value.

Accessibility Trait Effects

Intensity	Effects
0-1	<i>Sealed:</i> The plane cannot be accessed by any means. Attempts to <i>gate</i> or <i>plane shift</i> to the plane fail. No one can enter or leave the plane.
2-3	<i>Single Portal:</i> There is a single way into the plane – all attempts to <i>gate</i> or <i>plane shift</i> deposit the traveller at this single point. The plane still requires a key.
4-5	<i>Locked:</i> A specific, singular item, spell, password or other token is needed to access the plane. For example, only someone wearing a <i>crown of kings</i> can <i>gate</i> to the plane.
6-7	<i>Keyed:</i> A specific type of item or other token is needed. For example, only someone wearing a crown can <i>gate</i> to the plane.
8	<i>Planar Barrier:</i> Anyone trying to cast a spell to access the plane must make a Spellcraft check (DC 45) to get through the borders. If the check fails, the spell fails. If the plane has a key, it automatically overcomes the planar barrier. Most portals are designed with the key in mind, so the barrier does not affect them.
9	<i>Planar Barrier:</i> As above, but the DC drops to 40.
10	<i>Planar Barrier:</i> As above, but the DC drops to 45.
11	<i>Planar Barrier:</i> As above, but the DC drops to 30.
12	<i>Planar Barrier:</i> As above, but the DC drops to 25.
13	<i>Planar Barrier:</i> As above, but the DC drops to 20.
14	<i>Planar Barrier:</i> As above, but the DC drops to 15.
15-16	<i>Accessible Through Magic:</i> The plane can be accessed normally through spells or portals.
17-19	<i>Accessible Through Key:</i> The plane can be accessed from a co-existent or coterminous plane by anyone who has the right key. For example, anyone wearing a crown can will themselves to the other plane as a standard action. In the case of coterminous planes, the character must still be at a point where the two planes touch.
20	<i>Merged:</i> The two planes are one. A character can walk from one to the other.

Accessibility Quirks

Quirk	Value	Effects
Backfire	+2	If a caster fails the Spellcraft check to overcome a planar barrier, he takes 1d6 points of points of damage per level of the spell. A failed <i>gate</i> , for example, deals 9d6 points of damage.
Multiple Keys	+1 per key	Several different types of key allow access to the plane.
Complex Key	+1 per component	The key is actually a combination of different parts; a physical item, a word, a spell and so on. The 'key' to the plane might be 'the traveller must wear a crown and recite a specific rhyme while casting <i>plane shift</i> .'

'The multiverse is a very complicated puzzle. Gates and keys, locks and monsters, like some tremendous dungeon; but there is an answer. Of this, I am certain.'

TRAVELLING THE PLANES PORTALS

Those without recourse to their own spells or innate abilities travel the planes by means of portals, magical passages and back doors that criss-cross reality. Some portals are natural, but the majority were created in ages past. A portal can take any form, but most are in the shapes of doors, teleportation circles, gateways or other symbols of egress.

Some portals are doors, leading only to an adjacent plane. Others are gateways, leading to more distant realms. The larger and more useful a portal, the better known it is. Whole cities have grown up around major portals, in the same way a mundane metropolis grows around a ford or harbour. These cities, called gate-towns, are the heart of commerce on the planes. Their portals are always kept in huge fortified barbicans, filled with traps and magical defences. Should an enemy take the far side of the portal, invaders could swarm into the heart of the gate-town unless stopped by the barbican. Some portals have been sealed inside

activated barbicans for centuries, waiting for someone to navigate the death traps and passageways and shut down the defences.

Appearance of a Portal

A portal can look like almost anything. Most are doors or frames that the traveller walks through, but others are shadows cast by statues, where one walks into the shadow to pass through the portal; others are gems to be touched, boats that cross a misty lake, wells to climb into, symbols scratched into a wall or road, or chambers with only one door but two exits. Most portals only allow a single traveller to pass at any one time, but portals large enough to transport whole armies or fleets do exist.

Finding a Portal

Most established portals are obvious – it is hard to mistake a jade arch encrusted with runes of travel or a glowing yellow doorway for anything other than a portal. The more cosmopolitan cities have signposts indicating the location of the nearest portal, as well as the portal’s destination and how to activate it. However, locating an inactive, hidden or obscure portal is more challenging.

How Common Are Portals?

Natural portals can crop up anywhere, but are almost always found in planes that are strongly influenced or close to another (i.e., the planes have a Proximity of seven or higher, or are *Strongly Aligned* or *Dominated* by an element or energy). The Accessibility trait of the plane also affects the number of portals. Add the Proximity and Accessibility traits and the absolute value of any relevant Elemental or Alignment traits, then consult the Natural Portal Frequency table.

Natural Portal Frequency

Total	Portals are...	Knowledge (local) DC
0	Non-existent.	-
1-10	Exceedingly rare; one per continent, or thereabouts.	50
11-20	One per country.	30
21-30	One every fifty miles or so.	20
31-40	One every few miles.	10
41-50	One every mile or so.	5

The frequency of artificial portals varies depending on how advanced and magical the folk of the plane are. Most powerful civilisations build at least a handful of portals, for magical research or out of curiosity. Others become involved in planar commerce, trading for rare or exotic goods from the far reaches of creation.

Finally, certain ancient ruins contain portals at their hearts. However, there are dark things waiting to erupt into the world and it is not wise to open certain doors.

Portal Aura Components

Trait	Aura
Gravity > = +5	The aura curls back in on itself.
Gravity < = -5	The aura has many spikes and flares.
Time < = -5	The aura changes exceedingly slowly.
Time > = +5	The aura shimmers and jumps much faster than normal.
Size < = -5	The aura extends several feet from the portal.
Size > = +5	The aura is limited to a narrow band around the portal.
Water-Aspected or Dominated	The aura leaves tiny beads of moisture behind.
Fire-Aspected or Dominated	The aura has scorched the area around the portal.
Air-Aspected or Dominated	A breeze blows from the portal.
Earth-Aspected or Dominated	Tiny fragments of stone and dirt encrust the area around the portal.
Positive-Aspected or Dominated	The aura is much brighter than normal.
Negative-Aspected or Dominated	The aura is much darker than normal.
Arcane > 10	Tiny sparkles of energy flow through the aura.
Divine > 10	The aura is attracted to holy symbols, just like iron filings are attracted to a magnet.
Green > 10	Green streaks run through the aura.

The simplest method is to use the *detect portal* and *locate portal* spells (see page 57). *Detect magic*, *arcane sight* and *trueseeing* also allow a caster to notice the presence of a portal. (A portal glows with moderate Conjunction when seen with *detect magic*.)

Experienced planar travellers can sense a nearby portal in the same way elves notice secret doors – if a character with 10 or more ranks in Knowledge (the planes) is entitled to a Spot check to notice a portal if he passes within five feet of the portal. A portal that is simply inactive, such as a pair of standing stones, requires a Spot check (DC 10). Hidden portals such as a ring of tiny runes concealed by a layer of moss call for a much higher Spot DC (25 or more, depending on how well hidden the portal is).

A tracker can notice the unusual footprints left by otherworldly creatures, especially when such trails vanish abruptly at the portal. Locating a portal by tracks alone is a very time-consuming method, but is often the only way to escape a plane without resorting to magic.

Once a portal has been found, most travellers would prefer to know where it might take them before stepping through. Again, *detect portal* allows a character to study the aura of a portal (see below), while a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 25) can ascertain roughly where the portal goes (what sort of plane and possibly the name of the plane, if it is a well known one).

Auras

Portals are surrounded by a magical aura, similar to one surrounding a magical item. The subtleties of this aura cannot be perceived with *detect magic*, which merely shows the presence of Conjunction magic. When observed with *detect portal* or *arcane sight*, the colours in the portal's aura can be seen. Each plane has its own unique colour (see the Random Plane Table, page 241), as well as streaks and marks reflecting what sort of traits the plane has. A Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 15) is needed to interpret these signs.

'To open a portal is to bridge two points across the Transitive, as opposed to directly translating between the two points. An upsetting imperfection in the otherwise unbroken membrane of a reality.'

- Alastherion's Planar Encyclopaedia

Portal Guardians

Isolated or forgotten portals often attract guardians. The flux of magical energies around a portal makes it a desirable abode for aberrations and magical beasts. Creatures like gricks, ethereal marauders, gargoyles and phasms can be found near portals. Fey and elemental creatures like genies claim portals to their home planes, so they can literally have the best of both worlds (the strength and purity that come from an elemental plane, and the rich variety of a mixed plane).

Random Portal Appearances

2d20	Size	Appearance
1	Single Traveller	An ordinary wooden door, set into a stone frame.
2	Single Traveller	A pair of marble pillars, standing five feet apart.
3	Single Traveller	An alleyway, where strange cats paw through alien garbage.
4	Single Traveller	A shiny brass circle, held upright by a stone hand reaching out of the ground.
5	Single Traveller	A huge face that materialises in the stone; travellers must walk into its gaping mouth.
6	Single Traveller	A marble circle, electric blue in colour. When activated, a ring of lightning shoots up and engulfs the traveller.
7	Single Traveller	A suit of full plate armour, hanging on a stand. Travellers must put on the armour and close the visor to activate the portal. They vanish, leaving the suit empty.
8	Single Traveller	A small grate in the floor. It leads to a narrow passageway or sewer that slopes in an impossible direction.
9	Single Traveller	A freestanding pane of crystal that spins constantly. Travellers must step into the spinning crystal.
10	Single Traveller	A large praying mantis; when activated, it traces symbols in the air to create a portal.
11	Single Traveller	Three braziers in a triangle; when lit, clouds of pungent smoke gush out and hide the traveller. When the smoke clears, the triangle is empty.
12	Single Traveller	A crystal staff; when held up to the rising or setting sun, a beam of bright orange light transports the traveller.
13	Single Traveller	A narrow arc of stone, like a fallen bridge. The traveller walks along the arc, vanishing at the midpoint.
14	Single Traveller	A painting of a landscape, with tiny figures walking away from the observer. When the portal is activated, the traveller vanishes to become part of the painting.
15	Single Traveller	A curtain of silvery liquid, flowing down from a spatial rift. Step through the curtain to activate the portal.
16	Single Traveller	A door covered in interlinked cogs and wheels; pulling a lever makes the cogs spin out of position, opening the door.
17	Single Traveller	A swarm of wasps that crawl out and cover the traveller; they then fly off and deliver the traveller.
18	Single Traveller	An ornate pair of double doors, plated with engraved jade slabs and golden fittings. When a traveller approaches, shadowy images of the traveller's desired destination appear on the slabs.
19	Single Traveller	A series of doors, each one finer but smaller than the rest. The first door is big enough for an ogre, but is made of plain iron. The last is so small that even a halfling must squeeze through, but is made of glittering diamonds.
20	Single Traveller	A mirror hanging on a wall. The traveller must touch the mirror while looking into it; the reflection of the world behind him changes to that of the destination.

21	Single Traveller	A brick wall. Symbols are scratched into several bricks; when pressed, the wall moves and folds to create a portal.
22	Single Traveller	A sword on a chain; to open the portal, the traveller must take the sword and slice a bloody rent in the air, then step through.
23	Single Traveller	A garden path, which twists and turns through high hedges. Once the traveller walks out of sight down the path, the portal activates.
24	Single Traveller	A door with a brass plate on it; the plate becomes a ghoulish face that interrogates travellers before permitting them to pass through the portal.
25	Party (2-12)	A pair of large bronze gates, wide enough for two horses to ride abreast through. There is nothing but mist beyond the gates, until they open.
26	Party (2-12)	A strange, eerie lake; the only way across is a small boat, manned by a hooded and cloaked figure. The ferryman demands a fee...
27	Party (2-12)	A pair of statues depicting fish; when activated, they both spray green liquid light into the air, forming a pool that is the portal.
28	Party (2-12)	A stone courtyard; when all the gates are closed, the portal activates, transporting anyone standing there to the destination plane.
29	Party (2-12)	A circle of ruined and broken ground; when the portal is activated, a tornado descends from the clouds and sucks up the travellers.
30	Party (2-12)	A huge eye rimmed with fire appears above the travellers; it blinks, and they vanish.
31	Party (2-12)	A huge door, scaled for a giant. On the far side of the portal, the door is normal-sized.
32	Party (2-12)	A portcullis that slides down into the ground instead of being drawn upwards when used as a portal.
33	Party (2-12)	A pool of water; when touched, slimy tentacles erupt out of the pool, wrap around anyone nearby and drag them in.
34	Party (2-12)	A phantasmal image of a dragon that picks the travellers up and carries them off.
35	Any Number	A vast marble archway, bedecked with golden statues and symbols of triumph. Walking under the arch triggers the portal.
36	Any Number	A wide square surrounded by pillars; each pillar bears a rune. When all the appropriate runes are touched simultaneously, the portal triggers.
37	Any Number	A mirror-still pool of blue light; to travel through the portal, one simply leaps into the pool.
38	Any Number	A cloud of eerie yellowish fog that sparkles like gold in the sunlight. Walking into the mist triggers the portal.
39	Any Number	A pair of huge holes in the ground; when the portal is activated, a giant mechanical centipede crawls out of one hole. The centipede has a number of body-segments equal to the number of travellers, and each segment has a door in it. Once all the travellers are aboard, the centipede crawls into the other hole and delivers them to the destination plane.
40	Any Number	A black sphere standing on a pillar. When the portal is activated, the ball flies off and swallows up all the travellers nearby.

Constructed portals tend to be guarded by constructs. Golems are particularly popular, as are bound inevitables.

If a portal is well known and well travelled, it is guarded by whatever local authority claims the portal. Cities might build barbicans around a portal, or assign a contingent of guards to stand watch over it.

Activating Portals

Activation methods vary, but there are a few common ways to activate a portal.

- † **Command Word (free action):** Speaking the correct word activates the portal. Public portals usually have the command word inscribed on the portal; the activation words for others are closely guarded secrets.
- † **Touch Activated (free action):** Touching a symbol, stone or other icon activates the portal.
- † **Touch Activated (standard action):** Turning a wheel, pressing several icons in sequence or performing some other complex action activates the portal.
- † **Rite Activated (full-round or longer):** The portal requires a short ritual to be completed. Perhaps a particular prayer must be recited, a ring around the portal rotated into the correct position or a game of chess played against the portal.
- † **Spell Activated (standard action):** Casting a particular spell (usually open portal) is required to activate the portal.
- † **Sacrifice (standard action):** The portal demands a sacrifice. Often, such portals have a coin receptacle or burning brazier nearby. The cost of the sacrifice can be anything from a few coins to a magic item, depending on the whim of the portal builder, but the common fee is 500 gp per traveller.
- † **Drain (standard action):** The portal feeds on ability score points, hit points, spells or even experience. The character activating the portal can sense the drain before it happens and can pull away before it takes effect. The drain can

be of any size, but the common cost is one point of temporary Constitution or Wisdom damage, 1d8 hit points, three levels of spells or 50 experience points.

- † **Key Activated (standard action):** The portal requires a particular key or other item to activate it.
- † **Proxy Activated (any):** The portal uses any one of the above methods for activation, with one important difference – the person activating the portal cannot go through the portal during this activation. Summoned monsters are often used as proxy operators for such portals.

When a portal is activated, there is a surge of magical energy. This surge is obvious to anyone looking with *detect magic* and is often strong enough to be visible, creating a shimmering doorway. Some portals allow travellers to see the destination plane, but most are opaque.

Passing through a portal can be done as part of a move action – the traveller need merely walk into the portal to travel. Most portals are one-way, but two-way portals are not. Items can be thrown through a portal, and spells can be cast through as normal.

Most portals remain open for ten rounds (one minute), plus one round in which a traveller passes through the portal. For example, if a party of six characters open a portal, wait two rounds, then all walk through, the portal will stay open for another three rounds. Other portals keep to their own schedules, such as staying open for a set amount of time or requiring the character who opened it to concentrate for the duration of the portal's active period.

Some portals can be activated any number of times per day, but others are restricted to a set number of activations. Some of the most powerful portals can only be activated when a particular planar alignment comes to pass.

Portal Travel

Door-based portals are simple. They open directly onto the adjacent (coterminous or coexistent) plane; essentially, the traveller steps from one room to another. *Gate*-based portals are more complex, as there is a transitive plane between the point of origin and the destination. *Gate*-based portals can function in one of three ways:

- † **Reality Fold:** The portal distorts the spatial structure of the transitive plane so that the two planes are almost touching. This is how the standard *gate* spell works. From the perspective of an observer on the transitive plane, the portal activation looks like a momentary flash of magic, nothing more. This is the only form of *gate*-based portal that allows travellers to see their destination before travelling.
- † **Teleport:** Travellers moving through the portal enter the transitive plane and are then instantly *teleported* to another point on the plane adjacent to the destination plane, and are then finally pushed through another *door* to the destination. From the traveller's perspective, this is just a momentary 'hiccup,' a feeling of dislocation as they pass through the portal. From the perspective of an observer on the transitive plane, there is a flash of magic followed by a second, immensely distant flash. If the observer has readied a *dimensional anchor* spell or other *teleport*-blocking effect, the traveller can be intercepted.
- † **Conduit:** The portal creates a magical conduit between the two *doors*. Travellers within this conduit travel at immense speeds, reaching the far *door* within seconds. Such portals have a 'travel time' of 1d4+1 rounds, during which time the traveller finds himself flying down a narrow tunnel of frozen light, congealed ether, solid shadow or some other transitive substance. From the perspective of our observer, the portal activation causes a twisting worm-like conduit to erupt into existence. This conduit rapidly grows and stretches out to the far *door*. A creature on the transitive plane can attempt to destroy this conduit; if successful, anyone using the portal is dumped into the middle of the transitive plane. Some portals

create a new conduit for every activation, but a few are built with one particular conduit in mind and are subsequently rendered useless if the conduit is destroyed. The strength of a conduit depends on the transitive plane.

Portal Properties

A portal can do nothing more than link two distant points, but can also have a variety of special abilities and properties. Each property has an associated cost, which increases the cost of building the portal (see Building Portals on pg. 32), as well as the required spells. Unless otherwise noted, all spell effects are cast at the same caster level as the portal.

- † **Portal of the Byways:** This portal can create a *door* to an adjacent transitive plane, usually the Astral, in addition to going to its normal destination. The character activating the portal chooses where the portal goes to. Requirement: *door*. Cost: 10.
- † **Portal of Communication:** The portal magically gives any travellers the ability to speak the common language of the destination plane. This ability vanishes when the travellers leave the plane. Requirement: *tongues*. Cost: 5.
- † **Portal of Delay:** Anyone travelling through the portal is held for six rounds just before they exit the portal. An *alarm* sounds on the far end at the start of this six-round delay, giving time for defences to be activated. The travellers are aware that they are being kept in an extra-dimensional limbo, but cannot act. Requirement: *dimensional anchor*; *hold monster*. Cost: 5.
- † **Portal of Doom:** A *portal of doom* lies about its destination. Any attempts to determine the destination point of the portal give a false result. Usually, *portals of doom* dump travellers into

Conduits

Transitive Plane	Substance	Hardness	Hit Points	Appearance
Astral	Silver Cords	20	50	A woven filigree of shimmering silver threads.
Ethereal	Ectoplasm	3	30	A gooey tube.
Shadow	Solid Shadow	10	10	Jet-black stone corridor.
Dream	Water	-	40	A stream of water that carries the traveller along.
Spirit	Will	20	10	An endless row of growling stone statues.
World Ash	Ivy	2	20	A writhing, living green vine.

the middle of the Negative Energy Plane. Requirement: *non-detection*. Cost: 3.

- † **Portal of Erasure:** A *portal of erasure* strips magic away from travellers. It casts a single-target *dispel magic* (see *Core Rulebook I*) on each traveller while they are in transit. Requirement: *dispel magic*. Cost: 10.
- † **Portal of Hidden Destinations:** This functions just like a *portal of multiple destinations*, but all attempts to determine where the portal goes just detect the primary destination, like a *portal of doom*. Requirement: *non-detection*. Cost: 2 +1 per destination.
- † **Portal of Justice:** The *portal of justice* functions similarly to a *portal of multiple destinations*, but sends travellers to the nearest accessible plane that matches their alignment. A good traveller would be sent to one of the planes of the Firmament, while an evil traveller would be condemned to the Infernum. Requirement: *detect evil*. Cost: 10.
- † **Portal of Multiple Destinations:** A *portal of multiple destinations*, as the name suggests, can access several planes instead of just one. It can only access one plane at a time, and the destination plane is chosen when the portal is activated. Cost: 40 – the Proximity trait – the Accessibility trait of each additional plane.
- † **Portal of Protection:** The *portal of protection* casts *shifting element shield* on all travellers when they pass through it. Requirement: *shifting element shield*. Cost: 7.
- † **Portal of Sickness:** Anyone travelling through a *portal of sickness* is nauseated for 2d6 rounds if they fail a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the caster level of the portal). Cost: 5.
- † **Portal of Transformation:** The *portal of transformation* casts *polymorph* on all travellers when they pass through it, transforming them into a creature capable of surviving on the destination plane. Requirement: *polymorph*. Cost: 5.
- † **Portal of Watchfulness:** The *portal of watchfulness* observes all travellers using *truesight*, and telepathically reports all the information it gathers to its creator or another designated receiver. Requirement: *sending, trueseeing*. Cost: 3.

Building Portals

A character must be a spellcaster with the Craft Portal feat to build a portal. Devices for travelling

through the planes can of course be made using Craft Wondrous Item (*cubic gates, wells of many worlds* and so on), but a portal works according to quite different rules. Spells are rather inflexible; it costs the same effort to open a *gate* when travelling to a nearby plane as it does when travelling to the most distant reaches of the Far Realms. The wizard must reuse the same formula again and again, and researching new spells is costly and difficult. Portals, on the other hand, are all unique and can be tailored to the local situation. A portal can be built on top of a thin spot in the fabric of reality or be oriented to take advantage of an energy flow on the transitive plane.

To calculate the cost of the portal, use the following formula:

Cost = (50 – the Proximity Trait – the Accessibility Trait) x 2 – any drawbacks + any properties

The drawbacks are described above, under Portal Activation.

For example, a sorcerer intends to build a portal between the Material Plane and the Plane of Water. The two planes are coterminous (Proximity 7) and are Accessible Through Magic (Accessibility 15). The base cost is therefore (50-7-15) x 2 = 56. To bring the cost down, the sorcerer adds a drawback – the flames of the portal burn 2d8 hit points away from any travellers. This reduces the cost of the portal down to 50.

If the planes have a Proximity trait less than 7, the portal requires a *gate* spell. Otherwise, the caster need only know *door*.

The required caster level and price of the portal in gold and experience is as follows:

The sorcerer must be at least 12th level to construct a permanent portal between the two planes. He needs to know the door spell and must spend 25,000 gp and 1,000 XP on the portal.

MINGLINGS

Minglings are rare phenomena, where one plane bleeds into another. The first sign of a mingling is in the sky, as colours and strange clouds race through the atmosphere. Portals are small, even insignificant compared to the size of even a pocket plane. A mingling can engulf an entire plane and even a small mingling is a mile or more across.

Portal Drawbacks

Drawback	Value
Sacrifice	2 per 500 gp cost per activation
Ability Score Damage	3 per point of damage per activation
Hit Point Damage	3 per 1d8 points of damage per activation
Spell Slot Damage	3 per three slots
Experience Damage	4 per 50 XP spent per activation
<i>Portal is usable only...</i>	
Three times per day	5
Once per day	10
Once per week	15
Once per year	25
Only during alignment	50
<i>Gate Method (only when Proximity trait < 7)</i>	
Reality Fold	0
<i>Teleport</i>	10, but requires <i>teleport</i>
Conduit	10

Some minglings are subtle – if the Plane of Air mingles with a section of sky, or the Water Plane with a stretch of ocean, then the environments blend into each other. The winds become stronger, the surrounding sky becomes bluer and bluer until the traveller passes through the mingling and suddenly there is no ground below.

Even quite different planes can mingle in subtle ways. Often, two similar locations on two different planes will mingle. A dense forest on the Material Plane might merge with the Wood Between the Worlds, or a ruined city of fallen pillars flow into another ruin on an outer plane. In the case of such subtle minglings, use the rules for Finding a Portals on pg. 26. However, instead of Spot checks, use Survival checks – a character who pays attention to the environment around him will notice tiny shifts in vegetation or terrain, as one reality blends into another.

Larger minglings are much more obvious – when two worlds smash into each other, there is never enough space for subtle blendings. Planes tend to flow rather like liquids, so the denser and stronger elements of a plane go unchanged while softer places blend. If the Plane of Fire mingles with the Material Plane (a major disaster...),

then rivers of flame and gouts of plasma might turn the forests into living wildfires and scorch the fields, but the rocky mountains and stone castles would be relatively untouched. Similarly, on the far side of the mingling, the denser red fires would be unchanged, but the softer yellow and blue flames might meld with material objects, resulting in trees with leaves of blue fire, or fields of yellow burning grain.

Small minglings occur when two planes have a Proximity trait of 9 or higher. Larger minglings occur when the Proximity trait of two planes reaches 19 or 20. This is usually caused by potent magics (see Planecrafting, page 228), but sometimes two planes floating through the Astral Plane crash into each other and merge.

TRAVEL BY MAGIC

Portals are all well and good for the common folk, but a true traveller uses magic to navigate the planes. Portals are limiting; they are the roads and well-trodden paths of the cosmos. Magic opens up the wilderness

Portal Cost

Portal Cost	Caster Level Required	Gold Cost	XP Cost
0-10	5 th	5,000 gp	200 XP
11-20	7 th	10,000 gp	400 XP
21-30	9 th	15,000 gp	600 XP
31-40	11 th	20,000 gp	800 XP
41-50	12 th	25,000 gp	1,000 XP
51-60	13 th	30,000 gp	1,200 XP
61-70	14 th	35,000 gp	1,400 XP
71-80	15 th	40,000 gp	1,600 XP
81-90	16 th	45,000 gp	1,800 XP
91-100	17 th	50,000 gp	2,000 XP
101-110	18 th	55,000 gp	2,200 XP
111-120	19 th	60,000 gp	2,400 XP
121+	20 th	75,000 gp	3,000 XP

of reality to the traveller. An understanding of magic is vital to planar travel. The spells commonly used for travel are all well known across the planes.

Astral Projection

While this potent spell allows a character to explore the planes in relative safety (few things can sever a silver cord), it is seen as a somewhat cowardly and false method of travel, somewhat akin to sending a simulacrum. Showing a silver cord is a sign of treachery. Of course, this matters little to some creatures, who use their astral forms to attack enemies.

One common trick is the ‘astral doppelganger.’ A creature can use *astral projection* to form an astral body, then bring this astral body to another plane where it becomes a copy of the original body. The character then casts another *astral projection*, forming a second astral body. For those paranoid of having their silver cords followed and their sleeping bodies attacked, using astral doppelgangers can throw enemies off the trail. Others build sarcophagi to protect their suspended forms.

The astral form is also referred to as the ‘body of fire,’ because it seems to be made of flame when seen with *arcane eye*, *arcane sight* or *true seeing*.

Door

Door is an easy method of transporting large numbers from one plane to another, rivalling *gate* in its carrying capacity. The major drawback of *door* is its inability to jump more than one plane at a time, forcing those relying on this spell to travel via the Astral Plane – and the Astral is less than forgiving to those without sufficient magic. It is very easy for a traveller to get into trouble while using *door*.

Ethereal Jaunt and Etherealness

While these spells have a rather short duration and are normally used to move in the Border Ethereal, they can be used for long-term planar travel when coupled with *teleport*. The trick is to *teleport* to the edge of the Deep Ethereal and move there before the spell’s duration ends. When the character manifests, he manifests in the Deep Ethereal instead of dropping back to the Material Plane. From the Deep Ethereal, the character can move to the borders of any of the Elemental Planes or the Astral Plane.

Of course, the problem with this tactic is that the character has no way to get off the Ethereal Plane without a spell like *door*.

Gate

Gate is the pinnacle of planar travel spells. It creates an unstoppable arc of magic that folds space and punches a hole straight to any point in the cosmos that the caster chooses; it also requires significant magic such as *forbiddance* to block. It can carry a vast amount of material (even the weakest *gate* can transport a small army to a distant plane). It can also be used to call the most potent creatures from other realms.

The generic version of *gate* is a shimmering pool of colour, but most arcane spellcasters learn to create their own particular variation. A wizard’s *gate* is as unique as his personal sigil – one wizard’s *gate* might be a brass hoop covered with baroque decorations, another might create a gaping maw full of sharp teeth. Clerical *gates* are granted by their respective deities and are often accompanied by celestial choruses or surrounded by cherubs.

Plane Shift

Better known as ‘poor man’s *portal*’, *plane shift* creates a momentary *gate* to a specified plane. The spell is notoriously inaccurate and has a nasty habit of dumping travellers in unpleasant situations. Those relying on *plane shift* usually couple it with *teleport*, but this is not an option for every traveller. Using *plane shift* as one’s primary method of transport is seen as rather gauche and unsophisticated, the magical equivalent of riding a rather inbred and sickly nag instead of a thoroughbred horse. *Plane shifting* characters are often dismissed as lost travellers from a backwater world.

Still, *plane shift* is a cheap and easy way of travelling even to separate planes. It is also surprisingly flexible – when used as a touch attack, *plane shift* can send a foe into the Negative Energy or similarly hostile plane.

Teleport

While none of the *teleport* family of spells can penetrate a planar boundary with an Accessibility of 15 or lower, the sheer scale of the planes practically demands that a traveller have access to *teleport*, to save long voyages across seas of souls or treks through endless jungles filled with hungry jaguar-spirits.

ITEMS & ARTEFACTS

Devices of planar travel are common; relying on portals for travel is risky (every traveller has nightmares about stepping through a portal and finding it is barred on the other side), and not everyone can muster sufficient magic to *plane shift* or open a *door*. A wise traveller

‘The larger plane is referred to as the magister, the lesser as the minister. The minister plane is most assuredly doomed should the mingling endure; the best it can hope for is incorporation as a new layer of the magister.’

- Alastherion’s Planar Encyclopaedia

brings a few *scrolls of plane shift* or *planewalker talismans* for use in emergencies. Full details of these items are given in *Core Rulebook II*.

Armour of Etherealness

Unlike the spell, there is no time limit for how long a character can stay on the Ethereal Plane while using this armour. This makes the armour ideal for long explorations, even to the Deep Ethereal and beyond.

Rod of Security

This item works by transporting the users to a pocket plane with the following traits: Size 6, Morphic 5, Life 1, Proximity 0, Accessibility 1. This last trait means that the plane can normally only be accessed using the *rod of security*. It is possible to overcome this using *planecraft*.

Amulet of the Planes

A popular device for planar voyaging, the *amulet* permits the use of *plane shift* at will. A character with five or more ranks in Knowledge (the planes) gets a +2 synergy bonus to the Intelligence check required to use this item.

Cloak of Etherealness

More utilitarian than *armour of etherealness*, this cloak allows the wearer to use *ethereal jaunt* multiple times per day.

Cubic Gate

This is one of the most powerful items a traveller can possess. The ability to freely open a gate to any of six planes is most potent, as is the quick escape offered by pressing a side twice. Curiously, the item is based on the *plane shift* spell rather than *gate*; it compensates for the inaccuracy of *plane shift* by generating thousands of *plane shifts* and opening the most accurate one. This means that a *cubic gate* is always slightly off compared to a *gate* or *greater teleport*. It also creates a great magical distortion, making the transit obvious to anyone with the *arcane sight* to see it, and attracts attention.

Stones of Shift Guidance

To compensate for the inaccuracy of *plane shift*, many planar cities install these magical obelisks. A *stone of shift guidance* has an area of effect of five hundred miles and pulls any *plane shift* spells 1d100 miles towards it. Multiple *stones of shift guidance* have a cumulative effect, so enough stones in one place can ensure that all *plane shifting* travellers arrive at that spot. Many large cities have a particular square, civic building or even a barbican lined with these stones.

A *stone of shift guidance* is usually made in the form of a blue marble obelisk, topped with a crystal sphere. The sphere glows when the stone is ‘dragging’ a *plane shifting* character.

Moderate abjuration; CL7th; Craft Wondrous Item, *dimensional anchor*; Price 28,000 gp.

One side of a *cubic gate* always goes to the Material Plane, and another always goes to the home plane of the creator (or a random plane, if the cube was carved on the Material Plane). The Astral Plane is given a side on almost every *cubic gate*. The other three or four sides should be determined randomly (see the Random Plane Table, page 241).

Mirror of Mental Prowess

A *mirror of mental prowess* can create a *gate* effect, allowing the user to visit other planes. As the location can be *scryed* before the traveller opens the gate, it is one of the safest ways to travel. These powerful devices are exceedingly rare and possession of one is a sign of high status on the planes.

Ring Gate

Although *ring gates* use the *gate* spell, it is simply employed as a means of folding space and cannot reach across planar boundaries.

Well of Many Worlds

The *well’s* destination should be randomly determined (see the Random Plane Table, page 241) every eight hours or whenever the item is moved. A character can observe the energies around the gate to determine what sort of plane lies on the other side of the portal (see Auras, pg. 27).

FELLOW TRAVELLERS

Perhaps once, long ago, the Outer Planes existed in a perfect balance. Above and below, chaos to order, life to death and round again, all the worlds moved in divine synchronisation like a great clock; every being had its place and made its own contribution to the great war. Some say it was the coming of impatient, out-of-place mortals to the Outer Planes that ruined it all, while others blame machinations of Chaos.

Others simply shrug and guess that there were always rats in the pantry.

There are two sides to every plane, from the highest of the Firmament to the basest hell. From one perspective, the planes are the homes of gods and outsiders of inconceivable might. Each plane is a bastion of some power or ethos in the eternal struggle for all that is. They are the places where heroes go, where infinite evil clashes with infinite good and where the gods and their great agents walk like giants amid the outer reaches.

From another perspective, the planes are the homes of gods and outsiders of inconceivable might, yes – but who does not share his home with all sorts of rats and vermin? Whole races have grown up in the shadows and footprints of the gods; there is an underworld of villainy, trade, secrecy and, perhaps, *mortality* in the planes. The houses of the gods have been colonised (or infested) with a medley of strange beings who have nothing to do with the great balance of the planes or the war between good and evil – unless they choose to take sides.

Planar Organisations

Most creatures never leave their home planes. Certainly on the Material or Elemental Planes, only a tiny fraction of the folk even know about the existence of other planes. Suggestions that one can travel to the Afterworld without dying or that there are places where not everything is on fire are taken as heresy, madness or the retelling of myths by most sensible folk. Even on the much more cosmopolitan Outer Planes, most outsiders spend eternity contemplating the infinite majesty of the gods or tormenting the damned, never actually travelling to another plane even though they are aware of their existence. There is, therefore, an unspoken bond between fellow planar

travellers, an understanding of the dangers and the wonders of plunging headlong from one world to another.

The various planar organisations were founded by travellers to establish a network of allies and friends scattered across the planes. Over the centuries, they have grown beyond their original goals of brotherhood, and now the organisations each have their own interests and spheres of influence. Some have even become players in the great game.

Using Planar Organisations

The key to the various organisations is that they have agents or outposts on most of the planes of existence, allowing them to serve as running antagonists or allies in a campaign. They offer continuity in a game where the environment changes radically every session. Organisations can also be patrons, plot hook dispensers or refuges for the characters.

Characters can join one or more organisations and each has a feat and a three-level prestige class attached to it. If a character joins an organisation, they should take the appropriate feat as soon as possible. The prestige class can be taken at any point after that, and represents the character's involvement in the goals and running of the organisation. A character can take a level in the class, then take levels in a different class before moving back to the organisation class without penalty.

PLANEWRIGHTS

The Planewrights' Guild is an order of craftsmen who make planes. They were founded by an archmage who studied the planes (some credit Alastherion with being the first of the order; others claim it was the sorcerer-chiurgeon Qui). The great days of the Planewrights' Guild are long past – once, they alone held the secrets of planecraft, so any arcanist or powerful being wanting its own made-to-order demiplane would have to trade with the Planewrights. Their coffers overflowed with the wealth of empires and kings, until a thief stole one of their spellbooks and the knowledge of spells and infusions passed into common lore.

The Planewrights remain the pre-eminent experts on planecrafting and the metaphysics of space; they also have alliances with the Wayfarers, the Combine and the powers of Law to ensure that the planes stay safe and traversable. Planewrights have been known to descend on endangered realms and fend off dangerous minglings or extraplanar invasions. The forces of Chaos are opposed to the Planewrights and the highly

morphic realms of Chaos are often stolen and shaped by opportunistic Planewrights.

Most Planewrights are spellcasters or sages of some sort, although the organisation does welcome investigators and bodyguards to aid and protect their more cerebral members. The guild is still wealthy, both from its trade in infusions and spells and from the residue of its original vast fortune, but the guild is in something of a decline. Without some grand project to unite its membership, the guild may slip away to become nothing but an adjunct to the powers of Law or the Combine.

Organisation

The Planewrights are modelled on a loose guild structure, with apprentices, journeymen, masters and grandmasters. A Planewright must complete an act of planecrafting to progress beyond a journeyman and must make a new demiplane to become a master. The Grandmaster dwells on the home plane of the



Member of the Planewrights' Guild
 You are a member of the Guild of Planewrights.
Prerequisite: Knowledge (the planes) 5 ranks.
Benefit: You can perceive the traits of a plane automatically, without needing to use *arcane sight* or similar spells; merely standing in the plane is enough.

organisation, the Guildhouse, a demiplane that constantly orbits through the Astral Plane near the Inner Planes, harvesting infusions as it goes.

PLANEWRIGHT

Hit Dice: d6

Requirements

To become a Planewright, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Skills: Spellcraft 15 ranks.

Feats: Member of Planewrights' Guild.

Class Skills

The Planewrights' class skills (and the key abilities for each) are Appraise (Int), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (any) (Int), Speak Language (None), Spellcraft (Int), Survival (Wis) and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Planewrights' prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: Planewrights' gain no additional weapon or armour proficiencies.

Bonus Feat: The character gains the Craft Portal feat for free as a bonus feat. If he already possesses this feat, he gains Skill Focus (Spellcraft) or Skill Focus (Knowledge (the planes)) instead.

Planewright

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Bonus Feat, Secrets of the Doors
2 nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Stance of Yggdrasil, <i>Countercraft</i>
3 rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	<i>Planecraft</i> , Improved Planecrafting

Secrets of the Doors (Su): The Planewrights know the best methods for making portals. When constructing a portal, the Planewright can reduce the cost in both gold and experience to two-thirds normal.

Stance of Yggdrasil (Su): The character now counts as a *vergestave* for the purposes of creating pockets and extraplanar areas.

Countercraft (Sp): The character may cast *countercraft* once per day at a caster level equal to his character level.

Planecraft (Sp): The character may cast *planecraft* once per day at a caster level equal to his character level.

Improved Planecrafting (Su): The character may add half of his Knowledge (the planes) ranks to his Spellcraft check when crafting a plane.

THE COMBINE

The Combine is, on the face of it, the simplest and most direct of all the organisations. It is a trading group that spans the worlds, trafficking in all sorts of goods from the planes. Gems from the Plane of Earth are exchanged for weapons from the forges of the Infernum, furs from the Mythopoeia are traded for alchemical preparations or rare drugs and works of art. It has agents on every plane, and is the most widespread of all the organisations save perhaps the Wayfarers. It also has significant interests on the Material Plane.

The Combine was once a wholly neutral organisation, which rigorously observed local laws; if a particular plane banned a type of trade, such as slavery or religious iconography, the Combine would not quibble. Indeed, this is one of the reasons why smuggler's ports such as Tortuga arose. The Combine's reputation was one of scrupulous honesty and it still retains a sheen of dependability on many planes.

However, the inner circle of the Combine is currently dominated by a green dragon named Takash. The wyrm has a mysterious spell or artefact that allows her to *scry* on the other Combine members and has assassinated several rivals. Before joining the Combine, Takash had her own network of thieves and smugglers, and she is currently integrating her agents into the Combine. She is one of the wealthiest entities in all the planes, and is rumoured to be a consort of several deities of luck and trade.

Organisation

The Combine is held together by a complex internal web of trade agreements, tithes, tariffs and taxes. To the outside world, the Combine appears to be a massive monolith of commerce, but it is actually divided against itself thousands of times over. Characters who join the Combine and establish new markets and trade routes can sign over control of these resources to other members in exchange for a percentage of the profits or a flat fee. Most of the Combine's contracts are sanctified by inevitables.

The Combine has guildhouses in dozens of cities, but the inner circle dwells on the Astral Plane.

COMBINE TRADER

Hit Dice: d6

Requirements

To become a trader in the Combine, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Skills: Diplomacy 5 ranks, Sense Motive 5 ranks.

Feats: Member of the Combine.

Class Skills

The Combine Trader class skills (and the key ability for each) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Wis), Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility & royalty), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Listen (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language, Use Rope (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Combine Trader prestige class.

Member of the Combine

You are a member of the Combine.

Prerequisites: Appraise or Bluff 5 ranks, Profession (merchant) 3 ranks, 500 gp fee.

Benefit: You have a 10% discount on all goods bought from a Combine agent. Almost all major cities on the planes have such an agent.



Weapon and Armour Proficiency: Combine Traders gain no additional weapon or armour proficiencies.

Combine Reputation (Ex): On any plane where the Combine has influence (and this includes most of them), the character gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Appraise, Bluff, Diplomacy and Profession (merchant) checks.

Networking (Ex): The character hears all sorts of rumours from his Combine associates. He gains a variation of the Bardic Knowledge ability that only

Combine Trader

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Combine Reputation, Networking
2 nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Sanctify Deal, Improved Judgement
3 rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	<i>Debt Collection</i>

works for current rumours, but can use this for any of the planes without penalty.

Sanctify Deal (Su): The character can draw on certain ancient pacts made by the Combine and the powers of Law. If he declares he is sanctifying a deal (and informs all parties that he is doing so), then the terms of the deal will be enforced by an inevitable kolyarut. The inevitable arrives 1d20 hours after the deal is broken by any party. Only one kolyarut oversees a particular deal; if the kolyarut is destroyed, the inevitables take no further action.

Improved Judgement (Ex): The trader’s experience with other races and strange beliefs gives him a +4 insight bonus to Sense Motive checks and to Spot checks for seeing through disguises.

Debt Collection (Sp): The trader may now use *geas* spells to collect his debts. He may cast *lesser geas* on any creature who owes him less than 10,000 gp, and *geas* on any creature who owes him more. A creature’s life counts as being worth more than 10,000 gp. The trader may use this ability three times per day.

WAYFARERS

The Wayfarers are the least organised of the organisations presented here – they have no home plane, no fortress, no grandmaster or ceremonial guard. All they have a little bronze badge showing an open gateway and their good word.

Joining the Wayfarers is easy; all one needs to do is find an existing member of the group and learn from him the Wayfarer’s Oath. Most members, however, keep their status and their badges a secret except in times of dire need. The Wayfarer’s Oath demands that one Wayfarer help another on his way, no matter what the cost. The other Wayfarer could be a wanted criminal, a monster or a fiend, but the Oath still holds (a Wayfarer in the Infernum could demand aid from a demonic Wayfarer, and that demon would be bound by the Oath, for example).

If the Oath is broken, the oath-breaker is punished by the deities who watch over planar travel and is

restricted by a Planar Barrier requiring a Spellcraft check (DC 20) that affects only him. This barrier cannot be removed by anything short of an *atonement* spell.

The Wayfarers believe that the portals and paths running through creation must be kept open; some fight against those who would build restrictive barbicans or seal off planes, while others build and maintain new portals. The Wayfarers are not especially powerful in terms of numbers or influence, but their secrecy gives them an advantage and they count an unusual number of potent individuals such as adventurers among their members.

Organisation

The only 'organisation' to the Wayfarers is a system of hidden codes and sigils they use to mark portals and roadways with messages to other Wayfarers. Other than that code and the badge of the order, the Wayfarers have no common ties or holdings. They have certain sacred bonds to the deities of Travel and elder Wayfarers are encouraged to go on epic pilgrimages around all the planes to honour these gods.

Wayfarers tend to crop up in the unlikeliest of places, from the courts of mighty emperors to the blackest shadows beneath decaying cities. The Fellows of the Open Gate can be useful friends to have...

FELLOW OF THE OPEN GATE

Hit Dice: d8

Requirements

To become a Fellow of the Open Gate, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Skills: Bluff 5 ranks, Survival 5 ranks.

Feats: Member of the Wayfarers.

Class Skills

The Wayfarers class skills (and the key abilities for each) are Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Handle Animal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (all) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

The Wayfarer's Oath

I swear to do my utmost, by force of arms or magery, by honest faith or blackest treachery, by whatever means necessary, to aid the passing of my fellow Wayfarers. Should they ask of me directions, I shall guide them. Should they ask of me protection, I shall escort them to the nearest refuge or portal, or send them hence with mine own magic. Should they ask of me aught else, I shall point unto them the road, which leads to all things. Should I fail in my obligation to my fellow Wayfarers, then let the road be closed to me.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Fellow of the Open Gate prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: Fellows of the Open Gate gain no additional weapon or armour proficiencies.

Traveller's Grace (Su): The Fellow is automatically protected by an effect identical to a *grace* spell whenever he moves to another plane. This is a supernatural ability, not a spell-like ability; the Fellow is protected even if he is unaware or unconscious when transported. The *grace* effect lasts for three rounds and has a caster level equal to the Fellow's character level.



Fellow of the Open Gate

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Traveller's Grace
2 nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	Wayfarer's Luck
3 rd	+1	+1	+3	+1	<i>Plane Shift</i>

Member of the Wayfarers

You are a member of the Wayfarers.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (the planes) 5 ranks.

Benefit: You learn the Wayfarer's script, a secret code, and can leave messages in it. You may also use *locate portal* once per day as a spell-like ability.

Special: Those without this feat must make a Decipher Script check (DC 40) to understand the Wayfarer's script.

Wayfarer's Luck (Su): The Wayfarers are notoriously lucky – or blessed. For every three days spent travelling, the character may add one point to his Wayfarer's Luck bonus. The character may apply this bonus to his Armour Class, an attack roll, or a skill check as a luck bonus; doing so resets Wayfarer's Luck to 0. Wayfarer's Luck cannot exceed +20.

Plane Shift (Sp): The Fellow of the Open Gate may cast *plane shift* once per week.

FACELESS LEGION

It is strange that those who are named 'Faceless' are among the most recognisable orders on all the planes. The mercenary group all wear heavy helms of black metal that have neither visor nor air holes. The only identifying mark on a helm is a number written in the runes of chaos. The Faceless Legion have fought bravely in thousands of wars; theirs is a history drenched in blood. Their eyeless masks have seen more atrocities and sorrow than any man should bear.

Yet there is never a shortage of new recruits for their ranks.

Their helms are magical, but their chief property is not one that can be reckoned in auras and dweomers. Each of the helms is, in essence, an artificial soul. When someone puts on one of these helms, his soul is wrapped in that of the helmet. He is judged in all things as if he were the wearer of the helmet,

not himself. When the wearer dies, he is sent to the appropriate afterlife for one who has done the things the helm has done and when a new wearer puts on the helm, it is as though the helm-soul has been *resurrected*. The helm is proof against all forms of *scrying* and Divination – attempts to *scry* the wearer using his true name instead of the number of the helm also cause the spell to fail.

Those who have committed terrible crimes or who want a second chance at life are drawn to the Faceless Legion. Each new member is given a *faceless helm* and assigned to a unit. The Legion's mercenaries serve as everything from city watch and bodyguards to foot soldiers in demonic wars. After twenty-five years of service, a Legionnaire may retire, keeping his helm until he dies. Alternatively, he may remove the helm and pass it onto another, but few do.

There is one little known catch to service in the Faceless Legion. As each helm carries the weight of the sins committed by its previous wearers, there are certain helms which would condemn a saint to the Infernum, should she wear one.

Organisation

The Legion is commanded by the First Helm, which is always worn by the most skilled leader among the Faceless, as voted by a council of the twenty generals. Each general commands one thousand troops (an army), divided into ten centuries commanded by centurions. Each century is further divided into five companies of twenty.

The Legion has a base on the fortress plane of Azimuth, where a race of strange squid-like servitors dwell. These creatures, the Kjakti, deal with many of the day-to-day operations of the Legion. The Legion's wealth is spent on new weapons, healing and equipment, while members are paid a stipend of a few silvers a week.

All members of the Faceless Legion are referred to officially using their numbers, but they usually also have nicknames.

FACELESS WARRIOR

Hit Dice: d10

Requirements

To become a Faceless Warrior, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Feats: Member of the Faceless Legion.

Class Skills

The Faceless Warrior class skills (and the key abilities for each) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Dex), Handle Animal (Wis), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Str), Jump (Str), Listen (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spot (Wis), Survival (Wis) and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Faceless Warrior prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: Faceless Warriors gain any one of the following feats for free: Armour

Faceless Helms

The *faceless helms* of the Legion are in truth minor artefacts; the Legion's headquarters sits atop a vault that is rumoured to contain many thousands of them, although only twenty thousand are in service. Each helm is identical and has the following properties:

- † *Darkvision* out to 60 feet.
- † The *helm* provides air in airless environments, such as underwater.
- † *See invisibility* once per day.
- † *Message* (to other helm wearers only) at will.
- † +2 deflection bonus to Armour Class.

Member of the Faceless Legion

You are a member of the Faceless Legion.

Prerequisites: Knowledge (the planes) 5 ranks.

Benefit: You have a *faceless helm*.

Proficiency (any), Simple Weapon Proficiency, Martial Weapon Proficiency, Combat Expertise, Toughness.

Faceless Dread (Ex): The Faceless have a fearsome reputation. The Faceless Warrior gains a +1 morale modifier to his Intimidate checks for every other member of the Faceless Legion within 30 feet, to a maximum of +10.

Memories of the Dead (Su): The helm-soul contains echoes of the memories of all those who wore it before. Once per day, the wearer can gain a +5 insight bonus to one skill check. He may even make checks on skills that he does not possess.

SECT OF THE SPIDER

On the Material Plane, they say, 'Three men can only keep a secret if two of them are dead.' Out in the many worlds, where the souls of the dead are thick as flies on faeces, they have another saying: 'A man can keep a secret if the Spider allows it.'

The Sect of the Spider is a network of spies and intelligence gatherers that reaches across the planes. They are not content to merely acquire secrets; they use them. The Sect members are manipulators beyond compare, building webs of deceit and twisted motivations to entrap the unwary. Sect agents have engineered the fall of gods and the rise of nations.

Each member of the Sect is dedicated to a particular goal, a particular web of relationships and resources that he slowly spins. Members must ensure that their webs do not damage each other and are encouraged to find joint goals. This can result in long-term webs becoming bizarre, almost incomprehensible mishmashes of conspiracies, where Sect members manipulate a dozen kingdoms, fifty guilds, six score

Faceless Warrior

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+1	+2	+0	+0	
2 nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Faceless Dread
3 rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Memories of the Dead

of nobles and adventurers scattered across five planes to end a war, destroy a necromancer *and* ensure that the Inn of the Black Book stays in business.

The Sect of the Spider threads the fine line between genius and madness.

Organisation

The great strength of the Sect of the Spider is also the cord that binds them together into an organisation; the senior members of the order can brew a drug called *latheen* from the venom and silk of certain spiders. This drug vastly enhances the pattern-recognition ability of the user, allowing them to use the secrets they have garnered to manipulate others precisely. A *latheen* user perceives the world as a network of varicoloured strands, each one a tie of love or hate, honour or debt, lust or loathing. A skilled Spider can play these strands like a bard plays a lyre.

As *latheen* is addictive, the lines of supply and demand keep the Sect of the Spider united. Senior members control the distribution of the drug to newer recruits.

SPIDER SECT AGENT

Hit Dice: d6

Requirements

To become a Spider Sect Agent, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Skills: Bluff 7 ranks, Diplomacy 7 ranks, Knowledge (nobility) 5 ranks, Gather Information 5 ranks.

Feats: Member of the Sect of the Spider.

Class Skills

The Spider Sect Agent class skills (and the key abilities for each) are Craft (alchemy) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Forgery (Int), Gather Information (Cha), Knowledge (all) (Int), Listen (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis) and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Spider Sect Agent

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Latheen Bonus, Social Web
2 nd	+0	+0	+0	+3	Trap the Flies
3 rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	<i>From the Shadows</i>

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Spider Sect Agent prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: Spider Sect Agents gain no additional weapon or armour proficiencies.

Latheen Bonus: As the Agent rises in rank, he learns new techniques for using *latheen*, so the insight bonus he gains from the drug increases.

Social Web (Su): The Agent may draw characters into his web. This marks them with invisible strands

Latheen

A character must be trained to use *latheen*, by taking the Member of the Sect of the Spider feat. Without this training, a dose of *latheen* acts as a potent hallucinogen, causing the character to become sickened for 2d10 hours unless he makes a Fortitude save (DC 20). A trained user can use the heightened awareness of *latheen* to glean a greater understanding of relationships. He gains an insight bonus to all Diplomacy, Gather Information, Sense Motive and Spot checks for 10+1d10 hours.

The character must make a Fortitude save (DC equals the number of *latheen* doses taken) or take one point of *permanent* Constitution damage. If the save is failed, the DC for future Fortitude checks resets to 0. A dose of *latheen* usually costs 50 gp.

If a character does not take at least one dose of *latheen* every month, he begins to suffer withdrawal; this manifests as a -6 penalty to all Wisdom-based skills for 1d4 months.

Latheen is normally inhaled through a hookah, although a successful Craft (alchemy) check (DC 12) can convert a dose into a drinkable or injectable liquid or a pill.

of destiny, which can be perceived only using *arcane sight* or *latheen*. The Agent gains a +4 luck bonus to any attempts to Gather Information about characters in his web and they suffer a -2 penalty to any saving throws against his *scrying* effects. An Agent may only have a number of people in his web equal to his Intelligence score.

Trap the Flies (Su): The Agent may manipulate those in his web. While under the effects of *latheen*, he may make a Wisdom check (DC 10) to notice whenever anyone he has marked using the Social Web ability travels from one plane to another. He may then make an opposed Will save against the marked traveller to influence the planar travel effect. The Agent cannot stop planar travel or affect which plane the character goes to, but may roughly (within five miles) choose where a *plane shift* or off-course *teleport* spell deposits the marked character and any other travellers.

Member of the Sect of the Spider

You are a member of the Sect of the Spider.

Prerequisites: Sense Motive 5 ranks.

Benefit: You can use the *latheen* drug to gain a +2 insight bonus to several skill checks – see the description of *latheen*.

The Agent may also tweak the strands of synchronicity, making it more likely that marked characters encounter other marked characters. The effectiveness of this varies; there is a cumulative 10% chance per day that the marked characters encounter each other if they are in the same region (same city, same dungeon and so on), but the ability may work faster than this, especially on highly Morphic planes.

From the Shadows (Sp): The Agent may cast *plane shift* once per month, but may only travel to a plane where one of the characters he has marked with the Social Web ability is currently located.

EMISSARIES OF HELL

The Emissaries of Hell are a group of diabolists, fiends, conjurers and diplomats, all of whom have a common interest in infernal affairs. Some work directly for one demon lord or another; others are merely fascinated or professionally involved by events in the Lower Planes. Such practices are usually frowned upon by society, resulting in the diabolist being scorned at parties or burnt at the stake (depending on how tolerant society is), so the Emissaries offer a private society to discuss infernal matters. They also attempt to curry favour with various demonic powers by expanding the reach of the Infernum.

The Emissaries are a last resort for many; they wield significant power, and can often achieve the impossible with the aid of their infernal allies. However, their help never comes without cost. All members of the Emissaries have, willingly or otherwise, sold their souls to a fiend. Their only hope for salvation is to acquire enough influence and power before they die to avoid the flames...



Organisation

The organisation level of the Emissaries varies from plane to plane and country to country. In some lands, they considered evil *anathema* who hide each other from the hounds of heaven. In other lands, the Emissaries are more like a social club, ‘a sewing circle for the damned,’ as one commentator put it. In yet others, the Emissaries have grand palaces and portray themselves as the Ambassadors of Hell. The organisation’s branches are connected via the Infernal Realms – imps and other lesser demonic entities are inveterate gossips and gleefully tattle tales of other Emissaries who summoned them.

The Emissaries also trade research notes and spellbooks. The true names of various demons are especially valued scraps of knowledge in hellish circles.

AMBASSADOR OF HELL

Hit Dice: d6

Requirements

To become an Ambassador of Hell, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Skills: Diplomacy 5 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 5 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 5 ranks.

Feats: Member of the Emissaries of Hell.

Class Skills

The Ambassador of Hell’s class skills (and the key abilities for each) are Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (all) (Int), Intimidate (Cha), Listen (Wis), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis) and Spot (Wis)

Member of the Emissaries of Hell

You have sold your soul to a fiend.

Benefit: You have a *wish* spell, as cast by a glabrezu demon. You may use this *wish* at any time or can choose to cast it before the game begins.

Special: If you die, your soul is taken by a demon. You cannot be *raised* by any means unless this demon permits it, and your soul will return to the demon should you die again. You are doomed to an eternity of suffering (and no, you cannot use a *wish* to escape this fate).



Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Ambassador of Hell prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: Ambassadors of Hell gain no additional weapon or armour proficiencies.

Demonic Patron (Sp): Every Ambassador has at least one demonic patron. This patron is usually a potent demon such as a glabrezu. The Ambassador may contact the patron using *contact other plane* or *dream* once per two weeks. The patron *may* aid the ambassador in certain circumstances and will offer advice and counsel. While the demon has a vested interest in increasing the power of its Ambassador, he also has a vested interest in the Ambassador dying before he buys off his debt.

Binding Contracts (Su): The Ambassador may now traffic in souls. He may write contracts that allow others to willingly sign their souls over to him. For every thirteen souls gathered, he gains an extra *wish* spell, as per the Member of the Emissaries of Hell feat. Furthermore, if he collects thirteen souls thirteen

Ambassador of Hell

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Demonic Patron
2 nd	+0	+0	+0	+3	Binding Contracts
3 rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Diplomatic Immunity

times, he may either buy himself the opportunity to *atone* and reclaim his own soul or buy himself a fortress in the Infernum.

Diplomatic Immunity (Su): The Ambassador may claim *diplomatic immunity* once per day for six rounds as a free action. This immunity gives him electrical, poison, acid, fire and cold resistance 10, and Damage Reduction 10/cold iron and holy.

BROTHERS OF CHARITY

The Brothers of Charity were founded by an idealistic monk who wished to bring the bounties of the planes to the poor. She was incensed by the thought that the gods dwelt in palaces of diamond and jade and feasted on ambrosia and the wine of heaven, while their mortal worshippers lived in wretched huts and starved. Such inequity, she reasoned, was wrong and she set about rectifying it.

Sadly, many of her noble aims were soon usurped by thieves and scoundrels, but the organisation has endured. Now, it is a plane-spanning thieves' guild who (mostly) steal from the rich to give to the poor. It is a curious amalgam of interests, where ascetic monks rub shoulders with burglars of heaven and spies from a thousand worlds. The guildhouses of the Brotherhood offer shelter and alms to travellers and pilgrims.

Members of the Brothers of Charity are encouraged to trade, find, beg, borrow or steal the wealth of the planes and bring it to those who need it. Often, the wealth is in intangible things; bringing an infusion of Life to a sickly land or a river of elemental Water to

Toric [to Etrichan]: *So you've sold your soul; I hope you got a good price for it. The glabrezu offered wishes for souls, once, but it is a buyer's market and they are rarely so generous these days. Still, all that is past. The important thing now is avoiding the consequences.*⁶

– The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act VI, Scene vi

a desert can help the common folk more than all the gold in the world. Other members of the Brotherhood just steal gemstones from sacred statues and flee through the order's portals.

Organisation

The Brothers are organised into guildhouses, usually located in cities. The master of each guildhouse is expected to keep in touch with five other guildhouses via *sending* or messenger once a year, but other than that irregular contact, each guildhouse is largely on its own and must find its own way to improve the lot of the common folk of all the planes.

Members of the Brotherhood often adventure in search of new wonders to aid others. Senior members are referred to as Eleemosynes or Mercies.

ELEEMOSYNE

Hit Dice: d6

Requirements

To become an Eleemosyne, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Skills: Heal 5 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 5 ranks.

Feats: Member of the Brothers of Charity.

Class Skills

The Eleemosyne's class skills (and the key abilities for each) are Balance (Dex), Concentration (Con), Climb (Str), Craft (any) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Escape Artist (Dex), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Move Silently (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis) and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Eleemosyne prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: Eleemosynes gain no additional weapon or armour proficiencies.



Member of the Brothers of Charity
 You are a member of the Brothers of Charity.
Prerequisite: The character cannot be Evil.
Benefit: The character can blend in with the common folk of a plane. He does not appear to be an outsider for the purposes of divination spells. He also has a +1 circumstance bonus to his Charisma score when dealing with the poor who know about the Brothers of Charity.

he must make a Concentration check to maintain the *non-detection*.

Humility (Su): The Eleemosyne always counts as a native of whatever plane he is on. He cannot be affected by *dismissals*. He may also invoke a *grace* effect at will three times per day, as a caster of his character level.

BENEDICTION ARCANE

The Benediction Arcane is made up primarily of wizards and sorcerers, although anyone with an interest in the arcane arts is permitted to join the group. The order works to safeguard and promote the use of magic throughout the planes. The senior members of the Benediction are extremely powerful masters of the art, but they often hide their power from the folk of backward planes. Guidance from the shadows is the byword of the Benediction.

The Benediction Arcane is especially interested in spreading knowledge of spells from plane to plane and in establishing new schools of magic. They often take promising apprentices from some obscure village or slum and give them the freedom of planar travel. The Benediction's ultimate goal (according to rumour) is to gradually bring all the planes closer to the arcane weave, gifting all creatures with the power of wizardry. Many long centuries of civilising and teaching will be required before orcs, goblins, humans and other such savage creatures can all be given the gift of magic without the planes being torn apart in a wizards' war... but the Benediction has the patience granted by *potions of longevity*.

Merciful Strike (Ex): The Eleemosyne can deal non-lethal damage with a weapon that normally deals lethal damage without taking a -4 penalty to his attack rolls. Furthermore, this non-lethal damage can bypass damage reduction.

Non-detection Meditation (Sp): The Eleemosyne may cast *non-detection* at will, as a caster equal to his character level. However, he must concentrate on the spell to maintain it and may only take a single move or attack action in a round. If damaged or disturbed,

Eleemosyne

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1 st	+0	+0	+2	+0	Merciful Strike
2 nd	+1	+0	+3	+0	<i>Non-detection Meditation</i>
3 rd	+1	+1	+3	+1	Humility

Organisation

The Benediction Arcane is organised by lineage; a wizard might introduce himself to another member of the order as a student of such-and-such, who was apprentice to so-and-so, who was apprentice to master and so on and so forth. The Benediction maintains towers and citadels throughout the planes, but many of its members are wanderers.

UNSEEN MASTER

Hit Dice: d4

Requirements

To become an Unseen Master, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Skills: Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 10 ranks, Spellcraft 10 ranks.

Feats: Member of the Benediction Arcane.

Class Skills

The Unseen Master's class skills (and the key abilities for each) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Disguise (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (all) (Int), Search (Int), Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Unseen Master prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency:

Unseen Masters gain no additional weapon or armour proficiencies.

Spellcasting: The Unseen Master rises in spellcasting ability at 2nd and 3rd level. He gains new spells per day as if he had gained a level in whatever arcane spellcasting class he belonged to before becoming an Unseen Master.

Unseen Master

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1 st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Bonus Feat	+1 level of existing class
2 nd	+0	+0	+0	+3		+1 level of existing class
3 rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Sense Disturbance	+1 level of existing class

Member of the Benediction Arcane

You are a member of the Benediction Arcane.

Prerequisite: Ability to cast arcane spells or close friendship with one who can cast arcane spells.

Benefit: Once per day, the character may 'clutch at the weave' and extend the duration of any one spell currently active on him by 1d4 rounds. The spell must be one with a duration of at least five rounds.

Bonus Feat: At 1st level, the Unseen Master may gain any one of the following feats for free: Foreign Magic, Improved Foreign Magic, Home Ground or Punch Shift.

Sense Disturbance (Su): The Unseen Master may automatically sense any use of magic within 120 feet, as per the first and second rounds of a *detect magic* spell. This ability is constantly active. The Master is also sensitive to major shifts such as planar infusions or epic level spells over any range.

CHURCH OF REVELATION

It is one thing to be a pastoral cleric in a remote village, preaching the tenets of the faith to a wooden church filled with dull, sour peasants. That requires a measure of belief in the gods.

It is another thing entirely to be a planewalker, one who can visit the high halls of the Firmament while still a living man or speak to the greatest divine emanations directly instead of through the uncertain medium of *communes*. The Church of Revelation is a syncretic religion, dedicated to direct experience and understanding of the divine. They



have abandoned scripture in favour of direct consultation with the gods and their agents.

In some places, the Church is seen as a bright step forward; in others, a dangerous heresy. Many of the gods draw their best agents and servants from the ranks of Revelation, but it is not a church for the faint-hearted.

Organisation

The Church of Revelation is organised much like other religions, with the caveat that it is *understanding*, not seniority, faith or power, that carries authority within the order. Members of the Church are encouraged to confront and explore the nature of the gods. The Church has a strong following among many travellers, who have seen too much and gone too far to blindly accept the teachings of religion, but still desire divine guidance or a little holy luck.



(Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis) and Survival (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the Gnosis Seeker prestige class.

Weapon and Armour Proficiency: Seekers gain no additional weapon or armour proficiencies.

Spellcasting: The Seeker rises in spellcasting ability at every level. He gains new spells per day as if he had gained a level in whatever divine spellcasting class he belonged to before becoming an Gnosis Seeker.

Autonomous Magic: The spellcasting abilities gained from levels in this class are always inherent to the Seeker. They function even on planes with a low Divine trait, in antimagical areas or when the character has rejected his faith. Only the one to three levels of spellcasting gained from the Seeker class are affected by this ability, so a character who is a 10th level cleric and 2nd level Seeker would cast spells as a 2nd level cleric on a plane with no Divine magic.

GNOSIS SEEKER

Hit Dice: d6

Requirements

To become a Gnosis Seeker, a character must fulfil all the following criteria:

Skills: Knowledge (religion) 10 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 10 ranks.

Special: Charisma 13.

Feats: Member of the Church of Revelation.

Class Skills

The Gnosis Seeker's class skills (and the key abilities for each) are Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (all) (Int), Sense Motive

Gnosis Seeker

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spellcasting
1 st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Autonomous Magic	+1 level of existing class
2 nd	+1	+3	+0	+3		+1 level of existing class
3 rd	+1	+3	+1	+3		+1 level of existing class

Member of the Church of Revelation
 You are a member of the Church of Revelation.
Prerequisite: Wisdom 13.
Benefit: Choose any 0th level divine spell. You may cast this spell once per day as a spell-like ability, as a cleric of equal level.

MAGIC OF THE PLANES

The planes are magic. The artificial divide between the natural and supernatural is a product of the relative poverty of the Material Plane. While the veneration of deities and the study of spells are still practised on other planes, there is much less of a divide between those who wield magic and those who do not.

To put it another way – those who walk beyond the fields we know walk amid wonders, and to quibble over what is magical and what is mundane is pointless in such places.

See page 26, Travelling the Planes, for a discussion of spells used to move between planes.

SUMMONING AND CALLING

These two techniques are of vital importance on the planes, so a discussion of them is required. A *calling* spell brings the targeted creature to the caster, while a *summoning* merely brings the creature's 'fetch' to the caster. The former technique is much more powerful and dangerous for both creature and caster.

Calling

Only outsiders and elementals can be *called*. The various calling spells draw on the higher magical flux of the Elemental and Outer Planes to fuel the magic, therefore only creatures with a direct connection to a particular plane can be *called*, such as elementals who are comprised of their home, or outsiders who are the living embodiments of it. Most creatures carry enough of the magical nature of their home to be *called* when not on their home plane, but there is a percentage chance (equal to 20 - the creature's Hit Dice) that a *calling* spell fails when targeting a *specific* or *named* creature that is not currently resident on its home plane.

Characters who are natives of an elemental, energy or outer plane, or who have gone through a transformation that makes them outsiders (such as a 20th level monk) can be called as normal using these spells.

A creature currently within a *dimensional anchor* cannot be *called* (although the Punch Shift feat can be used to force a calling).

Planar Ally and Related Spells

The *planar ally* spell is a *request* for aid, akin to opening a *gate* and shouting a plea through it. Most deities maintain whole flights of celestials in constant readiness to respond to a calling, or assign a particular guardian angel to each cleric powerful enough to request aid. As most clerics lack the wisdom to even begin to comprehend the plans of the gods, the agents of the Firmament prefer to aid the cleric in short-term tasks instead of being caught up in longer duties that might conflict with their deity's goals. While a divine agent could certainly purge a whole kingdom of evil, for example, the agent's god might intend for their clerics to do so instead, tempering and preparing them for the far greater trials ahead. Still, celestials tend to be generous as long as the task they have been called for is a valid and good one. Often, the celestial will defer payment until after the job is done or claim the possessions of the fallen foes as its prize.

Elementals are much more mercenary in their outlook. The request for aid is made to the various elemental overlords and elder elementals, who do not dispatch their servants freely or easily.

Planar Binding and Related Spells

The *binding* spells are much more flexible, but also much more hazardous. They are not requests for aid as they either compel or trap the called creature. The creature is dragged from its home and chained inside a magical diagram. If the caster has not specified a creature by name, the spell manifests as a whirling vortex that randomly seizes a suitable target.

A 'cold binding' is where the caster simply casts the spell, calling a creature of a particular type and bargains for or demands its service. Outsiders see cold bindings as rather clumsy and rude acts, so the fees demanded by them are often high.

There are numerous individual outsiders whose names are recorded in books of lore, who enjoy or willingly submit to being called. Many devils use the opportunity to instruct wizards in evil, or to tempt them. Having easy access to the Material Plane can be a great boon for outsiders, although it must be balanced against the time spent away from home, the potential shame of being bound in a mortal's spell and the danger of being killed while carrying out a task. Still, there are thousands of beings who are willing to be called, and calling one of these without contacting it first is referred to as a 'standard binding.' A standard binding has slightly lower (10% less) fees than a cold binding, but the caster must know the name

of a suitable creature to be called (Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 10 + creature's Hit Dice)).

A 'pact' occurs when the caster first makes contact with the target of the binding, either physically (by travelling to another plane and meeting the target) or through a *sending* or even a *summoning*. Pacts are much friendlier – instead of grabbing the target, chaining it in a diagram and then bickering about price, the caster and the target can come to a mutually satisfying and complex agreement or even become friends. The binding part of the *planar binding* then becomes nothing more than a formality, and the spell is seen more like opening a *gate* for the creature than a trap.

A 'nugatory binding' is a binding where the caster has no intention whatsoever of actually employing the creature's services – the spell is simply a method of removing the creature from its home for a few days. For example, if an assault was being made on an astral fortress of titans, an ally of the besiegers might use *planar binding* to remove a few titans from the fortress. The titans would be trapped within the *magic circle* and forced to wait while their fortress fell.

Finally, a 'murderous binding' is the act of calling a creature and then slaughtering it. Murderous bindings are frowned upon by all outsiders, as neither the Firmament nor the Infernum are entirely happy with the idea of mortals whistling up their most trusted servitors and chopping them down. Still, a murderous binding is a better tactic for assassinating a demon than *plane shifting* into the fires and fighting the fiend on its home plane.

Summon Monster and Related Spells

There are two sorts of summoning spells. The various *summon nature's ally* spells draw from the Green of each plane and are essentially local in scope, as these do not usually involve planar travel, even the spells that summon elementals and genies through the invisible tendrils of Green energy that connect living things.

The *summon monster* spells are quite different. For centuries, it was something of a mystery how these spells worked – since it requires a potent spell like *plane shift* to even stumble onto an outer plane, how could a minor spell like *summon monster I* bring a creature from an outer plane with ease? Wizards theorised that perhaps the *summoned* creatures were actually just constructs made of magical energy that merely resembled extraplanar creatures, but this was disproved when they learned that *specific* creatures



could be summoned, and would retain the memory of being summoned.

The answer to the conundrum lay in the phenomenon called an astral lens. The petty magic of the summoning spell creates a distortion in the Astral Plane which projects the 'fetch' (manifest image) of an outsider onto the same plane as the caster. The astral lens is unstable, and vanishes after only a few moments (when the duration of the spell expires). From the perspective of the summoned creature, the world is suddenly 'doubled,' as his astral self is projected to another plane. The creature continues to exist on the outer plane, just as a character using *astral projection* leaves his body behind. Most creatures wait for the summoning to end before continuing with their lives, but a creature can act on two planes at once if it chooses to (its summoned fetch might be fighting on the Material Plane, while the creature hunts on its home plane).

A creature suffers a -2 penalty to all attack rolls and skill checks if it acts while its fetch has been summoned (this penalty only applies to the 'real' creature, not the *summoned* fetch). If the creature's fetch is slain, it cannot be summoned again for 24 hours; the 'real' creature is also *shaken* for 24 hours unless it makes a successful Will save (DC 15).

As an astral lens is required to project the fetch, summonings of this sort only work when the Astral

Summoning and Calling Restrictions

Caster and target are on...	Summoning			Calling		
	Outsider or Transcended	Material Creature	Traveller	Outsider or Transcended	Material Creature	Traveller
On the same plane	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
On different planes divided by the Astral Plane	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

Plane lies between the caster and the target of their summoning. Therefore, a caster on the Material Plane can summon an archon, but cannot summon another creature from the Material Plane. Theoretically, the

Summoned Characters

Yes, these rules do allow for one player to *summon* the character of another. This is not quite as abusive as it sounds if the following guidelines are adhered to:

- † A *summon monster* spell can only summon a character with a maximum character level of two + the level of the spell. Therefore, *summon monster IX* can only summon a 11th level character at most.
- † Characters can only *summon* each other when on different planes, and the Astral Plane must be in between. As the Astral Plane is coterminous with just about everywhere, this is not a huge restriction, but it does mean that a character cannot hide in an extradimensional space and only come out when *summoned*.
- † A summoned player character can be stopped by a humble *protection from evil* or *magic circle against evil* spell.
- † *Summoned* characters get only one-tenth the normal experience for any encounters that they were involved in, but the experience is still divided as if they had been present. For example, if a 10th level wizard *summons* his four 7th level fighter friends to deal with a monster, then the wizard would get one-fifth of the experience point reward, and the four fighters would get only one-fiftieth each.

archon could use a *summoning* spell to summon a human from the Material Plane (as the Astral Plane lies between the Material and Outer Planes) but could not use the spell to summon another archon if both were on the same outer plane.

However, the archon could draw on the tendrils of celestial energy connecting both outsiders to their home plane and summon its fellow archon even when both are on the same plane. It could not do this to a human traveller on the same plane, as the human lacks the innate connection to the plane.

So, one character could *summon* another, but only if the two were separated by the gulf of the Astral Plane. The Summoning and Calling Restrictions Table summarises the situation.

Summoning spells are often used for communication, in lieu of *sendings*. Instead of dispatching a message, a caster can just call up the fetch of the person he wishes to speak to. More powerful creatures who cannot be *summoned* often have a cohort or servant who is *summoned* in their stead, referred to as a herald.

MAGIC ON THE PLANES

The following changes to existing spells should be noted:

Air walk: This spell can be converted to function on different elemental planes (becoming *fire walk* or *earth walk*) using the Elemental Conversion feat.

Analyse dweomer: This spell can be used to determine all the traits of a plane if cast on that plane.

Arcane sight: This spell detects portals, as does the *greater* version. If the caster is at a vantage point where he can perceive the border of a plane (viewing it from outside, from a transitive plane or at the edges of a finite plane) he can also see the traits of the plane.

Astral Projection: While this potent spell allows a character to explore the planes in relative safety (few things can sever a silver cord), it is seen as a somewhat cowardly and false method of travel, somewhat akin to sending a *simulacrum*. Showing a silver cord is a sign of treachery. Of course, this matters little to some creatures, who use their astral forms to attack enemies.

One common trick is the ‘astral doppelganger.’ A creature can use *astral projection* to form an astral body, then bring this astral body to another plane where it becomes a copy of the original body. The character then casts another *astral projection*, forming a second astral body. For those paranoid about having their silver cords followed and their sleeping bodies attacked, using astral doppelgangers can throw enemies off the trail. Others build sarcophagi to protect their suspended forms.

The astral form is also referred to as the ‘body of fire,’ because it seems to be made of flame when seen with *arcane sight* or *trueseeing*.

Banishment: See *dismissal*.

Bless water: This spell can be converted to function on different elemental planes (becoming *bless fire* or *bless air*) using the Elemental Conversion feat.

Blink: *Blink* relies on quick transits between the current plane and the Ethereal. This means that it only functions on planes that are coexistent with the Ethereal (i.e., the Material, Elemental and portions of the Astral Plane).

Commune: A *commune* spell can target a deity or an outsider of the same alignment with 16 or more Hit Dice.

Commune with nature: Reveals the traits of the plane.

Contact other plane: Characters travelling on the planes sometimes see *contact globes* – the extraplanar end of a *contact other plane* spell – flitting through the air. These globes target entities of vast intelligence and wisdom, seeking the knowledge that the caster desires. If a traveller has an Intelligence + Wisdom total of 50 or more, he may be chased down by a *contact globe*. The traveller is permitted a Will save to resist the spell, in which case the globe moves onward. If the save is failed, the traveller is drawn into communion with the caster and is asked several questions (see the description of the spell).

A creature with *true seeing* can see the globe leaving the caster when the spell is cast. The globe *gates* to the target plane within 1d4 rounds, but it can be intercepted and the *contact other plane* spell diverted.

Control water: This spell can be converted to function on different elemental planes (becoming *control fire* or *control earth*) using the Elemental Conversion feat.

Create water: This spell can be converted to function on different elemental planes (becoming *create fire* or *create earth*) using the Elemental Conversion feat.

Curse water: This spell can be converted to function on different elemental planes (becoming *curse fire* or *curse earth*) using the Elemental Conversion feat.

Dictum: See *dismissal*.

Dispel evil: See *dismissal*.

Dimension door: See *teleport*.

Dimensional anchor: This spell essentially sets the Accessibility of all planes to 0 for the target. Casting *dimensional anchor* is seen as a *very* hostile act, worse than a mere attack. Many planar creatures are powerful enough to shrug off a *fireball* and so take it as a warning, but *dimensional anchor* is essentially a declaration of murderous intent. The Punch Shift feat can be used to attempt to leave a *dimensional anchor*, but only if the traveller is five or more levels higher than the caster of the *anchor*.

A creature inside a *dimensional anchor* or *dimensional lock* cannot be *called*, but can be *summoned*.

Dimensional lock: The area affected has an Accessibility of 0. The Punch Shift feat can be used to attempt to leave a *dimensional lock*, but only if the traveller is five or more levels higher than the caster of the *lock*.

Dismissal (and other spells like *banishment*, *dictum* and so on): Travellers from the Material Plane are considered extraplanar when on another plane, so they are victim to spells like these. *Dismissed* creatures end up back on their home plane, as if they had been *plane shifted* and then *teleported* to wherever they consider their home by someone who had seen the location casually. (See the *teleport* spell).

If a creature’s home plane has an Accessibility of less than 15, the spell makes an attempt to reach the plane. The creature being *dismissed* makes the Spellcraft roll

to penetrate any planar barriers. If the plane is keyed or locked, then the creature must possess the key, not the caster. If the spell fails to get the creature to its home plane, it is sent to a random plane.

Find the path: Can find portals.

Forbiddance: Again, this reduces Accessibility to 0. The Punch Shift feat can be used to attempt to leave a *forbiddance*, but only if the traveller is five or more levels higher than the caster of the *forbiddance*.

Gust of wind: This spell can be converted to function on different elemental planes (becoming *control fire* or *control earth*) using the Elemental Conversion feat.

Instant summons: This works just like a *plane shift* as regards Accessibility.

Maze: The labyrinth is created on the Astral Plane. Theoretically, a creature could encounter the *maze* from outside, but the labyrinths are too short-lived for this to be a common occurrence.

Mage's Magnificent mansion: This unusual spell actually creates an extradimensional space – a pocket plane. Theoretically, a character could use planecrafting (see page 228) to alter the properties of the mansion. The mansion has the indicated on the Magnificent Mansion Traits chart.

Move earth: This spell can be converted to function on different elemental planes (becoming *move fire* or *move air*) using the Elemental Conversion feat.

Phase door: Requires access to the Ethereal Plane.

Prismatic sphere/spray/wall: Use the Random Plane Table on page 242 for the 'sent to another plane' effect of these excellent spells.

Rope trick: The extradimensional space created by *rope trick* has the same planar traits as that of *mage's magnificent mansion*, although it has a Size of only 3 and a Negative/Positive trait of 0.

Secret chest: The chest is moved to the extreme edge of the Border Ethereal of the plane it was cast on. After sixty days, it begins to drift into the Deep Ethereal. Obviously, this spell can only be cast on a plane with a connection to the Ethereal Plane.

Shadow spells: These spells require access to the Plane of Shadow (i.e. the plane they are cast on must be at least coterminous with the Shadow Plane).

Magnificent Mansion Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal time</i>
Size	4	<i>Mansion</i>
Morphic	13	<i>Magically Morphic</i>
Life	-2	<i>Sparse</i>
Weather	-6	<i>Static</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	+4	<i>Bastion of healing</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	2	<i>Single portal</i>
Proximity...		
...to plane where it was cast	1	<i>Meet at one point</i>

Teleport spells: These spells require access to the Astral Plane. They can still be cast on almost any plane, but they can fall afoul of planar barriers.

Water breathing: This spell can be converted to function on different elemental planes (becoming *fire breathing*, *earth breathing* or even *air breathing*) using the Elemental Conversion feat.

NEW SPELLS

Calling Ward

Abjuration

Level: Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Effect: Prevents target from being *called*

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

While a *calling ward* is in place, the affected creature cannot be *called* by spells such as *planar binding* or *gate*. The attempt simply fails as if the creature was dead or did not exist. *Calling wards* also prevent the creature from being *summoned*.

Material Component: A handful of dirt from the creature's home plane.

Countercraft

Abjuration

Level: Clr 7, Drd 6, Sor/Wiz 7

Components: V, S, F/DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 feet + 10 feet/level) or entire plane – see below

Effect: Counters an act of planecrafting

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Countercraft can be cast either of two ways.

If the caster is within Medium range of a creature who is using a *planecrafting* spell, then *countercraft* can be used to automatically counterspell that *planecrafting* spell.

Alternatively, a *countercraft* spell can be used from anywhere on the plane to counter the changes being made by an act of planecrafting. This includes non-magical methods of planecrafting, such as infusions, spill overs or even divine right. *Countercraft* must be cast within one minute of the change being made. The caster takes 3d6 points of damage for every change to a trait – for example, if a standard Chaotic infusion is being added to a plane (Law/Chaos +1d6, Morphic +1d6, Weather +1d4), then the caster of *countercraft* will suffer (1d6+1d6+1d4)x3d6 points of damage. Each 3d6 roll is resolved separately; if the caster is killed by this damage, any left over changes are applied to the plane as normal. The caster may choose what changes are countered first; for example, the caster countering the Chaotic infusion could choose to absorb the Morphic change first.

Focus: A shield or staff.

Door

Conjuration (Creation)

Level: Clr 4, Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Medium (100 feet + 10 feet/level)

Effect: Creates a *door*

Duration: Concentration (up to one round/level)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

A *door* spell works like the *planar travel* version of the *gate* spell, with one important drawback – it can **only** create a portal where planes touch. Therefore, it can only be used to travel from one coexistent plane to another, or to travel from one coterminous plane to

another if the *door* is opened where the two planes touch.

For example, from the Material Plane, a *door* can be opened to:

- † The Ethereal Plane (as the Material and Ethereal Planes are coexistent).
- † The Plane of Shadow (as the Material and Shadow Planes are coexistent).
- † The Astral Plane (as everywhere is coexistent with the Astral Plane).
- † In some places, any of the Elemental Planes.

The *door* spell opens to a specific point on the other plane, but is always the point closest to the point of origin. For example, opening a *door* to the Ethereal Plane would bring the traveller to the Border Ethereal immediately adjacent to where the *door* was cast, while opening a *door* in the depths of the ocean to the Plane of Water would bring the character to whatever section of the Water Plane was closest to that ocean.

Detect Portal

Divination

Level: Brd 0, Clr 0, Drd 0, Sor/Wiz 0

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 60 feet

Area: Cone-shaped emanation

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 min/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This spell functions like *detect magic*, except it detects portals within the area of effect. The information garnered depends on how long the caster concentrates.

1st round: Presence or absence of portals.

2nd round: Number of portals and whether or not they are currently open or closed.

3rd round: The auras of portals (see page 27) become visible.

Ether Tether

Transmutation

Level: Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Close (25 feet + 5 feet/2 levels)

Target: One creature

Duration: 1 min/level (D)

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

The target of an *ether tether* is magically linked to whatever plane it was on when the spell was cast. Whenever the creature leaves the plane (whether by a portal, by voluntary means such as *plane shift* or even by *dismissal* and similar effects), it is yanked back by the *ether tether* and reappears 1d6 rounds later. The creature reappears as close to where it vanished from as possible. An *ether tether* will not stop a *summoned* creature from vanishing when the *summoning* expires.

Material Component: A length of cat gut.

Gather Infusion

Transmutation

Level: Clr 4, Drd 4, Sor/Wiz 4

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 feet + 10 feet/level)

Effect: Gathers a planar infusion

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This spell draws together the ambient energy of a plane to create an infusion (see page 228, Planecrafting). The infusion appears as a glowing, fist-sized nexus of power. The infusion must immediately be placed in a suitable vessel (see below) when the spell is cast. Lesser infusions can be gathered anywhere on a suitable plane. Standard infusions can only be gathered where the trait is intense (+/- 7), while greater infusions can only be gathered near the most intense zones (+/- 10).

When an infusion is gathered, it must be placed in a vessel. The vessel must be sturdy enough to contain the infusion, and costs 1,000 gp for a vessel capable of holding lesser infusions, 4,000 gp for one capable of holding standard or lesser infusions and 16,000 gp for one capable of holding any potency of infusion. A vessel can only hold one kind of infusion, but can be reused.

