LEGENDS & LAIRS

d20 system

PORTALS & PLANES

A RESOURCE FOR PLANE TRAVEL AND ALTERNATE WORLDS

CREDITS

MANAGING DEVELOPER

Greg Benage

WRITING

Mike Mearls

INTERIOR ILLUSTRATIONS

Steven Bagatzky, Ed Cox, William Eaken, Cos Koniotis, Anneth Lagamo, Brad McDevitt, Hian Rodriguez, Scott Schomburg, Mattias Snygg

GRAPHIC & COVER DESIGN

Brian Schomburg

EDITING

Greg Benage, Rob Vaughn

ART DIRECTION

Greg Benage

LAYOUT

Greg Benage

PUBLISHER

Christian T. Petersen

PRINTING

Bang Printing

Contents

WELCOME

Fantasy Flight Games is pleased to present *Portals & Planes*, the latest volume in our Legends & Lairs line of sourcebooks for the d20 System. *Portals & Planes* gives players and DMs everything they need to create and play exciting plane-traveling and world-hopping adventures and campaigns.

Chapter 1 presents new rules for player characters, including new prestige classes, feats, magic items, and spells uniquely suited to planar environments and distant worlds. The chapter also provides tactics and advice for playing each of the core classes in planar adventures.

Chapter 2 describes the different types of planar portals and how to design and integrate them into your campaign. This chapter also allows you to determine the traits of individual portals, from basic characteristics like size and operation to special effects like time travel and transformation.

Chapter 3 gives the DM everything he needs to construct alternate worlds and new planes of existence. The chapter includes a comprehensive system for identifying and defining environmental hazards and planar traits. The chapter concludes with a number of sample worlds, complete with detailed statistics blocks.

Chapter 4 presents comprehensive information on designing and running planar threats, creatures, races, and civilizations. It includes rules on adapting existing creatures to the planes and on varying their descriptions to present new and exciting encounters to the players. Finally, this chapter presents a host of new creatures and monsters appropriate to a plane-traveling fantasy campaign, from automatons to vortex howlers.

THE OPEN GAME LICENSE

All game rules and statistics derived from the d20 System Reference Document are designated as Open Game Content. The introductions to individual chapters and sections detail specifically the Open Game Content found within them. All other text is designated as closed content.

All illustrations, pictures, and diagrams in this book are Product Identity and the property of Fantasy Flight Publishing, Inc., © 2003.

The Open Game License is printed in its entirety at the end of this book. For further information, please visit the Open Gaming Foundation website at www.opengamingfoundation.org.

CHAPTER ONE
PLANAR ADVENTURING

The planes have long held a special place in fantasy adventuring. Many experienced gamers have a story about the time their characters journeyed to hell and fought a legion of demons and devils, or of an epic struggle to sneak into a god's palace and steal a mighty artifact.

Adventuring on the planes requires a set of skills distinct from the habits and tactics you may have developed to handle dungeons, wilderness, and urban scenarios. Usually, the environment and the unknown quantities within it are the greatest hurdles you face. A dungeon usually has a convenient escape route, a city offers friendly havens for rest and recovery, and the wilderness includes terrain that you may be familiar with. An alien plane could feature none of these. In essence, you have to start your adventuring career from scratch. The monsters are all new, the NPCs may be friends or foes, and the world around you is a blank map waiting for you to explore it.

This chapter focuses on providing you the advice and tools you need to succeed in traveling the planes. It starts with an overview of tactics and ideas that can help you deal with planar adventures. It also includes new races, prestige classes, feats, and spells you can use to develop characters with a unique, otherworldly

flavor. Remember that these same tools help your DM build unique villains, so be sure to pay attention to them.

Above all else, keep your mind open and consider all possibilities. The planes are limitless vistas of adventure, realms that your DM can forge into memorable worlds that you'll be recounting for years to come.

CHARACTER CLASSES

Planar adventures require versatility from adventurers. Given that a plane could pose a limitless array of hazards, characters that can perform well in a variety of circumstances have the best chance of success. On the other hand, specialists risk severe setbacks if a plane's features diminish their primary skills. A fire wizard trapped in a plane of endless ice must rely on his backup spells to survive. Each of the core classes receives a brief overview of its strengths, weaknesses, and priorities for planar adventures. Some, but not all, receive commentary on specific skill, feat, and spell choices. If any of these sections are miss-

5

ing, assume that a class has no specific feats or skills that improve its abilities in planar adventures.

The names and game rules describing the character classes, and all rules-related text derived from the d20 SRD, are designated as **Open Game Content**.

BARBARIAN

This class's access to useful skills such as Survival, Climb, and Jump make it a good choice for journeying to the planes. While your AC and combat abilities (when you're not raging) match up poorly compared to a fighter, your broad skill selection and increased number of ranks allow you to excel in dangerous environments. One of the keys to a barbarian's success lies in remembering when to rage. The bonuses to your Strength and Constitution scores are equally useful in non-combat situations. If you need to leap over a wide pit, the +2 bonus to your Jump check can make the difference between death and an easy landing.

SKILLS

Make the most of your skill points and go for a broad selection of talents. Climb, Jump, and Swim can mean the difference between success and failure in a planar adventure, especially since you cannot normally predict the sort of terrain you must handle. Survival is critical if no one else in the party has access to it, since you might face long periods without ready stores of food and water. Best of all, you can use it to ensure that you can find your way back to the portal you used to enter an alien world. Your illiteracy can be a major hurdle, since it makes communicating with strange creatures even more difficult than normal. Be sure to eliminate it as soon as possible.

FEATS

Since your primary role is as a combatant, look to feats that allow you to improve your chances in a fight. Dodge and the related feats allow you to take advantage of your increased speed while reducing the AC penalty due to rage. If the party lacks a ranger or druid, you might have to take Track and similar feats to help the party survive alien terrain. While less than an ideal situation, since you really should focus on combat, it can help cover the party's weaknesses in a pinch.

BARD

While it may seem like an odd statement, the bard shines like no other class during planar adventures. Your bardic knowledge ability, reliance on Charisma for magic, and access to Bluff and Diplomacy as class skills make you the perfect emissary. When the party meets an intelligent creature, it is your job to find out its intentions and find a diplomatic solution if one is possible. At higher levels, bardic knowledge can fill in many of the information gaps the party may face in strange realms. Make liberal use of that ability to figure out the basic conditions and arrangement of a world.

SKILLS

While Bluff and Diplomacy are easy choices, Sense Motive and Gather Information are critical to navigating the planes. When dealing with intelligent planar creatures, your lack of knowledge regarding their plans and intentions can be a major drawback. Both of these skills counter this limitation by allowing you to see through deception and track down the information you need to make an informed decision. There is nothing more embarrassing than arriving on a plane and inadvertently working with a cruel tyrant. In addition, spend some of your skill points on a variety of languages, particularly Draconic and others that might be commonly used across the worlds.

CLERIC

The cleric fills several roles in a planar adventure. Obviously, your spells heal the party and keep it going in the face of powerful monsters. Many of your spells target creatures with specific alignments, such as *chaos hammer* or *protection from evil*. In many cases, planes feature a preponderance of creatures with similar alignments, allowing you to make full use of such spells without fear of wasting them on inappropriate targets. In addition, you may have a good Charisma score to help bolster your turn attempts. Combined with Diplomacy as a class skill, you can serve as the party's spokesman when dealing with the intelligent creatures you meet. However, you may run into trouble if your god has a different alignment from or is mistrusted by the creatures you meet.

Skills

Knowledge (religion) is even more important than normal on the planes, as you can use it to identify sects that you might otherwise know nothing about. The standard religions on your character's world might all be familiar to you, but the iconography and practices you encounter might be utterly unrecognizable. As mentioned above, Diplomacy is a key skill for dealing with the strange creatures you meet.

Domains

Travel is, unsurprisingly, the best domain you can take if you plan to spend a lot of time moving from one plane to another. Its granted power can help overcome some of the environmental obstacles you meet, while the spells it offers give you many convenient escape routes from dangerous worlds. The domains centered on alignment—good, evil, chaos, and law—all give you access to spells that can defeat creatures of the opposite ethos. If you plan on traveling the planes to track down and defeat the enemies of your faith, these domains are all good choices.

Druid

The concept of a nature priest traveling the planes may seem odd, but the druid is one of the more effective characters in planar adventures. Your ability to identify plants and animals is an invaluable asset when visiting alien worlds, allowing you and your companions to steer clear of dangerous poisons and potentially deadly predators. However, many of your spells focus on animals and plants, two categories of creatures that might not be common foes, as opposed to outsiders. The key to success in planar adventures lies in your ability to maximize your spells' utility and make the most of your class skills.

Skills

Diplomacy and Survival combine to give you the two most important skills in handling planar adventures. The first allows you to interact with the many strange animals and civilizations you may encounter, while the second is important to finding food and avoiding nasty obstacles while traveling across strange worlds.

SPELLS

The primary obstacle you face is that your spell lists are tuned for use in wilderness areas such as normal forests, deserts, and similar environments. The planes promise much more exotic locales, ones that may leave your spells useless. When engaging in planar adventures, focus on magic that has the most utility across a wide range of circumstances. *Cure* spells and similar ones such as *remove disease* sustain the party and allow you to act as a secondary or primary healer. *Summon nature's ally* is a reliable fallback plan, as it gives you a useful friend regardless of the planes you explore. Until you have had a chance to scout a plane, try to avoid spells such as *transmute rock to mud* that rely on specific environments. Later, once you know a plane's traits, you can go back to using them.

FIGHTER

To a fighter, a planar adventure is just like any other excursion. Whether you are in the midst of a city, deep within a dungeon, or on a far-flung world, your job is to protect the other characters and beat down the monsters. In some ways, your abilities are the most robust between the planes. As long as you have your weapons and armor, you can make use of your feats to overcome your foes. However, on some planes you might find yourself denied these resources. Heavy armor is impractical in realms with scorching weather or those flooded with water. Try to carry a spare suit of armor—perhaps one that is lighter than your normal suit—as a backup plan. Since outsiders are the most common planar enemies, ready yourself to deal with a variety of damage reduction types. Carry a silvered weapon and other exotic armaments just in case you meet a creature resistant to your primary weapon.

Keep in mind that attacks can come from a variety of directions. Watch above and below for attackers, and be ready to step in and handle any unexpected surprises. When facing a strange creature for the first time, concentrate on defense until you know how to handle its offensive abilities. If you charge into combat, you might find yourself facing a monster with deadly melee special attacks such as a paralytic touch. Fight with caution and strike only when you have a good idea of what you are going up against.

SKILLS

You have few skills to choose from, but the ones you have are useful in a wide range of situations. Climb, Jump, and Swim help you avoid environmental obstacles. If you have a chance, remove your armor before attempting any physical stunts. In these cases, a spare suit of studded leather can help you navigate a dangerous area without crippling your defensive abilities.

MONK

The monk is the ultimate survivalist. Your great saving throws, improved speed, and many skills and abilities that counter your enemies' attacks combine to allow you to handle a wide variety of threats. While your offensive prowess may pale compared to a barbarian or fighter, defensively you are second to none. Best of all, your ability to fight without weapons and armor means that you need never worry about losing your equipment. You are equally adept at fighting in a blazing desert as on an earthen world-island floating through the sky in a massive storm. Your abilities may require you to take more risks than other characters, but you have the capacity to endure them. You should scout out creatures and range ahead of the party to uncover threats before they can overcome more vulnerable members of the party.

SKILLS

Focus on skills that emphasize your primary role in the party. If the group includes a rogue, stay away from Hide and Move Silently and focus on skills useful in combat, such as Tumble. On the other hand, if you must serve as a scout, Hide is a perfect skill. Of all the classes aside from wizard, a high Intelligence serves you the best. You have a good selection of useful skills and a decent number of skill ranks, but the more skills you can pick up the better. Swim, Balance, Climb, and Escape Artist help you survive planar environments. Diplomacy allows you to serve as a diplomat, especially if no one else in the party has a talent for social situations.

PALADIN

As a heroic champion of good, the paladin is every villain's worst nightmare. Your talents and abilities are well suited to taking down evil outsiders, and your excellent saves allow you to shrug off many planar threats and magical attacks. With Diplomacy as a class skill and Charisma a key attribute for many of your abilities, you are probably the best candidate for speaking with other creatures and diffusing tense social situations. The one challenge you face is that at times your position could prove to be a drawback. You might need to bargain with evil creatures, especially on worlds where every creature you meet is neutral at best. Try not to rely too much on your *detect evil* ability. Instead of using it as an excuse to attack a creature, view it as one piece of information useful in determining a creature's motives and plans.

SKILLS

Diplomacy is the obvious choice here. If your Charisma is high enough, consider investing cross-class ranks in Bluff and Intimidate for those times when reasonable discourse proves fruitless. Sense Motive is another good cross-class skill, especially if you expect to serve as the party's main contact. Try to master a wide range of languages, as your social skills mean little if someone must translate for you.

RANGER

As a master of the wilderness, the ranger falls into the same category as the druid. You have skills that prove very useful in navigating alien territory, but your spells might not work as well. On the other hand, your archery and melee combat skills work just as well on an alien world as in the forest's depths. For these reasons, you are perhaps the character best suited for leading the party safely through an alien environment. Scout ahead to discover dangers before they can strike your friends, support the more heavily armored fighters and paladins, and use your special abilities as often as possible.

SKILLS

As a ranger, you should keep your Survival skill at its maximum ranks. That skill is important enough that, unless there is a druid or barbarian in the party, you should be the best person in the party at it. Hide and Move Silently allow you to scout the party's way without drawing attention to yourself, while Listen and Spot are critical to uncovering threats before they gain surprise. Those five skills represent your core abilities. If you

9

must drop one of them, look at losing Hide or Move Silently.

ROGUE

The rogue's adaptability and broad selection of skills make him a critical component of any expedition to the planes. Your first priority is to look at your skills and determine which ones are important to your character. Sneaking is usually the rogue's forte, but if you have a ranger in your party you can skimp on those skills in favor of Sense Motive, Bluff, and other skills useful in social interactions. With your unparalleled flexibility, it helps if you look at the other characters' abilities and pick your skills with them in mind. If your party is heavy on social operators, go for stealth skills. However, since you are the only character suited to dealing with traps, you should allocate ranks to Search, Disable Device, and Open Lock regardless of the other characters' choices. When the party finds a trap, it is your job to handle it whether you are in a dungeon or trapped on a distant plane.

FEATS

Sneak attack is one of your most important abilities, but during a planar adventure you might face long stretches of battles against creatures immune to it. While feats that improve your maneuverability, such as Spring Attack, are good choices, try to invest two feat selections in Point Blank Shot and Precise Shot. If you cannot sneak attack a creature, it is usually a bad idea to move into melee combat with it. Instead, hang back, let it attack the high-AC fighter and cleric, and rain arrows, sling bullets, or crossbow bolts on it.

SORCERER

While a sorcerer can bring a tremendous number of spells to the table, her limited range of known spells restricts her abilities. When playing a sorcerer, you need to balance your spells' utility against the few slots you have available. Planar adventures exacerbate this dilemma, as some of your spells may be rendered useless by a plane's traits or the nature of the monsters you face. Starting from an early level, it is a good idea to take a wide range of combat spells that deal different types of damage. *Lightning bolt, acid arrow, ice storm,* and *fireball* give you the ability to direct most of the common energy types against your enemies. Nothing

is more frustrating than loading up on spells of a specific type only to find them useless against a common opponent or unusable in a planar environment. Particular when it comes to combat spells, look to keep a wide spread of possibilities available.

With your many spell slots, you can afford to sometimes let a spell fizzle due to spell resistance. Since you receive higher-level spells later than a wizard, you need to compensate for your lower-on-average save DCs. Feats such as Spell Focus are invaluable to you, since about half the time a wizard of the same level has access to higher-level spells. That one point of save DC can make a tremendous difference. For similar reasons, spells and magic items that boost your Charisma make good investments, especially if you use them shortly before an important encounter.

Invest in wands and scrolls to help cover any critical spell areas. You may find it easiest to load up on combat spells and general utility spells such as *shield* and *teleport*, saving more obscure spells such as *knock* for a wand or other magic item. As a rule of thumb, if you cannot use a spell more than two or three times during the course of the average adventure, it is probably best set aside for a wand or scroll.

WIZARD

The wizard's strength lies in his selection of spells, allowing him to prepare the perfect incantation for almost any situation. Unfortunately, you gain this flexibility at a cost of raw power. A sorcerer of the same level has more spells, though you usually have higher-level spells to compensate. Your ace in the hole is your spellbook. If you buy or find a good selection of scrolls, you always have the spell you need at hand. This situation makes picking the spells to prepare each day an important decision. Usually, you can get around this by using your bonus feats and Scribe Scroll to produce magical items you can use. If you have *knock* in your spellbook, you can produce a wand with it for a relatively small investment of time and money. Best of all, you still have the feats you normally gain to invest in other areas.

Since you have fewer but more powerful spells than a sorcerer, Spell Penetration is perhaps the most worthwhile feat you can take for a planar

adventure. You do not hit as often as other casters, but your spells pack a stronger wallop. This means that when you do target a creature, you need to stack the odds in your favor to get through its spell resistance. Best of all, Spell Penetration (unlike Spell Focus) works on all of your spells. While it may not be the best choice at 1st level, since you rarely encounter spell-resistant creatures early in a campaign, around 6th level it becomes an optimal feat selection.

Scrolls are your best friend, and you should try to keep one handy for each of the spells in your books. Since you have Scribe Scroll and they are relatively cheap to make, they help take maximum advantage of your free item creation feats and the breadth of spells at your disposal. Even if you forget to prepare an important spell, it is always as close as your nearest scroll case.

Planar Races

The dwarves of Khaerghale live on hunks of rocks that sweep through an eternal vortex. They erect gigantic nets to catch iron, dirt, and rock that floats in the air, using these raw materials to build their small cities. To them, living underground is an utterly alien concept. Instead, they are content to tend their fields and watch the skies from the surface of their flying islands. Meanwhile, the blue elves of Lettherea dwell among the mushroom forests of a land of eternal dusk. They dig into the ground, finding shelter from the great flocks of wyverns that periodically sweep over the land. These elves find comfort in subterranean environments, while bright light blinds them.

As you can see, humanoid races can develop in radically different directions across the planes. The standard rules for elf, dwarf, or gnome characters represent the typical members of those races. However, given the different conditions that exist across the planes, these folk can develop in an infinite number of ways.

This section presents new rules to produce player character races. By selecting a suite of racial traits, you can modify the existing racial PC options to create new spins on old concepts. From halflings who live in an endless rainforest to gnomes who travel through space on the backs of colossal whales, these rules allow you

to tinker with the core races and give them an interesting new slant.

Each race has a limited number of trait choices it may make to fill out its abilities. The abilities, listed later in this section, are worth various numbers of choices. You cannot spend more than your total allocation of choices based on your character's starting race.

Each of the core races has a few abilities determined by their biology rather than society. These abilities cannot be changed. Regardless of their plane of origin, all dwarves are tougher to trip and elves have sharp eyes and ears. Each core race lists the abilities that you may remove from them. You gain the points listed after an ability if you remove it. You may spend these points on the new abilities listed below.

As a rule of thumb, it is best to leave creating new races to the DM. Only he can ensure that any new planar races fit into his concept of the campaign world and remain true to the game's vision.

The names and game rules describing the character races, and all rules-related text derived from the d20 SRD, are designated as **Open Game Content**.

Dwarves

This stout race is heavily molded by its culture. Their hatred towards goblinoids, training in fighting giants, and love of mining and smithing are all driven by tradition. Planar dwarves may drop the following abilities in return for the listed number of picks.

- Stonecunning (1 point)
- +1 racial attack bonus against orcs and goblinoids (1 point)
- +4 dodge bonus to AC against giants (1 point)
- +2 racial bonus to Appraise checks and Craft checks (1 point)

Elves

As a race that leans towards the chaotic alignments, elves have little in the way of racial culture. Of all the good races, they are the most likely to remain relatively similar between worlds.

- Proficiency with either longsword or

rapier, proficiency with short and long bows and composite versions of both (2 points)

GNOMES

Due to their innate talent for some forms of magic, gnome culture tends to drift little between the planes. A gnome kingdom is likely to develop much the same regardless of its environment. Like elves, they have few racial traits tied to a specific culture.

- +1 racial bonus to attacks against kobolds and goblinoids (1 point)
- +4 dodge bonus to AC against giants (1 point)

HALF-ELVES AND HALF-ORCS

As the offspring of humans, these folk tend to find themselves outside of their nominally home culture. As such, they have no additional picks to spend on racial traits. However, unlike the other races they may change their preferred class due to a planar origin without spending points on new abilities. Half-elves may forgo their ability to use any class as a favored one in return for one pick's worth of abilities.

HALFLINGS

Like elves, halfings have little in the way of embedded culture. They tend to adapt to their surroundings, seeking out whatever talents and abilities suit them best. As such, most of their innate abilities are driven by biology rather than culture.

- +1 racial bonus with thrown weapons (1 point)

HUMANS

Unlike the other races, humans rarely exhibit any specific abilities and tendencies based on cultural factors. Their flexibility is what makes them capable of thriving in a wide range of environments. Still, on some worlds humans develop distinctive cultures that cause them to develop a similar set of abilities and skills.

- Bonus feat (2 points)
- Bonus skill ranks (3 points)

All Races

Any race may exchange a +2 bonus to an ability score for four points worth of planar racial traits. In some cases, environmental conditions can cause a race to develop slightly different physical traits.

After deciding which traits you want to remove from a race, count up the total number of points you have to spend on planar traits. Select abilities from the list below until you have expended all of your points. You cannot exceed your total point budget, but you do not have to spend them all. Unless otherwise noted, you may only choose a benefit once. There are limits on your selections in the standard rules, but if you really want to give stonecunning to a human race you can use the cost listed above under the dwarf entry.

Arcane Mastery: Long term exposure to arcane energy, a rich tradition of magical study, or perhaps a fluke of genetics has granted your race innate magical abilities. You may cast any three 0-level sorcerer/wizard spells once per day as a 1st-level caster. You suffer spell failure for wearing armor or carrying a shield when you use this ability (2 picks).

Attack Bonus: Long years of struggle against a particular race or creature type has created an intense martial tradition in this planar race. Pick any four specific creatures, such as mariliths, beholders, or orcs. You gain a +1 racial bonus to attacks against these creatures (1 pick).

Bonus Feat: Your culture places an emphasis on a specific talent or ability. From a young age, you were instructed in it or expected to develop it. You may select any feat, but it cannot have any prerequisites, including other feats (1 pick).

Daunting Appearance: While biologically your people are identical to the standard PC races, they have developed a fearsome appearance. They may commonly use tattoos and piercings, or they may have developed fiery eyes, sharp fangs, or some other fearsome traits. You gain a +4 racial bonus to all Intimidate checks (1 pick).

Defense Bonus: Your race has long faced attacks and raids by a specific type of creature. You may choose one creature type except for humanoids or monstrous humanoids. For these groups, you must pick four specific creature types. Against your chosen enemies, you gain a +4 dodge bonus to AC (1 pick).

Divine Blessing: The gods favor your people. An entire pantheon may grant them blessings, or perhaps a single deity enjoys their worship and does its best to look out for them. Choose any two 0-level cleric spells. You may cast them each once per day as a 1st-level caster. As divine spells, they do not suffer a chance of failure due to the armor you wear or the shield you carry (2 picks).

Energy Resistance: Subjected to harsh planar environments, your race has developed the ability to shrug off minor damage caused by various energy sources. You gain resistance 2 against an energy type of your choice: acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic (1 pick).

Elemental Affinity: The strength of a specific element on your home plane has changed members of your race. Elemental effects, such as a brief flare of flame, a sudden gust of wind, or a layer of moisture, manifest around you at random intervals. You can control this energy at times, creating different effects depending on your element.

Air: You summon the air that swirls about you, directing it in a blast towards an opponent. Once per encounter, you can use the aid another combat action as a ranged attack with a maximum range of 30 ft. Alternatively, you can attempt to move an object as if you had a Strength of 5 up to a range of 30 ft. (2 picks).

Earth: You gain a +2 bonus to Strength checks so long as a part of your body touches the ground. For a moment, your body gains a stony appearance as you use this ability (1 pick).

Fire: Flames roll up and down your arms, allowing you to deal 1 point of fire damage in addition to any normal damage you deal with a weapon or unarmed attack in melee combat (4 picks).

Water: Your skin is continually coated with a light dew. You gain a +2 bonus on all saving throws against fire attacks and need only drink a quarter of the normal amount of water necessary for your race (1 pick).

Martial Training: Warlike, aggressive, or perhaps simply intrigued by armed combat, your culture trains all its members in a few select weapons. Perhaps your people are continually under attack, or they could have a racial tradition of conquest and warfare. You gain proficiency with any two martial weapons of your choice or familiarity with one exotic weapon. Both of these weapons must have the same damage type (slashing, bludgeon, piercing) and both must be ranged or melee arms. You may take this ability more than once (1 pick).

Preferred Class: Your native culture emphasizes a different set of skills than others of your race. You may change your preferred class to one of your choice. This option does not cost a pick, but you must spend at least one pick on abilities in order to change your preferred class. This selection represents your planar origin and the unique culture you hail from. Half-elves and half-orcs ignore this restriction. Half-elves gain one pick of abilities for choosing a preferred class, while half-orcs may change it without spending picks.

Skill Affinity: Almost every member of your race or culture has at least a passing familiarity with a specific talent. You are exposed to it from a young age, or your people place a tremendous value on mastering it. You gain a +3 racial bonus to any two Craft skills or a +3 racial bonus to any one other skill (1 point).

After picking a planar race's traits, consider how it differs from its standard kin in terms of appearance, cultural traditions, and attitudes. A race with fire resistance 2 might have dark skin and black hair. Whenever you shake hands with a creature from a race with electricity resistance 2, you might feel a slight spark of static electricity. Creating an exotic appearance is part of the fun of sculpting a PC race to your taste. Most importantly, these changes should not occur without your DM's supervision. This system is not carte blanche to edit the standard character races. It is a tool that you and your DM can use to create unique characters with a planar origin.

You can have a lot of fun by transferring stereotypes from one race to another. The elves of a subterranean world might be humorless miners and craftsmen, while the dwarves frolic among mushroom forests and while away their days with wine and song.

PRESTIGE CLASSES

A myriad of magical and martial traditions develop across the planes. On every world with intelligent life, cultures create new ways of approaching old areas of study based on their unique outlook, environment, and history. The prestige classes here all deal with the planes in some way, making them likely to show up in any world that has mastered the magical talents needed to journey through the cosmos. Each class comes with a campaign seed to help inspire your imagination and give you ideas on how a class could fit into your game world.

The names and game rules describing the prestige classes, and all rules-related text derived from the d20 SRD, are designated as **Open Game Content**.

INVESTIGATOR OF HIDDEN SECRETS

To the average commoner, the planes are a place of myths, legends, and tales. While vile monsters are all too real to them, the idea of infinite worlds that exist outside of time and space is too much for them to take seriously. They lump such concepts in with every other strange, arcane mystery practiced by wizards and sorcerers.

The investigator of hidden secrets wants to keep things that way. He works to ensure that demons, devils, and those who would summon them into the world are kept in check. A single ambitious apprentice unleashes a terrible beast when he filches his master's scroll of *lesser planar binding*. A band of cultists works in secret to call forth a horde of demons to ravage the land and prepare for their tyrannical rule.

These threats remain forever on the verge of erupting across the land. The investigator seeks to uncover and destroy them before they can come to pass. Working with the hierarchy of the church, he uses a combination of divine magic and stealth to slip into society's shadowy recesses to track down and defeat those who would consort with evil outsiders.

In many ways, the investigator serves as an inquisitor. He captures heretics, questions them to learn of the extent of their activities, and turns them over to the religious hierarchy for trial. In some cases, he acts as judge, jury, and executioner, carrying out sentences based on the evidence he has seen firsthand. Investigators are usually treated with respect and deference, as at times they have been known to overstep their power and lead fanatical purges of the church hierarchy in pursuit of phantom enemies. Such pitfalls commonly plague lawful neutral faiths, as they place a premium on obedience and rigidity rather than justice.

Campaign Seed: In a campaign that features plenty of travel between the planes, the investigator is likely to become an important fixture in any large church's structure. With demons, devils, and worse traveling through gates, the commoners need someone to defend them from hidden threats. The Seekers' Society poses as a union of sages, researchers, and explorers who meet to exchange information on their travels and studies. In truth, the group is a front for a group of clerics, paladins, and other heroes from a broad range of faiths. They work together to coordinate their actions, dispatching spies across the planes to monitor demonic incursions and keeping informants in the world's major cities to report any weird occurrences. A PC could begin his career as an informant for the group, working his way up to this prestige class as he proves himself. Otherwise, if the characters gain a reputation for opposing evil churches and monstrous outsiders, the Society might approach them for help.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To become an investigator of hidden secrets, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +3.
Sneak Attack: +2d6.
Knowledge (the planes): 4 ranks.

Sense Motive: 8 ranks.
Feat: Iron Will.
Special: The ability to turn undead and cast 2nd-level divine spells.

Class Skills

The investigator of hidden secret's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Decipher Script (Int), Disguise (Cha), Gather Information (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Listen (Wis), Open Lock (Dex), Scry (Int), Search (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 6 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the investigator of hidden secrets prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The investigator gains no additional proficiencies with weapons, armor, or shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, Swim, and Tumble.

Spellcasting: At every even numbered level in this class, the investigator gains a level of divine spellcasting ability in any class in which he has levels, such as druid or cleric. He gains access to higher level spells, can cast more spells per day, increases his spells known, and achieves a higher caster level. He does not gain any of the other benefits of gaining a level in the casting class, such as improved ability to turn undead or additional uses of the *wild shape* ability.

Sneak Attack: The investigator must sometimes take down an enemy with a single, decisive blow. Demonologists and others who delve into forbidden lore command
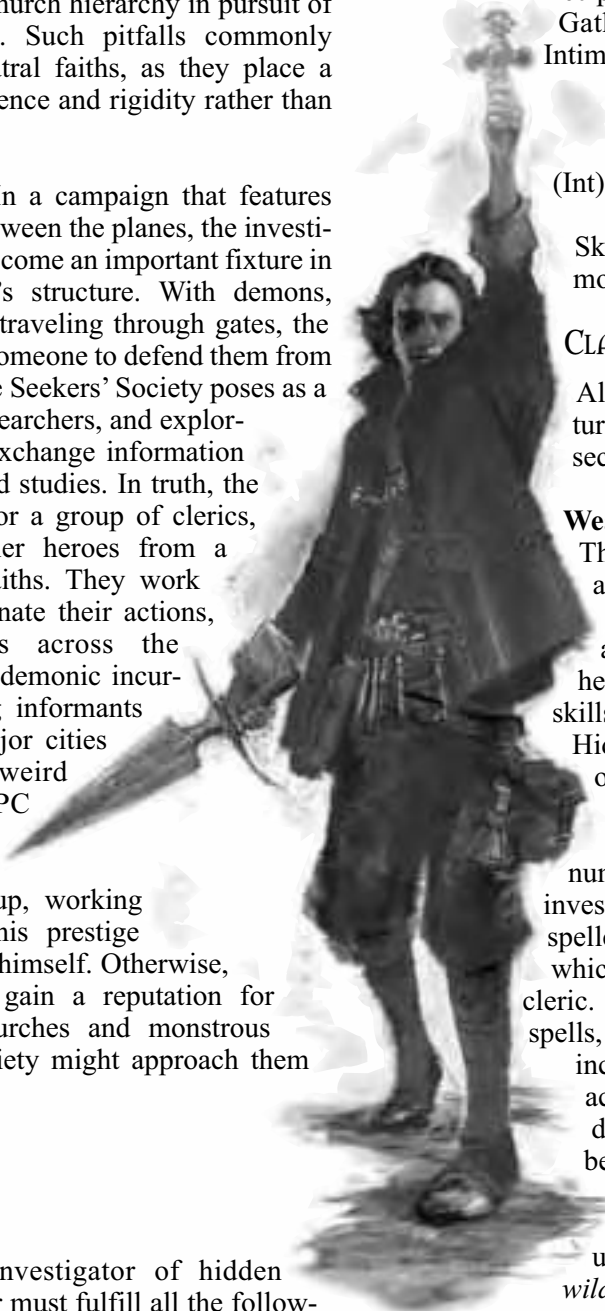
THE INVESTIGATOR OF HIDDEN SECRETS

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Eye of judgement, sneak attack +1d6	
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3		+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+1	+1	+3	Sense baneful energy	
4th	+3	+1	+1	+4		+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+1	+1	+4	Inquisitor, sneak attack +1d6	
6th	+4	+2	+2	+5		+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+2	+2	+5	Indomitable will	
8th	+6	+2	+2	+6		+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+3	+3	+6	Exorcism, sneak attack +1d6	
10th	+7	+3	+3	+7	Divine radiance	+1 level of existing class

mighty spells and powerful servants. Usually, if the investigator cannot overcome his foe in a few moments, he does not survive the encounter. An investigator stacks the bonus damage he gains from this ability with his existing sneak attack damage.

Eye of Judgment (Ex): The investigator develops the ability to quickly assess a person's attitudes, beliefs, and thoughts based solely on mannerisms, actions, word choice, and other subtle hints. After spending 10 minutes observing a person, the investigator may make a Sense Motive check opposed by his target's Bluff check. If he succeeds, he learns one of the following facts about the target: his alignment, where he grew up and trained in his current class, if he is under the effects of a mind-influencing effect, or whether he uses a false name and background. The investigator may try again each hour. This opposed check is made in secret, and on a failure the investigator's target may choose the exact nature of the information he learns. In essence, the target puts up a false front that fools him. In order to use this ability, the investigator must remain within 30 ft. of his target and he must be able to see and hear him.

Sense Baneful Energy (Su): The investigator's involvement in efforts to uncover and destroy evil magicians allows him to develop a sixth sense for fell energies. Anytime a spell with the evil descriptor is used within a mile of the investigator's current position, he may make a Wisdom check (DC 20) with a competence bonus equal to his level in this prestige class. If he succeeds, he determines the general direction of the spell's caster relative to his current position. The investigator gains

no other information about the spell. He does not learn who cast it, the distance to the site, the specific spell, or its effects. By the time he arrives at the place of its casting, his target may have long since fled.

Inquisitor (Ex): Under the investigator's fearsome glare, all but the staunchest agents of evil crumble and beg for mercy. If the investigator successfully uses his eye of judgment against a creature that has no avenue of escape from him, such as a bound prisoner, he may interrogate his subject to gain more information. Each time the investigator asks his target a question, he must make an Intimidate check opposed by his target's Will save. If he succeeds, his target must answer the question as truthfully as possible. Note that a creature given misinformation offers it as facts. If the investigator fails, the creature may either say nothing or lie. These checks should be made in secret so that the players do not know if a creature is telling the truth. A Sense Motive check opposed by a Bluff check can determine the truth of a creature's statements as normal. Once the investigator has failed three Intimidate checks during an interrogation, he must stop his efforts for one day before trying again. The creature's resolve has hardened and the investigator cannot break it.

Indomitable Will (Ex): The investigator develops a dogged sense of determination as he tracks down and uncovers the hidden forces of evil. The knowledge that a horrid threat could lurk under the most normal-seeming facade drives him to work without rest or pause. This dedication allows him to overcome a variety of physical and magical obstacles. The investiga-

tor gains a +4 morale bonus on all saving throws against mind-influencing effects. When he is reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, he may continue to take partial actions until he dies at –10 hit points. He cannot check to stabilize on any round he takes an action, and loses two hit points rather than one for that round.

Exorcism (Sp): Three times per day, the investigator may call upon his god's power, channel it with his fanaticism, and use it break the hold an evil creature has over an innocent. This ability takes the form of *dispel magic* cast as a cleric with the investigator's total character level. This ability may only be used to dispel an evil creature's mind-influencing spells and effects.

Divine Radiance (Su): At 10th level, the investigator's fanaticism and divine magical abilities combine to allow him to drive away the forces of evil by invoking his god's power. By spending one of his turn attempts, the investigator cloaks himself in a searing aura of divine energy. All evil creatures within a 60-ft. burst centered on the investigator must make Will saves opposed by his Intimidate check. Creatures that fail are immediately shaken. They suffer a –2 penalty on attacks, checks, and saves. Shaken creatures that have fewer Hit Dice than the investigator become frightened. In addition to the penalties for being shaken, they must make every effort to flee and fight only if cornered. Frightened creatures with less than half the investigator's Hit Dice become panicked. They suffer the penalties for being shaken, have a 50% chance to drop any items they hold, and may do nothing but flee the investigator. If cornered, they cower. Note that a creature proceeds from one step to the next. For example, a 1 HD orc first becomes shaken. If the investigator uses this ability and the orc fails its save, it becomes frightened. If he uses this ability again, the orc may become panicked.

Keeper of Forbidden Lore

The keeper of forbidden lore delves into black magic, trafficking with demons and devils in a desperate attempt to push the limits of his magic beyond mortal bounds. Above all else, the keeper is ambitious. This path to power invariably wears away the material and spiritual essence of those who follow it, but to the keeper this is a small price to pay. Evil outsiders are known to hoard arcane secrets in the same way that a miser gathers and protects the merest copper piece. Those with the willpower, fortitude, and arcane talent needed to call and bind such creatures stand to expand their powers far beyond the abilities of the typical mage.

Keepers of forbidden lore typically congregate in secretive cults that seek to evade the prying eye of inquisitors, particularly the investigators of forgotten secrets. Those crusaders are the keepers' foremost enemies, as they seek to curtail all contact between mortals and evil outsiders. Good churches, paladins, and even neutral arcane casters who seek to maintain the balance of the world all oppose the keeper's actions, as he grants demons a handy foothold in the mortal realm. Sadly, many young, ambitious sorcerers and wizards consider the keeper's drawbacks worth the expanded power that an alliance with the lower planes can produce.

Campaign Seed: The keeper is the ideal cultist, evil wizard, or power hungry spellcaster. He eagerly trades his physical and spiritual health for power. A secretive cult could arise in the land, forming cells in towns and cities dedicated to uncovering rare components needed to summon and bind demons. Like any good conspiracy, it is hidden behind multiple layers of secrecy. The upper ranks of the organization promise arcane power to ambitious young spellcasters, seducing them to the cause and creating secret agents in every magical academy and guild across the land.

Hit Die: d4.

Requirements

To become a keeper of forbidden lore, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Spellcasting: The ability to prepare and cast or spontaneously cast *lesser planar binding*. Characters that prepare spells must have it in their spellbooks, while those who spontaneously cast spells must include it as one of their known spells.
Knowledge (arcana): 12 ranks.
Feat: Acolyte of the Veil.
Alignment: Any non-good.

Class Skills

The keeper of forbidden lore's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft

(any) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (any) (Int), Profession (any) (Wis), Scry (Int), Sense Motive (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the keeper of forbidden lore prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The keeper of forbidden lore gains no additional proficiency with weapons, armor, or shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, Swim, and Tumble.

Spellcasting: For each level gained in this prestige class, the keeper of forbidden lore gains an additional level of arcane casting ability. He gains additional spell slots per day, spells known, and an increased caster level. If the keeper has levels in more than one arcane casting class, he must choose which class's casting ability to improve each time he gains a level in this prestige class. He gains none of the other benefits of gaining a level in his other classes, such as improved familiar abilities or bonus feats. He only improves his ability to cast spells.

Aura of Command: At 1st level, the keeper of forbidden lore learns how best to handle outsiders of all types. Whether he blusters and threatens his way past a demon or shows an archdevil the appropriate deference, he knows how to deal with planar creatures in social situations. He gains a +4 competence bonus on all Charisma and Charisma-based skill checks against non-good outsiders.

Boon of Service: The keeper of forbidden lore extracts powerful magic and lost arcane lore from the outsiders he calls and binds to his service. While this process slowly warps him and stains his soul, the arcane power he gains is unmatched by most mortal wizards. Each time the keeper gains this class ability, he may select a benefit from the abilities listed below. This ability represents the secrets and favors that he extracts from the outsiders that he binds to his service.

Arcane Secrets: The keeper's diabolic and demonic servants instruct him in new methods of magic, expanding the breadth of his learning. Casters that prepare spells may add six new spells to their books without paying the cost and time normally required for that process. Casters that spontaneously cast spells may add three spells to their list of known incantations. These spells may be of any level that the keeper can cast, but no more than two of them can come from the same level. The keeper may take this ability more than once, gaining additional spells known each time.

Arcane Might: The keeper gains access to magical power normally beyond the reach of mortal casters. He gains two additional spell slots that he may add to any spell level other than the highest spell level that he can currently cast. In addition, he cannot allocate both bonus slots to the same level. The keeper may take this ability more than once, gaining bonus slots each time.

Bond of Service: When the keeper selects this ability, he binds an outsider into long-term service. Perhaps he learned the creature's true name and can destroy it with a word, or he may have entered into a pact with a being that commands it. In any case, the outsider can provide the keeper with a variety of services. The keeper gains a +2 competence bonus on all Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (the planes), and Spellcraft checks as the outsider counsels him. Once per week, the keeper can command his servant to cast any arcane spell. This spell must be two levels lower than the maximum spell level the keeper has mastered and is cast at the

The Keeper of Forbidden Lore

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Aura of command, mark of heresy	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Boon of service	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Mark of heresy	+1 level of existing class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Boon of service	+1 level of existing class
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Mark of heresy	+1 level of existing class
6th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Boon of service	+1 level of existing class
7th	+3	+2	+2	+5	Mark of heresy	+1 level of existing class
8th	+4	+2	+2	+6	Boon of service	+1 level of existing class
9th	+4	+3	+3	+6	Mark of heresy	+1 level of existing class
10th	+5	+3	+3	+7	Boon of service	+1 level of existing class

keeper's arcane caster level – 4. For all other game mechanic purposes, the keeper casts the spell. He must use a standard action to cast a spell in order to use this ability, and must pay all material components as normal.

The DM should create a personality and appearance for this outsider. It appears as a fleeting, spectral figure that can speak any language the keeper can use. Otherwise, it has no abilities and uses none of its skills on the keeper's behalf. Invariably, these servants are angry and resent their position. The keeper may take this ability only once.

Diabolic Talent: Under the guidance of his otherworldly allies, the keeper learns to imbue his spells with the foul energies of evil planes. All non-evil creatures suffer a –2 circumstance penalty to their saving throws to resist his spells. The keeper may take this ability only once.

Infernal Craftsman: With the aid of demons and devils, the keeper uses hellfire and black magic to create magic items. Once per month, he can use an item creation feat with half the time and gold ordinarily needed to create the item. The keeper may take this ability more than once, gaining an additional monthly use of it each time. Note that the keeper, like any other spellcaster, can only work on one item at a time.