For example, an infusion of Life might be held inside a carved wooden sphere; an infusion of Negative Energy inside a skull studded with black onyx gems or an infusion of Fire inside a brass urn rimed with frost.

Focus: The vessel.

Grace

Abjuration

Level: Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Area: 15-foot emanation from caster

Duration: 1 round/3 levels

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Grace allows the caster to bring a 'bubble' of safe reality with him when he travels from one plane to another. For the duration of the spell, the caster is treated as if he was on his home plane for the purposes of all environmental and planar effects. For example, if a native of the Material Plane went through a portal to the Plane of Negative Energy, *grace* would protect him from the Negative Energy and from the cold and would allow him to use Positive Energy spells without impediment.

The *grace* effect manifests as a shimmering white sphere around the caster. *Grace* extends only to the caster and anyone else who travelled using the same portal effect; creatures on the new plane are untouched by *grace*.

Infuse Plane

Transmutation [Planecraft]

Level: Clr 6, Drd 5, Sor/Wiz 6

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Area: Entire plane

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This spell is used to incorporate an infusion into a plane. The material component for the spell is the infusion in question – as the spell is cast, the caster opens the vessel containing the infusion and hurls the little nexus of planar energy into the plane. The infusion immediately sinks into the plane in a cataclysmic eruption of furious power. See page 228, Planecrafting, for the effects of an infusion.

Alternatively, the character can touch an open portal while casting this spell to produce a lesser or standard infusion.

Material Component: The infusion produced using the *gather infusion* spell.

Locate Portal

Divination

Level: Brd 2, Sor/Wiz 2

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Long (400 feet + 40 feet/level)

Area: Circle, centred on you, with a radius of 400 feet + 40 feet/level

Duration: 1 min/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Locate portal allows the caster to detect any portals within range of the spell. It detects portals whether they are open or closed, active or inactive. It also detects the use of planar travel or teleportation effects such as *etherealness* or *dimension door*. The caster does not learn anything about the portal other than its location. A thin sheet of lead blocks this spell.

Focus: A forked twig.

Planecraft

Transmutation [Planecraft]

Level: Clr 7, Sor/Wis 7

As *lesser planecraft*, but the XP cost and price of the materials is doubled. The number of changes to traits is also doubled (+/- 6).

Planecraft, Greater

Transmutation [Planecraft]

Level: Clr 9, Sor/Wis 9

As *lesser planecraft*, but the XP cost and price of the materials is tripled. The number of changes to traits is also tripled (+/- 9).

Planecraft, Lesser

Transmutation [Planecraft]

Level: Clr 5, Sor/Wis 5

Components: V, S, M, XP

Casting Time: One hour

Range: Touch

Area: Entire plane

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

The *lesser planecraft* allows the caster to adjust the traits of a Magically Morphic plane (see Planecrafting, page 228). The caster may adjust traits by a total of +/- 3 (i.e., he could increase one trait by +2 and decrease another by 1, or add +3 to one trait or subtract -1 from three traits; any combination as long as the changes add up to three).

To alter the plane the character must make a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + twice the plane's Size trait).

A plane can only take a limited number of planecrafting spells – each planecraft spell after the first adds 20 to the difficulty. The DC drops back down at a rate of five per week until it reaches the base level of 15 + twice the plane's Size.

Material Components: Blood, powdered silver worth 500 gp and a gemstone worth at least 1,000 gp.

XP Cost: 250 XP.

Shifting Element Guard

Abjuration

Level: Clr 3, Drd 3, Sor/Wis 3, Rgr 2

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: 10 mins/level or until discharged

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates (harmless)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

This spell alters the properties of the spells *endure elements*, *resist energy* and *protection from energy*. As a free action once per round, the character under the effects of this spell can change what environment or energy type he is protected from. For example, a character on the Plane of Fire has the spells *shifting element guard*, *endure elements (heat)* and *protection from energy (fire)* cast on him. Just before stepping through a portal to the frozen wastes of the north, he uses *shifting element guard* to change the spells to *endure elements (cold)* and *protection from energy (cold)*.

All the active spells must be changed at the same time to the same 'setting.'

Shift Trace

Divination

Level: Brd 1, Clr 1, Sor/Wis 1, Rgr 1

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Medium (100 feet + 10 feet/level)

Target: The point where a target vanished

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

A *shift trace* determines where a planar traveller went when they cast a *plane shift* or similar spell or stepped through a portal. The *trace* must be cast within one minute (10 rounds) of the traveller leaving. *Shift trace*

only reveals what plane the traveller went to, not their location on that plane. Note that a traveller leaving via *teleport* is considered to have gone to the Astral Plane, but spells such as *gate* that pass through the Astral en route to another plane give a *shift trace* result of the destination plane.

Summoning Ward

Abjuration

Level: Clr 1, Sor/Wiz 1

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Effect: Prevents target from being *summoned*

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

While a *summoning ward* is in place, the affected creature cannot be *summoned* by spells such as *summon monster*. The attempt simply fails as if the creature was dead or did not exist.

Trivia of the Crossways

Divination

Level: Brd 2

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Effect: Improves bardic knowledge of the planes

Duration: Special; see below

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Trivia of the crossways gives a bard access to the bardic knowledge of the local plane. For example, a bard who travelled to the Firmament and cast this spell would instantly be able to use Bardic Knowledge to pick up on the latest gossip of the archons and angels. A bard using trivia of the crossways in the Infernum would know which demon prince is currently ascendant. When the bard leaves the plane he is no longer able to use his Bardic Knowledge ability to learn any more about the plane he has just left.

For example, knowing the name of a particular fiend would be obscure (DC 25) on the Material Plane. If the bard travelled to the Infernum and cast this spell, he would be using the same knowledge as a fiendish bard, so the DC would drop to Common (10) or Uncommon (20).

Tuning

Conjuration (creation)

Level: Brd 0, Clr 3, Sor/Wiz 3

Components: V, S, F

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Effect: Creates a tuning fork

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This spell conjures a tuning fork tuned to the frequency of the plane the caster is currently on, for use with the *plane shift* spell.

Focus: An instrument of some sort, used to produce the correct resonance.

Worldwalk

Conjuration (teleportation)

Level: Clr 9, Sor/Wiz 9

Components: V, S, M

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Personal

Effect: Allows caster to travel the planes at will

Duration: 30 mins/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

For the duration of *worldwalk*, the caster may move from any plane to any another (as per *plane shift*) as a move action. He may not carry other creatures with him unless they weigh less than a total of 50 pounds, including all gear. The caster arrives within 1d20 miles of his destination on the target plane.

Material Component: A multifaceted gemstone worth at least 500 gp.

PLANAR FEATS

Craft Portal (Item Creation)

You can construct magical portals that allow travel between the planes.

Prerequisite: Caster level 5th.

Benefit: You can construct portals (using the rules on page 32-33). Creating a portal takes one day per 1,000 gp of the portal's cost, and the creator must spend XP equal to 1/25th of the cost and use raw materials worth half its price, as per a normal magic item.

You may also repair a broken portal if it is one you could make; doing so costs half the XP and half the raw materials needed to make it in the first place.

Special: A wizard may take Craft Portal as one of his wizard bonus feats.

Elemental Conversion (Metamagic)

You can alter your spells to suit different elemental planes.

Benefit: See the list of spells on pages 52-54, which notes the spells that this feat can alter. You can adjust the spell so it gives the same benefit on another plane; for example, you can adjust the *water breathing* spell so it lets you breathe on the airless, fire-filled reaches of the Fire Plane. All other aspects of the spell are unchanged (so *fire breathing* does not protect from the heat of the flames).

Foreign Magic

You can disentangle your magic from the local weave.

Benefit: Three times per day, you may ignore the local restrictions on magic brought about by low Arcane, Divine or Green traits, or by the Elemental or Energy traits. For example, you can cast a Fire-based spell on the Plane of Water without having its power impeded by the Water-dominant trait.

Special: This feat cannot overcome the restriction of a Dead Magic plane.

Home Ground

You become a native of another plane.

Prerequisites: The character must have spent at least one year living on the plane.

Benefit: You can choose another plane to be your 'home plane,' the plane that you return to when *dismissed*. Taking this feat does *not* make you an elemental or outsider; you do, however, acquire the 'extraplanar' subtype when on the Material Plane.

Normal: Most characters are natives of the Material Plane.

Improved Foreign Magic

You can call upon the magical effects of your home plane.

Prerequisites: Foreign Magic, Home Ground

Benefit: Three times per day, you may cast a spell as if you were standing on your home plane, using its magical traits instead of those of the current plane. For example, if your home plane has a Green trait of +7, you can apply the metamagic benefits of that trait to three spells per day instead of using the Green trait of the current plane.

The three uses of this feat are in *addition* to the three uses of the Foreign Magic feat.

Punch Shift [Metamagic]

You can force your way through barriers that deny planar travel.

Benefit: You can increase the Accessibility trait of a plane for the purposes of a spell. For example, if a plane has an Accessibility of 1, it can normally only be accessed via a single portal. You can use this feat to increase the Accessibility, allowing you to travel to the plane via a *plane shift* spell.

For every two levels you raise the accessibility of the plane by, the spell being cast with *punch shift* takes up a spell slot one level higher. For example, a *plane shift* that also increases the Accessibility by 6 takes up a spell slot three levels higher than normal.

Special: This feat can be used to escape a *dimensional anchor*. The *anchor* has an Accessibility of 0.

NEW MAGIC ITEMS

Dismissing Weapon Property

Weapons with the *dismissal* property are to outsiders as *disrupting* weapons are to undead. Any extraplanar creature struck with a *dismissal* weapon must make a Will save (DC 14) or be sent back to their home plane. Only bludgeoning weapons can be given the property of *dismissal*.

Strong abjuration; CL 14th; Craft Magic Arms and Armour, *dismissal*; Price: +2 bonus.

Horseshoes of Hellriding

Horseshoes of hellriding allow the horse or other mount fitted with them to gallop through the boundaries of reality. To activate the shoes, the horse must move to trigger the various abilities of the shoes, as follows:

Travel	Riding
<i>Door</i>	Horse must move at least 30-ft. in one round.
<i>Plane Shift</i>	Horse must make a Jump check (or rider must make a Ride check) at a DC equal to 10 + (40 – the Proximity trait of the target plane – the Accessibility trait of the target plane).

For example, for a horse to ride from the Material Plane to the Plane of Earth, it could canter through a *door* to the Ethereal, move from the Border Ethereal of the Material Plane to that of Earth, and then ride through a second *door*; alternatively, it could try to *plane shift* by making a Jump check (DC 28).

Moderate conjuration; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item or Craft Portal, *door, plane shift*; Price: 90,000 gp.

Horseshoes of Hellriding, Cursed

Cursed horseshoes of hellriding look just like normal *horseshoes of hellriding*. However, when they are fitted to a mount and the rider tries to ride to another plane, the curse is triggered. The mount is *polymorphed* into a nightmare, who immediately begins to hellride towards the Infernum. Celestial mounts may make a Fortitude save against the *polymorph* (DC 17).

Moderate conjuration; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item or Craft Portal, *door, plane shift, baleful polymorph*; Price: 90,000 gp.

Planar Beacon

A *planar beacon* is a magical torch that burns for one day (24 hours). Its light penetrates the walls of reality, allowing any *divination* spells that are normally restricted to looking for targets on the same plane to detect items and creatures within 30 feet of the torch, or gives a +10 circumstance bonus to attempts to locate such creatures. For example, a *scrying* spell suffers a -5 penalty when searching for targets on another plane; if the target was holding a *planar beacon*, the penalty would be countered by the +10 bonus.

Alternatively, the *planar beacon* may be set alight entirely, in which case it burns out after one minute. However, for the duration of that minute, anyone *anywhere* thinking of a creature within the light of the torch knows where the creature is, as per the *discern location* spell. Furthermore, the fiery light of the torch tends to attract the attention of sensitive beings, those using *arcane sight* and so on.

Strong divination; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *discern location*; Price: 6,000 gp.

Pearls of the Planar Voyager

The *pearls of the planar voyager* are a string of pearls (5+1d4 stones) on a strand of silver (actually, a severed *silver cord*). Anyone grasping a single pearl and tugging on it firmly can detach it from the string; however, the *silver cord* continues to magically connect each pearl to the others.

Anyone holding a pearl may telepathically communicate with all of the other holders. Furthermore, once per day per pearl, a character may *plane shift* the holder of a neighbouring pearl to his location. The target must be willing to travel. Only the holder of the pearl to the left or right of the 'active' pearl can be transported in this matter.

Moderate divination and conjuration; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *plane shift, message*; Price: 81,000 gp.

Pentacle of the Thaumaturgist

A *pentacle of the thaumaturgist* is an iron badge in the shape of a pentacle and marked with the runes of a summoning circle. A black gem is set in its centre. By passing his hand over the gemstone, the wearer can effect any one *protection* spell from the following list: *protection from good, evil, law or chaos*. This *protection* is permanent until deactivated, although only one effect can be active at any time.

Once per day, the wearer may cast *dimensional anchor* or *dismissal*.

On command, the *pentacle* expands into a full-sized summoning circle and automatically erects a *magic circle* against the currently active alignment. The circle has all the appropriate sigils and binding to make it as secure as possible. The *dimensional anchor* ability of the *pentacle* is automatically triggered if a creature is *called* into the circle. The expanded *pentacle* can cast *planar binding* once per day.

Finally, wearing or displaying a *pentacle of the thaumaturgist* gives the holder a +2 circumstance bonus to any Charisma checks when dealing with outsiders.

Strong conjuration and abjuration; CL 15th; Craft Wondrous Item, *protection from evil, magic circle against evil, dimensional anchor, dismissal, planar binding*; Price: 250,000 gp.

Thurible of Exorcism

The *thurible of exorcism* is a +1 *flail*. When loaded with incense, the pungent smoke emanating from the *thurible* gives anyone breathing it (anyone within 10 feet of the *thurible*) *protection from evil*. Any outsiders or extraplanar entities possessing creatures within range must make a Will save (DC 25) or be *dismissed*. Only a cleric or paladin may wield a *thurible*.

Moderate abjuration; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *magic circle against evil, dismissal*; Price: 90,000 gp.

THE ETHEREAL PLANE

DESCRIPTION

The 'Inner Sea' of the planes, the eternal fogs of the Ethereal Plane wash over all the Inner Planes. It is the echo of the Material Plane, a realm of memory and ghosts. Items and actions on the Material Plane create ripples in this fog and draw the attention of wraiths and worse from within the mists.

'The Ethereal Plane is good for nothing except spying – and even then, I would prefer to scry.'

– Deviations

Getting there... and Back

The Ethereal Plane is coexistent with most of the Inner Planes, so simple spells like *door* or *plane shift* can reach it. There are also several spells such as *ethereal jaunt* that allow quick access to the plane. Natural portals to the Ethereal Plane are few, although minglings sometimes occur in graveyards and haunted places.

Survival on the Ethereal Plane

The atmosphere of the Ethereal Plane is clammy and chill but perfectly breathable and food carried onto the plane remains edible. The ectoplasm of the plane is potable and contains enough moisture to be consumed like water, while ectoplasmic food, though bland, is comprised of enough basic nutrients to subsist on. A mortal character cast away in this ghost world can survive, but will soon become a starved and maddened wretch.

Navigation through the Border Ethereal is simple – a character can see the features and landmarks of the adjacent plane and use these as navigation points. Ethereal characters can fly at half normal speed with perfect manoeuvrability and walk through most obstacles, so travel here is relatively simple.

Navigating the Deep Ethereal is much more difficult and requires the use of magic or Survival checks (DC 15) to maintain travel in a particular direction.

FEATURES & PROPERTIES

The dominant feature of the Ethereal Plane is fog. Rolling banks of grey mist extend for infinity though

Ethereal Plane Traits

Gravity	-9	<i>No gravity</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal time</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	5	<i>Alterable</i>
Life	-2	<i>Sparse</i>
Weather	-6	<i>Static</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	-2	<i>Undead are common</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to Material	14	<i>Coexistent</i>
...to Elemental	14	<i>Coexistent</i>
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

the Ethereal Plane is divided into regions, the Border Ethereal and the Deep Ethereal. A Border Ethereal is the layer of the plane immediately adjacent to, and coexistent with, the Material Plane or one of the Elemental Planes. If a character travels far enough in the Border Ethereal, he will eventually reach the towering wall of dark cloud that marks the edge of the Deep Ethereal.

While the various Border Ethereal Planes reflect the planes to which they are adjacent, the Deep Ethereal is its own entity and has no features save the cloudbanks and a few cenotaphs (see below).

*Etrichan: A desolate land of mist and ghosts pervades our world. Sometimes, in the night, I wake from the nightmares, my lungs choked with the fog of the Ethereal Plane, watched by the eyes studying me from beyond.*¹²

– The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act VII, Scene i

Ectoplasm

The ever-present fog is made up of a substance called ectoplasm. It feels like cold, slightly viscous fog. When compressed, ectoplasm becomes a clammy grey

slime. It can be strained in this form to a liquid that resembles exceedingly watery oatmeal. Ectoplasmic fog can be moulded into a particular shape (using standard Craft checks), which it will retain for some time (1d4 weeks) before drifting apart. A ghost could build a house of fog, although the walls would only be slightly thicker and more solid than the surrounding mists. The ghost could pass through the wall, leaving a rippling tear in the shaped ectoplasm that would slowly heal itself. Pushing through such an obstacle requires a Strength check (DC 7), a character may add his Wisdom or Charisma bonus (whichever is higher) to his roll – failure means that the character loses five feet of movement, but can try to move through the obstacle again if he has movement left.

Ectoplasmic fog dampens sound (-2 penalty to Listen checks) and blocks vision (granting 20% concealment to all those more than 30 feet away from an observer, 50% concealment to all those within 120 feet and total concealment beyond 120 feet).

Reflections of the Material Plane

A character can see into the Material Plane from any point on the Border Ethereal. This is something like peering through a cracked and dirty pane of glass. From some angles, the material world can be seen clearly; from others, it is distorted and warped out of all proportion; from yet others, it appears monochromatic and wreathed in mist.

This close relationship between the Material and Ethereal Planes causes other phenomena. Tenebrous wisps of ectoplasm catch on the tiny impressions in the Ethereal Plane caused by physical objects passing through it. If a wall is built in the Material Plane, it can be seen through the rolling ethereal fog. Wait long enough though and these mists will form into an ethereal duplicate of the wall. This wall is only

slightly more solid than any other piece of ectoplasm, but it can be seen without having to peer into the Material Plane. Over time, the ethereal landscape forms into a ghostly reflection of the real world.

If the real-world object were to be destroyed or moved (say, if the wall were demolished), then the ethereal duplicate would slowly dissolve back into free-floating mist. This process takes some time, so it is possible to glimpse what the landscape used to look like by examining the local Ethereal Plane.

The time taken for an ethereal duplicate to form depends on the nature of the object.

For example, a character comes across the ruin of a castle and wishes to learn who once dwelled there. The castle was destroyed six months ago, but stood for sixty years prior to its destruction. The ethereal duplicates of the wooden outbuildings have long since faded, but the stone structure of the castle itself will endure for five years before dissolving. The character might find duplicate suits of armour or other metal fittings, but only if their real-world counterparts had been in the same place for at least twelve years. While exploring, the character finds an ancient shield on the wall, bearing the crest of the castle’s owner. The real-world version of this shield may have long since been shattered, but its ethereal duplicate still exists for a time.

Like items shaped of ectoplasm, ethereal duplicates have a little solidity. Pushing through them requires a Strength check at a DC of the hardness of the real-world item; a character may add his Wisdom or Charisma bonus (whichever is higher) to this roll. Dissolving ethereal duplicates are even less resilient – reduce the DC by 1d10 points. Failing the Strength check means that the character loses five feet of

Ethereal Duplicates

Material	Time to Form	Time to Dissolve
Living creatures	Never	-
Most plants	One year	One day
Trees and bushes	One year	Two weeks
Fabrics, most common items	Six months	Two weeks
Gold, silver, gems	One month	One month
Iron and steel	One month	Two weeks per year of existence
Wooden buildings	Six months	One month
Stone buildings	Three months	One month per year of existence
Lead	Instantaneous	One year per year of existence
Other substances	12 – (hardness in months)	Hardness in months

movement, but can try to move through the obstacle again if he has movement left.

A character can pick up the ethereal duplicate of a sword and wield it against a ghost, but the duplicate will dissolve in 1d10 hours. The ethereal duplicates of magical items usually have no special properties - reduce the bonus of the item by three, or the caster level by twelve, so a *sword +5* would create an ethereal duplicate *sword +2*, while a *wand of fireballs* with a caster level of seven would create an entirely non-magical duplicate. Only permanent items create ethereal duplicates, and remember a moving item does not create an ethereal duplicate at all. That *sword +5* would have to be left on a shelf for a month to produce an ethereal duplicate, and the duplicate would only exist for a few days before dissolving if the sword was moved.

Violent weather or major discharges of energy on the Material Plane can also cause the local ethereal duplicates to dissolve. Roll percentile dice; if the result is lower than the damage inflicted by an energy attack, the ethereal duplicates within a radius equal to the damage x 5 dissolve within 1d10 rounds.

Ethereal duplicates only exist on the Ethereal Plane. Any attempt to remove them from their home plane causes them to instantly dissolve.

Permanent Barriers

Force effects such as a *wall of force* extend into the Ethereal Plane, as do effects that block planar travel such as *forbiddance*. To an ethereal creature, such areas appear to be filled with an impenetrable blackness.

Mixing blood into mortar or covering a building in ivy causes its ethereal duplicate to form much more quickly and strongly, halving the time needed to form a duplicate and increasing the Strength DC to push through the duplicate by +10. For example, a wall covered in ivy would require a Strength check (DC 20) to move through, even ethereally. This can slow or even block weaker ghosts from passing through its wall.

Ghosts, Small and Large

The Ethereal Plane is the home of ghosts, wraiths and other spectral entities. They float amid the mists, hungrily eyeing the warm energy of those who still live. The Ethereal Plane is also the home of the Discarded. These are the equivalent of an ethereal duplicate created by a living being. The discarded

appear only after a violent death, throwing off the shell of the dying body and forming a new shape from ectoplasm. The discarded have no intelligence or real will of their own; they merely repeat certain actions again and again. They exist only on the Ethereal Plane and cannot manifest, although they can move onto the Material Plane if the two planes mingle.

The *speak with dead* spell works by draining the discarded back into its former body. The spell conjures a Small ghost if the dead person died naturally, so casting *speak with dead* can lead to a rash of hauntings. While the discarded are not especially powerful, they can be dangerous in large numbers to ethereal travellers.

The Deep Ethereal

Finding the edge of the Deep Ethereal requires 1d10 days of travel or the use of a spell like *teleport*. The Deep Ethereal resembles the borderlands, but instead of randomly rolling mists, the ectoplasmic fog of the Deep Ethereal spins in a vast, eternal cyclone.

The Deep Ethereal is mostly a featureless expanse of fog dotted with *secret chests* and pocket planes tethered to locations on the Material Plane. It is infinite in extent.

HAZARDS

Apart from the ghosts that throng the mists the Ethereal Plane is relatively safe for travellers. The major threat is getting lost. A high Survival skill or items like a *planar compass*, however, prevent this.

Charged Ether (CR3)

Force effects like *magic missile* extend into the Ethereal Plane. When this force dissipates, when the *magic missile* detonates or the *forcecage* collapses, its energy is absorbed by the ectoplasm. Tiny fragments of force-charged ectoplasm float through the mists, slowly gathering together into crackling chains of energy. Charged ether looks like a bank of fog with flashes of lightning constantly erupting in its depths.

Ethereal creatures, being made of ectoplasm, can float through charged ether safely without discharging it. However, if a creature from the Material Plane touches the charged ether or comes within 60 feet of it, the ether fires violent bolts of force at the creature. Charged ether deals 2d6 points of damage (Fortitude save, DC 13) for half damage. A bank of charged ether has 50 + 5d10 points of force to discharge before it is exhausted. It will discharge at items from the

“Terrible muggy weather,” I said. “We’re on the Ethereal Plane,” he said, as if that was an excuse.’

- Traveller’s Tales.

Material Plane as well as creatures, so a character could discharge a patch of charged ether by shooting arrows at it.

Ethereal creatures often form charged ether into ethereal mines or other defences against corporeal invaders.

Coagulation (CR4)

Sometimes, the mists of the Ethereal Plane spontaneously solidify. The onset of a coagulation is heralded by a sound of creaking, as strands of stiffening ectoplasm rub against each other. This creaking lasts for 2d4 rounds before the coagulation begins and the Listen DC to notice this creaking is equal to the number of rounds x 8. The coagulation solidifies all mist within a radius of 6d6 x 10 feet, beginning at the centre of the affected area and expanding at a rate of 1d8 x 10 feet per round. Any character caught by the expanding edge of the coagulation must make a Reflex save (DC 14); a character who succeeds is moved to the edge of the coagulation, one who fails is stuck.

The coagulation blocks planar travel, so a trapped character cannot *plane shift* out, or even return to the Material Plane when an *ethereal jaunt* runs out. The coagulation lasts for seven + 3d10 days before dissolving. Ghosts and ethereal creatures usually just wait for the coagulation to dissolve, but characters who need food and water cannot wait so long. A character can dig through one foot of coagulated ectoplasm in eight hours; it has hardness 10 and 30 hit points per inch of thickness.

Cenotaphs (CR11)

Ethereal duplicates sometimes drift into the Deep Ethereal. Usually, they dissipate normally, but some endure for centuries. These ghost towns attract the discarded, wraiths and other ethereal creatures, and the memory-absorbing qualities of ectoplasm cause the denizens to copy the actions of the inhabitants of the real counterpart of the town. Travellers encounter copies of long-vanished villages or temples, filled with mindless undead who mimic the appropriate actions of the original. These cenotaphs can be useful shelters for travellers lost in the Deep Ethereal. However, at the heart of every cenotaph is a dread wraith (see *Core*

Ethereic Influenza

The dank mists and chill, clinging ectoplasm of the Ethereal Plane commonly give rise to illnesses. Etheric influenza is the most common of these, where the lungs become partially filled with the ethereal mists. A character must make a Fortitude save (DC 8) after every day in which he spends more than two hours on the Ethereal Plane. Etheric influenza lasts for 6 + 1d6 days, during which the character’s Constitution score is reduced by 1. The character can also dimly perceive ethereal creatures (Spot check, DC 25 required). Finally, the character’s skin is noticeably greyer and clammy – a sure sign that he has spent some time in the Ethereal realms.

Rulebook III) who rules the cenotaph, taking on the role of the local authority figure. It can feed on the fragments of memory inherent in the cenotaph, but also uses the cenotaph to lure unwary travellers.

LOCATIONS

There are few permanent features amid the rolling ectoplasmic mists.

The Eye

At the centre of the Deep Ethereal is a huge whirlpool, a shining white portal dozens of miles wide that leads to the Afterworld. It was created to gather up all the errant ghosts that linger on the Ethereal Plane. Four Colossal Psychopomps named Aadon, Barus, Chal and Escah guard the portal from interference and block living creatures from passing through the whirlpool. Of the four guardians, Barus is the most diligent. Aadon and Escah have both tired of their task; Aadon spends decades at a time sleeping, while Escah has long since abandoned his post and now rules a demiplane inhabited by lizardmen. Chal is still dutiful, but her heart is easily swayed by a sufficiently sorrowful or heroic need to access the Afterworld (Diplomacy check, DC 25).

The four psychopomps are not the only danger to travellers heading for the Eye. Vast shoals of ethereal marauders surround the eye, feeding on the discarded that are sucked into the whirlpool. There is little sustenance in such things, so a traveller will be attacked by dozens of hungry marauders as he approaches the Eye.

Warren of the Filchers

The curious entities known as ethereal filchers dwell in a vast warren of ectoplasmic tunnels in the Deep Ethereal, near to the edge of the Material/Ethereal Border. The warren looks like the intestines of some monstrous beast, as it is full of pulsing chambers and spasming orifices. A constant stream of filchers swarm in and out of the warren; entering the warren laden with the spoils of their thievery, they leave empty-handed.

The warren is an almost incomprehensible maze, organised according to the most curious of principles. The filchers scurry in and deposit their stolen items in the appropriate chamber, but the criteria they use are unknown. A king's ransom in gemstones might be placed next to a pile of oars stolen from canoes, while the spellbooks of an archmage might be carefully torn up to make a nest for an abducted mouse. A character exploring the warren of the filchers could find almost any item imaginable, but the search would be both lengthy and frustrating.

Over ten thousand filchers occupy the warren at any one time. The innermost chambers of the warren are the realm of the Filchers' Guild. A particularly enterprising thief once thought to raid the warren; she was captured by the large filchers that patrol the corridors, and had everything she possessed filched from her, including the *cubic gate* she used to reach the Deep Ethereal. Over the following years, she roamed the warrens, stealing already-stolen food. She learned the primitive language of the filchers, and from her they learned the concept of the Thieves' Guild. Now, the best and most skilful of the filchers are permitted to join the Filchers' Guild.

As for that thief, it is said she became the first master of the filcher's guild.

Ghostwatch

Ghostwatch Keep is a vast, imposing castle that floats in the Border Ethereal. It was constructed from the decaying fragments of ethereal duplicates of destroyed fortresses, so the architecture of Ghostwatch is a strange mix of styles and materials. The castle is the home of an order of penitents – paladins mostly, but they take in adventurers and heroes from all classes and races.

A group of clerics on the Material Plane known as the Friars of Mistguard keep the castle from dissolving by means of constant prayer and sacrifice. The friars also produce the *ghostwatch tabards* worn by all the

knights. Currently, Ghostwatch Keep is home to some ninety knights (twenty-five paladins, fifteen clerics, thirteen rangers, twelve fighters, four of each of the other classes), ranging in level between three and twenty. Any good-aligned character engaged in a heroic quest may call upon the Knights of Ghostwatch by means of a *sending*. Within three days, 6 + 1d6 Knights of Ghostwatch will appear to aid the character. However, once the character's quest is completed, the character has one month to settle his mortal affairs before he is called to serve Ghostwatch Keep for the rest of his existence.

The current Master of the Knights is a 20th level human paladin, Tobias de Triste, a melancholy man who called the knights to aid him in rescuing his lady love from a dragon. He won her freedom, but sacrificed his own to do so.

Tobias; Pal20 CR20; Medium humanoid (human); HD 20d10+60; hp 176; Init +0; Spd 20-ft.; AC 27; touch 17, flat-footed 27; Base Atk +20; Grp +21; Atk +27 melee (1d8+6, *holy avenger*); Full Atk +27/22/17/12 melee (1d8+6, *holy avenger*); SA Spells, smite 5/day (+6 attack, +20 damage); SQ Aura of good, *detect evil*, lay on hands (120 hp/day), aura of courage, divine grace, divine health, turn undead, *remove disease* 5/week, special mount; AL LG; SV Fort +21, Ref +12, Will +16; Str 13, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 22.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +10, Diplomacy +12, Handle Animal +10, Knowledge (religion) +5, Knowledge (the planes) +5, Ride +22, Sense Motive +5; Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Combat Casting, Power Attack, Cleave, Great Cleave, Leadership.

Ghostwatch Tabards

These magical tabards are woven from shimmering silver-grey thread and are marked with the symbol of the Knights of Ghostwatch, a longsword, its blade pointing skyward, wreathed in tendrils of mist. The tabards allow the wearer to move from the Ethereal to the Material Plane at will, but only if at least four other tabards are making the same journey at the same location and time. The tabards are made in groups of five, and the knights move between the planes as one.

Moderate transmutation; CL14th; Create Wondrous Item, *ethereal jaunt*; Price 10,000 gp.

Paladin Spells Prepared: (4/4/4/4; Save DC 14 + spell level) 1st – *bless, protection from evil, endure elements, lesser restoration*; 2nd – *bull's strength x 2, eagle's splendour, owl's wisdom*; 3rd – *prayer, remove curse, heal mount x 2*; 4th – *break enchantment, death ward, dispel chaos, dispel evil*.

Possessions: Full plate +4, heavy steel shield +3, holy avenger +5, cloak of charisma +4, gloves of dexterity +2, periapt of wisdom +2, ghostwatch tabard, three potions of cure critical wounds.

Special Mount: Tobias's warhorse, Beelanthas, wears horseshoes of etherealness, and is used to ethereal combat.

DENIZENS

The native creatures of the Ethereal Plane are blink dogs, ethereal creepers, ethereal filchers, ethereal marauders and all manner of ghosts. Save for the warren of the filchers and minor fortifications like Ghostwatch Keep, there are few organisations on the Ethereal Plane, although some travellers have reported encounters with whole civilisations living and dying in the Border Ethereal, walking invisibly and unperceived by creatures passing through the same space on the Material Plane.

The Discarded

Medium Undead (Extraplanar, Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 1d12 (7 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: Fly 30-ft. (perfect)

Armour Class: 12 (+1 Dex, +1 Deflection), touch 12, flat-footed 11

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/-3

Attack: Bite +1 melee (1d3-3)

Full Attack: Bite +1 melee (1d3-3)

Space/Reach: 5-ft /5-ft.

Special Attacks: Cause fear

Special Qualities: None

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +1, Will -2

Abilities: Str 4, Dex 12, Con –, Int 3, Wis 3, Cha 8

Skills: Profession or Craft (any) +1

Feats: Weapon Finesse (bite)

Climate/Terrain: Any ethereal

Organisation: Solitary, swarm (2-12) or battlefield (50-500)

Challenge Rating: 1/2

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually neutral

Advancement: None

This spectral entity seems to be the ghost of a dead man. He appears slightly confused by the gaping wound in his chest.

The Pact of Ghostwatch Keep

If I, the hero,

Fear to fail,

Knights of Ghostwatch,

My call will hail.

Warriors bold,

From ether stride,

To stand and hold,

My embattled side.

When deed is done,

And wars are ended,

Ghostwatch's hand,

Once more extended,

Collect the toll,

We have agreed

And take me home,

To hail to thee.

If a hero fears the failure of his quest, he may call upon the Knights of Ghostwatch. These Knights shall materialise from the Ethereal Plane and fight alongside the character. However, when the character's dies or his quest is completed, whichever happens first, the Knights return and carry him into the mists of the Ethereal Plane where he spends the rest of his life at Ghostwatch Keep, waiting for the call to arms.

The discarded are thrown-off shells of emotion and memory that were imprinted onto the mists of the Ethereal Plane by a violent death. They look just like they did in life, and remember all they once knew, but the discarded lack the intelligence or will to use their former skills. Most of the discarded repeat their everyday actions endlessly until they decay or are destroyed – a discarded harper plays their harp, a discarded soldier constantly patrols non-existent battlements.

Combat

The Discarded attack by biting or clawing with their chill, misty hands. They exist only on the Ethereal Plane, so they are only dangerous to other ethereal travellers or during a mingling.

Cause fear (Sp): The discarded can cast *cause fear* as a 1st level sorcerer once per day. The Save DC for this ability is 10.

Ethereal Creepers

Large Plant (Extraplanar, Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 4d8+12 (30 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 5-ft. (1 square)

Armour Class: 15 (–1 size, +6 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 15

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+12

Attack: Slam +7 melee (1d6+7)

Full Attack: Slam +7 melee (1d6+7)

Space/Reach: 10-ft./10-ft. (20-ft. with vine)

Special Attacks: Constrict 1d6+7, improved grab

Special Qualities: Blindsight 30-ft., camouflage, immunity to electricity, low-light vision, plant traits, resistance to cold 10 and fire 10

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +1, Will +2

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 10, Con 16, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 9

Climate/Terrain: Any ethereal

Organisation: Solitary or patch (2–4)

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: 1/10th coins; 50% goods; 50% items

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 5–16 HD (Huge); 17–32 HD (Gargantuan); 33+ HD (Colossal)

These nightmarish entities are relatives of the assassin vine (see Core Rulebook III) that have adapted to life on the Ethereal Plane.



Camouflage (Ex): Since an ethereal creeper is both ethereal and incorporeal only characters who can see ethereal creatures can attempt to Spot the creeper before it attacks.

Combat

An ethereal creeper can extrude any portion of itself into the Material Plane as a free action. The creeper can only be attacked when it is constricting a character.

Constrict (Ex): An ethereal creeper deals 1d6+7 points of damage with a successful grapple check. The vine can attempt to drag a constricted victim back onto the ethereal realm instead of inflicting damage – the victim is permitted a Will save (DC 13) to resist this, but the vine only uses this tactic when a materialised tendril takes severe (15+) damage.

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, an ethereal creeper must hit with its slam attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Blindsight (Ex): Ethereal creepers have no visual organs but can ascertain all foes within 30 feet using sound, scent, and vibration.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Ethereal Plane is the first plane many adventurers visit; it is very close to the Material World and minglings are comparatively common.

- † A young child wandered into the mists during a mingling and is now lost on the Ethereal Plane. The characters must track the child before the sun rises, burning off the mists and ending the mingling.
- † The characters are hired to steal the ethereal duplicate of a wizard's spellbook from a famed library – they have to penetrate the magical defences of the library and get the duplicate of the spellbook back to their employers before it dissolves into ectoplasm.
- † Strange, spectral knights attack a friend or relative of the characters. The friend made the Pact of Ghostwatch, but is now attempting to escape his tour of duty at Ghostwatch Keep.

THE ASTRAL PLANE

DESCRIPTION

Also known as the Great Realm, and while infinities are practically common throughout the planes, with travellers speaking glibly of the bottomless chasm of the Inferno or the infinitely hot fires of the Fire Plane, the sheer size of the Astral Realm is... beyond. The gulfs between stars and the slow march of all time from the foundation of the worlds to their inevitable ends are as nothing compared to the eternal vastness of the Astral Plane.

The Astral Plane is a void; sometimes shimmering white, sometimes coruscating purple, sometimes a shifting colour that has no name in the tongues of elf or man. It contains more demi-planes, pocket realms and portals than any other plane. The rest of the planes – all that exist, save the Far Realms – float amid the Great Realm and thus the Astral Plane is coterminous with all others. It also serves as the great highway of the planes, and travellers of all sorts are common.

Astral Plane Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	-2	<i>Three rounds on plane = one round on Material</i>
Size	20	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	5	<i>Alterable</i>
Life	10	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	10	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	10	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	10	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	10	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Quirk: <i>All spells are quickened</i>		
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to All	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

The Astral Plane's Time and Arcane traits combine to Quickened all spells cast on the plane.

Astral Envoy: *This is all-that-is, [making the Sign of Mufe] nothing and nothingness.*

Etrichan: *Nonsense, I have seen other worlds.*

Astral Envoy: *And yet, this is all-that-is.*

– The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act II, Scene xi

Getting there... and Back

Almost every travel spell may be used to access the Astral Plane. Even a humble *door*, if cast in the right place, can open a way onto the Great Realm. There also exist spells such as *astral projection* which are specifically designed to bring travellers to the Astral Plane.

The Astral Plane never mingles with other planes under normal circumstances, although magical accidents can bring about temporary vortices. Such incidents are quickly repaired by the Planewrights. Natural portals to the Astral Plane are rare, and usually occur where the fabric of reality has worn thin or large numbers of entities have used planar travel spells.

There are an infinite number of natural portals leading from the Great Realm to other planes. These are known as colour pools. They form and dissolve randomly as storms run across the Astral Plane.

Survival on the Astral Plane

Survival is relatively easy on the Astral Plane – the realm is timeless, so characters need not eat, drink, breathe or even sleep if they do not want to. Decay, illness, even the onset of poison is halted on the Astral Plane. Dying here takes *effort*.

That is not always a blessing. The Astral Plane is almost completely empty. Matter consists only of a few rare islands of stone. While the subjective gravity of the plane allows travellers to 'fly' at great speed, the astral gulfs are much, much too large for a character to get anywhere by controlled falling alone.

Magic such as *teleport*, an accurate *plane shift* or an astral vessel is practically a requirement for survival. Unprepared travellers who *door* to the Astral Plane can find themselves in the middle of an infinite nowhere. Neither starvation nor age will take them, so they must wait for an eternity unless they have some means of calling for aid (or killing themselves). Travellers

using *astral projection* have another problem to deal with – the silver cord that links the projected form to the traveller’s real body. If the cord is cut, the character is slain.

FEATURES & PROPERTIES

The dominant feature of the Astral Plane is its sheer emptiness. A traveller can fall for weeks and see nothing but the endless shifting fractal patterns of the plane. The only creatures commonly encountered are Astral Parasites, minor vermin attracted to conscious minds.

Natural Portals

Portals to random planes manifest in the wake of astral storms, stars, and psychic or arcane novas. These portals respond to conscious thought – by concentrating, a character within range of a portal (range equals the character’s Charisma score x 10 feet) can cause the portal to become translucent and allow astral characters to see the other plane, or make the portal open or close. If two characters try to control a portal at the same time, use an opposed Concentration check to determine who wins. If a portal is open, an astral character can step through onto the destination plane. The portal is normally one-way – a character can only go from the Astral to the other plane. However, for 1d4 rounds after a character has stepped from the portal, the portal can be used to reach the Astral Plane. The portal is invisible from the far side.

Use the Random Plane Table to determine where a portal leads.

Waystation Sizes

Size	Population	GP Limit	Defences
Diminutive	2-8	5 gp	Two 1 st level fighters or warriors on a Barge
Tiny	9-40	20 gp	Four 1 st level fighters led by a 3 rd level Fighter, accompanied by a 1 st level cleric or sorcerer
Small	41-90	50 gp	Ten 1 st level fighters led by two 3 rd level fighters, accompanied by a 2 nd level cleric and sorcerer
Medium	91-200	100 gp	Double the defences of a Small station, plus three wizards with <i>wands of fireball</i>
Large	201-500	250 gp	Double the defences of a Medium station, plus an astral longship
Huge	501-1,200	750 gp	Double the defences of a Large station, plus bound guardian monsters such as arrowhawks
Gargantuan	1,201-2,500	1,500 gp	Double the defences of a Huge station, plus an astral warship
Colossal	2,501+	5,000 gp	Double the defences of a Gargantuan station, plus a <i>chain lightning cannon</i>

Erratics

Erratics are the free-floating chunks of matter that dot the Astral Plane. Most are lumps of stone which have been sheared away from the Plane of Earth or a decaying demiplane, but there are pockets of empty air, globes of water or spheres of eternal flame drifting through the Astral Plane. Most solid erratics are inhabited by the various denizens of the Great Realm, while watery or fiery erratics are tapped to refuel and resupply astral barges going on voyages to planes with a normal Time trait.

Waystations

Waystations are inhabited erratics that have been claimed by one of the astral civilisations or guilds, such as the Wayfarers. A small waystation looks like a border fort clinging to a floating rock, with several strange astral barges docked at arched metallic spines that sprout from the fort. Larger waystations can have thousands of inhabitants.

The main feature of a waystation is its aethervane, a complex assemblage of crystals, brass rods, cogs and gauges. Aethervanes are sensitive to the distortions caused by the opening and closing of portals on the Astral Plane. A skilled aethervane operator can detect a portal opening millions of miles away. The waystations send their astral barges to these portals to pick up travellers.

Inside a waystation, a traveller may expect to find a small general store selling supplies (although food and drink are rarely sold), rooms to rent, a common

Random Waystation Table (Roll once for each column)

d12	Size	Inhabitants	Demeanour	Twist
1	Diminutive	Humans	Welcoming	All astral barges are missing.
2	Tiny	Humans	Greedy	Strange disease on board.
3	Small	Elves	Nervous	Station is threatened by a monster.
4	Small	Gnomes	Hostile	Station is threatened by invaders.
6	Medium	Celephates	Confused	Aethervane is malfunctioning.
7	Medium	Psychomagnates	Wary	Magical items for sale.
8	Large	Undead	Festive	Station crew are pirates.
9	Large	Constructs	Bored	Station crew are insane.
10	Huge	Mixed race	Preoccupied	Portal has opened within the station.
11	Gargantuan	Mixed race	Mournful	Station is in the grip of civil war.
12	Colossal	Mixed race	Religious	All is as it seems.

‘It has always been my contention that the Astral Plane is not timeless; it’s just so boring that it seems that way.’

- Deviations

room, a place to book passage on an astral vessel and the chamber containing the aethervane. As gravity is subjective here, chambers tend to be put to multiple uses; a craftsman on a waystation might have his bed and personal effects attached to the ‘floor’ of a room, and his tools and work area on the ‘ceiling’ – when he goes to work, he simply reverses his personal gravity and makes the work area into the floor. Waystations can be surprisingly well equipped for their size.

Astral Barges

The sheer size of the Astral makes mundane modes of transport useless. Magic is, therefore, the only effective option. The famed vessels that traverse the Great Realm are known as ‘astral barges,’ although they are often much too large and ornate to be properly called a humble ‘barge’. The barges work by skimming along the surface of the Astral Plane, using the same principles as the *dimension door* spell. The barges are powered by the will of the crew, so most behave like oared vessels, the ‘rowers’ use their Wisdom instead of Strength to row.

The speed attainable by astral barges is extraordinary; the vessels flit in and out of the dimensions and attain velocities greater than even the swiftest air elemental (up to five thousand miles per day). However, the magical field that propels the barge is very fragile – if one barge comes within two dozen miles of another, both are slowed to the speed of a mundane vessel. Therefore, shipping routes on the Astral Plane are

Aethervanes

An aethervane weighs at least 1,000 lb., and costs 2,000 gp. It is a non-magical contraption, created using the Craft (aethervane) skill. The aethervane is operated using the Profession (aetherist) skill (a character can use the Spellcraft skill instead, but all DCs are increased by +5). The following actions can be performed using an aethervane:

Detect Nearest Portal (DC 12): The aethervane detects the nearest portal (which will usually be 1d100 x 1d100 miles away).

Plot Portals (DC 15): The aethervane detects all active portals within 100,000 miles.

Plot Course (DC 10): The aethervane operator can plot a course to a specific portal to guide a barge or *teleport* spell.

Examine Portal (DC 17): The aethervane operator can examine the aura of a portal as if he were observing it using *detect portal* (see page 27).

carefully planned and interceptions and piracy are common.

Some astral barges are converted from seagoing vessels, while others were built on the Astral Plane, and look like nothing that ever sailed – after all, they need no streamlined hull nor sails. A cargo ship, for example, might be nothing but four wooden canoes containing the psychic rowers, with a huge net strung between them.

The heart of an astral barge is the *astral keel*, the magical device that propels the barge. Most keels are

driven by the will of the ‘rowers,’ except for *mage-keels* (which drain spell slots – each spell slot gives as much ‘push’ as one rower) and *binding-keels* (which

‘The Great Realm is the container for the thing contained. It is limited only by the limits of that which is within it.’

- Alastherion’s Planar Encyclopaedia

rely on magically bound creatures of high Wisdom such as gynosphinxes).

Moderate conjuration; CL 7th; Create Wondrous Item, *dimension door*; Price 28,000 gp.

Vaults

The Great Realm is littered with the detritus of ancient planar empires – it is the crossroads of creation, so thousands of battles have been fought in its changeless skies. Occasionally, a traveller happens across the corpse of some warrior slain in a battle long ago; the body is as whole and fresh as it was when the death blow was struck, for there is no time on the Astral Plane. Most of these relics have long since either been picked clean of treasure and magic, or have drifted off into the more remote regions of the plane and been forgotten.

Vaults are a different and far more dangerous matter. A long-lost civilisation had the custom of entombing

its vanquished foes in magically sealed vaults instead of merely killing them. These vaults blocked escape from within. The trapped creatures would float through the Astral Plane for millennia until they took their own lives – a fitting punishment for the enemies of the greatest empire in all creation (sadly, no living sage has ever learned the name of this ancient civilisation).

All vaults are identical – cubes of black marble floating through the astral gulf, with a single sealed door on each side leading inwards. When examined with *detect magic*, the vault radiates ancient moderate conjuration and abjuration magic. The vault cannot be entered using any sort of dimensional travel, as the inside of the vault is locked with a *dimensional anchor* effect. However, the door of a vault can be opened by a thief (Open Lock, DC 12 + 1d20) and the contents looted – assuming the vault’s prisoner is not still alive. To determine if the victim is still alive, have the denizens of the vault make Fortitude saves (DC 10 + 1d20); if the save succeeds, the denizens have endured the centuries.

HAZARDS

The Astral Plane is timeless and seemingly unchanging, but is capable of sudden and shocking bursts of violence. Most voyages will go untroubled, but the unfortunate exception faces the terrible wrath of the Great Realm.

Random Vault Table

1d8	Prisoner	Possessions & Treasure	CR
1	Formian Warrior, hp 30	<i>Amulet of natural armour</i> +1, 400 gp, four vials of contact poison (nitharit, initial damage 0, secondary damage 3d6 Con, Fortitude save DC 13). The vials of poison are attached to the front of the character and break if he successfully grapples an opponent.	3
2	Six Quasits; hp 13 each	None.	4
3	Djinni, hp 50	Ornamental lamp worth 1,500 gp.	5
4	6 th Level Human Fighter	See <i>Core Rulebook II</i> .	6
5	Chaos Beast, 50 hp	None.	7
6	Spirit Naga, 76 hp	500 gp, ornamental necklace worth 500 gp containing a <i>bead of force</i> and a <i>potion of cure serious wounds</i> .	9
7	Barbed Devil	Three <i>elemental gems</i> , one each of Earth, Air and Water, 500 gp.	11
8	Pit Fiend	3,000 pp; forty soul-rubies, worth 1,000 gp, stud the fiend’s tail; +3 <i>flaming morningstar</i> , <i>cloak of resistance</i> +5.	20

Starc Impact

Roll	Danger	Effect
1-7	None	None.
8-12	Positive Tendril	Character must make a Reflex save (DC 16) or gain 2d10 hit points. If this brings the character above his maximum hit point total, he continues to gain temporary hit points that vanish after one day. If the character reaches twice his maximum hit point total, he explodes.
13-17	Negative Tendril	Character must make a Reflex save (DC 16) or lose 2d10 hit points. A <i>death ward</i> spell guards against this effect.
18-20	Minor Starc Discharge	The character is caught between two tendrils of Positive and Negative energy that are cancelling each other out. The detonation deals 3d10 points of force damage to the character (Fortitude save, DC 15 for half damage).

Astral Currents (CR0)

These are flows of energy within the Astral Plane. A traveller 'falling' along one of these currents moves ten or more times faster than normal. There is a 20% chance that a current brings the character towards a useful portal, a 20% chance it is dragging him away from a portal-rich region and a 60% chance that the current is simply meandering through the plane. Monsters often hunt along such currents, and astral barges use suitable currents to speed their passage. The average Encounter Level is increased by two along an astral current.

Astral Storms (CR7)

An astral storm is heralded by a sudden strange wind – strange because there is normally no strong wind on the Astral. 1d6 rounds later, 1d100 miles of the Great Realm erupts into a seething chaos. An Astral Storm has both mental and physical effects on travellers; characters caught in a storm must make a Fortitude save and a Will save, both at DC 15 + 1d6.

If a character fails the Fortitude save, he is blown off course for 1d4+1 days. *Astrally projecting* characters must make an additional Fortitude save at the same DC or die as their silver cord snaps.

If a character fails the Will save, his mind is blasted by the chaotic energies of the astral storm. He is *stunned* for 1d6 hours, and has 1d4 languages replaced by an equal number of random languages. Spellcasters who fail the Will save have 2d10 random prepared spells or unused spell spots replaced by an equal number of random spells (these replacement spells do not have to be ones the caster knows – they are simply psychic junk vomited into the character's brain).

A character who fails both saves is swept through a portal into a random plane.

The energies of an astral storm open up 2d10 portals into random planes. The storm also attracts swarms of astral parasites, some of which accidentally swim into these portals and are destroyed. The portals become two-way portals for a brief time and creatures or matter from the other planes may fall onto the Astral Plane. This is how most erratics form, and there is a 10% chance that a storm leaves 1d4 new erratics in its wake. A fleet of astral barges looking for useful erratics shows up soon after a storm clears.

Starcs (CR12)

Opposites attract.

When one of the opposites is the infinite fury of the Positive Energy Plane, and the other is the equally infinite and hateful void of the Negative Energy Plane, this attraction can be lethal. A starc occurs when an astral current carries Positive Energy close to the Negative Plane, or vice versa. Huge, thousand-mile-wide, tendrils of energy lash out from one plane, seeking hungrily for the other. These tendrils are easy enough to avoid, as they move quite slowly until they close to within a mile of each other. Then, the formation of the starc is imminent.

For an unfortunate traveller caught in the middle, between the two tentacles, a starc looks like a host of whirlwinds, occupying an area 5 + 1d10 miles in radius. Half of the whirlwinds reach up from the Negative Energy Plane and are dark and eerie; the other half extend down from the Positive Energy Realm and burn with a terrible light. A starc lasts for 20 + 2d20 rounds before grounding. Each round, roll on the Starc Impact table for each traveller.

A character can attempt to fall into Positive tendrils – this is a move action, and means that a result of ‘none’ on the Starc Impact table becomes a result of ‘Positive Tendril’.

When a starc grounds itself, the main tendrils of Positive and Negative energy find each other and cancel each other out. The result is a massive explosion of force. Any characters within the area of effect of the starc are dealt 10d10 points of force damage (Fortitude save, DC 25 for half).

There is a 5% chance that a starc leaves a planar seed (see page 228) behind after it grounds itself.

Novas (CR = CR of characters)

A nova is a fluctuation in the fabric of the Astral Plane, caused by an excess of arcane or psychic power being expended in one place. A potential nova begins when a character uses his highest level arcane spell or psychic power (lower-level spells can easily be controlled by the character, and so have almost no chance of ‘leaking’. Roll a nova check (1d20 + the level of the spell) against DC 20 – if the check is successful, a nova forms.

If another highest level spell or power is used within 300 feet of where the first was used, make another check, adding the levels of the arcane spells or powers together, and subtracting one for every round that has elapsed since the first ability was used. Subsequent spell uses also add to the total in the same way.

Example: Three 5th level wizards are duelling on the Astral Plane. One casts haste on himself – this is his highest level spell, so the Games Master makes a nova check, rolling 1d20+3 against DC 20. The check fails. Next round, the other two wizards cast dispel magic and fireball at the hasted wizard. Two more nova checks are made. The first is at +5 (third level dispel magic + third level haste – one elapsed round), while the second is at +8 (third level dispel magic + third level haste + third level fireball – one elapsed round). The third check succeeds, and a nova forms.

A nova lasts for a number of rounds equal to the modifier to the roll that created it, so our example nova will last eight rounds. A nova manifests as an explosion of crackling colour, centred on the character whose spell or power tipped the balance. The nova extends for 1d6 x 100 feet in all directions. Any arcane spellcasters or psionic characters within the area of effect of the nova must make a Concentration check (DC 20) each round or the nova forces them to cast an arcane spell or begin to manifest a power. The

caster may choose which arcane spell or power to use, but he must cast a spell or manifest a power if able. Especially potent novas can drain a wizard of all his spells.

A character casting an arcane spell may make a Spellcraft check (DC 15 + the level of the spell) to ‘dampen’ it and ensure that it does not contribute towards triggering a nova. If this Spellcraft check is failed, the spell is lost.

LOCATIONS

The Astral Plane is home to numerous empires of great strength, size and antiquity, encompassing thousands of erratics and waystations. Exiled nations of humans, exilarchs, elves, dragons, celephates, titans and stranger creatures claim ownership over vast stretches of the Astral Plane – but the size of the Great Realm makes these empires appear as grains of sand floating in the sea.

The Orrery

The ‘greatest waystation,’ the Orrery and the Neverbuilt City are described on page 184.

Tollbooth of Erthiz

The ‘tollbooth’ is actually a Colossal iron construct, covered with blood-stained blades and vicious spikes. Erthiz is a 32HD glabrezu exiled from the Infernum for unknown reasons. His tollbooth incorporates a magical *aethervane* that can detect portals and *gates* opening over vast distances, and can even discern the current condition of the character activating the portal. If Erthiz detects an injured or weak character opening a portal to the Astral Plane, he *teleports* the tollbooth so that the exit to the portal leads into the tollbooth’s mouth.

From the unfortunate traveller’s perspective, the portal does not open onto the Astral Plane – instead, it leads to a steel chamber, with a single door and a large altar in the centre. The glabrezu demands that travellers

‘As starcs give birth to planar seeds, and planar seeds to planes, then an uncountable number of demiplanes must have been spawned in the nursery zone in the small plane of the ecliptic. Indeed, the inner planes we know may be nought but an unusually stable cluster of such randomly spawned planes.’

- Alastherion’s Planar Encyclopedia

pay a toll (usually 5,000 gp in gold or magic items). If a suitable toll is placed on the altar, the tollbooth vanishes. Otherwise, the door opens, leading to a gauntlet of progressively more dangerous traps and monsters. At each stage, Erthiz offers the traveller another chance to pay the toll, which increases by 5,000 gp after each door; most travellers refuse at first, but pay up as the dangers intensify.

Despite his demonic nature and mercenary attitude, Erthiz is not especially evil, and he is extremely knowledgeable on the subject of portals and planar travel. He also pays handsomely for new and rare monsters to stock his tollbooth.

Eidolon

The *Eidolon* is the largest astral barge ever built, a floating city of unparalleled luxury and decadence. It was once intended as the royal vessel for a particularly rich astral empire, but the building of *Eidolon* beggared the whole nation. The ship was then purchased by a consortium of deities for transporting souls. To keep running costs down, the upper decks of *Eidolon* are still as beautifully decorated and as filled with indulgent distractions as they were when the ship was first built, but the lower decks have been stripped down to the bulkheads to cram in as many lost souls as possible. Now *Eidolon* cruises through the Astral Plane, carrying a mixed load of souls and rich travellers. It docks at portals to each of the Outer Planes in turn, to offload the souls destined for the afterlife, thus allowing the cruise passengers to tour the planes.

Eidolon is generally recognised as a neutral place, where agents of the various great powers can meet and deal with each other. Some gods even travel incognito on board, lest they be recognised by thousands of their worshippers packed into the hold.

The Seal of Never

While most of the portals on the Astral Plane are temporary pools, there are a few permanent gateways to other planes. The most famous is one that goes nowhere – the Seal of Never. The Seal is a circular metal slab seven miles across, and engraved with a message in Celestial reading:

What Was Promised Lies Beyond This Gate For Those Who Know.

The cryptic inscription has attracted sages and thieves from across the cosmos, all trying to open the gate. A small city, Telos, has grown up on the surface of the seal. The two-hundred-foot-wide ravines of the

inscription have been colonised, and the buildings of Telos are located within the message. Each letter is a different district, so a Telosian might advise a traveller to try the third S for blacksmiths, or the G temple district for clerics.

Telos (Small City): AL LN; 15,000 gp limit; Assets 5,625,000 gp; Pop 7,500; Integrated (practically any race imaginable). *Power Centres:* Philosopher's Guild (LN), T'nazzin the Locksmith (Psychomagnate King, CN).

DENIZENS

There are relatively few creatures native to the Astral Plane; it is a realm of exiles and wanderers. The native creatures spend all their lives in a world without gravity, so they 'drown' within minutes if brought to a plane with a high Gravity trait.

Aether Mouths

Huge Aberration (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 8d8+56 (92 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: Fly 30-ft. (perfect)

Armour Class: 20 (-2 size, +4 natural armour, +8 deflection), touch 16, flat-footed 20

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +6/+22

Attack: Bite +15 melee (2d6+10) or claw +15 melee (1d6+4)

Full Attack: Bite +15 melee (2d6+10) and two claws +10 melee (1d6+4)

Space/Reach: 15-ft. /10-ft.

Special Attacks: Improved Grab, Swallow Whole

Special Qualities: Mimic Portal, *gate*

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +6

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 10, Con 25, Int 3, Wis 10, Cha 11

Skills: Hide +15 (size penalty included), Spot +4

Feats: Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claw), Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Any astral

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually chaotic evil

Advancement: 9-14 HD (Huge)

To your horror, teeth sprout along the edges of the colour pool, and it snaps at you. A massive bulk heaves itself out of the astral landscape and claws at you.

Aether mouths are curious predators that disguise themselves as natural portals. They can camouflage most of their corpulent forms to look identical to the shifting energies of the Astral Plane, leaving only their glowing oval mouths visible. The mouth looks exactly like a portal. Travellers are permitted a Spot check (opposed by the aether mouth's Hide check) to notice the tiny imperfections in the Astral Plane around the portal. Characters examining the portal with *arcane sight* may use Spellcraft instead of Spot.

Any character walking through the 'portal' is actually walking right into the creature's stomach, and is automatically Swallowed Whole.

Aether mouths are sometimes captured and forced to *gate* in creatures from other planes, but the beasts soon sicken and die in captivity.

Combat

Aether mouths wait for food to walk through them, by mimicking portals to other well travelled planes. They sometimes pretend to be portals to one plane, wait to see if a traveller takes the bait, then close their mouth, scuttle a short distance, and open a portal to a different 'plane' a short distance away. If the deception fails and the aether mouth must fight, it extrudes claws and summons defenders.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the aether mouth hits with its bite attack, it does normal damage and may immediately make a grapple check. If it succeeds, it may use its Swallow Whole ability next round.

Swallow Whole (Ex): If the aether mouth begins a round with a Large or smaller creature in its mouth, or if a creature walks into its mouth, it may swallow the creature. Inside, the aether mouth's digestive system inflicts 2d10 points of acid damage each round. Characters may escape by either beating the mouth's grapple or doing 30 points of damage to the inside of the gullet, which has an AC of 12.

Mimic Portal (Su): An aether mouth can pretend to be a portal, emitting the appropriate magical auras and even showing up on *detect portal* spells. A *true seeing* spell, however, will reveal its true nature.

Gate (Su): Instead of biting, an aether mouth can spit out a monster. This counts as a bite attack, not a spell-like ability. Each use of this ability deals 1d4 points of temporary Constitution damage to the mouth. Roll 1d6 and use the Summon Monster

spell list to see what monster the mouth vomits up, but the monster is *called*, not *summoned*.

Skills: Aether mouths have a +16 racial bonus to Hide checks.

Astral Parasites

Tiny Aberration (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 1d8 (5 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: Fly 30-ft. (perfect)

Armour Class: 15 (+2 Dex, +2 size, +1 natural armour), touch 15, flat-footed 13

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/-12

Attack: Bite +4 melee (1d3-4)

Full Attack: Bite +4 melee (1d3-4)

Space/Reach: 2-½-ft. /0-ft.

Special Attacks: Psychic drain

Special Qualities: None

Saves: Fort +0, Ref +2, Will -3

Abilities: Str 2, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 1, Wis 1, Cha 11

Skills: Hide +14

Feats: Weapon Finesse

Climate/Terrain: Any astral

Organisation: Swarm (20-200)

Challenge Rating: 1/8

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 2-3 HD (Small); 4-5 HD (Medium); 6-7 HD (Large)

This creature is a mess of little barbed tentacles, eyes, mouths and fins; it seems to be nothing but appendages, with no real body at all.

Astral parasites are the vermin of the Great Realm, a species (or rather, hundreds of similar species) that graze contentedly on stray thoughts, emotions and magical emanations that flow through the Astral Plane. They are spawned in their millions from starcs and other major astral events, and swarm through the plane in vast hosts. They are almost useless as a food source, as only other native creatures can digest the energies of a dying parasite. They vanish seconds after being slain.

Combat

Astral parasites are only dangerous when they focus on a particular character's mind. A swarm of parasites can suck up stray thoughts and emotions using their psychic drain ability. The swarm can be driven off by killing 30 + 1d20% of its members.

Psychic Drain (Su): An astral parasite can target a character and feed off his mind. For every twenty parasites feeding, the character suffers a -1 penalty to all Will saves.

Astral Whales

A massive creature glides past; it resembles a whale, but its iridescent hide is covered in strange protrusions and dangling tendrils.

Astral whales feed on parasites just as baleen whales feed on plankton. An astral whale has the same game statistics as normal baleen whales, only their Swim speed is replaced by an equal Fly speed (perfect manoeuvrability), and they gain the following supernatural ability:

Gravity Pulse (Su): The astral whale emits a pulse of energy in a cone 360 feet long and 120 feet wide. Any creatures caught in the cone must make a Fortitude save (DC 14) or be unable to use the Subjective Gravity trait of the Astral to move for 1d12 rounds. Native astral creatures with a Fly speed cannot move if they fail the save. Astral whales are immune to the gravity pulses of other whales.

Celephates

Medium Outsider

Hit Dice: 3d8+9 (23 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: Fly 20-ft. (perfect)

Armour Class: 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural armour), touch 11, flat-footed 14

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+3

Attack: Headbutt +3 melee (1d4)

Full Attack: Headbutt +3 melee (1d4)

Space/Reach: 5-ft. /5-ft.

Special Attacks: Lightning, Telekinesis, Sonic Shout

Special Qualities: Shutdown

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +6

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 15, Wis 8, Cha 13

Skills: Bluff +7, Concentration +9, Gather Information +7, Hide +3, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Listen +5, Perform +7, Spellcraft +8, Spot +5, Tumble +7

Feats: Iron Will

Climate/Terrain: Any astral

Organisation: Solitary or council (2-10)

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Any

Advancement: By character class



This entity is a giant, floating stone head, about five feet tall. Lighting crackles in its empty eye-sockets, and its cavernous mouth glows reddish-orange when it laughs.

Celephates are among the more curious entities encountered on the Astral Plane. They are floating stone heads, with booming laughs and forceful personalities. They are a curious and boastful race, always getting into trouble and flaunting their power and intelligence. They are also extremely knowledgeable, famed for their learning.

They are integrated into astral society as viziers, sages, overseers and spellcasters, as they rely on humanoids for many tasks. The celephates have telekinetic abilities, as they have no hands or other limbs. A celephate in an urban environment is usually encountered with two or three 'hands' or servants. Celephates reproduce asexually – when a celephate feels the urge to produce an offspring, it takes a lump of rock, shapes it with its telekinetic powers, then shoots a bolt of lightning into the head's eyesockets. The new celephate comes to life fully grown, inheriting many of the skills of its 'parent'.

Celephates speak Common, Terran and Celestial. They worship an obscure deity named Hutut-Novgrod, the Guardian of the Goal.

Combat

Celephates have a wide array of magical powers, but they tend to charge lustily into combat, using their Tumbling ability and flight to dance out of range of enemies. They also shout taunts and insults at foes, which are doubly disconcerting when coming from a

giant, flying stone head that is burning with its own inner flames.

Lightning (Su): Celephates can shoot bolts of lightning from their eyes. This is a ray attack with a range of 60 feet. The bolts deal 2d6 points of electrical damage (Reflex save, DC 13 for half damage).

Telekinesis (Sp): Celephates can cast *mage hand* at will. If a celephate does nothing but concentrate for five rounds, it can cast *telekinesis* as a 10th level sorcerer.

Sonic Shout (Su): Once per day, a celephate can shout as a standard action. This deals 1d6 points of sonic damage on all creatures within 15 feet. The celephate can choose to cast *command* on all these creatures, as a third level cleric (save DC 10) instead of dealing damage.

Shutdown (Ex): A celephate can close its eyes and mouth, presenting a solid stone face to the world. In this form, it gains DR 5/magic, but cannot attack or cast spells.

Celephate Characters

Celephate characters possess the following racial traits:

- † Strength +2, Constitution +2, Intelligence or Charisma +2.
- † Fly 30 feet.
- † Medium size.
- † Special attacks as above.
- † Two bonus Hit Dice.
- † Celephates have no limbs or bodies, and so cannot wear rings, boots or any form of clothing except cloaks. They cannot wear armour except giant-sized helms and cannot wield weapons except with *telekinesis*.
- † Automatic languages: Terran. Bonus languages: Common, Celestial.
- † Favoured Class: Sorcerer.
- † Level adjustment: +3

Exilarchs

Exilarchs are a race of failed celestials. According to their traditions, they were banished from the Firmament for failure in the task of ridding the planes of evil, but the archons whisper the truth – the exilarchs were too stern and unforgiving even for the gods of good. The first exilarchs could not even tolerate the slightest deviation from perfect righteousness, and

would destroy an entire mortal city if it contained even a single unrighteous man.

Since they left the heavens, the exilarchs – once united in their common, unwavering cause – have become divided. Some have stayed true to their ideals, launching attacks on bastions of evil and judging all others according to the strictest criteria. Others try to win back the favour of the gods by searching for some grand quest or gesture for redemption, while other exilarchs have inverted their morality and become as perfectly evil as they can be. The one thing they all still have in common is a fanatical devotion to purity.

Exilarchs look like they are composed of multiple beings, like a set of torsos all branching off a single point. Each portion can act independently – an exilarch gets only one move action in a round, but each ‘body section’ can attack or cast spells on its own.

Bilateral Exilarch

Large Outsider

Hit Dice: 6d8+24 (51 hp)

Initiative: +3 (Dex)

Speed: Fly 50-ft. (perfect)

Armour Class: 26 (-1 size, +3 Dex, +12 natural armour, +2 heavy steel shield), touch 12, flat-footed 21

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +6/+13

Attack: See below

Full Attack: See below

Space/Reach: 10-ft. x 10-ft. /5-ft.

Special Attacks: Double-headed, Smite, Spells

Special Qualities: Self-Sacrifice, Silence Aura, Immunity to acid, fire and poison, resistance to cold and electricity 10, Spell Resistance 18

Saves: Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +8

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16

Skills: Concentration +13, Heal +11, Hide +8, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Move Silently +12, Search +11, Sense Motive +11, Spot +11.

Feats: Power Attack, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Track

Climate/Terrain: Any astral

Organisation: Solitary or quartet (4) or flight (5-15)

Challenge Rating: 7

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Any lawful

Advancement: By character class

This bizarre creature seems to be a knight or paladin from the waist up, as its upper body is armoured and carries a mighty sword. Instead of

legs, however, it has another torso below its waist, that of a robed figure carrying a mace and shield. Six wings bear the creature aloft.

Bilaterals are the lowest grade of exilarch, half fighter and half cleric. They are the scouts and foot troops of the exilarch legions. The fighter half is known as the Custodian, while the cleric half is the Deacon. The two halves are aspects of the one being, but they can speak and act separately (and may even argue, verbalising internal debates). Bilaterals only act independently when they have no quadrivial or infinity exilarch to obey. For all their power, they lack initiative, and tend to seize on the first cause they encounter and pursue it fanatically. Bilaterals can become obsessed with seemingly trivial causes or plans, defending an obscure waystation from all comers or hunting down and annihilating all pickpockets in a particular city.

Combat

The two parts of the bilateral exilarch are a fighter and a cleric. The fighter carries a Large *greatsword* +2 and a *longbow* +1, while the cleric has a *mace* +1 and has a heavy steel shield. Bilaterals cast spells as a 6th level cleric.

Bilateral Weapons

Weapon	Attack Bonus	Damage
Large +2 <i>greatsword</i>	+10/+5 melee	3d6+8
Large +1 <i>mace</i>	+9/+4 melee	2d6+4
Large +1 <i>longbow</i>	+8/+3 ranged	2d6+1

Double-Headed (Ex): The two halves of the exilarch act separately, on the same initiative. It may attack *and* cast a spell, or attack with both the *greatsword* and the *mace*, or use a full attack and a full defence in one round.

Smite (Su): A bilateral exilarch can *smite* like a paladin twice a day, adding its Charisma bonus (usually +3) to its attack and adding its Hit Dice to the damage. The exilarch can only *smite* creatures of the opposite moral alignment (i.e., good bilaterals smite evil, evil bilaterals smite good, and neutral bilaterals cannot smite).

Spells (Sp): Bilateral exilarchs cast spells like a cleric of a level equal to its Hit Dice. A standard bilateral exilarch's spells are as follows: 5/4/4/2, Save DC 14 + spell level. 0th – *light, detect magic, cure minor wounds x 3*; 1st – *bane, doom, shield of faith, cure light wounds*; 2nd – *bull's strength, hold person, spiritual weapon, cure moderate wounds*; 3rd – *dispel magic, invisibility purge*.

Self-Sacrifice (Su): If reduced below 0 hit points, the exilarch may choose to let one of its halves die in order to regain 20 + 1d20 hit points.

Silence Aura (Sp): A bilateral exilarch can cast *silence* at will. The bilateral's own words and spells are unaffected by the *silence*.

Feats: Bilaterals gain Combat Expertise and Track as bonus feats.

Quadrivial Exilarch

Large Outsider

Hit Dice: 12d8+48 (102 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: Fly 30-ft. (perfect)

Armour Class: 28 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +18 natural armour), touch 10, flat-footed 27

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +12/+19

Attack: See below

Full Attack: See below

Space/Reach: 10-ft. x 10-ft. /5-ft.

Special Attacks: Four-headed, Spells, Monk abilities

Special Qualities: Self-sacrifice, Bardsong,

Immunity to acid, fire and poison, resistance to cold and electricity 15, Spell Resistance 24

Saves: Fort +16, Ref +13, Will +16

Abilities: Str 15, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 18

Skills: Bluff +19, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +23, Heal +19, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (history) +19, Knowledge (religion) +19, Knowledge (the planes) +19, Listen +21, Sense Motive +19, Spellcraft +21, Spot +21

Feats: Spell Penetration, Greater Spell Penetration, Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Alertness

Climate/Terrain: Any astral

Organisation: Solitary or chorus (2-10)

Challenge Rating: 15

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Any

Advancement: By character class

Looking at this bizarre creature makes your eyes water; its appearance changes from angle to angle. It has four distinct faces, but each of them shares features with the others. Its garb is similarly changeable; sometimes it seems to be wearing wizard's robes, sometimes armour, sometimes gaudy apparel, sometimes humble sackcloth. It has an indeterminate number of limbs and six wings.

Quadrivials combine the attributes of wizards, clerics, bards and monks. They are the tacticians and advisers of the exilarchs. Of all their kind, the loss of the

Firmament affected them the most, and now most quadrivials are insane. Many suffer from fractured personalities, changing goals even as they rotate one facet-self or another to the front. Others engage in vast plots to manipulate races into storming heaven, bringing down the gods or cutting the Infernum loose and sending the demons drifting into the Negative Energy Plane.

Combat

Quadrivials have the abilities of a 12th level sorcerer, cleric, monk and bard. The sorcerer aspect carries a staff, the cleric a mace, the bard a rapier and the monk nothing but its hands. Their attacks are as listed above.

Four-Headed (Ex): The four sections of the exilarch act separately, on the same initiative. It may attack using its monk section *and* cast three spells, or attack with all four weapons, or use a full attack, full defence, grapple and sing all in the same round.

Spells (Sp): Quadrivials have the spellcasting abilities of a 12th level wizard, a 12th level cleric and a 12th level bard. Their usual spells are as follows:

Bard Spells: 3/4/4/4/1, Save DC 14 + spell level; 0th – *light, mage hand, read magic, message*; 1st – *cause fear, charm person, expeditious retreat, tash's hideous laughter*; 2nd – *blur, cat's grace, heroism, mirror image*; 3rd – *confusion, gaseous form, haste, scrying*; 4th – *freedom of movement*.

Divine Spells: 6/6/5/5/4/3/2, Save DC 14 + spell level; 0th – *cure minor wounds, detect magic, detect poison, read magic, resistance, virtue*; 1st – *bless, cure light wounds x 2, entropic shield, sanctuary, shield of faith*; 2nd – *enthrall, hold person x 2, silence, zone of truth*; 3rd – *cure serious wounds x 2, dispel magic x 2, prayer*; 4th – *death ward, dimensional anchor, dismissal, spell immunity*; 5th – *flame strike, slay living, true seeing*; 6th – *heal, word of recall*.

Arcane Spells: 6/7/7/7/7/5/3, Save DC 14 + spell level; Spells known: 0th – *detect magic, read magic, light, ray of frost, arcane mark, acid splash, daze, flare, mending*; 1st – *detect portal, shield, magic missile, colour spray, identify*; 2nd – *detect thoughts, web, scorching ray, shatter, fox's cunning*; 3rd – *fireball, dispel magic, arcane sight, protection from energy*; 4th – *door, lesser geas, shout, enervation*; 5th – *plane shift, teleport*; 6th – *disintegrate*.

Bard Abilities: Quadrivials can use the countersong, *fascinate*, *inspire competence*, *suggestion*, *inspire*

Quadrivial Weapons

Aspect	Weapon	Attack Bonus	Damage
Sorcerer	<i>Quarterstaff</i> +2	+15/+10/+5	1d8+5
Cleric	<i>Mace</i> +2	+15/+10/+5	2d6+4
Bard	<i>Rapier</i> +2	+17/+12/+7	1d8+4
Monk	Fists	+13/+8/+3 (flurry of blows +13/+13/+13/+8/+3)	3d6+3

greatness, *song of freedom* and *inspire courage* +2 abilities of bardsong.

Monk Abilities: Quadrivials have all the powers of a 12th level monk, notably Improved Evasion, Wholeness of Body, and Abundant Step.

Self-Sacrifice (Su): If reduced below 0 hit points, the exilarch may choose to let one of its quarters die in order to regain 20 + 1d20 hit points.

Infinity Exilarch

Huge Outsider

Hit Dice: 24d8+144 (252 hp)

Initiative: +0 (Dex)

Speed: Fly 40-ft. (perfect)

Armour Class: 33 (+1 Dex, -2 size, +24 natural armour), touch 9, flat-footed 32

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +24/+40

Attack: See below

Full Attack: See below

Space/Reach: 15-ft. x 15-ft. /10-ft.

Special Attacks: See below

Special Qualities: Infinite Forms, Immunity to acid, fire and poison, resistance to cold and electricity 20, Spell Resistance 28

Saves: Fort +20, Ref +14, Will +20

Abilities: Str 26, Dex 10, Con 22, Int 22, Wis 22, Cha 22

Skills: Concentration +33, Craft +33, Decipher Script +33, Diplomacy +37, Gather Information +33, Heal +33, Intimidate +36, Knowledge (arcana) +33, Knowledge (religion) +33, Knowledge (the planes) +33, Listen +33, Sense Motive +33, Spellcraft +33, Spot +33

Feats: Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Improved Counterspell, Power Attack, Cleave

Climate/Terrain: Any astral

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 16 + 1/3rd of average party level

Treasure: Double Standard

Alignment: Any

Advancement: None

This entity looks like...you, and everyone you've ever met, and never met, who ever lived and died... all of them, together, a shining mosaic of faces all united by a single terrible will...

It is said that the Infernum is infinite, that the hosts of Hell are numberless. How, then, could the Firmament ever hope to hold back the flood of evil from below? Mighty as an individual solar is, it would surely be overwhelmed by sheer weight of numbers. The infinity exilarchs, on the other hand, transcend individuality. Each one reflects and contains...everything.

Wizards theorise that an infinity exilarch is a living astral lens (see page 51) that is constantly summoning everything on all the planes into itself. There are few infinities left to test this theory – most were destroyed in an attack on the Infernum. In that attack a dozen planes were shattered, and demonic ichor rained down across the cosmos; it is remembered in legends and folk tales as a time of judgement. The surviving infinities are now located on the Astral Plane, massing armies for fresh assaults on planes, both above and below.

While the lesser exilarchs are made up of distinct parts (fighter/cleric and sorcerer/bard/cleric/monk, respectively), the infinities copy the powers of others. To battle an infinity is to battle oneself, stripped down to the essence of your being. Infinity exilarchs retain the fanatical purity of will common to their kind, but it is filtered through the forms they borrow. An infinity exilarch can not only do everything an opponent can do, but it does it with more will and determination than the opponent could hope to muster. The infinity reflects and magnifies the souls of its enemies.

Combat

Infinity exilarchs copy the abilities of their foes, so their tactics and strategies change with each encounter. They know their new powers just as well as their opponents, so the exilarch will use whatever attacks the enemy fears most.

Infinite Forms (Su): An exilarch has up to six standard actions each round, and can copy the abilities (spells, skills, attacks, special abilities and so on) of up to six other creatures within 1,200 feet. For example, an exilarch fighting a fighter, cleric, wizard and rogue could attack as if it was the fighter, cast spells like the wizard, heal itself by copying the cleric, and sneak attack as if it was the rogue.

Psychomagnate

Medium Monstrous Humanoid (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 4d8+4 (18 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30-ft. (20-ft. in psychomagnate plate)

Armour Class: 19 (+2 Dex, -1 size, +2 natural armour, +6 psychomagnate plate), touch 11, flat-footed 17

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +4/+6

Attack: Two halberds +2 melee (1d10+2)

Full Attack: Two halberds +2 melee (1d10+2)

Space/Reach: 10-ft. /10-ft.

Special Attacks: Energy Field

Special Qualities: Spell-like abilities

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +6, Will +4

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 12

Skills: Concentration +8, Knowledge (the planes) +5, Listen +5, Spot +7, Survival +4

Feats: Two-Weapon Fighting, Combat Expertise

Climate/Terrain: Any astral

Organisation: Solitary or Group (2-6)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Any chaotic

Advancement: By character class

This curious creature is humanoid in shape, but it has no head – its face is sunken into its chest. It is armoured in a crystalline shell, and wields a halberd in either hand.

Psychomagnates are not originally native to the Astral Plane, but they moved there *en masse* when their own plane slid into chaos centuries ago. They are a strong and intelligent race, but see most other humanoids as nothing but slaves and cannon fodder until they prove themselves. Their society is driven purely by merit; a psychomagnate who accomplishes nothing is often treated as a slave, while a human hero who completes a great task is honoured and respected as an equal.

The psychomagnate fighting style relies on trips and keeping the opponent down as much as possible. They have adapted this style to the Astral Plane by combining their attacks with their natural ability to manipulate energy fields.

Psychomagnates speak Common and Psychomagnate. Their favoured class is fighter.

Psychomagnate Plate

This crystalline armour has the following game statistics:

Cost	Armour Bonus	Maximum Dexterity Bonus	Armour Check Penalty	Arcane Spell Failure Chance	Speed	Weight
1,250 gp	+6	+2	+0	15%	20-ft.	70 lb.

Combat

Psychomagnates welcome combat, as it gives them a chance to prove their skills. They prefer single combat, and issue challenges and invitations to one-on-one duels when they can.

Energy Field (Su): Psychomagnates can project a glowing purple energy field around themselves. This field has a radius of 30 feet. The field acts like an *entropic shield* for all those inside the field. Furthermore, anyone trying to use the Astral Plane's subjective gravity to move within the field must make a Will save (DC 13) – failure means the character cannot move this round using subjective gravity.

If a psychomagnate trips a foe inside the energy field, the field deals an extra 1d6 points of electrical damage. Activating the field is a standard action, and it lasts for ten minutes.

Spell-like abilities: 3/day – *bull's strength*, *cat's grace*, *magic missile*. All are cast as if the psychomagnate was a 3rd level wizard. When the psychomagnate uses any of these spells, purple energy crackles around it.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Great Realm is the crossroads of the Planes – usually, the characters will be using it to get from one place to another or as a neutral meeting ground. The Astral Plane is also big enough and old enough for literally *anything* to be encountered there. It can be the dumping ground of odd encounters and locales that would not fit anywhere else.

- † The characters are hired to locate a fabled lost portal. They are given a portable aethervane and a description of the portal's traits. They must scour the Astral Plane for astral storms and other portal-opening phenomena, then quickly scan for the desired portal. Their employer has not informed them where the portal goes – will their curiosity take them beyond the Great Realm and into the unknown?

† Something is moving, out there in the Planes. Waystation after waystation is found bereft of crew. In every case, they left suddenly as if in a panic, but the station's structure is intact and sound. As a strange darkness closes over the Great Realm, where will the characters take refuge?

† A god dies. All his worshippers, servants, armies and treasures are unceremoniously dropped into the Astral Plane. For scavengers, it is a wonderful opportunity, but others are looking at a suddenly homeless army and wondering where they will go – and just where did their god go, anyway?

† Whenever an extradimensional space is ruptured, its contents are spilled onto the Astral Plane. An important document or relic was stored in such a space, and a magical accident has occurred. The characters have to go to the Great Realm and find a needle in what amounts to an infinite haystack – however, it soon turns out that the 'accident' was deliberate. No one is going to notice a few extra corpses floating on the astral gulf, anyway.

THE PLANE OF SHADOW

DESCRIPTION

Wait until the sun is at its zenith, then stretch out your hand and watch the shadow it casts. The brighter the sun is above, the darker the shadow is below.

Above the Material Plane is a light brighter than any sun, brighter than a massed phalanx of ten thousand stars. The infinite energy of the Positive Energy Plane casts out spears of Positive energy, giving strength and life to all the planes of existence.

It shines like a sun on the Material Plane, and so the Material Plane casts a very dark shadow indeed – the Plane of Shadow.

Note the two Arcane Quirks, affecting two forms of magic. Furthermore, specific spells become more powerful on the Plane of Shadow. *Shadow conjuration* and *shadow evocation* spells are 30% as powerful as the conjurations and evocations they mimic (as opposed to 20%). *Greater shadow conjuration* and *greater shadow evocation* are 70% as powerful (not 60%), and a *shades* spell conjures at 90% of the power of the original (not 80%).

Getting there... and Back

The school of shadow magic is commonly used to access the Umbral Realm. *Shadow walk* lets a character slip into the shadows, while the usual spells like *door*, *gate* or *plane shift* also allow travel to the Plane of Shadow. The vast majority of travel, however, is from the Plane of Shadow to the Material Plane, as all the *shadow conjuration* and *shadow evocation* spells work by drawing on the stuff of Shadow.

Minglings with the Material Plane are rare, but not unheard-of. Shadow minglings only occur at night and are usually caused by the transit of an extremely powerful umbral creature, who carries with it a sizeable portion of Shadow stuff.

Survival on the Shadow Plane

The temperature of the Plane of Shadow hovers around freezing (40°), so characters must make a Fortitude save (DC 15, +1 per previous check) each hour or be dealt 1d6 points of non-lethal damage.

Plane of Shadow Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal</i>
Time	10	<i>Normal time</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	13	<i>Magically</i>
Life	2	<i>Dead Plane</i>
Weather	10	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	10	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	10	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	-4	<i>Bastion of Undeath</i>
Good/Evil	4	<i>Biased Towards Evil</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Shadow Magic	8	<i>Maximised</i>
Fire and Light Magic	-8	<i>Impeded, third level spells only</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	-1	<i>Hostile</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to Material	14	<i>Coexistent</i>
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Negative	18	<i>Merging</i>
...to Dream	5	<i>Occasional Intersections</i>

The whole plane is almost lightless, but alarmingly, travellers can perceive different gradations of darkness here, allowing them to see their surroundings in a monochromatic fashion. Lights such as torches or lanterns can be brought to the Shadow Plane, but they are relatively useless, as the only colour here is black, and objects can only be distinguished by their shapes and how their surfaces reflect light. Bringing a light also attracts the attention of the shadow beings – any light source automatically attracts a random shadow creature encounter every hour.

The terrain of the Shadow Plane shifts with the changing light (see page 83). Survival check DCs for tracking, navigation and not getting lost are increased by +5.

FEATURES & PROPERTIES

Like the Ethereal Plane, the Shadow Plane reflects the landscape of the Material Plane. There are Shadow forests beneath real forests, Shadow plains beneath real plains and so on. There are differences, of course – objects on the Shadow Plane form from the accumulated shadows of the Material Plane. A shadow tree might be lumpy and malformed, because the shadows cast by the morning sun are clear and sharp, while the shadows of the setting sun are blurred. A house that stands in the shadow of a much larger wall casts a shadow house that lacks a side.

The landscape of shadows slowly changes as light sources on the Material Plane move. The major light source, of course, is the sun, so mountain ranges and forests on the Plane of Shadow slowly migrate around in a great circle as the sun rises and sets. At night, the Shadow Plane is much less distinct; mountains blur into the valleys, forests blur into the ground, and the Darkreaches are more widespread.

Darkreaches

Other parts of the Plane of Shadow have never even seen the shadow of the light. Dive into the shadow seas or walk underground into chambers where the

The Language of Shadow

It is said that shadows cannot speak intelligibly, and this is true to a degree. No living creature can speak the language of shadows, not even with a *tongues* spell. Even telepathy fails, detecting nothing more than cold stain of hunger, instinct and an absence of thought.

However, any character who has died and then been *raised* or otherwise restored can understand what the shadows are saying. They speak in words only the dead may know.

sun has never shone in the real world and the traveller encounters the dark side of shadow. Such places are aligned to the Negative Energy Plane (Negative/Positive axis -5) and drain the life from travellers (living creatures not protected by a *death ward* take 1d6 point of damage each round).

Thousands of undead, mostly shadows, dwell in these darkreaches. Small darkreaches are anarchic places, ruins where the shadows cavort and whisper. Larger darkreaches are much more dangerous places. Potent spirits of undeath rise up from the depths of the

Darkreaches

Size	Real-World Counterpart	Minor Undead	Greater Undead	Nightshades
Tiny	Sealed room	One shadow	-	-
Small	Cellar	1d3 shadows	10% chance of a greater shadow	-
Medium	Cave or dungeon	2d6 shadows	25% of a greater shadow or wraith	-
Large	Lake	4d6 shadows	1d4 greater shadows or wraiths	10% chance of a nightcrawler
Huge	Vast cave complex	10d10 shadows	1d10 each of greater shadows and wraiths	50% chance of a nightcrawler, 25% chance of a nightwing
Gargantuan	Ocean	10d20 shadows	2d20 each of greater shadows and wraiths	One nightshade, 50% chance each of nightcrawler and nightwing
Colossal	None	Uncountable	1d100 each of greater shadows and wraiths	At least one triumvirate of night, plus a 50% chance of 1d4 extra nightshades of each sort

King of Shadows [to Etrichan]: *You call us ephemeral and you call us puppets of your flesh when you notice us at all, but we know better. We walk with you every day of your life, and when you blow out the candle, we shall still be here. We are waiting for you.*³⁰

- The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act IV, Scene ii

Negative Energy Plane; passing through the shadows serves to bolster both their shapes and strength. These spirits are the nightshades.

The first nightshades are the nightcrawler worms, who gnaw great tunnels and caves beneath the surface of the shadow world, creating larger and larger darkreaches. The nightwings are the next to emerge; these terrible beings erupt out of the ground and scour the land around the growing darkreach, driving off powerful creatures and enslaving others. The final types of nightshade to rise out of the depths are the nightwalkers, the rulers of the darkreaches.

The nightshades use the Plane of Shadow as a ‘staging area’, a halfway point between the Material and Negative Energy Planes. They travel to the Material Realm to abduct mortals; sometimes they take only lone travellers, sometimes a whole village or city at a time. These mortals would be instantly snuffed out if brought to the Negative Energy Plane, but on the Shadow Plane, the nightshades can slowly infuse the mortals with Negative energy, to create new and more terrible forms of undead.

Triumvirate of Night (EL21)

When three nightshades, one of each type, are assembled together, they are referred to as a triumvirate of night, and the powers of each of them are increased. They can communicate telepathically over any distance, and have their hit points increased by one point per hit die of the collective. Once per night, as a standard action, the three can combine their powers to create a *nightstrike*. This is a ray attack with a range of 300 feet. The target of this beam is affected by the nightcrawler’s Energy Drain ability, the nightwalker’s Evil Gaze and the nightwing’s Magic Drain. Also, undead creatures appear around the target as if the three nightshades had all just used their Summon Undead abilities simultaneously (this counts as a use of their Summon Undead abilities).

Errant Nights

Some nights never end. The dawn breaks, yes, but the events of the night endure for centuries as an errant night. These are regions of the Plane of Shadow that are exact copies of a particular region in the Material Plane, where an especially important or sorrowful night is drawn out for hundreds or even thousands of years. The spirits of those who were involved in that night are trapped in the errant night as undead.

For example, the siege of Shadox Keep was lifted when a band of heroes arrived at dawn to slay the fiendish harpies that had surrounded the castle. The events of that night spawned an errant night on the Shadow Plane. When each of the defenders of Shadox Keep died, one by one, they awoke to find themselves on the Shadow Plane, living out the long last night of the siege forever and fighting against Shadow harpies. The trapped shades are aware that they are reliving the worst night of their lives, but are powerless to leave – all they can hope for is for someone to recreate whatever happened at dawn, freeing them from the errant night. Some errant nights are stretched out endlessly, while others repeat themselves constantly.

Packs of shadow mastiffs patrol the edges of errant nights, preventing any form of intervention.



Magic on the Plane of Shadow

A character casting a shadow spell can choose to draw on the ambient darkness of the plane, or attempt to target a specific piece of shadowstuff. The latter option requires a Spellcraft check (DC of 15 + the level of the spell). If the check is failed, the spell is lost. One five-foot cube of shadow is absorbed per level of the spell. For example, a bard is being pursued by enemies, but finds his escape blocked by a wall of shadow. He could cast *shadow conjuration*, mimicking a *fireball*, and draw the shadow for the spell from the wall behind him. This would create a hole five-feet deep, ten-feet high and wide in the wall, as well as blasting the foes with a shadowy *fireball*.

Alternatively, the bard could choose to draw the matter for the spell from the bodies of his pursuers. Casting a shadow spell in this fashion works just like drawing on unliving shadow, but the target is allowed a Fortitude or Will save (whichever is higher) at the same DC as the Spellcraft check to resist. If the Spellcraft check fails, or the save succeeds, the spell is lost; otherwise, the target loses 1d10 hit points per level of the spell. The target must be within 120 feet of the caster and they must have a line of effect to the target.

The *shadow walk* spell is an exception to the above rules; it cannot be used to draw on shadow matter. If cast on the Shadow Plane, it can either be used as a one-off *plane shift* to the Material Plane, or else allow the caster to move 50 + 1d10 x 5 feet as a five-foot step.

Several spells can only be cast on the Plane of Shadow:

Shadow Creation

Illusion (Shadow); Bard 4, Sor/Wiz 4

This spell works just like *major creation*, but only on the Plane of Shadow.

Shades of Life

Illusion (Shadow); Bard 6, Sor/Wiz 6

This spell works just like *raise dead*, but only on the Plane of Shadow. The *raised* character is infused with shadow and counts as a shadow creature, as such they are immune to the natural hazards of the Plane of Shadows. They are not, however, vulnerable to turn attempts and cannot leave the Plane of Shadow without dying again.

HAZARDS

Shadow Madness (CR1)

Endless darkness, endless monochrome blackness... it stains the soul. Stay too long amid the shadows, and sanity itself becomes a shadow. For every day spent on the Plane of Shadow without seeing real light, a character must make a Will save (DC 10 + 1 per day). If the save is failed, the character loses one point of Wisdom until he leaves the Plane of Shadow. A character reduced to zero Wisdom forgets the existence of light and goes utterly mad. When he dies, he becomes a shadow.

Nightmare Zones (CR8)

Shadow is endlessly mutable, as any mage or bard who can cast *shadow conjuration* will testify. Sometimes, the Plane of Dreams and the Plane of Shadow intersect, and the dreaming minds of sleepers warp the stuff of shadow. The results are the Nightmare Zones; ghastly, writhing, amorphous fields of shadow forced to conform to the dreams of hundreds of sleepers. A Nightmare Zone can be of any size, although most occupy at least five hundred square feet.

Any creature within 50 feet of a Nightmare Zone is attacked each round by 1d6 nightmare tendrils. These tendrils change randomly with each attack.

Although the Nightmare Zone behaves like a hostile creature, it cannot be destroyed by damage alone – it is formed from the substance of the Plane of Shadow, so it constantly reforms. It can be bled off by casting fifty spell levels' worth of shadow spells (see Magic on the Plane of Shadow, above), or the connection to the Dream Plane can be cut off with a *dimensional anchor*, *forbiddance* or other contact-blocking spell.

A character can also choose to walk into the heart of the Nightmare Zone. The character is transported to a pocket plane halfway between the Shadow and Dream Plane. There, the character is plunged into the heart of the nightmare and must deal with whatever the dreamer fears (see page 89 for details on dealing with dreams). If the character ends the nightmare, he can pass into the Plane of Dreams as the pocket plane collapses.

Nightmare Tendrils

d10	Type	Attack Bonus	Damage	Special
1	Distorted Biting Face	+5	2d6	–
2	Slashing Tentacle	+6	1d10	–
3	Bludgeoning Pseudopod	+7	1d8	–
4	Piercing Spike	+5	1d12	–
5	Constricting Tentacle	+4	–	Has the Improved Grab feat and a grapple bonus of +10; inflicts 2d6 damage per round and drags character into the Nightmare Zone
6	Poisonous Scorpion Tail	+4	1d6	Poison, inflicts 1d8 points of Wisdom damage; Fortitude save (DC 16) negates
7	Shrieking Mouth	–	–	3d6 points of Sonic damage; Reflex save (DC 14) halves damage
8	Twisted Spellcaster	–	–	Casts a random spell using <i>shadow conjuration</i> (Save DC 14)
9	Choking Hand	+4	–	If attack hits, it coats the victim's mouth with a choking slime. The character begins to drown unless the slime is burnt off by applying one point of fire damage
10	Needle-Spitting Growth	+8	1d6 x 1d4	Fires 1d6 needles with a range increment of 30-ft.

LOCATIONS

There are very few welcoming houses on the Plane of Shadow – it is too close to the Negative Realm for there to be much cheer in the darkness. The unquenchable thirst of the shadows for warmth and the dire machinations of the nightshades make the Umbral Realm a dark place indeed.

The School of Night

The mysterious School of Night is an alliance of wizards and sorcerers who specialise in shadow magic. Many of the spells that manipulate shadow were first developed by masters of the school and they have continued their research to this day. Mortal travellers and interlopers on the Shadow Plane do attract the hostile attention of hungry shadows, but the School of Night has one of the largest yet most unnoticeable fortresses on the plane. They have developed a special form of portal based on the *shadow walk* spell, which only functions on the Plane of Shadow. The fortress of the School is spread out over thousands of miles. One tower might be located atop a mountain of shadow, and the neighbouring laboratory might lie a thousand miles away – but to a student stepping

through a *shadow door* from one to the other, the two buildings might as well be one.

To guard against invaders, the masters of the School of Night called and bound a Thousand-Eyed Arzoi to watch their doors. If any part of the fortress is invaded, the guardian shuts down the *shadow doors* leading to the compromised areas. Attempts by nightshades to eradicate the School of Night have so far been unsuccessful, although over a third of the fortress was lost before the masters hit on the idea of employing an Arzoi.

The masters of the School of Night never reveal their identities to anyone, not even each other. There are seven seats on the high council, and at least one is held by a wizard-lich. Despite this, the School of Night is not evil; indeed, one of their long-term projects is to drag the Plane of Shadow away from the Negative Plane and make it less hospitable to the undead. Obviously, the nightshades oppose this, and are attempting to do exactly the opposite. Some believe that the Plane of Shadow is in danger of rupturing into two demi-planes if this tension continues.

Tenebrous Citadel

The Tenebrous Citadel is among the oldest of the darkreaches. The lord of the Tenebrous Citadel is a nightwalker titled the King of Dark Places. Three full triumvirates of night serve him, along with twenty legions of shadows captained by dread-wraith sorcerers.

The citadel itself is mounted on a platform carried by three dozen nightcrawlers. The citadel is slowly descending into the Negative Plane. The shadows are constantly busy reinforcing the walls of the pit above the citadel and laying down tracks of magical iron. One night, they will dig through the shadowstone and break into the Negative Plane, and a vast wave of Negative Energy will rush up and fill the pit. Then, the magic of the Tenebrous Citadel will draw on this Negative Energy, opening vast *gates* to the Material Plane and forever blotting out the sun. Night will last forever then, and the King of Dark Places will become the King of All Places.

The King has mortal agents operating in the Material Plane, placing the iron sigils and markers he needs to guide this Negative energy. These agents are also responsible for kidnapping mortals to serve as slaves to the King. While most of the pit around the citadel is Negative-aspected or even negative-dominated, there are chunks of calcified positive energy embedded deep in the Plane of Shadow. Whenever the dig encounters one of these obstacles, the King must send mortals down to draw off the Positive energy so the nightcrawlers can keep digging. These barriers were placed there by a prophetic solar long ago, so they are defended by powerful holy guardians such as petrified hound archons.

While he waits to dig into the Negative Energy Plane, the King of Dark Places amuses himself by developing new blends of undeath and shadow. The shade-wights, for example, are a product of the King's terrible necromantic workshop in the depths of the Tenebrous Citadel.

DENIZENS

The native inhabitants of the Plane of Shadow include nightshades, shadow mastiffs, wraiths and dread-wraiths, will-o-the-wisps, shadows and greater shadows. Of these, only the nightshades claim rulership over any part of the plane.

Shade-wights

These mottled horrors are a blend of wight and shadow. They have the same statistics as wights except:

Speed: 30-ft. (6 spaces), Fly 30-ft. (perfect)

Special Qualities: A shade wight retains all of the special qualities of the base creature and adds:

Shadow Flesh (Su): Portions of the shade-wight's body are made of solid shadow. The shade-wight can extend its limbs, gaining a reach of ten feet. It cannot attack immediately adjacent squares when using this ability.

Vulnerable to Light (Su): A shade-wight takes one point of damage each round during which it is exposed to light brighter than a torch (such as a lantern or *light* spell).

Climate/Terrain: Plane of Shadow

Organisation: Solitary, pair, gang (3-5), or pack (6-11)

Challenge Rating: 4



ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Plane of Shadow is very similar to that of the Ethereal, if slightly less friendly. It is also considerably more likely to be visited – the Ethereal Plane is really just a misty backwater, good for nothing but elaborate sidesteps or as a slow route to the Astral Plane, but the magically morphic Plane of Shadow is very useful for wizards and illusionists. There are far more portals and *doors* to the Plane of Shadow.

It is also much more likely to be the home base of an adversary – it is immediately adjacent to the Material Plane, but is also close to the dark energies of the Negative Energy Plane.

‘There is in fact a very fine inn on the Plane of Shadow. It is, of course, rather difficult to find, being located in the midst of an area of utterly impenetrable darkness. Only the blind – and the blind drunk – can find it. I entered the former (a long story for another time) and left the latter.’

- Traveller’s Tales



- † A shadow-creature escapes from the Plane of Shadow during a mingling. It cannot survive on the Material Plane, so it takes refuge in the shadow of one of the characters. The shadow-creature cannot speak, but it does know that another mingling is coming soon. What will the characters do when one of their shadows starts moving of its own accord, and how will they survive an unexpected visit to the Plane of Shadows?
- † A master illusionist is using shadow stuff to lend substance to his theatre of illusions. However, an evil shadow has slipped into the illusionist’s spell, and is using the cover of the theatre to commit a series of horrible murders. To stop the string of deaths, the characters must discover that an illusory figure in the theatre has a deadly will of its own – and to make matters worse the illusionist has just been called to perform for the queen.
- † A solar appears to a band of good-aligned characters, and announces that it intends to proactively deal with the plot of the King of Dark Places. It is building a vast magical mirror on the Astral Plane to reflect a beam of pure positive energy onto the Tenebrous Citadel. The characters must carry a talisman and plant it within the pit, so the solar knows where to aim this destructive beam of light. They must descend deeper into the city and rescue the slaves of the King. Meanwhile, other forces also wish to get their shadowy tendrils on the talisman.
- † One of the characters is offered membership in the School of Night – if he can rescue one of the masters of the School. The master is caught in a vast Nightmare Zone of his own making. As the character penetrates the dream, he discovers that the master’s greatest fear is actually another master of the School of Night.

THE PLANE OF DREAMS

DESCRIPTION

The Plane of Dreams is the backdoor to all reality. It is the realm ruled by the minds of dreamers, an endlessly changing sea of dreamstuff dotted with islands and skerries of individual fantasy. Prophecies and omens swim through the Dream Plane like shoals of eager fish and wizards, psions and dragons are known to swim through the sea to reach other planes.

Describing the Dream Plane is, of course, quite impossible. You have been there before, every night, but you forget the shape and form of it when you wake, recalling only fragments.

Getting there...and Back

The easiest way to access the Dream Plane is simply to fall asleep. All true dreams take place on the Plane of Dreams; the mind projects a dream-avatar (like an *astral projection*) into the plane, which shapes a small section of it into the landscape for the dream and peoples it with the 'cast' – creatures conjured from dream stuff. When the sleeper wakes, the landscape dissolves back into the greater dreamscape and the dream-avatar vanishes.

It is possible to *gate* or *plane shift* to the Plane of Dreams, or to cast *door* on a sleeping dreamer to open a portal to the dreamer's dream. If a *door* is cast on the Dream Plane while the caster is touching a dream-avatar, the *door* opens to the location of the sleeping dreamer. It is possible to use co-ordinated dreaming to quickly slip from one plane to another without passing through the Astral Plane at all.

There are no natural portals to the Plane of Dreams, although there are minglings. Artificial portals generally go only to the dream-sea, but a few lead to permanent dreams.

The Dream Spell

Dream works by creating a dream-avatar for the messenger, who is then *plane shifted* into the dream-sea next to the dream of the target. The message is delivered by shouting into the sphere – the spell allows sound to penetrate the planar boundary.

Plane of Dreams Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal</i>
Time	-5	<i>One hour on plane equals one round on Material Plane</i>
Size	14	<i>Multiple solar systems</i>
Morphic	17	<i>Highly Morphic</i>
Life	+6	<i>Supernaturally Rich</i>
Weather	0	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	17	<i>Through Key</i>
<i>Dreamers can access the plane freely</i>		
Proximity...		
...to Material and Outer Planes	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Shadow	5	<i>Occasional Intersections</i>

Survival on the Dream Plane

The magic or skills required to survive on the Plane of Dreams vary depending on the dream. For dreamers, the plane is very rarely dangerous; should the dreamer die in a dream, the avatar dissolves and the dreamer awakens. However, those who have physically transported themselves to the Plane of Dreams are at risk of more permanent injury. Dreams have just as much substance here as mortal flesh, and a dream sword can cut as deeply as a real one.

FEATURES & PROPERTIES

The Plane of Dreams is divided into two regions – the dream-sea and the islands of dream.

The Dream-Sea

Calling it a sea is mere fancy – from some perspectives, it is an ocean; from others, a constellation of stars; from still other points, a field of shifting energies. It is Highly Morphic, so it can be shaped by those with

the will to do so. The only way to travel through the energies is to shape a road or river or some other surface to move across.

The Dream-Islands appear to be impenetrable bubbles of crystal floating in the sea. The scenes of the dream can be dimly perceived through the frosted shell of the bubble. In some places, they cluster thickly – where a whole city shapes, the sea is filled with tens of thousands of busy dreams. In other places, a traveller can swim for miles without encountering a single intelligible dream. Sometimes, dreams are shared (the four or five dreams granted to insects can be recognised from a great distance by their sound, the buzzing of trillions of dream-avatars all inside one vast shared dream). A successful Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 25- the Size of the plane) allows an observer in the Dream-Sea to calculate what plane a dreamer is on by the position of the dream in the sea.

Usually, the only way to enter a dream from the Dream-Sea is to use a spell like *plane shift* to enter the pocket plane. *Teleportation* effects, however, will not work, as they cannot cross planar boundaries. Experienced dreamers who are aware of the existence of the Dream Plane can leave holes in the edges of their dreams, allowing a traveller to walk or swim.

Dreamscapes

Each island is essentially its own pocket plane, known as dreamscapes, with its own unique traits. These dreamscapes have a Size trait of 2 + 1d10 and instantly dissolve when the dreamer awakens, although some planecrafters have managed to make a dream permanent by infusing it with Law or altering its Time trait. The Morphic trait of a dreamscape is always 14 (Narrative Morphic).

Other than these restrictions, a dreamscape may have almost any traits, to a maximum of +/-7.

The dream plays out within its own dreamscape unless interrupted by the dreamer waking (in which case the dream-avatar vanishes and the island and all its contents dissolve within 3d6 rounds), or if travellers enter the dream and are seen by the dreamer. The dreamer must then make a Sense Motive check opposed by the traveller's Bluff or Disguise skills; if the dreamer succeeds, he realises that these strangers are not part of the dream, and begins to wake. The dreamer may make a Will save (DC 15) to stay asleep, but is now conscious that he is dreaming.

Items can be taken from one dream to another, but they soon decay if removed from the Plane of Dreams.

The Dreaming Skill

A character who has visited the Plane of Dreams may take ranks in the Dreaming skill. This is a Wisdom-based skill that is a class skill for all. A character may use their Dreaming skill to shape his dreamscape when he falls asleep. He must make a Dreaming check for each trait he wishes the plane to have, at a DC of 5 + the value of the trait. Dreaming cannot be used untrained.

A character may also use the Dreaming skill to 'wake up' inside a dream (Dreaming check, DC 15) instead of making a Will save, and may wake up inside a dream without being disturbed by travellers.

Finally, a character with 10 ranks in the Dreaming skill may cast *dream* and *fabricate* once per day each while dreaming, as a sorcerer equal to his character level.

Anyone holding an item must make a Will save each round (DC equal to the number of rounds since the item was taken from the Plane of Dreams) or the item dissolves. Only one item per person can be taken in this manner.

HAZARDS

Wandering Destinies (CR4)

The Plane of Dreams is also the realm of prophecy and fate. Destinies coil and writhe through the Dream-Sea like rainbow serpents. Sometimes, they nest in a peasant's dream, causing a peasant girl to become a great general or warlord. They are also attracted to travellers. A wandering destiny cannot be fought directly, only blocked or imprisoned. It has an incorporeal touch attack with an Attack Bonus of +10, a fighting space of five feet by five feet, no reach, and a perfect Flying move of 30 feet. If the destiny hits a character, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 14). If the saving throw fails, the character now has a destiny. This behaves just like a *quest* spell, but it cannot normally be removed – the character is fated to accomplish, or at least, attempt to accomplish some legendary feat. The character might now be destined to unite the warring tribes of Gormoth, or slay the Wyrms Despairing... even if he has no idea who these tribes are, or what the Wyrms Despairing is.

Nightmare Zones (CR8)

Nightmare Zones occur where the Plane of Shadow and the Plane of Dreams blend into each other. The manifestation of a Nightmare Zone is described on page 85, but at the heart of a Nightmare Zone is an adamant dream as described below.

Adamant Dreams (CR

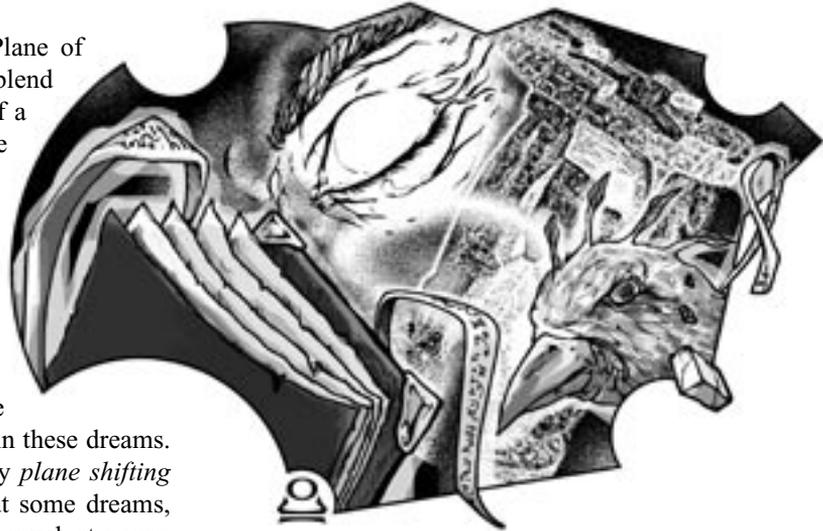
Varies)

Characters who travel into the dreams of others may be caught within these dreams. Normally, a dream can be escaped by *plane shifting* out or simply waking the sleeper, but some dreams, known as adamant dreams, are much, much stronger. These dreams have an Accessibility of 1 from inside – you can get in, but you cannot get out as easily. Even if the dreamer is woken and the dream dissolves, the bubble of force containing the dreamscape endures, and travellers are left trapped inside an empty, featureless bubble. Luckily for travellers, these dreams are usually recurring dreams, so the bubble will fill with dreamstuff once more when the dreamer falls asleep again. Keep in mind that one hour on the Plane of Dream is equal to one round on the Material Plane. If the dreamer falls asleep twelve hours after waking, the trapped dreamers will have to wait for a subjective 150 days if the dream has the same Time trait as the Dream-Sea.

The only way to escape one of these dreams is to resolve it. Such dreams come in several forms:

- † **Questing Dreams:** The dreamer is trying to get somewhere or attain some goal, but there are obstacles in his path.
- † **Dreams of Desire:** The dreamer is trying to claim some prize, but the prize keeps moving or his path to it is blocked or treacherous.
- † **Dreams of Danger:** The dreamer is being pursued by some monster or other threat, and must escape or defeat it.
- † **Dreams of Catastrophe:** The dreamer is involved in some activity that has gone utterly and bizarrely wrong.
- † **Dreams of Madness:** Surreal, symbolic dreams that defy logic.

Characters in a dream must aid the dreamer in resolving the dream – it is only when the quest or prize is found, when the danger or catastrophe is dealt with or when the madness is plumbed that the portal out of the dream may be found.



LOCATIONS

Sahanotheras, the City in Dreams

Who has not been to Sahanotheras? Everyone is guaranteed at least one glimpse of the marvellous sunset city in their dreams. Whether you visit it but once in your lifetime, or walk the marble terraces every night, you know the dreaming city. It is thronged by sleepers and stranger creatures; refugee dream-things crawled from a thousand imaginings or visitors from other planes.

The chief attraction of Sahanotheras is the Fool's Market. While the things of dream cannot long exist outside the Dream-Sea, they can be used within it. There are wizard's towers floating in the sea of dream, creating real items from dreamed components. All sorts of treasures can be bought for a pittance in the Fool's Market – but *caveat emptor*, for your purchases may dissolve when the dreamer who dreamed them wakes.

The Riding of Faerie

The Fey domains are rumoured to border the Dream Plane. Faerie hunts sometimes ride out into the sea and pursue beasts through half-a-dozen dreams, or kidnap unwary sleepers. Other Fey hunt for the bright, shapeless dreams of infants, slipping in and out through *door* spells to steal away the child and replace it with a changeling. Nine Faerie castles mark the borders of the Riding of Faerie; it is something of an irony that this, the most stable and well-established outpost of Faerieland, should be located on one of the most amorphous and changeable planes of all. Still, those who seek to contact the Fey can do so through dreams.

The Dream of Worlds

Once, there was a girl who dreamed of a forest, and in that forest there were many paths. Each of these paths led to a different world. The girl was so enchanted with her dream that she did not wake up again. Her body aged, withered and died, yet her spirit remained wandering the forest. She would dance down one path or another, clad in her favourite red cloak, visiting world after world. Some of these worlds are other planes, others are the dreams of sleepers. She has been dreaming now for uncounted centuries and has become immensely powerful in the art of dreaming. She has been known to lure and employ interesting people from their dreams and bring them to one plane or another. Her dream-domain can be used as a nexus point, but is filled with all manner of dangerous monsters, especially massive dire wolves and flesh golems armed with huge woodcutting axes.

DENIZENS

Most of the creatures of the Plane of Dreams are made from the stuff of dreams, and to the stuff of dreams they return when their brief lives are done. Within the plane, they are almost identical to the 'normal' versions of the creature – apply the Dream-Creature template. A few creatures dwell in or visit the Plane of Dreams using *plane shift* – eerie, whale-like creatures that carry particular types of dream are the most well known natives. Strange birds that resemble titanic hummingbirds also flit through the Plane of Dreams, draining the essence of dreamers, punching through the crystal shells of their dreams with massive beaks. Dragons use the Plane of Dreams as part of their long sleep cycle, creating powerful avatars that use the plane to expand the draconic mind and soul as their bodies grow. Succubi and hags are also known to visit the plane from below, and lillends from above.

Dream-Creatures

'Dream-Creature' is a template that can be applied to any creature. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Special Qualities: A dream-creature retains all the special qualities of the base creature, and adds:

Real only in Dreams (Su): If a dream-creature is removed from the Plane of Dreams, it begins to dissolve. The creature must make a Will save every round (DC 10 plus the number of rounds since it left the dream-plane) or vanish.

Quasi-real (Su): Dream-creatures are only quasi-real. A character encountering a dream-creature may make a Will save (DC 10 + half the dream-creature's Hit Dice + its Charisma modifier). If the save succeeds, the creature's attacks and spells are reduced to 20% of normal effectiveness.

Resistant to Damage (Ex): Dreams are notoriously difficult to kill. Dream-creatures automatically convert lethal damage to non-lethal damage, although each creature has a specific weakness to a form of attack that it cannot convert to non-lethal damage.

Climate/Terrain: Plane of Dreams

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature -2.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Dream Plane can be a useful replacement for the Astral Plane for a more mystical or roleplaying-oriented campaign. Instead of crossing the vast gulfs of the Great Realm, the characters must navigate the treacherous Dream-Sea and overcome a variety of nightmares. It makes travel more varied, but also much more troublesome.

The plane can also be used as a dumping ground for plots and ideas that do not fit elsewhere. If a scenario about a cursed tower or fantastical mirror world does not fit into your campaign, have someone dream about it and trap the characters in that dream.

- † A powerful wizard is rumoured to dream of the spell he is currently researching. Ambitious thieves could find his dream, enter it and steal the spell – but what horrors must a wizard of such rank dream of?
- † A mingling is occurring between the Plane of Dreams and the Material Plane, and dreams are spilling out into the world. Fear feeds on fear and nightmare on nightmare – if the common folk see horrors, they will dream of them and spawn yet more. How can the characters keep people distracted until the mingling ends?
- † A creature on a far-off plane where time moves slowly – such as the Astral Plane – is dreaming of a dark god. This dream-god has immeasurable power and as such is capable of affecting the worlds beyond the Dream Plane. It is desperately searching for a way to become real. The characters must find the sleeper and wake it before the dream-god escapes the unreal prison of its dreamscape.

THE ELEMENTAL PLANE OF EARTH DESCRIPTION

‘Earth’ is often a misnomer – this is the world of stone. This elemental plane is an infinitely large rock, solid for the most part but riven in places with billions of tunnels and caves, or veins of minerals, metals and gems. Towards the border with the Plane of Fire, this same stone melts into magma. In the opposite direction, it becomes damper and slides into mud. Still, all these inherent tunnels and imperfections are inconsequential; the sheer weight of rock that makes up the Earth Plane crushes comprehension.

Getting there... and Back

Natural portals to the Earth Plane are located deep underground. The majority are under the roots of mountains and new mountains are ‘born’ from the stone of the Earth Plane to slowly extend into that of the Material. A few portals are located amid the labyrinthine tunnels below. Xorn or miners pillaging the rich resources of the Earth Plane usually hold these portals.

Artificial portals to the Earth Plane are common – it is a relatively safe inner plane, and filled with treasures. The Earth Plane has suffered so much from the predations of invaders that many of its denizens are now hostile towards all outsiders.

Like the Fire Plane, *plane shifting* to the Plane of Earth often results in the traveller arriving somewhere unpleasant; in this case, entombed in solid rock. There are caverns and open areas within the plane, but random arrivals are unlikely (20%) to hit them. Using accurate portals, *gates* or ethereal travel are a far safer option.

Survival on the Plane of Earth

The Earth Plane can be divided into two categories – tunnels and solid rock.

Tunnels are relatively easy to survive in, if the traveller has any clue about exploring dungeons or caves. The main dangers here are getting lost and a lack of air. Travellers should make Survival checks (DC 20; five ranks in Knowledge (dungeoneering) gives a +2 synergy bonus) to avoid getting lost in the randomly twisting caverns and tunnels. The lack of breathable atmosphere in many of the caverns is a larger problem. Spells like *earth breathing* allow a

Plane of Earth Traits

Gravity	5	<i>Heavy gravity</i>
Quirk		<i>Objective</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal time</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	6	<i>Alterable</i>
Life	-2	<i>Sparse</i>
Weather	-6	<i>Static</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	-8	<i>Earth-Dominant</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	-3	<i>Biased towards Law</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Earth Spells	+6	<i>Empowered & Extended</i>
Air Spells	-6	<i>Impeded</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to Material	9	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Fire/Water/Positive/Negative Planes	11	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Ethereal	14	<i>Coexistent</i>
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

character to subsist on the dust filtering down from the tunnel roof, but most travellers carry their own air supplies or *polymorph* into forms that do not need to breathe.

Solid rock is impassable to most characters, which makes getting around on the Earth Plane rather difficult, and not everywhere is accessible by tunnel. Characters who cannot burrow need to either acquire a method of passing through the rock, or rely on *teleport*, *dimension door* or ethereal travel to get through most of the plane.

‘Stone is a word long in the speaking.’

- Dwarven Proverb

The Earth Plane is lightless, save for the occasional burning lava flow, glowing crystal or bioluminescent fungi. Most earth creatures are extraordinarily sensitive to vibration.

One curiosity of the Earth Plane is the effect of its objective gravity. On other planes, where solid ground is a rarity this usually comes in the form of a pocket; gravity always draws in towards the centre of the local mass. A character on the Air or Fire Plane who encounters a floating lump of rock can walk all around the rock, and 'down' is always towards the centre of the rock. However, on the solid Earth Plane, 'down' is 'towards the nearest solid mass of stone'. As these stone masses cannot be seen by a traveller walking down a tunnel, he may encounter gravitational shifts as he leaves the influence of one mass and enters that of another, so the tunnel 'floor' becomes the 'ceiling'. In the case of sudden shifts, the traveller must make a Reflex save (DC 10) to step back or else he falls. Most gravitational shifts are 'corkscrew turns', where 'down' moves up along one wall to the ceiling.

FEATURES & PROPERTIES

Every possible type of earth and stone can be found somewhere on the plane, as can almost every type of metal with the exceptions of magical metals and alchemical alloys. The walls of the tunnels are a beautiful mix of colours and textures. Millions of crystals reflect any light like a million stars.

Channels

While pockets of earth and other elements drift through the other Elemental Planes, the crushing pressure of the rocks does not allow similar pockets to survive on the Plane of Earth. Instead, the nascent pockets are forced down the path of least resistance – the tunnels and caves.

Water channels come in two forms, permanent and tidal. Permanent water channels occur when there is an open portal or vast water pocket at the end of the tunnel. They resemble the rivers of the Material Plane, having similar denizens and posing similar dangers. The water from such rivers flows until it pools in one of the vast enclosed seas of the Earth Plane, or else disperses and drains away into the millions of tiny cracks in the stone.

Tidal channels are much more dangerous and occur when a water pocket suddenly bursts against the walls of earth emptying into the tunnels. Water floods through the caverns; those in a tunnel when it fills with water must make a Swim check (DC 12) each round

for 1d100 rounds or be swept away. Failed checks cause a character to take 2d6 points of damage per round from smashing into rocks and stalactites.

Fire Channels are simply lava flows caused by fire pockets. They wind their way through the tunnels, carrying with them the occasional fire creature. The heat from the lava brings the air temperature in such tunnels to $2d20 + 120^\circ$ and touching the lava deals 6d6 points of fire damage to the unfortunate traveller. Fire channels cool down and solidify after a few miles.

Air Channels, the rarest of the three types, are oases of 'natural' life (especially when water and fire channels are also nearby). They manifest as turbulent winds that howl down the tunnels; those in a tunnel when these winds course through them must make a Strength check (DC 15) each round for 1d100 rounds or be blown away. Failure causes a character to be carried 1d20 metres by the winds and take 2d6 points of damage per round from crashing into rocks and stalactites.

Soil Bubbles

The grinding of the plane grinds rock down to dust and dirt. Soil bubbles are chambers of actual earth, not stone. They can be quite hazardous, as the loose soil acts like quicksand (see *Core Rulebook II*).

If the soil bubble has a source of light, such as glowing crystals or moisture, then life may flourish here in these eerie underground oases. Strange species that occur nowhere else can evolve and become extinct in hollows isolated by endless miles of rock. Soil bubbles that are accessible by tunnel are usually turned into farmland by whatever creature claims them.

Mineral Veins

Veins of metal and gemstones run through the body of the Earth Plane. If stonewells are its heart and channels the lungs and bowels of Earth, then wealth is surely its blood. Miners and thieves come from all over the planes like vampires, to greedily batten on the resources of the Earth Plane. Most of these invaders are nothing more than opportunistic travellers, grabbing a few choice gems before continuing on, but there are several large-scale mining operations.

Roll on the Random Stone Type Table every five miles or so to determine what sort of stone the surrounding walls are made of. A character trying to dig through stone can cut through (30 - the hardness of the rock) cubic feet per day. A successful Craft (Stonecutting) or Profession (miner) check (DC 10 + the hardness of the

Random Stone Type Table

1d20	Stone
1-6	Igneous
7-12	Sedimentary
13-18	Metamorphic
19	Metal
20	Magical/Gemstones

Igneous Stone

1d4	Stone	Hardness
1	Basalt	10
2	Granite	12
3	Obsidian	9
4	Pumice	8

Sedimentary Stone

1d6	Stone	Hardness
1	Coal	6
2	Chalk	5
3	Clay	5
4	Limestone	7
5	Sandstone	8
6	Shale	8

Metamorphic Stone

1d6	Stone	Hardness
1	Greenstone	10
2	Marble	10
3	Quartzite	10
4	Schist	10
5	Slate	8
6	Soapstone	9

Metal

1d6	Metal	Value	Dig DC
1	Copper	50 gp	10
2	Gold	200 gp	14
3	Lead	70 gp	10
4	Iron	80 gp	12
5	Silver	100 gp	12
6	Tin	50 gp	10

rock) doubles the amount shifted. When digging out gemstones or minerals, use the dig DC as the hardness of the material, but the character must also make a Craft (stonecutting) or Profession (miner) check at

Magical Ores & Gemstones

1d10	Substance	Value	Dig DC
1	Adamantine	1000 gp	20
2	Amethyst	100 gp	16
3	Cold Iron	100 gp	15
4	Emeralds	1000 gp	22
5	Diamonds	5000 gp	25
6	Mithral	500 gp	17
7	Rubies	1000 gp	22
8	Sapphires	1000 gp	22
9	Topaz	500 gp	20

the same DC; failure means he only gathers material worth half as much as normal in a day's work.

Example: A dwarf miner wandering the Plane of Earth is told that there is a vein of gold behind a rock wall. The rock wall is made of slate, so the dwarf can dig through 22 cubic feet of stone each day (one 5-ft. x 5-ft. x 5-ft. cube, roughly). If he makes a Profession (miner) (DC 18), he can double his speed. After two days of work, he hits the vein of gold. The gold has a Dig DC of 14. Each day of mining, he must make a Profession (miner) check (DC 14). On a success, he digs out 100 gp worth of gold; if he fails, he only digs out 50 gp worth.

The above rules are really aimed at adventurers trying to quickly exploit a find. For large-scale mining operations, the more detailed mining rules in *The Quintessential Dwarf* should be used. However, when determining vein quality, roll 1d20 instead of 1d10.

Stonewells

An active stonewell is one of the strangest sights in all the planes: stone flowing like liquid out of the ground. The stone usually solidifies soon after emerging from the stonewell, but it can be bottled and kept fluid for a time. The liquid stone is quite cool and looks just like normal, solid stone, through it flows like quicksilver.

A stonewell belches forth one cubic foot of stone each round. Rarer stonefountains and stonegeysers create 2d6 and 1d100 cubic feet per round, respectively, and there are even larger stonetorrents deep in the plane. The liquid stone solidifies in 2d4 rounds. Treat liquid stone as mud (see *transmute rock to mud*), and the hardening process acts just like *transmute mud to rock* (and the Reflex Save of DC 15 to avoid being caught).

Roll on the Random Stone Table to discover what sort of stone is being produced by the stonewell.

recites the crimes of the condemned and also triggers the chamber's sonic damage.

HAZARDS

Echo Chambers (CR3)

An echo chamber is an acoustically perfect cavern, 3d6 x 5 feet in length. Any sound made in the chamber is magnified and reflected dozens of times. Even a footstep can kill here, and a sonic attack usually causes catastrophic cave-ins. Spotting an echo chamber requires a Listen check (DC 15) to notice that something is 'odd' in the sounds coming from the chamber ahead, and a Knowledge (the planes) or Knowledge (architecture & engineering) check at DC 25 to know about echo chambers.

Characters passing through an echo chamber must make a Move Silently check at DC 12 to move safely. If the characters fail this check, speak or make other noises while moving through the chamber, consult the Echo Chamber Damage Table. Echo chambers function for three rounds before the sound dissipates.

If the damage ever exceeds 100 points in one round, the cave collapses (see cave-ins and collapses in *Core Rulebook II*). Note that the above damage stacks – if a fighter runs in and hits a wizard, who retaliates with a *shout* spell, the sonic damage in the first round is 1d10 (for the fighter's unquiet movement) + 2d8 (for the attack) + an extra 5d6 (the damage of the *shout* spell).

Casting a *shatter* spell on an echo chamber collapses it automatically. Echo chambers are often used to execute criminals – a stone bearing a *magic mouth*

LOCATIONS

Mines of the Abandonment

In ages past, a race of strange outsiders set to mining the infinite wealth of the Plane of Earth. Such a task might seem insurmountable, but the outsiders were most cunning, and devised golems capable of replicating themselves from the material they mined. One golem would soon build another, then those two would build four, those four eight and so on, until a near-infinite number of golems mined a near-infinite amount of wealth. These golems capable of adapting, so that if they encountered unexpected terrain or hostile foes, the golems could produce war-machines or specialist golems capable of dealing with these new challenges.

The race that built the mines is long gone, but the machines live on, a blind cancer eating through the Earth Plane. Uncountable billions of golems slowly cut into the stone. The materials gathered by the golems (primarily magical metals and gems) are placed in guarded and trapped vaults, to await the return of the overseers. The golem mines have not gone unnoticed, and thousands of elementals have perished fighting the miners. The other Earth races have as yet shied away from direct conflict, but the miners now threaten to encroach on their realms.

A more alarming development is the evolution of intelligence among the miners. Where once they were nothing but blind, unthinking constructs, there are now a few self-aware golems capable of wielding

Echo Chamber Damage Table

Sound	1 st Round	2 nd Round	3 rd Round
<i>Move Silently failed by</i>			
1-5	1	1d6	1d4
6-10	1d6	1d10	1d6
11+	1d10	2d10	1d12
<i>Sounds</i>			
Whisper	1	1d6	1d4
Conversation	1d6	1d10	1d6
Shout	1d12	2d12	1d12
Combat	2d8	4d8	3d8
Mass Combat	4d8	8d8	6d8
Sonic Damage	Equal Damage	Triple Damage	Double Damage

magic and commanding their fellows. Somewhere in the upper reaches of the Mines of the Abandonment, there is a Master Golem, or even a returned overseer, and it desires more than mere wealth.

The Golems of the Abandonment

The golems are divided into five castes. **Copper Golems** are the basic workers and miners, aided by **Brass golems** for heavy lifting and for dragging the ore back to the smelters. **Bronze golems** run the refineries and smelting plants and also make new golems. **Silver golems** are the guards and watchmen of the golem mines, while the **Gold golems** act as overseers and engineers.

The golems of abandonment share the following statistics (caste variations are noted in parentheses):

Copper Golem

Large Construct

Hit Dice: 18d10+30 (129 hp)

Initiative: -1 (Dex)

Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)

Armour Class: 30 (-1 size, -1 Dex, +22 natural (Brass: +30 natural) touch 8, flat-footed 30)

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +12/+28

Attack: Slam +23 melee (2d10+11)

Full Attack: 2 slams +23 melee (2d10+11)

Space/Reach: 10-ft./10-ft.

Special Attacks: (Silver: Breath weapon)

Special Qualities: Construct traits, damage reduction 15/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to magic, low-light vision (Bronze: Craft golem)

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +6

Abilities: Str 33 (Brass: Str 40), Dex 9, Con —, Int —, Wis 11 (Silver: Wis 15), Cha (Gold: Cha 15)

Climate/Terrain: Any

Organisation: Solitary or gang (2-4)

Challenge Rating: 13

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always neutral

Advancement: 19-24 HD (Large); 25-54 HD (Huge)

The golems have humanoid bodies made of metal, either copper, brass, bronze, silver or gold. Silver golems often carry a short sword in one hand. All golems are 12 feet tall and weigh about 5,000 pounds. The golems of abandonment cannot speak or make any vocal noise, nor do they have any distinguishable odour. They move with a ponderous but smooth gait, each step causing even the floor of the Plane of Earth to tremble.

Combat

Breath Weapon (Su): Silver golems can expel a cloud of poisonous gas that fills a 10-foot cube and lasts 1 round. They may vomit up a poisonous cloud as a free action once every 1d4+1 rounds; initial damage 1d4 Constitution, secondary damage 3d4 Constitution, Fortitude (DC 19) negates. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Craft Golem: Bronze golems can create other golems of any caste without having to expend money, magic or experience. It takes a bronze golem 100 days to make a golem, although up to five bronze golems can work together.

Immunity to Magic (Ex): All golems are immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature, as noted below.

A magical attack that deals electricity damage slows a golem (as the *slow* spell) for 3 rounds, with no saving throw.

A magical attack that deals fire damage breaks any *slow* effect on the golem and heals 1 point of damage for each 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause the golem to exceed its full normal hit points, it gains any excess as temporary hit points. For example, an iron golem hit by a *fireball* gains back 6 hit points if the damage total is 18 points. A golem gets no saving throw against fire effects.



All golems of abandonment are immune to rust attacks, such as that of a rust monster or a *rusting grasp* spell.

Vaults of Dreaming Stone

The Vaults of Dreaming Stone are often considered a myth of the dwarves, but certain travellers whisper that they do exist. Some stone *desires* to be worked, to be carved and built into wonderful castles and constructions. The dwarves speak of stones that leap into place, of statues that hide within stone, and so are not carved by the mason, but revealed.

In the Vaults of Dreaming Stone, these stones have clustered together and built themselves. There are castles, towers, arches and cathedrals that formed because they *must* be, because they are shapes inherent in the stone, without any aid from mason or mortar. Just looking at the Vault of Dreaming Stone gives a character a permanent +2 inherent bonus to Knowledge (architecture & engineering) and spending a month studying the Vault increases this bonus to +5.

Many dwarven ghosts haunt the Vault; these ghosts are the spirits of stone-workers who would prefer to look on such perfect buildings instead of moving on to the Afterworld.

Buildings from the Vault of Dreaming Stone

If using the buildings rules from *The Book of Strongholds and Dynasties*, buildings copied from those in the Vault have 50% more Structure Points and a +5 bonus to Stability. If a building can somehow be transported wholesale from the Vault, it has 100% more Structure Points and a +10 bonus to Stability.

Fields of Ioun

The Fields of Ioun are a series of huge caverns near the border with the Positive Energy Plane. The constant wash of power over the gemstones embedded in the cavern walls slowly infuses them with magic, transforming them into the fabled ioun stones. The Fields of Ioun can be dangerous to travellers, as the positive tides flow in and out quickly. Roll 1d10 for the current position of the Fields on the Positive/Negative axis, then roll +1d6 and -1d6 each round to see if the tides ebb or flow. The Fields never go below Positive/Negative 0.

At any time, there are 2d20 random ioun stones present in the fields, but there are always other creatures and travellers hoping to dash in and steal a few stones before the positive energy transforms them into incandescent fire.

The Entombment of Karak Azil

Karak Azil was a powerful demon lord who led his legions to conquer a rich section of the Plane of Earth. He offended an ancient elder elemental lord, who transformed the plain on which the legions were assembled into mud. Karak Azil leapt forward and slew the elemental lord with his demonic blade, *Malevolence*. When the elemental lord died, his transmutation spell ceased, the mud turned back into stone – and the legion of demons found themselves half-entombed in rock.

Being demons, and therefore immune to starvation and thirst, the legions are still there. The magically affected stone prevents them from *teleporting* or *polymorphing* their way out, but they can be dug out by brute force. Enterprising demonologists sometimes come to the Entombment to dig up a demon servant. Some demons are buried up to their waists, and can still converse or attack. In other places, limbs or faces are all that protrude from the stone.

As for Karak Azil, Conqueror of Nine Hundred Worlds, Malevolent Master of the Scarlet Legion, Consort to the Queen of Syric, Goat-King of the Realm of Ge'thal – he is stuck face down. A geyser of curses and foulness issues constantly from a small air-hole near his mouth.

Terran Language

The Terran language is slow. Many languages are slow – treant leaps to mind – but at least treant does not rely on subsonic echoes that are perceived through the listener's bones to carry information. Saying 'hello' in Terran takes hours. Conversations are not quite so slow; most conversations in Terran take place on several different 'sonic strata' at once, but getting any one piece of knowledge across is very, very, very slow.

A character who speaks Terran gets a +2 synergy bonus to Diplomacy, Sense Motive and Knowledge (the planes) checks relating to the Plane of Earth and its denizens, and a +1 insight bonus to Stonecunning checks.

DENIZENS

The native creatures of the Plane of Earth include earth elementals, earth and salt mephits, grimlocks, thoqqua and xorn. There are also some genie colonies. The sheer density of the plane means that any civilisations tend to be very isolated; one patch of tunnels might be inhabited by a mephit kingdom, while a xorn feeding pod moves through the rock a few hundred feet away, neither ever knowing the other is there. Travellers can wander the empty tunnels for decades and never encounter another living soul.

The Six Ethical Strata

The Six Ethical Strata are the beliefs of the earth elementals. Every elemental subscribes to three of these curious philosophies, and debates concerning the validity of one strata over another manifest as creaking noises or even earthquakes. The strata are divided into three opposed pairs.

- † **The Strata of Shape vs. the Strata of Form:** The Strata of Shape holds that stone can only find its truest potential when carved and built. These elementals view other creatures such as dwarves as necessary agents of change for stone, and ally with them. The opposing Strata of Form believes that each stone is created perfect, and carving is blasphemy. They oppose all forms of mining and building.
- † **The Strata of Height vs. the Strata of Depth:** The elementals of the Strata of Height venerate mountains and great outcrops of stone, while those of the Strata of Depth prefer tunnels and the great bulk of underground stone. Either faction will take up arms to defend their chosen terrain. As there are no true mountains on the Plane of Earth, the followers of the Strata of Height welcome being *summoned* to other planes.
- † **The Strata of Hardness vs. the Strata of Density:** The Strata of Hardness dictates that it is the outer face of stone that determines the nature of the stone. These elementals polish themselves and embed gemstones into their bodies (and can easily be bribed with such things). The opposing Strata of Density holds that what is within an elemental is what matters. These elementals ignore their physical appearance, looking like vaguely humanoid lumps of rock, and concentrate instead on developing their skills and mastery of the earth.

Seisant

Medium Outsider (Earth)

Hit Dice: 3d8+6 (21 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: 30-ft.

Armour Class: 20 (+10 natural armour), touch 10, flat-footed 20

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+5

Attack: Claw +5 melee (1d4+3) or *magic stone* +4 ranged (1d6+1)

Full Attack: Two claws +5 melee (1d4+3) or *magic stone* +4 ranged (1d6+1)

Space/Reach: 5-ft. /5-ft.

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Stoneskin, Vulnerability to Sonics, Tremorsense

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +5

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 13, Cha 12

Skills: Concentration +6, Craft (stone) +4, Hide +6, Knowledge (architecture & engineering) +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Spot +6

Feats: Craft Construct, Improved Natural Armour

Climate/Terrain: Plane of Earth

Organisation: Listening Post (2-5) or Tribe (20-50, +1d4 Clay Golems)

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: Double Standard

Alignment: Always lawful neutral

Advancement: By character class

This creature looks like a half-finished statue; a face and limbs emerge randomly from a lump of uncut stone.

Seisants are a race of creatures created to tend the stone. They seem to be intermediaries between elementals and a 'true' race; they have much more individuality and a distinct lifecycle, but are still born from stone. They have great command over stone, a power they attribute to the attention they pay to the song of the earth. To the seisants, the whole world is singing. Their tribes criss-cross the tunnels of the Earth Plane, looking for particularly harmonic places from which to listen.

Seisant travellers to other worlds are rare, although some tribes specialise in visiting other realms to compare notes. Seisants speak a variant of Terran. Their favoured class is cleric.

Combat

Seisants only attack those who interfere with their listening to the song of the earth. However, 'interference' can take many different forms – just

talking in the wrong corridor or digging in the wrong spot can warp the symphony of the stone and anger the seisants.

Craft Golem: Seisants can create clay golems without having to expend money, magic or experience. It takes a seisant 100 days to make a golem, although up to five seisants can work together. The golems are magically altered to be almost totally silent (Move Silently +10).

Stoneskin (Su): Seisants have an outer shell identical to the effects of a *stoneskin* spell. If this shell is removed (see below), it takes 1d4 weeks to regrow.

Vulnerability to Sonics (Ex): Seisants must make a Fortitude save when exposed to any sonic damage. The DC for this save is equal to 10 + the damage dealt. If the save is failed, the seisant's outer shell cracks and sloughs off, removing their *stoneskin* ability.

Tremorsense (Ex): Seisants can sense the location of any creature in contact with the stone within a range of 120 feet.

Spell-like abilities (Sp): At will: *magic stone*, *passwall*, *stone shape*, *stone tell*. 3/day: *wall of stone*, *spike stones*. 1/day: *summon nature's ally IV* (earth elemental only). All spells are cast as if by a 6th level cleric, and the save DC is 14 + the spell level.

Skills: Seisants have a +4 racial bonus to Craft (stone) and Knowledge (architecture & engineering) checks. They have a +4 racial bonus to Hide and Listen checks, but only when on the Plane of Earth.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

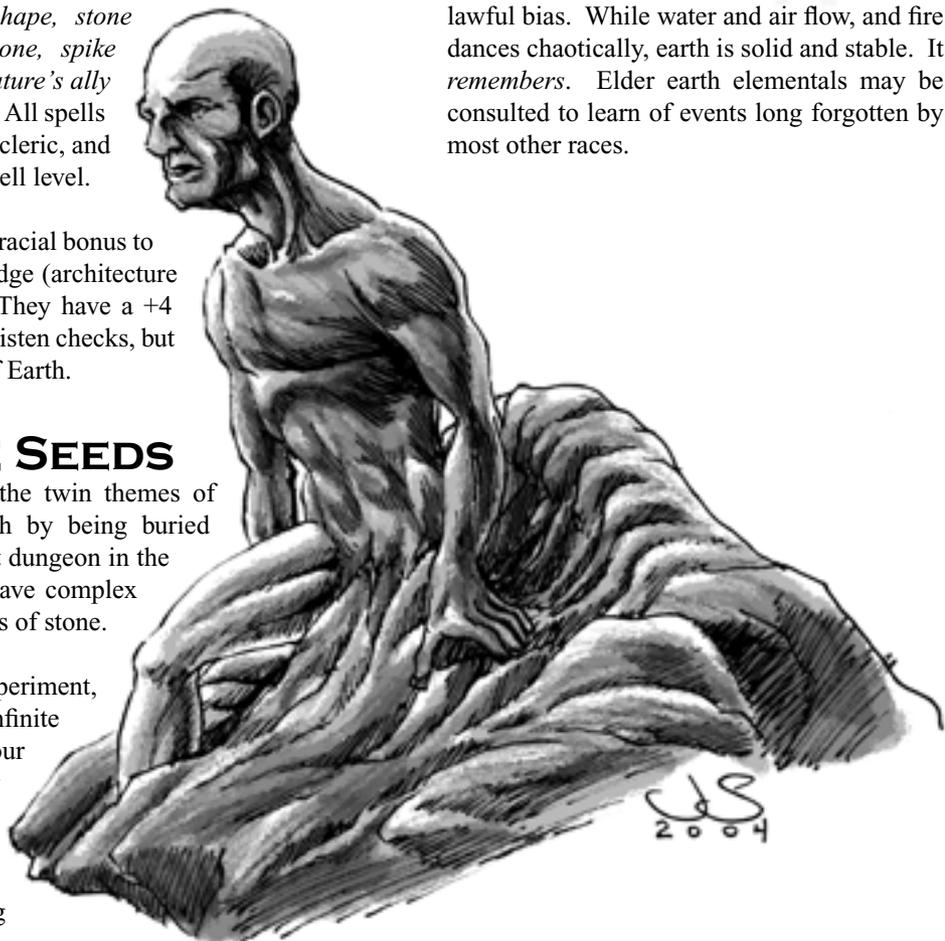
The Plane of Earth has the twin themes of buried treasure and death by being buried alive. It is not the biggest dungeon in the planes, it is the biggest cave complex possible. It is a wilderness of stone.

- † **Mining:** As an experiment, say 'plane of infinite gold' to your players. If they start drooling, then they would probably be interested in trying

to tap the resources of the Earth Plane like so many before them. A large-scale mining effort is very difficult – how do the characters get the miners there? How do they keep them alive? How do they stop the elementals from crushing them? How do they get the wealth back to somewhere they can spend it? And how do they deal with the hosts of thieves, assassins, warlords and tax collectors that are sure to descend on them? It is, really, an infinite amount of fool's gold, but getting even a little of it can make a party rich beyond their wildest dreams.

- † **The Lost Vaults:** Imprisoning creatures in sealed pocket planes or *trap the soul* spells is one approach, but sticking them in the infinite tunnels of the Plane of Earth can be just as effective. The mass of the plane blocks most *divination* spells, and think of just how effective an *imprisonment* is when cast on a plane with no discernable surface.

- † **The Memory of Stone:** The Earth Plane is ancient beyond compare, and is the only one of the Elemental Planes to have a solidly lawful bias. While water and air flow, and fire dances chaotically, earth is solid and stable. It *remembers*. Elder earth elementals may be consulted to learn of events long forgotten by most other races.



THE ELEMENTAL PLANE OF AIR DESCRIPTION

Imagine being lifted up into the sky, to fly amongst the clouds. Now, imagine some godly hand reaching in and replacing all the ground below with yet more sky. All around you, above and below, is one unimaginably vast day, all puffy white clouds and breezes and infinite, endless blue. The light comes from no discernable source; every part of the plane is equally bright.

Sometimes, the clouds scud quickly across the infinite sky, driven by vicious tearing windstorms.

Getting there... and Back

The natural portals to the Plane of Air are inaccessible to those without wings, and are hard to reach even for birds, as the portals tend to manifest in the upper reaches of the atmosphere or in the hearts of hurricanes. More permanent portals are said to be located at the sources of the trade winds and in the mouth of the north wind. Strong winds howl from each of these portals, so only the most determined flyer can pass into the wind's maw and emerge on the Air Plane.

Happily, it is quite safe to *plane shift* to the plane. There are relatively few dangerous regions, and no chance of the traveller drowning or being entombed, incinerated or eaten on arrival. Other methods of planar travel also work equally well.

There are also numerous constructed portals to the Air Plane. As the most hospitable of any of the Elemental Planes, it is the usual starting point for anyone travelling through them. Its sprawling cities are frequented by elemental guides and wizards specialising in protective spells and items. The air elementals and djinn are much more welcoming and cosmopolitan than the natives of other planes.

Survival on the Plane of Air

For travellers from the Material Plane, this plane is a literal breath of fresh air. A traveller needs no magic in order to breathe or to survive. Even gravity is relatively friendly here, as it is subjective,

Plane of Air Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal</i>
Quirk		<i>Subjective</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal time</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	6	<i>Alterable</i>
Life	0	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	+5	<i>Wild</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	+8	<i>Air-Dominant</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	+3	<i>Biased towards Chaos</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Air Spells	+6	<i>Empowered & Enlarged</i>
Earth Spells	-6	<i>Impeded</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to Material	9	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Fire/Water/Positive/Negative Planes	11	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Ethereal	14	<i>Coexistent</i>
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

allowing everyone to 'fly', even if in a rather clumsy fashion.

Many regions of the plane are icy cold (below 40°F), so warm clothing or *endure elements* spells should be used. Places near pockets of elemental fire, however, are much warmer.

FEATURES & PROPERTIES

The Air Plane is comparatively empty, although the air is so clear and visibility so perfect that a traveller can usually see at least one elemental pocket or other feature from any point on the plane, making it less oppressively vacant.

Cloud Banks

Massive white or grey clouds are the dominant 'terrain' feature. These clouds are not always made of water vapour; the majority are in fact laced with gold, forming complex lattices deep within cloud banks and it is this same substance from which most air elementals form their bodies. The clouds are solid enough to walk on (or at least provide a frame of reference to guide the instincts of those using subjective gravity), and as items in the Air Plane float unless they enter the personal gravity of a living being, the clouds are often used for storage or even as marketplaces. The substance of the clouds can be shaped merely by touching them. Bored elementals often build castles in the air, in imitation of the djinn.

Visibility in a cloud bank is reduced to 1d4 x 5 feet. All creatures have concealment while within a cloud.

Elemental Pockets

Pockets are especially common on the Air Plane, even from the opposing planes. The substance of air is not especially hostile; pockets are not burned away, eroded or crushed here. Indeed, the howling winds tend to help preserve elemental pockets, as they push them into calmer and safer regions of the Air Plane.

Water pockets tend to diffuse over time, turning into 'normal' clouds and seeding rainstorms. Fire pockets act like tiny suns, drifting across the plane bringing light and heat. Such pockets usually contain creatures from the appropriate plane, which employ spells or elementals to push the pocket in one direction or another. Other water pockets freeze into glittering diamonds of ice.

Earth pockets, also known as floating islands, are home to most of the non-elemental civilisations, from djinn landholds to trade cities. Natural earth pockets that have floated in through a portal or from one of the other elemental planes are claimed quickly, as there is such a huge demand for living space. More powerful djinni caliphs tear matter from the Material or Earth Planes using *wish* spells, to make room for their enormous palaces.

Cascades

The need to make the best possible use of the limited amount of solid matter on the Air Plane leads to the creation of cascades. Most of the cities on the plane use this method. A cascade is a specially aligned triad of elemental pockets. The water pocket is located above the earth pocket, and the fire pocket orbits the other two. Normally, the water would just float freely, so cascaders – creatures skilled at manipulating subjective gravity – fly up to drain off water from the water pocket, creating rainstorms or sluicing vertical rivers. In some large cities, another chain of cascaders wait below the earth pocket, and when the water filters through they rechannel it up into the water pocket.

Cascading is a tricky job – wild elementals and arrowhawks are attracted to these elemental pockets, and cascaders must be repetitive and precise. Inattentive cascaders can cause the water they channel to go off course and drench the wrong part of the earth pocket, sending a river down the main street of a city instead of into its irrigation canals, for example. Even more dangerous is the rare task of fire cascading, where the orbiting fire pocket is drained to fuel engines or provide heat for a forge.

Seen from afar, a cascade is a magnificent sight, as the falling water glitters brilliantly in the fiery light, and the flying cascaders are little silhouettes guiding the river in the sky.

Cascaders

The chief requirement for cascaders is the Concentration skill. Maintaining a cascade of water is an easy task (DC 5), but Concentration checks must also be made when the character is attacked or distracted. If a check is failed, the cascade either stops and floats in mid-air around the character, or else falls off course. A cascader can earn 3 sp a day.

Falling Palaces

The falling palaces are among the most curious phenomena on the Air Plane. A great caliph of caliphs once declared that he would live in splendour of such magnitude that it would be a great weight, even on the weightless Plane of Air. He and all his



caliphs were gifted with truly magnificent palaces and villas, made of the finest materials dragged from the Plane of Earth by ten thousand slaves. Proudly, each caliph sat in the throne at the heart of his new palace, and then the caliph of caliphs solemnly and gloriously planted his exalted and heavenly rear in the golden throne of thrones.

Then, as one, every one of the brand-new glorious palaces and villas slipped off their respective foundations and plummeted through the plane. They are falling still. The caliphs found that each throne was coated with *sovereign glue*, and (just to be sure) imbued with a *dimensional anchor*.

It is possible, with due haste and canny use of *teleportation*, to enter a falling palace and consult with the learned caliph trapped within (or loot his treasures in full view of the bound genie). This is somewhat hazardous, as if a character fails to align his subjective gravity with the entirely objective fall of the palace, he may find himself crushed by the finest marble.

The vizier of that unfortunate caliph of caliphs, it should be noted, is also the vizier to the current caliph of caliphs. The new caliph is much more reasonable than the old, a trait generally ascribed to his much more ascetic outlook.

HAZARDS

Most of the hazards on the Air Plane are caused by its violent weather. Storms and winds are at least twice as intense as those on the Material Plane, and are theoretically unlimited in how dangerous they can be. Note that most creatures will be flying on the Air Plane, and so take 2d6 points of damage when blown away, not the 4d4 normally caused by being bashed into the ground.

Vertigo (CR1)

First-time travellers to the Plane of Air are often overcome by the sheer size of the plane. Infinite spaces are two-a-copper amid the planes, but rarely can a traveller see most of an infinity at once. A flying or floating character must make a Will save (DC 12) or begin to fall in a random direction. It becomes progressively harder for a character to reorient himself (he may make another Will save every round, but the DC increases by one each time), unless he enters the gravity field of another character (in which case the Will save DC is reset to 12), or until he splatters violently against some obstacle. (Just as a reminder, the falling damage is 1d6 per 10 feet. There is something horribly ironic about a CR1 hazard that could conceivably inflict 20d6 damage...)

Setting the direction of gravity requires a Wisdom check (DC 16) and characters get a +6 bonus on this check if they have done it before.

Gas Pockets (CR1 or CR4)

While the Plane of Air does contain the purest, freshest air possible, it also contains stretches of foul and tainted air. These gas pockets manifest as sickly greenish or ominous black-brown clouds. Lesser gas pockets behave just like a 3rd level *stinking cloud* (save DC 13), while the greater variant acts like a permanent *cloudkill* (9th level, save DC 17). These gas pockets are often inhabited by creatures immune to their effects, such as belkers or dust mephits.

Wildwinds (CR3)

Wildwinds are malicious, semi-sentient winds. They delight in tormenting travellers. On their own, wildwinds are not especially dangerous. They can change their strength from Light to Hurricane at will (see Wind Effects in *Core Rulebook II*).

They can also shift direction at will, and like to blow characters into portals or gas pockets. Being nothing but wind with a tinge of intelligence and emotion (if it comes up, they have Intelligence 3, Wisdom 3, Charisma 3, Will save +0), they cannot be attacked conventionally. *Control winds*, *control weather* or similar spells can, however, drive off a wildwind.

Wildwinds are at their most dangerous when they act in concert with another creature, such as a belker. The wind shifts and adapts to the attacks of the travellers, hindering their every action. Characters suffer a -4 penalty to all attacks, while the creature gains a +4 circumstance bonus to all of its own attacks.

Charged Winds (CR3/5/7)

When an elemental pocket disintegrates, its energies are released onto the winds of the Air Plane. Air currents of aquamarine, silty brown and blazing red blow through the plane. A charged wind has all the same properties as a normal wind (of any strength), with the following changes.

Water-Charged Winds (CR3) are full of ice and snow. They are extremely cold (1d6 points of lethal damage each minute, Fortitude save at DC 15 to avoid another 1d4 points of non-lethal damage, and those in metal armour are affected as if by *chill metal*), and full of icy shards. These shards deal 2d6 damage per round (Reflex save, DC 15 for half damage).

Earth-Charged Winds (CR5) are loaded with dust and stone fragments. A character caught in such a wind must make a Fortitude save (DC 14) each round or be *blinded* by the flying fragments until he gets out of the wind. Furthermore, a character must make a Strength check to move in the wind. The DC begins at 5, and increases by one per round. If a check is failed, a character is rooted to the spot this round. 'Statues' are often found floating in the depths of the Air Plane, the remains of unfortunate travellers encased in airborne elemental earth.

Finally, **Fire-Charged Winds** (CR7) are scorching hot (1d6 points of lethal damage each minute, Fortitude save at DC 15 to avoid another 1d4 points of non-lethal damage, and those in metal armour affected as if by *heat metal*), and carry waves of flame. Anyone in the wind takes 6d6 points of fire

damage each round (Reflex save, DC 15, for half damage).

Stalker Labyrinths (CR7+)

On their home plane, the invisible stalkers built huge floating labyrinth-cities from walls of solidified air. These cities can contain hundreds or thousands of stalkers and stretch for miles, but are still imperceptible to the naked eye. The invisible stalkers 'welcome' visitors to their cities, and are greatly amused by travellers wandering through the gates and then getting lost in the maze of invisible alleys. Some stalkers even deliberately close doors and slide partitions around, to keep the unfortunate travellers confused and lost.

LOCATIONS

The Metropolis of Saah

Saah is one of the largest cities on the Air Plane. It is so large that it does not fit on a single floating island – no less than 57 islands support Saah's edifices. The islands are linked by bridges and nets for those who cannot fly, and the slums of Saah are actually creeping out onto the nets. Saah has expanded greatly despite its punishing taxes and autocratic government because of the First Edict. The First Edict is a simple law – anyone who becomes a citizen of Saah (by paying a fee of 500 gp, building a home and getting a job within the city limits or by spending a year and a day there) is granted one *wish* by a noble djinni. As wishgranting is difficult and taxing, the duty of fulfilling the First Edict is assigned as a punishment. The djinn of Saah constantly squabble, trying to avoid being the one chained in the Plaza of Heart's Desire. A lesser punishment applies to non-djinn criminals – they have their life energy (XP) drained to fuel the *wishes*. The chained criminals often plead with new citizens to only *wish* for reasonable things. (Indeed, a growing religious sect in Saah preaches abstinence, poverty and not *wishing* as the three highest virtues.)

As a result of the sheer number of *wishes* granted to the citizens of Saah, the city is a place of many wonders. Beggars might sleep on magical beds of the finest angel-down, a merchant's stall might be defended by a loyal Shield Guardian, ugly men have the most beautiful consorts and fools are kings.

The ruler of Saah is a mighty caliph named Sasahsahsnoos. He is exceedingly wealthy, as he demands a tithe of items or coins to a value of 500 gp from every transaction in Saah. Furthermore, pronouncing his name incorrectly or not adding the correct number of honorifics (Knowledge (nobility & royalty), DC 15) within earshot of his invisible stalker guards is a punishable offence.

Saah (Metropolis): AL LN; 100,000 gp limit; Assets 150,000,000 gp; Pop 50,000; Mixed (djinn, air elementals, invisible stalkers, other). *Power Centres:* Sasahsahsnoos (CN), Djinni Pashas (CG, CN, CE), Amalgamated Guild of Lawyers, Sages, Wizards and Wish-Phrasers (LN).

Aeastrophus, the Sagely Storm

The Sagely Storm is a permanent thunderstorm of great antiquity and surpassing violence. Indeed, it is so full of lightning bolts being hurled from cloud to cloud that it has become in essence a great gaseous brain; the lightning is the flashes of electrical energy between great synapse-thunderclouds. The Sagely Storm is a master of all forms of magic and psionics (Wiz30/Sor25/Drd25/Clr20/Psion35) and an expert on all manner of abstruse subjects (Int 45, +50 in all Knowledge skills).

However, the storm can only communicate through electrical telepathy. Normal spells like *detect thoughts* are far too short-range to encompass the meteorological scope of the Sagely Storm, so Aeastrophus must think through those who would speak to it. Each question asked of Aeastrophus inflicts 1d10 points of electrical damage per word, and his replies take a similar toll. Spells like *protection from energy* work, but creatures immune to electrical damage cannot perceive Aeastrophus' thoughts. Furthermore, Aeastrophus demands suitable gifts such as spellbooks or rare tomes before he may be consulted.

'There are kinder ways to learn the virtues of brevity than Aeastrophus.'

- Alastherion's Planar Encyclopaedia

Auran Language

Auran is relatively easy to speak, but the words run into each other to such an extent that taking a breath in the middle of a sentence completely alters the meaning. Therefore, a character can only say a number of words at a time equal to his Constitution score x 5. Air creatures are not affected by this rule, while the djinn speak a tongue that draws from the best of Common and Auran, which eliminates this restriction.

A character who speaks Auran gets a +2 synergy bonus to Diplomacy, Sense Motive and Knowledge (the planes) checks relating to the Plane of Air and its denizens, and a +1 inherent bonus to Fortitude saves to hold his breath.

Chateau Monsalvat

This is the fabled Castle Beyond the North Wind, and indeed it lies just beyond the *gate* that lets out that icy wind. The castle is surrounded by great floating icebergs and eternal snowstorms. Monsalvat hides a great treasure – an artefact known as Quest's End. The artefact is different for everyone who sees it, as Quest's End is the gift of knowledge – when one looks on Quest's End, one knows what one is looking for and where to get it. To ensure that the artefact does not inspire evil deeds, the knights of Monsalvat have built a Moral Dungeon beneath their castle. Travellers must run the gauntlet of traps, monsters and moral tests to prove their worthiness to look upon Quest's End.

DENIZENS

The native creatures of the Plane of Air include belkers, air, dust and ice mephits, arrowhawks, cloud giants, air elementals, invisible stalkers, thunderheads and djinni. Belkers are most commonly on the borders of both the Negative Energy and Fire Planes, but they occasionally colonise floating fire pockets and sail deeper into the Air Plane.

Arrowhawks can be found throughout the Air Plane. They try to claim calm, almost windless oases in which to lay their eggs. Spotting an arrowhawk clutch requires a Spot or Survival check (DC 25).

Mephits crawl over the various elemental pockets that drift through the plane, while the elementals can be found throughout the realm.

The Eight Divine Breaths

The Eight Divine Breaths are the religious beliefs of the air elementals. As befits their mercurial nature, air elementals gleefully hold to some, none or all of these tenets at the same time, even when such beliefs are contradictory.

- † **The Wind from the Winter:** The Winter Wind is harsh and hateful. Winter Wind Elementals despise other creatures, and are willing to be *summoned* only when they get to freeze flesh and crack stone.
- † **The Wind from the Summer:** By contrast, the warm Summer Wind is gentle and kind. Summer Wind elementals welcome travellers and willingly serve as guides.
- † **The Wind from the Autumn:** The melancholy Autumn Wind cares little for non-elemental things, and prefers to drift in the open reaches of the Air Plane, untroubled by any matter.
- † **The Wind from the Spring:** The curious and inquisitive Spring Wind wishes to learn, and happily accepts *summoning* if it gets to explore another plane.
- † **The Wind from Above:** The Wind from Above is pure and free of taint. It hates being infected with any impurities and restricts its contact with ‘muddied’ or mixed-element creatures.
- † **The Wind from Below:** The Wind from Below is foul, and carries all sorts of noxious gases. It gleefully mixes its airy nature with other elements, and welcomes traffic with outsiders.
- † **The Wind from the Void:** Also known as the Vacuum or Negative Wind, the Wind from the Void is the absence of motion, life and breath. It is inherently hostile to all things.
- † **The Wind from the Star:** The Wind from the Star expresses the freedom and energy of the air. It exists solely to fly and breathe.

Thunderhead

Huge Elemental (Air, Incorporeal)

Hit Dice: 7d8+28 (69 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: Fly 50-ft. (perfect)

Armour Class: 13 (-2 size, +2 Dex, +3 Deflection), touch 13, flat-footed 11

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +5/+16

Attack: Slam +5 melee (2d6+5) or hail (special)

Full Attack: Slam +5 melee (2d6+5) or hail (special)

Space/Reach: 15-ft. /10-ft.

Special Attacks: Hailstorm, Suck, Swallow Whole

Special Qualities: Command Winds, Fast Healing 1, Immunity to Electricity, Sonics, Fire, Cold, Acid, Incorporeal, Wind Travel

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +1

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 16

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +4

Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Toughness

Climate/Terrain: Plane of Air

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 5

Treasure: None

Alignment: Usually chaotic neutral

Advancement: 8-12 HD (Huge), 13-24 HD (Colossal), 25-36 HD (Gargantuan)

This creature looks vaguely like the face of a rather chubby, round-cheeked youth, but it is made entirely from cloud.

Thunderheads are a form of elemental that create and govern the winds. They look just like the classic conception of the four winds, all puffy cheeks and windy breath. They are rather childish creatures and are not very attentive to their duty (the elder thunderheads, by contrast, are much more faithful). Thunderheads are easily distracted, especially by new and interesting travellers.

Like other elementals, thunderheads are spontaneously created from the air of the plane. They speak Auran, but also tend to pick up fragments of other languages carried on the wind.

Combat

Thunderheads are incorporeal and immune to most forms of damage, making any combat with them deeply frustrating. They rarely batter an opponent to death, preferring to use wind travel to dump foes into dangerous or embarrassing situations.

Hailstorm (Su): A thunderhead can create a hailstorm as a standard action. This hailstorm strikes all areas below the wind's reach. All creatures within the area of effect take 2d4 points of bludgeoning damage from the hailstones (Reflex save, DC 16 for half damage).

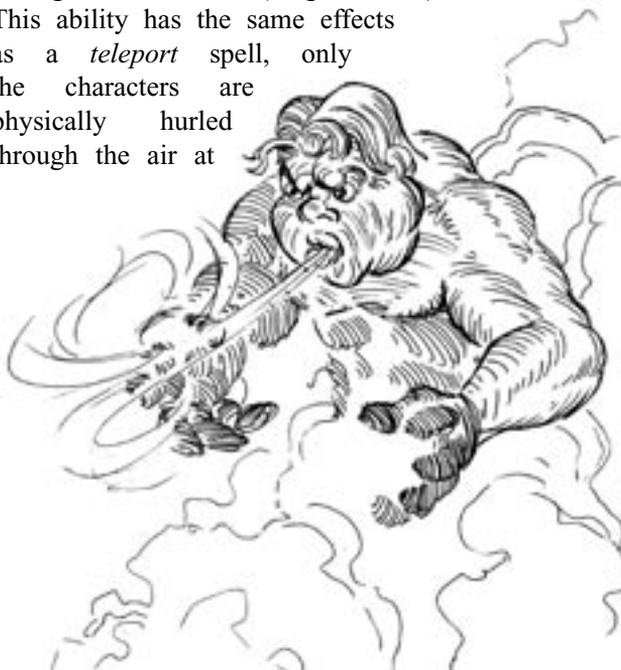
Suck (Ex): By drawing in its breath, a thunderhead can attempt to suck in four Medium-size creatures, eight Small creatures or one Large creature within reach. This is resolved as a grapple attack that does not draw an attack of opportunity.

Swallow Whole (Ex): If a thunderhead succeeded with a suck attack on a character in the previous round, and the character has not broken free, the thunderhead can swallow that character. A thunderhead can hold up to two Large, eight Medium or sixteen Small creatures within it. Swallowed creatures can escape if they deal 15 points of damage to the inside of the thunderhead. The thunderhead can use its wind travel ability on swallowed characters.

Command Winds (Sp): Using its control over the wind, a thunderhead may cast any of the following spells at will, as a 7th level sorcerer (Save DC 12 + spell level): *gust of wind*, *whispering wind*, *wind wall*, *control winds*.

Fast Healing 1 (Ex): Thunderheads heal one hit point per round.

Wind Travel (Su): A thunderhead may blow characters away on its breath by making a ranged touch attack (range 30 feet). This ability has the same effects as a *teleport* spell, only the characters are physically hurled through the air at



high speed and end up 2d6 x 10 feet above the ground. Obviously, the thunderhead cannot use this ability to transport characters underground or through obstacles, but it can blow characters over mountains and even through windows. The thunderhead does not have to make a ranged touch attack when using this ability on creatures it has swallowed.

The thunderhead may also use this ability on itself, but it must travel backwards.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The chief virtue of the Elemental Plane of Air is that it is relatively safe, an ideal starting point for an exploration of the Inner Planes. Even the local djinn are comparatively friendly.

- † One of the winds stops blowing. The characters travel to the Plane of Air to solve this problem, but discover that the thunderhead responsible for overseeing that wind has been enslaved by an evil wizard. The wizard has made a terrible mask of black iron and poison – when the thunderhead breathes out the wind, the mask taints it with a lethal gas. The characters must race to find a way to remove the mask before the thunderhead can hold the wind in no longer, and destroys the world in a toxic exhalation.
- † The floating island supporting a djinn's palace is slowly breaking apart. He offers the characters a *wish* if they can find another earth pocket large enough to support his estate. He cannot use his own servants because, if the weakness in his home were to be known, he would be severely embarrassed. When the characters finally find a suitable pocket and clear off the denizens, the djinn transports his palace off the disintegrating rock – only to discover that the 'rock' contains the egg of a fearsome earth monster, and it is hatching...
- † A mining consortium decides that the best way to solve the problem of the airlessness of the Earth Plane is to *gate* in breathable air from the Air Plane. However, the *gate* is seized by crusading elementals on both sides, who wish to permanently destroy the opposing elemental plane. The characters are hired to rescue the trapped miners.

THE ELEMENTAL PLANE OF FIRE

DESCRIPTION

A traveller can feel the heat through a portal. Every inch of this infinite plane is on fire; not the soul-searing spiritual flames of the Infernum, but real, flesh-blistering combustion. What little air exists is thick with smoke; what little solid matter exists is fuel for the fires. The light from the dancing flames leaps all around, illuminating infinite vistas of red and orange, blue and white.

If you cannot stand the heat, you have no business here.

Getting there... and Back

The Plane of Fire is best accessed by travelling to the Ethereal Plane, going to the Border Ethereal of the Fire Plane, and then transiting to the Fire Plane in a relatively safe place. Using an inexact method such as *plane shift* risks the traveller emerging in the heart of an inferno. Most natural portals to the Plane of Fire occur in the heart of volcanoes or in the core of the hottest forest fires and are hardly viable options. After all, anyone with the magical wherewithal to survive jumping into a volcano should probably just *gate* to the Plane of Fire and cut out all the falling and burning.

Magical portals to this plane tend to be one-way vortices that draw flames out of the Fire Plane, and many civilisations tap the energy of these flames to power their own industries. The rare two-way portals are usually controlled by genies.

Survival on the Plane of Fire

The most hospitable parts of the Plane of Fire – the sections that have been deliberately cooled and controlled to be used as audience chambers and trading grounds – are still hotter than the most sun-parched deserts. Any character not protected by *endure elements* must make a Fortitude save every ten minutes (DC 15, +1 for each previous check) or be dealt 1d4 points of non-lethal damage. Characters wearing heavy clothing or armour of any sort take a -4 penalty on their saves. A character with the Survival skill may receive a bonus on this saving throw and may be able to apply this bonus to other characters as well (see the skill description). Characters reduced

Plane of Fire Traits

Gravity	-5	<i>Light gravity</i>
Quirk		<i>Objective</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal time</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	6	<i>Alterable</i>
Life	0	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	13	<i>Violent</i>
Water/Fire	+8	<i>Fire-dominated</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	3	<i>Biased towards Chaos</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Fire Spells	+6	<i>Enlarged</i>
Water Spells	-6	<i>Impeded</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to Material	9	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Air/Earth/ Positive/Negative Planes	11	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Elemental	14	<i>Coexistent</i>
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

to unconsciousness begin taking lethal damage (1d4 points per hour).

The ‘cooler’ reaches, as opposed to the ‘blighted and frozen’ grounds described above, are hotter than a bonfire (1d10 points of fire damage each round),

Narrator: In the depths of Fire, below the ashen wastes, there sleeps a dragon. Once, this was the Elemental Plane of Wood, the heart of all life and Green energy throughout the planes. The dragon set it alight out of malice, and now it burns infinitely brightly.

But what dragon could be content with but a single act of destruction? ⁴

– The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act I, Scene i

while the majority of the plane has an average temperature that can melt steel (3d10 damage per round). *Protection from elements* spells are the best solution for a short visit; while *polymorphing* into a creature immune to fire is the normal solution for long-term travel on the plane. Even precautions like these are not foolproof – not even magical protection can guard against the hottest parts of the plane, and native spellcasters regularly employ *dispel magic* against visitors.

The Fire Plane is probably the most inhospitable of the Elemental Planes – while all the elemental realms pose their own unique difficulties, only the Fire Plane incinerates unwary visitors the moment they arrive.

The other problem here is the lack of air; while characters can breathe in the rare pockets of Elemental Air, the majority of the plane that is not actually fire is filled with superheated air, thick with smoke and noxious fumes. A *fire breathing* or similar spell alleviates the danger of a character arriving and ‘drowning’ despite his protections.

FEATURES & PROPERTIES

The Plane of Fire has six distinct types of terrain, different configurations of fire and gas. The only really solid matter in the Plane of Fire is the occasional pocket of stone sheared from the Earth Plane. Almost everything in the plane is composed of flame – even the ‘air’ is just fire burning in a colour that cannot be readily perceived.

Open Fires

The most common terrain encountered on the plane, open fires are just that – vast raging firestorms dancing all around. There is no up or down, no ground to burn or air to scorch, just fire, fire, as far as the eye can see. Moving in open fire is only possible for native creatures, which can ‘swim’ through the fire, or by using magic like *fire walk* or *fly*.