Supernatural Endurance: While the keeper's black magic warps and twists his body and soul, it can provide him with inhuman toughness fueled by his boundless ambition. When the keeper selects this ability, he gains hit points equal to his total character level. These hit points increase his maximum total. Each time he acquires a level after selecting this ability, he gains one additional hit point for the newly acquired level. The keeper may take this ability more than once, gaining additional hit points each time.

Mark of Heresy: The keeper of forbidden lore delves into areas of knowledge best left alone. He traffics with demons, forges pacts with devils, and even compels service from the lords of chaos. Such dealings cannot pass without leaving a mark on his physical body and his immortal soul. At every odd-numbered level, the keeper suffers a setback determined on the mark of heresy table. Demons do not serve their masters without extracting a price that far exceeds the demands they make in blood and gold. To use the table, roll 1d10 and add the keeper's level in this class. If this yields a duplicate result, skip to the next highest result on the table until you reach a trait that the keeper has not yet gained. If you reach the end of the table, wrap around to the top and start the process over until you find a trait the keeper does not yet possess.

Unlike other class abilities, the mark of heresy is not lost if the keeper permanently acquires negative levels. However, if he later re-gains a lost level, he does not have to roll again on the mark of heresy chart.

Mark of Heresy

d10+ level	Result
1–3	Unsettling Presence: The keeper's mannerisms and appearance seem odd to

other creatures. He suffers a –4 competence penalty to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks made against non-outsiders.

4–6   Aura of Corruption: Mundane animals react violently to the keeper's presence, as they sense the inner corruption that festers in his soul. All animals bark and yowl at him unless restrained with a Handle Animal check (DC 10). In combat, animals attack him in preference to all other targets unless the DM judges that a more direct threat is present. For example, a dire wolf would charge the keeper but it would stop to fight a barbarian or fighter that attacked it. As a rule of thumb, an animal does not endure attacks of opportunity to move and attack the keeper.

7–9   The Evil Eye: The keeper's eyes grow pale and milky, imposing a –2 competence penalty to his Spot checks. In addition, he and his associates suffer a –2 penalty to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks against non-outsiders. Note that if the keeper has the unsettling presence trait, he suffers that penalty and his allies suffer this one as long as he is present with them.

10–12   Shadow Sight: The keeper's continuing exposure to the horrors of the outer planes causes him to develop an array of minor phobias. He sees terrible creatures lurking in the shadows, suspects his comrades of betrayal, and suffers mental instability. He suffers a –4 penalty to Will saves made against all fear-based effects.

13–15   Hunched Back: The keeper's black magic causes a dramatic change to his body, warping and twisting his form. He develops a hunched back, imposing a –5 ft.

penalty to his speed and a –2 competence penalty to all Climb and Jump checks.

16–18   Noxious Soul: As the aura of corruption ability, except the keeper now draws undead creatures to him. His dealings with dark creatures have tainted his soul and cursed him with a necromantic aura. Undead creatures naturally gravitate towards such a source of power.

19   Physical Infirmity: The keeper develops a nervous tic, spasms, and other bodily tremors. He suffers a –2 competence penalty to all attacks and Strength and Dexterity-based skill checks and ability checks.

20   Spiritual Infirmity: Due to his prolonged exposure to fell beings, the keeper's soul degrades and wastes away. He suffers a –2 competence penalty on all saves against good spells, he can no longer prepare or cast such magic, and he suffers a –2 competence penalty on all saves to resist and remove negative levels.

MASTER OF A THOUSAND BLADES

Some fighting orders study animals, modeling their styles after a creature's signature moves. This practice is particularly popular among monks, as a broad range of monastic orders practice lion kung fu, tiger claw strikes, and similar methods and attacks. The master of a thousand blades studies a similar fighting art, but one that follows a different path to mimic a creature. Combining knowledge of magic with skill in forging weapons and armor, the master of a thousand blades harvests body parts from his foes and crafts them into strange weapons and armor. A master could fashion a mace from an orc's skull and arm bones, or a longsword from a giant beetle's fierce pincers. As he gains talent in creating such weapons and armor, he learns to unlock the magical potential in such weapons. He studies ancient arcane formulas, applies his talents, and gathers rare, strange

components to produce weapons that can rival the best wood and steel creations.

The master of a thousand blades has interests far beyond merely collecting defeated enemies and forging them into weapons. He seeks to understand and use fighting styles employed by the creatures of the infinite planes. While a sage might travel to study cultures and a merchant seeks to open new trade routes, the master searches for unique, strange creatures that he can fight in order to learn their combat techniques. Each time the master fights a new creature, he incorporates some aspects of its style into his own methods of fighting. His ultimate goal is not only to forge weapons that mimic his enemies' forms, but to copy their styles in his tactics. The greatest masters have studied and defeated hundreds of foes, allowing them to forge wholly new, unique methods of fighting. No two masters are alike, as their customs, outlook, and preferred tactics are drawn from the many creatures they have faced.

Campaign Seed: The Lords of Bone and Blade are an order of warriors who meet yearly to engage in an elaborate, non-lethal fighting tournament in honor of their god, Belvrak the Conqueror. According to legend, Belvrak defeated a mighty evil being from beyond the cosmos in battle. The creature tore his arm off, but Belvrak, unfazed by the wound, merely picked up his severed limb and used it to beat the creature to death. In memory of Belvrak's daring, stamina, and ingenuity, the Lords follow this prestige class. Many fighter/clerics and paladins of Belvrak follow this class, as do fighters who seek to prove themselves in the tournament and earn the renown and fame that come from being named Belvrak's champion. According to tradition, all the participants in the tournament must perform one service to the winner. In essence, the champion gains the services of an elite fighting force for one battle. The outcome of many wars has been determined by a champion's decision to weigh in for one side or the other.

Hit Die: d10.

Requirements

To become a master of a thousand blades, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.
Skills: Craft (weaponsmith) 8 ranks, Craft (armorsmith) 8 ranks, Intimidate 4 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 4 ranks.
Feat: Exotic Fighting Style.
Special: Craft a masterwork weapon from the remains of a creature you killed in battle and use it in at least one fight.

Class Skills

The master's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (any) (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Intimidate (Cha), Jump (Str), Swim (Str), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the master of a thousand blades prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The master gains proficiency with all simple and martial weapons. He gains no additional proficiency with shields and armor. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, Swim, and Tumble.

Harvest Weapons: The master of a thousand blades learns to preserve the body parts of fallen enemies and use them to produce new weapons. He can craft a club from an ogre's arm, a longsword from an umber hulk's pincer, or arrows from a skeleton's ribs.

To create one of these weapons, the master must spend the time and money needed to create a masterwork item, though the weapon's base cost is 0 gp since he has the raw materials on hand.

These weapons deal base damage equal to the creature's natural weapons or based on its size. Use whichever value is higher. The master may create light weapons from creatures that are smaller than his size, one-handed ones from creatures whose size equals his own, and two-handed ones from creatures with a size greater than his. In addition, these weapons automatically defeat the DR type possessed by the creature from which they are harvested. For example, a weapon made from a creature with DR 5/silver would defeat silver DR.

Anyone other than the master who tries to use one of these weapons suffers the –4 non-proficiency penalty. Only those schooled in this style of fighting know how to handle the exotic weapons this class produces. A character could use the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat to wield with proficiency any one weapon produced by a master.

Creature Size	Base Damage
Tiny	1d4
Small	1d6
Medium	1d8
Large	1d8
Huge	1d10
Gargantuan	2d6
Colossal	2d8

Harvest Armor: The master of a thousand blades can skin a creature and craft its hide into a durable, thin suit of armor. This armor confers a natural AC bonus based on the master's skill and the amount of gold he spends on crafting it. He must purchase chemicals and herbs to preserve the hide and render it thin enough to rest beneath a standard suit of armor. Regardless of the armor's listed cost, it takes a master one week to create one. These suits require tremendous amounts of customization. A master may forge them only for his own use. This armor weighs 10 lbs. A master can only combine this natural armor with light or medium armor. Heavy armor is too big and bulky to fit over it.

Natural AC Bonus	Minimum Character Level	Cost
+1	5	500 gp
+2	8	2,000 gp
+3	11	4,500 gp
+4	14	8,000 gp
+5	17	12,500 gp

Imbue Magical Traits (Su): At 2nd level, the master's blend of magical talent and craftsmanship allows him to fashion pieces from his enemies into enchanted weapons. He counts as an arcane caster with a level equal to twice his level in this prestige class for the purposes of crafting magic weapons. He may use any sorcerer or wizard spells that a caster of his equivalent level could use in order to produce magical weapons. He may grant his weapons enhancement bonuses, weapon abilities, and all other bonuses as normal. He may only use this ability with weapons fashioned from body parts of fallen enemies. Due to his familiarity with his materials, he the time needed to complete a weapon is halved. Otherwise, he follows the standard rules for creating magical armaments.

Master of Forms (Ex): Each time a master of forms defeats a creature in battle, he must take note of its race. Once per day, he may cross a race off his list and gain a +1 competence bonus to attacks for one encounter as he mimics his selected opponent's fighting style. Once a race has been removed from this list, it cannot be added again. As the master progresses through the planes, he seeks to fight as many different enemies as possible. Once he has mastered a creature's fighting style, he must move on to a different type.

Bearer of Strange Blades (Ex): When fighting with a weapon he produced from a fallen enemy's body, the master of a thousand blades gains a +2 bonus to initiative as his enemies are surprised and startled by his strange looking armaments.

Supreme Weapon Harvester: At 5th level, the master learns to make improvements to his weapon designs in order to grant them increased utility. By paying 300 gp and work-

The Master of a Thousand Blades

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Harvest armor, harvest weapons
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Imbue magical traits
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Master of forms
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Bearer of strange blades
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Supreme weapon harvester
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Eye of the master
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Exotic armor familiarity
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Fearsome aspect
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Forge of battle
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Blood of the beast

ing on a weapon that he has already completed or is in the process of creating, he can grant it one of the following abilities. He can make it a double weapon, he can grant it 10-ft. reach, it can grant him a +2 circumstance bonus to disarm checks, he may opt to drop it rather than be tripped when making a trip attack, he can set it against chargers to deal double damage, he can increase its threat range by one, he can increase its critical multiplier by one. A given weapon can receive more than one of these traits, but it cannot receive any trait more than once.

Eye of the Master (Ex): Once per day as a standard action, the master of a thousand blades watches an opponent and studies his fighting style. For the rest of the encounter, whenever the master attacks that opponent he gains a +2 competence bonus on attack rolls and a +2 dodge bonus to AC against that opponent's attacks. The master must be within 10 ft. of his enemy to study him in detail, and his foe cannot have any concealment against him.

Exotic Armor Familiarity: The master of a thousand blades learns to maximize the protection afforded by the exotic hides that he cures and wears in battle. He may wear it with heavy armor and its weight no longer counts for encumbrance. He literally wears this armor as a second skin.

Fearsome Aspect: While wearing his armor and bearing his weapons, the master of a thousand blades takes on a terrifying visage. To a casual observer, he almost looks like the fearsome creatures from which he claimed the materials for his equipment. While wearing armor and carrying weapons created with this prestige class's abilities, he gains a +2 competence bonus to all Intimidate checks.

Forge of Battle (Ex): At 9th level, the master of a thousand blades learns to channel the magical energy of his fighting style into a sudden, terrifying burst. In combat, the master can seize a limb from any slain opponent and use it as a weapon. Claiming the limb is a full-round action as the master tears it from his fallen enemy. The weapon must be of a size that the master can wield in one or two hands. Upon completing this action, all of the master's remaining enemies must make Will saves (DC equal to the master's Intimidate check + 5) or suffer a –1 penalty to attacks and damage for the rest of the encounter. This is a fear-based effect. A limb claimed in this way counts as a club of the same size as the creature it was taken from.

Blood of the Beast (Su): At 10th level, the master of a thousand blades learns to preserve the magical abilities and extraordinary capacities of the creatures he harvests his weapons from. When he creates a weapon, he may opt to store one use of an extraordinary or supernatural ability the creature possessed that it could deliver through a physical attack. The master can use that ability when fighting with his weapon once per week. The ability functions exactly as the monster used it, including save DCs. The master must declare that he is using this ability before he attacks.

TENDER OF WORLDS

While most druids concern themselves with a limited area of wilderness such as a forest or mountain range, the tender of worlds seeks to cultivate and watch over the very structure of the cosmos. These planar druids travel from world to world, ensuring that no one race or warlord manages to gain undue influence over multiple planes. Before the tenders organized, diseases, predators, and even simple plants could travel through a portal and wreak havoc with a planet's ecosystem. To help ensure that the planes would maintain their unique character and to prevent a single, dominant force from subjugating the various worlds, the tenders of worlds gathered to form a powerful check on such ambition. Working alone or in small groups, the tenders manage entire planes much as a botanist might cultivate a plant. They hold counsel with kings, spread lore of invading monsters, and provide magical and material aid wherever innocents need their assistance.

The tender of worlds learns to incorporate the magic of the planes into his divine abilities. He attunes his spirit to the cosmic patterns around him, learning to create and move through gates, recognize the patterns and traits of portals, and handle encounters with outsiders. His magic is the magic of the planes, yet while the scope of his responsibilities expands beyond a single world, never mind a river or forest, he is still fundamentally a force for preservation and protection.

Campaign Seed: The tenders could become involved in an area that comes under assault by demons, devils, and other outsiders. Alarmed by the influx of outsiders into a previously peaceful realm, the tenders dispatch rangers and druids to the area to help ready its defenses and teach its inhabitants tactics and methods useful in fighting the invading monsters. The PCs could meet a tender, and a druid in the party might join this class if the tenders approach them for an alliance. Otherwise, the tenders could have assisted the region in the past. Even after their victory, they remain in contact with local druids and seek out promising candidates for their organization. It may be a great honor to join the tenders, as their efforts in the past have kept the region free of demonic influence and saved many innocent lives.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To become a tender of worlds, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any non-evil.
Skills: Knowledge (nature) 8 ranks, Knowledge (the planes) 4 ranks.
Special: The ability to cast 3rd-level divine spells and use *wild shape* at least once per day.
Special: A tender of worlds must spend at least one month on two planes or worlds other than his home world. He must use *animal friendship* to gain the service of animals from two planes other than his plane of origin.

CLASS SKILLS

The tender of worlds' class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (any) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Handle Animal (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), Profession (any) (Wis), Scry (Int), Spellcraft (Int), Survival (Wis), and Swim (Str).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the tender of worlds prestige class.

The Tender of Worlds

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Planar sense	+1 level of existing class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Planar magic	+1 level of existing class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Planar jaunt	+1 level of existing class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Step of a thousand leagues	+1 level of existing class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Alter planar currents	+1 level of existing class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Speaker of a million tongues	+1 level of existing class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Warden of the planes	+1 level of existing class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	Sense portals	+1 level of existing class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Cosmic precision	+1 level of existing class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Walker between worlds	+1 level of existing class

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The tender of worlds gains no additional proficiency with weapons, armor, or shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, Swim, and Tumble.

Spellcasting: For each level gained in this prestige class, the tender of worlds gains an additional level of divine casting ability. He gains additional spell slots per day, spells known, and an increased caster level. If the keeper has levels in more than one divine casting class, he must choose which class's casting ability to improve each time he gains a level in this prestige class. He gains none of the other benefits of gaining a level in his other classes, such as improved turning or druid class abilities. He only improves his ability to cast spells.

Planar Sense (Su): The tender of worlds gains an intuitive sense of the planes' flow of energy, their arrangement, and the pathways between them. With a successful Survival check (DC 20), as a standard action he can determine the destination of any gate or portal that he encounters. In addition, when entering a new plane he may make a Survival check (DC 20) to attune himself to its energies, gaining insight into its traits and tendencies. With a successful check, he learns the general strength and effects of its planar traits. Furthermore, at the DM's option, he learns of its general history and reputation among planar travelers. This information could include creatures commonly encountered, the beings that control it, the gods worshipped on the plane, and so forth.

Planar Magic: Due to the tender's connection to the planes, he can use spells that normally affect animals on outsiders. When preparing any spell that normally affects only animals, he may choose to ready a version that affects only outsiders. Tenders who spontaneously cast spells make this decision when using the spell. *Animal friendship* is the one exception to this ability. The tender may gain the services of outsiders, but their CR can be no more than half the highest CR of the animals he may gain as companions.

Planar Jaunt (Sp): At 3rd level, the tender of worlds learns to open and follow the pathways between worlds, though his knowledge and skill are imprecise at best. He may cast *plane shift* once per day as a divine spell, using his total divine caster level.

Step of a Thousand Leagues (Sp): The tender of worlds masters not only the passages between planes, but also the affinities and gateways that connect one region of a plane to another. At 4th level, he may cast *teleport* once per day as a divine spell using his divine caster level.

Alter Planar Currents: The tender of worlds can use his knowledge of planar structure and the flow of cosmic energy to create a localized region in which a plane's traits fail to function at their normal levels. The tender and all his allies within 50 ft. of him gain a +4 competence bonus on all checks and saves to resist planar traits.

Speaker of a Million Tongues (Su): At 6th level, the tender perceives the planar

bindings that form and sustain intelligent life. He sees the patterns in speech and customs that underlie all civilizations, allowing him to feel at home with a wide variety of races, from the humans of the kingdom of Vestrial to the undead lords of the Nightrealms. He can communicate with any creature that has a language and gains a +4 competence bonus to all Diplomacy checks.

Warden of the Planes (Sp): As the self-appointed champion of the planes and the guardian of its overall structure, the tender of worlds must struggle to prevent malicious outsiders from spilling over to conquer and subjugate other, natural realms. To this end, he gains the ability to impede a creature's ability to travel between worlds in order to capture or kill it. At will as a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity, the tender may cast *dimensional anchor* as a spell-like ability. This spell functions at the tender's divine caster level.

Sense Portals (Su): The tender's preternatural ability to chart and watch the flow of planar energies gives him the ability to easily find gateways to other worlds. He need only concentrate on the direction and speed of the cosmic bindings around him to find a door between the planes. By concentrating for 10 minutes, the tender can discover the destination and general location of all portals within 5 miles of his current location. The tender learns where each portal goes and its direction and distance from his spot.

Cosmic Precision (Su): As a tender of worlds learns the pathways between the cosmic realms, he grows more adept at navigating them with his magical abilities. When using *plane shift*, he may cut the distance from his target destination at which he enters a world by half. When using *teleport*, he may roll twice for that spell's result and choose whichever of the two results he wants.

Walker Between Worlds (Sp): At 10th level, the tender may cast *gate* as a divine spell using his divine caster level once per day.

World Walker

In the blink of an eye, the world walker's sword slips through time and space to skewer his enemies. He stabs at his foe's chest, yet his blade strikes from behind. His arrows slip into portals, teleporting to drive directly down upon an opponent. The world walker's foes must continually watch all directions, for they can never be sure where his next strike will come from next.

The world walker studies the planar bindings and patterns that form the world around him. He learns to perceive folds and irregularities in space. Using his innate *ki* energy, he manipulates these gaps and uses them to improve his fighting abilities. At first, a world walker employs his talents to slip around enemies and sidestep their attacks. As he gains more skill, he uses them to create miniature portals large enough for him to attack through. He extends his weapons or fists through these portals, spawning their openings behind, above, or below his foes to confuse their guard and attack their weak points. These openings are similar to gates in that they allow matter to pass through, but nothing aside from the world walker's attack can move through them. A small creature could not piggyback through them to attack.

In many ways, world walkers are born rather than made. Some people have an innate sense for planar turbulence and irregularities. Most of the time these talents never make any real use of their skills. They might have a sixth sense for trouble or an uncanny ability to never become lost, but until they study under a master world walker their talents remain hidden. Only after traveling the planes and studying the fighting arts can they reach their true potential.

Monks are the most common world walkers, as their intense training in using and manipulating *ki* makes them natural candidates to develop any innate planar senses they may have. However, fighters, rangers, paladins, and barbarians can all draw on their combat experience to develop their inner strength.

Campaign Seed: The Monastery of the Open Way is said to appear outside of town once each decade for two months. It then fades into the planar mists and reappears on a different world. Monks and warriors who wish to study there must find a planar map that charts the monastery's journey across the worlds. A warrior must arrive at the monastery by simply walking through portals to its location, for a network of gateways connects the areas it

moves through. Those who complete this pilgrimage receive a warm welcome from the monks and, if they wish, may enter this prestige class.

Hit Die: d8.

Requirements

To become a world walker, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.
Knowledge (arcana): 6 ranks.
Feat: Dimensional Sense.
Special: A world walker must visit at least three planes of existence in addition to his home world, spending one week on each.

Class Skills

The world walker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Jump (Str), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (the planes) (Int), and Tumble (Dex).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the world walker prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: World walkers gain no additional proficiencies with weapons, armor, or shields. Note that armor check penalties for armor heavier than leather apply to the skills Balance, Climb, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Sleight of Hand, Swim, and Tumble.