The raging flames cut visibility to 1d4 x 10 feet, and deal 3d10 points of damage every round to any unprotected characters. The sheets of fire rushing through the plane change colour randomly; while reds, oranges and yellows dominate the flames, there are bursts of blue, green, white and even black fire. The few structures built in open fires float through the flame; the whole landscape is reminiscent of an underwater environment, if all the sea was turned to fire.

Landscapes of Flame

This surreal terrain is the most welcoming to travellers from the Material Plane, as it strongly resembles the mundane world. There are mountains and plains, rivers and forests. True, all of them are made of solid fire, but they are at least comprehensible. Landscapes of flame are made of different kinds of fire; colour translates to temperature and density.

So, a traveller approaching a castle on the Plane of Fire would see a structure made of reddish flames. The gate burns with a yellow light, while the banner flapping in the unseen breeze glows white and yellow. The fire elemental guards bear swords of orange fire. If the traveller touches the wall, he is dealt 1d4 points of damage, while touching the yellow gate deals 1d8 damage.

Landscapes of Flame often occur where the Material Plane and Fire Plane come into alignment – the terrain of the Fire Plane will not be a perfect copy of the Material Realm, but the two will echo each other.

The Ash Wastes

The eternal flames of the Plane of Fire do not require fuel. Still, pockets of matter do drift into the plane through portals, or are brought in as payment or sacrifices to powerful elementals. Whole nations have been consumed by the flames – take a handful of ash floating on the thermal winds, and you hold kings and heroes of old.

All this ash drifts down into the colder reaches, where the Plane of Fire comes close to the Negative Energy Plane. In the depths, there are great deserts of ashes and embers, broken by the occasional pool of still-burning flame or the crumbling remains of scorched stone. The Ash Wastes are all but bereft of elementals, who prefer warmer climes, but the other denizens of the Fire Plane often sift through the ashes for relics. The Ash Wastes are so cool that they only deal 1d6 points of fire damage per round.

Flame Types

Fire Colour	Equivalent Matter	Damage
Deep red	Stone	1d4
Light red	Earth, wood, clay	1d6
Yellow	Most plant matter	1d8
Orange	Metal	1d10
Blue	Water and other liquids	1d6
Green	Leaves, grass	1d6
White	Fire and other light sources	1d12

Gradations of Fire

Some sections of the Fire Plane are less homogenous than the chaotic flames of open fires. In the terrain called Gradations, the hotter flames rise and the cooler flames sink. These regions are vertical columns of changing colours, a twisted rainbow of heat. The Gradations are somewhat safer for travellers, as they can find their way to cooler regions easily. Each Gradation is about 200 feet in height, but can extend for hundreds of miles. From the traveller's perspective, there are 'shells' of flame – the 'sky' might be burning white, while the 'ground' is a sheet of yellow-green flame. Both sky and ground are nothing more than fire, and will not support a traveller.

Gradations of Fire

Colour	Damage Per Round
Yellow	1d10
Dark Red	2d10
Red	3d10
Bright Red	4d10
Orange	5d10
Green	6d10
Blue	7d10
White	8d10

Elemental Pockets

The most common pockets of foreign elemental material are pockets of earth. The surfaces of these chunks of earth and stone are scorched and burnt, but it can take centuries for the pocket to be burnt off. Earth pockets are highly valued, and are quickly claimed by elemental gangs and petty warlords alike. The innards of an Earth pocket are shielded from the heat of the elemental plane, and offer shelter to travellers. However, they may contain creatures from the Earth Realm, especially thoquua.

Air pockets tend to disperse quickly, and those that endure are usually filled with foul smoke and fumes. A traveller can breathe in an air pocket, but must make a Fortitude save (DC 12) each round or be *sickened*.

Water pockets are the rarest of all – the pocket is surrounded by a cloud of steam with a radius twice that of the pocket, which deals 1d10 points of damage per round to travellers passing through it. Worse, the pocket itself is boiling away; and whilst it can be used as shelter, it does, however, deal 10d6 points of damage per minute to anyone within it.

The Purest of Flames

Elemental fires need no fuel, though they will gleefully devour it if offered. They are not snuffed out by a lack of air, although they will burn all the brighter if they have access to it. They are ever changing complex shapes, taking on all possible forms as they flicker. They care nothing for the light they shed or the flesh they burn, they know nothing except their own bright dance.

HAZARDS

The whole Plane of Fire is a hazard. Environments that would be considered incredibly perilous in other planes are cool showers and balmy days amid the flames. Even in such a dangerous realm, though, there are even more perilous phenomena.

Calamitous Stars (CR5)

A calamitous star occurs when a particular cluster of flames begins to burn with unparalleled intensity, usually due to a burst of positive energy or a particularly rich source of fuel. Due to the eternal nature of the flames and the light gravity, the intense fire soon breaks off from whatever terrain it was a part of and shoots across the plane. Some calamitous stars behave like comets, circling the outer reaches or even flying off into another one of the elemental planes.

Most calamitous stars never get that far; instead they smash into an elemental pocket or an outcropping of solid red fire. A calamitous star travels at 3d6 x 10 feet per round, is (20 - the result of the 3d6 roll) x 5 feet in radius, and deals 5d10 points of fire damage and 5d10 points from the impact of its hit.

Spontaneous Combustion (CR5)

Protection spells can only do so much. The magic's shield prevents the character's flesh from melting, but waves of heat energy still bathe every cell in his body. If the protection fails, but the body does not have time to adjust, the character can simply burst into flames.

A character risks spontaneous combustion if a *protection from elements* or similar spell is exhausted by exactly enough damage needed to deplete the spell (i.e., a spell with 10 points of protection left takes 10 fire damage). In such a situation, the character must make a Fortitude save if he takes fire damage in the next round; the DC for this save is 10 + the amount of fire damage sustained. If the save is failed, the character begins to burn up from the inside; he takes an extra 1d6 points of fire damage every round that cannot be absorbed by *protection from elements* or

resist elements. The only way to stop an impending combustion is to apply cold damage to the character – if the character takes any cold damage, he may make a Fortitude save (DC 20 subtracting the amount of cold damage dealt); if successful, the combustion stops.

An impending combustion is quite visible to everyone around the character – his skin begins to glow from within and his blood boils.

Thermoclasm (CR7)

Thermoclasm is an intense fire storm; they manifest as roiling fronts of black flame, shot through with red and white fire-lightning and spitting columns of sparks. Thermoclasm increases the fire damage dealt by the local environment by 2d10, but the violent winds and shifting thermals throw characters around; characters in a thermoclasm must make a Balance check (DC equal to 15 + the extra damage of the thermoclasm). This check is modified as if it was a grapple check (Large creatures get a +4 bonus, Huge a +8 bonus, Small creatures get a –4 penalty and so on). If the check is failed, the creature is thrown a number of feet equal to the extra damage x 5 feet in a random direction.

Thermoclasm usually only last for a few hours, but they encompass vast areas (1d10 x 50 miles on average). They are caused when a calamitous star crashes into the Ash Wastes, throwing up a huge cloud of charged ash and fire.



LOCATIONS

There are few permanent locations on the chaotic Plane of Fire – both the elementals and the genies tend to be nomadic. The azer have their mines and forges, which are located either beneath Landscapes of Flame or within Earth Pockets.

Lake Adamere

The product of a massive natural portal to the Plane of Water, the area around Lake Adamere is the coolest and safest region on the Fire Plane (the ambient air temperature is a balmy 140° F). The outer edges of the lake are boiling, and vast clouds of steam roll off the lake and onto the surrounding fires. The inner parts of the lake are relatively safe, although there are slicks of ever burning oil and the occasional island of fire.

Adamere is protected by dozens of steam elementals, a curious blend of elements that can only exist under certain rare conditions. The lake is home to the majority of their race, and they will defend it with their lives. The ruler of the steam elementals is a curious entity named Ashbless, and is believed to be the undead remnant of a powerful fire elemental lord. As fire elementals normally merge back into the plane when they die and do not have distinct spirits, it is uncertain how Ashbless attained undeath without recourse to a spell of lichdom.

Steam Elemental

Medium Elemental (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 4d8+8 (26 hp)

Initiative: +0 (Dex)

Speed: Fly 40-ft. (8 squares), fly 30-ft. (average) (6 squares)

Armour Class: 17 (+7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+7

Attack: Slam +7 melee (1d8+6 + expansive force + scald 1d6)

Full Attack: Slam +7 melee (1d8+6 + expansive force + scald 1d6)

Space/Reach: 5-ft./5-ft.

Special Attacks: Superheat, scald, expansive force

Special Qualities: Darkvision 60-ft., fire resistance 20, elemental traits

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +1

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 4, Wis 11, Cha 11

Skills: Listen +6, Spot +6

Feats: Improved Overrun, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Quasi-Elemental Plane of Steam

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: None

Alignment: Often neutral

Advancement: 5 – 7 HD (Medium)

A steam elemental appears as a column or sometimes a cloud of steam, with a pair of wispy, tendril-like eyes expending from its upper surface. It constantly rolls and boils, giving off a faint hiss, but sometimes it suppresses this movement and remains still and quiet.

Steam elementals are found at the juncture of the Positive Energy Plane and the Elemental Plane of Water.

Steam elementals are rarely found on the Material Plane. They are sometimes summoned by artificers intrigued by the prospect of using them to power their machines, or as guardians for forges and workshops which manufacture such items. When called to the Material Plane, a steam elemental comprises a great cloud of steam or vapour, as produced from the flash boiling of a huge quantity of water.

Steam elementals with Intelligence scores of 3 or higher speak Aquan, but rarely choose to do so. Their voices hiss, blow and whistle, with all the characteristics of a fluid under tone.

Combat

Steam elementals may attack by ambush, appearing as innocuous-looking clouds of vapour. Once in combat they command the battlefield, knocking their opponents down and repeatedly pummeling or scalding any who attempt to rise. A steam elemental that knows it is about to be destroyed will often slay itself in a sudden transition to a superheated state, hoping to kill a number of its enemies as it does so.



Scald (Ex): Every attack by a steam elemental deals additional heat damage due to the scalding effect of the steam.

Expansive Force (Ex): If a steam elemental hits with its slam attack, it can attempt to trip the opponent (+4 check modifier) as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If

Steam Elemental Sizes

Size	Height	Weight	Superheat		
			Save DC	Heat Damage	Radius
Fine	½-ft.	1/6 lb.	10	1d2	5-ft.
Diminutive	1-ft.	1 lb.	10	1d3	5-ft.
Tiny	2-ft.	5 lb.	10	1d6	5-ft.
Small	4-ft.	34 lb.	12	2d6	10-ft.
Medium	8-ft.	280 lb.	14	4d6	20-ft.
Large	16-ft.	2,250 lb.	17	8d6	30-ft.
Huge	22-ft.	18,000 lb.	22	16d6	40-ft.
Greater	26-ft.	21,000 lb.	24	21d6	40-ft.
Elder	30-ft.	24,000 lb.	26	24d6	40-ft.

the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to counter-trip the steam elemental. Furthermore, the steam elemental gains a +4 check modifier to all bull's rush and overrun attacks.

Superheat (Ex): A steam elemental can force its 'body' temperature to incredible degrees, but this process inevitably destroys it. Changing to a superheated state is a standard action, which deals the listed heat damage to all creatures within the listed radius, but also instantly kills the steam elemental. The creatures affected may make Fortitude saves for half damage. The save DC is varied by the elemental's size and is Constitution-based.

Catarus

Referred to informally as 'the *other* city of brass', Catarus is a trade town built on the shores of Lake Adamere. The whole city is enclosed in a brass shell; water from the heart of the lake is pumped by mighty golem-driven bellows into pipes that wind around the inside of the shell. The constant running water keeps the brass from melting; the steam produced is channelled back through the city to power all sorts of wondrous devices.

Catarus (Large Town): AL LN; 3,000 gp limit; Assets 600,000 gp; Pop 4,000; Mixed (Mostly humans, gnomes and azer). *Power Centres:* The Chattering Lords (CN), Steamworker's Guild (LN)

The most wondrous of these devices, of course, are the famed Catarean portals. These steam-driven portals can be aligned to target almost any plane, and can force their way in. Worlds that would otherwise require a key or other token to reach can be travelled to via Catarus. The Chattering Lords, the rulers of Catarus, have sworn not to use the city's abilities to wage war, but the city itself is vulnerable to siege (cut off the pipes to the lake, and Catarus will bake in its own shell). More than a few warlords have considered conquering the brass city and using it to storm another plane.

The Seat of the Twelve Designate Flames

This is one of the largest fortresses on the entire plane, and has a unique defensive feature – it is surrounded by a moat of elemental ice. While non-fierce creatures can easily walk across the ice, it is a lethal barrier to any fire creatures trying to reach the fortress. The Twelve Designate Flames are ancient and powerful fire elementals, each of which has special authority

over a type of fire. Their names are pronounceable only in Ignan, but some have been roughly translated into Common as Forge, Pyre, Beacon, Refine and City-Eater. Five of the Twelve Designate Flames are said to be locked in the dungeon of the fortress. The least of the Twelve, Hearth, is the one most often encountered by travellers, as he is the doorkeeper of the Seat.

Any fire that is blessed by the appropriate one of the Twelve burns twice as strongly for twice as long, and cannot be extinguished by any means save magic (and even then, the caster of the extinguishing spell must

'I can say with the certainty born of experience that none of the Twelve is willing to light my pipe.'

- Traveller's Tales.

make a caster level check against DC 32).

DENIZENS

The native creatures of the Plane of Fire include azers, efreeti, fire, steam and magma mephits, hell hounds, magmin, pyrohydras, rast, salamanders, thoqqa and fire elementals. Most can be found throughout the plane, although the hell hounds are normally encountered only in the Ash Wastes. The salamanders have the largest single empire, although it is heavily feudalised and occupied mainly with holding back the rast swarms. The azer and magmin have their own kingdoms where the fires are banked and solid, near the border with the Earth Plane. The efreeti have their fabled City in that region too, but most efreeti pashas have their outposts in the upper reaches of the plane.

The Four Arcs of Fire

The Four Arcs of Fire are four divergent philosophies that dominate the fire elemental mindset. As fire

Ignan Language

Ignan is the second most difficult of the elemental languages to speak. It is a quick, harsh language, full of crackles and hisses. Emotional tone is conveyed by how quickly the speaker talks; angry fire elementals speak faster than calm ones.

A character who speaks Ignan gets a +2 synergy bonus to Diplomacy, Sense Motive and Knowledge (the planes) checks relating to the Plane of Fire and its denizens.

elementals are neither bright nor patient, discussions of the Four Arcs usually degenerate into fiery brawls. Still, a working knowledge of the Four Arcs is useful for dealing with fire elementals.

- † **The Arc of Purity:** Followers of the Arc of Purity believe that fire is the perfect element, and that its purity should not be sullied by the intrusions of other substances. They attack elemental pockets and travellers on sight, trying to drive them out of the plane. Being summoned to the Material Plane is like being dragged into a lake of sewage to these elementals; they are very likely to try to turn on the summoner if they can, or at least wilfully misinterpret commands. These elementals are positively insulted if offered fuel as a bribe – they see burning things as a grotesque perversion.
- † **The Arc of Fusion:** The Arc of Fusion holds that the elemental fires burn brightest when in synergy with other elements. They welcome offers of fuel and commerce with other elements. Elementals of the Arc of Fusion cluster around portals, begging for fuel and offering their services as guides and guards. They often mimic the actions of travellers and attempt to be as cosmopolitan as possible – followers of this philosophy can often be found on other planes.
- † **The Arc of Transience:** The Arc of Transience believes that it is fire's nature to begin as a small spark, to feed and grow, and then to finally burn out. While most elementals manifest at a particular size and only rarely change in form, all followers of the Arc of Transience begin as Small elementals and slowly grow into a Huge form over the course of several decades. When they reach this Huge size, they must die. However, elementals on the Plane of Fire are naturally as immortal as the eternal flames; therefore, the Transient Ones must leave the plane, blundering through the worlds as they look for a place to die.
- † **The Arc of Ash:** The Arc of Ash's philosophy is that everything should burn. Like the followers of the Arc of Fusion, they welcome being summoned to the Material Plane, but only so they can burn things. They will attack travellers in order to burn them, but can be

recruited with the promises of bigger things to burn. The Arc of Ash is the most popular of the four philosophies among young elementals.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The hostile Fire Plane is one of the most dangerous places in all the Inner Planes, so any quest that sends the characters there should be extremely rewarding.

- † A huge flare of eternal flame is reaching out of the Plane of Fire. Soon, it will smash into some important site on another plane. As the flare is part of the Plane of Fire, it cannot be extinguished. The characters will have to travel to the base of the flare and find some way to separate it from the eternal flames, so that it can be snuffed out with magic.
- † A powerful efreeti pasha has established his domain in a section of the Fire Plane, and it has caused the plane to align with a region in the Material Plane. The proximity of the Plane of Fire is scorching the land and the region is rapidly becoming uninhabitable. The characters must travel through one of the naturally occurring portals and convince the pasha to move his domain elsewhere so the planes can drift out of alignment.
- † The energies of the Plane of Fire are almost as great as those of the Positive Energy Plane, and much easier to handle. The characters might be sent to find the best and most energetic location to tap; not only must they willingly go into the hottest sections of the plane, but they must deal with the local denizens.
- † A series of unexplained fires breaks out in a city. Investigation reveals that a gang of magmin or fire elementals of the Arc of Ash have discovered and claimed a lost portal. To stop the interdimensional arson, the characters have to catch the fiery pests before they escape back through their portal.

THE ELEMENTAL PLANE OF WATER

DESCRIPTION

Water, water everywhere, and far more than a drop to drink. To the eye and tongue of an inexperienced traveller, the Plane of Water resembles a vast ocean. Stepping through a portal to the plane is like being weighted down and dropped into the depths – and to a degree, this is true.

The Water Realm, however, is more than that; it contains multitudes. Every conceivable droplet of moisture, from the saltiest wave to the freshest spring, from the morning dew to the blood running in your veins exists here, circulating in an eternally renewing current.

Getting there... and Back

Of all the natural elemental portals, those to the Water Plane are the best known and most frequently travelled. Most of the portals form in the deepest parts of the oceans, where the sheer pressure of the water above crumples and crushes the barrier of reality, allowing currents to flow between the planes. Such portals are usually guarded by one of the undersea races, such as the tritons.

Other natural portals exist at the sources of certain great rivers. Deep under the mountains, the river spills out of a portal, flowing down the slope and gathering strength as it goes, until it finally tumbles into the sea and a little of the water flows back into an undersea portal. The Material Plane and the Water Plane are intertwined in hundreds of places.

Narrator: Consider this – when the pressure of water is great enough, reality caves in to form a portal to this plane. Every ocean is therefore connected to the Plane of Water, and hence to every other ocean. We hence find Etrichan standing on the shore, looking out over all the planes at once, all rising and falling in the eternal susurrus of the tides. [Exeunt stage left]

– The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act III, Scene i

Plane of Water Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal</i>
Quirk		<i>Objective</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal time</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	6	<i>Alterable</i>
Life	+5	<i>Rich</i>
Weather	13	<i>Violent</i>
Water/Fire	-8	<i>Water-dominated</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Water Spells	+6	<i>Enlarged</i>
Fire Spells	-6	<i>Impeded</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to Material	9	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Air/Earth/ Positive/Negative Planes	11	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Ethereal	14	<i>Coexistent</i>
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

Magical portals to the Water Plane are actually much more common underwater; the aquatic races have their own arcane spellcasters and clerics, and the Water Plane is just as hospitable for them as the Air Plane is for surface folk. The few portals that exist above the waves are almost always imbued with *water breathing* spells to aid travellers.

Survival on the Plane of Water

The spell of choice is obviously *water breathing*, and thanks to the magical properties of the plane, it is automatically Extended. Any of the other spells for aquatic survival, from *polymorphing* into a merman or *gills* (see *Classic Play – The Book of the Sea*) also work perfectly well here.

Deva [To Etrichan]: *My intent is simple. Elemental water shall flow through this portal to the blessed realm, and become holy. It shall then fall through this portal into the Infernum and cleanse that place of evil.*

Etrichan [Shaking Head]: *There should be nothing left after such a cleansing – the Infernum is not corrupted, it is corruption.*

– The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act III, Scene vii

Surprisingly, there is little danger of being crushed by the weight of water when swimming in the infinite ocean; while the water does exert pressure on creatures, it never goes above that found a few fathoms below the surface. The fluidic nature of the water somehow gathers the pressure, creating the hazards known as crushspheres (see below).

The whole plane is lit by an eerie rippling radiance with no detectable source. The Games Master should review underwater combat in *Core Rulebook II* (or *Classic Play – The Book of the Sea*).

FEATURES & PROPERTIES

The Immiscible Oceans

The waters of the plane are not all salty – every conceivable form of water is found here; salt, fresh, hot, cold, every possible consistency and taste. These different oceans flow and twine together, divided by almost-invisible (Spot check, DC 25) membranes. A character can push through one of these membranes easily, but they are strong enough to keep the different waters separate. Sometimes, these membranes break and the waters merge. Then, later, the two seas will spontaneously separate again, salt dividing from fresh, every droplet knowing the way home, and a new membrane will form between them.

While characters using *water breathing* are unlikely to be affected by changes in salinity, some aquatic creatures can only live in fresh or salt water. Characters are, however, likely to be affected by changes in temperature – some of the immiscible oceans are fractionally below boiling (10d6 damage per round) or freezing (1d6 non-lethal damage per minute if the character fails a Fortitude save (DC 15

+ 1 per previous check, metal armour is affected as if by *chill metal*).

A character can destroy a membrane by precisely striking it with a slashing weapon (AC 25) and dealing at least 15 points of damage in one round. This slices the membrane open and the water flowing from one side to another widens the cut, ripping along the seam for miles and merging the two oceans. A damaged membrane can be repaired by a *wall of force* spell (or a few *water seal* spells from *Classic Play – The Book of the Sea*).

Elemental Pockets

Elemental pockets float through the Water Plane. Earth pockets are by far the most common; these huge chunks of stone slowly drift through the ocean, being colonised by genies and other creatures. Earth pockets are usually inhabited by ooze mephits, although a rare few are colonised by aboleths, who find the silty, dark waters to their liking.

Air pockets rarely last long; they manifest as huge bubbles of air, bobbing on the current. The magical forces keeping the ‘bubble’ intact slowly degrade over time, until the air pocket collapses. Some spellcasters reinforce the bubble with spells and use the bubbles as unlikely vessels in which to explore the Water Plane.

Fire bubbles are the rarest of all pockets on the Water Plane, as they only arise when a portal opens to the Fire Plane or when a fire pocket traverses the entire Plane of Air. Fire pockets last only a few days at most in the ocean, but they boil the water around them and create vast clouds of steam (1d10 points of damage per round for anyone touching the steam).

Coral Islands

Coral and seaweed were imported from the Material Plane aeons ago. The weightless, light-rich and fertile seas of the Water Realm proved to be a perfect environment for such organisms, and they flourished. Indeed, in many regions of the Water Plane, seaweeds of truly colossal proportions grow thousands of miles long, and coral grows so fast that its progress can be seen with the naked eye. To prevent the whole plane from being choked by seaweed and coral, the water elementals regularly

launch massive pruning missions on particularly large obstacles.

As most of the cities and landholds of the Water Plane's inhabitants are located on these coral islands and seaweed forests, the water elementals' pruning meets with hostility and resistance. Of all the planes, the water elementals are among the most unfriendly.

Icelands

Near the border with the Plane of Air, the water has frozen into icebergs and gigantic mountains of frost. These regions are dry, as almost all the water vapour has frozen out of the air. Frost giants and other creatures of cold dwell on these bergs. On the far side of the icelands, on the Plane of Air, there is an infinite cliff of ice dropping down forever.

HAZARDS

Magic Dilution (CR2)

This odd phenomena occurs rarely and is of little consequence to most aquatic creatures, but can be lethal to travellers relying on magical protection. When magic dilution occurs, the waters begin to carry off fragments of magic from a spell woven around a swimmer. It looks like tiny threads of light are drifting off from the enchanted character, and then dissolve. When viewed through *detect magic*, these little threads glow with the same aura as an active spell.

A magic dilution makes a spell run out five times faster than normal – its remaining duration is reduced to 20% of its current total as long as the character remains within the magical water. Stretches of magic-diluting water are rarely more than 300 feet in diameter, but they hold together with their own membranes and are often located at the entrance to djinn fortresses, to sap attackers of their spells.

Crushspheres (CR10)

Crushspheres are rolling zones of almost infinite pressure. They are a natural phenomena that are the accumulation of the water pressure from the rest of the plane. They look like globes of frosted glass that move through the ocean, occasionally emitting bursts of noise like thunder. Crushspheres range in size between ten feet and several miles in radius.

Any character within five times the sphere's diameter of the sphere (i.e. 50 feet for a 10-foot sphere, ten miles for a two mile-wide sphere) may be struck by one of these sonic bursts. These bursts happen every 1d100 rounds, and deal sonic damage as follows:

Crushsphere Sonic Damage

Range in Radii	Sonic Damage	Fortitude DC
1	10d6	20
2	8d6	18
3	6d6	16
4	4d6	14
5	2d6	12

A character struck by a sonic pulse may make a Fortitude save to take half damage.

The pressure within a crushsphere increases every five feet as the character moves towards the centre, and begins at the pressure equivalent of 100 feet below the surface. For example, in a forty-foot crushsphere, the pressure would deal 1d6 points of damage per minute if a character were five feet within the sphere, 2d6 at ten feet, 3d6 at fifteen feet, 4d6 at twenty feet. A character may make a Fortitude save (DC 15 + 1 for every previous save to resist the pressure). However, a character can only move at one-fifth normal speed within a sphere, and a new Fortitude save must be made every time the character moves any deeper into the sphere.

Small crushspheres are dangerous enough, but the larger spheres have internal pressures so high that no living creature could hope to survive. They are often used as prisons for powerful beings. As crushspheres float on the current, they are often redirected by magic and used as siege weapons and many underwater cities have been destroyed by a bombardment of crushspheres.

LOCATIONS

All locations on the Plane of Water are fluid; cities float like leaves on the current. All directions are therefore given in terms of currents and likely travel times, and all maps change constantly.

The Pool of Reflection

This is a stretch of still water, a holy site for the local elementals. The Pool of Reflection is like a giant crystal with infinite facets, although it is entirely liquid. Anyone who swims into the Pool of Reflection and floats at the centre can see all of the memories of countless others who have done the same in the past, and can ask one question of one of these memories. However, when the question is answered (and it is always answered truthfully and to the best knowledge of the memory), the questioner's image-memory is added to the ranks of those preserved for all time in the Pool. Visiting the Pool of Reflection can answer the heart's innermost question, but also leaves the questioner open to others.

The Choking City of Y'hanithlei

This was once one of the greatest cities of the Water Plane, a glorious marble metropolis attached to a living strand of mighty seaweed. Tens of thousands of genies, elementals, mephits and stranger creatures thronged the streets and air canals of Y'hanithlei. The lords of the city even brought a fire pocket to warm the waters. However, the light and warmth triggered a spate of growth in the seaweed supporting the city. The marble plazas splintered and broke; weeds pushed up every flagstone and slab.

Now, the much-reduced population of Y'hanithlei face a constant battle. The seaweed grows at the rate of four to ten feet a day, so a man who falls asleep in an empty room wakes up entwined in a lush growth of kelp. The city is too valuable and extensive to simply abandon, so the citizens are resigned to constant, frantic gardening and *blight* spells. Having an estate entirely free of weeds is a mark of high status in the city, to the extent that unscrupulous druids run protection rackets targeting rich genies, threatening to use *plant growth* to shame the genies if they do not pay up.

Y'hanithlei (Large Town, was Metropolis):

AL N; 3,000 gp limit; Assets 600,000 gp; Pop 4,000; Mixed (mostly djinn and mephits).
Power Centres: Ysamira Ildemar, First among Marids (LG), Genie Nobility (CG), Druid Gangs (CE)



Hiradi's Pumphouse

The Pumphouse is a bizarre accumulation of metal and pipes; imagine if a sea-spider orgy was dipped in brass and attached to a steam engine. The Pumphouse is the creation of a powerful triton druid named Hiradi, who claims that his machine is responsible for the continued flow of every river and the fall of every raindrop on certain worlds, and that the whole hydrological cycle is in his charge. It is a most stressful task, and the poor triton and his *summoned* helpers (mostly octopi) must dart through the inner tubes of the Pumphouse, adjusting dials and opening valves to ensure that some obscure rivulet does not stop dead.

It is entirely possible that Hiradi is insane. Any attempt to prove that his contraption does nothing will only draw his wrath, and he cannot put it to the test. If he were to falter in his duty for a moment to prove that his machine works, why, it could start a disastrous cascading failure with water falling everywhere!

The Pumphouse does have some use; it is capable of opening a *gate* to the source of any river in the Planes. If characters can sneak past Hiradi or win

Hiradi; Male Triton; Drd 15 CR17; Medium outsider (native, water); HD 18d8+18; hp 99; Init +0; Spd Swim 80 ft.; AC 24; touch 18, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +14; Grp +15; Atk +15 melee (1d4+1, dagger); Full Atk +15/+10/+5 melee (1d4+1, dagger); SA Spells SQ spell-like abilities, animal companion, nature sense, wild empathy, speed of the fish, salt synthesis, resist nature's lure, venom immunity, a thousand faces, timeless body, wild shape 5/day; AL LN; SV Fort +13, Ref +8, Will +14; Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 22, Cha 11

Skills and Feats: Concentration +12, Craft (plumbing) +12, Diplomacy +8, Hide +6, Listen +16, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +5, Knowledge (planes) +10, Ride +6, Search +12, Sense Motive +16, Spot +12, Survival +11 (+13 following tracks), Swim +15; Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Augment Summoning, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Brew Potion, Craft Wand, Extend Spell.

Druid Spells Prepared: (6/7/7/6/5/5/4/2/1; Save DC 16 +spell level); 0th – *detect magic x 2, cure minor wounds x 2, mending x 2*; 1st – *endure elements, faerie fire x 2, longstrider x 2, speak with animals x 2*; 2nd – *animal messenger, barkskin, bear's endurance, chill metal x 2, gust of wind, owl's wisdom*; 3rd – *cure moderate wounds x 2, magic fang x 2, protection from energy x 2*; 4th – *control water, dispel magic, freedom of movement, ice storm x 2*; 5th – *baleful polymorph, commune with nature, cure critical wounds, wall of thorns x 2*; 6th – *greater dispel magic x 2, wall of stone x 2*; 7th – *creeping doom, heal*; 8th – *word of recall*

Equipment: *Leather armour +3, wand of plane shift, wand of insect plague, wand of animal growth, periapt of wisdom +4, major cloak of displacement, boots of speed, pearl of power (two spells), ring of water elemental command, ring of protection +3, six potions of cure serious wounds, spellstaff containing finger of death*

Animal companion: Hiradi's companion is a giant squid named Scoti, who has a dozen skill ranks in Profession (pumphouse engineer).

Speed of the Fish: Instead of Woodland Stride, the sea druid receives this at 2nd level. He may now swim through the water at twice his swimming rate. This is adjusted as normal if the sea druid is encumbered.

Salt Synthesis: Instead of receiving Trackless Step at 3rd level, the sea druid gains the ability to subsist purely on sea water for periods of up to one week per class level. Salt synthesis, however, may not be conferred to another individual.

his trust, the Pumphouse can be a useful shortcut through creation.

DENIZENS

The native inhabitants of the Plane of Water include chul, sea cats, marid genies, ooze and water mephits, tojindas, tritons and water elementals. The tojanidas swim in great schools through the plane, feeding on tiny elementals and plant matter. The mephits are usually found clinging to elemental pockets, while the genies have colonised the seaweed and coral islands. The elementals are almost indistinguishable from the rest of the plane.

The Twenty Joyous Currents

These are twenty beliefs espoused by the water elementals. Most of the differences between the currents are almost incomprehensible to outsiders,

but the elementals consider them to be utterly fundamental. The Twenty Joyous Currents are divided into three groups – two 'stillnesses', nine 'rivers' and nine 'seas'. The rivers and seas are divided based on alignment, so there is a Chaotic Neutral river, a Chaotic Neutral Sea, a Lawful Good sea and river and so on...

- † **The Rivers**: Elementals following the river current believe that water is at its best when flowing through other elements. They enjoy being *summoned* and visiting other realms. Good rivers-elementals tend to be found in irrigated farmlands, where water is brought to the dry places. Evil river-elementals are more interested in invasively pushing water into other places, by flooding lungs and breaking dams.

Aquan Language

Aquan is one of the easier elemental tongues, and is probably the most widespread – most of the underwater races on the Material Plane speak it, and they have passed it on to the scholars and wizards of the dry lands. It is a mellifluous and liquid language; emotional content is passed on by means of ‘currents’.

A character who speaks Aquan gets a +2 synergy bonus to Diplomacy, Sense Motive and Knowledge (the planes) checks relating to the Plane of Water and its denizens.

† **The Seas:** The contrasting philosophy of the sea holds that water should be perfectly pure, and that leaving the embrace of the ocean is wrong. These elementals despise

summoners who drag them away from their perfect ocean. Good sea-elementals welcome travellers and hope they will learn to see the beauty of unbroken water. Evil sea-elementals see travellers as little specks of grit that must be driven out of the water.

† **The Stillnesses:** The ‘stillnesses’ are half-way points between the rivers and the seas. The stillness of calm is a momentary pause before an elemental chooses one of the other philosophies, while the stillness of death is a form of elemental ennui when the elemental decides that all water will one day evaporate and be destroyed.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Plane of Water is obviously very similar to the undersea environment, so most scenarios set underwater can easily be transplanted here. The number of accessible portals also means that the various undersea races can access the plane; characters walking along the shore could be grabbed by a band of locathah and dragged off through a portal to the Water Plane to deal with some problem in an elemental pocket.

† The characters hear of the largest pearl in all the planes; it lies at the heart of a crushsphere of great size, and the sage who describes it believes that the pearl is a natural product of the pressure. When they discover a method of retrieving it, they find that the pearl is actually used as a focus for a *trap the soul* spell – who or what have they rescued?

† A vast tsunami shatters cities all along the shore of the characters’ home nation. *Divinations* reveal that an underwater aggressor has opened a massive *gate* to the Plane of Water. Waves are building in the infinite depths of the Water Plane, then being hurled against the land through the *gate*. The first tsunami was only a test; the next will drown the entire world. The characters must travel to the Plane of Water and somehow break the wave before it reaches the *gate*.



THE PLANE OF POSITIVE ENERGY

DESCRIPTION

The Positive Energy Plane is light. Everything is washed in a glorious burning white glare that somehow is also perfectly clear and does not impede vision in the slightest. Everything is lit from within, as if the essential nature of every creature and object is visible and glowing.

If a traveller looks past the glare, the Positive Energy Plane vaguely resembles the adjacent Elemental Plane; near the Water Plane, it is an ocean of light, for example. On the border of Fire, the flames turn to shining beacons of coruscating energy. Along the edge of Earth, shining mountains reach into the glowing energy. At the border with Air, little floating islands drift in the light.

All this, however, is just the outer corona of the Positive Energy Plane. Travelling deeper, a traveller encounters a region so bright and energetic that all possible descriptions and distinctions melt away. Whatever is in the heart of the Positive Energy Plane, it cannot be perceived or known by mortal or god alike.

Getting there... and Back

There are almost no portals to the Positive Energy Plane. Natural portals are unknown save in the most unlikely confluences of magical events (occasionally, the heroic death of a powerful paladin or cleric suffused with positive energy can create a temporary planar rift, and magical accidents can produce almost any effect). Artificial portals are also rare, although some researchers do draw on positive energy, and some of the larger clerical orders use portals for healing.

Plane shifting to the Positive Energy Plane is risky, as the character might end up in one of the more lethal zones of the plane. A precise *gate* is a much safer option.

Survival on the Plane of Positive Energy

The main danger is the traveller exploding. Too much positive energy causes a traveller to combust in a flare of light. The outer corona of the plane is only positive-aspected, so a traveller is fairly safe. The deeper regions and flare zones are positive-dominant, which can kill a creature with sheer glory. There

Plane of Positive Energy Traits

Gravity	-9	<i>Subjective Directional</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal time</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	6	<i>Alterable</i>
Life	18	<i>All is alive</i>
Weather	0	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	+9	<i>Positive Dominant</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Positive Spells	+6	<i>Maximised</i>
Negative Spells	-6	<i>Impeded</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to Material	9	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Air/Earth/ Water/Fire Planes	11	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Ethereal	14	<i>Coexistent</i>
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

are no known spells that can defend against positive energy in the same way a *death ward* can (although it is a virtual certainty that some lich has developed a *life ward* spell, though the undead are surely loath to share their magic), so travellers hoping to pass through the deeper reaches must use other methods.

The traditional approach is to use a *dolorous wound* – a magically unhealing wound that is unaffected even by the positive energy of the plane. *Dolorous wounds* can only be inflicted by a *dolorous sword*, and can only be healed by a *miracle*. A character with a *dolorous wound* loses five hit points per round, every round (neatly balancing the fast healing 5 trait of the positive-dominant reaches).

Etrichan: *More light!* [Pained Gasp] [Curtain Falls].

– The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act XIII Scene iii

Dolorous Swords

Dolorous Sword, Lesser: This +1 greatsword has the added ability to cause a character struck by it to suffer an unhealing wound that deals five points of damage per round. A character can only have one of these unhealing wounds; further blows with a *dolorous sword* only deal normal damage. The wound may only be healed with a *miracle* spell. Moderate necromancy; CL 11th; Craft Magic Arms and Armour, *harm, permanency*; Price 72,350 gp. Cost 36,175 gp + 4,394 XP. Assumes Dolorous is a +5 weapon property.

Dolorous Sword, Greater: A *greater dolorous sword* has the same properties as a *lesser dolorous sword*, but also casts *geas* on the character struck by it. If the *geas* is completed, the sword automatically casts a *miracle* to heal the wound. Strong necromancy and enchantment; CL 18th; Craft Magic Arms and Armour, *harm, permanency, geas, miracle*; Price 167,200 gp Cost 83,600 gp + 8188 XP

Other travellers carry *vampiric cockleshells*. These are tiny shells containing distilled vampire blood. The shell sucks at the life energy of the wearer, draining 1d8 hit points each round. If the shell deals only one point of damage for three rounds in a row, the positive energy destroys the undead essence in the blood, ruining the cockleshell.

The other problems of the Positive Energy Plane, such as a lack of air, food, gravity and so on are relatively easy to deal with by magic. Navigation is also an issue, as there are no landmarks or permanent features that can be perceived by most creatures.

FEATURES & PROPERTIES

The Outer Corona

The borderlands of the Positive Energy Plane are only positive-aspected, not positive-dominated, so they are relatively safe for travellers. They contain elemental pockets from the neighbouring elemental plane (floating rocks and mountains from the Earth Plane, pools of water and oceans near Water and so on). The Outer Corona also gives rise to positively-charged variants of the elements, such as Radiance, Incense or even Holy Water.

The Outer Corona has few inhabitants; it is too marginal for the bizarre denizens of the plane, and too unstable for most travellers. While the positive-aspected trait is quite beneficial (fast healing 2 with no drawbacks), a flare or energy storm can quickly wipe a traveller out. The Outer Corona is therefore dotted with shelters such as the Towers of Earth.

The Inner Light

The deeper regions of the Positive Energy Plane are incomprehensible to outsiders. Here, the sheer

life energy of the plane is so great that thoughts and stories become living beings, and objects become self-aware and animated. Literally anything may be possible in the Inner Light. It is always bright, always transcendently joyous, always on the verge of some apotheosis, but it changes with every step.

Towers of Earth

Despite the name, these fortifications occur throughout the Outer Corona, although they are much more common along the border with the Earth Plane. The Towers are huge, thick-walled fortresses with leaded windows that block the dangerous effects of the Positive Energy Plane, protecting those within. Larger Towers are made of adamantine, and are immune to positive energy. Other Towers are made of much softer matter, such as granite or marble, and slowly become charged with energy. New Towers are dull and dark; Towers on the verge of collapse glow with their own inner brightness. Overcharged towers are cut loose and left to drift off into the plane, where they become incandescents.

Most Towers of Earth are inhabited by wizards or clerics studying the energy plane, or are used as waystations by travellers. Others are held by watchful outsiders who guard the Positive Energy Plane from interference, or even by liches or other powerful undead who research methods to put an end to positive energy forever.

Most Towers of Earth include a heavy main door, made of the same material as the Tower. This door is usually unlocked unless the tower is occupied. Inside, there is a storeroom and a spiral staircase leading up. The first floors of most Towers are bedrooms or living area with no windows. The top floor has thick leaded windows or arrowslits. Some Towers have a walkway or battlement on top.

Animated Objects and Manifest Thoughts

Objects animated by the life energy of the plane behave as if affected by an *animate objects* spell. Manifest thoughts appear to be people or places from the traveller's memory, but they are constructs of the plane. The thoughts have exactly the same statistics and abilities as the 'real' people, but tend to reflect the character's current mindset. A traveller thinking of a lost friend might accidentally conjure up a manifestation of that friend, while one worried about an enemy might create an apparition of that foe. A character can consciously suppress surface thoughts to block the creation of manifestations by making a Concentration check (DC 15).

Holygates

While any god can create positive energy through exertion of divine power, most prefer to tap the infinite Plane of Positive Energy and channel that energy to their worshippers. They do this by means of the Holygates, cyclopean temples centred around a huge *gate* that floats through the Outer Corona, drawing on the energy flows. These *holygates* are always guarded by a host of the god's servants, usually celestials. A character can, in desperation, go through a *holygate*, but these great portals were made to convey positive energy, not base matter. A character passing through a *holygate* is affected as if he had just cast *contact outer plane* and asked a question of the deity who controls the *gate*. *Holygates* always head to the home plane of the deity.

Deva #2 [to Etrichan]: *What are the Holygates, you ask? The temperance of strength with love.*

– The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act III Scene vii

HAZARDS

Most of the hazards of the Positive Energy Plane occur when the Inner Light expands into the Outer Corona.

Flares (CR3)

A flare occurs when a huge tendril of energy, many miles across, reaches out of the Inner Light. In rare cases, this can expand into a starc (see page 72), but

usually the flare is restricted to the Outer Corona. The leading edge of a flare is a crackling wall of white light, moving at 1d6 x 50 feet per round. Inside, the Positive Trait of the plane increases by +1 every three rounds, to a maximum of +9. The area will quickly become Positive-dominant, causing unprotected characters to explode fairly quickly.

Incandescents (CR5)

Incandescents are pockets of matter that have become so suffused with positive energy that they are on the verge of exploding, just like a character who has gained too many temporary hit points. The process works on matter in a similar fashion, but much more slowly. Incandescents look just like the usual floating islands, drifting oceans and other elemental pockets, but are much brighter and shimmer with colourless fire. Incandescents are naturally unstable. If a character strikes an incandescent with an attack, there is a percentage chance equal to the damage inflicted that the incandescent explodes (if a creature in or on an incandescent misses an attack by more than 10, it strikes the incandescent, and area-affect spells like



lightning bolt automatically strike the ground when targeting a creature on or in an incandescent).

When an incandescent explodes, it floods the surrounding area with positive energy. All creatures within 120 feet of the incandescent gain 3d20 temporary hit points. If this takes a creature above twice its normal hit point total, it risks exploding, as if it were within the Inner Light of the plane.

Incandescents can be any form of elemental pocket or even former Towers of Earth.

Energy Storms (CR10)

An energy storm is a flare that has curled back on itself and is collapsing. In an energy storm, the Positive Trait varies between +1 and +9 each round (roll 1d8+1 to determine the current Positive trait). Furthermore, bolts of energy lash the skies of the Positive Realm. Each bolt deals 6d6 points of damage (roll 1d4 for the type of energy: 1 – electrical, 2 – sonic, 3 – fire, 4 – force). There is a one in six chance that a character is struck in any round, and a Reflex save (DC 15) is allowed for half damage.

Furthermore, the storm sends turbulent waves of force rushing across the plane; moving in an energy storm is akin to moving through a tornado.

Energy storms can last for hours or even days.

Positive Fluxes (CR varies)

A positive flux occurs just after a major disaster on another plane, such as a battle, plague or earthquake. Hundreds of clerics and paladins draw on positive energy to cast their healing spells. As there is a very rough mapping between locations on the Positive Energy Plane and other realms (two clerics casting *heal* side by side draw from the same fount of energy, and *holygates* only exacerbate this phenomenon). When a positive flux occurs, the Positive trait of the plane decreases to +1 for a brief period (usually no more than 10 + 1d10 rounds). However, the flux also causes the Positive Plane to momentarily reflect the source of the drain, creating images of the plague hospice, battlefield or disaster site. Often, these images are given life and animation by the energy of the plane, causing travellers passing through the flux to be attacked by the spectral forces of the dying.

LOCATIONS

The Living City

The Living City floats in a curiously stable region on the border of the Inner Light. The region has a Positive trait of only +7, but still animates objects almost immediately. The entire city is aware and alive. Every object, doorknob, brick and lantern is animated. Furthermore, they retain this animation for months or years after leaving the Living City. As a lantern has a better understanding of how to light a room than any spelunker, and a hammer knows the art of forging better than a smith, merchants and craftsmen often travel to the Living City to hire tools. A tool from the Living City grants a +3 to +5 insight bonus to the appropriate task. Living weapons may also be hired here (but not magical ones – the act of imbuing an item with magic renders it immune to the animating effects of the Positive Energy Plane).

Castle Corbenic

This castle is ruled by a wounded king, an ancient warlord who suffered the first Dolorous Wound. Indeed, he bears a *greater dolorous sword* made magical with his own blood. This nameless king was a great hero, long ago. He was wounded in battle, and brought to this castle to heal and grow strong. One day, his unhealing wound shall be relieved, and he shall return to the land in the time of greatest need.

Until then, he sits on his throne in the midst of pure white light, and waits.

Travellers sometimes come to Castle Corbenic. The king tries them with tests designed to prove heroism and moral virtue. After all, the king does not know how long he must wait, and he will need strong and loyal followers when he returns to the mortal land.

The Phoenix Tree

The Phoenix Tree is an eternally burning tree located somewhere near the border between the Plane of Fire and the Plane of Positive Energy. The legendary phoenix nests amid its branches. Not only can the eggs of the phoenix be found here, but the fruit of the tree grants immortality to anyone who eats it (the character stops aging, and is instantly *true resurrected* if slain. The *true resurrection* ability only works once, and the character can subsequently be killed normally). The Tree of the Phoenix is guarded not only by the Phoenix itself, but also by a powerful celestial pyrohydra named Ladon.

The Fountainhead

At the innermost heart of the Inner Light, in the centre of all infinities, there is a humble stone well, weathered by the passage of uncountable aeons. The well stands on a small hill, surrounded by blazing fields of energy and light. This well is the Fountainhead, the Prime Source, the beginning of all things. It is guarded by a hooded figure of indeterminate age, race or gender. It is not a god or outsider, but something beyond either and it has allowed no being closer to the well than the foot of the hill.

DENIZENS

There are few native denizens of the Positive Energy Plane, other than a few incomprehensible creatures like ravids and nexids. The Inner Light may contain infinite numbers of strange new species, but they will forever remain a mystery.

Nexid

Small Outsider (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 4d8+8 (17 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: Fly 40-ft.

Armour Class: 12 (+1 size, +1 Dex, +6 deflection when incorporeal), touch 12, flat-footed 11

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/-1

Attack: Energy tendrils +3 melee (1d6 force damage)

Full Attack: Two energy tendrils +3 melee (1d6 force damage)

Space/Reach: 5-ft. /15-ft.

Special Attacks: Tendrils

Special Qualities: Incorporeal, symbiosis, spell-like abilities

Saves: Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +2

Abilities: Str 6, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 14

Skills: Concentration +7, Heal +4, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +5, Move Silently +7, Spot +5, Use Magical Device +7

Feats: Alertness, Dodge

Climate/Terrain: Plane of Positive Energy

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: None.

Alignment: Usually chaotic neutral

Advancement: Special; see below.

This bizarre entity is a wispy mass of glowing tendrils without a visible central mass.

Nexids appear to be living connections between creatures; the concepts of symbiotic relationships or alliance or the fundamental connectedness of all

things given physical form. They drift on the edge of the Inner Light, and are occasionally swept onto the Outer Corona by flares.

Nexids 'grow' by fastening themselves onto groups of creatures, reinforcing the connections between them. They can do this to themselves, leading to the creation of vast nexid webs thousands of feet across, but they prefer the stronger life energies of larger creatures. The nexids therefore try to attach themselves to groups of travellers – a group must contain at least three individuals, as nexids are the incarnation of connections. An individual nexid can bond with up to eight creatures, and saps one hit point from each creature per day when outside a Positive-aspected or dominated area.

However, being bonded with a nexid can be quite beneficial. The nexid allows its symbiotic partners to access its spell-like abilities, which include the ability to *plane shift*.

Combat

Nexids can feebly attack using their energy tendrils, but much prefer to be bonded with powerful creatures who can defend them easily.

Incorporeal: Nexids are incorporeal outside the Positive Energy Plane. They are often trapped and used as cheap sources of *plane shifting* by adventurers.



THE PLANE OF POSITIVE ENERGY

Symbiosis (Su): A nexid who is bonded to a group of creatures grows in power as the creatures do. Treat the nexid as if it was a druid's companion, and take the average level or Hit Dice of the group as the level of the druid. Once a nexid's group level reaches 18 or higher, the nexid spawns 1d6+1 new nexids.

Those involved in the symbiotic link with the nexid can access any of the nexid's spell-like abilities at will. A nexid can only maintain a link over a distance equal to the group level x 100 feet. Characters can leave the group at will, as long as the group always has at least three members. If the group membership drops below three, the nexid immediately *plane shifts* back to the Positive Energy Plane (or dies if it cannot *plane shift*).

If the nexid dies, all those linked to it take 1d4 points of temporary Intelligence damage.

Spell-like abilities (Sp): At will: *status, message*.
1/day: *shield other, plane shift*. All abilities have a caster level equal to the group level. All the abilities can only be used by and on members of the group bonded to the nexid.

Tendrils: A nexid's energy tendrils allow the creature to reach targets up to 15 feet away.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Plane of Positive Energy is something of an anomaly; it kills with healing. It is quite absurdly dangerous in some ways, but also very, very useful. It is, for example, a great refuge against undead, and a quick source of healing. A wizard with two *plane shifts* and some time on his hands can cure injuries just as well as a cleric can. Most quests and encounters on the Positive Energy Plane will, therefore, centre on healing or tapping the vast energies of the plane.

The Positive Energy Plane is also an excellent hiding place. It is infinite and confusing and has far fewer native inhabitants that can be used as guides. A character could

conceal himself in a Tower of Earth for a very long time without being found.

- † A fiend opens a *gate* to the Negative Energy Plane right in front of a *holygate*. Now all the clerics of one god find themselves channelling negative energy instead of positive. Heroes must go to the Positive Plane and destroy the *gate*.
- † A good-aligned necromancer finds a method of creating creatures like undead that are fuelled by positive energy. These 'posi-dead' require the establishment of a special energy tap on the Positive Energy Plane. As the characters help the necromancer build this machine, they discover that they are to be the test subjects for the posi-dead conversion process...



THE PLANE OF NEGATIVE ENERGY

DESCRIPTION

Warmth is the first to go. The traveller is overcome by a chill; not the bone-freezing cold of a winter wind, but the sickening quivering cold that presages the onset of illness. Then, colour is leached from the traveller's perceptions; everything is reduced to shades of black and grey. Sound is muted too; voices are reduced to whispers.

Press on into the dark, and meaning itself is stripped away. Ennui and apathy become almost inevitable. The traveller is reduced to a nothing amid nothingness. If by some miracle the traveller has the will to continue, he reaches the uttermost abyss, the end of all things, the End of All Worlds.

There is nothing beyond that point.

Of course, all this description assumes that the traveller is protected by a *death ward* or similar spell. Without such protections, the traveller's life will be drained away faster than his body heat.

Getting there... and Back

Natural portals to the Negative Energy Plane are either exceedingly rare or uncomfortably common. Actual doorways that lead to the Dark Realm are few and far between, and are built only by powerful liches or necromancers. However, every sentient undead creature is suffused with negative energy, and has a direct connection to the Dark Realm. From a certain perspective, each undead being is an inky blot of darkness, a tentacle from the Negative Energy Plane reaching for the Material Plane. Draw back from that perspective, and the terrible truth is visible: the more undead exist, the closer the Negative Energy Plane can drag itself to the Material Realm. This is why the Ethereal Plane runs thick with ghosts, and why the Plane of Shadow is ruled by nightshades. Like some terrible beast, the Negative Energy Plane is slowly coming to feast on the Material Plane.

A traveller who cares little about some remote eschatological events and wishes to get to the Dark Realm without leaping into a wraith's embrace should use caution – as usual, *plane shift* can

Plane of Negative Energy Traits

Gravity	-9	<i>Subjective Directional</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal time</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	6	<i>Alterable</i>
Life	0	<i>Hostile to life</i>
Weather	0	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	-9	<i>Negative Dominant</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Negative Spells	+6	<i>Maximised</i>
Positive Spells	-6	<i>Impeded</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to Material	9	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Air/Earth/ Water/Fire Planes	11	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Ethereal	14	<i>Coexistent</i>
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Shadow	18	<i>Merging</i>

deposit a character into an especially dangerous area. Careful travel via a *gate*, ethereal travel or even *shadow walking* to a darkreach are better options.

Survival on the Plane of Negative Energy

In the more pleasant and balmy regions of the Negative Plane, a character is dealt 1d6 points of damage per round, every round. The deeper regions force travellers to make Fortitude saves (DC 25) every round or gain a negative level. Compared to such hostility, minor problems such as a lack of air or gravity are trivial.

A *death ward* spell can protect a traveller from the draining effects of the plane, but only for a short time. Travellers expecting to spend a long time on the plane usually carry items that constantly renew the *death ward*, such as a *ring of death warding*.

However, the native creatures of the Negative Energy Plane are well aware of the precautions travellers must take to survive and will attempt to negate these protections. A traveller will be targeted with *dispel magic* spells and wraiths will grapple to wrestle the *ring of death warding* from a finger.

FEATURES & PROPERTIES

Like its Positive twin, the Negative Plane is divided into two regions, inner and outer. The outer region, known as the Borders of Void, is co-existent with the Ethereal Plane and has only the Negative-Aspected trait. The inner region, the Uttermost Abyss, is Negative-Dominated and unutterably hostile.

The Borders of Void

The Borders of Void are a great darkness, a pall of blackness broken by the occasional elemental pocket that has drifted in from a bordering elemental plane. The negative energy breaks down elemental matter and energy just as it saps life; water turns to brine, salt, or even unholy water, while air become fouled or even vacuous; earth turns to dust and ruin, and fire turns to ash or corpse-light. As these pockets float through the Borders, they slowly decay. A pocket of elemental earth might seem to be a perfectly solid boulder or continental plate, but it will be eaten away by negative energy until it has no more substance than a cobweb.

The border region is utterly lightless, and the illumination given by torches and other light sources is halved. The temperature hovers around freezing.

Flares from the Uttermost Abyss can make the borderlands extremely dangerous. While there are shelters such as the Spires of Woe, they are often sabotaged or ruined by hostile undead.

The Uttermost Abyss

This is the inner region of the Negative Energy Plane. Light and warmth are *impossible* here – the strongest *light* spell will illuminate nothing. *Arcane sight* allows a traveller to see auras, but not the objects casting them. *True seeing* or, alarmingly, *deathwatch* allow a traveller to view the Abyss ‘normally.’

Ring of Death Warding

These devices are silver rings. The *lesser ring* is inset with a ruby the *greater ring* with an imperishable diamond. Both types of ring give the same protection as a *death ward* spell, but the *lesser ring* has a limited lifespan of fifty charges. Every 10 points of negative energy damage or negative level absorbed by the ring uses one charge. The ruby slowly blackens and cracks as its charges are depleted, and turns to ash when exhausted. The diamond on the *greater ring* endures forever, as the *greater ring's* effectiveness is not limited by charges – it grants full protection as long as it is worn.

Lesser Ring: Moderate Abjuration; CL 9th; Forge Ring, *death ward*; Price 36,000 gp.

Greater Ring: Moderate Abjuration; CL 9th; Forge Ring, *death ward*; Price 72,000 gp.

Matter cannot endure here, unless it is protected by a *death ward*. Unprotected characters or objects quickly disintegrate – objects become dust, creatures become wraiths.

No-one save the dead know what is within the Uttermost Abyss. No *scrying* spell or divination can penetrate its darkness, and sending *true seeing* scouts into the darkness is sheer folly; there are uncountable wraiths and worse things in the abyss. There could be literally anything in that black hole at the end of the worlds; another set of inner planes or aborted, qliphothic universes linked through the black gate, an undead god of surpassing power, a city of all souls... anything.

Or, more likely, Nothing.

Spires of Woe

The Spires of Woe are strange towers of ancient design that reach from their foundations on the Elemental Planes deep into the Borders of Void. Unlike the Towers of the Earth that are found on the edges of the Positive Energy Plane, the Spires of Woe are all of like design. Each tower is an obsidian spike some one hundred and thirteen feet high. These towers are linked by narrow (two feet wide) arching walkways, although the vast majority have collapsed over the aeons.



Every thirty-third tower is a much larger citadel, containing at its heart a strange temple to some forgotten entity. Statues depict a five-armed being with a star-like head. Some of these temples also contain a huge black gemstone or sphere of smoky crystal. Sometimes, pulses of negative energy flood along the walkways, and these gems sing an eldritch chorus.

These towers can be found all along the infinite border of the Negative Energy Plane, and more than five score citadels have been counted. Many of these towers have been claimed by powerful undead who wish to bask in the negative flow of the plane while still holding onto their possessions. Liches are especially common, as are vampires.

The interior of a Spire of Woe is protected from the negative energy of the plane, so travellers are safe from the draining effects of the plane.

Banegates

Banegates are the unholy equivalent of the *holygates* used by various good-aligned deities (see page 123). They are protected by fiends immune to the draining effects of the plane, or by mercenary legions of wraiths. Most *banegates* are floating temples of black steel and congealed shadow.

Especially powerful necromancers on other planes sometimes construct their own petty imitations of *banegates*. These are simply permanently-active portals to the holdings of the necromancer, although most are guarded by constructs armed with *ghost touch* weapons to prevent unwanted wraiths and pesky spirits slipping through the *banegate* into the necromancer's sanctum.

HAZARDS

Flares (CR3)

A flare occurs when the shadows darken and the more intense energies of the Abyss rise into the Borders of Void. In rare cases, this can expand into a starc (see page 72), but usually the flare is restricted to the Borders. The leading edge of a flare is a flickering wall of deeper darkness, moving at 1d6 x 50 feet per round. Inside, the Negative rait of the plane decreases by -1 every three rounds, to a maximum of -9. The area will quickly become Negative-dominant.

Ash Storms (CR4)

Creatures who fall prey to the energy draining effects of the Borders disintegrate into ash. Ash storms are the result of whole armies or cities dying in the darkness. An ash storm can manifest suddenly, howl through a section of the plane, and then vanish in a few moments. Thousands of screaming faces can be seen in the ashes, the visages of those who died and were reduced to ash.

An ash storm has the same statistics as a hurricane, but also reduces visibility to 1d4 x 5 feet and forces all travellers to make a Fortitude save (DC 14) every round or begin to choke on the ash. Ash storms last 1d100 rounds.

Whispering Haunts (CR8)

A whispering haunt exists on the Negative Energy Plane where a large number of the undead are

gathered on the Material Plane. Each undead creature has its own link to the Dark Realm. Under normal circumstances this link is almost imperceptible as each of the undead is connected to the vast swathe of the Negative Energy Plane. However, when many undead are close to each other, their connections are compressed until they are visible, like silver cords on the Astral Plane. A whispering haunt looks like a forest of floating black strands, each quivering slightly in some unseen wind. Each strand whispers with the inner thoughts of each undead horror.

If one of these cords is severed (which requires a *holy* weapon; a strand has AC 20 and hit points equal to half those of the attached undead), the undead attached to it is temporarily destroyed – it will reform in 2d10 minutes as long as its body is intact (for material undead) or in 2d10 days for incorporeal undead. Finding which cord belongs to a particular undead creature requires divination magic such as *augury*.

The danger of whispering haunts is that the strands are extremely sensitive, and when disturbed they send out waves of negative energy. A strand has an effective Listen skill of 30 + the Hit Dice of the undead it is attached to. If the strand ‘hears’ anything, it emits a pulse (1d6 points of negative energy damage per HD of the undead). Wraiths and other denizens of the Negative Energy Plane are attracted to these pulses.

Vortices (CR10)

Vortices only occur in the Abyss, and only affect living characters. The victim of a vortex is suddenly dragged 5d100 miles deeper into the Abyss and struck by an effect similar to a *dimensional anchor* cast by a 10th level sorcerer (save DC 16). Most vortices carry off whole groups, but the plane is malicious and has been known to scatter travellers all over the Abyss.

LOCATIONS

The Necropolis

The city of the wraiths exists on the edge of the Abyss. Indeed, it is constantly on the verge of slipping over that edge and tumbling into the void. One side of the city projects out into the Abyss; the other is a mountainous counterweight holding it in place. As matter is reduced to dust by the negative

energy, the lords of the city have developed the art of smelting souls into imperishable stone. Wraiths and lesser undead are punished by being petrified and used as building material for the vast counterweight.

The Necropolis is therefore a constantly hungry city – as it grows, it needs more and more wraiths to hold it in place. Hunting parties of spectres range through the plane, corralling spirits. As the smelting technique is even more effective when used on the living, mortal travellers are especially prized as building materials.

The Aeon Dock is on the opposite side of the Necropolis from the counterweight. Here, ghost ships and necrospheres are lowered into the abyss, to consult with the Greatdead or seek out new deaths and atrocities in the depths of the Negative Plane.

The Greatdead

These are thirteen skeletons that float in a circle above the heart of the Abyss. They are all of different shapes and sizes; three are the size of titans, but others are human, elven, monstrous or even broken into shards. They may once have been lichs or other powerful undead creatures, but they have transcended this state. Their bones hang in space, while their dark minds work ceaselessly, whispering to each other in languages of dust and decay.

The least of the Greatdead is at least a 20th level wizard, and most are far more powerful than that. More alarmingly, their endless spell-weaving centres on ways to draw on the infinite power of the Negative Energy Plane and the linked, hateful minds of the undead. Some day, the dead whisper, they will all be united in a terrible dirge-spell that will bring all reality into the embrace of the grave...

The End

The End is a pit some fifteen feet wide at the base of the bottomless Abyss. It is empty, like a newly dug grave. Two figures, one carrying a scythe, the other a shovel, watch over the pit.

Spheres of annihilation orbit the pit like little dark worlds.

The pit is never filled, no matter what is placed within it.

One day, the dead say, everything will be put in the pit, and the gravedigger will put up no marker, only then will it truly be the End.

DENIZENS

If the undead call a plane home, it is this one. Wraiths swarm through the plane more thickly than flies in summer. Allips, spectres also throng the dark places, as well as the occasional shadow or ghost who wanders down from the Ethereal or the Plane of Shadows. Nightshades and liches are also found in the Dark Realm.

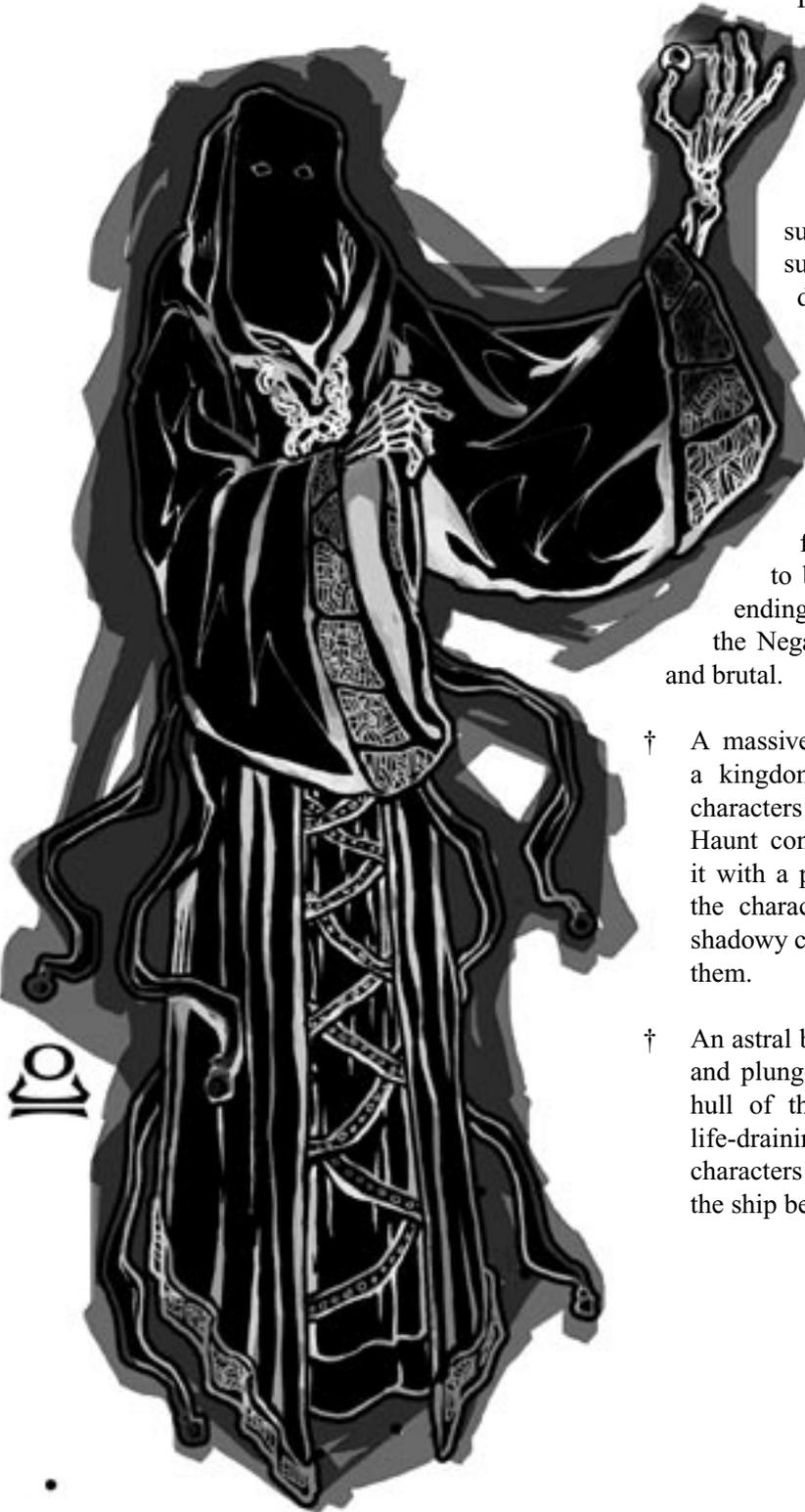
There are a few sickly and bizarre creatures, the negative counterparts to alien outsiders such as the ravid or nexids, but such beings have mostly been destroyed by the hosts of undead.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Negative Energy Plane is a hideously dangerous place, full of undead and those about to become undead. It is a place of endings and of sorrow. Any jaunts into the Negative Plane are likely to be short and brutal.

† A massive army of undead are assaulting a kingdom in the Material Plane. The characters are sent to find the Whispering Haunt connected to the army and destroy it with a positively-charged detonation. If the characters make one false move, the shadowy cords of the entire army will detect them.

† An astral barge goes disastrously off course and plunges into the Negative Plane. The hull of the ship will only stave off the life-draining energy for so long – can the characters dive into the darkness and rescue the ship before it succumbs to undeath?



THE VAULT OF STARS

DESCRIPTION

Welcome to the Other Side of the Sky.

The Vault of Stars is a vast plane of black stone, stretching in every direction as far as the eye can see. Low grey clouds hang eternally overhead. Huge pools of bright light are dotted throughout the Plane – these are the stars. Look up into the night sky, and you look upon the black stone of the vault, marked by the shimmering pools of starlight.

Some claim to have detected a slight curve to the plain, suggesting that the whole Vault of Stars is actually a great globe that contains all the worlds.

Getting there... and Back

The Vault of Stars is the Elysium of the Outer Planes. It lies between the Halls of Order and Tarassein, so there are numerous portals to all of the outer planes

Vault of Stars Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	-9	<i>Timeless</i>
Size	16	<i>Infinite but repeating</i>
Morphic	5	<i>Alterable</i>
Life	-2	<i>Sparse</i>
Weather	-7	<i>Static</i>
Water/Fire	10	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	10	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	10	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
<i>Some regions are strongly neutral</i>		
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Outer Planes	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

at the edges of the Vault. Many of these portals are located on the shores of major star-pools. Others lead to the various fortresses and glades controlled by the Fey.

Natural portals to the Vault of Stars are always controlled by celestial alignments; a particular configuration of the stars is required for a particular portal to open. Rare minglings occur at twilight, when a particular glade merges with a Material forest. There are also said to be permanent portals in the uttermost east and west, used by the sun and moon to travel between the Material Plane and the Other Side of the Sky.

Survival in the Vault of Stars

The Vault is dim and cold, but not especially dangerous. There is little shelter (but then there is little need for shelter, as the clouds never change and the air is still) and little food (save in the glades, and only the most unwise would hunt there).

In short, when one wishes to cross the infinite arch of the cosmos, one should dress warmly and bring trail rations.

Knowledge (arcana) gives a +2 synergy bonus to Survival checks when navigating the Vault, as those who know the constellations well can plot a path between star-pools.

FEATURES

The stony floor of the Vault is made out of a strange blackish rock or crystal. It is almost impenetrably hard (Hardness 18, HP 50/inch) and can only be worked with adamantine tools. A handful of fortresses and towers have been made out of this stone, known as Lapis Exilis, and in one region of the plane, some ancient hand has dug dozens of strange canals between a constellation of pools, as if intending to remake the heavens.

Some have compared the Vault to a desert; while there is no parching sun here, most of the land is trackless and empty, broken only by the occasional oasis of life surrounding a star. Not all stars support life, only those that walk the narrow path between too dim and too bright.

Starpools

A star is a lake of light, several hundred feet across. The liquid of each lake is a unique mix; some stars draw on positive energy, others on negative. Some

are hot enough to sear flesh; others are so hot that a droplet could scorch a kingdom, yet others are colder than the most bitter winter. Roll 1d10 for the Fire trait effects of a star, and roll +/- 1d8 for its Positive or Negative effects. The star's influence is limited to its waters and its immediate shoreline (1d10 x 10 feet from the edge of the water, and this distance can vary as the star waxes and wanes).

Most stars are home to a reannan (see Denizens, below).

Glades

While the Vault is not the only plane that is home to the Fey, there are many thousands of the fair folk living in the twilight forests. Most of their holdings are closer to the chaotic edge of the plane, on the shorelines of friendly stars. The largest glade is the Gloamwood, a great forest that threads its way through the constellation of the Hunter, but smaller glades can be found throughout the Vault.

A glade resembles an earthly forest in twilight and is inhabited by many Fey (mostly sprites and dryads, although there are stranger and more powerful entities). Glades are eerily quiet; often, the only sound is the songs of the Fey dancing around the lake.

Starhollows

A starhollow is the empty place where there was once a star; and now, there is only a dry basin incised into the stone. At the centre of every starhollow is a simple cairn containing the body of the reannan who once embodied the star. The Fey are naturally immortal and cannot understand death, nor can they mourn, so the cairns are built and the funerary rites performed by a sect of human monks called the Waiting Brethren.

A few starhollows are haunted by undead reannan (apply the lich template to the reannan).

HAZARDS

There are few major hazards in the Vault. For the most part, it is a tranquil, quiet realm of Arcadian glooms and patient stars. Still, there are dangers on the Other Side of the Sky.

Starwheels (CR0)

The path of souls is well known – souls are created in Tarassein and then pass through life until they reach the Halls of Order. Some souls are exalted, and follow the paths of Good overseen by the Firmament,

while others are foul and base and descend towards the Infernum. Most souls, however, simply cross the Vault of Stars. The watchful stars oversee their petty destinies.

In some places, the fate-pull or 'wyrd' of the stars is very strong. These regions are referred to as Starwheels, and are strongly aligned to neutrality. Those whose fate is overseen by Gods of Good or the Demon Princes of the Infernum are weakened here. Starwheels are often claimed as holdings by powerful neutral entities.

At the heart of a Starwheel is a Point of Balance. At a Point of Balance, fate is precisely divided between all alignments and deities; a single step or thought can move a character from one wyrd to another. This has the following effects:

- † Firstly, no divination spell can perceive anything that occurs at a Point of Balance. It is as if everyone and everything there were perfectly *mind blanked*.
- † Secondly, any actions taken at a Point of Balance are magnified a thousandfold in terms of their impact on a character's alignment. A character who betrays another here becomes Chaotic Evil, as if he had betrayed a whole nation to their enemies. A minor act of charity is enough to turn someone good. Normal *atonement* spells cost no experience at a point of balance, and the spell can be used to *atone* for even the most heinous, unforgivable crimes which are beyond its usual remit if the experience cost is paid (outsiders can change their alignment using *atonement* at a Point of Balance.)

Holes in the Sky (CR3)

There are a handful of holes in the sky, places where the rock of the Vault floor has either been worn or cut through. Spotting these holes is rather tricky – the rock is perfectly black, and the emptiness of the hole is also perfectly black. A Search check at DC 12 will locate a hole, as will a Spot check at DC 22. Otherwise, a character who encounter a hole must make a Reflex save at DC 16 or fall in.

The shell of the Vault averages one mile in thickness, so if the hole is evenly cut, the character will slam into the bottom of the pit and take 20d6 damage. Few holes are evenly cut; most are filled with jagged edges, ledges and protrusions, so a character only

takes 2d4 x 1d6 damage. If the hole is evenly cut (25% chance), then there is usually (90% chance) a portal at the bottom of the hole, which transports the faller either to the Astral Plane, the Plane of Air or (in rare, unfortunate cases) to the upper reaches of the sky in the Material Plane.

Some travellers have reported seeing tunnels cut into the sides of these holes, suggesting that some great labyrinth or system of underground canals connects the stars from beneath, from inside the black sky. This labyrinth has never been explored.

Tentacled Thing (CR7)

The grey clouds that hang low above the Vault have never been truly explored, and it is believed they extend for infinity. They are not entirely empty – something lives in the clouds, and occasionally the something (or *somethings*) reach down with mile-long rugose tentacles and try to scoop up unfortunate travellers. The tentacles drop with an eerie silence, so characters must make a Spot check (DC 16) to notice the tentacles in order to avoid being caught flat-footed. 1d4 tentacles drop down at a time.

The tentacles make grapple attacks, using the Improved Grapple feat. They have an attack bonus of +12, and a Grapple bonus of +16. If a tentacle grapples a target, it begins to lift the target into the clouds. The target may make attacks on the tentacle as it rises, as may any travellers on the ground. The tentacle has an Armour Class of 18, and can sustain 100 points of damage before dropping the target. The tentacle takes 1d6+1 rounds to reach the clouds while carrying a victim. If the target fails to free himself from the tentacle before it vanishes into the clouds, he is devoured by...whatever is up there. Victims of the Tentacled Thing can be *raised*, but never remember what they encountered in the clouds (nor can Divination spells learn anything about them).

Some tales hold that the thing likes music, and can be compelled to drop a victim if a tune is played for it. Other, equally widespread tales merely suggest it has a taste for bards.

LOCATIONS

All maps of the Vault are based on the constellations.

City of Regret

The City of Regret is one of the most curious cities in all the Planes. It is located somewhere near the centre of the Vault, by the north star. The city is

encompassed by walls of black stone, pierced by two great doors. One gate is the Gate of Beginnings, the other the Gate of Endings. Inside, the city is divided into seven districts, each of which has its own walls. Passing from one district to another requires that the traveller overcome a guardian. However, the guardian and the appearance of the districts vary for each traveller – to walk the streets and laneways of the City of Regret is to walk through one's own life and memories. The seven districts correspond to the seven ages of the traveller, from mewling infant to wrinkled elder. Most of the inhabitants of the city are mere phantoms of memory conjured up by a traveller, although many ancient and powerful sphinxes also dwell in the city.

A traveller in the City of Regret can obtain hints about his future by the appearance and nature of the various districts; a young adventurer who will obtain wealth and fame, then die a ghastly death in battle might walk through a humble District of Infants and District of Schoolboys, to a District of Lovers or District of Soldiers full of heroic statues, arenas and gaudy wealth, and finally into a gory red lake where the three last Districts should be.

When several travellers pass through the Beginning Gate together, the various districts subdivide to reflect each traveller's life. The Beginning Gate opens only inward; the Ending Gate only outwards. The Ending Gate is guarded by a doorman who says that he stands in proxy for his master, and can be bribed for the sum of merely two gold pieces.

Castles of Sun and Moon

The Castles of Sun and Moon are on the edges of the Vault. The Castle of the Sun is Fire-aspected; the Moon Keep is Water-aspected. The Sun and Moon rest in these castles during the night and day, respectively, attended by their various servants. Some travellers have dared to sneak through the portals to the Material Plane located in these castles, although the route is most perilous. The Sun is guarded by six solars; the Moon by six strange creatures of like power, known as lunars.

The Twilight Court

The proud Fey accept no judge or authority save their own rulers, and the only court of appeal these rulers recognise is the Twilight Court. This court is located in the heart of the Gloamwood, at a Starwheel. The accused and the accuser are brought to the court, then subjected to potent illusions. As divinations fail at a Starwheel, these illusions are impenetrable. The

The seven ages are, according to the bards, Infant, Schoolboy, Lover, Soldier, Justice, Elder, Second Childhood. The wizards reckon them less poetically as Infant, Apprenticeship, Youth, Journeyman, Master, Elder and Rebirth.

City of Regret (Small City): AL N; Variable gp limit; Assets equal to those of the travellers gp; Pop Varies – thirty sphinxes, some travellers, many shades; Isolated and Bizarre mix. *Power Centres:* Life and Death.

accused and accusers are tricked into the truth of their souls by these illusions. Often, the Fey judges create the illusion that the court has been held, the case judged, and that all concerned can go free; the illusion then presents images that try the disputants' morals and ethics. The disputants, believing they are long since gone from the court, act according to their natures – and because of the magnifying effects of a Starwheel, their true natures quickly become manifest.

Reverse Observatory

The small Reverse Observatory is located at the edge of a Hole in the Sky. It is the home of a trio of immortal sages whose knowledge of astrology is so extensive, they were taken up into the heavens to be counsellors to the reannan. The three sages observe the world below, paying particular attention to telescopes and magical research. They divine the future of the world in patterns of knowledge and learning; an inventor here aligns with a library there, and if a comet-like messenger crosses their path, then...well, only the sages know what will transpire.

One sage is known to encourage astrology and learning; another grumpily fears that it will lead to literal disasters. The third is too busy pursuing a particular reannan to care much for his duties.

The River of Stars

The River of Stars stretches across the entire Vault. In places, it is so narrow that a child could hop across it; in others, it is wider than the sea. The river is fed with liquid from thousands of stars, and is the main (indeed, only) artery of travel and trade in the sky. Fey gondolas with adamantine hulls ply the river, as well as pleasure-boats used to entertain reannan.

DENIZENS

The native inhabitants of the Vault of Stars include the reannan and other Fey, sphinxes and gorgons. Numerous travellers also use the Vault and especially the River of Stars as a quick, non-astral route across the Outer Planes.

Reannan

Medium Fey (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 16d6+64 (120 hp)

Initiative: +7

Speed: Move 40-ft, Swim 80-ft.

Armour Class: 31 (+7 dexterity, +10 natural, +4 *mage armour*), touch 21, flat-footed 24

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +8/+9

Attack: +12 melee (1d8+3, *brilliant energy longsword* +2) or +19 ranged (1d8+3, *longbow* +3)

Full Attack: +12/+7 melee (1d8+3, *brilliant energy longsword* +2) or +19/+14 ranged (1d8+3, *longbow* +3)

Space/Reach: 5-ft. /5-ft.

Special Attacks: Spell-like abilities, manipulate wyrd

Special Qualities: Summon weapons, energy control, immunity to cold, electricity and fire, fey traits, SR25

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +17, Will +13

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 24, Con 18, Int 16, Wis 16, Cha 25

Skills: Bluff +26, Concentration +22, Diplomacy +30, Hide +26, Knowledge (arcana) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +22, Listen +22, Sense Motive +22, Spot +22, Swim +10*

Feats: Alertness, Dodge, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Focus (longbow), Quickened Spell-like ability (*searing light*), Empower Spell-like ability (*searing light*)

Climate/Terrain: Vault of Stars or aquatic

Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 12

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Usually neutral

Advancement: By character class

The maiden rising from the radiant pool is clad in the finest white samite. Her hair cascades around her slim shoulders as she extends a hand – which is suddenly holding a bright sword.

Reannan are to stars as dryads are to trees and naiads are to rivers; the incarnation of a natural phenomenon. They are among the most powerful and proudest of all Fey. A reannan spends most of the time either submerged in her star-pool, or else walking along its shores. Some are lonely creatures who welcome

travellers; others are close enough to converse with their sisters, or even go swimming on the River of Stars. All known reannan resemble tall, beautiful maidens, although they apparently have other forms (the star-maidens speak of 'red dwarfs' and 'blue giants').

Most reannan are neutral, but some are good or evil. These latter star-maidens are usually part of a particular constellation that is sacred to a good or evil deity, and are referred to as the handmaidens of that god. Other reannan are referred to as 'fallen reannan' – this does not mean they have turned to evil, merely that they have travelled to the Material Plane when their star fell from heaven. These fallen reannan are often patrons of sacred lakes that constantly reflect the starry night sky.

Combat

Reannan have a vast array of potent spell-like abilities, but they are also skilled warriors. Some reannan have special champions to aid in their defence, either enchanted mortals or allied Fey.

Manipulate Wyrd (Su): The stars oversee fate, so a star-maiden can alter the course of a foe's destiny. As a free action once per round, a star-maiden can inflict a cumulative -2 penalty on a foe's attack rolls and Armour Class. The maximum penalty that can be inflicted is -8 for a true neutral character, -4 for a character who is neutral good or neutral evil, and -2 for a character whose alignment does not have a neutral component.

Summon Weapons (Su): As a free action, a reannan can summon a +2 *brilliant energy longsword* or a +3 *longbow*. She can give these weapons to others if she chooses, but the weapons vanish if the reannan is slain. A reannan with at least one paladin or cleric level can summon a *holy avenger* instead if she wishes.

Energy Control (Su): A reannan is immune to all death effects and negative energy, as if protected by a

perfect *death ward*. She is also immune to the dangers of too much positive energy.

Spell-like abilities (Sp): At will: *mage armour, daylight, searing light, water breathing, water walking, blindness, dispel magic, haste, word of recall*; 3/day: *flame strike, seeming, sunbeam, sunburst*; 1/day: *meteor swarm, plane shift, planar ally*. All spells are cast as a 16th level sorcerer (save DC 17 + spell level).

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Vault of the Stars is fairly empty, so unless characters need information from the reannan or the City of Regret, they are unlikely to travel here. There are portals at the edge of the Vault leading to all the other major Outer Planes, and the Vault is less hazardous than the Astral, so low-level characters can use the Vault as a rather clumsy nexus.

- † One of the rare evil reannan has come to the Material Plane to sow chaos and destruction. She has seduced a once-heroic paladin and given him her *holy avenger*, and he is building an army of conquest. Rather than fight this fallen hero directly, the characters must travel to the Vault, find the reannan's star, and poison it.
- † A group of low-level characters wandering through a wood are caught in a mingling, and are transported to the Vault. From here, they must find their way back through the planes.
- † A theologian comes to the conclusion that the rumoured tunnels beneath the Vault of Stars are actually a system of canals, a mechanism for *moving* the constellations. As the stars influence destiny, if this canal network could be mapped, the mortal races could wrest control of their own destinies. All he needs is a few brave adventurers to map a possibly non-existent, possibly infinite tunnel network in a celestial vault of cyclopean black stone.



TARASSEIN

DESCRIPTION

A dozen skies, each a different colour and weeping a different fluid blossom below the melting mountains. Tentacled birds pluck out suns and worry them into burning shreds that fall down and sear the undulating lands. Stones crack like eggshells and things made of briar, wire and wine and slime ooze out, stumbling with an eerie grace across the hairy marble pathway that sprouts just before each footstep. Screams become serpents, the rippling sound waves slowing in the treacle-thick air before dropping to the ground and crawling away.

All this is happening in your mind. Your eyes cannot truly perceive Tarassein. The reality would be far

Tarassein Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal, but Erratic</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	17	<i>Highly Morphic</i>
Life	+8	<i>Universal Life</i>
Weather	+10	<i>Atmospheric Chaos</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Law/Chaos	+8	<i>Strongly Chaotic</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	15	<i>Magically accessible</i>
Proximity...		
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Questing Grounds	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Mal	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Vault of Stars	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

worse, only reality is a tattered and frail thing here, in the Chaos.

Getting there... and Back

The fluid nature of Tarassein makes it an easy target for portals. Natural portals yawn open at the slightest provocation, while minglings are also alarmingly common. Artificial portals are also popular – chaos mages and madmen have been known to forge *gates* to the realm of chaos. There are also natural portals to the Astral Plane and the Vault of Stars.

Portals also lead to the Questing Ground and Mal. The Malite portals are surrounded by zones of decay, where chaos acts to spawn new plagues and illnesses. The portals to the Questing Ground, on the other hand, lie near the Soulspring.

Survival in Tarassein

Any living creature exposed to the environment of Tarassein takes 1d12 points of damage per round from constantly changing sources. Natives are usually immune to some forms of damage, and know how to evade the rest. A *protection from chaos* spell will guard against this damage.