Martial Artist: As part of the world walker's training, he learns to channel *ki* through his body. This life energy powers many of his abilities, and as a side effect he can channel it into his unarmed strikes. A world walker stacks his levels in this class with any monk levels he has to determine his unarmed damage. A character
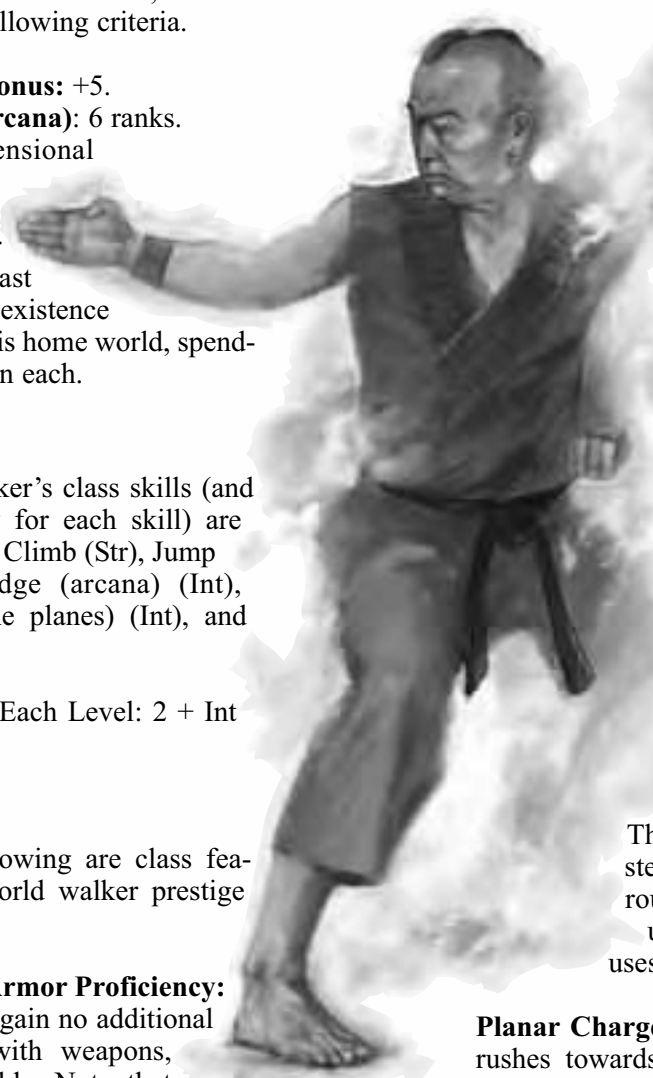
with no monk levels gains unarmed damage at a monk level equal to his level in this prestige class. The world walker gains none of the other monk abilities, such as flurry of blows or bonus feats.

Sidestep (Su): By concentrating on the flux of planar energies in an area, the world walker can slip through a fold in space and travel a very short distance. Each time the world walker uses this ability, he can move 5 feet in any direction to enter an unoccupied space. He may use this ability during his own action or he may use it in reaction to an opponent's attack or a spell. If the world walker moves in such a manner that he is beyond an attack or spell's range, the effect automatically misses him. A world walker may use this ability once per day at 1st level and gains an additional use of it at each odd-numbered level in this class. Using this ability and the movement it allows never draws an attack of opportunity.

The world walker may use sidestep as often as he wants during a round, though he obviously cannot use it more times than his total uses per day.

Planar Charge (Su): When the world walker rushes towards an opponent, he build up *ki* energy that he can unleash in a single burst of power that throws him towards his target. To observers, the world walker's motions speed up into a blur. When using the charge action, the world walker triples his speed.

Unexpected Strike (Su): The world walker learns to combine his fighting abilities with his innate sense of planar structure. When he attacks, he sends his weapon or first through a dimensional fold to strike an opponent from an unexpected direction. To observers, the world walker's fist or weapon slips

THE WORLD WALKER

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+0	+2	+0	Martial artist, sidestep (1/day)
2nd	+2	+0	+3	+0	Planar charge
3rd	+3	+1	+3	+1	Sidestep (2/day)
4th	+4	+1	+4	+1	Unexpected strike
5th	+5	+1	+4	+1	Sidestep (3/day)
6th	+6	+2	+5	+2	Planar jump
7th	+7	+2	+5	+2	Sidestep (4/day)
8th	+8	+2	+6	+2	Improved planar charge
9th	+9	+3	+6	+3	Distant strike, sidestep (5/day)
10th	+10	+3	+7	+3	Strike of 1,000 directions

through a shimmering portal and emerges from a similar gateway above, behind, or below his foes. If the world walker uses a move-equivalent action to activate this ability, he gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls against his opponent. In addition, his foe must make a Spot check (DC 10 + the world walker's level in this class + half the world walker's Intelligence modifier) or lose his Dexterity bonus to AC against the world walker's attacks until his next action. Using this ability does not draw an attack of opportunity.

Planar Jump (Sp): The world walker's increasing understanding of the planar bindings grants him more options in manipulating them. At 6th level, he learns to slip through more complicated, but deeper, folds and tears in space. He may cast *dimension door* three times per day as a sorcerer with a level equal to his total character level.

Improved Planar Charge (Su): At 8th level, the world walker seethes with planar energies when he rushes towards an opponent. His momentum allows him to slip into planar folds. He gains the benefits of his planar charge ability as normal. In addition, he no longer suffers an AC penalty when charging and can take as many turns as he wants while charging.

Distant Strike (Su): At 9th level, the world walker learns to open up a small gateway over a much longer than normal distance. Usually, his manipulation of planar structure takes place on a short, limited basis. Using this talent, he can create portals that span longer distances. Once per day, he may use a move-equivalent action to activate this ability. With his next attack in that round, he may use a melee attack at a range of up to 30 ft. The world walker strikes through a small gate, assaulting a target at long range. The world walker may us this ability with unexpected strike if he can somehow activate both abilities and attack in the same round.

Strike of a Thousand Directions (Su): At 10th level, the world walker learns to manipulate time, planar energies, and *ki* with unparalleled skill in a small, localized area. When the world walker attacks, his weapon or fist disappears into a shimmering portal. Similar gateways appear throughout the area, and duplicates of his fist or weapon spring from each of them to shatter his enemies. Activating this ability is a free action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. When the world walker uses it, his next attack splinters into five separate but identical strikes. These attacks may target any creature within 30 ft. of the world walker, and he may use up to two attacks against the same creature. Roll attacks and damage separately for each. For example, a world walker could attack five different creatures, one creature twice and three creatures once, or two creatures twice each and a third creature once. All of these attacks are resolved as if the world walker used his unexpected strike ability, though this talent does not consume one of that ability's daily uses. The world walker may use the strike of a thousand directions once per day. If he gains multiple attacks per round, only his first attack gains this ability's benefits.

Planar Feats

Just as the planes breed a staggering variety of cultures, so too do these cultures in turn produce their own unique methods of fighting, spellcasting, and other talents. The planar feats presented here are designed with a cosmic flavor in mind. Most of them deal with a character's ability to attune himself to the environment, successfully travel through the planes, or battle the monsters commonly encountered on other worlds. The text of this section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

Fighters may use their bonus feat choices to take any ability marked with the fighter keyword.

Acolyte of the Veil [General]

You traffic with demons and other evil outsiders, offering them sacrifices of living creatures and valuable treasure for their services. As an initiate of this horrid tradition, you can compel longer periods of service from evil creatures than is normally possible with your spells.

Prerequisite: Arcane caster level 1+, evil alignment.

Benefit: When using any *summon monster* spell, you may include 5 gp worth of gems or gold per level of the spell in the spell's material components to increase its duration by one round. You may boost the spell's length by a maximum of 1 round + your Charisma bonus. This bonus applies only when summoning evil creatures.

Alternatively, you can sacrifice a living, sentient creature to increase the spell's duration one round per Hit Die of creatures slain. You and your fellows must commit these ghastly murders in the round immediately before and during your use of *summon monster*. There is no limit to how long you can extend the spell's duration when offering living sacrifices to your demonic allies.

Combat Sense [Fighter, General]

At the slightest hint of trouble, you ready your guard and draw your weapon. Drawing on your combat experience, you react without thinking to sudden attacks and ambushes.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1, Quick Draw.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus to initiative. If you are attacked in melee during a surprise round, you may draw a weapon and do not count as flat-footed. However, you may still be flanked as normal. Ranged attacks and spells do not trigger this feat.

Dimensional Sense [General]

You have a sixth sense for judging the ebb and flow of cosmic energy, allowing you to travel through the planes with greater ease.

Prerequisite: Wis 13+.

Benefit: When a creature attempts to use *teleport, gate, planeshift,* or *dimension door* to arrive at a spot within 30 ft. of your current position, you may make a Wisdom check (DC 10) to predict its arrival one round before it appears. In game terms, your DM tells you the spot where a creature is set to appear, though you learn nothing of the creature itself. In addition, you have an unerring sense of the direction and distance to the last gate you traveled through. As long as you remain on the plane the gate took you to, you can always find it.

Elemental Mastery [General]

Spellcasters who travel the planes can improve their mastery over an energy type by visiting worlds where it is much stronger than normal. You attune your magic to the planar elemental forces that generate the energy it uses, giving your spells an added punch.

Prerequisite: Arcane caster level 1+; you must have visited a plane with the arcane potency or elemental ascendancy trait for the descriptor you choose for this feat.

Benefit: When you choose this feat, pick one of the following spell descriptors: acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic. When you cast a spell that deals damage of the type you selected, your spell deals an additional point of damage for every two caster levels. For example, if you had Elemental Mastery (fire) at 10th level, your fire spells would deal an additional 5 points of damage. Add this bonus damage to the spell's total damage, not each die.

Special: You may take this feat more than once, choosing a different energy type each time you gain it.

Exotic Fighting Style [Fighter, General]

Compared to warriors on your home world, you utilize a strange method of dueling. Your unfamiliar strikes, blocks, and ripostes foil their efforts and, more importantly, sap their confidence.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +3, must have visited at least two planes for one month each.

Benefit: Once per encounter, you may gain either a +1 competence bonus to melee attacks or a +1 dodge bonus to AC for a number of rounds equal to 1 + your Intelligence bonus. Activating this ability is a free action, and you do not have to make use of it over consecutive rounds. For example, if you could use this ability for three rounds, you could employ it for the first two rounds of a fight, stop using it, and then use your final round later in the fight.

Expel Outsiders [General]

You channel divine energy into an outsider's material form, disrupting it and forcing the creature to flee back to its plane of origin.

Prerequisite: Turn Outsiders, ability to turn undead.

Benefit: You may use one of your daily turning attempts to expel an outsider to its home plane. Make a turning check as normal with the following modifications. You may target only one creature with this ability, and it must be within 60 ft. of you. Unlike standard turning checks, you must roll 1d20 and add your level. If this total is greater than or equal to twice the target's Hit Dice, it is immediately forced back to its native plane. Note that the creature is under no compulsion to remain there. It can use any spells or abilities to travel the planes on its next action. Generally speaking, this ability is best used against weaker outsiders rather than the most powerful demons and devils.

You may also use this ability against any creature called into your world via a *summon monster* spell regardless of its type.

Normal: Turning affects only undead creatures.

Master Linguist [General]

You have a talent for language that allows you to puzzle out the meaning of tongues that you have never before encountered. By analyzing a creature's physical mannerisms, its tone of voice, and the pattern of its speech, you can attempt to communicate with it.

Prerequisite: Int 13+, ability to speak at least three languages other than Common and your racial tongue.

Benefit: When you attempt to communicate with a creature whose language you do not understand, you must make an Intelligence check to determine how much you can decipher. The master linguist table gives guidelines for the ability check DCs. You may make a check once for each particular phrase. If you fail, you must spend an hour listening to the creature's language before you can try again. You gain a +2 competence bonus to your check if the creature speaks slowly and clearly and a +4 circumstance bonus if it uses physical objects and gestures to convey its meaning.

After a short period, you can attempt to speak to a creature in its native language. After five successful Intelligence checks to use this feat, you may make an Intelligence check with a DC of 10 + the total words you attempt to communicate in a sentence. On a success, the creature understands you. On a natural roll of 1, regardless of modifiers, the attempt fails and you accidentally convey the opposite of your intended message.

Master Linguist Table

Situation	DC
Simple phrases, no more than five words long	10
Normal phrases, typical spoken sentence	20
Complex phrases, touching on esoteric topics	25

Rapid Recovery [General]

Your toughness and resilience allow you to shrug off injuries that would leave weaker adventurers bed-ridden for weeks. A night's rest is sometimes enough for you to recover from major injuries.

Prerequisite: Toughness.

Benefit: Eight hours of restful sleep counts as a full day of rest for you, allowing you to heal damage equal to your level. If you have suffered ability score damage, a night of rest counts as one day for purposes of recovering ability points. A day of rest heals double your level in hit points, while a day of complete bed rest heals triple your level in hit points. Note that you can only gain the equivalent of eight hours of sleep once per day. You cannot sleep 24 hours straight in order to gain three days worth of ability score recovery.

Turn Outsiders [General]

You call upon the power of the gods to terrify outsiders. Blasted by the power of your god, they quake in fear before your righteous aura.

Prerequisite: Divine caster level 3+, ability to turn undead.

Benefit: You may use your ability to turn undead against outsiders. Resolve the turn attempt as normal. Outsiders are not rebuked, commanded, turned, or destroyed. Instead, outsiders with an alignment different from yours become shaken. They suffer a –2 morale penalty to attacks, checks, and saves for a number of rounds equal to 1d4 + your Charisma modifier. Outsiders with an alignment identical to yours gain a +2 morale bonus to attacks, checks, and saves for the same duration.

Normal: Turning affects only undead creatures.

Watchful Strategist [Fighter, General]

The planes hold many strange creatures. Sometimes, it is best to hold back and assess a monster's abilities before rushing into combat against it. Drawing on your battle experience, you have a good sense for predicting an opponent's abilities by observing his actions.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +6, Sense Motive 4 ranks.

Benefit: As a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, you may observe an opponent and decipher his abilities based on his actions and bearing. Each time you use this feat, you learn 1d4 of your opponent's feats or 1d2 of his extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like abilities. Your DM selects the abilities you learn at random. You can only use this feat during combat, as you observe your foe's fighting stance and tactics.

Well-Timed Strike [Fighter, General]

You watch an opponent's actions, reading his movements to discern his intent and using that information to plan your counterattack.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +8, Watchful Strategist.

Benefit: As a move-equivalent action, you may choose to watch a single opponent and prepare a response to his action. When that foe takes his turn, the DM must announce his action. You may then take a standard action as normal. Your opponent must then take his action as stated by your DM, even if it is now impossible due to your action. In that case, your opponent wastes his action. You may use this feat once per encounter.

Normal: When you delay, you can act only after seeing what your opponents do or before they act. When you ready an action, you must attempt to guess your foe's action.

Planar Spells

Many spells tap into the energy of the planes, allowing instantaneous travel between worlds or calling strange creatures to serve a wizard's bidding. The new spells outlined here cover several different types of planar travel, tap into the energy of the cosmos to create effects, or serve as useful tools for explorers who venture across the worlds. The text of this section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

Dimension Portal

Conjuration [Teleportation]
Level: Sor/Wiz 6
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Long (400 ft. + 40 ft./level)
Effect: A dimensional passage connecting two points
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

As *dimension door*, save that the passage you create remains in place after you travel through it and other creatures may use it until the spell's duration ends. The portal appears as a gleaming point of light. It has no effect on attacks, provides no cover, and does not block movement. A creature must enter the space you occupied when you first cast this spell and spend a standard action to move through the portal. It counts as having cast *dimension door* save that it appears at the destination point you originally chose.

Travel is possible in only one direction. Creatures can enter at the spot at which you created the portal and exit it at the same place you traveled to, but they cannot do the opposite. If a creature would appear in a spot that is too tight to hold its bulk or in an area already occupied by a creature, it counts as having used *dimension door* to enter a spot occupied by solid matter.

A creature affected by a *dimensional anchor* cannot travel via this spell.

Dimensional Hop

Conjuration [Teleportation]
Level: Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You create a planar bubble around a creature, allowing it to cover the full range of its movement in a single step. The recipient of this spell may take a move-equivalent action to teleport a distance equal to its current speed, taking into account encumbrance and any other modifiers to speed. The creature must be able to see its destination point, but it may otherwise move up, down, or in any other direction. The creature instantaneously disappears from its starting point and appears at its destination. Moving in this manner does not draw attacks of opportunity.

A creature affected by a *dimensional anchor* cannot travel via this spell.

Material Component: A piece of parchment crumpled into a ball that you pull flat as you cast the spell.

Dimensional Slip

Conjuration [Teleportation]
Level: Sor/Wiz 1
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 1 minute/level
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You create a slight fold in the planar fabric, allowing a creature to move faster than normal as it takes steps in sixth- or seventh-dimensional space. The recipient of this spell gains a +5 ft. bonus to speed for every five caster levels. Apply this bonus to the creature's speed before accounting for any armor or heavy loads it carries.

A creature affected by a *dimensional anchor* cannot travel via this spell.

Arcane Focus: A slip of paper folded into a loop.

Dimensional Warp

Conjuration [Teleportation]
Level: Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Target: You and one willing recipient per caster level
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None (see below)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You and a number of willing creatures up to your caster level are teleported to any point up to this spell's maximum range. You may determine the exact placement of your fellow travelers at your arrival point, but they must all appear within 30 ft. of your destination. They can be above, below, or beside you, as long as they are within this range. Unwilling creatures are never affected by this spell.

A creature affected by a *dimensional anchor* cannot travel via this spell.

Arcane Focus: A small, iron mesh net worth 25 gp.

Planar Compass

Divination
Level: Brd 2, Clr 2, Drd 2, Sor/Wiz 2
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 minute/level

You tap into the planar system, analyzing the ebb and flow of cosmic energy to determine your relative position and the unique traits of the world you are on. For the duration of this spell, you intuitively know the destination of any gate or portal you discover. You learn the nature and strength of all planar traits that are currently in effect. Finally, if you cast *plane shift* while under this spell's effects you may cut the distance you are off target by half. If you cast *teleport*, you may roll twice to see if you deviate from your target, taking whichever result you want of the two.

Sphere of Safe Passage

Abjuration
Level: Clr 3, Drd 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: Personal
Area: 30 ft. radius centered on caster
Duration: 10 minutes per level
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You create a sphere of force that extends 30 ft. in all directions around you. Within this bubble, the air remains comfortably warm and has enough oxygen to sustain you and your companions for the spell's duration. You do not suffer the effects of planar traits while you remain within the sphere, and you ignore extreme weather, any heat or cold effects that deal subdual damage, and strong winds. Spells, abilities, and all other effects function within the sphere as normal. The sphere moves with you, but any physical barriers limit its size. It bends and folds to reshape itself as you move through tight quarters, into open areas, and back into a narrow area.

Planar Magic Items

The following magic items are useful for planar adventurers or feature a cosmic theme. Some grant you the ability to move between worlds, while others allow you to manipulate planar energy. The text of this section is designated as **Open Game Content**.

Aethership: An *aethership* is a 10-ft.-diameter bronze sphere set with a metal door and two thick, glass portals equally spaced on its hull. Three legs arranged like a tripod extend from its lower half, allowing it to stand on its own without tipping. Its interior is a single cabin with six chairs and a complex set of crystalline knobs, dials, and levers. This rare artifact can travel through the planes, allowing explorers to rest comfortably within its interior while they visit hostile worlds. One of the six crewmen serves as navigator, selecting the *aethership's* destination plane. This craft may journey between the planes four times per day, each time as if under the effects of *plane shift*.

The cabin's interior remains at room temperature and it holds a supply of fresh air that lasts 24 hours divided by the number of creatures within it. The door can be locked (Open Lock DC 40) while the hull and windows are, for all intents and purposes, unbreakable and indestructible. The ship is under the continual effects of *feather fall*, allowing it to float gently to safety if it enters a plane above ground level.

In addition to the navigator, one crew member acts as pilot. The *ship* can fly with a speed of 60 ft. at average maneuverability. It has no weapons, and attacks are impossible through the windows and the ship's hull. The hull does not block spells such as *dimension door* or *teleport*.

The *aethership* is a major artifact that you can use as the basis for an entire planar campaign. PCs who have access to it can wander from world to world, exploring countless lands or completing an epic quest.

Caster Level: 20th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *wish*; *Market Price:* 2,000,000 gp; *Weight:* 3,000 lbs.

Dice of Probability Manipulation: This item is a pair of dice with strange, arcane runes etched on to their sides. When rolled, the dice alter the ebb and flow of luck in an area. One die stands for good luck, the other one for ill chance. To use this item, a character must roll both dice. Depending on the die rolls, he gains a luck bonus or penalty to all attacks, saves, and checks for one hour. This luck modifier equals the result of the good luck die minus the result of the bad luck die. Note that if the bad luck die rolls higher, the character is stuck with a penalty. These dice may be used once per day.

Caster Level: 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *bestow curse, bless*; *Market Price:* 10,000 gp; *Weight:* —.

Forked Tongue Whip: Crafted from the sinuous tongue of a demon, this fearsome weapon is the bane of evil outsiders. When used to strike them, it inflicts 2d8 points of damage and counts as a good-aligned weapon. In addition, if the whip is forcibly snapped it emits a piercing wail that terrifies all evil outsiders. They must make Will saves (DC 14) or become shaken and suffer a –2 morale penalty to attacks,
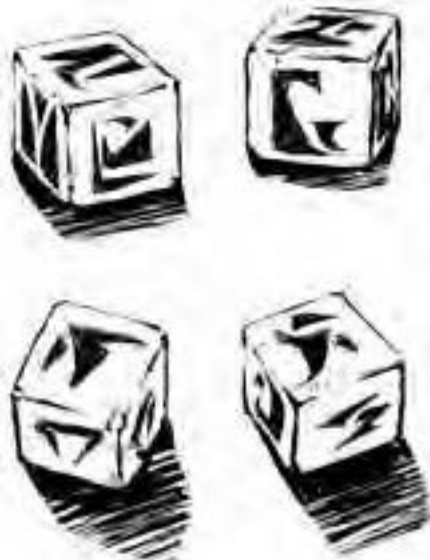
checks, and saves for one hour. The whip may be used in this manner three times per day, and activating this ability counts as a standard action.

Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magical Arms and Armor, a tongue taken from any evil outsider, *emotion*; *Market Price:* 18,000 gp; *Weight:* 3 lbs.

Helm of Planar Navigation: This globular metal helm has a glass window set in the front, completely enclosing its user's head while allowing him to see the area in front of him. The helm is enchanted to protect its wearer from gas attacks, providing him with an unlimited store of clean air and rendering him immune to any attack delivered via fumes or vapors. In addition, while the helm blocks the user's ears and most of his field of vision, magical sensors placed within it project a full view of the area on to the helm's inner surface. The wearer gains a +4 competence bonus to all Listen and Spot checks. Finally, when the user looks at a portal he can look into the area it leads to with a successful Spot check (DC 15). The wearer may make one check per portal.

Caster Level: 11th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *true seeing*; *Market Price:* 10,000 gp; *Weight:* 10 lbs.

Mask of the Emissary: Crafted from wood and clay, this plain, featureless white mask molds to fit the face of whoever attempts to wear it. While wearing the mask, the user's features change to take on a pleasing appearance based on a viewer's cultural and personal preferences. An orc may see a snarling, fearsome visage, while an elf sees a lovely, delicately featured one. The wearer's face retains his basic physical characteristics. Only the specifics of his countenance change. While wearing the *mask of the emissary,* a character gains a +4 bonus to all Bluff, Diplomacy, and Intimidate checks. In addition, three times per day he may cast *tongues* as a 6th-level sorcerer.

Caster Level: 7th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *charm person, minor image, tongues; Market Price:* 12,000 gp.

Rod of Planar Stability: This slender, silver item resembles an overly large skeleton key. It is about as wide as a human's hand and three feet in length. Normally a *rod* is unadorned, but some of these items are encrusted with gems and jewels. The *rod's* true power becomes apparent when it is exposed to a magical gateway, as described in Chapter 2. When touched to a gateway, the rod's bearer may make a Spellcraft check (DC 20) to temporarily re-attune the portal to allow travel to a plane of his choice. The check requires five minutes of uninterrupted work. On a failed check, the *rod's* user may try again until he succeeds. The portal functions as per the spell *plane shift*, transporting anyone who walks through it to the selected destination. Roll once to determine displacement, with all creatures arriving at the same place. The portal loses all of its traits and features save for its ability to transport users to the selected plane. This effect functions for 1d4 minutes, after which the portal returns to normal. The *rod* may be used only once per day per portal. A portal changed in this manner does not allow two-way travel. Once a character moves through it, he must find another portal to go back home.

Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *planar compass, plane shift*; *Market Price:* 15,000 gp; *Weight:* 2 lbs.

Scroll Door: A *scroll door* appears just like any other rolled up piece of parchment, though it feels heavier than normal. When unrolled, the *scroll door* reveals one of its faces as a portal to another world. This portal counts as a gateway and can have any traits, abilities, and functions as chosen by the DM (see Chapter 2). So long as the *scroll* remains unrolled and secured, creatures may travel through it. Closing this portal is as simple as rolling up the *scroll*. From the entry point, the *scroll* looks like a piece of parchment from one side, a portal on the other. It has the same appearance on its destination end, though it cannot be rolled up and taken from that side.

Caster Level: 17th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, Scribe Scroll, *gate*; *Market Price:* 30,000 gp; *Weight:* 2 lbs.

Vortex Darts: At first glance, these weapons appear to be nothing more than barbed, steel darts. They function as *+3 darts*, and when they successfully hit a creature they spawn tiny planar gateways within its body. These gates channel electricity, fire, acid, and cold into the creature's body, dealing 3d4 points of damage to it one round after the successful hit. This damage counts as all four types of energy. A creature must have resistance to all four to gain any resistance to this damage. The *darts* are exceptionally durable and may be re-used if they are recovered after being thrown.

Caster Level: 9th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *acid arrow, cone of cold, fireball, lightning bolt*; *Market Price:* 10,000 gp; *Weight:* 1/2 lb.

CHAPTER TWO ·

Gates to Other Worlds

Portals provide easy access to distant realms, alien worlds, and strange planes. By the same token, they give creatures from those places access to your campaign world. This chapter addresses the role portals play in a campaign, how you can use them to add variety and new challenges to your game, and the rules that cover their operation and use. Game rules and mechanics derived from the d20 SRD are designated as **Open Game Content**. Non-rules related text in this section is designated as closed content.

Portals: The Basics

Put simply, a portal is any magical gateway that transports a person to a region that is normally impossible to reach with the two or three steps it takes to walk through it. A shining gate carved into a mountain leads to a land of fiery lakes and brass castles. A seemingly mundane dungeon corridor opens into a cave located at the peak of the world's tallest mountain. A secret door in a wizard's tower grants access to an isolated chamber carved into the earth hundreds of feet below the ground.

Opening a portal activates powerful magic that spawns a mystic connection between two places in time and space. Walking through the portal allows a creature to move along that connection to appear somewhere or somewhen else. Depending on the type of portal, it may appear as a mundane doorway, a radiant sphere of energy, or a stairway heading down into impenetrable darkness. Not all portals function alike. Some allow two-way travel. If you walk through a portal, you can simply turn around and head back through to return home. Others allow one-way trips, stranding travelers in the weird realms they lead to, while a few transform their users to grant them the ability to survive in alien environments. Only a fool takes a portal lightly. One step can lead to death, imprisonment, or worse.

Portal Types

Portals can be broken down into three basic types. While these types exhibit tremendous variation in their operations, traits, and functions, they share enough basic characteristics that all portals fall into one of these categories. Furthermore, when using the portal creation rules provided later in this chapter, the three types provide you with a foundation onto which you can add special abilities, unique effects, and other details to make

one portal different from another. Portals are powerful, rare items. As such, they tend to have highly individualized capacities and abilities. While they fall into a few general categories, the special traits and functions they can feature make two portals unlikely to share the same exact details.

The three basic portal types are:

Gateway: A typical portal that connects one world to another, a gleaming doorway or gate that when opened leads to somewhere or some-when else. Most DMs and players picture a gateway when they think of a portal to another plane.

Malignancy: A tear in the planes that allows one plane to slowly destroy the other. Creatures spontaneously transform into the invading plane's counterpart, the terrain and atmosphere changes and shifts, and so on. A malignancy is more than a portal. It is an attack on the very fabric of a plane's existence.

Mingling: A powerful correspondence between two planar locales that forms a bond between them. Over time, this bond grows so strong that a physical passage opens between the two points. A traveler could walk into a forest in his world and emerge on the other side in a different world if that forest was part of a mingling.

The various portal types are detailed below. They are given game rules, examples, and descriptions of how you can use them in your campaign.

Gateways: Doors to Anywhen

Gateways pass for plain, vanilla, dependable modes of transportation when compared to other portals. Gateways almost always appear as doorways, such as gates, doors, stairwells, and windows. Sometimes, they are designed to appear as mundane items. A gateway could be disguised as a painting of a woodland scene simply by placing a picture frame around it. A gateway designed as a secret door can prevent most casual snoops from stumbling across it.

Activating a gateway is simple and easy. A user needs only to open the gateway and step through it. The gateway forms a powerful magical correspondence between two points, allowing objects to travel between them simply by moving through the gateway's magical field.

To any observer, the gateway is simply a door that has a different world on the other side. Many cleverly designed gateways do not even appear magical. A simple dungeon door could be a gateway that leads to a chamber in a dungeon halfway across the continent or many levels deeper within the complex. This characteristic of gateways represents the only real danger in using them: A traveler could move through a portal, travel hundreds of miles, and not even realize it. Unlike other portals, gateways are simple, easy, and safe to use. The magic involved in creating them is relatively simple and limited, but it is also reliable and difficult to sever.

Gateways are the most likely of the portals to be built and used by intelligent races. After all, a wizard interested in building a portal wants a reliable doorway to another realm. A wormhole or a vortex might grant him access to more places, but they are also as likely to kill or strand him as they are to transport him to his desired destination. Gateways provide stable, reliable transportation between two distant points. Individual spellcasters may build them to facilitate travel to planes where they want to do research or where they can gather important materials and components necessary for their research. Civilizations that cultivate and harness magical talent may use them to form a limited rapid transit network. A kingdom's borders are much easier to defend if entire armies can step through a gateway and move from one city to another. Planar creatures that want to establish a beachhead on a world for conquest, trade, or diplomacy are likely to employ gateways.

Game Rules

Gateways are the simplest portals to use. To activate one, you need only physically move through it. Of course, gaining access to a gateway is not always as simple as opening a door. Some of them are disguised with secret doors, concealed to appear as mirrors or dead-end corridors, or unable to operate until the correct key is used to activate them. Still, as far as the game rules are concerned, a gateway is simply a door

that, when entered, leads a character to some time or place other than that which physically lies on the other side of it.

The one important thing to consider about a gateway is how it activates. Some gateways function when a door opens, a gate parts, or a key is turned in a lock. Others operate constantly, requiring users to simply step through them to travel to the other side. Otherwise, a gateway has no special rules. You can add more details and abilities to a gateway, such as a locking mechanism or spells that trigger when the gateway activates, with the rules given later in this section.

In Your Game

As the basic type of portal, gateways can fill a wide range of roles in your campaign. Civilizations with a high degree of magical expertise may use them to transport important officials and materials. A skilled magician might construct gateways for clients willing to pay his fees, allowing prosperous merchants to construct treasure chambers accessible only through a gate and resourceful villains to build escape tunnels that lead hundreds of miles away. Divine spellcasters might erect gateways to their deities' realms. The important temples in a city or region could have direct access to a god's court, allowing demons, angels, and other outsiders to counsel their followers and provide them with material support. The characters could break into an evil temple only to find a horde of devils pouring from a gateway to deal with them. In such a world, religions might command great respect and authority because of their access to outsiders and their willingness to turn to the planes for aid.

As a rule of thumb, the more gateways present in your world the more likely that travel is easier and that outsiders can influence everyday events. However, keep in mind that constructing a gateway is no easy task. As the rules for creating portals (presented later in this chapter) illustrate, only powerful spellcasters have the talent and resources needed to create them. Thus, even if the knowledge necessary to create gateways is relatively common, they are likely limited in use. Only the richest, most powerful groups and NPCs in your campaign world can afford to build them. Since gateways provide static access between two points, their inflexibility can limit the impact they have on your game world.

For example, a nation ruled by powerful wizards may use gateways to explore distant planes and strange continents. The characters could use these gateways to visit many strange settings, helping to expand the vistas of adventure you can present in your game, but the gateways' limited size, hidden nature, and relative inaccessibility prevents these gateways from having a major impact on your world. The wizards restrict access to the explorers they hire, and the gates themselves may be the size of a typical doorway, too small to allow large numbers of creatures to easily use them. Most important of all, the wizards could design emergency measures with which the gates can be easily destroyed.

Malignancies: Cancers of the Planes

While a malignancy is rather easy to use to travel from one area to another, it is perhaps the most dangerous, threatening kind of portal. A malignancy develops when the planar binding between two realities deteriorates. If this decay causes the two planes to meld into one another but stops before it can run out of control, a mingling (see below) arises. Otherwise, the interplay of energies between the two planes causes an imbalance in energy. One plane slowly gathers more power and through natural, arcane processes repairs the rift by absorbing the raw material of the plane it has mingled with. Over time, one plane is slowly destroyed, its material absorbed into the other plane. Known as a malignancy, this effect is sometimes used by vile creatures and civilizations to extend their domain to different worlds. Since a malignancy alters a plane's environment to match the invading realm's characteristics, it creates a beachhead suitable for use by invading outsiders and other creatures that may be unable to survive outside of their home plane.

A malignancy takes a variety of forms, depending on its severity. The most minor, and most common, malignancies alter a local area within a plane to match the invading realm's terrain, creatures, and atmosphere. After converting a few square miles, the malignancy dissipates as enough energy and matter has been spent to heal the rift between the planes. This phenomenon produces bizarre, seemingly nonsensical terrain such as patches of boiling water in the midst of an ocean, stony mountains honeycombed with caves rising from a desert

plain, or massive, persistent storms that prevent travel and render the land a wind-scoured waste.

Other malignancies cause much more radical, dangerous conditions. Horrid creatures spawn from the air itself, generated by the malignancy's transforming properties or ripped from one world and cast into another. Cities crumble into haunted ruins in a matter of moments, while terrible storms of magical energy blast and scar the land.

Each malignancy displays unique physical effects, but they all follow the same general patterns. Pulsating waves of energy surge forth from a central point, the heart of the malignancy. These waves appear as incandescent walls of energy, and sometimes they cause additional effects such as a momentary pause in the flow of time. As the wave passes, it randomly alters creatures and materials. Generally speaking, the less intelligent the creature the more likely it is to be transformed. Theoreticians have long debated the nature of this distinction, and most agree that simple creatures are more likely to lose hold of their identity in the face of a malignancy's alterations.

Over time, the malignancy's reach extends to cover a greater and greater area. Unless someone completes the *ritual of mending*, it can grow to cover hundreds of square miles or even engulf an entire planet.

A malignancy generates many portals between the planes, mostly between the two worlds that are caught within it, though sometimes the planar stress generates pathways to distant worlds and realms. Many of these portals resemble gateways and minglings, but others are products of the malignancy's transforming powers. As the boundaries between planes diminish, a traveler can literally walk from one plane to another. The malignancy replaces one plane's material with the other's, permanently binding them together.

Sometimes, this replacement allows a creature to visit a few points within the invading plane. For example, a malignancy could replace a lake in a lush, forest world with a rocky crater from a desert one. A creature from the forest world would see a crater in the place where the lake once stood. If it walked into the crater, it would unwittingly enter the desert plane and would

have to cope with that realm's physical characteristics. It could still see its home plane bordering the crater, but it could interact with any creatures from the desert world that stood within it. To return home, it would simply have to walk out of the crater. Other times a malignancy allows only a one-way trip. The creature from the forest world would be trapped in the desert plane as soon as it stepped into the crater. The terrain surrounding the crater would, to its eyes, waver and shift, seemingly transforming into the desert world.

GAME RULES

The primary danger a malignancy poses lies in its ability to alter and change terrain and creatures. The first step you must take in designing these portals is to look at the conditions and terrain within the dominant plane, the one that is invading and altering the weaker realm. Chapter 3 includes extensive rules for designing strange worlds and mysterious planar realms. Use the environmental effects listed there to construct the regions that have been altered by the malignancy, drawing on the invading plane's characteristics to help you decide on what options to use.

For example, a desert world invading a forest realm would leave the wooded areas as little more than withered, dead stands of trees sticking out of the slowly rising sands. The temperature would become searing hot, even if the forest world is gripped in winter, while sandstorms would frequently arise to plague travelers. Make a list of the planar traits that you want to use to reflect the invading realm's characteristics.

Depending on the malignancy's strength, its transforming storms could happen as infrequently as once per week or as often as once per hour. The stronger the storm, the more often it manifests. Each time a storm appears, apply the effects of one of the invading plane's traits to the area of the malignancy. As the wave of energy spreads, it immediately transforms the world around it. Usually, the victim plane's terrain is completely altered and replaced but in some places vestiges of it may remain. A city may be reduced to ruins, a stand of trees turned into charred logs, and so on. Creatures of the animal or plant types within the storm's area of effect must make Intelligence checks (DC 10 or higher, see

41

Sample Malignancy Sizes

Type	Storm Rate	Transformation DC	Growth Rate
Minor	1/month	10	+1/2 mile radius/month
Average	1/week	12	+1 mile radius/week
Major	1/day	15	+1 mile radius/5 days
Apocalyptic	1/hour	20	+1 mile radius/day

the sample malignancy table) or be immediately transformed into random monsters native to the invading plane and with the same or fewer Hit Dice. As with the planar traits, make a list of creatures and monsters native to the invading plane and use them to replace animals that fail their checks.

Malignancies spread at variable rates depending on their strength. The stronger the malignancy, the faster it covers the land. A powerful malignancy can cover a kingdom in a matter of weeks, but most take a few months to extend more than a few miles in any direction. Usually, a malignancy stabilizes after reaching this size but in extreme cases, or when an intelligent creature intentionally creates and cultivates a malignancy, it can grow far larger.

Halting a Malignancy: A malignancy can be stopped but not reversed with the use of the *ritual of mending.* This powerful magical formula draws on ambient energies of the entire victim plane, rather than the local area affected by the malignancy, to repair the rift. Any spellcaster capable of casting 4th-level or higher spells can learn and use the ritual. It takes 10 days minus the caster's Intelligence modifier to learn the ritual's formula. Once a caster has learned it, he can use it whenever he fulfills its requirements.

Completing the ritual requires that a caster expend 20 total levels of spells. The caster must spend one hour meditating on the ritual's mystic formula, at which time he expends the spell slots or prepared spells totaling 20 levels. Spells expended in this manner have no effect and casters who must prepare spells need not do so for the day in order to use the ritual. After completing this preparation, the caster must scribe a complex, geometric pattern using 10,000 gp of diamond, mithral, or gold dust on the ground within the malignancy. This takes two hours of work, and if the caster is disturbed in any manner he must make a Concentration check (DC 15). If he fails,

the ritual attempt fails and the caster must start over from the beginning. If the caster completes the ritual, the malignancy stabilizes. The energy storms causing the changes cease and the zone of change stops growing. In 2d4 days, all gateways spawned by the malignancy close permanently, severing the connection between the two planes and restoring balance to the cosmic firmament.

Creating a Malignancy: Some vile, aggressive races and deities use malignancies as a way to conquer entire worlds, expand their holdings, and smash their enemies. Spawning a malignancy is no easy task. The spells *wish* and *miracle* can be used to weaken the planar bindings between worlds, causing the slow leak of energy that characterizes a malignancy. A spellcaster must cast *wish* or *miracle* for 10 consecutive days, each day focusing on the same point, the same target plane, and the desired effect. The actual phrasing of the request is contained with the *Codex of Infinite Bindings*, a long-lost tome supposedly penned by a rogue godling who stole the secrets of the multiverse's construction. After completing these spells, the caster creates a minor malignancy between two worlds, the one he currently occupies and a target plane of his choice. For every 10 additional, consecutive days he performs this ceremony, he increases the malignancy's severity by one category as per the sample malignancy sizes table.

Very few spellcasters have successfully created a malignancy in this manner. The gods are loath to allow such actions. Only evil deities grant such a *miracle* and lawful evil gods are 75% likely to deny the spell's effects.

In Your Game

Malignancies can serve as an excellent source of villains, an unexpected incursion of planar monsters, and an environmental threat that could unravel the very fabric of the world. A malignancy that appears in the midst of a city or similarly populated area can cause tremen-

dous damage as strange monsters wander the streets, the buildings and streets shift and change, and so on. The real key to using this portal lies in your ability to weave an interesting, strange environment. A malignancy bends and twists the world, creating a unique backdrop for adventures as the characters enter the malignancy to find its source. The other issues to look at include the malignancy's genesis, the plane that spawned it, and the long-term impact it may have on your game world. This section addresses each of these topics.

The malignancy's source determines the nature of the creatures and environmental changes that it heralds. If a fiery, hell-blasted world intrudes into your campaign setting, it produces searing heat, windstorms, and other effects. As mentioned above in the game rules section, make a list of the traits found in the invading plane that bleed over into its target. After deciding on these traits, you need to think about how to present them in your adventures. Does reality shimmer, melt, and transform before the party's eyes? Is the change more subtle, with the sun setting on an unaltered landscape but rising on one hideously warped by the malignancy's magic? In addition, consider how creatures spontaneously transform into invading monsters. Clusters of energy may appear in thin air, growing into a roiling mass that spawns a creature. In other cases, terrestrial plants and animals may slowly undergo a twisting process that transforms them. The malignancy transformation table summarizes a few different options you can use to describe these effects.

If the characters are caught in an area as it transforms, they are safe from any harm due to the process of the changes but they may have to suddenly deal with a dangerous environment. For example, characters walking down a wooded path may suddenly find themselves in the midst of a lake. Generally speaking, it is poor form to force the characters into any lethal situations due to the changes. The players cannot guess what the terrain is going to change into. Drowning the party's fighter and cleric in a lake that suddenly appears beneath them is unfair and arbitrary.

However, that does not mean that the changes should pose no threat. Instead, modify the threat so that the characters have a chance to survive. Instead of a deep lake, the PCs are caught in a flash flood and must leap into nearby trees or find high ground before they are swept away.

You can use the random terrain manifestation table to create unexpected environmental threats for the characters to face. Generally speaking, a sudden transformation should require a saving throw (DC 15) or an ability check (DC 10) to avoid its drawbacks. Since ability score bonuses do not rise with level as fast as saves, the DC for them is lower. The drawback a characters suffers on a failed check or save should be appropriate to a trap with a CR 1 or 2 lower than the party's level. At this level, the sudden changes are dangerous and sap the party's strength, but they do not pose the prospect of killing characters or overwhelming the party.