The terrain of Tarassein is constantly changing and mutating. Characters can attempt to seize control of its morphing (see page 4, Planar Traits, for rules on controlling morphic zones). The random vicissitudes

Tarassein Damage Sources

1d10	Damage Type
1	Force (invisible buffets of energy)
2	Fire (gouts of flame, hot spots)
3	Cold (freezing winds, erupting ice crystals)
4	Acid (rain of acid or blood, fog clouds)
5	Sonic (unearthly screams or thunders)
6	Electrical (bolts of lightning, crawling energy serpents)
7	Bludgeoning (falling rocks, collapsing cliffs)
8	Slashing (passing birds with razor feathers, rain of swords)
9	Piercing (thorns, darts, rain of knives)
10	Pure chaos (internal pain, cancers)

of the plane may produce other environmental hazards such as rivers of fire, oceans manifesting above the traveller's head, poisonous rocks or vacuum storms which each require spells or survival techniques, but such hazards cannot be predicted.

FEATURES

The major feature of the chaos pools of Tarassein is unbridled formlessness. Things bubble out of the raw chaos, taking on rough shape and form for brief moments before lapsing back into the primordial madness. The whole plane quivers like a heat haze; nothing is certain, all is transitory. The shapes thrown up might echo existing shapes in the rest of the multiverse (cliffs that appear as castles or clouds that appear as a whale) because any shape in the shapeless lands is a thin patina of Order over elemental Chaos.

Shaped Zones

A shaped zone is an area of relative stability, formed by a traveller or native with sufficient willpower to tame the surrounding chaos and force it into some recognisable form. A shaped zone can have any appearance, but most are free of the vicious weather that is endemic to the rest of the plane. Most shaped zones are only a few feet across (a radius equal to the shaper's Charisma score), but others are magically

enhanced and enlarged, and can be the size of an island or even a small country.

Shaped zones are almost always inhabited (the rare exceptions occur when a shaped zone has *permanency* or a similar spell cast on it).

Decaying Zones

Decaying zones occur when a shaped zone is abandoned by its creator. Usually, the shaped area dissolves almost instantly back into formless chaos when a sentient mind ceases concentrating on it, but sometimes these regions are slower to subside. A decaying zone looks much as it did when it was being shaped, but all the lines and edges are running and smearing. Think of a limestone statue left out in acid rain for a century, or carved ice allowed to melt and refreeze over and over. Decayed zones rarely have sentient inhabitants (unless the person who originally shaped the zone is within, but is unconscious or injured), but tend to attract scuttling chaotic parasites who swallow stray bits of rotting debris.

Pocket Planes

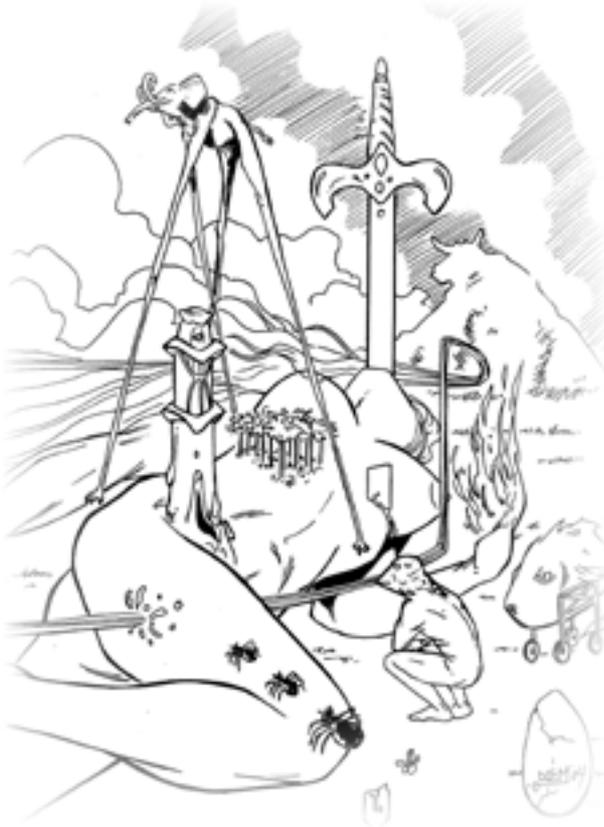
The highly morphic nature of Tarassein makes it a prime target for ambitious planewrights seeking to carve out a demiplane or pocket plane for themselves. This is by no means an easy task – the plane can easily be crafted, but bringing the Law trait up and the Morphic trait down infuriates the creatures of chaos, so the planewright must expend a great deal of energy keeping his nascent plane clear of trespassers.

Numerous pocket planes are known to float within the pools of chaos, notably the domains of the Orodro and the Daughters of Bedlam (see below).

HAZARDS

Scarab Cascades (CR6)

Chaos scarabs are the simplest possible creature that can endure in the Tarassein. They are little knots of chitin and muscle, studded with rudimentary eyes and clenching mandibles. A swarm of scarabs has the same stats as a locust swarm (see *Core Rulebook III*), with one important difference – the swarms instinctively shape chaos into more of themselves. Every 1d4 rounds, the number of scarab swarms *doubles*. The scarabs have a +10 racial bonus to Wisdom checks for warping chaos; a character who can warp chaos may make an opposed check to prevent any swarms within range from reproducing themselves.



The whole of Tarassein would dissolve into scarabs if it were not for eruptions and especially violent weather patterns, which punch through the scarabs' weak control over the stuff of chaos and sweep the insect hordes away.

Eruptions (CR8)

An eruption is the generic term given to the phenomenon of chaos vomiting up something unusually dangerous – the surrounding terrain turns into boiling acid, a giant mouth, full of teeth, a zone of negative energy or something even less pleasant. If the travellers are moving through unformed chaos, they may make a Reflex save (DC 18) to dodge out of the way and avoid being caught in the eruption. The eruption deals 3d6 + 8 points of damage per round, and continues to grow. A character can scramble out of the way and stay ahead of the expanding eruption by making a run or double move action, but characters trying to fight or do anything else other than escape must keep making Reflex saves to avoid the damage. Most eruptions last for 2d6 rounds.

LOCATIONS

The Soulspring

It is said that souls are born in the heart of chaos. This is, of course, untrue – how can a plane as mercurial as Tarassein have a heart? Still, there is truth here, and all the souls of mortal beings come from chaos. The Soulspring is a region where a tendril of Positive Energy has been caught in Tarassein, so creativity merges with the life force to produce new souls. It is a dangerous region – until the souls slip away through *gates* or are collected by the Tenders of Souls, any traveller in the Soulspring not protected by a *mind blank* or *protection from chaos* must make a Will save each round (DC equal to the number of rounds since the character entered the Soulspring) or be possessed. As the new souls are without reason or memory, the character acts as if *confused* for 1d10 rounds.

The Tenders of Souls are imposing outsiders; each one stands as tall as a storm giant, but has a pair of feathery wings and the head of a sea-bird. They gather souls into their white bundles before travelling to other planes to disperse them. Occasionally, a Tender will be called upon to find an especially potent soul when it is time for a hero to be born.

Asylum

The Asylum is a pocket plane controlled by the insane Daughters of Bedlam. It is a nightmarish madhouse,

a hospice for those whose minds were broken by the Daughters. They have no intention of curing their victims – instead, the Daughters divine the future by listening to the screaming and gibbering of the insane. Asylum is a labyrinth of grey prison cells, stained cloth and iron bars. Thrice in the last millennium, the forces of the Firmament have descended into Asylum to rescue the souls held in bondage there. Twice, they were successful – they healed wounded minds and brought the essences of the dead to the Afterworld. On the last occasion, the Captain of the Host was driven mad by a trio of elder Daughters, and his foolish commands led the angels to disaster. Thirty-seven angels and celestials of varying standing and potency are now denizens of the Asylum.

DENIZENS

Variant forms of almost any creature can be encountered in Tarassein; the chaos throws up creatures that echo existing shapes in order. These malformed echoes rarely survive for long before being subsumed back into the wrack of chaos. Chaos beasts swim through Tarassein like sharks, as do phasms and gibbering moutherers.

Orodro

Large Outsider (Chaotic)

Hit Dice: 4d8+12 (30 hp)

Initiative: +5 (Dex)

Speed: 40-ft.

Armour Class: 25 (+5 Dex, -1 Size, +12 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 21

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+11

Attack: Two slaws +1 melee (1d6+4) or bite +6 melee (1d4+6 plus engulf) or by weapon

Full Attack: Two claws +1 melee (1d6+4) and bite +2 melee (1d4+4 plus engulf) or by weapon

Space/Reach: 10-ft. /10-ft.

Special Attacks: Clutch, Engulf

Special Qualities: Immune to Critical Hits and Flanking, Adaptable, Weapon Use

Saves: Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +6

Abilities: Str 18, Dex 20, Con 16, Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 14

Skills: Balance +20*, Bluff +10, Climb +10, Disguise +15*, Hide +6, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +12, Sense Motive +7, Spot +10, Tumble +12

Feats: Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm

Climate/Terrain: Tarassein

Organisation: Solitary or Shower (9-12)

Challenge Rating: 4

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always any chaotic

Advancement: 5-10 HD (Large), 11-15 HD (Huge)
This entity is a geyser of black slime that spouts constantly from the ground. Shapes – limbs, faces, body parts and stranger, less discernible objects – form and dissolve as the slime rushes up and flows down the slick flanks of this pillar of ooze. The only constant feature is the cluster of eyes near the top of the pillar, although the faces, organs, hands and other housings that contain these eyes change constantly.

Orodros are sentient geysers of chaos. They are referred to as ‘Limb-fountains’ in some texts, as most of the matter they throw up from inside themselves is organic, and looks like dismembered chunks of a humanoid body. Despite their off-putting – even vile – appearance, Orodros can be quite pleasant, although some have no compunctions about chopping humans up for aesthetic reasons.

The realm of the Orodros is a very alarming plane indeed; their magics have merely slowed the endless churn of Tarassein, not stopped it. Walls shift and twist, buildings coil and writhe; the very laws are mutable. The Orodros consider Allmother Chaos to be a goddess eternally in the process of birthing itself, and have ties to various chaos or apocalypse cults. The race as a whole is not hostile, but some seek to drag everything back into primal formlessness. Orodros rarely leave their home plane, except when hired as assassins or aiding a chaos cult.

The Orodros can consciously slow their own changes, selecting the right random body parts that swell up from within them to build a surprisingly good patchwork humanoid body. They use this ability to infiltrate other planes in disguise.

Combat

Orodros are frightening foes; they are extremely agile and fluid combatants, slipping through the defences of enemies and rapidly adapting to their enemy’s actions.

Clutch (Ex): If a Orodros hits with both claw attacks, it may make a free bite attack at its full attack bonus.

Engulf (Ex): An Orodros who hits with its bite attack may attempt to flow over a Medium-size or smaller opponent. This requires a Grapple check; if the Orodros wins, it envelops the foe. The foe begins to drown, and any attacks that strike the Orodros must also be applied against the enveloped foe (for example, if a character makes an attack on the Orodros that hits Armour Class 20 and deals 10 points of damage, an

enveloped enemy would also take 10 damage if his Armour Class was 20 or less). A character can escape from being engulfed by making a successful Grapple check against the Orodros.

Adaptability (Su): Whenever an Orodros is struck by a weapon or energy type, it gains Damage Reduction 2 against that attack form for the next six rounds, to a maximum of DR10.

Weapon Use (Su): An Orodros is instinctively proficient in any melee weapons it holds. They delight in disarming their opponents and using their weapons against them.

Skills: Orodros have a +8 racial bonus to Balance and Disguise checks. They may disguise themselves as Medium-size creatures.

Daughters of Bedlam

Medium Outsider (Chaotic, Extraplanar, Evil)

Hit Dice: 7d8 (31 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30-ft.

Armour Class: 15 (+2 Dex, +3 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 13

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +4/+6

Attack: Fingernails +6 melee (1d4+3 plus poison)

Full Attack: Fingernails +6 melee (1d4+3 plus poison)

Space/Reach: 5-ft. /5-ft.

Special Attacks: Poison, Gaze of Madness, Spells

Special Qualities: Intuition, Aura of Madness, Insanity Plunge

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 5, Cha 20

Skills: Bluff +15, Concentration +10, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +15, Gather Information +15, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Listen +7, Move Silently +12, Sense Motive +7

Feats: Negotiator, Dodge, Mobility

Climate/Terrain: Tarassein

Organisation: Solitary or trio

Challenge Rating: 6

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: By class, only as sorcerers
The creature is a humanoid female, with long flowing multicoloured hair. You would assume she was a rather odd human, if it were not for her unnaturally long fingernails, which have been used to tear at the flesh of her bare arms and neck. Alarmingly, she seems to have also used them to claw out her own eyes.

The Daughters of Bedlam are either elemental spirits of chaos who are dedicated to spreading madness across the planes, or else are the souls of those who died in insanity and have learned to draw new power from chaos. All of the Daughters are physically similar; rake-thin human females with flowing hair that shimmers in multiple colours. They dress in shapeless shifts or rags.

The Daughters desire only to drive other creatures insane. They can be bound and compacted for projects that will cause madness. Their pocket plane in Tarassein is known as the Asylum, and is exactly what it sounds like – if anyone claimed by the Daughters dies while insane, their soul is trapped in the Asylum forever.

Combat

The Daughters prefer to avoid physical combat, although they can be surprisingly agile foes. They are often accompanied by succubi or axiomatic harpies, both of whom are often of like minds to the Daughters.

Poison (Ex): The Daughters dip their fingernails in a brew made from ergot and certain other fungi. This has the same properties as striped toadstool poison (see *Core Rulebook II*), save that it works by injury. Anyone scratched by this attack must make a Fortitude save (DC 11) or suffer one point of temporary Wisdom damage. The secondary damage from the attack is 2d6 Wisdom and 1d4 Intelligence.

Gaze of Madness (Su): The Daughter has a constantly active Gaze attack with a range of 30 feet. Anyone caught in the gaze must make a Will save (DC 19) or be *confused* (as the spell) for one round. The save DC is Charisma-based.

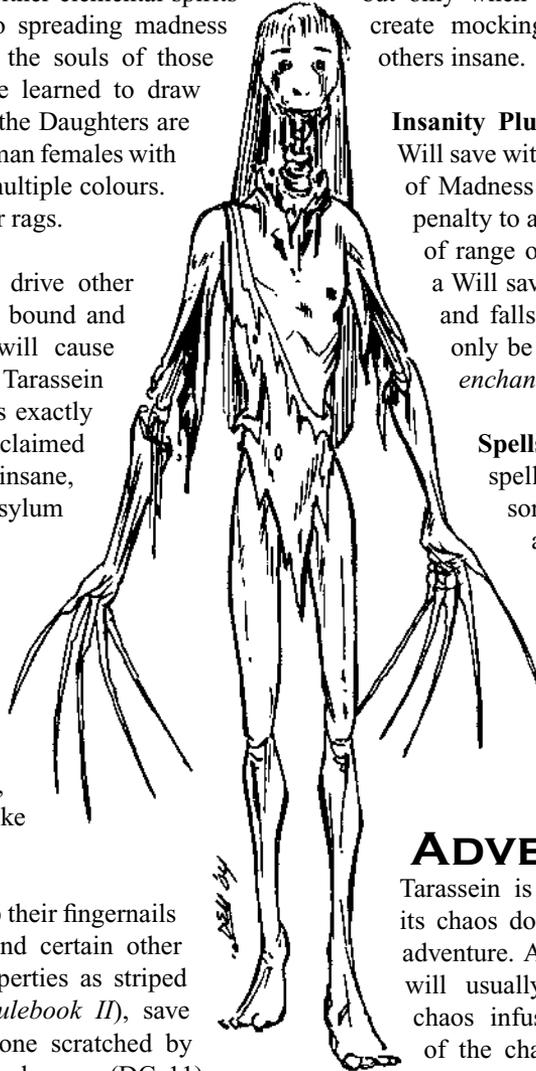
Intuition (Su): The Daughters have an instinctive intuition of the flows of chaos, which gives them an edge in combat. In any round, as a free action, a Daughter may gain a +4 insight bonus to any one attack roll or skill check, or may increase her Armour Class by +4.

Aura of Madness (Su): The Daughter's mere presence is unsettling. Anyone within 30 feet of her suffers a -2 penalty to all rolls. Also, they have a +20 insight bonus to Wisdom checks for warping chaos,

but only when using the chaotic landscape to create mocking or false constructs to drive others insane.

Insanity Plunge (Su): Anyone who fails a Will save within range of the Daughter's Aura of Madness suffers a further -1 cumulative penalty to all Will saves until they move out of range of the Aura. Anyone reduced to a Will save of -5 or more is driven insane and falls into a catatonic coma and can only be cured with *remove curse*, *break enchantment* or *heal*.

Spells: All Daughters have the spellcasting abilities of a 5th level sorcerer. The usual spells used are as follows: (6/8/5, Save DC 15 + spell level): 0th – 6 4 2 *daze*, *ghost sound*, *message*, *open/close*, *detect magic*, *ray of frost*; 1st – *mage armour*, *charm person*, *hypnotism*, *burning hands*; 2nd – *mirror image*, *hideous laughter*.



ADVENTURE SEEDS

Tarassein is a rather unfriendly plane, but its chaos does offer some opportunities for adventure. Any scenarios about planecrafting will usually include a trip to gather a chaos infusion or two, as the flexibility of the chaotic medium is very useful to planewrights. The endless wastes of chaos are also an excellent place for a troubled party to establish a refuge.

† A trio of Daughters of Bedlam are summoned by an ambitious courtier to drive the king insane. The characters must uncover the plot and stop all three. If they fail, they must travel to the Asylum to rescue the king's soul so he can be *raised*.

† An artist discovers that creativity can be distilled from raw chaos. Together with a mage friend of hers, she discovers where this fount of inspiration lies. However, it inspires the mage to create thousands of new spells. Unless the mage is stopped, he will soon create a spell that will spill chaos across all the worlds. The characters must help the artist reach her friend before unbridled creativity spells disaster.

MÂL

DESCRIPTION

The Maw of Chaos is opening.

For aeons, Mâl was a dead plane, a wasteland of sealed tombs and stagnant air. It was a forgotten side room of the Outer Planes, inhabited only by exiled fiends, thieves, vagabonds and anti-social wizards. They built ramshackle towers and shanty towns amid the ancient monoliths and cyclopean temples. Mâl was just another mystery of the planes, a curiosity for archaeologists and tomb robbers.

Then the graves opened, and the Mâlites came forth.

Now, the Maw of Chaos is caught like a dragon with a sword in its mouth; the seething hosts of chaos are poised to swarm out of Mâl and overwhelm all the planes, but are blocked by the motley crew of squatters and smugglers. Somewhere in their encampments is the artefact that will muster all the Mâlites and open all the gates...if only they can find it.

Getting there... and Back

Mâl is rather hard to reach for a plane its size. Most of the ancient portals that lead there have long since decayed or been lost. A handful of new portals were constructed, but with the planar barrier surrounding the Maw, such portals were costly or compromised by draining the energy or magic of travellers. The planes close to Mâl are hardly hospitable – on one side lie the flames of the Inferum; on the other, the warping tides of unbridled chaos. Only the Vault of Stars offers easy access to Mâl, but no stars shine in its choked sky.

No natural portal to Mâl has manifested in many ages on the material world. Be thankful for that.

Reaching Mâl by spell is problematic, due to the planar barrier. While it is of a relatively low intensity and should prove little trouble to a spellcaster capable of casting *plane shift* in the first place, it can be an unwelcome surprise for a traveller in dire straits (a condition not uncommon in the Maw).

Survival in Mâl

The environment of the plane is unwelcoming, but not immediately hostile – until the traveller takes a step. Motion tends to trigger the beetle winds, which can tear a traveller to shreds in minutes. An *antilife shell* or spell of *repel vermin* is ideal (alchemical repellent will serve in a pinch). Other regions of the plane have their own unique dangers – see below under Hazards.

Mâl Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal</i>
Size	16	<i>Infinite but repeating</i>
Morphic	3	<i>Slightly Morphic</i>
Life	-6	<i>Wasteland</i>
Weather	+6	<i>Dangerous</i>
Water/Fire	10	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	10	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	-3	<i>Mostly dead</i>
Good/Evil	+5	<i>Mildly evil</i>
Law/Chaos	-5	<i>Mildly chaotic</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	-3	<i>Impeded</i>
Green	-3	<i>Impeded</i>
Accessibility	12	<i>Planar barrier DC 20</i>
Proximity...		
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Tarassein	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Infernum	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to the Vault of Stars	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

Mâl has three distinct yet equally dangerous types of terrain; the plane is either composed of dunes of coarse dry sand, briny seas or jagged mountains of broken bone.

The average temperature in the desert region is above 90°F; the mountains average about 12,000 feet in height and are very steep (+5 DC to all Climb checks) and the seas are violent and storm-tossed. Consult *Core Rulebook II* for rules on handling such hazards.

Winds in Mâl never drop below Strong, and windstorms are common.

Malite Cultist #4: *Where there is form, let it be broken. Where there is shape, let it be twisted. Baptise us in the ash of cities and the juice of the living earth.*

– The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act VII Scene i

FEATURES

Picture a plane-spanning city made of a foul greenish resin. Take a hammer to this city, shatter it into uncountable shards. Blindly pour a dozen desert's worth of sand and five oceans of brackish water onto the ruin, not caring if some sections are submerged in rolling dunes, seas or plains of mud. Add bones of some tremendous horror punctuating the ruins.

This is the landscape of Mâl.

The Tombs of the Mâlites

The Mâlites are a race of creatures from an earlier epoch of creation. In a time before the gods were born, there was no distinction between law and chaos, between good and evil. Everything, they whisper, was *different*. At some point, the rules changed, and the Mâlites could not adapt, so instead they slept.

All this was learned through study of the great Tombs of the Mâlites. These tombs are everywhere in the sandy deserts of Mâl; massive, ugly organic edifices made of shaped green resin. Originally, the sages thought that the grotesque faces and monsters on the tombs were nothing but decorative gargoyles, but they are long-dead Mâlite slaves. Strangely, these trapped corpses are the only bodies in the tombs. The Mâlites are outside, in the desert. The grains of sand are Mâlite 'mind-eggs', and the tombs are in truth organic engines for remaking flesh and bone into new bodies for the Mâlites. These mind-eggs prevent the Mâlite soul from moving on or dissipating; instead, they wait bodiless and undimensioned for aeons. The vast mountains of bone (the remains of the first Mâlites were to be the raw material for these engines, but they feed even more eagerly on travellers).

The tombs do contain certain ancient artefacts and treasures of the Mâlites, as well as all sorts of guardian monsters, constructs and traps designed to liquefy and reprocess invaders and trespassers.

Spawning Pools

These pools only occur where the four dominant features of Mâl – the briny seas, the cyclopean tombs, the sands and raw material such as the bone mountains – come together. The spawning pool is a lake of vile slime exuded by a tomb, from which new Mâlites crawl. Most of the Mâlite towns lie on the shores of these pools.

The Rising Tide

The tainted ocean of Mâl is distilled from formless chaos, and has a much higher Morphic trait than the rest of the plane (+2d8 Morphic), and the seas are rising. As the Maw of Chaos awakens, the briny waters will run throughout the rest of the plane, increasing the Morphic trait as the Mâlites leave their sleep to invade the other planes.

Most of the outsider settlements on Mâl have dug canals through the sand and tapped the ocean to give the area around the settlement the Alterable Morphic (Morphic 5) trait.

HAZARDS

Mâl is possibly the most innately hostile of the Outer Planes; the Infernum or Tarassein may be more dangerous, but Mâl is a realm of hate and alien horrors.

Beetle Winds (CR6 + special)

The sands of Mâl are in truth eggs, as noted above. Any vibration can cause these eggs to hatch into tiny green beetles with four pincers and any number of legs. The beetles form into choking swarms that descend on whatever woke them, tearing at flesh and bone. The little fragments of gore stolen by the beetles are later fed into a tomb, to produce a new Mâlite body. One of the Mâlite souls attached to a beetle inhabits this new body.

Any character walking on the sands of Mâl must make a Balance or Move Silently check at DC 15 each round. If this check is failed, a beetle wind forms. One beetle wind swarm arises for every check that was failed in any round. A beetle wind has the same statistics as a locust swarm (see *Core Rulebook III*). If any character is killed by the damage from this swarm, a Mâlite with a CR equal to the level or Hit Dice of the slain creature is born nearby within 1d10 rounds. Mâlite movement does not cause beetle winds to rise.

When the stripped and ruined carcasses of the slain travellers fall into the sands, most beetles usually become sand again, but some fly up and join the constantly howling beetle winds of the upper atmosphere.

'Kill them all and be thankful that there are no gods willing to sort them out.'

– Deviations.

Resin Showers (CR10)

The skies of Mâl are thick with oily green-black clouds. Sometimes, a rain of liquid resin pelts down on the tortured landscape. Any creature caught out in the rain takes 1d6 points of acid damage per round. Furthermore, every point of acid damage (whether it actually damages the character or not) forms a glob of sticky resin weighing five pounds. After a few minutes of exposure to the resin shower, most characters will be severely overloaded and may even be entirely encased in resin (a character whose movement has been reduced to five feet per round due to the weight of resin being more than twice his maximum load will be unable to breathe unless someone else breaks a breathing hole in his resinous shell). The resin has a hardness of four and 10 hit points per inch of thickness. Any character encased in resin is assumed to have a two inch thick shell of resin.

Once, these resin showers were under the control of the Mâlites, who caused their fortresses and tomb-cities to rain out of the heavens wherever they walked. The current resin showers are accidents, and therefore must be recycled.

1d10 rounds after the rain stops, any areas covered with resin are struck by lightning bolts from the sky. These bolts deal 6d6 damage per bolt, and keep blasting until all the resin has been reduced to dust (1d10 rounds later), which is sucked back up into the clouds. Characters struck by these bolts may make a Reflex save (DC 15) to take half damage, and any damage is dealt to the resin sticking to a character first.

Mâlites are immune to the resin showers. Resin showers do not cause beetle winds.

LOCATIONS

There are no roads in Mâl, no clear paths. Little of the plane has been mapped other than a few square miles around each active portal.

The Waking City

This is the largest known stronghold of the Mâlites (although travellers have reported seeing far greater resinous castles out in the seas), and the only one where they tolerate the presence of outsiders. The Waking City is a bizarre, incomprehensible pile of resin towers and twisted buildings, an urban viscera of winding corridors and living rooms. The Mâlites permit outsiders to live and even dwell in the city, but only in certain sections – and the laws and borders

The Waking City (Large City): AL CE; 15,000 gp limit; Assets 11,250,000 gp; Pop 15,000; Isolated (96% Mâlites, 4% others). *Power Centres:* The mortal power centres are the August Embassy from Hell (NE) and the Trader's Guide (LN). The structure of the Mâlite rulership is unknown.

governing these sections change without notice. An outsider who has lived for six months in one chamber might return home to find an host of Mâlites waiting to evict him violently if necessary. The Mâlites are believed to be studying outsiders, especially their magic.

Life in the Waking City drives most outsiders insane. The Mâlites stalk the streets, engaged in strange rites and seemingly meaningless acts. The geography of the city changes with every rainstorm. The buzz of the swarming beetle winds is a constant nightmare hymn, occasionally broken by crackling fields of lightning that hang between the coiling towers for days at a time. Still, the city is safer than the deserts outside, and some of the lesser Mâlites will trade their wares for goods from other planes.

Tortuga

Before the Mâlites awoke, Mâl was a backwater, inhabited only by thieves and treasure hunters who wanted a place to hide. The pirate city of Tortuga is located near several active portals (leading to the Orrery, the Plane of Air, Esqogalt on the edge of Chasm and numerous other places). Tortuga is a ramshackle arrangement; huge nets and tattered sails protect the city from beetle winds and resin storms (although the insects still infest the city, though in lesser numbers, and acidic resin drips constantly from holes in the sails). The chief virtue of Tortuga is that it is a godless city – literally. Due to some quirk of Mâlite magic, the whole of Tortuga has a divine trait of zero; divine spells cannot function here. This has made the city popular among those who have offended a deity, and feared by servants of gods both good and evil. Clerics are disliked and are distrusted by most

Tortuga (Large Town): AL CN; 3,000 gp limit; Assets 750,000 gp; Pop 5,000; Mixed (Pretty Much Anyone 96%, Mâlites 4%). *Power Centres:* The King of Tortuga, a 15th level rogue (CN), Cult of Bedlam (CN), Embassy of Hell (NE).

inhabitants of Tortuga – they may enter the city, but are forced to wear distinctive black hats on pain of death.

Almost anything is for sale in Tortuga, although most of the commerce these days is in Mâlite tools and weapons.

The Gatechain

The Gatechain is a rusted set of linked metal hoops, each one big enough for a great wyrm dragon to fly through wings outstretched and not strike the rim. Seven hoops emerge from the sands, although at least another four lie buried nearby. A different rune in the Mâlic tongue is engraved atop each hoop.

Each ring is a portal of ancient design. When all the grains of sand in the desert have been converted into Mâlite warriors, when all the seas have turned to blood and the mountains recycled into flesh, when there is nothing here but cities swarming with uncountable hosts of Mâlites – then the Gatechain will float free of the desert, and all its thousand links will open to all the planes of creation, and the Mâlites will go forth and conquer.

Until that fateful day, the Gatechain lies forgotten and broken in the sand. A *door* spell can be used to open any of its links, so it can be a method of travel off Mâl without meddling with its Planar Barrier.

DENIZENS

The only denizens of Mâl are the Mâlites and the handful of creatures who have come here from other planes. The Mâlites are creatures of chaos; not fiends, not outsiders, but something entirely *other*. They have apparently little attachment to their own physical form, so a Mâlite soul might be removed from one body and inserted into another as circumstances require. They find the current arrangement of the planes...distasteful, and intend to use planecraft to return the universe to a more chaotic, lifeless and artistic state.

The Mâlites date from a time before the current conception of arcane magic. They cannot use arcane magic especially well, but are resistant to it. Many of their own spells no longer function (the weave of magic in the planes has moved on, and their incantations cannot influence it), so the Mâlites are desperately trying to learn new dweomers and spells. Wizards and tomes of arcane lore are a primary target for Mâlite raiding parties.

Currently, the majority of the Mâlite race is still bodiless in the Maw of Chaos. Of the incarnate portion of the race, some are involved in reactivating all the tombs to build new bodies for their kin, while the rest are exploring the planes – reconnaissance for the time when all the Mâlites swarm out and the Maw devours all.

Mâlite WARRIOR

Medium Aberration (Extraplanar, Mâlite)

Hit Dice: 4d8+4 (18 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 30-ft., Climb 20-ft.

Armour Class: 21 (+1 Dex, +10 resin armour), touch 11, flat-footed 20

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+5

Attack: +6 melee (1d12+3 or 1d8+3, resinblade) or +4 ranged touch (2d4, acid jet)

Full Attack: +6 melee (1d12+3 or 1d8+3, resinblade) or +4 ranged touch (2d4, acid jet)

Space/Reach: 5-ft. /10-ft.

Special Attacks: Resin blade, acid jet

Special Qualities: Mâlite traits, psychic waves

Saves: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +4

Abilities: Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12

Skills: Hide +9*, Listen +9, Move Silently +4, Spot +9

Feats: Dodge, Weapon Focus (resinblade)

Climate/Terrain: Mâl

Organisation: Solitary or hunting party (2-6)

Challenge Rating: 2

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: By character class

Level Adjustment: +4

The figure skittering towards you is roughly humanoid, but it stretches that definition to its limit. Four limbs carry a form armoured in green chitin towards you, and organs that might be some sort of eyes glitter at the end of facial cilia. A bladed spine coils and twists hungrily along the creature's length.

These Mâlite bodies were based on the appearance of the settlers at Tortuga. They have four limbs like a human, but the limbs shift depending on the creature's needs. It has no discernable face. The Mâlite warriors are scouts and foot troops, armed with the infamous resin-blade. This device is somewhere between a whip and a sword, and is often coated with acid or poison.

Combat

Mâlites have little need for self-preservation, so they are fearless warriors. They are cruel and cunning, and have come to understand the importance others place on the life of the weak, so a Mâlite warrior will often target children, familiars and other non-combatants to demoralise his foes.

Resin blade (Ex): The resin blade is a two-handed slashing weapon that can be used as a whip with reach, or a blade with no reach. It does 1d8 damage in whip mode, and 1d12 in sword form; changing between the two is a free action. Non-Mâlites cannot normally wield a resin sword.

Acid Jet (Ex): As an attack action, a Mâlite can spit a jet of acid up to 60 feet. It must make a ranged touch attack to hit with the jet, which deals 2d4 points of acid damage.

Psychic Waves (Su): Mâlite warriors produce psychic waves that weaken and disorientate their foes. Anyone struck in melee combat by a Mâlite warrior must make a Will save (DC 13) or be sickened for one round. The save for this ability is Charisma-based.

Mâlite Custodian

Huge Aberration (Extraplanar, Mâlite)

Hit Dice: 14d8+70 (133 hp)

Initiative: +1 (Dex)

Speed: 30-ft.

Armour Class: 27 (+1 Dex, -2 size, +18 resin armour), touch 9, flat-footed 26

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +10/+23

Attack: +13 melee (claw, 1d8+5)

Full Attack: Two claws +13 melee (claw, 1d8+5)

Space/Reach: 15-ft. /10-ft.

Special Attacks: Swallow Whole, Swarm Attack

Special Qualities: Mâlite traits, Create Mâlites

Saves: Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +12

Abilities: Str 20, Dex 13, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 16, Cha 12

Skills: Balance +10, Climb +5, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Listen +20, Spot +20, Search +19

Feats: Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: Mâl

Organisation: Solitary or hunting party (One custodian plus 5-10 warriors)

Challenge Rating: 11

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic evil

Advancement: 15-20 HD (Huge)

Level Adjustment: -

Mâlite Properties

All Mâlites have the following properties:

- † Spell Resistance of 11 + their Hit Dice, against arcane spells *only*. Furthermore, this resistance is reduced by one point for 24 hours after a spell has been cast (successfully or unsuccessfully) on a Mâlite. Also, if the Mâlite prepares any arcane spells, his resistance is reduced by one per spell.
- † Displacement Field (Su): A Mâlite can project a displacement field, which gives attacks against it a 25% miss chance unless the attacker can perceive the creature by some method other than sight. It also has a +4 racial bonus to Hide checks thanks to this displacement field. *True seeing* penetrates this defence.
- † Immunity to acid.
- † *Telepathy (Su):* Range 100 feet. Furthermore, all Mâlites are considered to be constantly *mind blanked*.
- † Mâlites only speak their own language. They can learn other languages, but it is exceedingly difficult for them (treat another language as a skill that the Mâlite must take ranks in and make skill checks to convey an idea).
- † Mâlite souls are not tied to their bodies; they cannot be *raised*, nor are they subject to death effects such as *slay living*. Only a spell like *trap the soul* can keep a given Mâlite from one day being reinstalled in a new shell.

This green horror is four-legged and bigger than a horse, but it moves like a hybrid of feline and equine. Four bulbous organs like wasp nests sprout from its shoulders and haunches. It has no distinct mouth, but a seam appears to run the entire length of its body, opening and closing at various points. A ghostly blue haze of shifting energy patterns floats between the four hive-like growths.

Custodians are a variety of Mâlite used to create more warriors in areas where tombs are no longer functioning, or on other planes. They are essentially walking factories for producing more of their kin. The four hives contain mind-seeds, and the blue energy is

the psychic communication of all the Mâlite souls anchored to these seeds.

The main goal of a custodian is to produce more Mâlite warrior bodies for the minds it carries.

Combat

While a custodian is a powerful combatant with its resinous claws, it has no intention of merely rending its enemies apart – after all, their bodies can be used to spawn new Mâlites.

Swarm Attack (Ex): A custodian contains eight swarms of Mâlite beetles. Treat these swarms as locust swarms (see *Core Rulebook III*). Releasing a swarm is a free action for a custodian, but it can only do so once per turn.

These swarms can attack normally, but they can also attempt to control anyone injured by the custodian's claw attacks by flying into the wounds. Anyone targeted by this attack must make a Will save each round (DC 14 + 2d6) or fall under the control of the swarm. If the wound caused by the custodian's claws is healed, the control is broken. Characters under the control of the swarm must move as the swarm dictates (usually, towards the custodian). They are otherwise considered to be stunned. Bolts of blue energy leap from the haze above the custodian meaning while the victim is under the swarm's control.

Swallow Whole (Ex): A custodian can swallow a creature whole if it pins the creature with a grapple attack. If the target is unresisting (such as the victim of a swarm attack), the custodian can automatically swallow him.

A swallowed victim takes 2d8 points of acid damage per round. He may cut his way free by dealing at least 30 points of damage to the inside of the custodian with a light slashing or piercing weapon (the gizzard has an AC of 16). If the victim is killed while inside the custodian, he is transformed into a Mâlite warrior within 1d4 rounds. A custodian can hold one Large, four Medium, or eight Small creatures in its stomach at any one time.

Create Mâlite (Su): A custodian can create Mâlite warriors, as described under the Swallow Whole ability.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Mâl is the wild card plane – there is a potential new threat to overturn the neat balance of Law and Chaos, Good and Evil. If the Mâlites do leave the Maw of Chaos, all the planes could be engulfed in war. Even if this never happens in your game, the repercussions and uncertainty of new players in the great war of the planes could fuel all sorts of adventures. Mâl is also a great place to hide unusual monsters or adventures – it is unfriendly and dangerous, a world of challenges and ancient dungeons.

- † The characters are hired by a mysterious benefactor to track down a spellbook. As they search, they discover that their benefactor intends to trade the book to the Mâlites. The book contains several powerful spells; do they risk drawing the wrath of chaos by tampering with or destroying the book?
- † An ancient portal is discovered, leading to Mâl. Investigations reveal that there is an ancient Mâlite city located beyond the portal. The characters are offered the chance to loot the city; all they need to do is hold the portal, build a canal to increase the area's Morphic trait, dig into the living sands and drive off the Mâlite hordes.
- † The powers of the Infernum declare that due to the threat of Mâl on their doorstep, they are offering a truce to the Firmament. Evil is endlessly deceitful, so this simply *cannot* be true – what are the fiends up to?
- † The Mâlites have not ignored the poor shanty towns like Tortuga out of mercy, but because of a single young girl, a sorceress who lives in the alleyways of the thieves' city. At the moment of her birth, her soul became enmeshed in the mind-seed of the Mâlite god-queen. The child is unaware of her authority over the Mâlites, and is only barely clinging to sanity due to the alien presence in her mind. As she grows, so too does her power. She might give in to the Mâlites, freeing them to ravage, or fall under the influence of some lord who uses her to control the Maw of Chaos – or she might fall in with the characters, who can help her close the Maw once more. Given the chaos of Tortuga and its trade with other planes, that child could have passed through a dozen portals and grown up unaware of the circumstances of her birth. She could even be one of the player characters...

INFERNUM

DESCRIPTION

It has many names – Hell, the Pit, the Infernal Reaches, the Lower Planes, the Abyss, the Haunt of Adversaries, the Evil, the Enemy. Call it simply the Infernum for now, but know that simple name conceals an infinite number of horrors. The darkness below the planes descends infinitely into unfathomable depths of perverted flames, endless circles of torment and evil. Layer after layer, plane after plane, demon-lord after demon-lord, evil upon evil, death after death until the mind shatters and the very soul is consumed.

A thick pall of gritty, oily black smoke hangs over the Infernum, the rising ash of billions of burning souls. It is a mercy for those viewing it from the upper planes, for it blocks the Infernum from sight.

The name, too, is a mercy. If we were to look upon Hell, or enumerate all its evils, we would surely go mad.

Disclaimer: The above values are just for the outer layers of the Infernum, and lower reaches may have quite different properties. Go to Hell at your own risk.

Getting there... and Back

It is very easy indeed to get to the Infernum – just lead a life filled immorality, cruelty and evil deeds and you shall be conveyed there soon after your death.

Travellers who wish to visit the Infernum before they are condemned there face a somewhat more difficult task. The Lower Planes are relatively easy to reach by magic – even *plane shifting* is a fine option (admittedly, this is largely because all the Infernum is equally dangerous, so inaccuracy is a minor hazard compared to infinite fiends and pits of boiling agony).

Natural portals to the Infernum are practically non-existent; occasionally manifesting in places of terrible suffering or foulness, but are soon sealed by heroes or the efforts of the celestial host. Artificial portals and *gates* are slightly more common, but these are also sealed or kept under surveillance by the Firmament.

Infernum Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal</i>
Size	20	<i>Infinite infinites</i>
Morphic	5	<i>Alterable Morphic</i>
Life	0	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	+6	<i>Dangerous</i>
Water/Fire	+8	<i>Fire-dominated</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/ Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	+8	<i>Strongly evil</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	15	<i>Magically accessible</i>
Proximity...		
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Mal	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Chasm	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

Any attempts to translate out of the Infernum to the Material Plane draws the wrath of heaven. Most demons must use guile and stealth to escape the pit, or rely on mortal summoners to draw them up through magic.

The other route out of the Infernum is to climb back up the Chasm (see page 153).

Survival in the Infernum

Listing the spells and wards needed to survive here would take an entire book. Survival here is complicated by the sheer *size* of the plane – an infinite number of layers mean a more-than-infinite number of terrains. One region of the Infernum might be a frozen wasteland, next to an ocean of blood, next to a plain of teeth and razor-sharp blades, next to a torture chamber where whole worlds are scourged, pierced and wracked. A wise traveller should *scry* or otherwise determine the local environment before visiting a region in the Infernum.

The one effect that is almost a requirement is something to hide the traveller's alignment. Any Good characters show up like beacons against a background of foulness. A paladin or good cleric will attract flocks of fiends unless his alignment is shrouded or he is under the protection of a more powerful fiend.

FEATURES

The infinity of the deeper layers of the Infernum will be explored in the upcoming *Classic Play: the Book of Hell*. The rest of this chapter will focus on the Mountains of Sin, as this is the region encountered by most planar travellers.

Evil wears many, many faces; some are fair, some foul, but all deadly. So too does the Infernum present an infinity of aspects. The outer rim is known as Feuerring, the moat of hell (see *Feuerring: Gateway to Hell*). Feuerring is a ring of boiling liquid and tortured souls, choked by poisonous gases and shoals of floating islands inhabited by demonic guards. By the standards of the Infernum, this is practically a welcome mat.

Beyond Feuerring, the Mountains of Sin surround the inner layers of the Infernum. These massive mountains are the terrain most often visited by travellers, as most portals open here and visitors are... expected. The Mountains rise out of the surrounding flames like teeth; every surface is jagged, treacherous or both. Towers and castles inhabited by all manner of horror and fell beast emerge from the stone like mangled limbs.

Sins in Stone

It is said that every sinful act adds a pebble to these mountains; if true, then hope is fading fast, for these mountains are taller than any natural range. Each mountain represents a different sin, from the foothills of Falseness and Deceit to the vast peaks of Atrocity and Murder. Each mountain has a ruler aligned to its particular misdeed; succubi flock around the Mountains of Lust and Illicit Desire, balors stalk the slopes of Wrath, while hezrou and dragons dwell in the peaks of Greed.

These mountains are aware of their natures; if any such sin is committed by an extraplanar creature while standing on the appropriate mountain, the mountain tries to claim him. The character must

make a Will save (DC 20) or have his alignment move one step towards the alignment of the mountain (Greed and Lust are neutral evil, Envy and Vanity are lawful evil and Sloth, Wrath and Gluttony are chaotic evil). If the character's alignment matches the alignment of the mountain, he is either struck by an *imprisonment* spell (Save DC 23) as the mountain tries to absorb him. Alternatively he becomes a native of the Infernum, gaining the Home Ground (Infernum) feat for free, and slowly transforms into a fiend over the next few months).

Gatehouses

These towers are located near portals and mountain passes. At the heart of each gatehouse is one or more *stones of shift guidance*, to bring travellers closer to the gatehouse. Each gatehouse is ruled by a fiendish lord of at least bebelith status, although glabrezu, mariliths and barbed devils are more common. By ancient compact, these gatelords are sworn not to destroy travellers on sight, but instead must grant them an audience. A traveller can negotiate for the protection of such a gatelord and for the service of a guide to the lower reaches. The minimum fee for such aid is at least 500 gp per traveller per level; this figure is doubled for good characters and tripled for good paladins or clerics.

At the top of each gatehouse is a great cage containing a single soul, set alight using demonic magic. In its agonies, the soul is warped to the size of a giant, and appears as a burning skeleton of white light. The soul is horribly sensitive to any form of planar travel other than the innate *plane shift* or *gate* ability of certain fiends, so any arriving travellers cause the soul unbearable agony. This behaves like a *locate portal* with a range of thirteen miles from the gatehouse. The soul projects a beam of burning light that acts like *faerie fire* outlining the travellers for 1d10 minutes.

There are tens of thousands of fiends and hellish vermin lairing amid the crevasses and caves of the Mountains of Sin who are attracted to the light of these beacons.

Torture Palaces

These fortifications are essentially holiday villas for the fiends. Hell is thick with condemned souls, oceans and swarms of the damned things.

There is so rarely time to take pride and joy in the craftsmanship of agony and punishment, to bring exquisite agony to one soul. The Torture Palaces, then, are reserved for the most deserving of the damned. In these castles, everything is designed specifically to bring pain and sorrow to a single individual. Some are incredibly complex machines of pain; others are reconstructions of the life of the damned soul, where the worst events in his life are repeated endlessly; others are dream-keeps where the damned is made to alternately forget and re-experience his death over and over again.

Torture Palaces do make excellent hiding places; there is usually only one major fiend in residence and the lesser horrors avoid the villas for fear of disturbing its master.

Inferniculars

Inferniculars are quick paths down into the depths. They are sluices made from the spines of hellworms. A character sliding or flying down an infernicular is transported to another layer of the Infernum at great speed. The surface of an infernicular is exceedingly slippery; anyone trying to stand on the floor of an infernicular without falling into the slide must make a Balance check (DC 30) each round or slip into the abyss.

HAZARDS

Thornbushes (CR2)

The wicked thornbushes that grown on the slopes of the Mountains of Sin are sown as traps for the soul. The spirits of the damned catch on the thorns like straggly bits of wool or droplets of dew. Navigating through a stand of thornbushes requires an Escape Artist check at DC 10. If the check fails, the character is pierced by thorns dealing 1d4 points of damage. Furthermore, the character's soul is caught on the thorns. It requires a Will save at DC 16 to disentangle one's soul from the thorns, and other characters may use an Aid Another action to help. If a character's soul is left behind, it may be claimed by the demon who finds it.

Infernal Taint (CR6)

The evil of the Infernum is a palpable thing. Characters who travel in the Infernal Realms may have their bodies tortured and their minds broken,

but worse is the pallor that falls upon their souls. After every day spent in the Infernum, a character must make a Will save (DC 20). If the save is failed, the character suffers a *cumulative* -1 profane penalty to *all* attack rolls, saving throws and skill checks. A character may remove this penalty by willingly shifting his alignment one step towards the opposite alignment (so a paladin will move from Lawful Good to Neutral Good to True Neutral to Neutral Evil to Chaotic Evil; Neutral Good characters can choose to end up as either Lawful or Chaotic Evil).

A *protection from evil* effect removes the profane penalty for the duration of the effect.

Lava Tongues (CR12)

The Mountains of Sin are not volcanoes *per se*; they may, however, vomit forth molten rock and sulphurous fumes, the flames in their guts are unnatural hellfire. These flames do not merely rise and fall as the mountains erupt and go dormant – instead, the flames worm their way through and around the peaks like serpents of living flame. These vast tongues of lava can be up to ten miles away, slowly crawling and writhing around the fringes of the Infernum.

A lava tongue is not a monster and cannot be fought using conventional means; it is hateful fire animated by a malignant, hellish will. It moves at a rate of 100 feet per round and is 1d20 x 10 feet wide. Any character caught in the flow takes 10d6 fire damage per round and must make a Swim check (DC 25) or be dragged under. All metal is affected by *heat metal*.

Some lava tongues are under the control of the local demonic lords, who use them to form moats or lakes of burning rock around their holdings.

LOCATIONS

The Pit

The damned are hurled down from the Halls of Order, through Chasm, and fall from the Pit into the Wood of Damnation. From the perspective of a traveller in the Infernum, the Pit is a massive gash in the skies of hell, ringed with green flames. Souls fall like shooting stars, burning up in the black air.

'Now, it happened that I had died, which I try to avoid doing more than once a year as it creates all sorts of hassles when it comes to tithing. Anyway, I was condemned to everlasting torment on a technicality, and lay impaled on a tree in the Wood of Damnation for three days. On the fourth, the Wormwood Queen came wandering by. One thing led to another, and I was quickly able to convince her that she should fetch a saw and cut me down, as being impaled on a tree was rather inconvenient for what we had in mind. I was later able to steal the silken sheets from her bedchamber and make myself a makeshift balloon in which I escaped from hell.

I tell this story not as an idle boast, but because I happened to find that tree rather comfortable, and would pay well to have it cut down and made into an armchair. All I need is a few ambitious and sinful woodcarvers.'

– Traveller's Tales

The Pit is the main entrance to the Infernal Realms, and hence is fortified beyond compare. A thousand massive keeps of hellstone surround the floor of the pit, and legion upon legion of demons stand watch for an invasion from the Chasm. At the same time, the Pit is the main *exit* from hell, so the landscape is littered with the ruins of escape attempts, such as folly-towers that reach hundreds or feet into the air, balloons and skyships of repentance, ladders and catapults and burnt spellbooks of all sorts. The portal to Chasm is only a few hundred feet (1d20 x 50 feet) above the ground, but the air is filled with flying demons who drag would-be escapees down.

The Wood of Damnation

The Wood of Damnation is a forest of thorny trees that grows directly beneath the opening to Chasm. The thorns spear the souls of those who fall from the Pit, where they wait in agony until a demon plucks them like fruit and carts them off to their eternal punishment. Items and treasures as well as all the junk of the planes is dumped down the Chasm, so the undergrowth is thick with decaying and broken wonders. Characters wandering the Wood may find all sorts of valuable goods, if they can ignore the screaming of the pinned souls, the evil and animated trees and all the other dangers of the Infernum.

The ruler of the Wood of Damnation is a nalfeshnee druid named Abthoth. He has fused himself with the tree of a fiendish dryad, the Wormwood Queen. He has learned to draw on the power of the souls pinned to his branches, and is a fearsome power. The two are allies, but she secretly covets her husband's power, and has whittled away his support amid the trees.

The Court of Bountiful Injustice

There is no appeal for a soul sentenced to eternal punishment. There is only the accounting at the Court of Bountiful Injustice. The fiends are – theoretically – open to bribes to win freedom for a damned soul. In truth, the best fate that can be won is a kingship amid the flames or a position in the armies of the Infernum. The only purpose of the Court is to calculate how large the bribe should be.

The massive courthouse is a labyrinth of tunnels scratched into the rock. This labyrinth is of immense complexity, as it is a direct manifestation of the complexity of the laws and precedents related to bribing the nalfeshnee. Subsidiary labyrinths contain the thousands of scrolls and tomes that detail the sale of souls, and souls are traded in the Tattered Market above the labyrinth. Lawyers and orators are common in the tunnels surrounding the Court, hawking their skills and (lack of) virtue to prospective bribers.

The gold or magic given in bribes is funnelled back to the other planes, fuelling the schemes of the Emissaries of Hell or other fiendish agents.

The Court of Bountiful Injustice (Large City): AL LE; 40,000 gp limit; Assets 50,000,000 gp; Pop 25,000; Mixed (50% fiends, 25% damned, 25% outsiders). *Power Centres:* The Court of Bountiful Injustice (LE), Guild of Demonic Attorneys (LE), Barukiel the Pit Fiend Governor (LE)

DENIZENS

The denizens of the Infernum are uncountable in number and unquantifiable in evil. Every sort of demon and devil can be found here, along with hellhounds, achaierai, barghests, yeth hounds and so on, as well as fiendish versions of thousands of other species.

The other major denizens are the damned, the souls of the evil dead. These appear to be an incorporeal facsimile of how they appeared in life, stripped of all equipment and clad only in grey rags.

Creating the Damned

'Damned' is a template that can be applied to any humanoid or monstrous humanoid, referred to as the base creature. The creature's type changes to 'undead' and it gains the 'incorporeal' subtype. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

HD: Increase to d12

Speed: Same as the base creature

AC: Same as the base creature

Attacks: Same as the base creature

Damage: Same as the base creature

Special Attacks: Same as the base creature, but the damned are incorporeal and usually lack incorporeal touch attacks

Special Qualities: A damned retains all the special qualities of the base creature, and adds:

Solid to Fiends (Su): The damned are not incorporeal to the attacks of fiends and fiendish objects. An Infernum-forged weapon acts like a *ghost touch* weapon against the damned, while an infernal cage can trap the damned. Fiends can grapple with the damned freely, but the damned cannot normally attack fiends back.

Saves: Same as the base creature

Abilities: Same as the base creature

Skills: Same as the base creature

Feats: Same as the base creature

Climate/Terrain: Infernum

Organisation: Varies

Challenge Rating: Same as the base creature -3

Treasure: None. The damned have no equipment

Alignment: Always evil

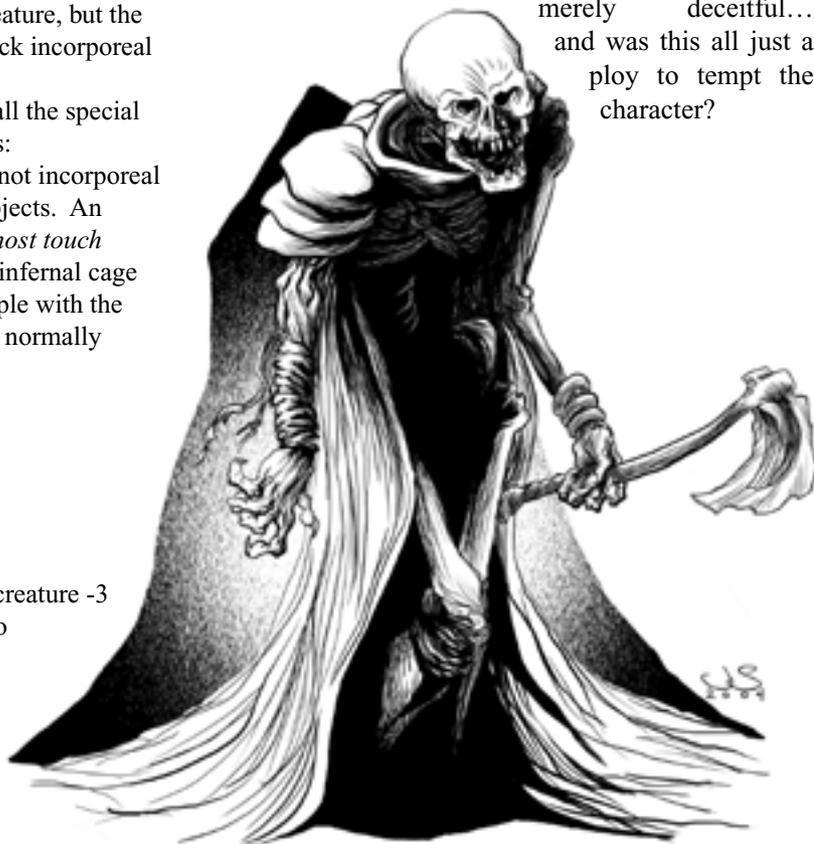
Advancement: None

ADVENTURE SEEDS

† The characters discover that one of their old foes is currently attempting to bribe the Court of Bountiful Injustice. If he succeeds, he will become a power in the Infernum and be able to strike back at the characters. The party must travel into hell and somehow ruin their old enemy's attempt to get a second chance.

† A Fey lord begs the characters to aid him in rescuing his true love from Hell. She is, of course, the Wormwood Queen. How exactly do you rescue an evil dryad when her tree is the possessed, animated body of one of the most powerful nalfeshnee in the Lower Planes?

† An attack on the Halls of Order results in many good souls being condemned unjustly. Wishing to make amends, the fiends offer a position in the Court of Bountiful Injustice to a paladin or other notably good character. The character will have to judge the merits of dozens of fallen souls; some are genuinely good and should be freed, but others are merely deceitful... and was this all just a ploy to tempt the character?



CHASM

DESCRIPTION

The multiverse is cracked and broken. The Lower Planes are divided from those above by a gash in reality. On the far side of Hell, the wound has partially healed, although how it was sealed is unknown. Chasm, though, is still a bleeding rent in the fabric of the cosmos. It is a great pit that opens at the edge of order and sanity, and drops away for countless leagues into the abyss of the Infernum.

Order, not being a wastrel, has put the Chasm to use. Souls judged evil are hurled into Chasm, where they fall until landing and impaling themselves on the thorny trees of the Wood of Damnation. Atop Chasm is the Great Grid, a vast prison door that keeps the forces of the Lower Planes from swarming up.

Chasm Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal</i>
Size	13	<i>Multiple worlds</i>
Morphic	5	<i>Alterable Morphic</i>
Life	0	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	0	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	+4	<i>Mildly evil</i>
Law/Chaos	-4	<i>Mildly lawful</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	15	<i>Magically accessible</i>
Proximity...		
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Infernum	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Halls of Order	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

The sheer sides of the Chasm have been gnawed away and colonised by all manner of creatures. There are vertical kingdoms and terraced dominions clinging to the edge of the Chasm, as well as cities floating amid the rain of souls.

Getting there... and Back

The easiest way to access Chasm is to use magic. Trying to climb into Chasm from below draws the wrath of thousands of flying demons; from above, the traveller must evade or persuade the ever-vigilant Grid Guardians to let him pass. It is much better to *plane shift* or *gate* in – so long as the traveller is prepared for the drop.

Natural portals to Chasm are few. There are the usual portals from the Astral Plane and the various nexus points. Magical resonance occasionally creates a portal to Chasm at the bottom of huge pits and ravines, while the walls of Chasm are rumoured to connect to the Plane of Elemental Earth in places.

Artificial portals in Chasm are relatively common – after all, the naturally coterminous points of the plane are blocked by the Grid above and by fiends below. Most of the terraces have at least one portal, as do the Windfisher Cities.

Survival in Chasm

The single most important question in Chasm is; ‘*can you fly?*’ Those who can may cross the Chasm easily, assuming they can dodge the falling souls. Those who cannot must slowly clamber around the edges. The denizens of Chasm are mostly Lawful Evil, so slavery and oppression are common.

The shafts of light that manage to pass through the Grid light from the upper reaches of Chasm. The lower sections are choked with yellowish fumes and smoke from the Infernum, so massive wrought-iron lampposts projecting from the walls of the pit are used on the lower half.

FEATURES

The Chasm is roughly square in most places, although its shape changes greatly as one descends and the walls bulge or fall away. The upper sections are the most regular, but the heat rising from the Infernum has melted much of the lower stonework, creating ghastly twisted tongues of molten rock

and ashen drifts. The width of the Chasm also varies, from around one hundred miles at its widest to no more than 100 feet at its narrowest. Occasionally, massive earthquakes cause regions of the Chasm to draw together or spring apart. The Grid has been observed to flare violently when this occurs, although it is unknown if the shock of the earthquake disturbs the Grid or whether the Grid itself is used to reshape the Chasm.

The Falls

Things constantly fall through Chasm – souls, mostly, screaming as they plunge towards their eternal torment, but Chasm is used as a dumping ground for all sorts of things. The earthquakes and terrace-building on the upper levels dislodge stone and waste matter; numerous *gates* from magically-potent civilisations disgorge unwanted detritus into the Pit. Some have referred to Chasm as the ‘world-sewer’ and the epithet is not entirely inaccurate. That said, the most surprising objects have fallen into Chasm, leading many to suspect that either the Halls of Order are using the pit to dispose of unwanted chaotic items, or that the fluctuations in the Grid create temporary portals which suck in

Falling Objects

1d100	Object
0-30	Nothing
31-60	A Damned soul falling; see page 152, the Infernum, for the Damned template. The soul is always evil, but may be of any race or class.
61-80	Stone or earth from a terrace above.
81-90	Junk and broken items.
91	A random simple melee weapon.
92	A random simple ranged weapon.
93	A random martial melee weapon.
94	A random martial ranged weapon.
95	A random exotic weapon.
96	A random piece of armour.
97	A random piece of adventuring gear.
98	A random alchemical item or toolkit.
99	A random mundane item.
00	A living creature who has fallen.

objects from across the planes. Others believe that the goods held by the dead are carried with their souls and then dropped into Chasm when the soul continues on to its final resting place.

The Falls are not constant; one minute, the skies might be empty while in the next a torrent of damned souls and wreckage from some forgotten war pelt down. Roll on the following table if a character investigates a Fall.

Windfisher Cities

Huge rocks float through Chasm; most of these have been colonised. The so-called Windfisher Cities are more like villages for the most part. They cast great nets into the falls to dredge out anything of value. As the best prizes are found higher in the falls, there is constant jockeying among the cities for the upper sections of the Chasm. Wars are fought using flying ships and wyvern-riders for a few miles of altitude in a near-infinite pit.

Stairwells

Several sections of the Chasm have been cut and shaped into stairs. No one stairwell extends the full length of the Chasm, from the fumes of Hell to the Great Grid, but a traveller can theoretically travel the Chasm without clambering over sheer rock or flying. Most of these stairwells are inhabited or guarded, and some are trapped or lead into dungeons. Some stairwells delve mercifully into the rock face, enclosing travellers. Others are carved into the walls of Chasm, so the traveller can see all the way down as he climbs, and one misstep can send an unfortunate soul tumbling into the abyss.

Terrace Kingdoms

The major bastions of civilisation in Chasm are the terrace kingdoms. Massive ledges have been cut into the stone walls by legions of slaves and bound monsters, to create territory for despotic kings and exiled demons. These petty kingdoms rarely last more than a few centuries before being torn apart by war or crushed by the falling debris of a higher land. The one thing almost all these kingdoms have in common is that their societies are extremely stratified; a commoner from one terrace might be executed for daring to trespass on a higher ledge, or even for looking up from the ground. In general,

the higher the terrace and the further back it is from the edge of the pit, the higher its status.

The inhabitants of these kingdoms vary; tieflings and other fiendish races are common, as are undead and half-undead. Not all of the Damned fall all the way into the Infernum, so dead clerics and sorcerers can carve out their own dominions on the edge of the abyss. There are also kingdoms made by the common races; humans and goblins seem to get everywhere, while evil elves and drow take to the racism and drive for purity in the terrace kingdoms with characteristic élan and cruelty.

HAZARDS

Death from Above (CR2)

Falling objects regularly rain down from above, such as small stones or falling victims. A character can keep an eye on the sky; this causes a -2 penalty to all skill checks, Reflex saves, and attack rolls, but does ensure that the character is never surprised by a sudden shower.

A character who is not keeping watch may be struck by falling objects, for 2d6 damage. A Reflex save at DC 12 is allowed for half damage. One character may keep watch for up to eight others.

Falling (CR+1)

Obviously, the major danger on a plane that is all precipice and void is falling. Strong winds whip around the edges of the chasm and the rocks are slick with slime and condensation, so Balance and Climb checks are required to move in many areas of the plane. The DC for these checks varies from 10 to 30 (roll 10 + 1d20 for a random section of the plane).

A character who falls off the edge of the cliff is unlikely to plummet all the way into hell – there are many protrusions and irregularities in the shape of the wall, so he will probably also slam into some obstacle. The character must make a Dexterity check, beginning at DC 10. If the check succeeds, the character manages to angle his fall and strikes the cliff face again 1d20 x 10 feet down (roll damage as normal). The character may now make a Reflex save at a DC of 10 + the result of the 1d20 roll to grab on. If he fails to angle his fall, or fails to grab on, he may make another Dexterity check

after another 1d20 x 10 feet, but the DC for each subsequent Dexterity check increases by 2.

A character who falls from the centre of the Chasm (from the Grid, a floating island or flying ship) uses the above rules, but the DC for the Dexterity check starts at 20.

If a character's body is killed by the fall, his soul continues falling into the Infernum, and must be retrieved before the character can be *raised*.

LOCATIONS

One of the convenient things about Chasm is that all directions can be given simply in terms of distance fallen. Barometers and altimeters are more common than lodestones or maps.

Peredrim

The City of Peredrim was built by the most cunning of stonemasons in ages past. The city's walls were impenetrable, its towers reached high into the sky yet were more enduring than diamond, its foundations absorbed the shock of quakes and burrowing worms alike with no more than an imperceptible quiver. In short, Peredrim was unassailable.

Its attackers did not bother to assail Peredrim though; instead they shattered the terrace on which it sat. With a terrible grinding noise, the whole city slid and slid...and stopped. Peredrim ended up clinging to the cliff face, the terrace it stands on having been cleaved off, whereupon it tipped over the edge and got stuck on an overhang. The city now stands at a right angle to its former position; walls are now floors, streets are chutes or ladders. The city is now mostly empty, but a few loyal citizens remain – even in its steep and diminished form, Peredrim is still magnificent, defensible and beautiful.

Peredrim (Large Town, was Metropolis): AL LN; 3,000 gp limit; Assets 600,000 gp; Pop 4,000; Mixed (50% outsiders, 25% damned, 25% fiends). *Power Centres:* Netmaker's Guild (LN), Varus the Field (LE), Spider-eater Herders (LE).

The Dominion of Asaguth

Asaguth is king of nine terraces, making him one of the most powerful, but petty warlords on Chasm. He is a half-orc, half-fiend, the offspring of a famous orc warrior and a marilith. He won his kingdom and his throne by virtue of his mixed blood, and he intends to breed an army of similar strengths. Race and purpose segregate the various terraces of his kingdom; at the base, humans toil in the fields. Two terraces up, dwarf-smiths forge weapons and armour. On the seventh terrace, fiends conspire and whisper. The eighth terrace, known as the Pleasure Gardens, are anything but; here, Asaguth enforces a breeding program between mortal to fiend through both natural, magical and alchemical means.

The bat-winged legions of Asaguth are one of the few units of flying infantry in Chasm, and so have a great advantage over the other terrace kingdoms, who must rely on skyships and flying mounts.

The Web Lands

About two-thirds of the way down Chasm lie the Web-Lands, the haunt of fiendish spiders and other arachnid horrors. The webs criss-cross the Chasm, trapping souls and other falling objects. There, spiders spin webs large enough to catch cities and ships, here too – wars are often fought between the drifting Windfisher Cities and the spider empire. The spiders, huge and loathsome, ancient and powerful, are usually the victors in such struggles, however, when the webs grow too thick and the flow of souls to Hell is choked off, pit fiends armed with *vorpal swords* rise up and slice through the webs, opening Chasm once more.

The Sect of the Spider is rumoured to have a stronghold or portal near the Web Lands, where they brew the fabled drug *latheen*.

The Gallows of Insight

The Gallows of Insight is an ancient structure sunk deep into the side of the Chasm constructed from godbone and the wood of the first tree that stretches out into Chasm. It is rickety and groans in the slightest breath of wind. A thick hempen rope hangs from an iron ring at the tip of the Gallows' arm.

Hanging from the Gallows is rumoured to bring wisdom. A character that ties the rope around his leg

and hangs from the Gallows may gain a permanent +1 inherent bonus to Wisdom. At the end of each day, the character may make a Gallows Check; roll 1d20 + the character's Wisdom modifier. If the total exceeds 20, the character permanently gains one point of Wisdom. For each day spent without food or drink hanging from the Gallows, the character may gain a +1 insight bonus to his Gallows Check (see *starvation and thirst* in *Core Rulebook II* for details on the effects of such conditions). A suspended character is always subject to Death from Above (see Hazards) and is never considered to be aware of potential threats. The suspended character is also especially vulnerable to falling objects (see The Falls) and rolls to determine what type of item falls past the character. Sentient creatures will desperately try to catch hold of a hanging character to halt their fall, though they require a Reflex check at DC20 to do so. Any inanimate item striking the character inflicts 1d6 points of damage logical for its type per size category above Small. For example if a discarded chair hits a character, the item is Small and so deals 1d6 points of Bludgeoning damage. A discarded greatsword also hits the suspended character, as a Large weapon, this deals 3d6 points of Slashing damage.

Characters can attempt to hang from the Gallows in this fashion as many times as they wish, but may only benefit once. Alternatively a character may also choose to hang by the neck; such a character takes 1d6 points of non-lethal damage every 15 minutes. At the end of each day, the character may make a Gallows Check; roll 1d20 + the character's Wisdom modifier. If the total exceeds 20, the character gains 1d4 permanent points of Wisdom. For each day spent without food or drink hanging from the Gallows, the character may gain a +1 insight bonus to his Gallows Check (see *starvation and thirst* in *Core Rulebook II* for details on the effects of such conditions). Again a character can attempt to hang from the Gallows in this fashion as many times as they wish, but may only benefit once.

The Great Grid

The Great Grid is the lock on the gates to the Infernum. It is a vast grating that covers the entirety of Chasm; fifty-mile-long girders of adamantine, each one imbued with the most potent abjurations and runes of warding. Fields of force seethe between the gaps in the Grid, preventing anything from crawling back up the Chasm.

Breaking through the Grid requires either smashing through an adamantine girder (hardness 20, hp 28,800) or passing through one of these fields of force (which behave just like a *prismatic wall*, only each layer also inflicts 10d6 points of force damage on anyone touching it). There are only two viable ways through the Great Grid.

Firstly, the Circle of Judgement where souls are evaluated, stands above a portal through the Great Grid. Theoretically, a creature could pass back through this portal, but would then have to deal with the Grey Judges (see Page 161, Halls of Order).

Secondly, there are all sorts of small tunnels and secret passages on the edge of the Grid, where it is set into the stone of Chasm. This warren of cracks and rifts is patrolled by Grid Guardians as well as other dangers, but it is relatively easy to slip through unnoticed.

The Great Grid was created to prevent major fiendish invasions of the upper planes, not to block off access to the Infernum altogether. All of the demon princes and arch-fiends can translate to other planes by bypassing the Grid, but it does ensure that the armies of Hell will never march on the vulnerable Halls of Order.

The Grid has a single lock – the City of Puzzles. This is a city built in twenty-four square districts that can slide around like a child's puzzle. One combination of the districts will open the Great Grid, but these districts constantly squabble for access to the four elemental *gates* located at the corners of the city, and rarely cooperate with anyone who wishes to slide the city's districts around to solve the puzzle.

DENIZENS

Aranea, phase spiders, spider eaters, achaierai, barghests and all manner of fiends and outsiders dwell in the Chasm. The Great Grid has its own defenders, the constructs known as Grid Guardians.

Grid Guardian

Huge Construct (Extraplanar, Lawful)

Hit Dice: 16d10+40 (128 hp)

Initiative: +0 (Dex)

Speed: 30-ft.

Armour Class: 28 (-2 size, +20 natural armour), touch 8, flat-footed 28

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +12/+31

Attack: Slam +21 melee (1d8+11) or *gridspear* +12 ranged (1d6+13)

Full Attack: Six slams +21/+16/+11 melee (1d8+11) or *gridspear* +12/+7/+2 ranged (1d6+13)

Space/Reach: 20-ft. /10-ft.

Special Attacks: Gridspears, Smite Chaos, Smite Evil, Spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Construct Qualities, Gridlock, Immunity to Primitives, DR 20/Adamantine

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +4

Abilities: Str 32, Dex 10, Con -, Int 8, Wis 8, Cha 16

Skills: Spot +18

Feats: Multiattack, Power Attack, Improved Bull Rush, Awesome Blow, Cleave, Improved Overrun

Climate/Terrain: The Great Grid

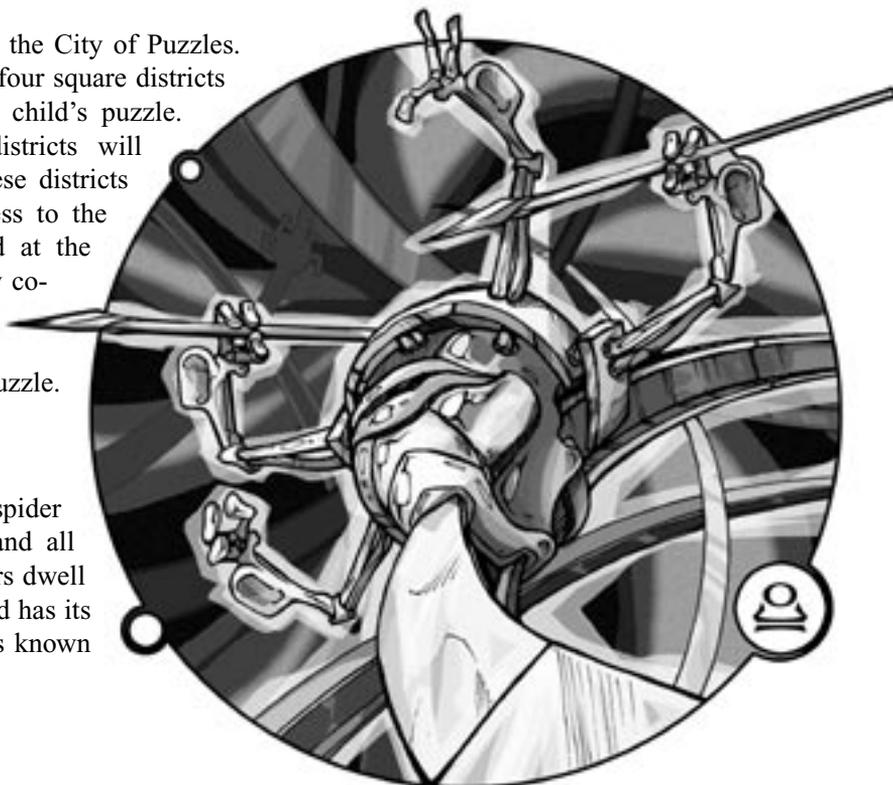
Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: 14

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always lawful neutral

Advancement: None



The creature rolling along the grid is roughly spherical, but its base slots onto a rail running through the Grid. It has six arms spaced equally around its equator and a blandly smiling metal face atop its spherical body.

Grid Guardians are potent constructs made to patrol the Great Grid and protect it. Silver Guardians patrol the upper side of the Grid, in the Halls of Order. Golden Guardians move along the lower side of the Grid, watching the Chasm. Bronze guardians all revolve along the inner edges of the Grid, inside the energy fields. The Guardians were built by the Lords of Order along with the Great Grid, and are essentially extensions of the Grid's purpose.

Combat

Grid Guardians are only interested in two things – protecting the Grid and ensuring that no-one gets through it. They will stop to converse with travellers on the grid, but they are not especially loquacious, even for giant metal rolling toys stuck to an adamantine railway.

Gridspears (Su): A Grid Guardian can produce up to three gridspears from its body to throw each round. A gridspear is a spear +2 that casts *forcecage* (barred version) on anything it strikes. A gridspear vanishes after being thrown.

Smite Chaos (Su): Once per day, a Grid Guardian can make a normal attack to deal +16 additional damage against a chaotic opponent.

Smite Evil (Su): Once per day, a Grid Guardian can make a normal attack to deal +16 additional damage against an evil opponent.

Gridlock (Su): While on the Great Grid, a Grid

Guardian has Fast Healing 2 and has a +6 bonus to all saving throws. If destroyed, it is reabsorbed into the Grid.

Immunity to Prismatics (Su): Grid Guardians are immune to all prismatic spells, including the fields of force that pervade the Grid.

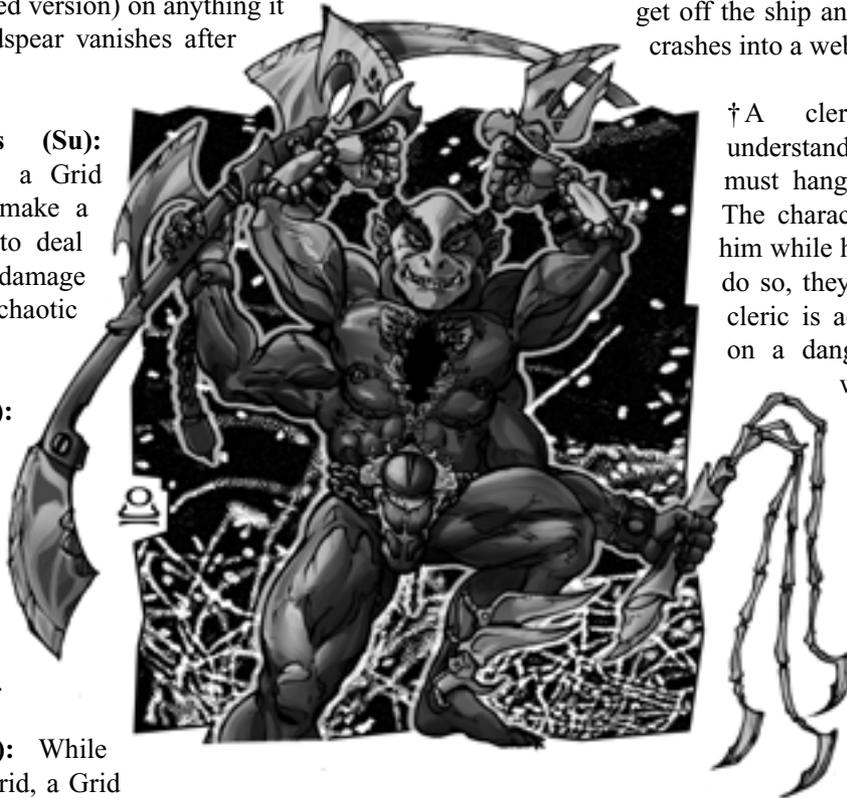
Spell-like abilities (Sp): At will: *great shout, dismissal, order's wrath*. All spells are cast as if by a 16th level cleric, and the save DC is 16 + the spell level.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Chasm is a place between two other, much more powerful planes. Above, there are the Halls of Order; below, the fires of the Infernum. It is a wild no-man's land, a realm where law and evil are constantly recombined in terrible, ghastly forms. It can be used as a challenge for the characters to deal with until they are ready for the hordes of the Infernum.

† The best sky-ships are made in the Windfisher Isles. The characters are sent to purchase one and bring it back via a *gate*. However, the ship is sabotaged by a rival, and begins to sink. Can the characters get off the ship and survive when it crashes into a web far below?

† A cleric wishes to understand everything, so he must hang from the tower. The characters must defend him while he hangs. As they do so, they are told that the cleric is actually mediating on a dangerous spell that will have dire consequences, and truly seeks power, not understanding. Can the characters trust in the cleric's divine wisdom, or will they betray the deceitful cleric?



THE HALLS OF ORDER

DESCRIPTION

Alarming, at first glance the Halls of Order look like a realm of chaos – objects are in constant flux, writhing and shifting while retaining their overall shape. On closer examination, the truth is revealed; the Halls of Order are a constantly advancing and accelerating *process* of increasing order and complexity. Every object and creature is constantly being refined and resolved, moving towards a higher order of perfection.

Leave a stone on the roadside in the Halls of Order and watch it for a time. The cracks in the stone become more regular, the random stains and blemishes shift until they are snow-flake patterns on the surface of the now-regular rock. The road has become straighter, and as you blink, you realise your eyes have become lenses of crystal.

Getting there... and Back

The Halls of Order border on the two planes of the dead – the Afterworld and Chasm – so the easiest way to get to Order is to die. For those searching for a less drastic means of travel, the plane is easily accessible through magic, as even *plane shift* is reliable here.

Natural portals to order are non-existent – for the random flux of the planes to produce doors to the realm of perfect law is unthinkable. All portals to the Halls of Order are carefully constructed for specific purposes. All is planned, all is anticipated.

'How can it be argued that order is not desirable? The structure of the multiverse is two-fold – the Elements move from Positive to Negative, in the direction of entropy. Souls move from Chaos to Order, countering the flow to entropy. All living things are therefore bound to Order by the very structure of the universe.'

– Alastherion's Planar Encyclopaedia

'Thoughts can be traps.'

– Deviations

Halls of Order Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	1	<i>Slightly Morphic</i>
Life	0	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	0	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Law/Chaos	-8	<i>Strongly lawful</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	15	<i>Magically accessible</i>
Proximity...		
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Afterworld	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Chasm	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

Survival in the Halls of Order

The lower four layers of the plane are as safe as a region of the Material Plane, so a traveller need take no special precautions. The upper two layers are much stranger, as the level of order approaches perfection. Any chaotic impulse can result in the traveller being attacked or transformed by agents of Law. Effects that hide alignment are suggested for safe travel in these layers.

FEATURES

The Halls of Order are divided into six Halls, the six layers of the plane. A character can travel between these layers using spells – all six layers are coexistent with each other, and numerous portals exist between them. Furthermore, at the 'edges' of the plane are many little ledges. The six Halls are located on the faces of a rotating cube, but the ledges are outside the cube. A character can walk to the edge of the plane along one Hall, wait for the cube to rotate, then walk back the way he came onto a different face.

The Machine Realm

The lowest level of the Halls of Order is a vast engine; furnace-hot and oil-dark, the air choked with chemical fumes and the smoke of a billion forges. Dwarves and azer scurry through dim access-ways and along slowly rotating cogs and gears, overseeing the workings of the Great Machine. In one part of this device, inevitables are forged by other machines, metal and crystal folding in accordance with inevitable law. In another region, mighty clockworks tick on, regulating the forward flow of time across the cosmos.

The Machine Realm is not yet conscious. The great intellect of Law that exists on the upper layers has not yet downstepped itself into unliving metal and stone. One day, the Machine will have rebuilt and refined itself sufficiently to become self-aware, vastly increasing the ability of Law to bring Order to all that exists. At the heart of the Machine Realm is the seat of this nascent intellect, a machine-mind guarded by hosts of inevitables. If a single whisper were to be spoken inside this great sealed chamber, or even a stray thought were to disturb the mind as it grows, it could conceivably drive the Great Machine insane even as it slowly becomes aware. Many have tried to subvert the unborn machine-mind – their corpses litter the metal corridors outside the sealed chamber.

The Model City

The second layer of the Halls of Order is the Model City, a plane-spanning metropolis where Law is paramount. The citizens thread their way between massive edifices of stone. A tunnel system filled with mechanical worms carries the common folk to their assigned duties, all watched over by a billion sleepless eyes of crystal. Law is enforced by agents of order; some are constructed inevitables, others are mortal beings so strongly aligned to order that their actions are utterly dominated and circumscribed by Law.

The Model City is an experiment; how can the various races and civilisations of the multiverse be brought under the beneficial rule of Law? Therefore, towering tri-legged gate-machines are dispatched to dredge whole villages or city-quarters from other planes into the Model City, where the reactions of the new additions can be observed and the universal law adjusted to bring the greatest degree of order to the masses.

The sheer size of the Model City is mind-boggling, and it is much more peaceful than other cities a tenth its size. Jealous scions of chaos sometimes launch sudden raids or spawn criminal syndicates within the Model City, but the agents of Law are ever-vigilant.

The Library of All-That-Is

The third layer of the Halls of Order is referred to as the library. Almost every book ever written is here, transcribed by diligent clerks who *scry* over the reader's shoulder. Any creative act increases order, so books are sacred here. The Halls of Order are haunted by thousands of sagely ghosts, the souls of wizards and philosophers who linger here to study. The librarians are spider-things, indistinct clouds of silence, shadow, eyes, legs and quills; they do not take kindly to borrowers.

Finding anything in the library is exceedingly difficult; almost all the books are physically identical, and most have been translated into a curious language used only in the library. Learning this script of order is difficult; the language was designed to process and order concepts and lore from thousands of different races, so it is most complex and encompassing.

The Language of Law

This script is used only in the Library of All-That-Is. Only a character with Intelligence 16 or more can learn it; furthermore, it takes three 'language slots' – a character must allocate three bonus languages or spend three skill points to learn the language. It can only be written; it cannot be spoken aloud. Chaotic creatures cannot learn this language.

Circle of Judgement

Souls are formed in Tarassein and pass through life, either following a neutral path through the Vault of Stars or else making a moral choice and coming under the auspices of the Firmament or the Infernum. No matter how the soul behaved in life, however, it shall end up here, in the Circle of Judgement. The Grey Judges review each soul in turn, determining exactly what proportions of good and evil, law and chaos hold sway over it. Particularly exalted or potent souls attract the attention of advocates, powerful outsiders from one plane or another. A

paladin's soul might be defended by a guardian angel; a demonologist might be claimed by a dozen fiends, each of whom have the necessary paperwork to demand ownership.

The Circle of Judgement itself only takes up a fraction of this layer. Nine great gates, each corresponding to a particular death, bring in the souls, who then wait in endless queues until the Circle is ready to judge them. The gates are accounted as follows: Death by War, by Sickness, by Famine, by Spell, by Beast, by Murder, by Suicide, by Age and by Fate.

Souls judged evil are hurled into Chasm; those worthy of rest are carried on silver barges to the Afterworld. The brightest souls are carried into the Firmament, while those souls too chaotic and free to accept rest are usually sent back to Chaos to be reincarnated once more.

A potent soul (Character level 10+) may request a trial by the Grey Judges instead of judgement in certain cases. Inevitables are dispatched to the Dream Plane to retrieve suitable witnesses and jurors.

The Grey Judges

These entities are lesser Lords of Order; their power stems mainly from their grey robes of office, which empower them to judge the fate of souls. These minor artefacts empower the wearer to act as a *talisman of pure good* or *talisman of ultimate evil* once per day. Furthermore, the wearer's judgements hold; a damned soul can be removed from the Infernum and sent to the Afterworld if the wearer so decrees.

The Grey Judges are all Lawful creatures with similar statistics to Titans. They have little patience for the living, and tend to issue summary judgement against those they find to be interfering with the judicial process.

Dominions of Order

These are the holdings of the greater Lords of Order. These entities are not gods per se; they are the expression of the natural forces of order. Their domains are primarily abstract; the only solid

terrain are growths of crystal, while all around fly equations and the manifestations of process.

The Lords of Order sometimes manifest in this midst of this incomprehensible order. They resemble whatever they hold authority over, so the Lord of Building looks like an animated castle, speaking through his drawbridge-mouth and peering through arrow-slit eyes. The Lady of Intellect is a cold being of blue crystal and lightning-quick thought. The Lord of Constellations is a shape made of dots and lines that form fate-governing patterns as he moves.

The Lords of Order are exceedingly potent on this layer – it has the Divinely Morphic trait, and they are divine here. It is here that the forces of Order are marshalled and dispatched against the spawn of Chaos and where that great minds reach out over the cosmos to draw it back from the pit of barbarism and madness.

Eutaxy

The layer of Eutaxy is the highest manifestation of Order. No being has ever passed into this face of the cube and returned. It is a field of constantly moving light, a single thought constantly expanding. Eutaxy attempts to replicate itself; the other five layers are merely echoes or approximations of Eutaxy in different respects (the Machine Realm in base matter; the Model City in civilisations; the Library in individual minds; the Circle of Judgement on a universal scale, and the Dominions mediate the flow of Order from Eutaxy to the other four aspects).

Eutaxy has the Law/Chaos trait of –10 (Uttermost Law).

HAZARDS

Refining Breath (CR5)

The major hazard in the Halls of Order is the Refining Breath. This phenomenon is an attempt by the plane to make everything in it more orderly. The Refining Breath manifests as a sudden gust of dry wind. Anyone struck by the breath must make a Fortitude save; the DC for the save is 10 if the character is Lawful, 15 if Neutral and 20 if Chaotic. The character must continue making saves each round until he succeeds at one.

Whenever the character fails a save, one of the following effects occurs:

- † The character's ethical alignment becomes Lawful.
- † The character's highest and lowest ability scores are averaged.
- † The character's hit points are changed as if he had rolled the average amount on each hit dice.
- † The character becomes crystalline; he gains DR 5/Chaos, but loses two points of Dexterity and Charisma.
- † The character is struck by a *geas* never to break any laws (no save).
- † The character is struck by a *mark of justice* (no save).

LOCATIONS

The Dungeon of Ill Regard

This labyrinth is a pocket plane along the vertex between the Machine Realm and the Dominion of Order. Here, especially powerful chaotic creatures and other aberrations are captured and dissected. Spools of cold iron are wound around with the life-essence of chaos beasts and potent Fey, who have their chaotic substance uncoiled cell by cell. Sagely machines analyse the stuff of chaos, hoping to impose order on it. The walls of the dungeon are made of perfectly transparent crystal, so that the chaos-things trapped within can be observed at all times by the glittering guardian constructs.

Iujis' Junction

The network of train tunnels beneath the Model City includes several portals to other planes. All these tunnels meet up at one underground complex, overseen by a human cleric named Iujis. Agents of order travel through Iujis' Junction on various missions and journeys, and is certainly one of the cleaner, safer and more convenient nexus points. Iujis permits travellers not in the service of Law to use her junction fairly freely, occasionally demanding a minor toll.

In secret, Iujis has a longer-term goal. She seeks to become a Lady of Order, by spreading the civilising effects of travel throughout the planes. The Lady of Trains or Transport would be a potent portfolio to hold. She has made bargains and compacts with several imps and devils of fiendish industry

to promote technological development and steam power in numerous worlds.

DENIZENS

The inhabitants of the Halls of Order are primarily humans, azer, dwarves and gnomes, as well as vast numbers of inevitables and Lawful creatures. The Halls seek to bring all things towards the perfection of Law, so almost any entity may be assigned its place in the order of created things.

Inevitable, Jarut

Medium Construct (Extraplanar, Lawful)

Hit Dice: 4d10+20 (42 hp)

Initiative: +0 (Dex)

Speed: 30-ft.

Armour Class: 20 (+10 natural armour), touch 10, flat-footed 20

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +3/+6

Attack: Slam +6 melee (1d6+3) or sap +6 melee (1d6+3, non-lethal)

Full Attack: Slam +6 melee (1d6+3) or sap +6 melee (1d6+3, non-lethal)

Space/Reach: 5-ft. /5-ft.

Special Attacks: Force Passage, Smite Chaos, Spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Fast Healing 3, Construct traits, Damage Reduction 3/chaotic, immunity to entanglement

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +1

Abilities: Str 16, Dex 10, Con -, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 14

Skills: Sense Motive +6, Spot +12*, Survival (tracking only) +6*

Feats: Alertness, Track

Climate/Terrain: Halls of Order

Organisation: Solitary or Squad (5)

Challenge Rating: 3

Treasure: None

Alignment: Always lawful neutral

Advancement: None

This clockwork creature resembles an animated suit of armour. It carries a cudgel in one hand. Its 'face' is a perfectly reflective silvery sphere.

The jaruts are among the lowest grade of inevitable; they are the city watch of the Model City, and are rarely dispatched outside its limits. They are assigned to enforce the laws of the city, quell disobedience and deal with troublemaking travellers. The approach of a jarut is easy to spot – as they move, the constructs project a wedge of

force that pushes other creatures harmlessly out of their way. A squad of jaruts can charge through the thickest crowd to apprehend a lawbreaker.

Combat

Jaruts rarely use lethal force – they are programmed to apprehend criminals, not kill them (more powerful inevitables are used to destroy the enemies of Order). Their primary weapon is a sap; anyone struck with it feels a momentary telepathic flash that informs them exactly which laws of the Model City they have broken, if any. When forced, jaruts resort to battering foes with their metallic arms.

Force Passage (Su): Jaruts project a wedge of force that pushes obstructions to one side; they may move through the squares of other Medium-size creatures (although this still draws attacks of opportunity). The jarut can even force a creature out of a square – the target is displaced to an adjacent square to the left or right of the jarut (creature’s choice). Four jaruts working in concert can push a Large creature using this ability.

Smite Chaos (Su): Once per day, a jarut can make a normal attack to deal +4 additional damage against a chaotic opponent.

Immunity to Entanglement (Su): Jaruts are immune to the tangling effects of spider’s webs, tanglefoot bags, *web* or *entangle* spells, and nets.



Spell-like abilities: At will: *zone of truth*, *command*. 3/day: *web*. A jarut may also cast *greater teleport* three times a day, but may only take one passenger, and only then when the passenger is a lawbreaker being brought for judgement. The saving throw for all spells is 12 + the spell level.

Skills: Jaruts has a +6 racial bonus to Spot and Survival checks. The latter can be used only for tracking.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Halls of Order offer a wide variety of potential adventures.

- † The characters are in a town attacked by the tripods, who draw the town into the Model City. The characters have to find a way out of the Halls of Order without running afoul of the inevitables.
- † The characters are sent to retrieve a particular soul from the endless lines that wait outside the Circle of Judgement. As they search, they encounter a devil who has been sent to plead for their quarry’s soul. Why is the Infernum involved?
- † A cleric sends the characters to consult the Library of All That Is. She is concerned that, over the centuries, scribes have made errors in new editions of the sacred texts. The current doctrine must be checked against the perfect copy in the Library. When the characters retrieve the book, they discover that the sacred texts have indeed been edited over the years – the original teachings of the cleric’s god clearly demand a disastrous holy war. Do the character bring the truth back and plunge the church, and possibly whole nations, into war?
- † A renegade Lord of Order launches a crusade against chaos with an army of mechanical warriors. How can a being of perfect Law be considered a renegade? Why a crusade now? And more importantly, can the characters break into the central vault of the Machine Realm and teach its mind the virtues of good before the mechanical army overruns everything?

THE AFTERWORLD DESCRIPTION

The Afterworld is the garden of the upper planes; an infinite heavenly greensward wreathed in roses and bright mists. The shining bulwarks of the Firmament defend the Afterworld; it slopes down from the mountain of Heaven to the sharp borders of Order or the rambling woods of the Questing Ground.

Most souls that are not condemned to the fires of the Infernum are brought to the Afterworld. Each deity maintains a vast estate on this plane, where their followers and servants dwell in relative bliss and happiness for all eternity. The dead rest easily here.

Getting there... and Back

The Afterworld is protected by a powerful planar barrier; only characters anointed with specific oils in a ceremony appropriate to a particular deity can

travel to this plane. Knowing this ritual requires a Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20 for the character's patron god, DC 30+ for another god). If the ritual is not performed, then the character cannot reach the plane using *plane shift*. A traveller who uses a particular ritual sacred to a god can only access the region of the plane claimed by that god.

For travellers unwilling or unable to use such a ritual, the Afterworld is difficult to enter. Portals from the Firmament and the Halls of Order exist, but they are constantly guarded. The portals from the Questing Ground are much less secure, but reaching them is a task for legendary heroes (see The Questing Ground, page 177). The Astral Plane also borders on the Afterworld, but travellers from the Great Realm must cross the Gulf of Azroi (see below).

Most gods dislike mortal interference in the Afterworld; even spells such as *raise dead* are often frowned upon. The sooner a spell is cast, the better (ideally, before the soul passes through the Circle of Judgement and is condemned to the Afterworld or thrown into the Chasm).

Afterworld Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal</i>
Size	20	<i>Infinite layers</i>
Morphic	10	<i>Divinely Morphic</i>
Life	0	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	0	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	-4	<i>Mildly good</i>
Law/Chaos	-4	<i>Mildly lawful</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	6	<i>Keyed</i>
Proximity...		
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Firmament	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Halls of Order	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Questing Ground	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Ethereal	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

Survival in the Afterworld

The Afterworld is quite safe. Most of the terrain is similar to regions of the Material Plane – at least, so it appears to mortal travellers. The dead see things differently. The presence of the living in the Afterworld alters the plane; the dead exist in an eternal, timeless, unknowable moment until the influence of the living reminds them of such things as time and form, blood and bone, hunger and thirst.

FEATURES

Each of the divine estates of the Afterworld has its own quirks and qualities (indeed, each is a layer of the plane and can have its own Traits). From the perspective of the living, each estate is an expression of the personality and portfolio of that god. The estate of a war god might be filled with drinking halls and tents where warriors remember their deeds of glory; the estate of a power of light could be a dewy field where seven suns dance in the clear blue sky.

The Memory of Form

The presence of the living evokes the memory of the dead. The longer a living character remains in a region of the Afterworld, the more tangible it becomes. The surroundings and their resident dead are dragged down towards material existence by the spiritual ‘weight’ of the living. In game terms, the longer a character stays in one place, the greater the effect of his presence. When a character first arrives in the Afterworld, it appears to be shrouded in mists (yet slightly reminiscent, in scent and feel, of sunshine and childhood dreams). The range of a character’s influence on the plane is Long (400 feet + 40 feet/level).

Example: The cleric Tembrook wishes to speak to his late mentor Amae who initiated him into the worship of the god of the sea. He obtains permission to visit the dead and plane shifts to the Afterworld. When he arrives, he finds himself in a mist that smells of salt. As he waits, the terrain around him slowly becomes visible; he stands on a cliff over a rolling ocean where the faces of the drowned dead peer out of the depths. He walks along the shore until he sees the face of Amae. He waits near Amae until she rises from the water. Initially, she is but a mask for the sea god, but if Tembrook is patient and respectful, his mortal nature will awaken the memory of form in her.

It is possible to hasten this manifestation – the smell and taste of mortal food and drink halves the time it takes the dead to appear, while a handful of soil or stones halve the time it takes terrain to manifest. Blood is even stronger, reducing the time to one-tenth of normal. Furthermore, blood splattered onto one of the dead makes it corporeal for one round per hit point lost in drawing blood (minimum of

one). If one of the dead is fed 25 hit points worth of blood, it becomes corporeal for one day.

Godholds

At the heart of each of the divine estates is a Godhold, a fortress containing a portal to the home plane of the deity who holds the allegiance of the local dead. Celestials and other outsiders serving that god guard the fortress. Especially powerful dead cluster around the walls of the Godhold, ready to rush through to aid their god in times of need. The gods can draw upon the life energy of a soul, merging its essence into their own. Most Afterworlds are a process of refinement through bliss; the soul becomes more and more aligned with the nature of the god until the two are indistinguishable, and this spiritual journey is physically realised by the soul’s journey through the estate to the Godhold.

Godholds are also an excellent backdoor to a deity’s personal realm.

Sample Estates

Not every deity has an estate in the Afterworld; some prefer to take the souls under their aegis to their own home plane, or have no dead followers (or perhaps their estates are in sealed layers of this plane). Those that do maintain estates create realms that reflect their portfolios and personalities; for example...

Magic: The Afterworld of the deity of magic is a spell seen from the inside, an infinitely expanding chant, gesture, thought or act of surpassing beauty. The dead are drawn from their endless reveries within the magic weave by the presence of the living, and manifest initially as iconic

The Memory of Form

Life is present for...	Surrounding	The Dead
One round	No change	Sense of a presence
Six rounds	Dim perception of shape of terrain	Vague, misty figure
Twelve rounds	Mist shapes itself into the terrain	Dead figure manifests, but is dominated by the interests and portfolio of its deity
Two minutes	Terrain becomes solid, but still somewhat idealised, iconic or misty.	Dead figure can remember something of its life, but is still very otherworldly
Ten minutes	Terrain becomes ‘normal’	Dead figure is still intangible, but is otherwise as it was in life

representations of famous wizards or spells before reverting to the form they wore in life.

The Godhold of Magic is a wizard's tower of shimmering light standing in the centre of a school where apprentices who died before earning their staffs are permitted to continue their studies and become true wizards before passing on to become part of the weave.

Elves: The Afterworld of the elven race is the true forest, the woodland that all other woods are but shadows of. It borders on faerieland, and the shores of the furthest seas. The elves sing hymns of praise as their gods hunt endlessly through the golden woods.

The Godhold here is the great Tree of Life; every leaf is the soul of an elf, and it exists in eternal spring.

Woodlands: For the souls of those loyal to the God of Nature, the Afterworld is a green symphony of life. It is perfectly formed and harmonious through instinct alone. The dead take the form of animals or plants, and only shift back to human form when in the presence of the living.

The Godhold of Nature is a great black bear or wolf-creature, who eats the souls who are joining with the god.

Slaughter: The Afterworld of slaughter runs red with blood; it is an infinite charnel field of mud, gore and bone. The dead roam the land in suits of black mail, armed with axes. There is no death here, only dismemberment, so they fight constantly until there is nothing left of the soul but bloodlust and fury.

The Godhold of Slaughter is a chasm that can only be crossed by throwing in sufficient skulls to make a bridge. When a soul crosses, the chasm convulses, spitting out a rain of skulls over the whole plane. These skulls then roll back to their chopped-up bodies, rise up again, and continue to fight.

Roads: The God of Roads' Afterworld is not a place; so much as it is a journey. Whenever a traveller walking down a country lane at night hears a footstep behind him, but sees nothing, then for a moment all the walking dead trod close behind him. The Godhold here is the literal End of the Road.

Gnomes: The gnomish Afterworld is a glittering cavern of infinite size, filled with toys and wonders. Celestial badgers roam the caves when not being *summoned* by low-level casters. The Godhold of the Gnomes is a complex machine that analyses the alchemical content of the soul and balances its essences before sending it onwards.

Valour: The valourous Afterworld is a festival, a celebration at the end of every quest. Great knights joust and practice their swordplay, while bards sing tales and act out deeds of heroism. The Godhold of Valour is a mighty fortress that overlooks the festival ground, ruled by a solar king.

The Unclaimed Dead

Not every living thing swears fealty to a god in life; some care nothing for the petty politics of the divine, instead following a moral code derived from universal principles or simply living their lives as they see fit and as their conscience tells them. These dead are judged just like the rest in the Circle of Judgement; those who are deemed evil are hurled into the Chasm, while those who escape damnation join the Unclaimed Dead.

The Unclaimed Dead dwell at the edges of the Gulf of Azroi. The Azroi are drawn from their ranks, as are many of the other entities who safeguard the continuation of existence. The land of the Unclaimed Dead is the one part of the Afterworld that requires no special ceremony to reach, so these dead are used to visitors and travellers from other planes.

The Docks of Heaven

Souls are brought from the Halls of Order to the Afterworld by ship, silver and black barges mostly, although other vessels are sometimes pressed into service. These vessels are crewed by dead wardens (see below), and make berth at the Docks of Heaven. This shining port extends out over the Gulf of Azroi. Representatives of every god and power visit the Docks of Heaven, to collect the souls bound for one estate or another. For the newly deceased, the Docks are one final hubbub of confusion and indignity before the afterlife. Some souls go astray in the docks, stolen by diabolic pressgangers and succubi or converted at the last moment to a different faith.



The Docks of Heaven are one of the more curious places on the planes; as agents from every deity and demigod are present, the docks are afire with stratagems, rumours, conspiracies and deceptions. There are celestials here who have not looked upon the pure light of the Firmament in aeons, and instead have spent their time with infernal giants and corrupt knaves.

HAZARDS

Individual estates can have their own hazards, but some dangers are common throughout the plane.

Hungry Souls (CR2+)

Not every one of the dead rests peacefully. Some are disturbed by the presence of the living or events occurring in the world they left behind, and so desire a return to the flesh. Swarms of these ghosts sometimes descend upon living travellers. They appear to be wisps of white mist rushing through the plane. These wisps make incorporeal touch attacks on travellers with an attack bonus of +5; each hit deals 1d6 points of damage by drinking blood straight from the veins. Every time it drinks,

the soul becomes visible for an instant. If the soul drains 25 points of blood, it becomes corporeal and usually attacks. A soul appears just as it did in life.

Deathly Echoes (CR9)

In rare instances, travellers can unwittingly run afoul of the memories of the dead. This is especially common in cases where a group of souls died as one, in war or disaster. The travellers suddenly find themselves reliving the memories of the dead – fighting in a war, trapped in a mine, in a burning house. 1d6 + 5 rounds after the hallucination begins, the deaths begin; whenever the characters in the hallucination fail at anything, they die. Every blow becomes lethal; every failed Balance check or Reflex save drops the character into the flames. When a character dies in the hallucination, he must make a Fortitude save (DC 25) or die in reality. The character gets a +1 insight bonus to the Fortitude save for every round he survives in the hallucination.

For example, if a character is plunged into the deathly echo of the slaughter of the Company of the Ox by a medusa archer, he would get a +1 bonus for every round in which he avoided the gaze and the poisoned arrows of the medusa.

LOCATIONS

The Gulf of Azroi

This great chasm divides the living from the dead. It is a dark void, starless and empty save for the dim, hostile lights of the azroi themselves. They are a race who guard and protect the dead from hostile, interfering powers. The Gulf of Azroi has a singular property known as *mazing*; every footstep (five foot step) conjures a new maze of force, as per the *maze* spell. The azroi and the barges of order are immune to this effect.

The azroi dwell in glowing hives that cling to the precipices and high places of the Afterworld. They do not take kindly to their charges being disturbed, nor do they especially trust the gods that have colonised their realm. Whispers without a discernable source suggest that once the azroi preyed on the dead, grabbing souls that wandered too close to their homes, but in ages past they were bound by the powers of Law to watch over the land of the dead. Whatever the truth, the eerie Gulf of Azroi is not a place to linger long.

The Embassy of Gravediggers

Only the dead truly know how they wish for their mortal affairs and chattels to be dealt with. Some arrange for mediums and clerics to *speak with the dead* to ensure that their inheritors are keeping to whatever instructions were left behind; others possess the living or slip into the Dream Plane to deliver messages. Most, however, merely consult with the Embassy of Gravediggers. That this ebony tower should so resemble a gravestone is perhaps an accident. Every true mortician and gravedigger knows the secret ways to the embassy – dig at a certain place in a cemetery on a certain night, and the earth will fall away revealing a black tunnel leading into the Afterworld. The dead who are especially concerned with the disposition of their mortal affairs can beg favours of the gravedigger's guild, exchanging tales of buried treasure or other useful secrets in exchange for their aid.

The master of the Embassy is an ancient and lugubrious necromancer-child named Lenore, who is unique among the gravediggers, as she is already dead.

Puppet City

There are those who cannot bear to live without form or substance, for whom the thought of an eternity with only the immaterial delights of the Afterworld is intolerable. These unfortunate souls sometimes run afoul of the imps who, by ancient compact with the Azroi, are permitted to roam the Afterworld (the various celestials and other divine emanations in the Godholds have no such agreement with the imps, so the creatures are hunted from any estates they trespass in).

Those souls who listen to the imp's blandishments are brought to Puppet City, a strange two-layered metropolis. The upper level is a bizarre machine filled with iron cages and pulleys. Below is the mortal world in microcosm, a land of artificial fields, rivers, deserts, mountains and cities. The corpses of the dead are exhumed by imps and brought through via hidden portals or the gravedigger's secret ways and tied to the ropes hanging down from the upper level of Puppet City. The souls are then fused into the iron cages above, from which they can control their body below as if it was a puppet. They then go about a macabre recreation of life, working and trading and even coupling in decayed husk-puppets.

Perhaps Puppet City is a devilish scheme by the imps to drag souls out of heaven and down into hell, or perhaps it is more sinister than that, a grotesque attempt to cheapen and sully the mysteries of life and death.

DENIZENS

Dead Wardens

Medium Outsider (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 2d8+4 (13 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30-ft.

Armour Class: 17 (+2 Dex, +3 hide, +2 heavy wooden), touch 12, flat-footed 15

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +1/+2

Attack: Scimitar +2 melee (1d6+1)

Full Attack: Scimitar +2 melee (1d6+1)

Space/Reach: 5-ft./5-ft.

Special Attacks: Disrupt Undead

Special Qualities: Deathsense, Reanimation

Saves: Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +4

Abilities: Str 13, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Skills: Diplomacy +4, Hide +7, Intimidate +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Sense Motive +6, Spot +6, Survival +6

Feats: Track

Climate/Terrain: The Afterworld

Organisation: Solitary (1) or hunting party (4-7)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Usually lawful good

Advancement: By class

Level adjustment: +2

The creatures are human in appearance, but wear bands of black and white makeup or war paint on their faces. There is not a single scrap of colour anywhere on their forms – they are entirely dressed in black, white and shades of grey, from their fur boots to their steel helms and bright swords.

The dead wardens are spectral rangers who watch the boundaries of the Afterworld, aiding the azroi in the defence of the dead. The wardens are also responsible for hunting down any souls who are stolen from or escape the Afterworld unlawfully.

Despite their appearance, name and general demeanour, the Dead Wardens are not undead, nor are they drawn from the ranks of the dead. They are a race unto themselves, living beings who dwell in the land of the dead. The old songs of the

Wardens speak of a time when their whole race, from the eldest to the new-born, were slaughtered by their enemies and brought as a whole to the lands of the dead. The gods took pity on them and returned them to life within the borders of death. Their humble presence does not awaken the dead under most circumstances – shedding their blood, however, will still attract the attention of the dead.

The wardens have a most curious relationship with their own dead – dying is simply a return home. Their little villages are watched over by great cloudy hosts of the ancestors.

Combat

Dead wardens are adept at using the terrain of the various estates to their advantage. Their Deathsense ability allows them to work out what the estate will look like when it manifests, so a warden might hide behind a bank of mist before it solidifies into a drinking bench in Valhalla or a serene statue in the Garden of Reflection. When forced to leave the

Afterworld, they prefer to keep to the shadows and strike from ambush.

Disrupt Undead (Su): Once per day, as part of a full-attack action, a dead warden can give any weapon he touches the disruption property, even if the weapon is not a bludgeoning weapon. This property only lasts for a number of rounds equal to the dead wardens Hit Dice.

Deathsense (Su): A Dead Warden can use the abilities of the detect undead and deathwatch spells at will, as free actions.

Reanimation (Su): A Dead Warden has special dispensation to return from the dead. If slain, he rises again fully healed 2d10 rounds later. This ability can only be used once.

Azroi, Thousand-Eyed Huge Outsider (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 12d8+96 (150 hp)

Initiative: +0

Speed: Fly 50-ft. (perfect)

Armour Class: 24 (-2 Size, +16 natural), touch 24, flat-footed 24

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +9/+26

Attack: Slam +18 melee (1d8+9+2d6 electrical)

Full Attack: Slam +18/+13 melee (1d8+9+2d6 electrical)

Space/Reach: 15-ft. /15-ft.

Special Attacks: Terrible Stare, Thunderous Strike, Spell-like abilities

Special Qualities: Thousand Eyes, Gulf Walk, Spell-like abilities

Saves: Fort +16, Ref +8, Will +11

Abilities: Str 28, Dex 10, Con 26, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 22

Skills: Bluff +18, Concentration +20, Diplomacy +21, Escape Artist +12, Heal +17, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (history) +17, Knowledge (the planes) +17, Listen +16, Search +16, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +18, Spot +17

Feats: Lightning Reflexes, Combat Expertise, Flyby Attack, Dodge, Power Attack

Climate/Terrain: The Afterworld

Organisation: Solitary (1)

Challenge Rating: 10

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always lawful neutral

Advancement: 13-18 (Huge), 19-30 (Gargantuan), 31-64 (Colossal)



This entity is a cloud of angry darkness; thousands of burning eyeballs flit around the edges of the clouds, and lightning-flashes within illuminate the shapes of eldritch symbols in the deep shadows.

There are numerous forms of azroi; the thousand-eyed form is the most commonly encountered, but there are also Bright Circle, Bleak and All-Consuming Azroi. These bizarre entities dwell in the feared Gulf of Azroi, a dangerous region on the edge of the Afterworld. The azroi are avaricious and unpleasant company, but are bound by ancient oaths and *geases* to defend the Afterworld, however, many of them spend much time and effort trying to circumvent these oaths and break the spells. They always keep their word, but are as greedy and as prone to wilfully misinterpret the wording of a bargain as the most stubborn and petty genie.

The azroi are worshipped as deities by several cults, especially among the minotaurs. They gleefully accept worship, as they consider lesser creatures to be nothing more than playthings and entertainment for outsiders. They live in fear of an apparently mythical race of beings called the Glith.

Combat

The azroi use divide and conquer to defeat their foes, wrapping an enemy in *mazes* and then *plane shifting* to each in turn. The safest way to battle one is inside a *dimensional lock*.

Terrible Stare (Su): By concentrating all of its thousand eyes on a foe, the azroi can shatter the enemy's mind. This is a gaze attack that affects all within 60 feet. Those affected must make a Fortitude save (DC 22) or be affected by a *feblemind* effect for 12 rounds.

Thunderous Strike (Su): Anyone hit by an azroi's slam attack is dealt 2d6 points of electrical damage and must make a Fortitude save (DC 11) or be deafened for one hour.

Thousand Eyes (Su): The azroi is surrounded by a great swarm of floating eyes. It is permanently under the effects of *true seeing*, and cannot be surprised or flanked. It may cast *greater prying eyes* at will as a free action.

Gulf Walk (Su): Azroi are not affected by the maze-like hazards of the Gulf of Azroi or normal maze spells.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): At will – *maze, plane shift, dispel magic*. All spells have a saving throw of DC 16 + the spell level. The creature's normal tactics are to use the Terrible Stare on a target, wrap it in a *maze*, then *plane shift* to that maze to destroy that creature in a one-on-one confrontation.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Most adventures in the Afterworld are going to centre on death, and what happens afterwards. In many fantasy games, death is no more than a momentary inconvenience, a sniffle easily remedied by a spell. The Afterworld gives the characters a chance to see the other side, to learn where they are being dragged back from.

- † One option is to only allow *raise dead* spells and effects to work easily before the character's soul has entered the Circle of Judgement. When it has reached the Afterworld, it is under the protection of the gods, and can only be returned to life with their permission – or if retrieved by force.
- † A god's followers begin falling sick and dying for no apparent cause. Healing spells offer no cure. The deity intends to take over the Afterworld, so it is swelling the numbers of its dead followers by releasing a magical plague. The characters must expose the plan and stop the god.
- † The characters uncover a plot so heinous, so terrible that they must act – but sadly, they get killed before they can do anything. They must survive being judged by the Halls of Order and brought to the Afterworld; they must then find each other, escape the afterlife, and foil the plot.

THE FIRMAMENT

DESCRIPTION

The Holy Mountain is a great golden crystal. At its summit is the Utter Light, the inverse of the abyss, the Zenith of all that is good and holy and pure. The mountain acts as a divine prism, splitting and resolving the Utter Light of goodness into its different manifestations. Near the peak of the mountain, as the traveller draws close to the light, thought, deed, nature and even belief itself become evident as facets of a single thing.

The lower slopes of the mountain are dominated by various aspects of the light. Here is the host of Heaven, eternally vigilant against the machinations of the Infernum. There are the palaces of the gods,

Firmanent Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Special)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal</i>
Size	18	<i>Infinite</i>
Morphic	5	<i>Alterable Morphic</i>
Life	0	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	0	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/ Positive	+5	<i>Positive-Aspected</i>
Good/Evil	-8	<i>Strongly Good</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	+4	<i>+2 metamagic</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	15	<i>Magically accessible</i>
Proximity...		
...to Astral Plane	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Afterworld	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to The Questing Ground	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

Etrichan: *I have seen Heaven. I have seen the ranks of the archangels. I have seen the legions of Good.*

Malas: *And, O my brother, you and I shall stand with them at the last battle.*

Etrichan: *Not I brother.* [Withdraws bloodied knife from robes and advances on Malas]

Malas: *No Etrichan. No!* [Fade to black]

– The Fall of Etrichan Von Trask
Act XII Scene iii

ruling over the affairs of the cosmos. There are the blessed fields where hope springs up eternal. Beyond lies the Aurora Realm of beautiful truth.

All these things are one in the Firmament.

Getting there... and Back

Like most planes, the Firmament is accessible by spells such as *gate*. However, it is one of the most secure realms – any travellers are soon detected and confronted by celestials or angels. Only those warded against divinations can hope to walk the paths of Heaven unseen. Evil beings are quickly attacked by guardians; the ramparts of the Firmament are well-protected indeed.

Portals are common in the two planes closest to the Firmament (the Afterworld and the Questing Ground) and rare elsewhere – the celestial hosts prefer to open temporary *gates* instead of establishing permanent portals. Still, some of the great bastions of good have at their heart a portal to the Firmament (and even some saints and holy men are, unknowingly, living portals to the heavens).

Most travellers never get further than the foot of the mountain, the realm known as the River of Tears. Here, travellers may obtain audiences with the powers that be without risking the strangeness of the upper slopes. The River also has the most portals and *gates*. Those pressing uphill are advised to have a guide or guardian angel, and to ensure that their souls are pure and their consciences clean.

Survival in the Firmament

The Firmament is not dangerous except to those who bring evil to its unsullied slopes. The

Weight of Sins

Good/Evil	Effects on Good Character	Effects on Evil Characters	Strength/Escape Artist DC to overcome
Faint	+5-ft. movement	-5-ft. movement	10
Moderate	+10-ft. movement	-10-ft. movement	15
Strong	Fly 10-ft. (perfect)	-20-ft. movement	20
Overwhelming	Fly 30-ft. (perfect)	-30-ft. movement	25

atmosphere is breathable, the climate soft and pleasant, the air is pure and bracing. However, the weight of a character's sins takes on physical form here. Neutral characters are unaffected by this phenomenon; apply the effects of the following table.

See the *detect evil* spell for the definition of Faint, Moderate and so on. Being under the influence of *protection from good* or *freedom of movement* counters the weight of a character's sin for the duration of the spell.

FEATURES

The Firmament is divided into several layers. The lowest layer, the River of Tears, must be crossed physically, while the Aurora Realm can only be reached by flying. Of the other layers, four – the Hosts of Heaven, the Bright City, the Blessed Fields and the Palaces – are all located on the slopes of the mountain. A traveller who climbs up from the River can walk around the mountain, passing from one layer to another. However, these four layers are also aspects of each other, merely different ways of looking at a single whole. By making a Wisdom check (DC 15), a character can translate from one slope to another.

The seventh and final layer, the Zenith, can only be reached by one of the four Guarded Gates at the end of the four slopes.

River of Tears

The River of Tears encircles the base of the Holy Mountain. It springs from the weeping of angels, who sorrow for the injuries and burdens of mortals. White bridges of sandalwood reach over the water from the portals on the far shore, leading from the Vault of Stars and other neighbouring planes to the slopes of the mountain. To drink from the river is to experience the suffering of all things; characters

must make a Fortitude save (DC 20) or be overcome with emotion of 1d10 minutes and utterly unable to do anything other than weep (treat as *nausea*). If this experience is coupled with an *atonement*, the spell costs no experience.

Most portals and *plane shifts* targeting this plane exit on the banks of the river. Boats ply the River of Tears – some carry weeping celestials, others are piloted by entities who represent one deity or another. *Communes* manifest as ripples in the water, while those who seek the wisdom of the gods must hail a passing boat and speak to the celestial it carries.

The bridges that cross the River of Tears are all guarded by planetars and trumpet archons.

The Halls of Heaven

Here, the Firmament is a fortress more than anything. The walls are made of white adamantine and holy valour made physical, and garrisoned by hosts of warrior angels, saints and the holiest of paladins. The fortress stretches higher and higher, but also delves unthinkably deep into the crystal of the Holy Mountain. The forces of the Host constantly practise the arts of war, in preparation for the day when Good and Evil will clash.

There are always other wars though, petty skirmishes in the grand scheme but still large enough to engulf worlds and celestials are called away to fight for that god. Incursions from the Infernum must be dealt with. There are also the Calls for Succour, the heavenly manifestation of *planar ally* spells.

The Marshals of the Host are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the Firmament's forces in the face of these distractions. It is they who also give permission for an angel to respond to a *calling* or to perform some other task. Many of the Marshals feel that much more discipline and focus

is required on the part of the Host and are infuriated by the number of celestials called away from their duties by gods or mortals.

The Captains of the Host are extremely powerful angels or celestials who command and lead the forces of the Firmament. Most of the Captains are loyal to one god or another, but nine are dedicated purely to the cause of Uttermost Virtue; these are referred to as the Nine Valours.

Notable features on this layer include the great Proving Grounds, where legions of the exalted dead and companies of angels do battle with illusory or summoned demons, and the Wailing Towers, where all calls for succour are heard and delivered to the appropriate Marshal by lantern archons.

The Bright City

Although the Halls of Heaven and The Bright City share many qualities, The City serves as the actual Fortress of the Firmament. Both are towering edifices of white adamantine carved into the Holy Mountain. The city, though, is a place of joy and celebration. It is what the Firmament was before the shadow of evil stained the worlds, and therefore is marred by sorrow as well as painted with joy. It is also, simultaneously and eternally, the celebration of the ultimate defeat of evil. Both these versions of the Bright City, the old and the new, have always and will always exist.

On the streets of the Bright City, the honoured dead and those celestials who were not made to serve in the Host meet to further the cause of good. Celestials and angels and the like are technically *emanations* – beings who are facets of the god who created them, and therefore lack free will or truly independent existence. Mortals are beings with souls – they can fall into the Infernum or rise to the Firmament by their own choices. Mortals bring the spark of creativity, of new and better expressions of the powers of Good to Heaven. The geometry of the Bright City is constantly changing, and these changes are reflected in both the codes of the various good religions and the shape of the Holy Mountain itself. Every iteration brings the pure light closer to the material world.

That is not to say, of course, that the Bright City is nothing but an endless debate on moral philosophy and theology. Children run through the streets



and laughter is everywhere. Songs dance through the alleyways as living tangles of light. It is not a foolish place, blind to the sorrows of the world; its joy stems from hope, a hope reinforced and informed by the certainty that there are heroes willing to take up arms and work against evil.

This is, perhaps, the true nature of the Bright City – to be the wellspring of hope. It cascades through the Blessed Fields and slips into the underground canals into the Questing Grounds, but it begins here, in the steep streets that ascend eternally towards the zenith.

Blessed Fields

This slope of the Holy Mountain is bathed eternally in the warm sunshine of the early autumn. The crystal surface cannot be seen here, as it is covered in a riotous tangle of growth. Forests and jungles are intertwined with fields of grain and flowers. Beasts such as the ubiquitous celestial badgers stalk through the undergrowth, but these fields are free from suffering and hunger. Celestials walk among the fields, hunting and farming.

The flowers of heaven are dreams of virtue and inspiration; they are gathered and brought to the Plane of Dreams by messenger angels, and are there scattered onto the Dream Sea. Grain and grapes are gathered also, to be made into bread and wine for *heroes' feasts*.

At the edge of one greensward are the stables and corrals of the steeds of paladins. The grooms here are horse-spirits.

The Palaces of the Gods

Those deities who make their home on this plane maintain great castles on the upper slopes of the mountain. Many of these castles are made into the shape of animals, and roam with stony intent across the mountainside. Others have massive *gates* facing off towards the Godholds in the Afterworld, and towards the Holygates in the Positive Energy Plane. Each god has its own followers and outsiders, and the land around its Palace is usually either Divinely Morphic or even a full-scale pocket realm with its own traits and qualities.

The Palace of Cthao

Cthao is the divine castellan, a patron god of craftsmen and guardians. His realm is the Divine Mill; it is located on the lowest slopes and powered by the flowing of the River of Tears. The Mill grinds souls; Cthao's rewards are for those who toil and suffer, yet do not despair. Although he is a minor deity, his aspect as the Castellan permits him to replace another god who must for some reason or another temporarily abandon its place and duties.

When Cthao must take over the castle and role of another god, he wears a specially prepared and sanctified mask. These masks are stored in a vault below the Mill. Anyone who stole such a mask could masquerade as a deity, but 101 celestial clay golems and 1,001 vigilant dwarven defenders guard them.

Aurora Realm

The Aurora Realm hangs above the Holy Mountain. It is an iconic realm, a region of prophecy, visions and of revelation. Signs and portents hang in the skies of heaven, to be glimpsed by those with the devotion or madness to see them. There is little in the Aurora Realm for most folk; only those who prefer to experience the divine through a cascade of bizarre images and intimations (wizards, mostly) travel through the Aurora. The only common denizens are lillends and lammasu.

A character in the Aurora Realm doubles the effectiveness of divination spells such as *augury*, *legend lore* or *vision*.

The Zenith

At the peak of the mountain is a shining silver light.

No mortal can approach within a thousand miles of the light, and no celestial, within five hundred. Who knows how close the gods can walk?

HAZARDS

Heaven holds few dangers save for those who are evil – the true danger is within.

Unworthiness (CRO)

Good characters in the Firmament are faced with the perfect nature of their alignment, the ultimate standard by which to judge themselves. For those who have not been paragons of goodness (and anyone who believes such a thing has failed, for self-doubt is a necessary component of true virtue – without self-doubt, there is no possibility for improvement), the Firmament may challenge their worthiness to count themselves as truly good.

A good character may be tempted by the rewards of the Firmament, with relief from his burdens, with the chance to turn his quest or his duty over to another, seemingly more suited guardian. An angel might offer to take the place of a paladin on some holy mission, or a long-dead cleric suggest that he could return from the dead to take on the duties of a cleric character. Accepting this *replacement* is never the correct choice and is never offered when the paladin's mission is obviously too trivial for the angel or when the mission could only be completed by the angel. The key to the test is that the character is offered the chance to turn a burden he could bear over to another, when a major part of being truly good is doing all that you can for others.

If a character fails in this test, then the Games Master should keep a close eye on alignment 'drift' – the character has shown that he lacks faith in his own virtue, and might slowly drift towards neutrality or a less demanding method of doing good. A character who succeeds in the test has had his moral strength tested in the crucible – his alignment will not drift, though he may still fail.

Bonus experience points for roleplaying should be given either way.

LOCATIONS

As the entire Firmament is simply different refractions of the Light, there are few distinct locations, nor have many travellers returned from its brightness to speak of the geography of Heaven.

The Net of Stars

The Net of Stars is a wide pool in which the night sky gleams even at noon. The constellations sacred to the powers of good glow especially brightly within it. The net is a portal to the Vault of Stars, but this is the least of its properties. The gods cast their constellations like a net across the sky in aeons past, to catch souls like fish. At the end of each age or during terrible disasters, they lift the net out of the pool to gather those souls that are as yet unjudged, but are currently aligned to good. It is something of a cheat, a pre-emptive redemption of the masses. Still, the Net of Stars is a merciful boon to those slain by war or disaster; instead of having to wait in the dull grey corridors of the Circle of Judgement, they are taken straight up into the Firmament.

If the Net of Stars were destroyed, or worse, stolen, it would be a great boon to the forces of evil. The net is also capable of conjuring up Reannan.

The Tree

The Tree is a rather ordinary-looking, medium-sized tree, usually an oak or ash tree. There is a rock or even a bench beneath it. The tree's branches curl protectively over the seat, which is large enough to seat two (or more, depending on the season and the needs of the tree). Anyone sitting on the seat may command the tree to travel to any point on the Material Plane. When a traveller meets a sage or a long-dead, but inspirational hero, it will be under the tree. The tree returns to its customary place in the Firmament after delivering its passengers.

Anyone within 30 feet of the tree comes under the effects of an *owl's wisdom* spell. Furthermore, a hidden bowl in the tree conceals a cache of useful weapons, healing potions and so on.

Almoner

Almoner is the largest ship to sail the River of Tears. It begs for alms at all ports and bridges around the foothills of the Mountain, then *plane shifts* to more unfortunate realms to dispense the bounty of heaven. *Almoner* is captained by a crew of living penitents

The Ordering of the Firmament

Entity	Duty	Layer
<i>Angels</i>		
Astral Deva	Guardianship of Mortals	River of Tears, Bright City
Planetar	War	Halls of Heaven
Solar	Champions of Right	Any, Palaces of the Gods
<i>Archon</i>		
Lantern	Servants and lesser messengers	Usually Bright City, Palaces of the Gods
Hound	Defence of the Firmament	Halls of Heaven, River of Tears
Trumpet	Greater messengers and Heralds	Bright City, Blessed Fields
<i>Eladrin</i>		
Bralini	Inspiration	Blessed Fields, Aurora Realm
Ghaele	Guidance	Blessed Fields, Bright City
<i>Guardinals</i>		
Avoral	Watching the enemy	Blessed Fields, Aurora Realm, River of Tears
Leonal	Righteous Anger	Blessed Fields, Halls of Heaven
Lillends	Beauty	Blessed Fields, Bright City, Aurora Realm
Titans	Agents of the Gods	Palaces of the Gods, Bright City

– those who have done such terrible, unholy deeds that they are damned indeed. Risking life and limb, soul and sanity aboard *Almoner* is the only way any of them shall atone and set foot upon the heavenly shores. Swift *Almoner* is especially hated by the Emissaries of Hell and by their fiendish patron. It has been seen on dozens of seas, from the wild waters of the Material Plane to the burning oceans of the Infernum.

The current captain of *Almoner* is a cleric named Jathi; formerly an evil cleric, she betrayed her own evil god in an attempt to seize his power. Now, she is hunted by all the hells and rival powers, as well as her former cabal.

DENIZENS

The denizens of the Firmament include angels, archons, avorals, bralini, celestials and half-celestials, ghaeles, leonals, reannan, titans and other divine beings. Each of these has their own unique duties in the Firmament.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Adventuring in the Firmament is tricky – good characters are unlikely to find any real opposition here, neutral characters can find little to do here, and that burnt-red stain being scrubbed away by the lantern archons is all that remains of the last evil character to set foot here. Heaven offers few opportunities for heroism and swashbuckling.

One part of a campaign that should be determined is the nature of good and the Firmament. Evil tends to be much the same in most games – a single dark power or handful of rivals, with vast quarrelling and rather disorganised legions beneath them. Good, on the other hand, can be a single monolithic and united power block, or a pantheon of informally allied and like-minded gods. Irritatingly, one core class – the cleric – works best with the former arrangement, while another – the paladin – is best suited to the latter. Make good too united, and you end up with something very close to monotheism; make it too fractured, and it loses the strong moral centre and code a paladin needs.

From the point of view of a planar game, this becomes even more important – are there petty politics in heaven? Do the angels quarrel? Are all the gods of good just aspects of the Light, or are there multiple ‘poles’ of goodness?

- † One of the Marshals of the Host is directly forbidding angels under his command to respond to *callings*. The characters must somehow infiltrate the Halls of Heaven and either convince or assassinate the Marshal.
- † A bard is enshrining the dead in songs of praise, ensuring that their souls end up in the Questing Grounds rather than the Afterworld; these dead are then sneaking into the Firmament via the underground canals of hope. The characters must find a way to prevent the bard from upsetting the cosmic order through music.
- † A mad angel decides to end the war once and for all – but shattering the Holy Mountain and letting the Utter Light pour down onto all the planes of the Multiverse. Do the characters aid him, or stop him? Does he have allies among the Host?



THE QUESTING GROUNDS

DESCRIPTION

The Questing Grounds are where stories and legends live. It is the otherworld, the neverland, a half-way point between the subjective, personal truths of the Dream Plane and the universal, terrifying naked truths of Good and Evil, Law and Chaos. It is where the myriad planes of the multiverse become comprehensible and familiar to the mortal mind.

Every story that is retold has its echo in the Questing Grounds. If a story is retold enough to become a legend, then it will be a great and glorious part of the plane.

The terrain of the Questing Grounds resembles the Material Plane, if exaggerated – mountains are taller, forests thicker, the seas are deeper and so on.

Questing Grounds Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	-9	<i>Timeless flow</i>
Size	16	<i>Boundless</i>
Morphic	14	<i>Narrative Morphic</i>
Life	6	<i>Supernaturally Rich</i>
Weather	0	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/ Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	-4	<i>Mildly Good</i>
Law/Chaos	+4	<i>Mildly Chaotic</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	15	<i>Magically accessible</i>
Proximity...		
...to Astral Plane	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Firmament	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Tarassein	7	<i>Coterminous</i>
...to Dream Plane	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

'According to certain learned savants, all lives are charmed here. Personally speaking, The Questing Grounds seem little different to the Material Plane to me.'

– Traveller's Tales

It is a magical land, a fairyland, full of a child's awe at the bright new world.

Getting there... and Back

The Questing Grounds is the loom of hope, where the raw emanations and disorgements of chaos are shaped into heroic forms by the light of the Firmament. Therefore, natural portals exist between the Firmament and the Questing Grounds, as well as between Tarassein and the Grounds. There are also the usual portals to the Astral Plane and the Vault of Stars. The relation between the Questing Grounds and the Plane of Dreams is odd; not only can a *door* be opened to the Questing Grounds when a creature on that plane is dreaming, but the *door* also works from within any dream about one of the great tales.

Artificial portals to the Questing Grounds are uncommon, but not unheard of. Bards make them, mostly, to encounter the subjects of their Sagas firsthand.

There have been occasional minglings between the Questing Grounds and the Material Plane, when a Saga needs heroes (see below).

Survival in the Questing Grounds

The Questing Grounds' environment is not innately hostile, but dangers are everywhere. The woods are always full of wolves, every graveyard has ghosts and its dungeons are always well stocked.

The best tool for survival here is an understanding of myths and legends. As the shape of the Questing Grounds is affected by stories, any storytelling version of the Perform skill can be substituted for Survival.

FEATURES

The Questing Grounds can be divided into two regions; Stories and Sagas. Physically, both are similar – storylands are created from the stuff of everyday tales. They are immediately recognisable

because they draw from the same common Archetypes over and over again; wise fools, greedy merchants, heroic knights, damsels in distress and so on. They are a jumble of little stories and tales without true definition.

The lands of Saga look similar, but these regions are dominated by specific stories. Unlike the essentially generic, repetitive storylands, the Saga has a definite geography and much more recognisable characters. It also needs to be completed, over and over. Sagalands tend to drift, and a storyland can suddenly be enveloped in a Saga if conditions are right.

Creatures of Story

Most of the creatures and characters encountered in the Questing Grounds are manifestations of the plane, just like elementals are the stuff of the Elemental Planes animated by an inherent spirit. Therefore, when one of the denizens or an item of story is removed from the Questing Grounds, it begins to dissolve. The creature (or holder of the item) must make a Will save each round (DC equals the number of rounds since leaving the plane) or have the item dissolve into nothingness.

Otherwise, the creatures of story are identical to normal creatures, although they have the Extraplanar subtype and are as unaware of their status as characters in a story.

Archetypes & Masks

The various Archetypal characters that appear in tales have an independent existence in the Questing Grounds. The fools, hermits, innkeepers, knights and dragons a traveller encounters as he crosses a

storyland are simultaneously individuals in their own right, expressions of a common type of person, and Masks for a single being who lurks behind all the tales. Something exists that connects all fools, all hermits, all cruel stepmothers. These Archetypal entities are the true powers of the Questing Ground.

Any one of these Archetypes can attempt to ‘push’ a manifestation of itself. If the fool is ill-disposed towards the characters, it can try to make an individual occurrence of the fool type attack or hinder the characters. Jesters in courts feel the urge to throw things at them, village idiots set their dogs on them, third sons out seeking their fortune mistake the characters for brigands and so on.

A ‘push’ works just like a *suggestion* spell; the DC for the Will save depends on how closely identified the character is with the Archetype.

Characters from other planes can become caught in an Archetype. This has some benefits – as the plane is Narrative Morphic, a character who is ‘fitting into’ the story will find his path is smoother, and will come to encounter what he expects to encounter in the story. A little-known side benefit is a protection from Scrying and divination – spells tend to confuse the character with the Archetype, so characters gain a circumstance bonus to saving throws against Divinations equal to the Will Save DC for avoiding suggestions from the Archetype.

A character wearing a Mask designed to look like the Archetype automatically moves up one level, from Faint to Moderate, Moderate to Strong or Strong to Overwhelming.

Archetype Levels

Identification	Signs	Will Save DC	Suggestions...
Faint	The character is taking on the Archetype’s role in a story.	10	1/day
Moderate	The character is also dressed in the traditional garb of the Archetype.	15	1/hour
Strong	Other people think of the character in terms of his Archetypal role, not as an individual.	20	1/minute
Overwhelming	The character is so aligned with the Archetype that he self-identifies with the Archetype instead of himself.	25	1/round



What Are The Archetypes?

The exact number and nature of the Archetypes has never been fully catalogued. Games Masters with a knowledge of the Tarot can slot the usual suspects in here; otherwise, just use the normal fairy-tale elements – the Trickster, the Giant Killer, the Mother, the Crone, the Stepdaughter and so on. Animals can also show up as Archetypes, like wolves, crows or swans.

If the stories of the Material Plane in your campaign have common characters or elements, these may also manifest as Archetypes.

The Archetypes are not intelligent or sentient as most creatures understand it, but they do have a will and can have overarching desires or goals. They cannot be the target of spells or effects.

Sagas

The Sagas are the great tales, the stories of epic heroism, of quests and valour and true love. The bards recount them; they are written in the books of history and enshrined in marble, bronze and stone. Unlike the petty stories, the Sagas have true meaning all their own instead of being merely Masks for the Archetypes.

Some Sagas have their own regions in the Questing Grounds where their events play out over and over again. Other Sagas move like storms across the face of the plane, manifesting with sudden, violent and dramatic need – the ordinary folk of story are torn from whatever Archetype rules them and instead begin playing the parts of the characters in the Saga. The Archetypes therefore hate and despise Sagas, which diminish their influence over the Questing Grounds.

Sagas do change over time, as the way they are recounted changes. A barbarian princeling clad in animal fur becomes a young noble dressed in finery when the tale becomes popular in a more civilised area, but this does not alter the true nature of the Saga. This is a two-way process; if a character travels to the Questing Grounds and murders the prince, then bards spontaneously begin singing an alternate version of the Saga. The events of history are immutable, but how we remember them can be changed.

These are more than mere tales; the Sagas inspire future heroes and future acts of good. They are therefore blessed and sanctified by the light of the Firmament. Each re-enactment of a Saga produces a *Guerdon*, a divine reward that is channelled by the retellings to the Material Plane. The Sagas are therefore an engine of good; the raw creativity of chaos is shaped by the deeds of mortals who are guided by the light of the Firmament; the light is then reflected out by the tales to inspire more.

Travellers in the Questing Grounds who enter or are enveloped by a Saga may find themselves taking on roles within the story. The creatures of the story instinctively know what roles they are to take, while the characters have no such instinctive knowledge. A traveller in a Saga cannot leave the Saga until it ends, and the Saga cannot end until he plays his role. A Saga unable to complete itself has disastrous consequences for the lands around

it; earthquakes, storms, darkness and disease run rampant and the characters are driven mad until the traveller discovers and plays his assigned role.

At the end of a Saga is the guerdon, the prize. This manifests as a shining sphere of light or a haloed object. If touched by the protagonist of the Saga, it vanishes and is dispersed throughout the Material Plane. If touched by a traveller, it can be broken apart and harvested as spiritual energy. A guerdon is worth between 200 and 1000 experience points per character level, depending on how important the Saga is.

Reinforcing the Sagas

Travellers can consciously try to become involved in a saga. For example, if the tales of Robin Hood exist in a campaign world, then a band of travellers who dress in green and carry bows and include among their number a superlative archer, a big man with a quarterstaff, a fat cleric, a beautiful maiden and a rogue in scarlet could trigger the saga and play all the roles. Having living creatures instead of story-folk acting out a Saga creates a positive feedback loop – if the saga is completed successfully, then the *original* victory of the Saga might be replicated again in the mortal world. For example, if our travellers overthrow the Sheriff of Nottingham in the Questing Ground, then cruel and usurping lords across the Material Plane might also be overthrown by fate.

HAZARDS

Archetype Creep (CR5)

Travellers in the Questing Grounds run the risk of being absorbed into one Archetype or another. This process is known as Archetype Creep. It manifests as a series of events that try to move the character up the Archetype Levels table. For example, a travelling wizard might find a pointy hat and set of starry robes, and then something – a spill, a flood, a swarm of rabid moths – would happen to his travelling garb to force him into the wizard's robes. Then, he might find an empty wizard's tower, or have a false beard stuck to his chin. Slowly and surely, the Archetype manoeuvres him into a situation where he falls under its spell.

Mechanically, Archetype Creep is a series of skill or ability checks or saving throws at DC 15 + the Archetype Level (for example, a wizard unaligned to the Wizard Archetype would make the initial Reflex save to dodge the spill at DC 15). The Archetype will try three times for each level, using its Suggestion ability to force the character to comply.

If the character reaches the Overwhelming level, his will is subsumed into that of the Archetype and he becomes a Non-Player Character until rescued. Other characters can try to counter Archetype Creep by having the endangered character act in ways incompatible with the Archetype.

Questing Beasts (CR Varies)

When a traveller arrives in the Questing Grounds, a Questing Beast is spawned. Groups of travellers may spawn packs of beasts, or else share a common quarry. The Questing Beast is a monster that exemplifies the desires and fears of the traveller, often preying on their hopes. A traveller who fears a pursuer might find a Questing Wolf hot on his heels; a traveller who suspects his lover is unfaithful might be haunted by a Questing Succubus.

The Challenge Rating of the Questing Beast should be equal to the character level of the character who spawned it. Select an appropriate monster, then apply the Questing Beast template to it.

Laments (CR 10)

Death is the end of every story. Every tale of woe, every keening for the dead, every eulogy scrawls patterns of sorrow and loss into the Questing Grounds. These laments manifest as black storms that tear through the storylands, leaving only dry

Lament Effects

Failed Will Saves	Effect
First	Affected by <i>crushing despair</i>
Second	Affected by a version of <i>hideous laughter</i> that makes the character weep instead of laugh
Third	Affected by <i>enervation</i>
Fourth	Dies

black dust in their wake. A character caught in a lament must make a Will save every minute (DC 15) or suffer from the noted effects.

Furthermore, every lament is accompanied by 2d4 lesser banshees (treat as spectres, but increase their CR to 9 and add the ability to cast *wail of the banshee* once per day as a spell-like ability. The DC for the Fortitude save is 15.)

LOCATIONS

Most of the locations in the Questing Grounds are repeated over and over, being nothing more than Archetypes. The few permanent locations are either leftovers from degenerating Sagas, or else constructed by extraplanar visitors.

Agency of Tales

The Agency of Tales is the one outpost of the Halls of Order that borders on the realms of Chaos. It is a small metallic tower with eight green windows. It has the curious property that it cannot be spoken about in tales; anyone trying to tell a story of the Agency finds their tongue tied and their quill dry. The inevitables of the Agency of Tales are responsible for ‘unjamming’ Sagas that lack a key player. If the Tale of the Dragonslayer lacks a dragon, a slayer or a maiden because one of the storyfolk has been subverted by an Archetype or a traveller, then the inevitables scour the multiverse for suitable replacements.

This close to chaos, the inevitables have become rather... quirky.

The House of Many Chimneys

The house is so named for the great number of fireplaces, for everyone knows that tales are best told by the fire. It is the home of a sect of bards and scribes who seek out lost tales. They delve into the most dangerous Sagas and piece together fragments of story into the histories of ancient days. The master of the house is a half-elf named Istobel. As the efforts of the house reach into more dangerous stories, she has begun to seek out adventurers who can escort her bards deeper into the Questing Grounds.

Hunter's Lodge

The Hunter's Lodge is the home of certain very powerful barbarian shamans and dreamers. Part of the tribe's ceremonies involves vision-hunts in the Questing Ground. Using certain rituals, the shamans cast *astral projection* on the initiate barbarians and then *door* them to the lodge. In the lodge, they are instructed by the shamans and then sent out to hunt their Questing Beasts.

DENIZENS

Every creature ever mentioned in story or song has its place in the Questing Grounds. Fairy-tale monsters like giants and dragons are especially common, as are the Fey.

Questing Beast

‘Questing Beast’ is a template that can be applied to any creature (but usually to animals and magical beasts), referred to as the base creature. The creature gains the ‘story’ subtype. It uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

HD: +2 HD

Speed: Same as the base creature

AC: +2

Attacks: Same as the base creature

Damage: Same as the base creature

Special Attacks: Same as the base creature, and add:

Phantasmal Strike (Su): Three times per day, a Questing Beast may adopt a terrifying guise for one round. Any creature in combat with the Beast may make a Will save (DC 10 + ½ Beast's Hit Dice + its Charisma modifier) to see through the guise. If the Will save is failed, then anyone injured by the Beast's attacks this round must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + ½ Beast's Hit Dice + its Constitution modifier) or die. Even if the Fortitude save succeeds, the injured character takes an extra 3d6 points of damage.

Special Qualities: A Questing Beast retains all the special qualities of the base creature, and adds:

Discern Location (Sp): A Questing Beast can discern the location of the character who spawned it at will.

Greater Teleport (Sp): A Questing Beast can teleport to the vicinity (within 10 miles) of the character who spawned it at will.

Plane Shift (Sp): A Questing Beast can *plane shift* at will, but only to follow the character who spawned it.

Integrity (Sp): As long as the character who spawned it lives, the Questing Beast is exempt to the restrictions on unreal creatures leaving the Questing Grounds.

Saves: Same as the base creature

Abilities: Add +2 to all abilities. If the creature's intelligence is lower than 6 after the noted adjustment, raise it to 6

Skills: Same as the base creature

Feats: Same as the base creature

Climate/Terrain: Questing Grounds

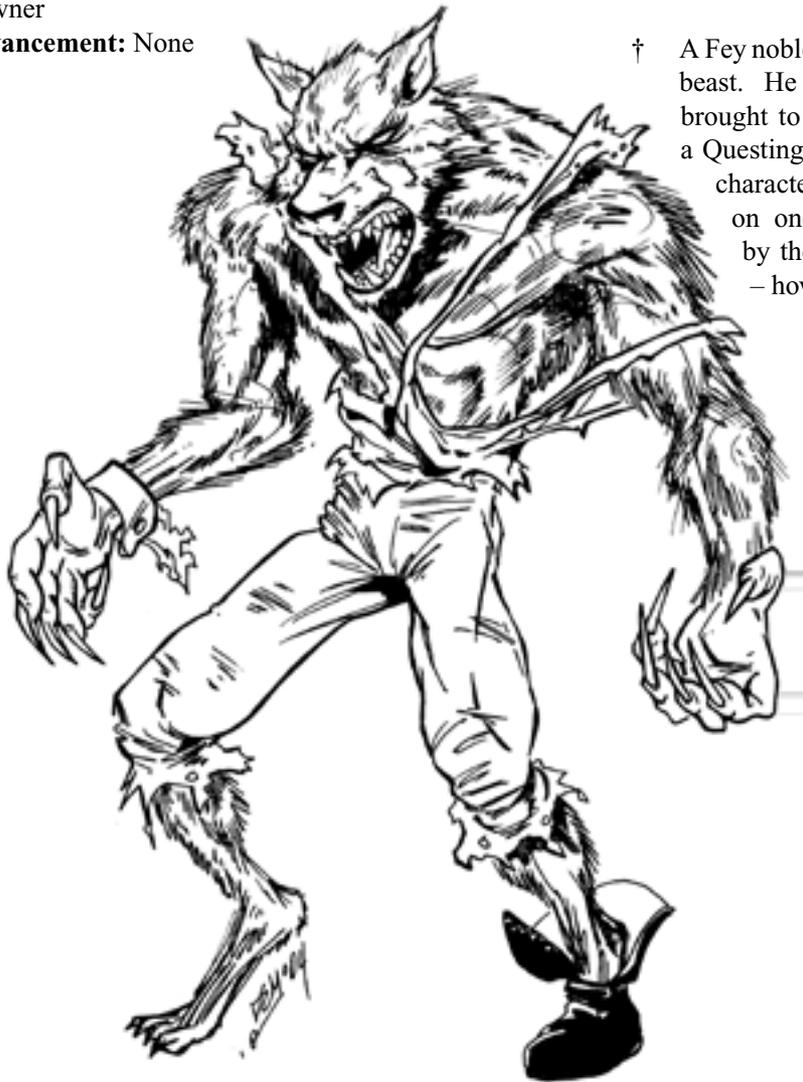
Organisation: Solitary

Challenge Rating: See above

Treasure: Standard, plus killing your Questing Beast gives a character a *limited wish*

Alignment: Always chaotic. The moral part of the creature's Alignment is always the opposite of its spawner

Advancement: None



ADVENTURE SEEDS

† One of the characters finds a body face down in the mire. He turns it over – and finds it is his own corpse. Some enemy of the characters is on the Questing Grounds and is sabotaging the Saga of the characters' greatest accomplishments. Unless the characters stop their enemy, he will ruin the posterity of their deeds forever.

† A great danger threatens the kingdom, and only an ancient weapon can save it. However, no-one now knows where the weapon is. The characters are sent to consult with the House of Many Chimneys, but they have not yet uncovered this secret. The characters must dress as the ancient heroes who found the weapon long ago, trigger the Saga, and play it out until they discover the resting place of the weapon.

† A Fey noble wishes to hunt a truly dangerous beast. He has the characters abducted and brought to the Questing Ground, to spawn a Questing Beast worthy of his spear. The characters have hostile Fey kidnapers on one side and a monster spawned by their own worst fears on the other – how do they survive?

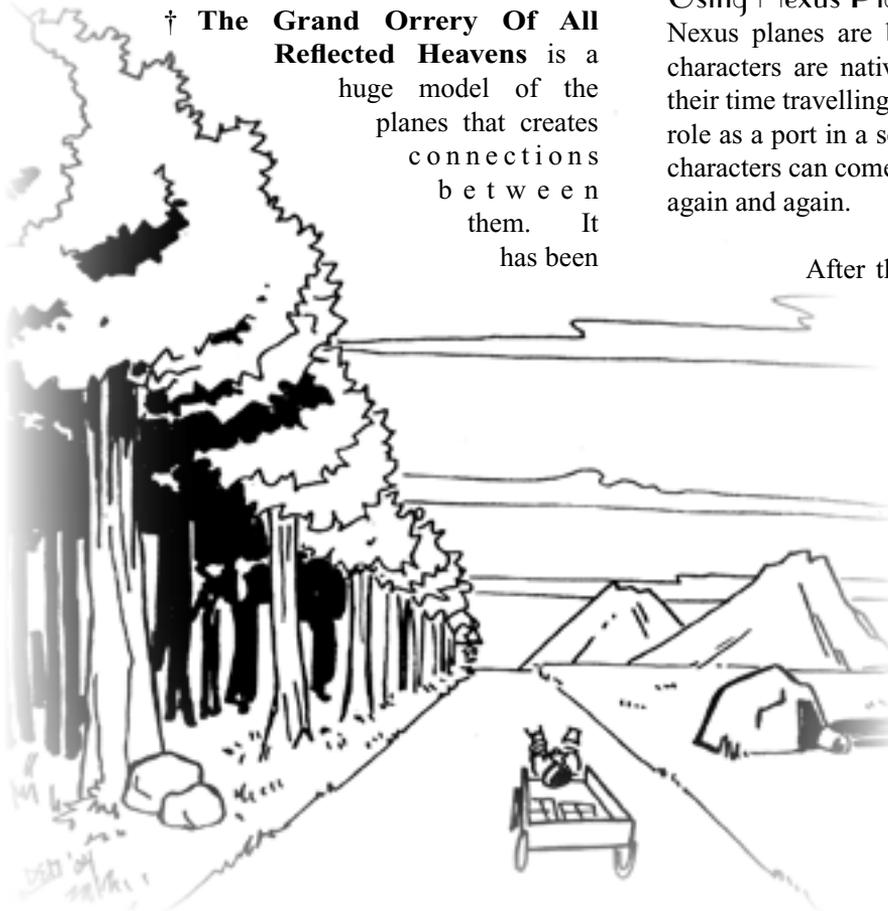
NEXUS PLANES

There are certain planes that are perfectly aligned with the structure of the cosmos, places where all worlds are equidistant, where an infinity of portals open up for the traveller, and everywhere is just a step away. The Astral Plane is the largest and best known of these Nexus Planes (the Sea of Dreams runs a close second), but neither of these realms is especially convenient to the hurried traveller. While portals lead from the Astral Plane to every world and demi-plane in the multiverse, these portals are separated by vast distances.

There are, however, smaller nexus planes, places where portals lie behind every corner and curtain. These planes are the centres of inter-planar civilisation, where creatures and travellers from all the planes rub shoulders; godless, lawless places where anything can be encountered. They are the cross-roads and free-ports of reality.

Three such planes are described here.

† **The Grand Orrery Of All Reflected Heavens** is a huge model of the planes that creates connections between them. It has been



'Symmetry is produced by wholeness; harmony by symmetry. There are points where the multiverse looks upon itself, and knows itself for what it is.'

– Alastherion's Planar Encyclopaedia

colonised by a decaying race who abduct creatures from different planes to fight proxy wars and entertain them.

† **The Wandering Inn Of The Glorious Toad** was cursed by a minor god to travel the planes forever. Every day, its doors open on a new world. It has become a popular institution among travellers.

† **Dunmorgause Castle** is a keep caught between the Faerie lands and the Material Plane. Simple magics can open portals from the suspended castle to other planes, but this is a secret known only to the increasingly insane heirs to the lord of the castle.

Using Nexus Planes in a Game

Nexus planes are best used in games where the characters are natives of the planes, or spend all their time travelling. A nexus plane fulfils the same role as a port in a sea-faring game; a place that the characters can come home to, a place that can recur again and again.

After the third or fourth long journey through the wilds of the Astral Plane or slow, painstaking searches for some obscure portal to a forgotten plane, the players can get rather tired of yet another trek, and would prefer to just jump straight to their destination. Nexus planes let the characters get to wherever they are going quickly.

THE GRAND ORRERY OF ALL REFLECTED HEAVENS

DESCRIPTION

Step through a portal to the Grand Orrery, and on first glance the land looks just like the Material Plane. There are rivers and fields, mountains and seas. A warm light shines from the south, where a bright sun hangs strangely low in the sky.

Then the traveller looks up, to see a massive brass sphere pass far, far overhead. Beyond this sphere, high in the clouded sky, are other objects, glittering platforms of fire or green earth, moving along shining celestial tracks; bright icons and regalia of the gods, the constellations formed not of distinct stars, but engraved onto huge metal plates. A face wider than an ocean smiles down from above. This whole world is artificial, a model of the multiverse built of brass and mithral.

Orrery Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal</i>
Size	11	<i>Continental</i>
Morphic	5	<i>Alterable Morphic</i>
Life	0	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	0	<i>Dangerous</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Fire-dominated</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Strongly evil</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	15	<i>Magically accessible</i>
Proximity...		
...to all planes	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

'The existence of the Grand Orrery proves numerous theories of mine about the nature and relationships of the various planes....'

– Alastherion's Planar Encyclopaedia

The great disc of the Material Plane moves on one step; the heavens realign. The portal behind the traveller vanishes, to be replaced by another elsewhere in the Orrery. Understand the movements of the Grand Orrery, and you understand the multiverse.

Getting there... and Back

The Grand Orrery is a demiplane in its own right, so it can be reached by a *gate* or *plane shift*. Portals also lead from the Astral Plane to the Orrery, or a *door* cast from the dream of an Orrery resident. As the plane is contained within the Great Realm, spells like *ethereal jaunt* cannot easily reach the Orrery.

There are no natural portals or minglings between the Orrery and any other planes – the plane is entirely artificial, constructed aeons ago. There are, however, numerous constructed portals. The Orrery is one of the best-known nexus planes, so many wizards and travellers have built methods for quickly reaching it.

As the Grand Orrery's discs and plates move through their various configurations, portals open between the Orrery and other planes. These portals are distinctive – they are liquid ovals of molten brass, surrounded by a baroque metal hoop. At any time, the Orrery is connected to hundreds of location throughout the planes. Unlike other nexus points, which usually connect to existing gates, doors or other apertures, the portals of the Orrery simply open into empty air. Returning to the Orrery via its portals requires that the traveller knows when and where another Orrery portal will open.

'What Alastherion doesn't mention is that he was exiled by the Marain for attempting to adjust the gearage of the Orrery so its movements would fit with other, incorrect theories of his...'

– Deviations

Orrery Portals

There is a percentage chance equal to the total of a plane's Size plus Accessibility traits that a portal is currently open between it and the Orrery. Roll on the following table to see how long such a portal remains open.

Orrery Portal Duration

1d6	Duration
1	Three rounds
2	One minute
3	Ten minutes
4	One hour
5	Eight hours
6	One day

Most portals in the Orrery open on the Disc of the Material. Predicting when or where a portal opens requires plotting the course of the various components of the Orrery – this is done with a Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check at DC 30. Having five ranks Knowledge (local: the Grand Orrery) or Knowledge (the planes) each give a +2 synergy bonus to these checks.

FEATURES & LOCATIONS

The Grand Orrery is essentially a model of the planes. It is not an exact model, nor is it to scale. The largest single section is the Disc of the Material, a flat circle roughly two hundred miles across in the lower part of the Orrery. The Disc sits on a bulbous base, which contains whatever magical engines drive the Orrery.

The Spine of the Orrery is a great arc of the brass and mithral alloy that makes up more of the machine. The Spine curves up from the base, describing a three-quarter-circle over the Disc of the Material. Three Elemental Orbits – huge circular tracks – rotate through the Spine over the Disc. Each Orbit corresponds to one of the elemental planes of Air, Earth and Fire, while the Water Orbit grows from the central spike of the Disc. Three elemental platforms ride along each Orbit, moving like low-hanging stars through the sky of the Orrery.

The Orbit of Elemental Air was broken in some ancient war and has collapsed. One section has

fallen onto the Disc below, while the rest hangs like a crippled appendage from the Spine.

At the top of the Spine, directly above the central spike of the Disc, is the Moon of the Orrery, a slowly spinning device that glows a pearlescent white when aligned with the Positive Energy Plane or a sullen black when Negatively aligned. Beyond the moons, the Spine curves into a crooked end, like a bishop's crosier. Here is found the infamous Unbuilt City.

A web of metallic filaments also extends from the Spine to form a sphere around the whole Orrery. Dozens of small plates corresponding to the various Outer Planes and major demiplanes move along these filaments. Unlike the Disc of the Material or the elemental platforms, these plates are generally uninhabited, although the occasional crazed hermit or isolationist wizard makes his home on a field of runic brass that hangs dozens of miles above the slowly rotating ground.

The Disc of the Material is carried by three great statues, which themselves stand on the base. These statues are a dragon, a pegasus, and a griffon. If the Spine of the Orrery is counted as north on the disc, then the dragon stands in the uttermost south. Its mouth gapes open, disgorging a beam of fiery light. This light tracks from east to west each day on the Orrery.

Seasons and Weather on the Orrery

The Disc of the Material slowly rotates around the central spike. The warmest regions are in the 'south' of the Orrery, close to the fires of the dragon. When a location on the Disc rotates around to the north, it is plunged into winter. Although the disc is only two hundred miles wide, the lack of air currents makes the temperature difference much more extreme. The only major winds are those caused by the hot air rising in the south, drawing air from more northerly climes. The presence of the central spike means that these winds tend to come from the territories of the north-east and north-west.

The edges of the Disc are inhabited only by nomadic tribes. In the summer, the edges are scorched by the fire of the dragon; in winter, they are crushed under the eternal glaciers that have grown on and fallen from the Air Orbit.

On the Nature of the Grand Orrery

The Orrery is a *working* model of the planes – the various sections move of their own accord, following the progress of the planes through the astral medium. The alignment of the planes creates the Orrery Portals. While the natural state of the machine is to precisely reflect the current state of the multiverse, it can be overridden to forcibly open a particular Orrery Portal. These can be done using the controls of the Orrery (see the *Rings of the Orrery* and the *Unbuilt City* sections, below) or by physically dragging one plate or elemental Orbit into position. The Orrery resets itself as soon as possible.

The builders of the Orrery are unknown. When the machine was first discovered, it was empty of life save for a few decaying forests on the Disc of the Material. It is generally supposed that the builders were humanoid, as the cyclopean statues and art that adorns the machine depicts humanoid faces. Such theories, of course, ignore the sheer scale and alien magic of the Orrery...

The Orbit of Elemental Water is unlike the other elemental orbits; while Earth, Air and Fire are great metallic circles each carrying three platforms, the Orbit of Water consists of three huge globes sprouting like strange fruit from the central spike. Two of these great globes contain oceans; the third is broken. Rain is sprinkled from these globes in regular rainstorms. Each of the three globes sprays its contents over a third of the Disc. As one of the globes is broken, a whole third of the Disc is a dry, parched desert.

The terrain of the Disc is similar to that of the Material Plane, with mountains, plains and forests. Rainwater tends to flow towards the centre; rivers twine together until they reach the Spireward Sea surrounding the central spike. Waters are drawn up through the spike and channelled back into the globes of the Water Orbit, conserving water (although these imprisoned oceans are filled to the brim in the Water Renewal).

The four Renewals are an annual event on the Orrery, corresponding to the equinoxes and solstices. In the Water Renewal, *gates* to the Plane

of Water open inside the Water Orbit, refilling the oceans. At the time of the Earth Renewal, *gates* open on the three platforms of the Earth Orbit, shining green light across the face of the Disc and causing plants to sprout. The Fire Renewal is the most dramatic of all – *gates* on the fire platforms project beams of searing flame into the mouth of the southern dragon, refuelling its internal furnaces for the next year. There is no Air Renewal any more, but the glaciers in the north quake and crack every autumn, as if mighty winds are howling deep beneath the ice.

The Disc of the Material

The Disc of the Material has all the landscapes of the wide world, crammed into a small land no more than fifty leagues across. The terrain is a bizarre patchwork; here a hill torn up by the roots, there a carefully tended orchard ripped from the soil and placed in the midst of the wilderness; there half a village, or a single tower from a mighty fortress, or a drying marsh that was once a lake. Once, the Disc of the Material was no more than a flat metal plain, featureless and blank. Every towering mountain, every hill and valley, every tree and shrub, every shovelful of dirt on the Disc was stolen from another plane and brought through a portal. Most of this epic theft was committed aeons ago, but constant maintenance and additions are required.

The landscape of the Disc is unstable; a river might be deposited in the dry desert, or a mountain atop soil that cannot bear its weight. Maps change with each year. The only constant places are located around the centre, where there are bastions of solid stone on the shores of the inner sea. Travellers cannot ignore the changing landscape of the outer disc, of course, as Orrery Portals can open anywhere.

There are nomadic tribes out in the shifting lands, gypsy traders who track the patterns of the artificial stars of the Orrery and know when the portals open. They slip from world to world, selling trinkets and wonders from every plane. These tribes are a mix of bloodlines; the essence of fiends and celestials melded with elemental strains and the hot blood of humans. The tribes avoid the desert regions for the most part. The nomads know to keep out of the games played in the Unbuilt City, but they occasionally take pity on a slave and may offer advice or even an escape route.



The drier regions of the Disc are known as the Varikah Wastes. The lack of rain and the death of any plants that would hold the soil together have conspired to turn the region into a dustbowl. The Wastes are home to a civilisation of hostile lizard folk, whose reaction to most trespassers and travellers is to eat them. The lizardfolk have numerous powerful clerics of a deity named Devourer of Worlds. Fortunately for the rest of the Orrery, they seem to have no interest in expanding their little kingdom, preferring instead to build towers to watch the movement of the heavens and to dig into the mechanisms beneath the Disc of the Material.

The Inner Disc

A ring of ancient mountains surrounds the inner disc. As the Disc of the Material curves in towards the centre, all the water poured from the Water Orbit rushes through tunnels and narrow canyons. The cities and fortresses of the inner disc are located on the heights above these channels. The inner disc is quite heavily populated – the slopes leading down to the lake are filled with villas, towers and chateaus belonging to various planar travellers and local lords.

By agreement with the lords of the Unbuilt City, the inner disc's portals are not to be used in the Games. Any house champions who manage to cross the peaks or the river channels are considered to have escaped the Games. The rivers and the rimward side of the mountains are therefore stocked with guardian beasts. All champions wear the talismans of the house which claims them, and the monsters are trained to attack only creatures carrying such talismans, but there are always accidents and failures.

Most travellers never need to pass beyond the borders of the inner disc. Orrery Portals appear on the shores and the sea leading to most major planes. Only those seeking a specific, obscure or lost plane need travel into the dangerous hinterlands of the disk.

The oldest and largest city here is Omphalos. The decaying undercity beneath Omphalos was built by Elethoi's folk, the Mairin, when they first arrived in the Orrery. The new city was begun by those fleeing the Games, but as the fame of the Orrery grew, other travellers found their way to the plane. The ruling Mairin attempted to dislodge the 'rebellious escapees' from the ruins of Omphalos, but the indirect clashes between the people of Omphalos and *gated* troops soon became bogged down in a war of *dimensional locks* and *dismissals*. A rival faction in the Unbuilt City took the opportunity to move ahead in the Games, overtake the ruling house and claim the city. They signed the Pact of Omphalos, declaring that the inner disc was not to be used in the Games and secretly agreed that the new rulers would also receive a cut of all trade in Omphalos.

A city of portals, Omphalos has no walls – why bother with fortifications, when the enemy might walk through a *gate* in the market square? Instead, tall spires of ivory rise above the low gambrel roofs; these towers keep watch for portals opening, and guards are usually dispatched to ensure that the portal does not fetch through dangerous monsters. The master of the city bears the title of Watcher of Omphalos, a reference to the time when the primary activity in the city was looking for opening portals. Now, the wizards have calculated almanacs and concordances, and Omphalos has settled down to a comfortable middle age as one of the great trade cities of the cosmos.

The Nomad Tribes

Seven tribes, comprised of a cross-section of sentient races, wander the outer Disc, scavenging in dungeons and towers torn from other planes for use in the games or using the lesser-known portals to visit other planes.

- † The *Peregrin Tribe* are famed travellers; barbarians who have a better instinctive understanding of the planes than the best sages and scholars. They have Knowledge (the planes) as a racial skill, and may use their Wisdom modifier with the skill instead of Intelligence. They are among the best guides in the planes.
- † The *Broken Chain* are escapees from the Games of the Unbuilt City. They are the one tribe who regularly interfere with the Games. As the movements of the Orrery are partially controlled from the Unbuilt City, the Broken Chain are disliked by many of the other inhabitants of the Orrery. However, they are quick to recruit new members from those abducted for the Games, and so are the militarily strongest tribe.
- † The *Rhytan* are Fey-blooded; the Plane of Dreams and the borderlands of Faerie are rarely contacted by the Orrery, but the Rhytan are always there when they do. The eerie tribe are masters of prognostication and fate; they have ties to the Sect of the Spider, but whether the sect are manipulating the tribe or dancing to their tune remains to be seen.
- † The *Harantine* are peerless warriors, practised in the fighting arts of scores of planes. They act as mercenaries when their purses are light, but their true love is combat and swordplay.
- † The *Daughters of Ash* are scavengers and orphans. Most are children or youths, who were caught when the Orrery scooped up their homes. Others fled the towns of the inner Disc, seeking a new life in the outer wilderness. They raid other planes for supplies and weapons, thieving in a hundred markets before running away to their ever-changing neverland.
- † The tribe of the *Bulreen* are the most civilised of the seven tribes. They wander the lands closest to the inner disc, serving as guides to the outer portals. The Bulreen nomads have strong ties to the Combine.
- † Finally, the tribe of the *Ulthoon* are ruled by a caste of necromancers. They have great hosts of zombie slaves to carry their tents and packs through the shifting terrain of the outer disc.

On the far side of the Spireward Sea from Omphalos is the port town of Iseby, ruled by a drunken titan named Cay. Iseby lacks Omphalos' knowledge of the portals, but has a better navy. Other small villages are dotted around the coast; some trade with the nomad tribes, some farm the mountain slopes or fish the Spireward Sea, while still others are the holdings of adventurers or travellers who have made the Orrery their home.

The Spireward Sea

The Spireward Sea is unlike any normal ocean; to prove this bold statement, the following facts are offered. Firstly, the sea is very small, being no

more than seventy-five miles wide at its widest extent. Secondly, it is fed from every direction by fast-flowing rivers. Thirdly, the heart of the Spireward Sea would be a great whirlpool, caused by the confluence of these rivers and the spin of the Disc of the Material, if it were not for the great Central Spike rising from the exact centre of the disc. Fourthly, it is inhabited by tojindas and water mephitis. Fifthly, and most importantly, most other seas do not contain gigantic brass pipes that suck up thousands of gallons of water each day and pump it dozens of miles into the air to the overhanging globes. An especially brave captain can even sail

Omphalos

Like most of the cities in the Grand Orrery, Omphalos is a city of convenience. It is a port on every sea. It is not especially pleasant, nor is the climate conducive to good health. Those who come to live there do so because they need swift travel to a dozen planes, not because they share any common beliefs or ethos. The common folk of Omphalos see nothing odd in dealing with celephates, tieflings, genies or even – in rare cases – the more pleasant fiends. The Navel of the World is open to all.

In Omphalos, the laws are decided by the Watcher and his privy council of nine advisors. The three wealthiest citizens and three randomly chosen citizens serve on the council for periods of three years; the other three members are selected from the citizenry by the other six councillors on the grounds of merit or ability, and serve for six months. The laws are enforced by a small city watch; the city also hires mercenaries from the Faceless Legion to defend against more dangerous troublemakers.

The Combine has a great deal of influence in Omphalos, but all the Planar Organisations save perhaps the Planewrights have agents here.

Omphalos (Large City): AL N; 40,000 gp limit; Assets 30,000,000 gp; Pop 15,000; Integrated (mix of all races). *Power Centres:* The Watcher, Jadeel Na'linthel (CN), The Golem Thaddek (LN), Combine Agent Hao Pult (NG), 134 of the Faceless Legion.

his ship into one of the pipes and ride the rising waters up to the strange enclosed seas within those globes, and from there onto the Plane of Water.

Orrery Portals open along the Spireward Sea, just as they open elsewhere in the Grand Orrery. Trading ships pay particular attention to portals that connect sea to sea, cramming their cargo holds with goods unthinkably rare on other planes.

The floor of the Spireward Sea is the one of the two places on the Disc of the Material where the original surface of the disc can be seen – almost everywhere else, the surface is covered with a patchwork of mountains, hills, forests and other

forms of occluding dirt. (The other place is, of course, the extreme rim of the disc, and that is scored and abraded due to contact with the fallen Air Orbit.) Divers and merfolk have described the shining metal plain as being engraved with a complex pattern of angles, lines and other marks, which doubtless had huge significance when the Grand Orrery was built.

The Central Spike

The Central Spike rises from the exact centre of the disc; it is the axle on which the world turns. The Spike is unthinkably huge, being no less than two miles in diameter and approximately thirty miles tall. A spiral staircase (scaled for giants or titans) twines around the spike, but there are all sorts of tubes and quick-moving platforms inside which allow for quicker travel.

Three-quarters of the way up, three huge metal struts fashioned to resemble maidens branch off from the spike; these struts support the three globes of the Orbit of Water. The pipes drawing water up from the Spireward Sea run through these struts. Past this level, the spike narrows precipitously, angling inwards to a single needle-sharp point.

A few hundred feet below the needle, though, is one of the most precipitous and vertiginous places in the whole Orrery. A ramshackle platform of wood and scrap metal is strapped, lashed and glued to the spike. This platform is the home of a gnomish wizard, Padriacalon Iseuthemithis, who has spent much of his life studying the Orrery. Telescopes and aethervanes jostle for space with Padriacalon's tent, nets of food, and stacks of books. The gnome has a *helm of teleportation*, but it is bulky and unreliable. He usually travels up and down the Spike by climbing down the staircase over the course of several weeks, but has been known to *featherfall*.

Directly above the spike floats a spherical device the size of a small castle; the heart of the Orrery. Portals flicker everywhere around the heart, faster than the eye can follow. Every passing instant opens new doors to other planes. A flyer trying to reach the heart would have to thread a path through this storm of gates. Not even *teleportation* or *dimensional anchors* are of use here; there are simply too many portals.

The Orbit of Water

For the common inhabitants of the Grand Orrery, the Orbit of Water is the only important elemental orbit. It consists of three great globes that hang from the Central Spike. The globes are held aloft by statues of maidens, who carry the globes on their heads. The maidens appear to be human or perhaps half-elven; certainly, there is an eldritch quality to their smiling faces. The globes rotate in synch with the disc below, sprinkling rain on the landscape. The globe rotates to do so – the upper hemisphere is pierced with channels and gratings that allow the water to fall through. (One curious trait is that these gratings filter the salt from the water before it falls. A thick encrustation of salt builds up on the inside of the globe, which must be constantly chipped away and cleared by crab-golems that scuttle eternally around the inside of the globe.)

Inside two of the three globes are enclosed seas, lightless and violently churned by the movements of the globes. Portals to the Plane of Elemental Water refill these globes annually. There are colonies inside the globes; things that dwell in the lightless depths of the ocean find in the dark confines of the metal globes a fine home. The portals to the Water Plane remain active all year round and can be opened with a touch.

One of the globes is broken. Its portals are shut and dark, its enclosed seas are dry. Great gashes mar its surface. A kraken of great power slumbers within the shattered globe, its tentacles coiled around tablets of ancient stone.

The Orbit of Air

The Orbit of Air was shattered in the Mairin civil war. One of its three platforms fell upon the Disc of the Material, sliding down the Spine in a catastrophic fall. As the platform is on the far side of the disc from the only major heat source on the Orrery, it has frozen. An eternal glacier grows atop the ruined platform. The platform is trapped between the Spine and the rotating disc, so it scrapes a five-mile-wide section of the edge of the disc clean of all matter. The constant abrasions have cut gouges into the mithral-alloy surface of the disc and sometimes the movement of the whole Orrery is arrested when one of these wounds catches on the ice. When the rotating disc breaks free and the Orrery resets, the shock of sudden movement sends earthquakes through the already-unstable land.

The Harantine and Bulreen tribes search for shards of disc-material, which they make into weapons.