Malignancy Transformation Table

d%	Effect
1–10	The world melts and shifts, transforming into protoplasmic goop that arranges itself into the invading plane's terrain.
11–20	Observers experience a brief blackout as time stops, the world rearranges itself, and time flows forward once again.
21–30	Observers are suddenly caught in a black, timeless void. They feel as if they are falling through empty space, when suddenly the altered environment snaps into being around them.
31–40	For a brief moment, any observers see the invading plane's terrain around them. These flickers grow longer and more frequent, until they finally end with the new terrain in place.
41–50	As soon as the characters look away from a site, it transforms. Even in the briefest moment a location remains out of sight, it changes.
51–60	The change appears like a stain spreading across the terrain. The ground shifts, plants and animals transform in an instant, and the invading world overwrites its target.
61–70	A powerful storm of energy batters the land. Any terrain struck by its powerful waves slowly changes, with each burst of energy pushing the transformation closer to completion.
71–80	The world grows fuzzy and indistinct, as if the characters squint-

ed their eyes. After a few moments, everything grows clear again but has been transformed.

81–90 A shrill, piercing noise slowly builds in volume. Even magical or mundane means to block it out, such as a *silence* spell, fail to diminish its effects. All Listen checks suffer a –1 circumstance penalty per minute the noise persists. After 30 minutes, the noise ends with a thunderous crack. At that moment, the world changes around the characters. As the planes collide and change, the effects of the transformation manifest as sonic energy.

91–100 The ground and terrain shudder and move like living organisms. For a brief moment, they lose all color and shape before snapping into the form of the invading plane's terrain.

A malignancy's source can drive a campaign's plot or dictate the enemies the party must overcome in order to stop it from overwhelming their world. A villain, especially one with a strong link to an alien world or plane, could create one as a convenient beachhead into the PCs' homelands. Outsiders from elemental planes, demons, devils, and other strange monsters may feel most comfortable in an extreme environment that can prove deadly to humanoids. For example, fire elementals thrive in searing hot areas. Human and elf warriors might not even be able to engage the fiery invaders if their lands are consumed in flames and lava.

If the source of the malignancy is a villain or spellcaster, the characters may have to defeat him in order to prevent its spread. The villain may have a copy of the ritual needed to undo the malignancy. Otherwise, the malignancy could be a natural effect that runs out of control. The PCs may mistake the alien monsters that arrive through it as invaders, when in fact those creatures are as afraid of the malignancy as the characters. If the PCs can overcome their mistrust and anger towards the "invaders" they can ally with them to heal the rift. Finding the ritual needed to repair the damage may require the characters to depart on an epic quest across the planes to uncover it.

In terms of your campaign world, a malignancy can herald the arrival of a major new threat to peace and stability. Outsiders, elementals,

and even strange humanoids and animals from another world can swamp an unprepared region in a matter of days. If the malignancy erupts in an isolated area, many weeks or even months could pass before anyone notices it. By that time, plenty of creatures could have passed through the planar veil, while the malignancy may have had enough time to transform a wide swath of territory. Imagine a malignancy that erupts in the midst of a lonely forest deep within an empire. Within a few months, a previously peaceful area of the realm, far from the dangerous borderlands, could be besieged by hordes of planar beasts swarming from the portals the malignancy created. The characters may investigate what seems like a simple incursion of undead or outsiders, only to find that the creatures were spawned by something that could threaten the entire world.

The malignancy does not necessarily have to link your campaign world to a place that spawns terrible, dangerous monsters or that seeks conquest and bloodshed. The world on the other side of this portal could be a peaceful place that wants to stop the malignancy from spreading. In this case, the characters must work with the denizens of the other world to find the *ritual of mending*. As mentioned above, the first barrier the PCs face is learning to trust what seems like a dangerous foe. In addition, NPCs from the PCs' homeworld may lobby for war or insist that only an invasion into the interloping world can halt the malignancy.

For campaigns that center on roleplaying and politics, this can provide a critical issue of contention between the PCs and their rivals. Remember that in this case, the characters' enemies could be good-aligned or even members of the PCs' churches and other organizations. Afraid for their land's survival and worried that a mistake could doom them all, these NPCs could fight long and hard to block the characters' efforts in favor of a shortsighted, fruitless plan. The NPCs are not necessarily stupid or evil. They may simply be frightened or unable to see the wisdom of aiding the creatures from beyond the malignancy. To them, the portal's effects are a sure sign of the invaders' evil plans.

Even after a malignancy has passed, its effects still remain on the campaign world. A once lush, verdant area could be transformed into a

rocky, parched ruin. A city is turned into a weird edifice of odd architecture, strange design, and unfathomable geometry. Monsters and animals spawned by the malignancy remain and perhaps successfully breed new generations, giving you a ready source of new creatures to add to your campaign world. A malignancy is a handy way to permanently introduce changes to your campaign world or add new threats to it.

Minglings: Hidden Paths Between Worlds

In isolated villages at the edge of civilization, the peasants whisper of the strange old wood. Despite the heat or cold, the trees are always shrouded in mist. Sometimes, adventurers wander into the forest and return with strange tales of impossible vistas such as oceans that appear just beyond the thickest stands of trees, soaring mountains that reach to the sky, and even stranger sights. Others never come back at all. Yet, for every explorer who stumbles into an otherworldly domain, dozens return to town bored, tired, and frustrated.

Most sages write off the fantastic stories as a crude ploy to win fame and attention or the fevered dreams of an inexperienced traveler who ate the wrong type of mushroom. However, a few take careful note of the traveler's reports and correlate their tales with descriptions of distant planes and worlds. These sages know that in some areas, a strange confluence of geometry, mystical energies, and geography can combine to create a persistent, if unpredictable, portal between worlds. In some regions, a traveler can enter a forest on one world and emerge from the other side on a different plane or alien world. Known as minglings of the planes or mingling portals, these geographical features are invariably infested with a wide manner of strange phenomena and creatures, making them not only difficult to employ for planar travel but dangerous to inhabit.

A mingling arises when two planes share a strong bond or correlation centered on a specific location or geographical feature. Often, a mingling features multiple pathways to many different realms. A mountain cave burrows into the earth and has side pas-

sages that branch out to the plane of earth, a demon haunted forest, and the court of a chaos lord. In the middle of a great ocean, a whirlpool sucks ships down to a hole in the ocean floor and out to the green waters of a distant world.

Most minglings are difficult to use, as the pathways one must walk to cross the planes within them are not always obvious. While a cave or mountain pass offers only one route, a forest or the convoluted streets of a city holds many different pathways a traveler can follow, with only a few distinct paths opening gateways to other worlds and planes. Decoding these trails is an arduous task that requires an extensive knowledge of the planes, magic, and geometry.

Minglings are mazes of planar energies that can lead you almost anywhere. A mingling that persists in a city block may require you to walk around a building five times clockwise, enter a specific doorway, walk up a set of stairs, then enter a closet and close the door behind you. When you open the door, you find yourself in a closet at a castle hundreds of miles away or on a different world. Minglings are sometimes notoriously difficult to use, making them easy to overlook and favored by creatures that want to secretly move between the planes.

Usually, a mingling exhibits a few strange magical traits. A persistent mist may cling to the land, regardless of the weather conditions. The air is always a little hotter than normal, while spontaneous magical effects may duplicate simple arcane and divine spells such as *ghost sound* or *dancing lights*. The confluence of planar energy that creates a mingling can spawn a wide variety of ambient magical effects.

A mingling can be rather easy to destroy if you understand the conditions that created it. In the example above, the building's exact position and configuration create a strong affinity between it and the distant locale to which it can transport travelers. Altering the building, even doing something as simple as adding a window or boarding up a door, could sever the connection. Minglings are almost two-way gates, as the affinity between the two locations creates portals on both ends. Walking through a mingling gives a traveler no special knowledge of how to get back, and solving the riddle of the return trip can prove a daunting task.

GAME RULES

Minglings require few special rules for their construction, as they follow the same basic rules as gateways. However, learning to use a mingling in the game is a much more daunting task than deciphering a gateway's function.

To determine the pathway to follow in order to use a mingling, you must make a Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 30) and spend at least one day exploring the mingling's area. In addition, you need to use several spells to find the threads of energy that reveal the mingling's pattern. During the day in which you attempt your Knowledge (arcana) check, you must cast *detect magic* four times, *see invisibility* twice, and *true seeing* once. This spread of spells allows you to identify the mingling's auras, analyze them, and determine their underlying workings. You do not gain any special knowledge of where the mingling may take you, but you do learn how to activate it. Note that you do not necessarily need to prepare or cast the spells yourself. You can use magic items, such as potions or scrolls, to duplicate their effects. However, the same person must make the skill check and cast the spells. Make your Knowledge (arcana) check after expending the spells.

Not all minglings have such stringent requirements for their use. From the examples given above, the cave mingling shows that some of these portals are as easy to use as a gateway. A traveler needs only walk through a cave or enter a forest to use it. These minglings are found in equal number as their more complex cousins, but they are typically formed by natural terrain. Forests, caves, caverns, mountain passes, ocean currents, and even patterns of boulders strewn across a field can create the affinity necessary for a mingling.

When designing a mingling, the first step is to determine if you want it to be a complex, difficult to use portal or one that a traveler can stumble into. As mentioned above, the simpler a mingling the more likely that it consists of natural terrain features. Minglings should also connect two places that have similar features and layouts. For example, a mingling should connect a forest in one world to a stand of trees in another. That stand could be in the mountains, in a desert oasis, or in a city park, but the general terrain should be the same.

The mingling causes a gradual shift between worlds, causing most travelers to overlook the portal's operation. There is no one specific point at which the worlds meet. Rather, there is a zone of shared space that a traveler can walk through to go from one world or plane to another. Designating this shared zone is the second most important part of creating a mingling. Generally speaking, that shared zone should have the same exact layout in the two worlds. Depending on how the characters leave a shared zone, they may end up in a different world. You can designate that walking east from it leads to one world, while walking north leads to another. Otherwise, you could use a random method to determine where the PCs show up.

A mingling can also feature multiple portals to different areas. A forest might feature a multitude of shared zones within its bounds, leading travelers to may distant worlds. With a few days of walking, a group of adventurers could unwittingly travel through dozens of planes and worlds.

Since a mingling represents a nexus of arcane energies, the physical features that comprise it should have a few planar traits. A forest might be unseasonably cold, while a lake features unusually powerful winds. Undead might dwell within a graveyard that has a connection to a world dominated by the living dead, and so on. Refer to Chapter 3 for information on planar traits and their game rules. Using more than two or three traits is probably overkill, and remember that a mingling is above all else subtle. While a malignancy links two planes with thunderous energy and sudden, traumatic changes, a mingling works by creating an enduring but simple link between them. The effects spawned by it may be strange, but they can usually be explained as natural, though rare, occurrences.

In Your Game

A mingling is the perfect way to lure the characters into a distant world or alien plane without their knowledge. What starts as a simple excursion into a forest takes a decidedly strange turn when the characters retrace their steps and discover that the village they expected to find no longer exists. Since minglings are so subtle, they are easy to overlook. Not only are the characters likely to miss this portal type's operation, so too are the NPCs and spellcasters in the campaign world. Consider the introduction to this section. The villagers consider the forest an odd place, and the strange events there give it a sinister reputation that causes most of them to avoid it. Most sages write the place off as nothing more than an overblown legend, with few of them suspecting anything involving actual planar travel.

With that in mind, a mingling is unlikely to have an enduring, long-term impact on a campaign world. Chances are that such a portal has been overlooked by the powers that be. Minglings are difficult to locate, as even travelers who use them might not be able to exactly locate the point at which they moved from one world to another.

Furthermore, a group of travelers could use a mingling, enter a distant world, and never realize it if they lack the maps and navigational tools necessary to determine their location. If the mingling is in the middle of a wilderness area, the similarity between the departure and arrival points may trick explorers into missing the portal's effects. Obviously, encountering weird monsters or noticing that two or more suns are in the sky are dead giveaways that something strange is happening, but a traveler's first guess is unlikely to be that

he slipped through a portal and arrived in a distant world. Many travelers may simply add the alien plane's terrain to their maps and assume that they have discovered an area infused with weird magic or under the effects of some ancient spell.

A mingling allows you to inject a sense of the strange, the mysterious, and the unexpected into an adventure. The characters could be walking through what looks like a mundane landscape, only to find themselves in the midst of a bizarre world or dealing with a mob of dangerous outsiders. The best worlds to link to your campaign setting via a mingling are those with subtle but important changes. When designing the destination world, focus on the planar traits from Chapter 3 that emphasize subtle changes. Change a race's standard alignment, alter how magic works, sever contact with the gods, or add environmental effects that are dangerous, drain resources, or alter how the characters can use their spells and abilities. By using the mundane as a foundation, you can introduce changes that catch the characters by surprise and drive the players to distraction trying to figure out what has happened to them.

When presenting a mingling during a game session, decide if you want to even bother adding any hints as to its presence. With the physical correspondence present in a mingling, most of the simple portals function silently and seamlessly. Obviously, the portals that require elaborate ceremonies and actions are tough to mask. You could present the actions as part of a magical formula that alters reality, catapults the user forward or backward in time, or allows him to perceive the spirit world that exists around the material realm. If the PCs suspect that the NPCs they meet on a plane are ghosts or figments of their imagination, it can lead to some interesting (and possibly comical) role-playing.

PORTAL ABILITIES

No two portals are exactly alike. The magical skill required to create them and the natural processes that sometimes spawn them are complex enough to allow for a wide range of gateways, passages, and doors. Gates

designed to allow travel to a specific realm or world usually incorporate spells and abilities designed to aid travelers. A portal to a realm inhabited by storm giants may grant its users the ability to understand the giants' language. Naturally occurring portals sometimes have odd, random effects on their users. A portal to the elemental plane of fire may transform someone who uses it into a salamander for the duration of his visit.

This section details the basic characteristics of portals that you need to define, along with a variety of abilities and enhancements you can give them. Many of these abilities are meant to make it easier for the characters to use a portal or journey to the planes. Lower-level parties in particular can run into trouble because they lack the magical spells needed to survive a dangerous environment, communicate with the local creatures, and so on. The portal traits can help overcome such obstacles.

Basic Traits

All portals have several traits that describe how they operate.

Size

A portal's size covers the physical dimensions of objects that can fit through it. A portal functions for any creature or object with a size less than or equal to its listed size. For example, a Large portal functions for anything of size Large, Medium, Small, Tiny, or Fine.

Operation

This trait describes how a portal functions. Some portals use magic to form a physical link between two locations, while others *teleport* their users. There are three operation types: blink, open, and projection.

Blink: A blink portal *teleports* those who walk through it. A traveler enters the portal and suddenly appears at the destination it leads to. Usually, these portals are designed to link two rooms or similar locations, though one-way blink portals can deposit their users almost anywhere. Ranged attacks do not function through a blink portal.

Open: An open portal works a lot like a physical door that connects two rooms. It creates a passageway that allows objects to move

between worlds, planes, or places without any restraint. From the user's point of view, he simply steps through the portal and emerges somewhere else. An observer standing on one side of an open portal can see into its destination area. Spells, missile weapons, and other ranged attacks can be used through an open portal unless it is one way. In that case, such attacks can only be used in the same direction as one-way travel through the portal.

Projection: Some portals work by casting a user's soul through the planes while keeping his body behind. These gateways may create a new body for the traveler to use or they may grant him a spectral, incorporeal form that protects him from harm while allowing him to explore and interact with the environment. A projection portal normally features one or more of the following traits: limited travel, spirit portal, or transformation.

Direction

Direction determines whether a portal can be used for a round-trip journey or if provides travel in only one direction. The two basic descriptors for this trait are one-way and two-way.

One-Way: The portal allows travel in only one direction. A one-way portal that connects point A to B allows travel only from A to B, not the reverse. If a creature steps through the portal, it must find a different way to return home. Ranged attacks are impossible through these portals. Blink portals are one-way.

Two-Way: These portals function in both directions. A two-way portal that connects points A and B allows travel from A to B and from B to A. Ranged attacks are possible through these portals. Open portals are one-way.

Destination

Obviously, a portal must lead somewhere. Some portals connect directly to a second portal on their far ends, while others simply drop their users in the middle of a world without any obvious sign that a portal exit lies near. The characters could step out of an elaborate, carefully constructed portal or materialize in the middle of an open field.

Traits

Portals are designed by a wide range of races and cultures. Furthermore, they provide access to realms and worlds beyond count. Thus, they offer a tremendous number of options for designing and using them. A portal that leads to a submerged realm may give its users the ability to breathe under water, while one that connects to a world populated by orcs might transform its users into those humanoids. Few portals are designed without regard to the realms they lead to, leading wizards and artificers to tailor their creations with special traits and abilities. Each trait includes a short commentary on how you can use it in your game and the role it fulfills.

Disarming: A portal with this trait is usually designed to foil attackers or ensure a site's security. When a creature moves through this gate, it must make a Will save (DC 25) or all of its equipment, including weapons and armor, is transported to a secondary location such as a holding cell, treasure vault, or similar location. The creature arrives in the portal's destination area stark naked. On a successful save, the creature holds on to his equipment, but the portal fails to operate for him. Anyone using this gate may opt to automatically fail this saving throw in order to travel through it.

In Your Campaign: A disarming portal presents a daunting challenge to the party. While it might take them where they want to go, they have to risk adventuring in the new realm without their equipment. Generally speaking, it is a bad idea to take away the characters' gear for too long a time. After all, they have fought hard to acquire their items and deserve to use them. Throw a few encounters at the PCs that they must overcome without their items, but be sure to let them reclaim their items soon after using the portal. Make sure that the encounters include nothing that can permanently harm the PCs, such as poison, level drain, and similar effects that could be prevented or cured with their items. Otherwise, you risk frustrating the players with a seemingly capricious encounter designed to "cheat" by taking away their stuff then hitting them with a tough monster.

Limited Access: A trait favored by clerics who erect portals to their deity's realm, a limited access portal can only be employed by creatures who meet certain prerequisites, such as alignment and race. Creatures

who do not meet these requirements cannot use the gate. Usually, they are either prevented from entering it or it simply fails to activate when they walk through it. In either case, only creatures who meet this trait's requirements may travel via the portal.

In some cases, the limited access trait causes a portal to react differently based on who enters it. If a creature fails to meet the activation requirements, the portal could send him into a prison, a location far from the portal's location, or some other inconvenient place. A portal to a god's planar fortress may send non-believers to a prison block where they are questioned and punished for trespassing.

The limited access trait can define characteristics a creature must have, or it can list those that a creature cannot have. For example, a gate may be designated to work only for good creatures or it may work for ones that are not evil. In the latter case, good and neutral creatures could activate the gate.

The limited access trait can be overcome by anyone who makes a successful Use Magic Device check to emulate or mask his alignment, race, or other characteristics. Consult that skill's description for the appropriate DCs and other guidelines. On a failed check, the portal fails to operate as normal.

In Your Campaign: A limited access gate provides a convenient escape route for villains, a ready explanation for why temples could build planar gates without fear of monsters or other threats seizing them, or a puzzle that forces the characters to find some item to allow them through a portal. The requirements to use a portal with this trait can extend to the objects a character carries, a password that must be spoken, a sequence of hand signs, and other keys to "unlock" a portal.

Limited Charges: Some portals are designed to allow only a few creatures at a time to use them. These portals usually connect to dangerous or monster-infested regions. By placing a limit on how many creatures can use the portal, the designers help ensure that it cannot be used for a mass incursion or invasion. A portal with this trait allows a fixed maximum number of creatures to use it over a certain time period.

Once this limit is reached, the portal fails to function until the time limit expires. For example, a portal could allow six users per day, 12 per week, one per year, and so on.

A limited charges portal can also be given a hard limit on the number of times it can be used before its magic expires. These one-shot gates are used to ensure that once a small number of creatures have made a planar journey, nothing can follow their path.

In Your Campaign: This trait is a handy way to force the characters to journey to a plane without dragging along dozens of retainers and helpers. If you see a portal to another world as important only for an adventure or two, you can use this trait to explain why the gate ceases to function once your campaign heads in a different direction. Limited charges also force the PCs to budget their use of a portal rather than run back home to heal and rest at the slightest sign of trouble. In addition, you can use this trait as the centerpiece behind an adventure where the characters must return home after using a gate. The PCs could enter a gate they have used many times before only to find that it has stopped working when they try to return home. You can also use it to split up the party, but be sure that the dangers beyond it are appropriate to the splinter group's strength and that any PCs who did not make the journey still have something to do.

Limited Duration: A common trait used to control access to a portal, limited duration causes a portal to function only during certain hours of the day or on precise days of the year. For example, a portal that leads to a temple's sacred burial ground may only open from sundown to midnight during the city's day of the dead to allow only the high priests to gain access to the revered dead. Other portals have this trait to confound burglars, keep creatures trapped within certain areas, and so on. A vampire caught behind a portal that opens when the sun shines upon it is effectively trapped, barring supernatural assistance. Limited duration portals may work on regular schedules. A dwarf clan may use a portal to travel to distant mines, but the gateway only opens in the morning and evening when the dwarves go to and from work, respectively.

In Your Campaign: This trait is a fun way to introduce a time pressure into an adventure,

with the characters scrambling to complete a goal or defeat a villain before they are forced back to their home plane. Usually, players prefer to make slow and steady progress in an adventure to ensure that they can heal up and prepare spells between encounters. With a time limit hanging over their heads, they must take more risks and work to budget their time. Nothing is quite as tense, fun, and memorable as racing to defeat a dragon, grabbing a lost artifact, and rushing back to a gate before it closes. If a gate has already closed, the party might have to fight off waves of attackers to buy enough time before it opens again. The tension mounts as the PCs suffer more damage, spells run low, and potions dwindle, all while they desperately wait for the portal to open.

Limited Travel: Some portals allow only a limited view into their destination worlds. These portals allow a user to project his senses to a distant location, scanning an area with his vision or listening intently with his hearing. Sages interested in exploring the outer realms but who do not want to expose themselves to any dangers frequently use these portals, as they allow travel without any danger.

These gates are tied to sight, sound, or both senses. When a creature activates this portal, he physically remains in his current location. By concentrating, he can project his senses to the portal's destination. There, his senses work as normal and he gains the benefits of any special abilities, spells, or other effects that alter or improve them. The traveler manifests as a Diminutive, ectoplasmic sensor that has AC 14 and 1 hit point. This sensor counts as an incorporeal creature with a speed of 10 ft. It gains its user's saving throws and ability scores, but not his skill ranks or other abilities. In addition, the sensor is utterly incapable of making attacks or casting spells. If the sensor is destroyed, its user suffers 2d4 points of damage and cannot use that specific portal again for 1d6 days. A character using a limited travel portal can sever the connection to his sensor as a standard action. He can cast any spell through the sensor that can normally be used via *scrying*. Use the rules for spell use under that spell's description.

In Your Campaign: This portal is a good tool to allow the characters to visit a plane without exposing them to any real danger. It can serve as a useful plot device to show them a powerful threat they must one day face

or illustrate the hazards of planar travel. In some cases, these portals make the ultimate espionage device. A king could use a limited travel portal in his castle to allow his secret police to observe visitors safely and silently. A villain could use this gate to watch the characters fight his underlings, learning of their tactics and abilities firsthand.

Spells: To help a traveler survive in the distant, alien planar realms, some portals bestow blessings, enhancements, and other spells upon their users. When the portal activates and sends a person to its destination, it can also automatically cast several spells upon him. For example, a portal to the elemental plane of water may cast *water breathing* on its users. Other commonly used spells include *endure elements, fly, bull's strength,* and similar magic.

A spell is cast by a gate at its creator's caster level. You can tailor this level so that the spells last long enough to play a role in an adventure. For example, if you want the PCs to go to a watery realm where they must act fast before their *water breathing* spells elapse, you can give this effect a low caster level. Usually, though, these spells are cast as a 15th or higher level caster, as creating a portal is a daunting task normally undertaken by only the mightiest wizards, clerics, and sorcerers.

In Your Campaign: This trait is a handy way to give the party access to dangerous regions at low levels. Otherwise, it can help free up spellcasters' abilities for use in encounters rather than as maintenance to keep the party alive in a dangerous area. Sometimes adventures in aquatic, searing hot, or other dangerous areas can be overwhelmed by the bookkeeping and maintenance of using spells like *endure elements* to keep the PCs going. This trait allows the players to concentrate on the adventure and the environment rather than on their spell lists.

Spirit Portal: Sometimes, a portal is built to allow observation and exploration without exposing its users to a plane's dangerous creatures and noxious environment. Known as spirit portals, these devices transport a spectral image of a traveler while keeping his body safe on his home plane. When a character enters a spirit portal, his body crumples to the ground. A Heal check (DC 15) reveals that he has dropped into a coma. In fact, the user's spirit arrives at his destination in an incorporeal

form, leaving his body behind. This form grants him several benefits:

- Incorporeal creatures can only be harmed by other incorporeal creatures, by +1 or better weapons, or by spells, spell-like effects, or supernatural effects. They are immune to all nonmagical attack forms. They are not burned by normal fires, affected by natural cold, or harmed by mundane acids.

- Even when struck by magic or magic weapons, an incorporeal creature has a 50% chance to ignore any damage from a corporeal source—except for a force effect

- Incorporeal creatures move in any direction (including up or down) at will. They do not need to walk on the ground.

- Incorporeal creatures can pass through solid objects at will, although they cannot see when their eyes are within solid matter.

- Incorporeal creatures are inaudible unless they decide to make noise.

- The physical attacks of incorporeal creatures ignore material armor, even magic armor, unless it is made of force or has the ghost touch ability.

- Incorporeal creatures pass through and operate in water as easily as they do in air.

- Incorporeal creatures cannot fall or suffer falling damage.

- Corporeal creatures cannot trip or grapple incorporeal creatures.

- Incorporeal creatures have no weight and do not set off traps that are triggered by weight.

- Incorporeal creatures do not leave footprints, have no scent, and make no noise unless they manifest, and even then they only make noise intentionally.

The traveler's ghostly form remains linked to his body. He must either travel back through the gate or use *wish, miracle,* or a similarly powerful magic to return to his normal state.

Most gates designed for this use are built to trigger when a user sits on a couch, chair, or throne with belts to keep his body secure while he travels. These gates always offer two-way travel. Moving back through the gate returns an

incorporeal traveler to his body. A creature that does not have a body waiting for it on the other side cannot use the return gate. Normally, the passage back through this gate has the limited access trait (see above) set to forbid travel to any creature that did not use the gate to enter the plane or location.

Damage against the user's incorporeal form and his physical body counts against his total hit points. His physical body is considered helpless, leaving it vulnerable to coup de grace attacks. If either the user's physical body or his incorporeal form is slain, he dies instantly.

In Your Campaign: While this trait allows only a limited form of travel, it can serve an important role in the campaign. The PCs may use a portal with this trait to explore a hostile environment, spy on a villain, or slip through a fortress's defenses. Usually, it is best to combine this trait with the time limit ability (described below) to prevent a clever player from permanently turning his character into an incorporeal being. A clever villain could use this gate as part of a hoax, passing himself off as undead and tricking the locals into thinking an area is haunted.

This portal can also set up some interesting roleplaying encounters. The PCs could use this portal to visit and negotiate with a powerful outsider. While incorporeal, they are immune to many attacks. If the NPC they visit is powerful enough that may not be sufficient protection, but it could be enough to force the NPC to at least hear them out before attacking. On the other hand, if an NPC uses this gate, the characters face a much stronger than normal foe. A gang of bandits could use one of these gates to rob and pillage the area around its exit point, forcing the party to track down the robbers' point of origin to defeat them.

Time Limit: A time limit portal offers the ultimate protection against unwelcome access or attacks by alien beings. Time limit portals are designed to force a creature to return back through them after a limited time elapses. Using the portal places a timed *teleport* effect on a creature. If a certain time limit passes before the creature passes through the portal on a return trip, this effect immediately transports him back through the portal whether he is willing or not. This effect functions as *teleport* cast by a 20th-level wizard. If an affected creature

dies before the duration elapses, his corpse (or whatever is left of it) is affected by this trait. This effect extends to any items that character carries, including living creatures. See *teleport* for full details.

The time limit portal's ability can be countered with *dispel magic* or similar effects if such spells are used before the time limit expires. The time limit's effect counts as a 9th-level spell cast by a 20th-level wizard. Alternatively, you can rule that the portal's limits cannot be counted in any manner.

In Your Campaign: The time limit trait is a useful control to add to other powerful gate abilities, such as time travel, spirit portal, and transformation. It allows you to bestow the characters with a potentially game-breaking advantage without worrying that it could play havoc with your entire campaign. Once the portal's time limit runs out, the characters return to normal. In addition, it adds an element of the uncertain to a portal if the PCs know that they have only a limited about of time to complete a mission or find an object on a portal's far side. The PCs must rush ahead to achieve their goals before the portal drags them back across the planes.

Time Travel: Not only does the portal allow travel to a different location, but it also sends users to a different time. These portals are either static or adjustable in operation. Static portals transport their users the same distance in time whenever they are used. Adjustable ones can be set to transport users to different time periods each time they are used. When designing a portal, note the distance in time that a static one transmits its users or the range of times that an adjustable one can be set to. An adjustable portal may allow its users to select from several different, specific time periods or it might allow him to designate the units of time forward or backward he wants to go. You may assign separate activation checks and costs to a portal's time travel abilities.

In Your Campaign: Time travel presents a host of unique problems and issues that you must resolve before using it in your campaign. Complete ideas and options for time travel are given later in this chapter on page 60.

Transformation: Sometimes, a portal leads to a realm that presents such a dangerous environment that its users must assume wholly new forms in order to survive. Portals with the transformation trait alter their users through a polymorph effect to give them new bodies adapted to their destination environment. Travelers bound for an airy realm may be given forms with wings, while those sent to a land of endless dark may gain darkvision or a similar ability. In any case, the portal's users emerge with new bodies. They retain these forms until they make the return trip back through the gateway.

A creature affected by this gateway may attempt to resist the change by making a Fortitude save (DC 25). Those that fail this save or willingly accept the change gain the benefits and drawbacks of their new form. To convert a creature that travels through one of these gates, follow a few simple steps.

The creature loses all benefits, drawbacks, and abilities it gains due to its race. This change may cause modifications to its ability scores, special abilities, and so forth.

After removing any abilities and modifiers linked to a creature's race, grant it all the modifiers, drawbacks, and abilities of its new form. A creature's alignment never changes, nor do any of the abilities it gains via class levels even if those levels are tied to a system of rules that allow a creature to gain levels in a monster type. The creature's equipment, including weapons and armor, changes to accommodate its new form. Items grow or shrink to remain the same relative size as the creature.

In Your Campaign: A portal with the transformation trait provides a memorable roleplaying experience as the PCs must adapt to their new forms, explore an alien world, and make use of the new abilities that their form grants them. The characters could slip into an enemy stronghold with their disguises, forcing them to play a dangerous game of cat and mouse as they work to uncover clues while maintaining their cover. Usually, these portals also include the whispers of knowledge trait to teach the characters how to use their abilities and manage their forms.

You can grant the PCs powerful forms, such as frost giants or dragons, as long as you scale encounters appropriately. Try pushing the limits of the d20 System and make a journey to another plane a memorable experience. If a portal has a time limit placed on it, you can go wild without fear of permanently altering your

campaign. Once the time limit elapses, the characters are pulled back through the portal and return to their normal forms.

Variable: Some portals exhibit different characteristics and traits each time they are used. Some of these portals can be reset to different settings via mechanical levers and buttons or through arcane manipulation. Other portals randomly acquire properties each time they are used, usually due to the gradual degradation of the magic that binds them and allows them to operate. In either case, a portal with the variable trait does not always act the same way from use to use.

The programmable version of this trait allows a user to add and subtract traits, set a new destination, and make other changes to a portals' operation. For example, a single trait could lead to a world dominated by orcs, the plane of fire, and a wizard's tower on the other side of the planet. Each destination may have a variety of traits attached to it. When a destination is selected, the portal automatically manifests traits useful for that locale. More advanced portals allow a user to select a destination and the traits he wants to use.

The erratic version of this trait causes a gate to acquire random traits each time it is used. To design a gate with this trait, make a list of traits and assign a flat percentage that the trait occurs for each use. When a creature moves through the gate, check to see which traits to apply for his trip. You can include one or two-way operation and destinations when randomly determining a portal's abilities. For the destination, make a list of the possible areas the portal can lead to and randomly pick one each time the portal activates.

In Your Campaign: This trait can play havoc with the players' plans, as they use a gate once and expect it to display the same characteristics every time they travel through it. Be careful, though, to avoid using this gate to arbitrarily kill the characters. A gate that randomly sends a character to the middle of a volcano might be funny, but it is likely to annoy the players and make them feel that your game is unfair and capricious. Focus on random aspects that could complicate the characters' lives without instantly killing them. For example, perhaps a portal to a world inhabited by frost giants transforms some of the characters into that race while granting knowledge of the giants' language to a few of the unaltered PCs. The players would have to be creative to come up with a plan that allows their characters to masquerade as giants. Think of similar situations where a few characters' gaining the benefits of portal traits could cause problems for the party and make adventures more interesting.

Vortex: A portal with this trait causes a planar imbalance that draws energy and matter into one end and out the other. To an observer, air and debris are sucked through the gate, while on the other side the gate blasts the area with a gale-force wind that knocks creatures down and showers them with material dragged through its maw. A portal with this trait has an entrance, where material is sucked into the gate, and an exit, where it is ejected. One-way portals always have their entrance where they open and their exit where they lead to.

At a vortex portal's entrance, planar energies drag objects toward and into the gate. A 5-ft.-wide open portal creates an area of suction with a 50-ft.-radius spread. For every additional 5 ft. of width, extend this spread by 20 ft. Creatures within this area must make Strength checks (DC 10) or be dragged 4d6 feet toward the portal. In addition, failure on this check reduces a creature's speed to 0 ft. for all movement modes other than burrowing and knocks the creature prone. A burrowing creature can escape by digging into the earth. Creatures that make this check may move at half speed but may not fly.

All inanimate objects are dragged toward the portal at a speed based on their weight. All objects move a base of 4d6 feet per round toward the portal. Reduce this speed by 1d6 for every 100 lbs. above 100 that the object weighs. For example, a 200-lb. object would move 3d6 feet toward the portal each round.

At the portal's exit, air and material drawn into the gate pour out of it and knock creatures and objects backward. A 5-ft.-wide open portal creates an area of repulsion with a 50-ft.-radius spread. For every additional 5 ft. of width, extend this spread by 20 ft. Creatures within this area must make Strength checks (DC 10) or be forced 4d6 feet away from the portal and be knocked prone. A character pushed out of the gate's area of effect completes any compulsory movement but is then free of

the gate's effects. On a failed check, a creature cannot move toward the gate unless it burrows. It can move in any other direction as normal. On a successful check, a creature can move toward the gate at half its normal speed, though it cannot fly in that direction.

All inanimate objects are pushed away from the portal at a speed based on their weight. All objects move a base of 4d6 feet per round away from the portal. Reduce this speed by 1d6 for every 100 lbs. above 100 that the object weighs. For example, a 200-lb. object would move 3d6 feet away from the portal each round. Once an object moves out of the gate's area, it is no longer subject to this effect.

A creature pulled into the gate is ejected from the other end. It must make a Strength check (DC 10) or be thrown 4d6 feet out of the gate's exit. On a successful check, the creature stumbles from the gate and appears next to it as normal. However, it must make Strength checks as normal to resist the gate's effects on subsequent rounds.

When the vortex gate blasts a creature away from its exit, you can either pick a likely destination for it or you can use the following random method. Start the creature's movement in a random square adjacent to the gate. Then, move it away from the gate by randomly selecting an adjacent square until the creature exhausts its movement. Always move the creature away from the gate. This random process should never allow the creature to move closer to the gate. If the creature hits a solid object, the creature and whatever it hits suffer damage as if they fell a distance equal to the total distance the creature moves. The creature's movement then ends. If it hit a living creature, its target must immediately make a Strength check (DC 10). If the moving creature is larger than the one it hit, its target must make this check with a –4 circumstance penalty per size category below the creature that struck it. If it is larger, it gains a +4 circumstance bonus per size category above the creature that struck it.

In Your Campaign: A vortex gate provides a sudden, nasty surprise for characters who perhaps treat gates as simple doorways to be used at will. A vortex portal also serves to force the PCs into a portal that they are perhaps not ready to handle, especially if it is disguised as a mundane doorway. The characters come across a doorway, open it, and suddenly find themselves sucked into a different world. This portal also works as a passage that connects to a planar vortex. Try using one of these portals to spice up the scene of an important battle. The characters must fight while they (and their enemies) are pushed, pulled, and generally battered about by the vortex's howling winds.

Whispers of Knowledge: While some portals bestow spells and abilities on their users to help them survive in an alien environment, a portal with this ability literally teaches its users how to navigate an alien society or fend for themselves in a strange wilderness. Portals with the whispers of knowledge trait grant their users temporary skill ranks, languages, and feats. These abilities persist for a number of days equal to the user's Intelligence score. Since these skills and feats are only temporary abilities, they cannot be used to fulfill the prerequisites to any ability.

Normally, this trait confers ranks in skills such as Knowledge, Survival, Swim, and Climb. These skills can spell the difference between life and death in a planar realm. For example, a portal to a world inhabited by outsiders bound by an intricate code of honor could give its users the knowledge needed to communicate with those creatures without insulting their honor. Normally, these gates grant up to 8 ranks in a skill. Treat these ranks as if a character selected them as normal. They cannot be used to violate the standard cap on skill ranks based on level, and characters that count a skill as cross-class gain a half rank per rank spent on it. For example, a gate to a realm inhabited by a race adept with arcane magic grants 8 ranks in Spellcraft. A fighter, who counts Spellcraft as a cross-class skill, would gain a total maximum bonus of +4, while a wizard, who has Spellcraft as a class skill, could gain up to a +8 bonus.

While languages are normally purchased using skill ranks, these portals grant full command of a language regardless of a character's class and Intelligence.

In Your Campaign: Like the spells or transformation traits, this trait is a convenient ability that makes it easier for the PCs to cope with planar travel. Many times, dealing with alien cultures goes from being an intriguing challenge to a frustrating obstacle when the PCs cannot communicate with the creatures they

meet or navigate their culture. Use this trait to give the characters the basic skills and abilities they need to interact with the creatures they meet and handle the basic necessities of life on another plane.

The Portal Stat Block

Like monsters, portals are described using a generic stat block that summarizes their specific abilities and characteristics. This section details the stat block, describing its traits and standard format. All sample portals in this book use this format.

Portal Name (Size, Operation, Direction): Destination, trait (applicable notes).
Portal Name: The portal's title or a short description of its appearance.
Size: The largest creature that can move through the portal.
Operation: How the portal transports a creature: blink, open, or projection.
Destination: Where the portal leads.
Traits: Each trait the portal possesses, along with any special notes or details concerning it listed in parentheses. For example, a limited access portal should list the various traits and abilities that the trait is keyed to operate on.

Portals in the Campaign

One of the consequences of portals in a campaign world is that they make travel much easier. Easier travel leads to faster communication, more efficient trade, and greater economic power. Thus, it follows that anyone who controls a portal stands to make a tremendous profit from it while accumulating political power. When considering how to add portals to your world, think of the economic, social, and political repercussions they may have. Portals are not likely to remain isolated in the wilderness or locked away in a dungeon if someone in power determines he can profit from it.

Of course, a portal must lead somewhere useful or interesting for it to hold any potential for profitable use. A portal to the depths of hell is little more than a death trap. The authorities, if they are good or neutral-aligned, are likely to destroy or at least contain such a passage. On

the other hand, a portal from a port city to a dwarven silver mine is likely to cause a major boom in trade between those two places. The dwarves can save money and labor moving their heavy, bulky wares, while the port can profit from the sale of silver goods to the many merchants who drop anchor at its docks. In this case, both parties benefit economically from the link forged between them.

Other times, a portal can open up an isolated realm for exploration and settlement. A portal that leads to a distant forest could give an overcrowded kingdom the room it needs to expand. If the kingdom has no room to grow without invading its neighbors, it can now send settlers and explorers through the gate to ease its population pressures and uncover new raw materials to exploit. Of course, this could lead to a whole new set of problems. The settlers could blunder into an elf kingdom's sacred groves and unwittingly chop them down. A horde or orcs and goblins could sweep through the area and use the portal to attack the kingdom, or what the colonists thought was an isolated, unclaimed wilderness could be in the heart of a distant empire. In any case, the unknown nature of the destination realm could lead to many unforeseen complications.

Politically, a portal can grant tremendous power and influence to whoever discovers it. In both the scenarios outlined above, whoever controls the portal stands to profit from the increased trade and the flow of people and materials through it. He could charge a fee or tax to travel into the gate, or he could gain tremendous influence with the king and other nobles.

With those thoughts in mind, consider the guilds, religions, nations, and other groups in your campaign world that could control a portal or might make use of one. Consider how common portals are in your campaign. The more common portals are, the more likely that a given group controls one. After all, with doorways to other worlds common knowledge and easily constructed, most groups with the resources to construct one will do so. On the other hand, this makes controlling and using a portal less likely to give a group any decisive advantages over its rivals. If everyone has access to portals, the advantages and benefits they can give tend to cancel each other out.

If portals are relatively rare, then a portal is more likely to grant a group a decisive advantage. However, chances are that unless an established group actively seeks a portal or has the means to construct one, an up-and-coming political or economic power group could gain control of it. A portal's advantages are not always obvious. A mercantile guild that relies on shipping and overland travel to move goods might be suspicious of a portal. Change is a daunting prospect to those in power, especially if they must risk their resources and power to take advantage of it. Thus, your campaign world could see a new guild, religion, or kingdom rise in power as it uses a portal to advance its cause.

While portals offer advantages to different groups, the exact nature of those benefits differs from one type of organization to the next. A temple may use a portal to contact its divine leaders, while a merchant house may use it to open up new trade routes. Listed below are various groups and factions that may exist in your campaign world along with some ideas on how each could exploit a portal, what changes that could bring to a campaign world, and how the characters could become involved in them.

CRIMINALS

A thieves' guild or criminal cartel would see a portal as a convenient way to cover its crimes. It could turn its attention to the world on the other side of the portal, especially if the portal is concealed on its destination end. The guild could either steal from residents on the other side or find narcotics and rare items to import and sell on the black market. A city suddenly swamped with strange, noxious chemicals from foul realms could have a group of smugglers traveling to distant planes to find narcotics and similar goods to sell on the streets. The thieves could draw the wrath of a powerful figure on the portal's far side, leading to an invasion into the city as soldiers and enforcers seek to track down the criminals. A thieves' guild could bribe government officials to wage war against the invaders, tricking the authorities into fighting their own battle for them. The characters may have to step into this conflict to bring it to a halt and unite both sides in seeking the true villains.