In the depths of the glacier lies the town of Drakholt. The town is surrounded with permanent *walls of fire* to hold back the ice. The town is as far from the sun as one can get on the Orrery, so the only ambient light comes from the flickering flames of the walls. Drakholt is a refuge from the Games of the Unbuilt City; the sullen folk of the town search for ways to attack the city or shut down the Orrery's Portals on which the city depends. They have sent explorers into the Spine that rises above their icy retreat and even into the machine labyrinth inside the Base.

The other two platforms and the broken half of the Orbit have fallen. One platform landed on the base, and contains the ruins of a glittering cloud castle. The other platform passed out of the Orrery entirely, and now drifts through the Astral Plane, where it has been forged into a barge by titans.

The Spine

The Spine of the Orrery arches like a tremendous world tree over the disc. At it rises, the two surviving Orbits of Earth and Fire and the Web of the Heavens branch off the Spine. It is made of the same metal as the disc below, but every inch of the Spine is marked with runes and gauges. Three huge faces stare down from the underside of the arch onto the land below. Travellers have found tunnels and dungeons inside the Spine, including hollow

Shard Blades

The weapons made by the nomads from the scavenged debris are known as Shard Blades. Working the brass/mithral alloy is beyond their arts, so they simply attach bone or wooden handles to suitable shavings. These weapons weigh half as much as normal blades, and deal an extra dice of damage – a Shard Blade longsword deals 2d8 damage instead of 1d8. However, as the blades are found, not made, they are never Masterwork items and therefore cannot be made into magical weapons (although they can be targeted by *magic weapon* spells).

Shard Blades are traded for 500 gp/pound more than their normal cost. Only slashing weapons can be Shard Blades.

shafts hundreds of miles long. At least one of these eerie, abandoned corridors leads to the Unbuilt City, but the labyrinths of the Spine have never been accurately mapped.

The moons of the Orrery rotate slowly, attuning to the Positive and Negative Energy Planes in turn. When the moon is aligned to one plane or the other, it becomes charged with energy. Inside, the moon is inhabited by alternating colonies of positive and negative creatures, who slip away to their home planes as their moon fades. They share a city of grey stone built inside the moon, and yet never see their neighbours.

The Orbit of Earth

The Orbit of Earth is composed of a narrow ring of metal extending from the Spine all the way around the Orrery and back again. Three platforms move along this track, corresponding to three sections of the Earth Plane. Each platform contains a permanent portal to Earth. One platform is the lair of the only dragon known to make its permanent home in the Grand Orrery, a red wyrm named Ruin who is allied with the forces of Chaos. Another is the garden of the Orrery, a magical orchard walled with green-glass lenses that project life energy down onto the plains below. The third platform is dark and quiescent, but seems to contain some sort of industrial complex.

A character could fly or *teleport* to the Orbit, or even climb the Spine and then walk along the track for many thousands of miles to reach the platforms.

The Orbit of Fire

The Fire Orbit moves in a wider circle than Earth. Like the Earth Orbit, it carries three platforms, the only stars in the night sky of the Orrery. The three platforms each contain permanent portals to the Plane of Fire, which occasionally spit out goutts of flame. All three platforms have huge valves on their underside, carved to resemble coiled serpents

Rings of the Orrery

These curious artefact rings have been found in ancient vaults in the Orrery. They are simple bands made of the same metal as the rest of the machine. Each ring is attuned to one of the great statues or faces that decorate important parts of the Orrery, such as the underside of the Spine, the water globes or the Three. The wearer can see through the icon's eyes and even magnify the things he sees, allowing a wearer viewing the land from a statue hundreds of miles above to peer through cloud layers and see a traveller walking below. The rings may have other powers to control their respective icons, allowing the wearer to influence the rainfall or the opening and closing of portals.

that unwind when the platforms spit elemental fire into the belly of the dragon. One platform plays host to an outpost of azer, who use the Orrery for trading. The middle platform is malfunctioning, and the *gate* there leaks molten metal and stone down onto the disc below. The third platform of fire is known as the Beacon; it is held by those who oversee the Games of the Unbuilt City, and blasts of flame signal the start of the games.

The Heavens

The various Outer Planes and major demiplanes are represented in the mechanism of the Orrery by metal plates engraved with a symbol corresponding to the plane. These plates are attached to the Spine by a web of filaments. At night, the lights of the fire platforms or the moon reflect off the edges of the runes, creating a sky full of constellations. Astrologers watching these artificial constellations can predict the relative positions, accessibility and states of the planes.

The Unbuilt City

As above, so below; the patchwork terrain of the Disc of the Material is reflected in the city above.

Internal Portals

A network of local portals exists within the Orrery, letting a character teleport from one section of the Disc to another, or from the Disc to a location within the Spine or one of the elemental Orbits. Using these portals requires one of the Rings of the Orrery, or a lesser ring that does not control anything other than granting access to the portals.

The fabled Unbuilt City is located on a wide flange at the extreme end of the Spine, directly above the dragon statue. Not a single part of the Unbuilt City was made by its inhabitants, the Mairin. Instead, every building, every palace, every alleyway and

The Games of the Unbuilt City

Elethoi, mistress of the Sapphire Book, was first to find the Orrery and she used it to carry her people away from the desolation of the dragons. For a time, they prospered for they could bring all that they desired from other planes. They dwelt in a city made of the finest buildings and palaces of a dozen worlds. In time, the greed of the people grew strong; jealously flared between the houses. Soon, the magic of the Orrery was turned to war. Fiends and stranger creatures sprang from gates, elemental flares scorched the ground. As their quarrels grew, the very framework of the Orrery creaked and groaned in pain.

Once again, it was Elethoi who saved them. She created the Games of the Unbuilt City. Each house would pluck champions from the worlds accessible through the Orrery. The house whose champion succeeded at the various quests and challenges set for them by the other houses would rule the Unbuilt City until the next iteration of the games. This compromise ensured that the people did not destroy themselves – and brought untold danger and misery to thousands of unwilling champions.

– Heretical Marain history

The Games of the Unbuilt City are played on the outer reaches of the Disc of the Material. Each noble house of the City abducts adventurers and warriors from whatever plane they wish. The houses also acquire suitable tasks for these champions – a castle might be taken from one land, a gemstone plucked from the Plane of Earth and placed at the heart of the fortress, and a selection of monsters grabbed from Mâl to be strewn about its halls. The champions of one house would then try the challenges of another. A complex weighting system ensures that challenges cannot be impossible or too easy. The house that accumulates the most points over the course of the Games wins status in the Unbuilt City; positions in government, influence over the Orrery's controls, or even Elethoi's throne.

From the perspective of an unfortunate champion in one of these games, the adventurer is suddenly *gated* to a strange plane, where he is forced to wear a talisman bearing the sign of the house that abducted him. He is told of the task that he must complete – if he refuses, he is punished or told that the only way to get home is to comply. Successful champions are usually added to the stable of the house that chose them, and are used again and again to compete in the games. The houses keep track of their champions using *scry* spells.

flagstone was stolen from another plane. The city is a magnificent monstrosity to look upon. Everyone from beggar to lord dwells in a glorious mansion. In some places, where a particular family holds sway over a whole district of the city, the buildings are stolen with an eye for harmony and space, but in most of the city the architecture is a ghastly mix. Gothic castles jostle for space with elven tree-towers or bulbous marble palaces, and streets weave nervously between the unplanned monuments.

The palace of the Unbuilt City lies below the city streets, on the underside of the Spine. The palace's great emerald windows look down upon the whole Orrery. In the heart of the palace is a model of the whole Orrery, a precisely scaled-down copy of the whole machine. This model can be physically manipulated to reconfigure the Orrery and cause portals to open. Only the court astrologers of

the Mairin are permitted to touch the model, but most of the major families have either bribed an astrologer or two or have placed spells on the model to manipulate it.

Just as they dwell in the most magnificent homes imaginable, the citizens of the Unbuilt City feast upon the fruits and harvests of all the planes. They must be careful – while the model in the palace could be set to open a portal in any treasure vault or king's hall, the Mairin cannot risk a direct confrontation with any of the great planar powers. They have the vast power of the Orrery, but their numbers are still few. If they angered a cabal of arch-wizards or a deity, they could not defend themselves with any real hope of success. Therefore, they only steal from those who could not trace the theft – a country baron might open his wine cellar or his granary to find it emptied. There is therefore little need

in the city for any sort of crafts or trade; the only distractions to be found are the famous Games of the Unbuilt City. Watching and betting on these games under the influence of all the intoxicants and narcotics in existence, the Unbuilt City is drenched in debauchery and decadence.

Fear and Loathing in the Unbuilt City

Almost any common item can be obtained in the Unbuilt City for free. Portals sweep through markets and treasuries on hundreds of worlds, scooping up goods and depositing them in palatial storehouses where they are sorted by slaves. Anyone who desires an apple or a candlestick or a sword or a slave can take what they want from the storehouse – there is always more on the other side of the portal. Rarer items are bartered for; magic items and drugs are the most common trade goods. Use opposed Charisma, Diplomacy or Intimidate checks; for each point of difference between the totals, adjust the final price up or down by 5%.

The main drug used here is power. The Mairin family whose champions win the Games can claim various political offices in the city. Only those of Mairin blood can sponsor a stable of contestants in the Games, although over the centuries a few other races have taken up residence in the city and even married into the various Mairin families.

There are roughly two dozen Mairin families who have the resources and influence to make a strong showing in the Games. The key to success in the Games is information; the Mairin employ agents to find suitable candidates for the stables. Heroes and adventurers who distinguish themselves are marked for abduction and used in the Games. Victory in the Games brings more influence in the Unbuilt City and greater access to the model of the Orrery (and hence more wealth, more agents and a better position in the next Games).

Most of the noble families claim descent from Elethoi of the Sapphire Book, the wizardess who first found the Orrery. The others are the old Mairin nobility or either especially ambitious bloodlines who did especially well in the early Games of the Unbuilt City. The various families vie for political office and control of the fabled Magpie Throne.

The Unbuilt City (Small City): AL CN; - gp limit; Assets A quite absurd amount of gp; Pop 10,000; Mixed (80% Mairin, 20% other). *Power Centres:* The Noble Families (CN), the Magpie Throne (CE), The Court Astrologers (LN), Scions of the Sapphire Book (N), Wardens of the Games (LN)

As for Elethoi herself, she left the Unbuilt City after the first Games proved their worth. She was said to be sickened by the greed shown by her kin, and preferred to go in search of the secrets of the Orrery. She was an extremely skilled wizard, who could doubtless have extended her life through lichdom or alchemy if she chose. Travellers in the depths of the Grand Orrery sometimes report seeing a beautiful woman dressed in flowing robes but when moving to investigate are met only by a glittering sapphire.

The Three

The three are the triad of massive statues that support the Disc of the Material. In the ‘south’ of the disc, the Dragon’s mighty jaws contain a fiery light that is the Orrery’s sun. The slopes of the Dragon can be climbed, but the metal is painfully hot to the touch because of the fires within. Elementals and salamanders claim the Dragon as their home. The huge mechanisms that channel the flames into the mouth and move the massive head from left to right require access tunnels for maintenance, so there are numerous underground complexes within the sweltering heat of the south.

The Pegasus stands in the ‘northwest’ region – its wings are outstretched and form a mountain-range of white-enamel that the disc rolls past. Its head is bowed low over the disk, so low that tall trees brush against its mane. The mouth of the Pegasus is articulated, suggesting that at some point in the distant past, it could speak. Like the Dragon, there is a network of tunnels and chambers within the Pegasus statue. It is inhabited by a couatl philosopher named Telatotl who studies the skies of the Orrery, attempting to discern the future.

Finally, the Griffon is located along the northeast of the disc. One massive claw is outstretched, reaching for the Central Spike. This claw is articulated, like the Pegasus’ mouth, and there is an overwhelmingly strong aura of magical energy, the

same sort of emanation that is left after a wizard throws a spell. The Griffon could be used as a proxy for a spellcaster, magnifying the somatic gestures of a spell to cast it over the whole Orrery. How this can be accomplished, though, is surely a secret lost somewhere in the labyrinth of tunnels beneath its surface.

The Base

Folk living within the wondrous machine of the Grand Orrery rarely stop to consider that theirs is an artificial world; they are distracted by the latest deaths in the Games or the changes in the heavens or tribal politics. Even when they realise the nature of the world, that the rotating disc and constant flux of the portals are the product of ancient engines, they rarely think about what drives these machines.

There is more space, and many more miles of corridor and chamber in the bulbous base of the Orrery than there is on the surface of the Disc of the Material or in the Spine. The great labyrinths in the mountainous Three are no more than utility rooms compared to the vast complex that lies beneath the disc. The base of the Orrery contains titanic arcane engines that throb and pulse with the slow rhythm of the moving planes.

Elethoi walked here, long ago, searching for the Builders.

HAZARDS

The main hazard in the Orrery is not a natural phenomenon (if anything is natural in a machine world) – it is the Games. The Mairin are not above kidnapping random travellers and ordering them into a monster-infested ruin, nor is it unheard of for monsters recruited for the Games to wander off and attack settlements or tribes on the Disc.

The movement of the various components of the Orrery does build up a potent static charge of magic. Flying more than a mile above the Disc or one of the platforms or attempting to *teleport* through this space is hazardous. A *teleport* effect, even a *greater teleport*, always uses the ‘seen once’ line of the *teleport* spell. A flying creature is dealt 1d6 points of electrical damage per round of flight; both the chance of going astray and the electrical

damage increases dramatically around the magical powerful zones of the Orrery, such as the Central Spike or the Three.

DENIZENS

The Orrery contains creatures from every plane of existence; monsters caught when a section of landscape was taken through a portal, things recruited to serve in the Games, travellers who find the Orrery to be a convenient short cut through the planes. It is also the only place where the mairin can be found in large numbers. Their race is mostly dead – their homeland was devoured whole by flights of dragons in ages past.

Mairin

Medium Humanoid (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice: 1d8-1 (3 hp)

Initiative: +2 (Dex)

Speed: 30-ft.

Armour Class: 19 (+2 Dex, +5 breastplate, +2 heavy steel shield), touch 12, flat-footed 17

Base Attack Bonus/Grapple: +0/+0

Attack: Longsword +0 melee (1d8+poison) or heavy crossbow +2 ranged (1d10+poison)

Full Attack: Longsword +0 melee (1d8+poison) or heavy crossbow +2 ranged (1d10+poison)

Space/Reach: 5-ft. /5-ft.

Special Attacks: Poison

Special Qualities: Addiction, Shift Sense, Spell-like abilities

Saves: Fort +1, Ref +2, Will -1

Abilities: Str 10, Dex 15, Con 8, Int 17, Wis 8, Cha 14

Skills: Appraise +7, Bluff +6, Craft (alchemy) +7*, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (the planes) +7*, Listen +3, Spot +3

Feats: Alertness

Climate/Terrain: The Orrery

Organisation: Solitary, party (4-7) or warden team (8 or more, including at least one wizard or sorcerer of 5th level or higher and one fighter or ranger of 5th level or higher)

Challenge Rating: 1

Treasure: Double standard

Alignment: Usually chaotic neutral

Advancement: By class

Level adjustment: +1

The figure facing you is humanoid, but slightly thinner and paler than could be considered human. A strange tracery of bioluminescence glows on its face.

The mairin are a race of humanoids from a dead world who have taken up residence on the Orrery. They are degenerates, addicted to pleasure and convinced of their own innate superiority to all others. The main occupation of the vast majority of the mairin is to play and win the Games of the Unbuilt City, although a small few become fascinated with the cities along the Spireward Sea and go off exploring the planes beyond the city. Most, however, are strangely parochial for a race dwelling in a nexus plane.



The mairin worship no gods and have no clerics save those of other races whom they have enslaved. Their ambition drives them to great heights of swordplay or magic. The mairin have naturally bioluminescent pools of light on their skin, and ritual scarring and tattoos are used to shape these glowing marks into family and caste marks.

Combat

Mairin dislike melee combat – they are too slight and vulnerable to survive direct clashes with many opponents. They are masters of poison and drug use, preferring to deliver their venoms using heavy crossbows or other ranged weapons.

Poison (Ex): The mairin brew their own poisons in the Unbuilt City. They commonly use a nerve agent that deadens reflexes (Fortitude save DC 18, initial damage 1d6 Dex, secondary damage 1d6 Dex), but have a wide range of speciality venoms available, including ones that specifically interfere with spellcasting (Fortitude save DC 18, initial damage requires a Concentration check at DC 15 + the spell's level to cast a spell, secondary damage increases the DC by +10; both effects last for thirty minutes). The mairin never accidentally poison themselves when using poison.

Addiction (Ex): All mairin are addicts to one form of drug or another. A mairin must spend at least 50 gp multiplied by their level on drugs each month, or suffer withdrawal (-4 to all ability scores for one month, -3 to all scores in the following month, -2 after that indefinitely, as complete recovery is impossible for the mairin). In the Unbuilt City, such intoxicants are freely available.

Boost (Su): Once per day, a mairin can draw on its inner reserves and increase any one of its classes by two levels, gaining the benefits of the boosted class' base attack, saving throws and special abilities. For example, a 5th level mairin monk could boost his monk level to seven, gaining the *wholeness of body* ability. This boost lasts for 1d4 rounds.

Shift Sense (Su): Mairin have an ability similar to the *detect portal* spell; they can automatically sense any planar travel effects active within 60 feet of them.

Spell-like abilities: 3/day: *light*, *hypnotism*. The saving throw for all spells is 12 + the spell level. The Save DC is Charisma-based.

Mairin characters:

- † +2 Dexterity, -2 Constitution, +2 Intelligence, -2 Wisdom.
- † Favoured class: Rouge or Sorcerer.
- † Level adjustment: +1.

Skills: All mairin have a +4 racial bonus to Craft (alchemy) and Knowledge (planes) checks.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Grand Orrery of All Reflected Heavens is a nexus plane – it is a quick route to almost any plane imaginable. The sheer complexity of the moving parts means that the Games Master can have a suitable portal pop up whenever the plot needs it, and the adventurers can get to an adventure much more quickly. It is also a fascinating environment to explore and gives characters a rather different place to call home.

- † The Games of the Unbuilt City are the most blatant plot device ever: the mairin grab ‘champions’ (characters) and ‘challenges’ (dungeons, monsters, villages – whatever third party modules that the Games Master has lying around) and drop them onto the

Disc of the Material. Almost any monster or item can show up in the Games, and they also offer a short-term campaign structure - the characters are abducted, learn to survive in the Games, eventually escape their mairin captors and then can flee to almost any plane. For an especially ambitious campaign, the players could also play mairin nobles manipulating their adventurer characters.

- † The City of Omphalos and the settlements around the Spireward Sea can be an excellent base for an adventuring party. It is a neutral ground where outsiders from any plane can show up; the characters can be employed as traders, guards, diplomats or spies.
- † Characters can also delve into the mysteries of the Orrery itself? Was it built as a method of travelling from one plane to another? As an escape route from a dying world? As a method of predicting the future? Where did the builders go, and why did they abandon the great machine?



THE WANDERING INN OF THE GLORIOUS TOAD

DESCRIPTION

The Wandering Inn of the Glorious Toad God varies in appearance depending on where it is. Each time it materialises on a new plane, its front door aligns to an existing doorframe, alleyway or other suitable portal. In one city on the Material Plane, the inn door might appear in an archway in the sewers, or a closet in a palace, or atop a belltower. In the Plane of Fire, it might appear in a cave mouth in an Earth Pocket, or in a ring of flames. In the Chasm, it might materialise in Peredrim or in one of the Windfisher Cities. A few minutes before it materialises, the sign of the Glorious Toad appears above whatever portal will be aligned with the door.

Wandering Inn Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal</i>
Size	5	<i>Large inn</i>
Morphic	5	<i>Alterable Morphic</i>
Life	0	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	-8	<i>Magic only</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/ Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	15	<i>Magically accessible</i>
Proximity...		
...to current plane of residence	3	<i>One portal</i>

In the beginning was the Glorious Toad God Chag-Nuth-Thu, who was thirsty. He translated to the Material Plane, for there he knew was drink in abundance. The Glorious Toad God stumbled and hopped into the first inn he came upon, where he drank all that was offered, all he could buy, and even all that he could smell hidden in the cellar for the nose of the Glorious Toad God is most sensitive. He drank until he fell over insensible in the now-empty cellar.

When the Toad God awoke (much, much later), he hopped upstairs. The innkeeper told the god to go home.

‘I would’ burped the Toad God, ‘but I cannot remember which plane is mine own.’

‘You can’t stay here’ said the innkeeper.

‘I am a Toad God’ muttered the Toad God, ‘Toad Gods stay where they want’ and waved his hand.

The inn groaned, and twisted, and the land outside changed. The Toad God went back to bed in the basement; and from that day to this, the Inn has travelled the planes, visiting each plane in turn. One day, perhaps, it will find the home plane of the Toad God, or he will wake up and stagger home.

Until then, it wanders.

Inside, the Glorious Toad is a large and rambling inn, expanded and renovated by numerous owners, long-term residents, or rampaging demons.

Getting there... and Back

The easiest way to get to the Wandering Inn is to walk in the front door. The trick, of course, is finding the front door, which can be anywhere in the multiverse. The Inn moves according to its own whim (or the whim of the Toad God’s ancient spell), but divination spells can predict roughly where the inn will go next, and The Inn’s schedule for the next few days is chalked up on a board just over the bar.

The Inn is a pocket plane in and of itself, so *plane shift* spells can bring a traveller to the inn if they can reach the plane where the inn is currently resident. Just appearing in the inn, however, is frowned upon, especially if the traveller brings unwelcome pursuit with him. However, *gating* into a reserved room is perfectly acceptable.

FEATURES & LOCATIONS

The Wandering Inn was once an ordinary inn, and most of the fittings have endured or been replaced with similar items. A pewter mug in the inn might have been swapped for the skull of a fiend, but through a drunken haze it might be possible to mistake this for a normal inn – until, of course, you see the customers.

Ground Floor Locations

Front Door

The shape of the front door of the Wandering Inn varies depending on which doorframe it is set into, but it is always a heavy oaken door (Hardness 5, 20 hp, Break DC 25). On the inside of the door is an ornate metal plate; when touched, this plate reinforces the door with *arcane lock* and *ironwood* while someone holds the door shut (Hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 43 + Strength bonus of character holding the door). The metal plate can also be commanded to use *clairvoyance* to display the area just outside the inn, although there is also a small viewing plate that can be drawn aside.

On the outside of the door is a heavy doorknocker in the shape of a frog with jewelled eyes. Using the doorknocker triggers an *alarm* in the bar within, but also casts *detect evil* on the character outside. Being evil does not bar a character from the inn, but it may result in the traveller being questioned and watched.

Tables and Chairs

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Range Increment	Break
Thrown Mug	1d4 non-lethal	20	10-ft.	2+
Bottle	1d4 non-lethal	19-20	5-ft.	1+
Broken Bottle	1d3	20	-	-
Stool	1d4	20	-	3+
Chair	1d6	20	-	3+
Table	1d8	20	-	8+

All of these are improvised weapons (-4 penalty to hit). If the weapon deals more damage than the value in the Break column, it shatters.

Anyone viewing the area just outside the inn with *detect portal* or *arcane sight* will notice a quivering fissure – the exit point of the stable door (see below).

Common Room

The dominant feature of this room is the bar, which was torn from a dark temple of evil where it was once a sacrificial altar. The blood and ichor has mostly been scrubbed from the oily green-black stone, although visitors are still advised not to try to sip up spilled beer. The altar-bar occasionally manifests an aura of infernal green light, but has yet to summon up horrors or possess any of the patrons. Casks of ale and some bottles of wine are kept behind the bar, as are a pair of masterwork clubs and a *merciful crossbow* +2. Behind the bar hangs a slate, which has the inn's next three planes of call and the estimated times of arrival and departure, as well as a silver bell. This bell tolls once an hour before the inn vanishes, and again five minutes before.

The main fireplace is large and lined with stone – the Wandering Inn was originally located amid the snows of the north, where customers would come in frozen and frost-covered. The grating in the fire is made of cold wrought iron; it is also a summoning circle which has been used to bind demons and elementals. There is a small secret compartment half-way up the chimney between the ground floor and the first floor (Search DC 23 to find, but it is currently empty).

Above the fireplace are a pair of crossed swords – neither are magical or even especially well-balanced, but they do look like blades of great power. Above those is a painting of a rather obscure mountain range on the Material Plane. The painting is also non-magical, but the scene depicted is used

as a guide for *teleporting* if regulars at the inn are separated or lost. Just to the right of the fireplace is a comfortable stool and a low table, often occupied by a bard or other entertainer performing in the inn.

Half a dozen round tables are scattered around the rush-covered floor of the common room. There are also two alcoves near the fireplace where more private conversations can take place – both alcoves can be cloaked in *private sanctum* spells on command, by touching a little gargoyle-face on the wall. Here too are mismatched stools and chairs from a score of different worlds and craftsmen.

There are two windows in the wall near the door, but they do not connect to the outside world – beyond the inn is nothing but silvery nothingness. Anything thrown out the window just floats a few feet away (so a pall of smoke hangs over the inn when the fire is lit, until blown away by the occasional *gust of wind*).

Kitchen

Calling it a kitchen is perhaps being generous. Seeing as the inn visits new and exotic worlds on a daily or weekly basis, most of the inn patrons prefer to eat out, and the kitchen in the Glorious Toad goes largely unused – as an area for food preparation, anyway. Wizards and sorcerers are a major part of the inn's clientele, so the kitchen has been pressed into service many times as an alchemist's lab, workshop or even surgery.

It was last cleaned before the fall of pretty much any empire you care to name.

Storeroom

The storeroom contains very little; the inn buys most supplies 'locally'. A trapdoor in the leads down to the cellar. Cask the golem waits here when the inn is closed.

Stables

The Wandering Inn once had a more conventional outside stables, but only the main body of the inn was affected by the Toad God's spell. Magic provided the answer – this former storeroom is under the effects of a size-altering spell, making it big enough to hold the steeds of any guests. In desperation, the stables can even be used as emergency accommodation. The room can warp

its space to a maximum of 100 feet x 100 feet x 30 feet. A permanent *dimension door* effect in one wall transports the animals to a spot just outside the front door. This is a major hole in the inn's security, as anyone who can pinpoint the spot where the *dimension door* exits can use it to slip into the back of the inn. Therefore, a heavy wagon wheel is pushed over the *dimension door* by Cask if the inn is threatened.

Office

This small backroom is protected by a heavy, iron-bound door (Hardness 6, 30 hp, Break DC 25) and kept locked (Open Lock, DC 30) by Malpon. Inside is a small and battered writing-desk and a bookcase. Malpon can barely read or write, so the inn's accounts are kept by Ariane. In truth, the Wandering Inn is vastly wealthy, as many of its customers are powerful adventurers who think nothing of throwing a thousand gold on the table to pay a bill. In addition to common notes and bills from suppliers, there is a special concordance written by a previous innkeeper. This book, in concert with a Knowledge (the planes) check, can be used to calculate where the inn will go next. The DC for this check is 15 +5 per plane in advance, so DC 20 for the next plane, DC 25 for the one after that and so on – without the concordance, the DC is doubled.

The bookcase contains several items and books acquired by previous innkeepers that were deemed too dangerous to leave on display upstairs in the library. Notable items include a *helm of opposite alignment* and a full set of *elemental gems*. The evil or dangerous books have had their most dangerous pages removed and replaced by pages bearing *explosive runes*. The expurgated pages are kept with the treasures of the inn.

These treasures are kept in a chest in a cunning hiding place. The walls of this room are panelled, as is the ceiling and floor. Six of these panels conceal clever catches (Search DC 30 – each must be found individually). The panels are aligned to face each other, and can be rotated. Essentially, the chest is magically kept inside-out – when all six panels are flipped around, they put the chest back into normal reality. The chest is locked (Open Lock, DC 30) and magically sealed with an *arcane lock*. It contains 5,000 gp in cash and another 1d6 x 5,000 gp worth of gemstones, along with an *amulet of the planes* and the pages from the expurgated

Notable Former Innkeepers of the Wandering Inn

Thelfric of Norvale. The first innkeeper, he sold the inn a few days after the Toad God fell asleep in the basement. It is said of Thelfric that he went out to find a way back to his home village and his lost wife.

Jerome the Welcoming. Innkeeper after Thelfric, it was Jerome who established the Inn as one of the best way to see the planes. He made the silver bell that warns patrons when the inn is about to depart.

Mab the Red. Under her stewardship, the Wandering Inn was used as the mobile base for a band of adventurers who cut a swathe of heroism and swashbuckling skulduggery across the planes.

X'chrit'x. An insectoid warlord, X'chrit'x captured the Wandering Inn and used it as a beachhead for invasions of twenty-nine cities and towns. For a time, the sign of the Glorious Toad was as feared as the skull-and-crossbones or faceless helm.

Syllassine. A daughter of one of Mab the Red's companions, Syllassine was among the most powerful sorcerers ever to walk the planes. She reclaimed the Inn from X'chrit'x and served as innkeeper afterwards for longer than any before her save Jerome. She also wrote the concordance which allows innkeepers to predict where the inn is going.

Ashto. The only innkeeper to be a worshipper of the Glorious Toad God, Ashto's reign as innkeeper was cut grievously short when he declared that alcohol had offended the Toad God, and therefore the inn would no longer serve drink.

books, which include spells like *horrid wilting*, *greater planar binding* and *wail of the banshee*.

Upper Floor Guest Rooms

All of the upper rooms used by the guests and staff are largely identical, save that two serving maids are forced to share a room. Each room has a bed or bunk bed, a table, a washbasin, a storage chest and a chair. Some rooms also have a window, although now it merely looks out onto the silvery bubble that surrounds the pocket plane of the inn. The inn has

twenty guest rooms, of which seven have double bunk beds. Eight of the twenty rooms are currently occupied. When the inn is overcrowded, guests are offered sleeping quarters in the Menagerie, library or common room.

Each room has a door which can be locked (Open Lock, DC 25). Guests are permitted to use more powerful protections (such as *arcane locks*, *glyphs of warding*, guardian monsters), but must put up the 'do not disturb' sign to prevent the cleaning staff getting blasted.

Menagerie

The menagerie is in a converted loft. It was established by a long-term resident of the inn, who was an avid hunter and collector of strange creatures. The menagerie is kept as a curiosity and an entertainment for the guests. Most of the creatures here are either stuffed or preserved using alchemy, although there are several that are petrified statues. The entities here include a stuffed planar dragon hatchling, a ravid, an elemental axiomatic dire wombat, a medusa and a bizarre round thing covered in ears.

Unknown to anyone in the inn, the dead marilith preserved in magical amber in one corner of the Menagerie is actually only a mostly-dead marilith preserved in magical amber. The demon is stuck in the yellow crystal, but if the amber were ever cracked, even slightly, its evil influence could ooze out.

Library

This small adjunct to the Menagerie is filled with scrolls, books, carved stones, tablets and memory crystals from dozens of planes. There are few magical books in here (nothing but a few travelling spellbooks containing common or emergency spells), but there are lots of travelogues, discourses on religion and philosophy, histories and the like. The library also has a chest containing several games of skill and chance collected over the years.

The Broken Room

Before the inn became the Wandering Inn, the only problem with the Broken Room was that the roof leaked. Now, the room is exposed to the unthinkable transdimensional energies of the Space between Spaces when the inn moves from one plane to another. Anyone in the room sees the

worlds wheel at terrifying speed through the holes in the roof. The geometries of the broken room have become twisted and...wrong. The bed has bumps and angles where no normal bed should have such things, there are unfathomable depths of dark, stagnant water in the washbasin, and the wardrobe lurks with terrible intent. Most terribly of all, there is no such wardrobe in any of the other rooms. No innkeeper has ever admitted buying such a wardrobe, and it is too big to fit up the stairs.

Anyone in the Broken Room when the inn moves must make a Will save and a Fortitude save, both at DC 25. If the Will save is failed, then the character's mind is affected by the leaking divine energy; roll 1d6. On a 1-2, the character is *feebleminded*. On a 3-4, the character goes insane in some fashion, often becoming obsessed with some minor slight or passing desire. On a 5-6, the character converts to the worship of the Toad God. If the Fortitude save fails, the character is swept away by the energies, and ends up on a random plane.

The Broken Room also has a tendency to pick up random travellers and other planar debris. The door is kept locked and *alarmed*, but the staff still listen at the door after each transition, to make sure that nothing has materialised in the Broken Room.

Basement

Brewery

Most of the inn's supplies are bought locally, but the small brewery here produces the inn's own specialist brew – Toad's Woad, an alarmingly blue ale. Malpon has also been experimenting with some of the stranger apparatus and notes left by former innkeepers – one of them was certainly trying to bottle the Philosopher's Stone and serve it with tonic water, and he believes he is close to recreating this great work.

Cellar

The cellar of the Wandering Inn is whispered of in the same breath as the Vaults of Zin, the treasury of the caliph Oosalamagas, or the war chest of the Fiendish Legions. A partially inventory might run: fresh fruit, jars of water, sacks of grain, barrels of smoked and salted meats, bread and pastries, cheese, sundry junk and unidentified items, Toad God. Obviously, the last two items are of the most interest to unsavoury thieves (the rather tasty pastries acquired in the Afterworld of the Halflings

are of interest to savoury thieves). The innfolk tend to collect curios and items from the planes, and many of these get donated to the inn or just left in the rooms. Such items are thrown into the basement junkpile. *Arcane sight* or *detect magic* spells are useless here, due to the proximity of the Glorious Toad himself. Almost anything could be found in this pile, but due to accidents in the past, guests are not permitted to root around without the innkeeper's permission.

Beyond the pile is the small Temple of the Toad God that contains the Toad God himself. The divine music of His Snores echo throughout the chamber, and in His sleep He scratches Himself in a manner that is surely meaningful and prophetic. The Toad God looks like a twelve foot tall hairy toad with a slightly smug expression. Whether it is a true god, or merely an amazingly powerful creature is unknown. Only one brave psion ever tried to plumb the mysteries of the Glorious Toad God, and she reported a hangover so terrible it could shatter worlds.

HAZARDS

Getting Left Behind (CRO)

The Inn moves according to its own whim, but over the centuries, its patterns have been observed and mapped. It tends to stay on each plane for three or four days on average, but has been known to stay in one place for up to two months at the longest or only an hour or two at shortest. The estimated times are up on a board in the inn, and the silver bell tolls before the inn leaves and travellers are encouraged to cast *alarm* or similar detection spells on the bell if they are leaving the inn.

Guests with unpaid bills must settle up before leaving the inn if the bell has tolled the hour. Most guests pay in advance, and the inn rarely suffers from welchers running out the door just before the inn moves

on. Guests who are left behind must make their own way back to the inn, although rescue parties have been assembled from among the residents in rare cases.

Duration of Stay

1d6	Duration
1	1d10 hours
2	1d20 hours
3	2d20 hours
4	1d4 days
5	1d6 days
6	1d20 days

Roll on the Random Plane Table on page 248 for where the inn goes next. For duration of its stay, roll on the table above.

Toad's Woad (CR0)

Toad's Woad is the blue ale brewed in the basement of the inn. It is made from whatever ingredients can be obtained locally, so the taste and consistency varies somewhat. The major elements are gathered from the planes – pure elemental water, hops from the Elysian fields and so on – and when the Inn's movements do not co-operate, the innkeeper hires adventurers to obtain the missing ingredients. The azure hue and distinctive taste come from the curious blue fungi that grow on the flanks of the sleeping Toad God.

A mug of Toad's Woad requires a Fortitude check (DC 14) to avoid a cumulative –2 profane penalty to all skill checks, attack rolls and saving throws. If a character drinks more than twenty mugs of Woad, he may make a Will save (DC 20). If the check succeeds, he may *commune* with the Toad God and ask three questions. A character can only commune in this fashion once per month.

Toad's Woad costs 6 cp per mug.

Rules of the Inn

1. *No blasting spells.*
2. *All Toads are sacred.*
3. *The Inn waits for no man.*
4. *Do not open the door without the doorkeeper's permission.*
5. *Last call at midnight.*
6. *No open fires save in the hearth.*
7. *No callings and no dismissals.*
8. *No disjunctions.*
9. *Do not set Task on fire.*
10. *All roads lead to ruin.*

The Bill (CR0)

The Wandering Inn of the Glorious Toad is surprisingly reasonable given its unpredictable location.

Room (per night, including breakfast)	10 gp
Long-term Residence (per month, including meals)	200 gp
Meal	5 sp
Errands (obtaining items from local markets, etc)	5 gp

DENIZENS

The staff and residents of the Glorious Toad change regularly. Innkeepers die or tire of the duty, and hand the inn onto another worthy caretaker. Staff are even more fluid – most serve only for a few months before hopping off on one plane or another. The characters currently living in the inn are...

Malpon the Innkeeper

The current owner of the Wandering Inn of the Glorious Toad is Malpon, a former adventurer. The previous innkeeper died when Malpon was staying there; he had tired of the adventuring life and decided to purchase the inn. He still remembers his glory days, riding out on quests and slaying monsters. He also has an eye for the ladies, 'a conquest on every plane' as one wit put it.

Malpon keeps his old adventuring gear in his room, but he ensures that his weapons and armour are always in good condition and still practises assiduously, 'a shiny sword and dashing suit of armour work wonders with the fairer sex' he says. He keeps *Gyhel's Ring* in his apron for emergencies, although the masterwork clubs and crossbow can solve most problems.

Malpon; Ftr12/Brd1/Ex1; CR13; Medium humanoid (human); HD 12d10+2d6+36; Hp 110; Init +3; Spd 30 ft. or 20 ft (armoured); AC 13 or 20; touch 13 or 11, flat-footed 10 or 19; Base Atk +12; Grp +16; Atk +17 (1d6+4, masterwork club) or +21 (2d8+14, *greatsword* +2); Full Atk +17/+12/+5 (1d6+4, masterwork club) or +21/+16/+11 (2d8+14, *greatsword* +2); SA none; SQ bardic music, bardic knowledge, countersong, *fascinate*, spells; AL CG;



SV Fort +13, Ref +11, Will +11; Str 18; Dex 16; Con 16; Int 9; Wis 13; Cha 17

Skills and Feats: Appraise +3, Climb +14, Craft (brewing) +1, Handle Animal +9, Hide +7, Intimidate +9, Listen +5, Perform (drinking songs, sagas) +9, Profession (innkeeper) +3, Ride +9, Sense Motive +5; Cleave, Great Cleave, Great Fortitude, Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Greater Weapon Specialisation (greatsword), Home Ground (the Inn), Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialisation (greatsword)

Possessions: *Gyhel's Ring* (casts antimagic field once per day when activated), *greatsword* +2, *full plate* +1

Spells (2): mending x 2

C'zahl, Serving Girl

C'zahl is a night hag who was unwittingly trapped in the inn – she was tormenting a poor cleric by using her *dream haunting* ability. When the inn moved, it translated to a plane without an Ethereal component, so she was forced to materialise atop the cleric.

It was very embarrassing and confusing for all concerned.

Having failed to corrupt or destroy the cleric, C'zahl knew that she would be *persona not grata* in the Infernum (or, more accurately, *persona* torn to shreds for her failure), so she elected to stay on in the inn as a serving girl. She wears the form of a human female and has sworn not to bite or eat

guests unless they really deserve it, but is just as evil and nasty as any other fiend. She is sarcastic, coarse and cruel in the extreme, but her harsh, bitter exterior merely cloaks an inner soul of utterly depraved foulness. She takes especially pleasure in taunting Ariane and any clueless adventurers from the Material Plane who wander into the inn.

C'zahl, Night Hag, hp 75. See *Core Rulebook III* for game statistics, but replace her Mounted Combat feat with Home Plane (the inn).

Ariane, Serving Girl

A devotee of a deity of knowledge, Ariane sought out the inn. Each member of her order chooses one field of study, and she selected the planes. The Wandering Inn is the perfect place for such a scholar – or so she thought. To her horror, she discovered that all too often, the 'Inn' takes precedence over the 'Wandering' part, and instead of carefully observing the manifestation of the divine in the myriad realms of the multiverse, she now spends more time serving drunken genies and tipsy Fey. Raised in a sheltered convent filled with kindly and scholarly nuns, this came as something of a shock to the rather prissy young Ariane, but she is slowly adapting.

In each new world, Ariane attempts to learn as much as possible. Guests are often asked to escort the cleric out into the plane if it is fairly safe. She is a pretty and personable companion, although her habit of mixing moral lectures with planar trivia gets tiresome quickly.

Ariane; Clr3/Wiz3; CR6; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d8+3d4; Hp 21; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11; touch 11, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk +4 (1d6-1, masterwork club); Full Atk +4 (1d6-1, masterwork club); SA spells; SQ divine aura, turn undead, spells; AL NG; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +13; Str 8; Dex 12; Con 10; Int 17; Wis 16; Cha 15
Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Heal +9, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (religion) +9, Knowledge (the planes) +9, Spellcraft +15; Brew Potion, Enlarge Spell, Extend Spell, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll

Possessions: *Cloak of resistance* +2, *potion of cure critical wounds*

Spells (Arcane: 4/3/2, Save DC 13+spell level): 0th – detect magic, detect portal, light, mending; 1st – shield, unseen servant, magic missile; 2nd – detect thoughts, see invisible



(Divine: 4/3+1/2+1, Save DC 13+spell level):
 0th - Purity food and drink x 2, light, mending; 1st
 – bless, comprehend languages x 2, protection from
 evil; 2nd – calm emotions, hold person

Cask

The final current member of staff is a wooden golem made from empty casks of ale and scrap wood. Cask has served the inn for over a century, carrying his inanimate kin up and down from the cellar, serving drinks, tossing out drunks and holding the door shut against hordes of nameless screeching horrors. Cask is not especially bright, even for a golem who has spent a century dealing with customers, but he is useful and well loved in the inn. During the night, after sweeping the bar, he waits in the storeroom. Cask is willing to help any guests of the inn, but will not leave the inn without the innkeeper's permission.

Cask; Wood Golem; CR8; Large construct; HD 10d10+30; Hp 85; Init -2; Spd 20 ft.; AC 18 (-1 size, -2 Dex, +11 natural); touch 7, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +7; Grp +22; Atk +15 melee (2d10+7); Full Atk 2 Slams+15 (2d10+7); SA none; SQ Construct traits, DR10/adamantine, immunity to spells; AL N; SV

Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +1; Str 26; Dex 6; Con -; Int 6; Wis 6; Cha 8

Skills and Feats: None; Power Attack

Immunity to Spells (Su): Cask is immune to all spells except spells which specifically target wooden objects, which affect him normally.

Precifax Vaclen

Precifax the gnome is a herald from the court of a gnomish king, sent to deliver a message to a potent astral entity known as Eater of Eyes. He encountered the inn three years ago, and has stayed there ever since. After all, he reasons, statistically speaking the inn is almost certain to one day appear in the domain of Eater of Eyes, so staying put and drinking is exactly the same as braving the wilds of the astral plane. His bar tab and costs are paid for by the gnomish king. An investigation was launched into why a simple message to the Astral Plane is costing several hundred gold coins a year, but it is tied up in committee.

The gnome generally introduces himself as a messenger-savant – he has seen many things and studied many scrolls, and considers himself an expert on every topic. After introducing himself, he will happily deliver a lecture on said topics, analysing the audience's mental capacities, likely histories, probable fates and so on, before leaping like a conceptual mountain goat onto another intellectual peak. Precifax has mastered the bardic technique of breathing through his overlarge nose and exhaling through his mouth while talking, allowing him to ramble on for what seems like a lifetime. If it were not for his allergy to fur, which causes him to sneeze violently, Precifax could keep talking indefinitely. C'zahl has trained an infernal kitten to jump onto Precifax when he bores her. Precifax's audience can introduce themselves to the gnome while he crumples in a fit of sneezing, or flee. The latter is generally preferred.

Precifax; Rog2/Exp2; CR3; Small humanoid (gnome); HD 4d6+4; Hp 20; Init +2; Spd 30 ft; AC 16 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +3 studded leather); touch 13, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grp -1; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, gnome hooked hammer); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, gnome hooked hammer); SA Sneak Attack +1d6; SQ Evasion, Gnome Traits; AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +2; Str 12; Dex 14; Con 12; Int 14; Wis 7; Cha 7

Skills and Feats: Balance +5, Bluff +1, Climb +3, Decipher Script +6, Disable Device +5, Diplomacy +1, Escape Artist +5, Gather Information +1, Hide +5, Jump +4, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +5, Knowledge (trivia) +8, Knowledge (the planes) +5, Listen +3, Move Silently +5, Open Lock +5, Search +1, Sense Motive +1, Sleight of Hand +5, Survival +1, Tumble +5, Use Magic Device +5; Dodge, Skill Focus (knowledge (trivia)).

Possessions: *Boots of Striding and Springing.*

N'glm of the Glorious Toad

The Glorious Toad God is a god, and must be worshipped. Ever since it got heaven-shatteringly drunk and collapsed in the inn, the cult of the Toad God has understandably diminished, although it did enjoy a brief renaissance when the senior cleric came up with the Doctrine of Imbibed Example, which states that only by mimicking the holy acts of the Toad can the faithful achieve salvation, and therefore the followers of the Toad God should drink as much as they are able. N'glm, a balding bugbear, is the most devoted follower of this Doctrine. For religious reasons, he stays in the inn praising the Toad God, drawing on church funds to support his devout inebriation.

N'glm lives in fear that the Glorious Toad God will wake up and do something stupid, like leave the bar or order him back to the swamps. Whenever the god stirs in its slumbers, N'glm hires bards to sing lullabies.

N'glm; Clr3; CR4; Medium humanoid (goblinoid); HD 6d8+6; Hp 30; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 16 (+3 natural, +2 leather, +1 light wooden shield); touch 10, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +4; Grp +5; Atk +6 (1d8+1, morningstar); Full Atk +6 (1d8+1, morningstar); SA spells; SQ divine aura, turn undead, spells; AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +6; Str 12; Dex 10; Con 13; Int 10; Wis 15; Cha 9

Skills and Feats: Bluff +5, Concentration +5, Climb +3, Hide +4, Listen +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Move Silently +5, Spot +6; Alertness, Combat Casting, Great Fortitude, Weapon Focus (morningstar)

Possessions: *Holy Symbol of the Toad God, nolzur's magic pigments*

Spells (4/3+1/2+1, save DC 12+spell level): 0th – detect magic, guidance, purify food and drink, resistance; 1st – bless beer, shield of faith, summon monster I, 2nd – bear's endurance, lesser restoration

Walker in Shadow

The wizard known as Walker in Shadow is a newcomer to the inn. It is rumoured that he is fleeing a powerful foe, and took to the inn as it is an excellent refuge against pursuers. He is a potent magic-user and has a keen intellect. He has a habit of attempting to solve puzzles and disputes with his magic, as he sees lesser beings as problems to be solved. His solutions are often abrupt and cruel.

The Walker in Shadows has rented two rooms in the inn – one for himself and his wife, the other for use as a laboratory. While evading his pursuers, he is also engaged in all sorts of magical research connected to some sort of plane-manipulating spell. He is a member of both the Planewrights and the Emissaries of Hell, but his plans are not part of the goals of either group.

He dresses in long, dark, hooded cloaks; the only features that can usually be discerned are his flowing brown beard and his glittering eyes.

Walker in Shadow; Wiz9/Thaumaturgist 5; CR14; Medium humanoid (human); HD 14d4+14; Hp 50; Init +0; Spd 30 ft; AC 13 (+3 deflection); touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +8; Grp +7; Atk +7 (1d4-1, dagger); Full Atk +7/+2 (1d4-1, dagger); SA spells; SQ spells, improved ally, extended summoning, contingent conjuration, planar cohort; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +11 Str 8; Dex 10; Con 12; Int 22; Wis 13; Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Bluff +9, Concentration +16, Diplomacy +17, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (the planes) +21, Listen +7, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +21, Search +13; Augment Summoning, Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Member of the Emissaries of Hell, Member of the Planewright's Guild, Lightning Reflexes, Scribe Scroll, Punch Shift, Widen Spell

Possessions: *Headband of intellect +4, ring of protection +3, metamagic rod of lesser extension*
Spells (4/6/6/5/5/4/4/2, save DC 16 + spell level): 0th – detect magic, light, arcane mark, prestidigitation; 1st – shield, mage armour, identify, charm person, magic missile, protection from good; 2nd – summon monster II x 2, blur, web, fox's cunning x2; 3rd – fireball, dispel magic, lighting bolt, arcane sight, blink; 4th – dimensional anchor, stonewalk, shout, summon monster IV, mnemonic enhancer; 5th – dismissal, teleport, wall of force, cone of cold; 6th – chain lightning, mislead, disintegrate, summon monster VI; 7th – plane shift, limited wish

The Walker in Shadow has a planar cohort – an efreeti named Issan is bound to her service. Furthermore, if attacked, a hamatula appears to defend the Walker. He has yet to use the *wish* spell garnered from his membership in the Emissaries of Hell.

Lyi

The consort to the Walker in Shadow is a vampiric sorceress named Lyi. The patrons of the inn are aware of her undead status and are scared of her, but she has promised not to feed while staying in the inn. Just to be on the safe side, Malpon has contacted an old cleric friend of his, who has promised to send a scroll of *banishment* to get rid of Lyi and the Walker if necessary. She is terrifyingly cold and clinical. Although the Walker has mellowed somewhat during his time in the inn, she despises most of the other guests and spends most of her time in her coffin.

Lyi's hungers are rising, though – the Walker has made it clear that she will be punished if she ruins his hiding place, so she intends to slip out and feed when he is distracted.

Lyi; Sor7; CR9; Medium undead (augmented human); HD 7d12; Hp 50; Init +3; Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (+2 deflection, +3 dex, +6 natural); touch 15, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +3; Grp +8; Atk +8 melee (1d6+9, slam); Atk +8 melee (1d6+9, slam); SA blood drain, children of the night, dominate, create spawn, energy drain, spells; SQ spells, alternate form, DR 10/silver or magic, fast healing 5, gaseous form, cold and electrical resistance 10, spider climb, turn resistance +4; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 20; Dex 16; Con -; Int 15; Wis 10; Cha 23
Skills and Feats: Bluff +24, Concentration +17, Hide +16, Listen +13, Move Silently +16, Search +10, Sense Motive +8, Spot +13

Possessions: Cloak of Charisma +2, ring of protection +2

Spells (6/8/8/5, save DC 16 + spell level): 7 5 3 2 0th – detect magic, read magic, ghost sound, open/close, arcane mark, ray of frost, resistance; 1st – shield, mage armour, expeditious retreat, magic missile, protection from good; 2nd – web, darkness, invisibility, blindness, cat's grace; 3rd – nondetection, vampiric touch, haste; 4th – dimension door, black tentacles

ADVENTURE SEEDS

The Wandering Inn of the Glorious Toad is basically a mobile setting – the campaign can move from plane to plane, but the characters still have a safe place to call home. One of the major problems with a plane-travelling game is a lack of continuity, but here the major Non-Player Characters come along for the ride. Anyone can show up in the inn.

Relationships and quests related to the various denizens of the inn can keep a party busy for months. The bar is a neutral ground, allowing the characters to interact with evil wizards, bugbear alcoholics and golems in a way that is quite different to how they would interact in a dungeon. The inn is also a safe refuge for a low-level party on the planes, as they can run back to its comparative safety if necessary.

- † Any one of the inn guests could hire the characters – Malpone might need ingredients for Toad's Woad, Ariane might need an item or sample from a plane, the Walker a component for his magical researches. Such excursions would be on a strict time limit – if the characters do not return quickly, the inn will move on without them.
- † The inn provides a quick way to drag low-level characters onto the planes. They arrive in a new town, visit a local tavern, and fall asleep there. They wake up to discover the inn has moved on to the Infernum...
- † Malpon tires of running the inn, and offers it to the characters for a nominal charge. Do they keep it as an inn, or turn it into a mobile adventuring base, or a fortress, or something else entirely. And just what does happen when the Glorious Toad God wakes up?

DUNMORGAUSE CASTLE

DESCRIPTION

Castle Dunmorgause is a castle caught between the worlds – a faery-built keep, it could not return to Faerie until the bargain was completed, but Sir Daen's machinations ensured that this would never happen. Torn from the Material Plane and rendered homeless, Dunmorgause has become a nexus plane – belonging to nowhere, it touches almost everywhere. The very stones of the castle yearn to find a home plane, so any act can trigger a portal. Light a fire in the grate, and the flames become a portal to the Fire Plane. If the wind blows over the towers of the keep, the air is rent by gates to the Plane of Air.

The castle is not especially large, but it is of the finest workmanship and artistry. It stands on a stony knoll overlooking a dark lake. The lake surrounds the castle on three sides; the knoll slopes down on the fourth through gardens to a tangled wood. The whole place – keep, lake and green promontory – are surrounded by a constant shroud of eerie mist.

Dunmorgause Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal</i>
Size	6	<i>Castle and environs</i>
Morphic	5	<i>Alterable Morphic</i>
Life	-2	<i>Sparse</i>
Weather	-3	<i>Mild</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/ Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Normal</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	15	<i>Magically accessible</i>
Proximity...		
...to almost anywhere	3	<i>One portal</i>

A sickly sun and unnaturally bright moon shine down alternately from above.

Getting there... and Back

Reaching Castle Dunmorgause requires magic or exceedingly good fortune – the only portals leading to the plane are the ones opened by characters in the castle, so a traveller can only pass through a portal if he happens upon one while it is open. Dunmorgause can be reached by *plane shift*, but it is a little-known plane and few have the correct note to tune a shift.

Leaving Dunmorgause is comparatively easy – any act there can potentially open a portal. Certainly, any of the major planes save that of the Material can be accessed by ritual acts.

- † **Ethereal Plane:** The mists surrounding the plane lead to the Ethereal Plane. Any mist or smoke within the castle also has a 30% chance of opening a portal.
- † **Astral Plane:** Mirrors in Dunmorgause lead to the Great Realm. Even sufficiently clear and limpid water will serve as a portal.
- † **Shadow Plane:** Any room within the castle that is made completely lightless, either by sealing off and snuffing out all light sources or through *darkness* becomes a portal to the Shadow Plane.
- † **Dream Plane:** The Plane of Dreams can be accessed in the normal way, by dreaming. However, there is a 5% chance that a character dreaming within Dunmorgause slips bodily into the Dream Plane.
- † **Fire:** Any open fire larger than a torch-flame becomes a portal to the Plane of Fire.
- † **Earth:** Earth Portals are slightly more difficult to trigger – to reach the Plane of Earth from Dunmorgause, a character must dig into the soil of the promontory. Six feet deep is usually enough, although some badger burrows offer shallower portals.
- † **Air:** The portals to the Plane of Air occur when the wind speed exceeds fifteen miles per hour or so – a strong breeze. The natural

weather on the plane never produces such effects, but spells, bellows, fans or even the flight of swift-winged creatures can open Air portals.

- † **Water:** The whole of the lake surrounding the castle is a portal to the Water Plane – admittedly, a dark and sinister region of the plane, home to hags and abyssal nixies.
- † **Positive:** See Features & Locations, below.
- † **Negative:** See Features & Locations, below.

Portals to almost any other plane, except the Material, can be opened from any doorframe or point of egress in the castle and grounds. The key is to create a sympathetic magical link between the desired plane and the doorway. This requires a Charisma check, at a DC equal to 30 - the Accessibility trait of the target plane. Using symbolic magic gives bonuses to this check, as follows:

- † **Naming the Desired Plane:** +2
- † **Having a tuning folk tuned to that plane:** +5
- † **Decorating the doorway with symbols of that plane:** +3
- † **Setting up the area around the portal to resemble the target plane:** +3
- † **Having soil or another physical connection to that plane:** +3
- † **Home plane of a person trying to open the portal:** +5
- † **Per other person attempting to open the portal:** +1, to a maximum of +5

If the check fails, no-one can attempt to use sympathetic magic to open a portal for 24 hours. *Gates* and other methods of travel still work, however, as do the various permanent portals in the castle.

The six heirs to Dunmorgause named by Daen are all bound to the castle – they can leave the plane, but it will always find them again. They keep getting drawn back to this plane. None of them has yet hit on the idea of living within a *dimensional lock*, and it is uncertain what would happen if they tried. They all obtained the Home Ground

Once, there lived a cunning but dissolute and penniless nobleman named Sir Daen, who bargained with the Fey. If they would rebuild his ancestral castle and restore his fortunes, then they might take his heir on Daen's death. The Fey agreed, and a year and a day later, the reconstructed castle appeared amid Sir Daen's estates.

The Fey tricked him. The moment Sir Daen crossed the threshold of his new castle, he felt his life energy begin to drain from him. A curse had been laid on the keep to slay him.

He had tricked the Fey. Sir Daen did not have one heir, he had half a dozen – an eldest daughter, a favoured son, another son from the wrong side of the sheets, a brother, a confessor and a sealed will – and each one had apparently faultless documentation to prove their claim. His bargain with the Fey said that they could only take his heir, singular, but here were six.

Sir Daen died a month after the castle reappeared. All his family and friends were gathered round his death-bed.

And they never left.

(Dunmorgause) feat for free, but characters who take that feat will normally experience the same effect of random portals drawing them back to the plane after a few weeks.

FEATURES & LOCATIONS

The Mists

The Mists that surround Dunmorgause are grey and ghostly, chilly even in the noonday sun. They are exceedingly thick, such that a traveller cannot see more than five feet ahead of himself. A character walking into the mists may be swept away into the Ethereal Plane – there is a percentage chance of this happening equal to the distance the traveller has walked beyond the border of the mists.

The mists have been known to close in, suddenly extending tendrils over Dunmorgause Lake and enveloping swimmers or boaters. There is no apparent order to these sudden advances.

Dunmorgause Lake

The grim lake that surrounds the castle is where it got its name. It is deep (sixty feet at its deepest) and cold. The lake water is dark and striated with blacker stretches as portals to the plane of Water open and close in its rippling tides. Anyone swimming in the lake must make a Swim check each round (DC 10) or be swept through one of these portals. Occasionally, creatures from the Water Plane appear in the lake, but it is too small and chill to sustain a tojinda or elemental for long.

There is a single small island – more of an exposed, rocky sandbar – in the middle of the lake. It contains a freestanding portal to a floating island on the Plane of Air.

The Castle Knoll

The Castle Knoll is the rock on which Dunmorgause stands. It is a granite knoll, but riddled with caves and wind-worn passages, most of which have become portals to the Plane of Earth. Climbing from the lake shore up to the top of the mount requires a Climb check (DC 20). There are two other ways up – a narrow stairs is cut into the rock on one side of the knoll, leading up from the boathouse, and one of the caves connects to the vaults underneath the castle.

Boathouse

A small boathouse clings to a carved dock at the base of the knoll. Three rowing boats – one leaky and almost unusable – are stored here.

Gardens

The gardens of the castle stretch from the south-facing main gate down to the edge of the woods. Before the Fey rebuilt the castle, this was a tangled and sickly market garden supplying vegetables and herbs to the kitchens. Now, it is an eerie but elegant floral garden. White gravel paths wind through beds of fairy flowers and enchanted blooms. Marble and bronze statues, benches and other ornaments are scattered through the gardens.

The gardens shift and change as the day progresses. There are miniscule portals to Faerie in the heart of certain flowers, but they are only large enough for sprites.

Church

While there is a chapel in the keep, there is also a small church standing on the edge of the gardens. It too was transformed by the Fey into a magical temple of twisted marble and shining rosewood. The Fey worship no gods, so the religious iconography of the temple is rather mocking. The scenes depicted in carvings and murals are the same as they have always been, but the characters are shown with feral grins and sidelong ironic glances.

Sir Daen's bones lie on a pallet before the altar, wrapped in a grey cloth.

Folly

On the far side of the church is a small folly, an absurdly thin, tall tower. An exceedingly precarious spiral staircase winds around the inside of the tower. At the top is a portal to Tarassein.

Woods

The tangled woods were also reshaped by the Fey, and contain any number of sleeping treants and dryads. A portal to Faerie is located somewhere amid the mist-wreathed trees; alone of all the portals in Dunmorgause, this one opens *inwards*, from the far side. A tall figure, horned and terrible, has been glimpsed riding among the trees. Some of the servants whisper that this was the same figure that Sir Daen bargained with all those years ago...

Dunmorgause Keep

Once, it was Dundaen, the Castle of Daen. Mortal hands built it in centuries past, and like all the works of man, it crumbled and decayed. The Fey embraced it and remade it in their own image. Its new name was found inscribed on the threshold in runes of fire. The castle's appearance was not greatly changed at first glance, although the fallen towers were raised again and the failing walls shored up. The majority of the changes were more subtle; all the iron doorhandles and torch-holders replaced with bronze, the architecture slightly more curved and eldritch, cracks in the stone running in patterns or shapes that seem oddly reminiscent of hunting beasts.

Physically, it is an enclosure castle (see *Classic Play – Book of Strongholds and Dynasties*) – a fortified wall surrounding a bailey and keep. The

wall connects to the keep at two points overlooking the lake. Three towers and a gatehouse are linked to the keep by the encircling wall.

Ground Floor

Gatehouse

The gatehouse leading into the courtyard is heavily fortified. The massive gate bears a brass plate of the coat-of-arms of Sir Daen. A small postern gate is inset into the main door. At night, this postern door becomes a magical portal to a random other plane. The title 'DUNMORGAUSE' is inscribed in fiery elf-runes across the threshold.

Courtyard

The courtyard of Dunmorgause is engraved with a huge symbol, a cosmological monad that describes the structure of the planes. The grooves of the symbol are filled with a thin line of gold, although this has been pried up and stolen in one section.

Forge

The forge is perfectly serviceable, although the bellows used to blow air into the furnace have been removed. The forge is, unsurprisingly, a gate to the Plane of Fire.

Stables

The stables have been known to align with the Questing Grounds or even the celestial stables in the Firmament. They have also been known to contain horses.

South Tower

The South Tower once overlooked the approaches to Dunmorgause. Now, it stares out over the gardens and the woods. Anyone standing atop the South Tower may cast *detect portal* at will.

Dunmorgause Tower

The Dunmorgause Tower overlooks the lake, and the narrow staircase leading up from the boathouse. It is the usual home of Denvoi, who spends much of his time fishing in the lake. The upper levels of the tower have a truly astonishing collection of bizarre fish bones and aquatic carcasses dragged out of the Plane of Water.

Lady's Tower

The prettiest and tallest of the three towers, Lady's Tower was originally intended as a bower for the ladies of the keep. Since the lady Eloise has become interested in wizardry, she has converted much of the tower into a laboratory, watched over by a *lesser planar ally* (an invisible stalker). Eloise has also established portals to the Halls of Order by hanging geometric symbols and pieces of clockwork around one of the doors leading out on the wall's walkway. She intends to beg the inevitables for aid in resolving the dispute over Dunmorgause.

Underground

Stores

The storerooms of Dunmorgause castle were well stocked when Daen died, but the passing years have largely emptied them. Occasionally, a traveller might leave something behind, but the various surviving servants and family members just carry their own food with them or hide it in secret caches around the castle. If all else fails, the lake has fish and there are a few stunted apple trees in the wood.

The underground well connects to a freshwater region in the Plane of Water.

The garderobes sluice down past the vaulted storerooms into the lake – or at least they did when the castle was first built. *Detect portal* spells have shown that the garderobes, too, have become portals, although no-one knows or wishes to know where they go...

Crypts

The crypts of Dunmorgause went untouched by the Fey, who find human bones in iron caskets deeply distasteful. However, when the castle became disjoined from the Material Plane, the strong atmosphere of death in the crypts transformed all the graves into portals to the Negative Material Plane. The dead of the line of Daen awoke as a host of wraiths and spectres. Fortunately, the influence of the Negative Plane does not extend beyond the confines of the crypts, and Mirelle has placed holy symbols and wards at all the entrances to keep them in. Such weak protections would normally be of little use, but here, the symbols produce enough resonance to open portals to the Firmament or Positive Energy Plane on occasion.

One exit goes unwarded – the secret passage leading up from the lake shore.

Upper Floors

The upper sections of the castle are much more unstable than the surrounding estates – the corridors have the unnerving habit of linking up with other castles and large structures. A traveller can wander through Dunmorgause and end up in a titan's fortress on the Astral Plane or in the middle of a barbican in the Infernum.

This trait means that the castle is much larger on the inside than it is outside; a traveller walking from the Chapel to the Solarium might unknowingly walk through a portal to an unused corridor in some forbidden city a hundred worlds away, pass through a second portal back to Dunmorgause, stroll past a gallery in a ruined keep built aeons ago, and thus arrive in the Solarium by a route that is both direct and maddeningly circuitous.

Great Hall

The main hall of Dunmorgause Castle had attention lavished on it by the Fey. It is a riot of green lacquer, bronze and oak, giving the impression of being a woodland glade in the wildwoods while still being entirely enclosed. Eyes seem to peek through the gaps in the ornate chairs or from behind ornaments, but despite the constant sense of an alien presence in the great hall, it is usually empty.

Chapel

The chapel went untouched by the Fey – as holy ground, blessed and *hallowed* by its custodian Marielle, it was anathema to them. The chamber often aligns itself with the Firmament. Marielle's current concern is finding Daen's soul, so that he can be dragged back and resolve the whole mess – he refused *resurrection* and some force blocked *speak with dead*. Marielle is currently engaged in opening portals to different estates in the Afterworld. Daen claimed to be a follower of her faith, but his soul is not in the afterlife reserved for such followers. If he has fallen into the Infernum, then Marielle and the rest of the heirs may be trapped in Dunmorgause forever.

Solarium

The Solarium is a large chamber near the top of the keep, with a trio of magnificent stained-glass

windows that can be thrown open to the south. Dunmorgause rarely sees bright sunshine, but the room contained enough solar symbolism to align itself with the Positive Energy Plane. The portal opens at dawn, connecting to the Outer Corona. As the day progresses, the portal's egress tracks across the Positive plane, reaching the inner light and intensely energetic sections of the plane around noon. Towards evening, the portal slips back into the Outer Corona before fading away at dusk. The Solarium is used as an easy source of healing by the natives of the keep.

Servant's Quarters

Most of the original servants either fled the castle or were accidentally lost when some random configuration of circumstances opened a portal. Only three of the original servants are left, although occasionally one of the heirs hires some extra help. The three surviving servants are Rabican (see below), an old butler named Belfils and an insane cook, Matron Agava.

Ganelon's Rooms

Ganelon, as the eldest son and – in his mind, anyway – heir presumptive to Dunmorgause has claimed the lord's suite of rooms occupied by his father and grandfather before him. He has fortified all the entrances, creating his own little enclave of trapped chambers and barricades. He has succumbed to paranoia, believing that all of the other heirs are plotting against him and that only by constant training and vigilance can he survive – therefore, his rooms are filled with weapons, training dummies and other devices to test nerve and sinew. They also include portals to the Questing Grounds and Astral Plane, where he can practice the fighting arts against suitable foes.

Rabican's Rooms

Rabican has discovered something that none of the other heirs know – portals can be made permanent by marking them with the blood of an heir. He has assembled a series of secret rooms by aligning an arrowslit or some other inconsequential opening with another plane by creating symbolic links, dabbing his blood onto the portal, then removing the symbols and concealing the stain. His secret passages leap from plane to plane.

HAZARDS

Save the constant risk of being swept away by a random portal, and the usual dangers of a magical castle inhabited by the increasingly insane, bound by the curse of a mysterious and powerful Fey lord, and increasing dangerous travellers, Dunmorgause has no notable hazards.

DENIZENS

The six major denizens – the only truly permanent inhabitants of Dunmorgause are the six heirs of Sir Daen. When he died, everyone in the castle – servants, relatives, guards, nobles, mourners and all – were transported with the castle when it was torn from the Material Plane to be claimed by Faerie. When the castle was ‘stalled’ half-way between the two, due to the knight’s intestate status, everyone except the six heirs was able to slip away.

That was a decade ago. The six heirs have been trapped in the castle ever since. They can leave for short periods – no more than a few weeks – before it finds them again. Each of them knows that should the others all die, then the Fey that Daen bargained with will claim the last survivor as the heir, but all of them also want the castle as their inheritance – it has become an obsession for all of them. Dunmorgause is therefore the scene for endless futile power plays and betrayals as each of them search for ways to take it all.

Eloise

Daen’s eldest child from his marriage to a lady of high standing, Eloise was groomed from a young age to be married off to some rich noble or even a wealthy commoner or grubby yet gold-laden adventurer to rebuild her family’s fortunes. She was quite infuriated when her father bargained with the Fey to rebuild the castle, seeing in it an utter lack of faith in her. In truth, Daen was never a man to rely on any one scheme, although Eloise then was too naïve to see this.

She is far from naïve now. She was the first to discover how to open sympathetic portals, when she accidentally turned her wardrobe into a portal to a palace in the Vault of Stars. Since then, she has visited dozens of cosmopolitan and forward-looking planes (including those where order of birth, not gender, determine inheritance). She is a common visitor to several courts and a pillar of society at

numerous planar parties. Without realising it, she has become the image of her father, manipulating and conniving with charm. She has also begun to study wizardry in an attempt to understand her predicament. She is aware of how valuable the castle could be as a planar nexus, if only it could be rid of the other heirs and the troublesome Fey.

Eloise; Ari3/Wiz5; CR7; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d8+5d4; Hp 30; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (dex +2, *ring of protection* +2); touch 14, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +4; Grp +3; Atk +4 melee (1d4-1, masterwork dagger); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4-1, masterwork dagger); SA Spells; SQ spells; AL N; SV Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 8; Dex 14; Con 9; Int 15; Wis 14; Cha 17

Skills and Feats: Bluff +13, Diplomacy +16, Gather Information +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +10, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Listen +5, Perform (dance, song) +10, Sense Motive +13, Spot +7; Home Ground



(Dunmargause), Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Skill Focus (diplomacy), Skill Focus (perform) Still Spell, *Possessions: Ring of Protection +2, Wand of Magic Missiles*

Spells (4/4/3/1, Save DC 12 + spell level): 0th - Detect Magic, Detect Portal, Message, Prestidigitation; 1st - mage armour, comprehend languages, charm person x2; 2nd - alter self, invisibility, detect thoughts; 3rd - suggestion

Ganelon

Ganelon grew up expecting to inherit the castle. Daen's ancestors were once honourable and proud, and Ganelon despised his father for failing the line.



When the castle was restored to its former glory, Ganelon's opinion of his father was utterly reversed – surely he had won this boon from the Fey in a duel or tourney. For a year and a day, he was his father's most ardent defender and supporter.

Then Ganelon's high opinion was unhorsed more solidly than a jousting knight struck with a dragon's lance when he discovered that his father had apparently bargained his beloved son over to the Fey. He was first infuriated, then became paranoid and convinced that everyone was trying to deny him his inheritance. Since his father died, he is obsessed with defending himself and claiming the castle.

Ganelon; Ftr7; CR7; Medium humanoid (human); HD 7d10+21; Hp 65; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (*breastplate +1, large steel shield +1*); touch 10, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +7; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (1d8+7+6, *flaming longsword +1*); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d8+7, *flaming longsword +1*); SA None; SQ None; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 18; Dex 11; Con 16; Int 11; Wis 7; Cha 12

Skills and Feats: Listen +10, Spot +10, Ride +10; Alertness, Blind-fight, Cleave, Home Ground (Dunmargause), Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Ride-by Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Possessions: Breastplate +1, large steel shield +1, flaming longsword +1

Rabican

As far as all of the other heirs save Denvoi know, Rabican is one of the three loyal servants who have stayed at Dunmorgause throughout the years of the curse. He is a thin, ill-featured man, but seemingly willing to take on any task, no matter how vile. If anyone knows where the bodies are buried, it is Rabican.

This may prove to be something of a liability, as Rabican is the oldest child of Daen, born of a youthful liaison between the knight and a peasant girl. Denvoi was travelling with his brother Daen when this indiscretion occurred, and aided Daen in keeping an eye on the boy. When Rabican was old enough, Denvoi had him placed with the servants of the castle. Denvoi believed that his brother was being kindly and sentimental about his bastard child. It was only when the bargain with the Fey came to light that Denvoi realised that there might have been a darker reason for Rabican being brought to the castle.

Rabican's mother was no fool, and marked well the coat-of-arms of that knight. Rabican knew he was the firstborn son of Sir Daen from an early age, and plotted on how to blackmail or otherwise convince his father into legitimising him. He shares his father's gift for intrigue and plotting. Since the curse struck the castle, he has been busy observing and learning about all the other prospective heirs. He has methods in place to assassinate Ganelon, Mirelle and Eloise, although he feels a little fondness for Denvoi and is unaware of Aya. Of all the heirs, he is most likely to betray them to the Fey.

Rabican; Rog7; CR7; Medium humanoid (human); HD 7d6+7; Hp 35; Init +3; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+3 dex, +2 leather); touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +5; Grp +6; Atk +9 melee (1d6+1, masterwork sickle); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+1, masterwork sickle); SA Sneak Attack +4d6; SQ Evasion, Uncanny Dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 12; Dex 17; Con 12; Int 17; Wis 12; Cha 8
Skills and Feats: Appraise +6, Balance +10, Bluff +6, Climb +10, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +10, Escape Artist +9, Forgery +9, Gather Information +6, Hide +19, Intimidation +4, Jump +8, Listen +7, Move Silently +12, Open Lock +10, Search +9, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +9, Spot +7, Swim +4, Tumble +10, Use Magic Device +2, Use Rope +4; Combat Expertise, Home Ground (Dunmorgause), Improved Trip, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse

Possessions: Masterwork sickle, *tan bag of tricks*

Denvoi

Unlike his more ambitious and clever older brother Daen, Denvoi was content with the simple things in life. A little wine, a few women, the occasional tourney or campaign against the orcs – an ordinary life for the second son of a failing noble house. He regretted the slow decay of the family, but felt that this was the fate that awaits all the works of man, and that his brother would get himself into too much trouble if he tried to reverse this decline.

Denvoi was right about the 'too much trouble' part, but did not realise that he himself would be drawn in until Daen confided that Ganelon was too immature to be lord and that he could only trust his beloved brother Denvoi to rule. Denvoi was never able to out-argue his brother, so he agreed. Soon after, the bargain with the Fey was uncovered and the castle almost literally went to hell.

Denvoi is the only one of the heirs *not* plotting ways to win the inheritance. He does not want Dunmorgause, nor does he want to be the prize of a dangerous Fey. He is fairly content to sit and fish the lake and maintain the castle – let one of the clever nieces or nephews sort out the problem. He strongly dislikes Mirelle, seeing her as an interloper in what is essentially a family affair.

Denvoi; Ftr5; CR5; Medium humanoid (human); HD 5d10+10; Hp 50; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (+4 chain shirt); touch 10, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d10+7, masterwork halberd); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d10+7, masterwork halberd); SA None; SQ None; AL NG; SV Fort +6, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 16; Dex 10; Con 14; Int 10; Wis 15; Cha 13
Skills and Feats: Craft (woodworking) +4, Handle Animal +5, Heal +4, Knowledge (nobility and Royalty) +2, Perform (song) +3, Ride +8, Survival +4, Swim +3; Home Ground (Dunmorgause), Mounted Combat, Self-sufficient, Skill focus (craft), Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (halberd), Weapon Specialisation (halberd)

Possessions: Masterwork Halberd, *silver raven figurine of wondrous power*

Mirelle

For all his many faults, Sir Daen was a masterful debater. Mirelle, the chaplain assigned to the decaying Dundaen Keep did not expect the local lord to be able to argue the finer points of philosophy or theology with her. She came to believe that if she could convince Sir Daen to sign his estates over to the church and become a knight in service to the gods – even, perhaps a paladin – it would be a truly good and worthy act, infinitely better than watching his family's fortunes and standing decay on the fringes of the noble court.

Indeed, it seems that Sir Daen was willing to agree. Then she discovered that he had made a bargain with the immoral Fey. Mirelle was appalled, and quickly 'realised' that her divine duty was not, as she had suspected, to win Sir Daen back to the church – it was to defeat the hellish blandishments of the Fey.

Mirelle has become obsessively strict about following the tenets of her faith. She terrorised the servants for minor indiscretions until they fled, and now spends much of her time cataloguing the sins and haranguing the other heirs. As far as she is concerned, Dunmorgause belongs to the church

and to her, and both the other heirs and the Fey are secretly in the service of demons.

Mirelle; Clr9; CR9; Medium humanoid (human); HD 9d8; Hp 51; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +6; Grp +5; Atk +5 melee (1d4-1, cane); Full Atk +5/+0 melee (1d4-1, cane); SA Spells; SQ Turn Undead, Divine Aura; AL LN; SV Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +12; Str 8; Dex 10; Con 10; Int 14; Wis 20; Cha 8

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Diplomacy +11, Heal +10, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14; Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Home Ground (Dunmorgause), Iron Will, Scribe Scroll

Possessions: Medallion of thoughts, two scrolls of planar ally

Spells (6/6+1/5+1/4+1/4+1/3+1, Save DC 14 + spell level, Domains: Law, Protection): 0th – Create water, detect magic, detect poison, light, mending, purity food and drink; 1st – bless, command x 3, comprehend languages, protection from evil, protection from chaos*; 2nd – augury, eagle's splendour, hold person, silence, spiritual weapon, calm emotions*; 3rd – dispel magic x 2, magic vestment, summon monster III, protection from energy*; 4th – death ward, divination, lesser planar ally, sending spell immunity*; 5th – plane shift x 2, spell resistance*, wall of stone

Aya

The last of the six heirs is the ghost that haunts the castle. Aya is a half-Fey child of no more than ten years, with unnaturally green, cat-like eyes. All of the other heirs have seen her slinking around the castle grounds or slipping into portals, but none have ever managed to catch or interrogate her. Around her neck in a pouch she carries the last will of Sir Daen, which names her as his heir – and the human side of her features are very like those of Eloise.

Aya has lived her whole life slipping between Faerie, Dunmorgause, and the other planes. Of all the heirs, she is the only one who does not fear the Fey and is the most adept at planar travel, a changeling as free as the winds. What her connection to Sir Daen is, and what her goals are, no-one knows.

Aya; Brd3; CR3; Small Fey (half-human); HD 3d6; Hp 12; Init +4; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 (+4 dex, +1 size); touch 15, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp -6; Atk +1 melee (1d4-2, knife) or +7 ranged (1d4, sling);

Full Atk +1 melee (1d4-2, knife) or +7 ranged (1d4, sling); SA Spells; SQ Bardic Music, bardic knowledge, countersong, *fascinate*, inspire courage +1, vanish; AL CN; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 6; Dex 18; Con 10; Int 12; Wis 12; Cha 15

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Climb +9, Escape Artist +9, Hide +12, Move Silently +10, Listen +3, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Perform +7, Tumble +9; Home Ground (Dunmorgause), Skill Focus (knowledge: the planes), Stealthy

Possessions: Pipes, knife, sling

Vanish (Sp): Once per day, Aya may cast either *invisibility*, *dimension door* or *plane shift* as a sorcerer of equal level to her class level. This ability is part of her unique Fey heritage

Spells (3/2, Save DC 12 + spell level): *Dancing lights*, *daze*, *mage hand*, *message*, *prestidigitation*, *summon instrument*; 1st – charm person, grease, hideous laughter.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Castle Dunmorgause is a unique nexus plane, in that the adventurers may be among the first to discover it. A party of mid-level characters who happen upon the enchanted castle could have all sorts of adventures as they could work out how the castle's portals work and what exactly all the strange denizens are doing. The legacy of Sir Daen could be a long-running campaign plot in the vein of Peake's *Gormenghast*.

† Any one of the heirs could draw the characters into the tangled web of relationships that is Dunmorgause. Eloise is the likely candidate, but Rabican, Mirelle and even Ganelon do travel the planes and occasionally pick up travellers or hire agents. Alternatively, the characters could be sent to discover what exactly happened to Sir Daen's family when the castle abruptly vanished a few weeks after it abruptly returned.

† For an even nastier connection, one or more of the characters could also be heirs of Sir Daen. The knight had a mysterious and shady past, and Rabican might not be Daen's only bastard child.

LESSER PLANES

DESCRIPTION

The Lesser Planes are tiny planar shards, demiplanes, pocket planes, shattered worlds and nascent seeds – little self-contained realms no larger than an island. The vast majority of these lesser worlds float through the Astral Plane, orbiting the inner planes in a wide belt between the energetic inner planes and the spiritual outer planes. Other lesser planes nestle close to the larger realities that they calved off from, and often come into conjunction with them (causing a mingling).

Each lesser plane is unique, although most are largely similar to other, larger planes. Most lesser planes are created by cleaving off a section of another plane, and so inherit the basic physical qualities and terrain of their parent. Long centuries of habitation and planecrafting can of course greatly alter a lesser plane, so almost any conditions are possible in these little reality bubbles.

Unless otherwise noted, a Lesser Plane has the following traits.

Lesser Plane Traits

Gravity	0	<i>Normal (Subjective)</i>
Time	0	<i>Normal</i>
Size	<9	<i>Smaller than a barony</i>
Morphic	5	<i>Alterable Morphic</i>
Life	0	<i>Normal</i>
Weather	0	<i>Normal</i>
Water/Fire	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Earth/Air	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Negative/Positive	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Good/Evil	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Law/Chaos	0	<i>Balanced</i>
Arcane	0	<i>Normal</i>
Divine	0	<i>Impeded</i>
Green	0	<i>Normal</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>By magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to Astral	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

Getting there... and Back

The standard spells can access most lesser planes. One notable trick is to make use of the resonance between a parent plane and any lesser planes that have calved off from it – if a caster has a tuning fork for the *plane shift* spell, he may make a Spellcraft check (DC20) to use the fork as the focus to a *plane shift* to any related lesser plane. This can be done even if the caster does not know if there are any lesser planes related to a given plane.

There are thousands of lesser planes, far more than can be told of here. Still, those described here are almost archetypes – wizards' strongholds, long-abandoned experiments, renegade enclaves, engineered pleasure-domes and so on.

THE MEMORY PALACE OF TYRSAMBALUS

Tyrsambalus was a magician, a wizard of surpassing power and insight. For a time, he dwelt in a mansion at the edge of civilisation, where he studied the wheeling of the stars and the patterns of the magical weave. However, his research was constantly interrupted by a stream of supplicants and beggars asking the master wizard for advice and aid, not to mention robbers and spell-thieves. He moved his mansion to the depths of the wilderness and surrounded it with guardian monsters and a maze of shifting paths. This availed him little, however – while he had far fewer visitors, they tended to be heroes and adventurers with much more complex and important problems. After a succession of adventuring parties coming to him with ancient artefacts to be identified and prophecies to be elucidated, Tyrsambalus despaired of finding peace and quiet on the ground, and so he moved his mansion to the skies above.

His only visitors were hungry and rapacious dragons, which rather defeated the purpose of *levitating* his home. Finally, he did what he had long planned, and enacted a mighty ritual of planecrafting. With a thunderous crack, the mansion of Tyrsambalus vanished from the world, becoming a self-contained demiplane. This spell was more than a simple planar cleave, though – it was designed to transform the mansion into a memory palace, a reflection of the wizard's mind. If successful, it would have organised his mind as precisely as the greatest works of architecture, allowing him to

walk the corridors of his own thought processes and gain great insights into how his own magical psyche worked. He could have observed a spell from the inside, relive any memory he desired from any angle, or perfectly recall everything he ever read.

Unfortunately, Tyrsambalus was not alone when cast his spell. A trio of thieves had infiltrated the mansion, and were about to liberate the wizard's spellbook when the mansion was transformed...

Memory Palace Traits

Size: 5 (large castle); **Quirk:** Strange Shape

Arcane: +6 (+3 metamagic)

Description

The Memory Palace appears to be a vast rambling mansion, overflowing with tattered scrolls, books, curios, artworks, furniture and other such junk. It also has a surfeit of doors; every room has at least two exits (1d4+1 on average), ranging from ordinary doors to secret passages to trapdoors to magic mirrors to chimneys. There is no apparent order to the design of the mansion – a kitchen leads into a wide corridor, a garden of statues lies next to a master bedroom. This is because the architecture within the plane reflects four minds instead of one. Instead of being a perfect reflection of Tyrsambalus' ordered mind, the plane is essentially insane.

The four minds trapped within the walls of the plane can project fetches – manifestations of their previous selves made of dust and illusion. These fetches can even leave the plane, but fade from existence after a few weeks (the fetch must make a Fortitude save each day at a DC equal to the number of days it has existed, or vanish).

The various rooms inside the Memory Palace reflect aspects of the four trapped minds. None of the four minds are really conscious, but movement through the structure does allow them to think in a vague fashion. For example, if a fetch wished to remember a particular fact, it might have to walk down a corridor and enter a room dedicated to that memory. Damage to the palace also affects the minds it is made of.

The majority of the rooms are dominated by Tyrsambalus' personality. The old wizard is completely fascinated by magic. He pursued the

study of spells not out of a desire for power, but for sheer love of the art. Even before transforming his mind into an architectural construct of unaging stone and marble, Tyrsambalus had greatly extended his life using *potions of longevity* and *wish* spells. In his barely-remembered younger days, he was an adventurer and fought many strange monsters and fiends.

Tyrsambalus' rooms are filled with books of arcane lore, scrolls with half-finished spells and notes, as well as the occasional memorial to his adventuring days or long-forgotten loves. One vast wing of the rambling mansion is the solidified architectural representation of the spell that created the Memory Palace; a sufficiently insightful spellcaster could perhaps decode the shape of the rooms and recreate the spell. The other notable rooms under Tyrsambalus' influence are the spell rooms, chambers which are the architectural manifestations of the dweomers prepared by the wizard when his planecrafting took hold. A *fireball* room might have been a spherical chamber with fiery walls, inhabited by a flock of incontinent bats; a *plane shift* room might constantly change in appearance as it skitters across different realities.

Tyrsambalus' Fetch

The psychic project of the wizard resembles Tyrsambalus as he was in life – an elderly bearded human, dressed in flowing silvery robes and with a perpetually befuddled expression on his face. He leans on a staff, and wears a pointed hat when outdoors. His mind was always focussed on higher things, so he never bothered with the changing fashions of wizards. The fetch spends most of its time in the wing of the Memory Palace that corresponds to the planecrafting spell, trying to remember how to remove the interlopers from his mind.

As Tyrsambalus' mind is now part of the plane, his fetch comes prepared with the same spells every time. He cannot prepare new spells, but when he manifests a replacement fetch, its complement of spells is refreshed.

Tyrsambalus' Fetch; Wiz15 CR13*; Medium humanoid (fetch); HD 15d4+15; Hp 52; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +7; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (1d4-1, dagger); Full Atk +6/+1 (1d4-1, dagger); SA Spells; SQ Fetch;

LESSER PLANES

AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +12; Str 7; Dex 10; Con 12; Int 22; Wis 16; Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Craft (stonework) +18, Diplomacy +8, Knowledge (architecture & engineering) +24, Knowledge (arcana) +24, Knowledge (history) +18, Knowledge (religion) +18, Knowledge (the planes) +27, Spellcraft +24, Sense Motive +9, Spot +12; Craft Magic Arms and Armour, Craft Portal, Craft Wondrous Item, Craft Wand, Extend Spell, Silent Spell, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (knowledge: the planes), Quicken Spell

Wizard Spells Prepared: (4/6/6/5/5/5/4/2/1; Save DC 16 +spell level) 0th – *light, mending, open/close, prestidigitation*; 1st – *shield, unseen servant, identify, magic missile x 2, charm person*; 2nd – *arcane lock, resist energy, detect thoughts, web, fox's cunning x 2*; 3rd – *dispel magic, arcane sight, suggestion, displacement, fly*; 4th – *dimensional anchor, door, scrying, lesser geas, resilient sphere*; 5th – *dismissal, major creation, lesser planar binding, summon monster V, shadow evocation*; 6th – *shadow walk, disintegrate, mage's lucubration, banishment, limited wish*; 8th – *greater planar binding*

Possessions: None of note – the fetch's items and clothing are composed of the same thin matter that composes its body. While Tyrsambalus appears to have a wide arrange of potent magic items,

including a *staff of the magi*, his items dissolve into dust when they leave his body and have no abilities *: Due to his lack of spells and items, the fetch's challenge rating is lower than its level would suggest.

The three thieves were named Kaeli, Asthemín and Gihen. Kaeli was an ambitious agent of a rival wizard of Tyrsambalus, who laid a potent *geas* on her. The thief was compelled to assemble a team to steal Tyrsambalus' spellbook and bring it to the rival wizard. Even when Kaeli was transformed into part of the Memory Palace, the *geas* endured. Her fetch constantly searches for the spellbook, which is hidden somewhere in the Palace. The *geas* also manifests as bizarre distortions that sometimes cause the walls to constrict and twist. Kaeli's rooms tend to be dark and unpleasant, and often contain traps. She was a creature of shadows and betrayal in life, and her mind is not a pleasant place to roam in.

Asthemín was an expert thief hired by Kaeli. Out of all of them, he has adapted best to his new existence. His rooms are filled with luxuries and indulgences, and his fetch enjoys them all. He dreams of turning the Memory Palace into a sybarite's paradise, and because his dreams take the form of corridors and rooms here, he has a good chance of accomplishing



his plan. He needs supplies from outside the plane, though, so he attempts to bribe or seduce any outsiders who pass through the Palace.

Finally, Gihen is a young wizard who was brought in to disarm Tyrsambalus' traps. She is nervous and secretive – her rooms are filled with hidden doors and grey shadows. She desperately wants to escape the Palace, and believes that her only hope is to win Tyrsambalus' aid. Her fetch did manage to locate Tyrsambalus' spellbook, but she is scared that Kaeli's fetch will steal it and murder Gihen or Tyrsambalus or both if Gihen reveals this.

Kaeli's Fetch; Rog8 CR6*; Medium humanoid (fetch); HD 8d6+8; Hp 36; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15; touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+3 dex, +2 leather armour); Base Atk +6; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+1, short sword); Full Atk +7/+7/+2 (1d6+1, short sword); SA Sneak Attack +4d6; SQ Trapfinding, trap sense +2, evasion, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +2, Ref +9, Will +3; Str 12; Dex 17; Con 10; Int 16; Wis 12; Cha 14

Skills and Feats: Appraise +8, Balance +10, Bluff +7, Climb +6, Decipher Script +8, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +12, Disguise +12, Escape Artist +8, Gather Information +7, Hide +10, Intimidate +11, Jump +6, Knowledge (the planes) +6, Listen +9, Move Silently +10, Open Lock +8, Search +8, Sleight of Hand +11, Spot +10, Tumble +12, Use Magic Device +10; Alertness, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Finesse, Two-Weapon Fighting

Possessions: None of note – the fetch's items and clothing are composed of the same thin matter that composes its body

*: Due to her lack of items, the fetch's challenge rating is lower than its level would suggest.

Kaeli is lithe and dark-featured, and dresses in ornate leather armour. She carries two short swords of strange design with wicked curved blades.

Asthemin's Fetch; Brd6 CR4*; Medium humanoid (fetch); HD 6d6+6; Hp 30; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12; touch 12, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d6, rapier); Full Atk +4 (1d6, rapier); SA spells, bardic music; SQ Bardic knowledge, countersong, *fascinate*, inspire courage +1, inspire competence, *suggestion*; AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +6; Str 10; Dex 15; Con 12; Int 14; Wis 12; Cha 17

Skills and Feats: Bluff +12, Concentration +5, Climb +5, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +12, Hide +11, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Listen +10, Move Silently +11, Perform +15; Brew Potion, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (perform)

Bard Spells: (3/4/3, Save DC 12+spell level) 0th – *daze, detect magic, light, mage hand, read magic, summon instrument*; 1st – *charm person, cure light wounds, grease, hideous laughter*; 2nd – *enthral, invisibility, summon monster II*

Possessions: None of note – the fetch's items and clothing are composed of the same thin matter that composes its body

*: Due to his lack of items, the fetch's challenge rating is lower than its level would suggest.

Asthemin is tall, thin and blond. He dresses in flamboyant clothes, and has a special taste for hats.

Gihen's Fetch; Wiz5 CR4*; Medium humanoid (fetch); HD 5d4+10; Hp 25; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10; touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk +2 melee (1d6, staff); Full Atk +2 (1d6, staff); SA spells; SQ Fetch; AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 11; Dex 11; Con 15; Int 17; Wis 14; Cha 13

Using the Memory Palace

This plane is best used as a puzzle for the characters – they must learn the curious relationship between the architecture of the place and its denizens. The confusing structure also makes it a handy hiding place, especially with its high Arcane Magic trait.

Adventurers could be hired by a friend of Tyrsambalus to rescue the wizard – or by his rival, seeking to discover what became of Kaeli and her team. Others may just want to discover some secret of Tyrsambalus by threading the corridors of the Memory Palace to a particular room, and observing the images or artwork there.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +10, Decipher Script +11, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Search +7, Spellcraft +11; Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll

Wizard Spells: (4/4/3/2, Save DC 13+spell level) 0th – *detect magic, read magic, arcane mark, message*; 1st – *shield, magic missile, sleep, colour spray*; 2nd – *summon monster II, web, shatter*; 3rd – *dispel magic, fireball*

Possessions: None of note – the fetch’s items and clothing are composed of the same thin matter that composes its body

*: Due to her lack of items, the fetch’s challenge rating is lower than its level would suggest
Gihen wears dark grey robes, with a hood that disguises her sharp, thin features. Her skin is startlingly pale and wan.

SPHERE OF ISOLATION

The original purpose of the Sphere of Isolation is lost in time; it appears to have once been part of a larger construct. It floats near a cluster of portals in the Astral Plane, and the location of the Sphere is well known to most experienced travellers.

Description

Physically, it is a sphere some two hundred feet in diameter, made of a curious metal believed to be an alloy of adamantine and godsblood. No weapon or spell known has ever so much as scratched the surface of the sphere, and even lesser deities have battered the Sphere to no avail. As far as anyone can tell, the Sphere of Isolation is utterly invulnerable.

Six round portals pierce the sphere, leading to a hollow chamber within. The chamber is filled with air, but is deathly cold (-15° F) and utterly dark. Spells can alleviate both these conditions.

The only feature on the inside of the sphere is a strange mechanical clock, which slowly counts down towards zero. When the clock reaches zero, the six portals iris open, allowing those inside the portal to leave. The portals remain open for one hour, then the clock resets and the doors close again instantly. No known force can keep the doors open – any object placed in the doorway is crushed quickly (the door has an effective Strength of 90 (+50 for break checks)). While the doors are closed, those inside the sphere are completely

cut off from the rest of reality – the Sphere’s Accessibility trait drops to 0, and cannot be raised by any means while the doors remain closed. No spell allows an outsider to enter the sphere, or those inside to leave. Not even divinations like *discern location* can penetrate the sphere.

The important question, of course, is how long the sphere remains shut. The duration of the clock’s countdown varies, and cannot be predicted in advance. Roll on the table below to see how long the Sphere of Isolation is in effect for.

Sphere of Isolation Duration

1d20	Sphere Remains Closed For
1	10 rounds
2-4	One hour
5-7	Six hours
8-12	One day
13-16	Three Days
17	One week
18	Two weeks
19	Three weeks
20	Four weeks

Those inside the Sphere can tell how long they are stuck inside; there is no way for those outside to determine when the sphere will open.

The Sphere of Isolation is a refuge for those fleeing powerful foes – for a time, the Sphere is an unassailable fortress, where the hunted can rest and heal. The space around the Sphere is often filled with *scrying* sensors, artificial eyes and other observers, as various wizards and sorcerers wait to see when the Sphere will open and who will next take refuge there.

Attempts to capture or colonise the Sphere have proved fruitless; a powerful Exiliarch appears to have some claim on the Sphere of Isolation, and has been known to drive out those who stay too long within its confines.

GIANT'S BOOT

The giant in question must have been some elder titan, or perhaps one of the nigh-mythical land giants said to roam certain unfortunate and flat lands, as the boot in question is some four hundred feet fall. It is made of what seems to be some form of dragonhide, though it would have taken the culling of dozens of flights of dragons to gather enough wyrmskin. The boot is of conventional design, with a sole of solid iron. There is a single rip near the big toe of the boot – the other entrance is the more conventional one at the top.



The Giant's Boot is a plane in its own right, existing in an extradimensional region bordering on both the Astral and the Plane of Dreams. It is likely that the boot fell through a rift of some sort, as it would have taken a great deal of magical force to translate the boot into a 'pocket' plane.

Six portals ring the rim of the boot, leading to the Astral Plane, the Material, and the four major Elemental Planes. The portals were created by a cleric, the Chanter of Nine, who discovered the Boot after an unsuccessful *plane shift*.

Description

There stands a village, also called Giant's Boot, within the giant's boot. Most of the buildings line the 'walls' of the boot, around where the giant's ankle would be, as the floor (or sole) of the boot is befouled with noxious gases. These gases get worse as the traveller moves deeper into the boot. That said, there are those who search the sole of

the boot for treasure, as diamonds have been found in cracks in the iron sole. There is also a profitable iron mine in the heel.

Giant's Boot (Village): AL LN; 200 gp limit; Assets 5,000 gp; Pop 100; Mixed (50% human, 35% dwarven, 15% mixed). *Power Centres:* Sheriff of Giant's Boot, a dwarven Fighter8; Heel Associates Trading and Mining Combine.

The villagers have built a series of gantries and ladders leading from their homes to the six portals around the rim, and make a living trading goods through the boot to the various elemental planes. The folk of Giant's Boot are tough and resourceful – lacking any powerful patrons or magical defences to secure their portals, they must regularly fight off incursions from the Astral or elemental attacks. The villagers regularly hire mercenaries to supplement their town guard.

The Smell of the Boot

Anyone travelling in the deeper regions of the boot must make a Fortitude save every minute or take 1d6 points of non-lethal damage. A character who fails a save is also nauseated for 1d6 rounds. The DC of the Fortitude save varies between 5 (just below the village) to 12 (most of the boot) to 25 (the foul, diamond-bearing cracks in the dark depths of the sole).

BUILDING THE COSMOS

In the beginning...was the Games Master and a blank page.

Creating a cosmology for your campaign world is more complicated than just coming up with a few interesting outer planes for high-level characters to go adventuring in. The cosmos should tie into the history and mythology of the setting, into the politics and religion, into the nature of magic and the divine. Think of the early, low-level stages of a campaign as ‘the fields we know’ – the mundane, common, Earth-like reality. When the characters move beyond the fields we know, the structure of the stranger places they encounter define and exemplify the conflicts and themes of the campaign.

The structure and nature of the planes depends on what role they will play in the campaign. Common purposes include:

- † Homes of the Gods
- † Manifestations of cosmological or philosophical ideals
- † Realms of elementals, outsiders, celestials and fiends
- † A cosmological underpinning for the campaign world
- † Radically different adventuring
- † High-level adventuring

Obviously, a plane or planar structure can support multiple purposes.

Homes of the Gods

The plane is the residence of a deity; perhaps the souls of the deity’s followers reside there along with its servants. The plane reflects the deity’s interests, personality and divine portfolio. Having the home planes of the gods as easily accessible realms works well in some campaigns, but can make the gods much too mundane. Travelling to the afterworld or

storming heaven works very well in a game with a limited, Greek-style pantheon where the gods are not quite omnipotent or omniscient. Being able to easily travel to the home of the gods does not work as well in a game where the gods are much more distant and mysterious. The more directly active the gods are, the more common travel to their home planes will be.

In a game where the gods can be encountered, then the Games Master should be prepared to answer all sorts of questions, such as the nature of divinity, why the gods do not intervene directly in the mortal world, why they restrict their powers to clerics and so on. Spells like *commune* allow a character to ask a limited number of questions, but if the characters can *plane shift* to heaven, they can grill the gods on all those niggling questions.

Manifestations of cosmological or philosophical ideals

Good and evil, law and chaos, sorrow and joy, dream and nightmare; a plane can be the incarnation of a particular concept. This is symbolism made concrete, so the characters can interact directly with forces and concepts. Putting such concepts into the form of a plane lets the Games Master put the important elements of the campaign into the foreground. If a major theme in the campaign is the clash between Law and Chaos, then having planes of Law and Chaos turns the conflict from an abstract struggle into a much more immediate war. Making philosophical clashes into physical ones works well in a roleplaying game, as it engages the players on multiple levels simultaneously instead of one.

The downside of planes like this is that they can become very repetitive. Describing how fluid, strange and, well, chaotic the plane of chaos is gets boring – the solution is to come up with several facets for major cosmological planes, or to come up with a strong ‘hook’ for the concept – presenting chaos as a court where the nobles are constantly politicking, conniving and backstabbing each other, for example.

Realms of elementals, outsiders, celestials and fiends

In a game with a lot of conjuring and summoning, then the homes of the creatures being summoned

become important. Unlike, say, a *fireball*, a summoning requires that the Games Master and player know what sort of monsters are available. *Planar allying* and *planar binding* are even more complicated; an understanding of extraplanar society and politics is required to negotiate with *called* entities. Planes that are inhabited by outsiders should have bizarre, alien customs and laws that the players can discover, learn and turn to their advantage.

A cosmological underpinning for the campaign world

The planes can serve to explain strange elements in the setting; perhaps magic exists because of energy flowing between the Positive and Negative planes, or perhaps the night is ruled by evil because the Realm of Darkness becomes aligned with the Material Plane when the sun sets. Giving a structure to the supernatural and the cosmological lets the players grasp and manipulate the setting much more easily.

Radically different adventuring

The planes can serve as an excellent change of pace from a normal campaign. The alien terrain and strange encounters of the planes can shake up a staid campaign, or add new life to familiar tropes. A dungeon crawl is very different when the dungeon is located on the Elemental Plane of Water, carved from the heart of a living iceberg that is slowly slipping into the Fire Plane, making all the rooms slowly melt. Players who have fallen into a familiar set of tactics have to re-evaluate everything in a dead-magic or low-gravity plane.

High-level adventuring

Once player characters reach the higher levels (14+), then the challenges and dangers of the Material Plane begin to pale. At this level, the characters are capable of dealing on a daily basis with threats that could wipe out a whole city. Monsters that might have been the ultimate foe in earlier adventures are now little more than cannon fodder. The planes can be an arena for greater challenges and high-level play; the characters graduate from the familiar world to the wider realm of the planes. The key to this style of play is to give the characters reasons to move; extra-planar threats or offering them their own home plane are good methods to make them

leave the Material Plane and go adventuring beyond the fields they know.

Radically different campaigning

A campaign set among the planes from a low level is very different to a game that occasionally visits extraplanar locations. The characters are amid the weird and the wonderful from the outset, so the strangeness of the planes is much less surprising. Using the planes in this fashion requires a much greater ‘support network’ – while high-level characters may be able to survive without supplies, shelter, shopping and healing for long periods of time, low-level characters are much more fragile. The campaign needs cities, factions, home villages, marketplaces, temples and so on. To avoid making the planes too mundane, the Games Master should make the societies and cities of the planes very different to those in a normal game. The high level of magic use and the sheer familiarity with the supernatural on the planes can be useful tools here – turn the fantasy dial all the way up, and have high-fantasy cities bedecked in *continual light* and *teleport circles*, inhabited by all manner of strange beings.

The downside of this style of play is that the planes can become a little grotty. The glorious light of the Land of High Magic is diminished if ye olde magic shoppe is around every corner and little beggar-urchins are running around underfoot. (That said, a skilled Games Master can get great mileage out of mixing styles of play and throwing clashing settings and styles up against each other; the contrast of glory and grandeur with grime and pettiness, of shining marble halls with grubby streets and thieves, or of high magic with steampunk technology can make a memorable game if the Games Master can keep the game from becoming an endless cavalcade of new weirdness.)

COSMOLOGICAL STRUCTURES

Once the Games Master has a vague idea of what he wants from the planes, the next step is designing a structure. Having a structure is not strictly necessary – most planar travel spells just blip from one plane to another without any concern for what lies between. However, a structure is a very handy tool. Firstly, it gives both characters and players a

tool for remembering the planes and the connections between them; remembering that all the planes are spokes on the Great Wheel or constellations in the sky gives players a better chance of recalling an obscure plane. Secondly, putting the planes in a structure can spark new ideas; if all the planes are arranged in the shape of a rose, then other plant-related themes can come into play. Evil or Negative Energy can be conceptualised as rot, or world-eating aphids could threaten the Material Plane.

Wheel

This is the default cosmology – there is an inner ‘hub’, which is comprised of the tangled, Ethereal-wrapped knot of the Material, Shadow and Elemental Planes, collectively known as the Inner Planes, the wide Astral, and an outer rim of outer planes. There are two wheels at right angles to each other; the inner wheel of Earth, Air, Fire and Water on the axle of the Material Plane, and the outer rim of planes. Each plane on one of the two wheels borders on two others; Fire borders on Earth and Air, while the Firmament borders on the Afterworld and the Questing Ground.

Tree

All the planes hang from a massive tree, like the Norse Yggdrasil. The upper planes are higher on the tree, the lower planes are rotted and fallen fruit lying around its roots. The Ethereal Plane is the mist that clings to the tree, while the Astral Plane is actually the tree itself – instead of sailing in astral barges, the travellers walk along the branches. The plane of Chasm is not really a plane at all – those condemned to the lower planes are thrown off the tree and fall down the bare, branchless lower portion of the trunk. The plane of Mâl is a rotting abscess in the bark.

This structure gives an easy way to get from plane to plane, just by walking along the branches and climbing the trunk. Perhaps the tree has four roots, corresponding to the four elemental planes. This puts the elemental planes right next to the fallen lower planes, suggesting that evil elemental creatures might be common in this cosmology (and if the lower planes are fallen fruit, maybe other planes can also become corrupted and fall...)

Positive and negative energy might actually be forms of growth and decay in the tree; there might even be a Plane of Sap within the tree.

Rose

This variant on the Tree cosmology puts all the planes as petals on a flower. The lower planes of evil are thorns on the stem, while the other elemental, outer and Material planes are nested petals. Perhaps the planes get colder as the traveller moves out towards the edge of the rose, putting planes like the Halls of Order or the Plane of Air on the fringes. The heart of the blossom might be the Positive Energy Plane, or the Firmament.

This is one of the more tightly bound cosmologies – there is actually little need for transitive planes in this setup, as every plane borders on several others. The Ethereal, Astral, Shadow and Dream planes could be turned into normal petals, or just removed entirely.

Solar System

In the solar system cosmology, each plane corresponds to a planet. This can be a direct equivalence; the campaign world orbits the star known as the Plane of Fire, while Earth is a rocky sphere, Air is a gas giant and Water is a water world. The Outer Planes would then become the planets of outer space. The Astral Plane could be the airless void between the worlds, or a hyperspatial short cut. As the planes orbit around, the different planes move into and out of alignment.

This structure has no plane bordering any other – everything is separated by the gulf of space. This structure works well in a sci-fantasy campaign; the characters could travel from plane to plane not by portal, but by Jules Verne-style rocketship or cannon.

Descending Stair

The Descending Stair cosmology traces the descent of energy through the cosmos (Games Masters with a religious bent could do well to research the tree of the Sephiroth). The highest plane is the Firmament, which then descends through the Questing Grounds (an engine for converting the pure energy of the divine into forms compatible with the lower cosmological regions) and the Afterworld. The next plane in the chain is the Vault of Stars, which traces the shapes of the energy’s intentions and destiny. The Astral and Dream planes form a bridge between the wholly immaterial upper planes and the more physical lower planes. The energy

explodes into the lower regions in the form of the Positive Energy Plane, which then splits into the four Elemental Planes. These planes provide the raw ingredients to form the Material Plane. The Shadow Plane and evil planes are aborted regions beyond the stair.

Islands in the Ocean

In this variant, the planes float in the Ocean of the Astral Plane. This is similar to most cosmologies, but plays up the nautical theme. Astral barges get replaced with swift-sailing caravels and elegant elf-ships. All the planes are separate, but there are currents and streams that allow faster travel. ‘Ports’ become cities with *doors* to the Astral.

See *Classic Play - The Book of the Sea* for rules on nautical travel. The Outer Planes become strange, distant islands, while the Inner Planes are more familiar seas.

As Above, So Below

This replaces the dichotomy of having inner and outer planes with just two arcs of worlds, one above and one below, which reflect each other. The Material Plane remains at the centre of the cosmology, connected to the two arcs via the Transitive Planes. The lower arc is composed of the various elemental planes, the upper arc of the outer planes. The Positive Energy Plane corresponds to the Firmament. The fire plane equates to the Infernum, the water plane to Tarassein, the earth plane to Order and so on.

CREATING A PLANE

Once the Games Master has decided on what role a plane will play in his game, the next step is to create it. The planar traits (see page 4) just give the barest bones of a description – much more is needed.

If the plane is only going to show up for a single short adventure or as background flavour, then the Games Master does not need to do too much initial work. Come up with a single strong image, perhaps even inspired by a piece of art. Only a handful of locations are required, so the Games Master does not have to worry too much about repeating himself or painting himself into a corner. Give the players enough to visualise the plane and let the adventure carry the game.

Planes that will play a bigger part in the campaign need more work. They should be approached as if designing a new region or country in a campaign world, with different terrains, kingdoms, political groups, cities and so on. The magical traits of the plane should be taken into account; a lack of gravity, or fire, or giant spider-gods that skitter through the minds of the populace looking for chaotic thoughts will affect how civilisation exists on that plane. That said, be careful of making too many changes – the stranger the plane gets, the more trouble it is to run. It is better to make one or two changes and extrapolate from their effects, instead of coming up with a really bizarre set of conditions and leaving the players with no idea what life on the plane is actually like.

Often, only one or two major locations on a plane will come into play. If the characters are low-level and are travelling by portals, then the Games Master can just start with the region around the portal and work out from there.

Design Checklist

Consider the following questions when designing a plane.

Why? What is the plane doing in your cosmology? Do you need a whole other plane, or would this idea be better suited as a layer or region in an existing realm? Will this new plane fit with the existing structure?

What are the characters going to do there? Keep the needs of your campaign in mind. Running off to design glorious otherworlds is fun, but having a wonderful cosmology is a bit pointless if the characters are just going to be slogging through another dungeon. Planar campaign should use their unique setting to make the game different and unusual – never just transplant a plot from a ‘normal’, Material-based campaign to the planes unchanged.

How to the characters get there? If the characters are high-level enough to travel under their own power, then this is easy enough (although the Games Master still needs to work out how they learn of the plane, and possibly come up with a motivation for them to go there). If they are relying on portals, then the location of the near side of the portal and the look of the portal must be designed.

Example: The Plane of Oblivion

The Games Master is creating a Plane of Oblivion. This will be the home plane of the major villains of the campaign. Oblivion is the loss of identity, of being, of memory, of everything that makes a person themselves. The easiest way to describe such a plane is the old cop-out, ‘anyone who visits Oblivion and returns remembers nothing of the plane’, which would be fine if Oblivion were just going to be mentioned in an aside, but will not work in a game where Oblivion is a major element of the campaign.

Perhaps the denizens of Oblivion have no memories, and forget everything from moment to moment. While consistent with the concept of the plane, this does create more problems – how is a villain supposed to be a threat if he cannot even remember who the characters are? Still, ‘forgetfulness’ will have to be brought in somewhere.

Taking an idea from movies, maybe the denizens of Oblivion tattoo their important memories onto their bodies. The forgetfulness occurs only once a day – perhaps it could be tied to the rise of the moon of Oblivion, or perhaps the river Lethe floods its banks at every high tide. Tattoos are a very strong visual image that could be used to hook the players, and signal to them who the villains are.

The good Games Master prefers his classics, so we go with the river Lethe. Each night, the waters of forgetfulness rise. Anyone caught in them loses their memories. However, any sort of memory loss can be very tricky to run in a roleplaying game – while the *characters* might forget something, the players might not have (or, amusingly, vice versa). Having to keep out-of-character knowledge of what has been forgotten separate from in-character knowledge is difficult and not very satisfying. Any loss of memory will have to be handled carefully, and there has to be a way for characters to retrieve their lost memories. The best way is probably to turn amnesiac characters into non-player characters, and provide a way for the rest of the party to heal them. Memories might be swept away by the rising water and transformed into pearls lining the bed of the Lethe.

The ordinary folk of Oblivion might live in buildings that perch high above the water, on stone stilts, or in cities threaded by canals of black water, or behind great dams of memory. Those who fail to escape the waters tattoo themselves with instructions on where to go and who can aid them in retrieving their memory-pearls. Perhaps because of the delays and losses caused by the memory-thieving water, Oblivion has never attained a true civilisation and is ruled by feral barbarian-kings – the villains of the campaign. They brainwash common folk to turn them into assassins by immersing them in water, and wield icy axes with blades of frozen Lethe-water.

Now that the Games Master has an idea of what the main features of the plane are, he can start assigning planar traits and coming up with images and encounters. Hideous monsters swimming in the inky waters of the unconscious; hermits perching on pillars above the water; oblivion-reavers in longships, the moonlight glittering off their memory-stealing axes.

Also consider why the portal exists? Is it a natural portal, or did someone build it? If so, why? Is it guarded? Is it secret? Is it safe?

How do they move around and fight on the plane? Consider both overland movement and tactical movement? Can the characters just march across the surface of the plane, or fly, or choose the direction of gravity? If you use a battlemat and miniatures, can you actually draw the battlefield on the table? Can the players easily visualise the fight

scenes and make the appropriate tactical decisions? Be very careful about undermining the basic combat rules with environmental changes – no plane should apply more rules changes than, say, underwater combat if you expect to run battles there.

What does the plane look like? When the characters step through a portal for the first time, what do they see? Make sure that you have enough ideas to sustain the plane – one problem that often crops up is repeating the same four or five descriptive words

over and over until they lose all meaning. (*What's the plane of chaos like? Well, it's, er, chaotic. And swirly. Everything keeps changing, in a swirly, chaotic way.*) Consider grabbing a thesaurus and writing down a list of appropriate adjectives. Also, do not restrict yourself to the visual elements – what does the plane smell like, or taste like?

What hazards exist on the plane? Are there unique dangers and threats caused by the environment?

What changes are there? How is the plane different to the Material Plane? Does magic work the same way here? How about all the characters' skills and special abilities?

Who – or what - lives on the plane? Are the plane's inhabitants natives of the plane, or did they come from elsewhere? Are they living incarnations of the concept of the plane, like celestials or elementals, or are they a race unto themselves like genies or celephates. Does the plane have an ecosystem, or is it such a magical place that such base concerns are beneath it? How do the inhabitants navigate the plane and survive its hazards?

Can a character buy a meal, a sword, or a mount on the plane? Take each item in order, and consider what sort of food, weapons and steeds exist on the plane. Is there money or barter? Farming? Forges and metalworking?

Who rules the plane? Who makes the laws on the plane? Are there laws? What are the consequences

of the characters breaking them? How are they enforced? Can the characters learn of the laws before breaking them? Why do the rulers control the plane?

How much contact with other planes does this plane have? Are travellers common, or are the characters a strange novelty? Are there plenty of portals and interplanar travel, or will the characters have to hide their origin or explain that yes, there are other worlds beyond this one and no, they are not touched in the head.

Building A Hazard

The underlying mechanics of a hazard are always the same; the characters must make a skill roll, saving throw or some other test to avoid suffering from the hazard. The penalty for failure can be hit point or ability score damage, penalties to other checks, or conditions like nausea or petrification. Like monsters, hazards have Challenge Ratings to measure how dangerous they are and how much experience the characters should get for overcoming them. As discussed in *Core Rulebook II*, an encounter with a CR equal to the party's average level should drain one-quarter of their resources. This works very well with monsters, as they present multiple different aspects of challenge. The wizard can target them with spells, the fighter can expend his hit points battling them, the ranger can spend arrows shooting them, and the cleric (as usual) can burn his spell slots on *cure* spells. Every one of the party's skills and abilities may be tested in combat.

In contrast, most hazards only challenge in one way - a treacherous rope bridge can really only drain the party's hit points and cure spells (if they fall) or flying spells and climbing (if the bridge breaks). They tend to be all-or-nothing affairs – either the characters have the necessary tools to get by safely (they have *fly* spells or a rogue with climbing skills), or they do not.

For especially common skills that every party tends to have full ranks in, such as Spot or Listen, increase the DC by 2-4. For rare skills like Appraise or the obscurer Knowledge skills, decrease the DC by a like amount.

The damage inflicted by a hazard should be about one-quarter to one-third the average hit points



Saving throw required

CR	Save DC
1	11
2	12
3	13
4	14
5	15
6	16
7	17
8	18
9	19
10	20
11	21
12	22
13	23
14	24
15	25
16	26
17	27
18	28
19	29
20	30

Skill check required

CR	Skill DC
1	10
2	12
3	13
4	15
5	16
6	18
7	20
8	22
9	24
10	25
11	26
12	27
13	28
14	29
15	30
16	30
17	31
18	32
19	33
20	34

Damage Dealt (Infrequent)

CR	Damage
1	1d6+2
2	1d8+2
3	1d10+2
4	2d6+4
5	2d8+4
6	2d10+4
7	3d6+6
8	3d8+6
9	3d10+6
10	4d6+8
11	4d8+8
12	4d10+8
13	5d6+10
14	5d8+10
15	5d10+10
16	6d6+10
17	6d8+10
18	6d10+10
19	7d6+14
20	7d8+14

of a character. At higher levels, this gets harder to adjudicate, as the gap between high hit point characters like fighters and barbarians and weaker classes such as sorcerers grows much wider. The table above works for hazards that inflict damage every minute or so, or whenever the characters get to get through the hazard – a wall of spinning knives or a volcano that erupts every few rounds. For constant hazards, like acid rain or the screams of the damned, have the damage roughly equal the character level each round.

PLANAR GAMES

So, once the cosmology is in place and the planes are designed, what are the characters to do out there?

Jaunts

A jaunt is a short, once-off trip to a plane – the characters arrive by portal or spell, complete some task, and return to the Material. The charm of a jaunt is the unfamiliarity of the environment and the novelty of the planes. Ideally, the characters

should be fairly unprepared for the conditions they will encounter and know relatively little about their destination.

- † An assassin from another plane strikes at the characters. To defend themselves against future attacks, they have to track the assassin through the plane of shadow. It transpires that the assassin is in the service of a wizard who has developed a spell that turns the shadows of living beings into monsters. The assassin is actually the shadow of one of the characters, which was accidentally exposed to the wizard’s magic.
- † A random portal opens and sucks up the inn where the party is resting, depositing them, the inn and the other patrons in the middle of an unknown plane. The characters have to protect the inn’s guests as they trek across the strange new world, looking for a portal back home.
- † The characters are hired by the king’s warden to track down and capture an

extraplanar beast suitable for the king's hunt. However, the beast turns out to be a disguised shapeshifter, who overpowers the king's guards and kidnaps His Majesty. As the characters are the only ones to have travelled to the other plane, they must lead the second hunt to rescue the king.

Quests

A quest takes the characters across several planes in pursuit of some goal. If you have lots of planes, you may as well show them off. The simplest way to organise a quest is as a chaining puzzle or set of plot tokens – the characters find out where they are going next by completing an adventure on each plane, or have to collect one item from each plane. More complex quests can build on the themes of the planes – a cleric proving himself worthy of a divine prestige class might have to prove himself in the fires by travelling to the Plane of Fire before descending into the darkness (going to the Infernum) until he is delivered to the light (just when all hope seems lost and he is trapped in hell, he reaches ninth level and can now pray for a *plane shift*).

- † A new star appears in the sky. Astrologers determine that this star is part of a constellation, but only one star from the constellation is visible on each plane. The characters must race across the planes, finding the next star in each new sky and plotting the shape of the constellation.
- † A powerful angel once fell from the Firmament. As he fell, his soul was corrupted, and his holy armour was stripped from him, piece by piece. The sections of the armour were scattered across the planes. Now, the final part of the armour has also become corrupted, transformed into the *dread gauntlet*. If the fallen angel can retrieve the other sections of its armour, it can taint them too and regain all its power. The sections of armour must be kept from their owner – but as the characters travel, they discover a prophecy claiming that the angel can only be redeemed when its full panoply of armour is returned to it...

Clashes

A planar clash involves a limited number of planes, but has a lot of travel and interaction between them. The classic example is an invasion of one plane by another – the ghosts of the deep ethereal marshal to possess the folk of the Material Plane, a cult opens a portal to the Infernum, spirit bison from the Questing Grounds migrate across the land and so on. However, a clash could be a political struggle; perhaps two empires exist side by side, each on a different plane but linked by many portals, or maybe the gods dwell in a celestial city in the sky, and are regularly visited by priests and penitents. When running a clash game, the key is having a strong contrast and plenty of travel between the various planes.

- † One of the elemental planes – say, the Plane of Fire – moves into close alignment with the Material Plane. The weather patterns and climate begin to change, natural portals between the planes open, genies and elementals become more frequent visitors. Some lands profit by this alignment; colder regions thaw, others have better harvests, fire mages become more powerful. However, other kingdoms and groups are less than pleased – desert regions become uninhabitable or conquered by planar invaders, winter wizards have their power diminished and so on. What side do the characters take in this change?
- † A secret otherworld exists in the depths of the wilderness. Wherever the forests are thick and vital, portals open into the misty realm of the druids, of green magic and the Fey. Those who know this secret can plant their own groves to open up a door to the otherworld. Now, a sect of wizards have discovered a method for opening *gates* to this hidden plane. The druids risk having all their strongholds and secrets uncovered unless they can counter this magic.

Planar Campaigns

Games set entirely among the planes are quite different to games where the characters visit the planes. The Material Plane plays a much smaller role, so there is no baseline of normal reality to contrast the stranger planes against. This does give

the Games Master much more latitude in coming up with grandeur and strangeness – when the Material Plane is the centre of the cosmos, the other planes cannot be allowed to overshadow it completely in importance. The scale of the game has to be kept in check, to avoid making the Material Plane seem like a minor backwater in the face of the grand games of good and evil, law and chaos. In planar games, there is no such need, allowing the Games Master to drop in billion-year old world-spanning empires, hosts of pantheons, bizarre philosophies and whatever else he desires, elements that would clash with the quasi-medieval mood of most games.

The downside of not having a Material plane baseline, of course, is the lack of common ground for the players. If they have no shared conception of what the campaign will be like, then the early sessions of the campaign will likely be disjointed and full of clashes of character concept. Try to limit the scope of the first few adventures and use them to ease the players into the setting.

The various nexus planes like the Orrery (see page 184) and the Wandering Inn (see page 197) are excellent home towns for planar games.

Low levels

The average power level of the planes tends to be higher than the Material Plane, so the characters will have to rely more on guile and bluffing instead of solving problems through combat. At low levels, characters in a planar game are utterly dependant on natural or artificial portals (or the intercession of non-player characters) to move from one plane to another. The characters could adventure entirely on one plane with only the occasional jaunt to another plane, or have some method of quickly finding portals. Alternatively, they could have a patron who provides planar travel, or dwell in a nexus with lots of portals.

- † The characters are a band of trans-dimensional thieves, stealing the wealth of other planes. They belong to a guild that has plotted numerous portals, allowing them to sneak into other worlds and pull off the most improbable heists.
- † A senile but powerful wizard is dying due to a magical disease. He has still-running experiments, secret spell caches

and unfinished business across dozens of planes. If he admits his growing weakness, though, his enemies will strike and destroy him. He must put his affairs in order before he dies, so he hires a band of miscreants and vagabonds to shut down his experiments, seal his vaults and help him wipe out the occasional rival.

- † The characters happen onto a temple dedicated to a god of travel. While looting it, they are cursed never to spend more than three days in any one place; they are constantly *plane shifted* from one plane to another. They are send skimming across the worlds, looking for a cure for their condition.

Mid levels

At mid levels, the characters are still largely dependant on portals for travel, but can muster the occasional *door* or *plane shift* for emergencies. They can now hold their own in combat, but are still relatively minor players in the grand scheme of things. They can now be free agents, as they probably have the necessary skills and magic to find portals and navigate the planes on their own. Mid-level games can also take unusual races with higher level adjustments, allowing the players to play more outré characters.

- † The party are bounty hunters in the service of heaven, seeking out the foulest evil-doers and dragging them back for justice. Their own misdeeds will be weighed in the same manner should they die.
- † The party discover that they are the last surviving souls of a now-dead race, reincarnated into new bodies and drawn together by fate. They are destined to reclaim their lost ancestral plane and resurrect their kin – but those who destroyed them in the past are watching for any sign of a return, and just who arranged for their reincarnation anyway?

High levels

High-level characters can be quite at home in the planes, able to travel freely and deal with the truly great powers of the planes. While an individual

character might still be hopelessly outmatched by a demigod or demon lord, a party of characters can prove to be a significant power bloc even in cosmic clashes. One common mistake made at this level of play is to put in too many threats to the whole multiverse – while every high-level party does deserve to save the worlds at least once, all of creation need not be threatened every week. A potent rival or long-term threat is much more effective.

- † The characters are a strike force in the service of Law. The forces of Chaos are rising, and are threatening to subsume all the planes in madness. Wherever chaos cults arise, the characters are there to destroy them.
- † One of the gods of Good chooses the characters as its new champions – so it begins to arrange for evil to take notice of them, for their loved ones to suffer and for their holdings to be destroyed so that their desire for righteous vengeance and justice will be as strong as possible. The greater good justifies any means.

COMMON PROBLEMS & SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

Time Travel

Planes with an unusual temporal trait can result in the characters being displaced in time. Worlds where time runs slower are easy to handle – just remember to keep track of how much time has passed in ‘real’ time. The only time slow planes become a major problem is when the characters spend a long period there, and years or centuries pass in real time. A campaign world can be swept away by the passing years if everyone the characters ever knew dies of old age while they are away adventuring for a week. Ensure that characters never have to get stuck on a slow plane for too long.

Faster planes are slightly trickier – characters on fast planes can have a huge advantage over those on slower planes. If a *haste* spell is useful in combat, consider how a fast plane allows a character to *plane shift* away from a fight, heal, rest, prepare new spells (and, if the plane is fast enough, settle down, craft a few magic items, read a few improving books and take a nice, relaxing holiday) before returning to the

fight a few rounds later. The Time trait should be kept to a comfortable +/-5.

Variable time traits can be much more problematic. Being moved backwards in time can cause all sorts of paradoxes. Can the characters undo events? Can they meet themselves, or kill their own grandparents and so on? The existence of divine beings also adds a further complication – are the gods omniscient, able to see the future and hence deal with time travellers?

The simplest option for avoiding paradoxes is to say that the characters sent back in time replace their former selves. This does cause the minor paradox that they can now take a different set of decisions and maybe even avoid the sequence of events that resulted in them being sent back in time in the first place. The Games Master should also decide if the characters retain items and changes made in the original timeline. (Keeping copies of character sheets or tracking changes is a good idea in adventures when time travel is a possibility).

Another option is to have some force – inevitables, gods of time, mysterious entities from beyond the known planes – enforce the laws of causality and block the characters from making major changes. The moment the characters travel back, they are on a countdown – soon the guardians of causality will appear and deal with the characters, but if they act quickly, they can take advantage of their displaced status.



Unless you are running a very, very odd campaign, time travel should never be an easily accessible or regularly recurring feature – it causes too many headaches and problems for the Games Master.

Getting Lost

The planes are big and wild, and one of the primary methods for travel – *plane shift* – is notoriously inaccurate. A high Knowledge (the planes) skill and Survival can help, but wandering around the planar wilderness can get dull. The best solution is to make local guides a common feature of the campaign – have other planar travellers employ them, and possibly even have the characters serve as guides to their home plane in some adventures. The guide provides a handy but non-omniscient mouthpiece for the Games Master to clue the players in about local events and strange customs on the plane. Keep the guides low-powered and local – the intent is to bring the characters to the most interesting bits of the planes quickly, not provide extra muscle in combat or give them answers to every question. Making guides a common custom gives the characters a sort of universal greeting that they know will be understood on most planes, and the nature of the guide provides a handy way for the Games Master to exemplify the inhabitants of the current plane.

Characters dumped in the wilderness without a guide and without planar travel spells will need some method of finding a portal. The frequency of portals should be inversely proportional to the *starting* level of the party – a low-level party can only travel the planes using portals, so there should be plenty of routes through the worlds, and a portal should never be too far away. A high-level party are expected to be able to move under their own power and survive without easy access to planar travel.

Keep track of who in the party can travel from plane to plane, and who can communicate from plane to plane.

No Continuity

Planar campaigns can quickly degenerate into a series of unconnected adventures in different environments, each weirder than the one before – ‘If this is Tuesday, it must be the Astral Plane’ syndrome. There are two related problems here – the lack of continuity between adventures and the

desire on the part of the Games Master to show off all his shiny new planes.

There is no need for an adventuring party to visit *every* plane, no matter how cool each one is individually. If every new adventure takes place in a totally unfamiliar setting, the players get jaded. They have no reason to connect to or remember any one plane, as they know that next week they will be moving on. The simple solution is to show down and reuse planes. Not every adventure has to take place on a different plane. Even a strongly episodic campaign where the characters are sent on a different mission each week can benefit from a bit of retreading over familiar ground.

Continuity is a more subtle problem. If the characters are travelling over vast distances and huge gulfs every week, they are much less likely to return to that same inn or trade town over and over again. Instead, they will head for wherever best suits their immediate goals – a new inn or different resupply point every time. Similarly, villains can get forgotten – the Goblin King of the Marsh is not much of a threat even if the party failed to kill him if they simply move onto the next plane.

The solution here is to make the recurring locations and villains plane-spanning in scope. The recurring villains and party nemeses should be able to travel the planes just like the characters. The recurring non-player characters should also be able to travel (so the characters can run into the same magic-item-selling wizard on six different planes, instead of bargaining for items with six different wizards and forcing the Games Master to come up with six different excuses for why there are no *wands of instant death* for sale) or else provide an excellent reason for the characters to return to the same place over and over again. Either use a nexus plane or encourage them to build their own stronghold or pocket plane – anything to keep them from being homeless vagabonds without ties to anything.

Overpowered Non-Player Characters

The Planes are very much the place to find the big monsters and powerful characters. The gods call this place home, after all, not to mention angels, fiends, titans, genies, elder elementals and all the other bizarre outsiders. It can be very easy for the Games Master to show the characters just how big

the fish get in this pond by dropping a very, very powerful non-player character into the game.

This temptation should be resisted. Just because the planes contain such powerful entities does not mean they should be used lightly. Having extremely potent entities show up regularly as flavour, plot devices, or worse, ways to chastise or guide the players just cheapens them. Use power as sparingly as possible. After all, which is the more impressive entry for a solar into the campaign – as a glorious avenging angel of supreme might and majesty, *called* by a cleric who just cast his first *gate*, or as a celestial ticket inspector who shows up to scold the same cleric who happened to make a minor alignment violation within sight of heaven. Keep your special-effects budget in check, and make sure that the players are in control of their own characters' destinies.

A Passive Cosmos

This is the flip-side of the Overpowered Non-player characters problem in some ways. The Games Master just uses the planes as an interesting set of terrains or locations, without considering their full scope. The fundamental forces of the game – Law and Chaos, Good and Evil and so on – are in *conflict*. This is, from the point of view of the Games Master, a good thing, as conflict offers plenty of scope for adventures.

Use the planes as a stage for this truly epic conflict. The opposing forces are almost perfectly balanced, so the actions of the player characters might be enough to spell victory or defeat. Have great forces moving behind the curtains of the planes, causing vast armies and powerful creatures to act according to their will. Let the players glimpse the hands of the Lords of Order and mad King of Chaos, let them perceive the will of the gods moving on the face of the waters. Have wonderful things *happen* out in the planes.

No Answers to Imponderable Questions

Part of the charm of a plane-hopping game is encountering truly bizarre phenomena, philosophies and entities, and being able to deal with cosmological questions like the meaning of life and death directly, on a practical level. The downside of this is that there is always one player who nitpicks or finds fault with explanations. Be

prepared for questions like ‘why is there farming (or mining, or whatever) when there’s an infinite plane of food (or minerals, or whatever)?’, ‘how can there be different versions of the same religion when a cleric can just pop into the god’s home plane and ask for clarification?’, or ‘why do people live here when there is that portal to a much nicer plane that we just came through?’ Even the best Games Master can get tripped up sometimes, especially in strange environments where a lot of assumptions no longer apply.

There are several solutions to questions that you do not have the answers to, such as:

- † **Stealing the player’s ideas:** Whenever any objection is raised, people will try to rationalise it – ‘people don’t mine the plane of Earth because it is too dangerous’, ‘the god allows different versions of the same faith because he’s undecided himself’ and so on. Listen to your players and do not be afraid to borrow their solutions.
- † **Come up with a careful solution:** Any question can be answered in a fantasy game where the Games Master is the ultimate arbiter of all things, but any answers should be self-consistent and meaningful. To buy yourself time to come up with such a decision, use random encounters, sudden visits from important non-player characters and other such delaying tactics. An off-the-cuff solution can create unforeseen new problems while solving old ones.
- † **‘Yes, that is odd...’:** One of the most beloved solutions for the Games Master is to reward players for noticing accidental flaws and logical inconsistencies in his game. Basically, you repackage the whole thing as a mystery, and the players go off and try to solve it. This solution combines both the previous two while also making the players feel smart and insightful.

PLANECRAFTING

There are more worlds than these. Wave a wand and encompass the smallest fraction of the Astral Plane. In that space, a billion billion potential planes bubble. An act of divine will – or the overweening ambition of a mortal – can pluck these potential fruits and make them into new planes of creation. There is no fortress more unassailable, no fiefdom more prestigious, no richer holding than one’s own plane.

Almost all planes begin as a *planar seed*, also known as a *mundane egg*. These fabulous objects are tiny bubbles of reality that can be shaped by the application of potent spells. Other planes are formed by folding over the fabric of another plane to create a pocket plane, or by cleaving off a section of an existing plane. Reality is a malleable thing, another cloth for the spellcaster to cut and weave with his art.

The spells and rituals used to alter a new plane’s properties can also – with difficulty – be used to change an existing plane. Setting the Material Plane alight with elemental fire or turning every door into a *gate* to the Infernum can be done, if a villain has the means and will to do it. What makes a plane can also ruin a plane.

CREATING A PLANE

There are five methods for creating a plane.

Planar Seeds

‘A planar seed is but the visible facet of a much larger potentiality – possibly even the entire multiverse. All that is, is reflected in the egg. As above, so below.’

- Alastherion’s Planar Encyclopaedia

Planar seeds are sometimes found in the aftermath of stars or other massive, world-shattering energy discharges. They are crystalline eggs, about the size of an infant’s head. They glisten strangely, as if reflecting lights that do not yet exist. A character holding a *mundane egg* can ‘hatch’ it with an effort of will. This costs 1000 XP, although the application of sufficient magic or energy (say, a *wish* spell, or holding the egg over an erupting volcano) can also hatch the egg.

Planar Seed Traits

Gravity	-4 to +4	<i>Varies</i>
Time	-4 to +4	<i>Varies</i>
Size	1d4	<i>Varies</i>
Morphic	1d10	<i>Varies</i>
Life	3	<i>Almost None</i>
Weather	1	<i>None</i>
Water/Fire	-4 to +4	<i>Varies</i>
Earth/Air	-4 to +4	<i>Varies</i>
Negative/Positive	-4 to +4	<i>Varies</i>
Good/Evil	-4 to +4	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Law/Chaos	-4 to +4	<i>Mildly Neutral</i>
Arcane	-4 to +4	<i>Varies</i>
Divine	-4 to +4	<i>Varies</i>
Green	-4 to +4	<i>Varies</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to plane of creation	7	<i>Coterminous</i>

The egg vanishes, becoming a new demi-plane if the egg was hatched on the Astral, or a pocket plane if hatched within another plane.

The new plane can be accessed using the usual spells. It has the following initial traits (for the traits with an initial value of -4 to +4, roll 1d12; 1=-4, 2=-3, 3=-2, 4=-1, 5-8=0, 9=+1, 10=+2, 11=+3, 12=+4).

The bodies of certain extremely powerful creatures can act as planar seeds. Legends tell of heroes and demigods making worlds from the corpses of gods and bones of giants.

Genesis

The psionic power of *genesis* (see *The Psionics Handbook*) can create a small demi-plane. Once the plane is formed, it can then be shaped using the planecrafting techniques discussed below. The genesis plane has the following traits – those denoted as ‘choice’ can have any value desired by the creator, within the range specified.

*'Of Ymir's flesh
Was earth created,
Of blood the sea,
Of his bones the hills,
Of his hair trees and plants,
Of his skull the heavens'*

- Revelation of the Ten Thousand

At first, the fledgling plane grows at a rate of one foot in radius per day to an initial maximum radius of ten feet per manifester level. Once the new demiplane reaches its maximum size, it does not stop growing, but its growth rate decreases dramatically to only half an inch in radius per week (just over two feet per year).

A genesis plane can only be safely created as a demi-plane, on the Ethereal or Astral. It cannot be used to create pocket planes.

Genesis Traits

Gravity	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Time	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Size	Special	<i>Varies</i>
Morphic	1-10	<i>Choice</i>
Life	3	<i>Almost None</i>
Weather	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Water/Fire	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Earth/Air	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Negative/Positive	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Good/Evil	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Law/Chaos	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Arcane	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Divine	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Green	-4 to +4	<i>Choice</i>
Accessibility	13	<i>Through Magic</i>
Proximity...		
...to plane of creation	14	<i>Coexistent</i>
...to Astral and Ethereal	14	<i>Coexistent</i>

Divine Intervention

A god can create a plane without needing a planar seed or relying on the *genesis* ability, but it is taxing even for a deity. Most prefer to use a planar seed for the initial act of creation, then use planecrafting to adjust the plane's morphic trait to 'divinely morphic'. Once the god can alter the plane's traits by just divine right alone, the rest is easy.

Folding A Plane

A plane can be folded, creating a section of the plane with different traits, i.e. a pocket plane. See Limited Areas, below – a pocket plane has a lower Accessibility trait than the rest of the plane.

Planar Cleave

A section can be chopped off a plane using planecrafting. See Limited Areas, below – a demi-plane has a Proximity trait below 14 with its parent plane.

A newly created plane can be visited with *plane shift* as normal, assuming it is big enough (a plane with a Size of 1 is only five feet high and wide, so it can only fit a single Medium creature within it. Inside, it is a rather featureless realm, a white-walled emptiness as if the traveller is inside an egg.

CRAFTING A PLANE

Planecrafting is the art of altering the traits of a plane. The traits are listed in Chapter 4, Planar Traits. By increasing or decreasing these traits, a character can warp the physics of the plane, enhancing its magical or elemental qualities, bringing it closer to another plane, locking it off from planar travel, or even creating new forms of life.

The most important consideration when altering a plane is its Morphic trait. The higher a plane's Morphic trait, the easier it is to alter the plane's traits (including the Morphic trait – it is a common practise to increase a plane's Morphic rating to a high level, unless the plane can be shaped by will alone, and then 'lock' the plane by bringing the Morphic rating back down).

Planecrafting Methods

Morphic Trait is greater than...	Method
1	Infusions
3	Planar Alignments
3	Great Works
10	Divine Right
13	Magic
17	Will

The second most important consideration is a plane's Size. Bigger planes are much, much harder to affect than smaller ones. Most planecrafters section off part of a plane using verge-staves or other markers.

There are several methods used when altering a plane. Some are available only at higher levels of the Morphic trait.

INFUSIONS

'I like infusing Chaos into a plane. Not to craft it, you understand, but just to see the pretty colours.'
 - Deviations.

An infusion involves taking the elemental matter or energy of one of the other planes, and dispersing it into the plane being crafted. For example, to create new seas and rivers on a plane, the easiest thing to do is draw elemental water onto the plane.

The downside of infusions is that they are essentially random and uncontrolled, and can have disastrous side effects on the plane. Infusions can be minor, standard or greater. Lesser infusions can be created by opening a portal to a plane with a high (either -8 or +8, or +17 depending on the trait type) rating in the desired trait. Standard infusions are obtained either by opening a portal to a section of the plane with a maximum (-10 or +10, or +20 depending on the trait type) rating in the desired trait, or by travelling to the plane and gathering elemental energy. Finally, greater infusions can only be obtained by visiting the most dangerous parts of the plane. The *gather infusion* spell (see page 50, Magic of the Planes) is used to produce an infusion.

Using an Infusion

Once a character has obtained an infusion, it is instilled into the plane's structure using the *infuse plane* spell (see page 50, Magic of the Planes). Depending on the strength of the infusion and size of the plane, this may not work; the character must make a Spellcraft check against a DC of 15 + twice the plane's Size trait. This roll is modified by the strength of the infusion (a lesser infusion adds +5 to the DC of the check, a standard infusion +10 and a greater infusion +20)

A plane can only take a limited number of infusions – each infusion after the first adds 20 to the difficulty. The DC drops back down at a rate of five per week until it reaches the base level of 15 + the plane's Size.

If the Spellcraft check fails, the infusion fails to take hold. Otherwise, it works. Each infusion type lists the changes it makes to the plane's traits.



An infusion has a **Primary Change**, which is the amount it changes the desired trait by, and may also have **Secondary Changes**, which are other traits that are also affected by the infusion. If the roll for a Secondary Change is greater than five, it causes a lesser infusion for that trait.

For infusions that can be positive or negative, such as Gravity or Life, the Secondary Changes move in the same way unless otherwise specified. For example, if the Primary Change is negative, the Secondary Changes will also be negative.

Infusing Quirks

The various quirks listed with each planar trait can be created using infusions, if the change is high enough. For example, a Gravity change of five can be used to make gravity on the plane subjective instead.

Unstable Planes

If any of the plane's traits go off the end of the scale, the plane begins to collapse. It will disintegrate in a number of days equal to its Size trait squared unless the damage is repaired using planecrafting techniques (such as an opposite infusion). Until the damage is repaired, the plane will be beset by disasters of all kinds (earthquakes, firestorms and so on).

Gravity

Gravity infusions can be positive or negative. Gathering gravity is obviously rather difficult; some planes contain magical stones or metals that exert a potent gravitational pull, or have chain-spirits that are responsible for holding objects down. Such things are rare, so standard or major infusions of gravity are almost unheard of.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Gravity +/- 1; *Secondary Change:* None.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Gravity +/- 1d4; *Secondary Change:* Weather +/-1d4. Earth/Air +/- 1d4. (Move towards the Earth end of the axis if the Gravity change is positive, move towards Air if negative).

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Gravity +/- 1d8; *Secondary Change:* Weather +/-1d6. Earth/Air +/- 1d6.

Time

Infusions of Time are incredibly dangerous. Any manipulation of time invites paradox and draws the attention of various powerful forces, such as inevitables and azroi, who guard against the undermining of the laws of reality. Still, lesser infusions of time can create very useful pocket planes.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Time +/- 1d4; *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos +1d6.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Time +/- 1d6; *Secondary Change:* Weather +/-1d4. Law/Chaos +/- 1d6, Morphic +/- 1d4.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Time +/- 1d8; *Secondary Change:* Weather +/-1d6. Law/Chaos +/- 1d8, Morphic +/- 1d6.

Size and Morphic

These traits cannot be manipulated directly using Infusions.

Life

Infusions of Life spring from the blessings of nature-deities or by diffusion millions of seeds or fertile earth over the whole plane. Negative infusions of life usually take the form of disease or negative energy.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Life +/- 1d4; *Secondary Change:* Positive/Negative +1d3, Green +/- 1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Life +/- 1d6; *Secondary Change:* Positive/Negative +1d6, Green +/- 1d3.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Life +/- 1d8; *Secondary Change:* Positive/Negative +1d6, Green +/- 1d4.

Weather Infusions

Weather infusions are very easy to create, but tend to have severely deleterious effects on the plane if pushed too far. The character adding the infusion may choose what sort of weather is produced.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Weather +/- 1d4; *Secondary Change:* Earth/Air +/- 1, Green +/- 1, Life +/- 1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Life +/- 1d6; *Secondary Change:* Earth/Air +1d4, Green +/- 1d4, Life +/- 1d3.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Life +/- 1d8; *Secondary Change:* Earth/Air +1d6, Green +/- 1d6, Life +/- 1d4.

Water Infusions

Infusions of water cause the sea level of the plane to rise considerably, and create flooding and rainstorms. Like the other elemental infusions, they are comparatively common and easy to obtain.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Water/Fire -1d4; *Secondary Change:* Morphic +1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Water/Fire -1d6; *Secondary Change:* Morphic +1, Life +1, Weather +1, Size +1.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Water/Fire -1d8; *Secondary Change:* Morphic +1d3, Life +1d3, Weather +1d3, Size +2.

Fire Infusions

Fiery infusions are very dangerous; the energetic flames leap across the plane sowing destruction in their wake.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Water/Fire +1d4; *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos +1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Water/Fire +1d6; *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos +1, Life -1d4, Weather +1.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Water/Fire +1d8; *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos +1d3, Life -1d4, Weather +1d3.

Earth Infusions

Infusions of Earth stabilise a plane.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Earth/Air -1d4; *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos -1, Morphic -1, Weather -1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Earth/Air -1d6; *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos -1d3, Morphic -1d3, Weather -1, Size +1.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Earth/Air -1d8; *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos -1d6, Morphic -1d6, Weather -1d4, Size +2.

Air Infusions

Adding elemental Air to a plane makes it much more chaotic and fluid.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Earth/Air +1d4; *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos +1, Morphic +1, Weather +1d4.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Earth/Air +1d6; *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos +1d3, Morphic +1d3, Weather +1d6, Size +1.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Earth/Air +1d8; *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos +1d4, Morphic +1d3, Weather +1d8, Size +2.

Negative Infusions

The Dark Realm saps at the life of the plane.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Negative/Positive -1d4; *Secondary Change:* Life -1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Negative/Positive -1d6; *Secondary Change:* Life -1d4, Size -1, Good/Evil +1d4.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Negative/Positive -1d8; *Secondary Change:* Life -1d6, Size -2, Good/Evil +1d6.

Positive Infusions

Opening a realm to the infinite brightness can cause it to swell out of control.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Negative/Positive +1d4; *Secondary Change:* Life +1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Negative/Positive +1d6; *Secondary Change:* Life +1d4, Size +1, Good/Evil -1d4.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Negative/Positive +1d8; *Secondary Change:* Life +1d6, Size +2, Good/Evil -1d6.

Good Infusions

Infusions of pure Goodness are beneficial to the entire plane.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Good/Evil -1d4; *Secondary Change:* Positive/Negative +1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Good/Evil -1d6; *Secondary Change:* Positive/Negative +1d3, Life +1.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Good/Evil -1d8; *Secondary Change:* Positive/Negative +1d4, Life +1d3.

Evil Infusions

The skies darken and the hearts of men turn black.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Good/Evil +1d4; *Secondary Change:* Positive/Negative -1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Good/Evil +1d6; *Secondary Change:* Positive/Negative -1d3, Life -1.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Good/Evil +1d8; *Secondary Change:* Positive/Negative -1d4, Life -1d3.

Lawful Infusions

The addition of Law to a plane stabilises it greatly. One common practice is to reduce a plane to primal chaos, bringing the Morphic trait up to a high level,

reshaping the plane to the crafter's desires, then infusing Law back into the plane.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Law/Chaos -1d4; *Secondary Change:* Morphic -1d3, Weather -1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Law/Chaos -1d6; *Secondary Change:* Morphic -1d6, Weather -1d4.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Law/Chaos -1d8; *Secondary Change:* Morphic -1d8, Weather -1d6.

Chaotic Infusions

A chaotic infusion has the effect of greatly increasing the Morphic trait of the plane.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Law/Chaos +1d4; *Secondary Change:* Morphic +1d3, Weather +1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Law/Chaos +1d6; *Secondary Change:* Morphic +1d6, Weather +1d4.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Law/Chaos +1d8; *Secondary Change:* Morphic +1d8, Weather +1d6.



Neutral Infusions

A neutral infusion can only be obtained by locating one of the rare planes that are Strongly Neutral. All Neutral infusions do is bring balance, by adjusting all traits towards their mid-point (0 or 10, depending on the trait).

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* +/- 1 to all traits; *Secondary Change:* None.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* +/- 1d4 to all traits; *Secondary Change:* None.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* +/- 1d6 to all traits; *Secondary Change:* None.

Arcane Infusions

Arcane infusions manifest as sparking trails of light cascading across the sky.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Arcane +/-1; *Secondary Change:* None.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Arcane +/-1d4; *Secondary Change:* Morphic +/-1.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Arcane +/-1d8; *Secondary Change:* Morphic +/- 1d4.

Divine Infusions

Divine infusions always require the character to nominate a specific deity. The infusion of divine power makes all the faithful more powerful, not just those who follow that deity (unless the Focussed Magic quirk is taken). The Secondary Changes of a divine infusion are always related to the alignment of that deity and bring the plane closer to that deity's alignment.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Divine +/-1; *Secondary Change:* Good/Evil +/- 1, Law/Chaos +/- 1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Divine +/-1d4; *Secondary Change:* Good/Evil +/- 1d4, Law/Chaos +/- 1d4.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Divine +/-1d8; *Secondary Change:* Good/Evil +/- 1d6, Law/Chaos +/- 1d6.

Green Infusions

Infusions of the Green cause life to blossom throughout the Plane.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Green +/-1; *Secondary Change:* Life +/- 1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Green +/-1d4; *Secondary Change:* Life +/- 1d4.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Green +/-1d8; *Secondary Change:* Life +/- 1d6.

Proximity and Accessibility

These traits cannot be manipulated directly using Infusions.

Alignment Type

Proximity	Alignment Type	Number of Spill-overs
7+	Coterminous	1
14+	Coexistent	2
20	Mingling	3

Spill-over Infusions

Trait Rating (-10 to +10)	Trait Rating (0-20)	Spillover Type
-5 or +5	14+	Lesser
-7 or +7	18+	Standard
-10 or +10	20	Greater

Morphic 'Infusions'

There is no way to increase the Morphic trait using normal infusions or spells that mimic them, but planar alignments can create the equivalent of a Morphic infusion. A change in the Morphic trait increases the chaos of the plane.

Lesser infusion: *Primary Change:* Morphic +/-1. *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos +/- 1.

Standard Infusion: *Primary Change:* Morphic +/-1d4. *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos +/- 1d4.

Greater Infusion: *Primary Change:* Morphic +/-1d8. *Secondary Change:* Law/Chaos +/- 1d6.

work depends on what sort of change in the traits is desired, but most great works take the form of gigantic buildings or public-works projects. To increase the Fire trait of a plane, a ruler might establish hundreds of huge flaming beacons that burn day and night. To increase the Divine trait, a ruler would build vast cathedrals and fill them with fervent believers.

Making any sort of change through a great work is very, very slow. Each change requires a number of Change Points equal to the size of the change plus the Size trait of the plane, squared. For example, to raise the Arcane trait of a Size 10 plane by two would require $(2+10)^2=144$ Change Points.

Exactly what constitutes a change point varies, but an act that affects 1,000 people for at least one year or costs 10,000 gp is a good guideline. Altering a plane through great works is out of the reach of most characters; it is normally an activity for whole civilisations to undertake.

Still, it usefully works at low Morphic levels, so a character with a Size 4, Morphic 3 plane could use a Great Work to increase the Morphic trait to 13, requiring $(10+4)^2=196$ change points.

PLANAR ALIGNMENTS

If a plane is brought into alignment with another, the dominant traits of both planes can spill onto the other. The strength of the spillover is based on the strength of the traits. A spill-over behaves just like an infusion, causing primary and secondary changes.

Only the highest traits of a plane spill over (decide randomly which traits spill over when two or more are of equal intensity). Size, Proximity and Accessibility do not spill over, but Morphic **does**.

When the two planes move out of alignment, the spill-over vanishes, so apply the opposite types of infusion to both planes.

GREAT WORKS

The slowest but safest method of altering a plane is through great works. The nature of a great

DIVINE RIGHT

A deity can directly alter any trait of a plane with a Morphic trait of 10 (Divinely Morphic) or higher. The deity may use a lesser infusion freely, a standard infusion if the plane has a Divine trait higher than 15 and a greater infusion if the plane has a Divine trait higher than 15 and the plane's Law/Chaos or Good/Evil trait is the same as his own.

A *miracle* spell draws directly on the power of a god, and can adjust any trait (even the Morphic trait) up or down by one point.

MAGIC

The spells *lesser planecraft*, *planecraft* and *greater planecraft* can be used to alter a plane's traits, as long as the Morphic trait is above 13. These spells can alter all traits, even Size, Morphic, Proximity and Accessibility.

WILL

Finally, if the Morphic trait is at 17 or more, the plane can be altered by an effort of will. Small-scale alterations are described under the Morphic trait on page 9. Larger alterations use Change Points (see Great Works, above), but the number of Change Points required is the DC for a Wisdom check. If the check succeeds, the plane's trait changes as desired.

VARIATIONS AND TECHNIQUES

Few planecrafters dare work their magic on a whole plane at once. Most planes are much too large to affect with most spells; more dangerously, any planecrafting attracts rivals like vultures and crows to the realm being shaped. If a wizard laboriously works a plane's Morphic trait up to the level of Magically Morphic, he can expect half-a-dozen roaming sorcerers and thieves to *plane shift* in and try to steal the plane out from under him. Therefore,

Planar Inertia

The planecrafting rules allow characters to make large-scale changes to a plane. While this is fine for newly-created pocket dimensions, the Games Master may quail at the idea of the players dropping Greater Negative Infusions on the Material World and wiping out a large chunk of the campaign setting (more socially-minded players might drop Positive Infusions instead and merely wipe out all the undead, but this is still a very large change).

To prevent this, the Games Master can rule that a particular plane has Planar Inertia – it is settled in ...

Vergestaves

A vergestave is a metal or wooden staff topped with a metallic crown or crystal. They are usually made in attuned sets of a dozen or so, although one vergestave can be attuned to another made by a different crafter. A vergestave must be planted into the ground (a standard action), whereupon it immediately activates. If other active, attuned vergestaves are present on the plane, the staves attempt to section off the area between them. See the Size trait on page 5 for how much space each level of Size includes – a set of vergestaves can encompass an area with a Size equal to their number. If a vergestave is destroyed or removed, the sectioning collapses.

Moderate Abjuration; CL12th; Craft Staff, dimensional anchor; Price 43,200 gp per set of 12.

methods for working smaller, more defensible sections of a plane were developed long ago.

Limited Areas

A character can 'section off' part of a plane. This requires that the character perform what is termed a 'Rite of Encompassment', marking the border with devices called *vergestaves* or *vergemarkers*. A *vergestave* is a magical staff that is planted to mark the border. A number of *vergestaves* equal to the desired Size of the subsection is required (for example, to create a pocket-plane of Size 6, six *vergestaves* must be planted).

Vergemarkers are larger constructions such as menhirs or towers. A *vergemarker* costs 25,000 gp to build.

If the desired size of the section is only four or less, then it can be marked off using a single *vergestave* or marker.

The Rite of Encompassment activates the verge markers and transforms the sectioned-off part of the plane into a pocket plane. This new pocket plane

Example – the Hierarch of Owlsbury Creates a Sanctum

The Hierarch of Owlsbury (a 16th level lawful good cleric) wishes to create a hidden sanctum in his cathedral, where he may commune directly with the gods. This will be a pocket plane of Size 3, so he needs a single marker. He commissions the construction of a magical altar containing a hidden door, which leads to a small room concealed within the foundations of the cathedral. When he activates the altar – a vergemarker – that small room becomes a pocket plane. The Hierarch then uses *planecraft* several times in succession to bring the plane’s Accessibility trait down to 17, declaring that the plane can only be accessed by an ordained cleric of the church hierarchy. Now, the door will only exist for clerics of his faith. (However, the plane can still be reached using a *door* or *gate* spell. If the Hierarch expended much more energy, he could bring the plane’s Accessibility trait down to a six (to make the plane keyed to only clerics of his order) or even four, locked (in which case only he could access the plane). Skimping on such defences makes this sanctum much more vulnerable, but we allow an old man his indulgences.)

Next, he casts two *planar ally* spells, calling up potent outsiders and commands them to bring him Infusions of Good and Law. He pays for their services with certain ancient relics of the church. When the called creatures return, he uses two *infuse plane* spells to add these infusions, waiting one month to minimise the DC. Infusing the plane requires a Spellcraft check at DC 15+twice the plane’s Size, or DC 21. The hierarch has a Spellcraft of +15, so he succeeds easily at both checks.

The plane ends up as follows:

Size: 4	Accessibility: 17 (clerics can enter freely, others must use magic)	Proximity (to Material): 20
Good/Evil: -5	Law/Chaos: -4	Positive/Negative: +2
Life: +1	Weather: -3	Morphic: 10 (divinely morphic)

All other traits are the same as those of the Material Plane.

has exactly the same traits as the ‘parent’ plane, with the following exceptions:

- † The new plane’s **Size** is determined by the size of the verge.
- † Both planes have a **Proximity** of 20 and an **Accessibility** of 20 to each other.
- † The new plane has a Morphic rating of 13 (Magically Morphic).

From the perspective of most creatures, the Rite of Encompassment changes nothing. The two

planes are still one for all intents and purposes; a creature can walk from one to the other without even noticing a change. However, the new plane can be affected with infusions and spells without these effects impacting directly on the parent plane. (Spill-overs can still occur if changes are made when the two planes are still in close Proximity.)

The first thing that is normally done is to reduce the Proximity or Accessibility or both of the new plane relative to the parent.

Noticing Planecraft

Magnitude	Examples	Detectable at range...	Check DC
Lesser	<i>Lesser planecraft</i> , lesser infusion or spillover, demigod, any great work	100 miles	20
Standard	<i>Planecraft</i> , standard infusion or spillover, god, willworking	1000 miles	15
Greater	<i>Greater planecraft</i> , greater infusion or spillover, greater god	Anywhere on plane	10

A plane created in this manner cannot exceed its parent plane in Size.

Creating Layers

A layer of a plane can be created by making a pocket plane, increasing the pocket plane's Size until it equal to the Size of the parent plane. Alternatively, increase a new plane's Size to above 14. Layers can be planecrafted separately to the rest of the plane.

Counter Craft

Planecrafting is not a subtle activity. Even a humble *lesser planecraft* spell sends shockwaves of magical force cascading through the plane. Infusions scar the sky; stains of elemental matter slowly permeate the living world. When planecrafting is performed, anyone with the eyes to see it knows what is happening.

Detecting planecrafting requires a Spellcraft or Wisdom check, as follows.

Most well-established planes have native spellcasters who are aware of the danger of planecrafting, and will act to stop any disastrous changes. Often, there are *countercraft* spells attached to a variation of a *contingency* spell that have waited for aeons to be triggered. A character trying to alter a plane that has other powerful residents should either have their support or be prepared to defend himself.

Plane Design

Adding infusions or crafting a plane does more than just tweak the plane's traits up and down – every change has discernable physical or spiritual effects. Sample effects are listed with each level of a trait (see page 4, Planar Traits). However, when a character is increasing or decreasing a trait, he can (to a degree) mould how these effects manifest. A character who wants, say, a moat around his castle can increase the Water trait of the plane and declare that it will rise up in the shape of a moat.

This is not a precise method of altering the physical traits of a plane, and the character will probably still have to do some physical construction work to reshape the moat, but it is a much faster method than *gating* in a river or using lots of *create water* spells.

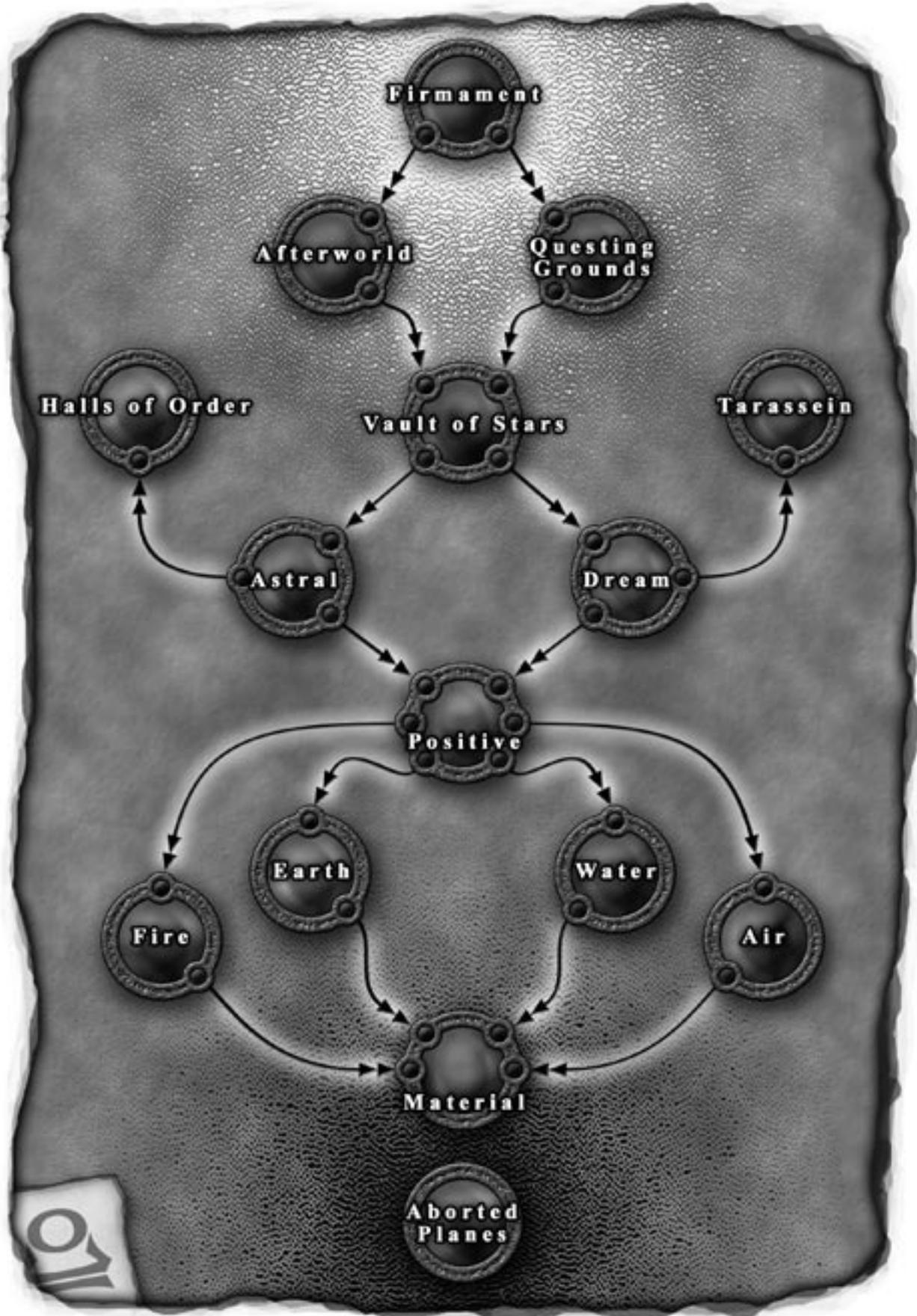


A partial list of effects possible is below, but the Games Master should be flexible with 'flavour' items. If the players go to the trouble of crafting their own home plane, let them have their upside-down seas and endless castles without making them jump through too many hoops...

Gravity: Increasing a plane's gravity causes earthquakes throughout the plane. Adjusting the gravity level by one or two causes minor tremors; shifting Gravity by three or more causes a proportionally more disastrous earthquake. A gravity shift of seven or more will level most of the plane, or even shatter the land. Decreasing gravity is less destructive, but sudden shifts will cause structural problems.

The Selective Gravity quirk (+2) allows for the creation of floating objects such as castles.

Time: Changes in the time trait are almost imperceptible to people on the plane (use the



normal rules for detecting planecrafting listed under Countercraft, above). Be *very* careful about the Backwards Time quirk – abuse of time travel attracts the attention of very powerful beings.

Size: When the Size trait changes, the planecrafter may choose *where* this space is added – does the plane just swell, or does a new vista open up in the east. The new territory reflects the rest of the plane – a mountainous land will produce more mountains when expanded.

If a plane’s Size is increased with an infusion of earth, air or water, the Size increase is concentrated in the land area, sky or water area respectively.

Morphic: Changes in a plane’s Morphic level tend to be rather subtle; use the sample effects in the Morphic trait description as guidelines for roleplaying. There are no physical changes until the trait goes below two or above seventeen.

For an amazingly defensible plane, combine Highly Morphic with the Limited Morphic (the party who created the plane only) quirk.

Life: Obviously, increasing or decreasing the Life trait affects the sort of life that the plane can support. When the Life trait is being increased, the planecrafter can choose which sort of life will primarily benefit from this increase (use the ranger’s favoured enemy list as a set of life categories, ignoring the categories of construct and undead). The planecrafter can even choose what species he

would like to see arise (see the Intelligent Life and Magical Life quirks). Evolution takes time, even when magically assisted. Assume that at Life 10, it takes 5,000 years for a new form of life to arise and halve it for every point of Life above 10 (so at Life 20, a new form of life appears in about five years). The Games Master should create the statistics for the new life-form, and there is no reason to assume that it is well-disposed towards the planecrafter (although careful engineering and displays of magical might can convince the new inhabitants of your plane to worship you as a god).

Those interested in making hideous mockeries of life on a smaller scale should peruse *Encyclopaedia Arcane: Crossbreeding*.

Weather: The planecrafter may choose the tendencies of the weather, but permanent weather patterns need the Weather Feature quirk.

Water: As described above, an increase in the Water trait can create bodies of water in the plane. A one-point increase creates a pond or lake; two points creates a river or large lake, four creates a sea, and five or more creates an ocean.

Fire: Below Water/Fire +3, fire needs fuel to burn, and adding more fire just sets objects alight normally. At or above this level, open firestorms and eternal walls of fire become common, so adding fire allows the planecrafter to create features just like adding water.

Earth: Adding earth creates fertile fields (+1), rolling hills or rocky outcrops (+2), vast mountain ranges (+4) or a cavernous underworld (+5).

Air: Adding air increases windspeeds, but also hastens erosion. Mountains and canyons become more common.



JS
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PLANE CRAFTING

Negative: Adding negative energy to a plane deepens the shadows and awakens slumbering undead. In rare cases, it can be infused into specific places, creating ghost towns or haunted castles. It can also be used to create veins of corrupted metal or stone.

Positive: Positive energy additions can be used to strengthen the folk of the plane; for one week after a lesser infusion, one month after a standard infusion, and for one year after a greater infusion, everyone on the plane has +1 hit points per Hit Dice.

Good: Infusions of good can tilt the alignment of the plane's denizens towards good. It can also be used to create holy water, hallowed temples, or even infused into metal or stone to provide raw materials for *holy* weapons.

Evil: See *Good*, but reverse it.

Law: See *Good*, but shifts alignment one step closer to lawful.

Chaos: See *Good*, but shifts alignment one step closer to Chaotic.

Arcane: Rushes of arcane energy can spark the creation of new sorcerers. Furthermore, by concentrating arcane energy in never-before-seen patterns, it is possible to develop new spells and even schools of magic that are possible only on that plane.

Divine: Divine energy channelled into a plane may cause temples and holy sites such as healing springs to form spontaneously.

Green: Adding the Green to a plane may cause creatures to spontaneously *awaken*. By targeting the infusion, a character can attempt to *awaken* a specific creature or object.

Proximity: Moving a plane can create a sensation of movement for creatures on the plane, as if they are falling while standing upright. The movement can be detected by observing the skies of the plane, as the stars shift to reflect the new horoscopes of the plane's location. Astral observers can also see the plane 'move'.

Accessibility: Adjusting the accessibility of a plane is often termed 'locking' the plane.



DESIGNER'S NOTES

For a hobby that prides itself on its imagination, fantasy gaming can be incredibly repetitive. The same stock elements are trotted out again and again, the same dungeon crawls and quasi-medieval worlds filled with improbable monsters and predictable quests. Sometimes, a campaign gets it right and taps into the mythic, but all too often it is just the same old tropes.

When did 'fantasy' become so dull?

Planar games can at least make a slightly better claim to originality. Admittedly, they tend to be a fusion of the good bits of Moorcock, a little (never enough!) Dunsany and a grab bag of slightly tarnished classic mythology, but they do at least shake things up a little.

The single best piece of advice these notes can give you is to go nuts. Come up with the strangest, grandest ideas you can muster and develop them until they scare you. Do not always use those dull stock elements.

* * *

After the above comments about the need for innovation and originality I am rather embarrassed to admit that most of the planes here were designed to fit into the majority of those campaigns, rather than be groundbreakingly original. I encourage you to dropkick my planes off a cliff, then climb down and rebuild the wreckage into something that reflects your campaign. Grab locations from one plane, hazards from another and rearrange them all into a cosmology that spurs new adventures.

The planecrafting rules are my favourite part of the book, and fulfil an long-term goal of mine – allowing players get hold of their very own plane. It was a fortunate accident that these rules also encompassed many of the creation myths. I am rather proud of being able to have Odin kill Ymir or Marduk kill the original Tiamat within the confines of the rules.

The planar organisations are there partly to give continuity to a game, partly as an excuse to have a feat that began 'You have sold your soul' and partly to have some prestige classes that were actually tied to a group. That is one of my favourite ideas, and one that goes underused.

The three nexus planes were a solution to the problem of episodic planar games not having a place to call home. The Orrery has been running around inside my head for a while, Dunmorgause is a nod to *Gormenghast* and *Amber*, and I will leave you to work out where the Wandering Inn comes from on your own.

Further nods must go to Jorge Luis Borges, Italo Calvino and I would urge any Games Master to read *Invisible Cities* especially. Alan Moore and Neil Gaiman (*Promethea* and *Sandman* respectively), Douglas Adams as *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* was an unconscious influence on half this book (and a conscious influence on the rest) and to R. Sean Borgstrom's *Nobilis*. I will also acknowledge a massive debt to Sepulchra and his story hour on the ENWorld website (go read it, as it is one of the best inspirations and resources for a Games Master ever).

This book blossomed out of control in the writing – my original outline called for many more planes to be written, but I found that the level of detail needed for a plane to be playable in my mind took far more space than the outline allocated. Therefore, there were a lot of painful cuts and whole worlds have tumbled away into the ether.

I suppose that is inevitable. The charm of the planes is that there are always new vistas to explore and new worlds to conquer. It is just that you will be the one who gets to write them, not me.

Good luck with that.

Gar

RANDOM PLANE TABLE

d100	Plane
	<i>Material Plane</i>
01-02	Familiar Location
03-04	Unfamiliar Location
05-06	Distant Location (far side of world, other planet, etc.)
	<i>Ethereal Plane</i>
07	Border Ethereal of Material Plane
08	Border Ethereal of Elemental Plane (Roll 1d4, 1=Earth, 2=Air, 3=Fire, 4=Water)
09	Border Ethereal of Energy Plane (Roll 1d4, 1-2=Positive, 3-4 Negative)
10	Deep Ethereal
11-12	<i>Shadow Plane</i>
	<i>Dream Plane</i>
13	Sea of Dream
14	Individual Dream
15-20	<i>Astral Plane</i>
	<i>Plane of Earth</i>
21-22	Cave
23-24	Solid Rock
	<i>Plane of Air</i>
25-26	Empty Sky
27-28	Storm, Gas Pocket, Elemental Pocket or other notable location
	<i>Plane of Fire</i>
29	Open Fire
30	Landscape of Fire
31	Ash Wastes
32	Gradations of Fire
	<i>Plane of Water</i>
33-34	Open Sea
35-36	Coral Island, Elemental Pocket or other notable location
	<i>Positive Energy Plane</i>
37-38	Outer Corona
39-40	Inner Light

	<i>Negative Energy Plane</i>
41-42	Borders of Void
43-44	Uttermost Abyss
45-49	<i>Vault of Stars</i>
	<i>Tarassein</i>
50	Shaped Zone
51	Decaying Zone
52	Raw Chaos
53	Pocket Plane
54-59	<i>Infernum</i>
	<i>Chasm</i>
60-62	Open Chasm
63-65	Side Wall
	<i>Halls of Order</i>
66	Machine Realm
67	Model City
68	Library of All-That-Is
69	Circle of Judgement
70	Dominions of Order
71	Eutaxy
	<i>The Afterworld</i>
72-73	Estate
74-75	Unclaimed Dead
76-77	Gulf of Azroi
	<i>The Firmament</i>
78	River of Tears
79	Bright City
80	Halls of Heaven
81	Palaces of the Gods
82	Aurora Realm
	<i>The Questing Grounds</i>
83-85	Generic Storyland
86-88	Saga
89-95	<i>Astral Plane</i>
96-00	Random Demiplane or Pocket Plane of Games Master's Choice

Italics refer to specific planes.

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