GOVERNMENT

A government's use of a portal is probably determined by its alignment. Evil regimes may seek to conquer and exploit the lands on the other side, neutral governments would use a portal if they could profit from it, and good ones would likely err on the side of caution lest the portal allow a powerful force to invade the land. In any case, the portal's strategic and economic benefits would be harnessed for the state's benefit. Troops and scouts would use it to cut down on travel times if the portal led somewhere on the same world, while a planar gateway might be secured and guarded by a powerful fighting force.

Once it is clear that mob of demons or a similarly destructive force does not lurk directly on the other side, the government would move to explore the distant land and investigate its potential uses. Again, alignment plays a role in this reconnaissance. An evil lord would probably send a heavily armed and armored group to capture a few locals and question them, while a neutral or good ruler would rely on a diplomat backed up by enough soldiers to repel any attacks.

If a government controls a portal, chances are that it applies tight restrictions on who is allowed to travel through it. A portal is a potentially dangerous tool, especially if the world on the other side is rife with monsters and other threats. In the interests of maintaining safety and security, the government may allow only a select few explorers and researchers through the gate. The characters could be part of such a team, tasked with exploring the gate's far end and determining if large-scale operations are safe to conduct.

RELIGION

Of all the groups listed here, a religious order stands to gain the most from a gateway. A temple could feature several portals to distant realms of the gods or other places from its myths and teachings. Clerics could travel to a miniature plane where angels, devils, or similar beings instruct them in the art of divine magic and the teachings of the faith. Powerful religious figures, those who guide the faithful on a national or continental level, might even go to the divine planes to have a personal audience with their gods.

The more active the gods are in your campaign world's events, the more likely they are to contact and confer with their mortal followers. Angels and other outsiders might be common sites in a city's temple district, while an adventure into an evil temple could include a side trek into hell or a similar infernal realm. If an evil priest kidnapped an important person or seized a magic item, the characters might have to use the dark temple's gateway to track him down. Any trip into a chapel of evil could promise to send the characters halfway across the cosmos. Slipping away to another plane would prove a useful way to evade pursuit, and any important figure in a temple's hierarchy could find refuge in his deity's home.

Trade

Merchants and other businessmen stand to profit tremendously from portals. Transporting goods is a major cost, as not only must a trader pay for guards, wagons, ships, and so forth, but bandits, monsters, and other threats can destroy a caravan or steal items in transit. A portal not only makes it easier to move goods, but it also makes it much more reliable. A portal that leads to an exotic realm can be a particularly rich boon. A merchant can sell his wares as exotic, foreign goods on another plane, use his profits to buy local trade items, then sell them on his home plane at greatly increased prices. In both cases, a merchant can buy items that are command inexpensive to one group and sell them to another as rare and valuable artifacts.

If a society has access to a portal, trade and profit are most likely the two engines that drive its use. If money can be made from something, someone will find a way to exploit it. Trade drove many of the European explorers who ventured to the Far East and into the New World. In the same manner, ambitious trade magnates and noblemen could task explorers, such as the PCs, with establishing new trade routes through a portal and opening diplomatic relations with any civilizations on the other side.

Widespread Use

Depending on the level of magic in your campaign world, you may decide that portals are a common method of travel. Civilizations rich in arcane power and magical technology could develop a network of portals to link their cities, aid in their defense, and open up trade routes to other worlds and planes. There are a number of repercussions this approach can have on your game world.

First, a reduction in travel time makes rare and hard to find items much easier to purchase. Even the smallest town can have a well-stocked market so long as it has access to a portal. Weapons, armor, magic items, and other trade goods useful to adventurers would be available in any town with a portal. The characters could visit the local blacksmith and place a magical weapon on order. Even if the craftsman lacks the skill needed to create such a weapon, he can use the portal system to find someone who does. A powerful merchant family or trade guild might even construct a series of warehouses linked by portals that offer almost any item for sale.

The government can become much more controlling and active in local affairs with the use of portals. Rather than filter messages through spells available only to powerful
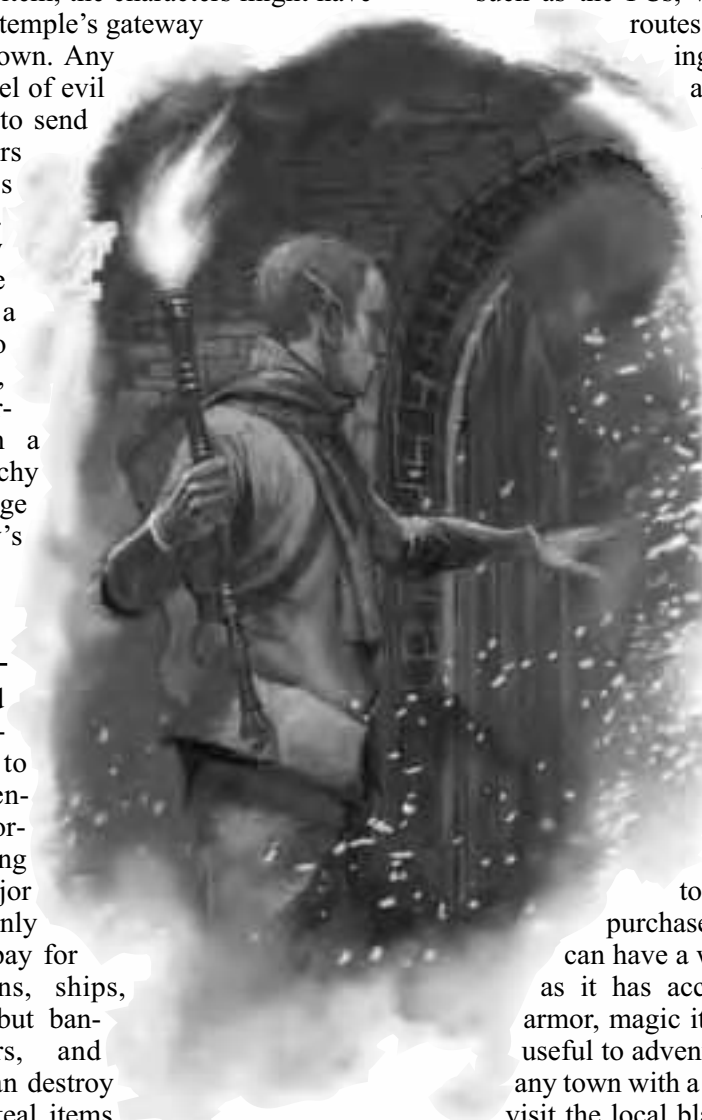
spellcasters or via messengers, a portal allows a direct connection from one point to another. The king could demand that his dukes and barons attend an audience in his throne room on a moment's notice. The noblemen must simply step through a portal, meet with their lord, and then step back through. Normally, such communication would be impossible without the use of magic. Portals make it much easier for a central authority to enforce strict control over its outlying areas.

THE PERILS OF TIME TRAVEL

You can use portals to allow characters to travel through time. While this may seem like a simple and fun option, it opens up a lot of issues you may want to consider. Since the characters' actions in history can sweep back to affect the present era of your campaign world, you need to consider how time travel works in your campaign and its ramifications for your world.

Most of this advice applies to travel backward in time. Traveling forward poses few risks for your world's developments. Any changes the characters cause spin off towards your world's future, allowing you to conveniently duck their ramifications. Since the characters lack knowledge of the world's future, they do not have to deal with any changes on a firsthand basis. Travel back in time, on the other hand, poses a host of potential issues. These problems can be overcome, but it pays to think about them before leaping into time travel adventures.

The key problem in time travel is that the characters can go back in time, do something that changes history, and then move back forward to their original era. Sometimes, these changes are simple. If the PCs kill the lich king before he can conquer the world, they return to a land freed from his tyrannical grasp. Many changes require much more thought than that. A PC could go back in time and inadvertently kill his ancestors. In that case, does the PC suddenly cease to exist? If so, how could he go back in time to murder his own family? Are his actions erased along with his physical form? After all, he never existed now that his great-grandparents are dead. You need to resolve how history

changes, if at all, and what effect it has on your game world's current time period.

Alternate worlds offer the easiest way to handle these changes in a clean, simple manner. Under this arrangement, each plane or world consists of an infinite number of realms that exist in parallel along different time streams. Each major (or even minor) decision or event spawns different versions of the same world, each of which contains the various outcomes created by an event.

For example, a horde of orcs invades a human kingdom. On one world's timeline, the orcs win and destroy the land. On another's, the humans drive the orcs back into the wilderness. Each world has the same basic characteristics, but their histories diverge wildly.

This explanation allows you to easily sweep away any changes. If the PCs go back in time and mess around with history, they merely spawn new, parallel worlds. The time period they hail from remains unchanged. A PC might cease to exist in one variant, but he remains alive on others. A traveler can jump from world to world, wreaking havoc while leaving his original timeline intact.

While this solution provides a convenient explanation for almost anything the PCs do, it undercuts the dramatic tension in time travel scenarios. The characters might travel back in time, but their actions have no effect on the time they hail from. They can cut down the evil overlord, but they bring peace to a variant, parallel world. Their own time remains in his clutches. This option is best used when you want the characters to visit distant times, but their actions are not driven by a desire to alter history.

You should also consider if travel between alternate timelines is possible. If so, the characters could meet alternate versions of themselves. In other timelines, they could be foul villains or simple peasants. This could lead to some fun roleplaying opportunities, and the characters could also visit alternate worlds where villains they previously defeated are alive and well. If you disallow travel to alternate timelines, this makes changes to history more important. Once the PCs change the past, they can no longer go back to their original time period. Instead, when they travel forward

they move along the divergent timeline they created.

If you want to give time-traveling characters the option of altering history, you need to think through the ramifications of this choice. As pointed out above, the characters run the risk of creating a seemingly endless loop of possibilities. If event A spawns event B, which in turn prevents A, how can A ever happen in the first place? One way to avoid this is to treat the future as indeterminate. When the characters travel back in time, from their perspective the future is no longer set. Their changes alter history, but their own future selves are now in limbo. There is only one timeline, and each time someone travels back along it he undoes the history he leaps over. Traveling to the future is either impossible or history proceeds without the character's interference until he arrives in the future.

History could be such a powerful force that, while the PCs can cause minor changes, events proceed as they did before in terms of general trends and events. If the characters go back in time to defeat a villain who would go on to conquer the world, one of his lieutenants takes his place and completes his plans. The details may change, but the general progression of events remains the same.

If you want to give the PCs the chance to truly alter history, they run the risk of destroying themselves. In this case, even a minor change could cause a chain of events that prevents a PC from existing. If the characters travel to the past and lead an army to victory that was supposed to lose, a soldier who now survived the conflict may meet a PC's ancestor, marry her, and prevent the character's parents from ever meeting (or existing). In this case, the character suffers from temporal instability. As he causes changes to history, there is a variable chance that he is either immediately sent back to the future or annihilated. If changing history is impossible, the time stream corrects the anomaly by returning a PC to his home time and undoing everything he did to alter history. In the second case, history changes and destroys the character. Only fixing the changes he made can bring him back. A character annihilated in history cannot be returned to life by any means mundane or magical means. Since he no longer exists and never did exist, he cannot be returned to life.

The historical alterations table lists the various levels of change a character can make and the associated chance that he ends up tossed back through time or erased from the historical record. A faint change is anything localized to a very small area, such as a village, and affects events for no more than a month. A light change covers anything that covers a slightly larger area, such as a small town, and has ramifications that persist for up to a year. A medium change encompasses anything that kills a person who has a minor effect on history or has a widespread, decade-long impact on events. A heavy change involves killing a person who plays a major, though supporting, role in historical events and includes any change likely to have an impact on the character's present. An overwhelming change includes anything that radically shifts the nature and condition of the character's present era.

Historical Alterations Table

Change Type	Chance of Correction
Faint	1%
Light	10%
Medium	25%
Heavy	50%
Overwhelming	90%

Worlds Between

In addition to portals, some planes serve as little more than passages to the vast expanse of the cosmos. Most notable among these realms are the wormholes, the vortices, the great tree of the cosmos, and the river of worlds. These realms serve as alternates to the traditional astral and ethereal planes. Those two domains normally serve as the bridge between the characters' homeworld and the outer realms. They are covered in depth in other supplements and are given only nominal attention here. Instead, this book focuses on alternatives that can serve as the glue that binds a cosmology together.

If your players immediately think about the astral and ethereal when you mention the planes, the alternatives presented here can give them a nice surprise and keep your campaign fresh and unique. In addition, these worlds between were designed to mesh smoothly with both of those realms. You can use these ideas in addition to or in place of the astral and ethereal.

The River of Worlds: This body of cosmic water is the firmament in which the planes are nestled. A brave traveler with a ship, crew, and plenty of supplies could theoretically sail from one end of the cosmos to another. The river provides access to most of the planes, but it is a dangerous place fraught with aquatic and otherworldly horrors.
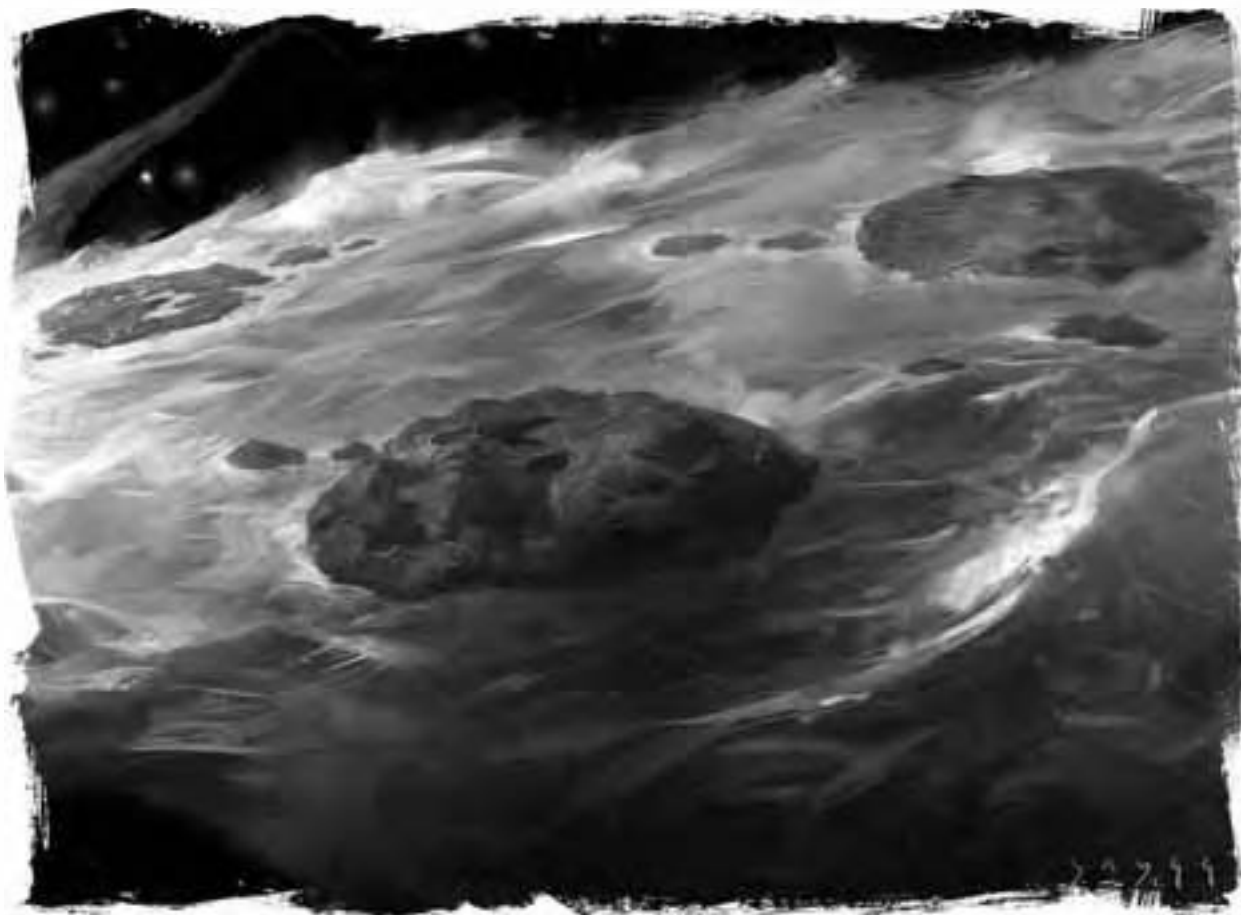
The Vortex: This phenomenon is a tempest of air and energy that you must fly through in order to navigate. A careless traveler can be dragged into one and tossed into a random plane. Vortices are notoriously difficult to navigate, but they offer access to a wide number of times and places.

The Wormholes: A network of tunnels in the fabric of reality that characters can travel through to visit other planes. Strange creatures and even entire cultures thrive in some areas of these tunnels. Like a vortex, a wormhole is a dangerous but potentially useful portal.

The River of Worlds: Sailing on the Sea of Creation

The priests claim that in the beginning, there was nothing. When the gods first formed the cosmos, they built it from the vast, empty infinity of space. Yet, they had to start somewhere. Before the first bricks of creation could be laid, the gods needed a foundation on which all of the cosmos could stand. Thus was the river of worlds born. Just as water bounds the continents and encompasses the world, so too does it envelop and hold the very planes of existence. In some cases, travelers can even sail off the edge of a world and into the endless waters between the planes. However, most worlds float within the river but have no physical connection to it. Instead, an explorer must employ a portal or powerful spell to open a passage to this infinite waterway.

The easiest way to picture the river of worlds is to think of it as an infinite body of water with islands dotted across its surface. These islands are entire worlds and planes. In some cases, they resemble normal islands in that they phys-

ically touch the river's waters. These islands are smaller planes or realms whose physical waters are provided by the river of worlds. In other cases, they are translucent spheres that float in the water. Bound within these spheres are stars, planets, even entire galaxies. In either case, a brave explorer could pierce his world's sphere or simply sail to the edge of his plane to enter the river of worlds. From there, he can travel to anywhere in the cosmos.

The river of worlds operates outside of the laws that normally bind the planes. A ship could sail between two worlds in a few days, as the mighty planar currents carry it through space and time. From the perspective of the men and women aboard the ship, they spend a few days sailing at a leisurely speed. In terms of the cosmos, they travel billions of miles—if the space between worlds could even be given physical dimensions. Such is the power of the river that distant realms seem like islands in a small sea.

The waters of the river are cool to the touch and infinitely deep. In some areas, entire worlds and planes exist deep within it. These aquatic worlds, including gateways to the elemental plane of water, spawn the many creatures and outsiders that inhabit the seas, oceans, and rivers of other planes. To these creatures, the surface of the river is a strange, alien place. They are usually too involved in their own affairs to disturb travelers, but in some areas monstrous beasts of the planar river attack travelers of all sorts. Sharks, squids, water demons, and worse prowl the currents in search of an easy meal. Some sages theorize that beasts as large as a plane prowl the deepest areas of the river. These monsters, if they exist, may even predate the gods. Stories of lost worlds that disappeared form the watery firmament suggest that these creatures are capable of devouring entire worlds. Still, no direct evidence of such destruction exists, though some sages claim that when a world dies, all memories of it perish along with its physical form.

The sky above the river of worlds is dark but dotted with enough distant stars to provide a steady, if dim, radiance. High in the air above the river, gateways to the elemental plane of air float along with spheres and world islands that are dominated by that element. At times, swirling clouds of bright ether

drift above the sea, providing short periods of bright light.

Unlike a terrestrial sea, the river of worlds is mostly calm and smooth. Few planar winds blow through this area, as they swirl high above in the realm of air. Still, sometimes storms the size of entire worlds swoop down to toss the waters and disturb the firmament of the islands. These calamities strike perhaps once every thousand years, yet the stories of the destruction and upheavals they cause echo through history. Great cataclysms within the planes can be attributed to these storms, and entire races and historical epochs have been wiped away by them. Earthquakes, tidal waves, a rain of fire, and worse can all befall a world when its island or sphere within the river is rocked by a rampaging planar storm.

In some areas, the river of worlds steams and boils from the fiery heat of the plane of fire. Known as the boiling seas, these stretches of the river bound spheres dominated by the element of fire. The islands in these areas are choked with volcanoes and burning plains, while salamanders and fire elementals prowl their shores. A few planar sages theorize that to the creatures of the plane of fire, the river of worlds is a hellish place of endless water. Evil criminals from that plane are banished to the river, leading the few fire creatures found in the planar river to be overly aggressive, hateful, and murderous. Unfortunately, the glow of the flaming islands serves as a natural beacon for travelers who have lost their way. Many unfortunates have sailed to their dooms when they ventured too close to a burning island.

The plane of earth is bound to the river through the many islands and world spheres that float within it. In many ways, this element is in the closest harmony with the river. While air soars above it and fire smolders within it, the island worlds of earth mingle with the river's waters and form a balanced equilibrium. The world islands appear to be nothing more than a mariner would sight on a terrestrial ocean.

However, the planar bindings of the river allow a gargantuan world to appear as nothing more than an island a few hundred miles across. As a ship approaches, the island seems to grow disproportionately larger as the distance to it dwindles. Finally, when a ship approaches close enough, it crosses the planar bounds

and enters the island's world. The sky shifts, the air changes, and the ship arrives at the outer edge of the world's oceans. Sometimes the border between the planes allows a ship to appear a few miles from shore, but other times a traveler must journey hundreds or thousands of miles to reach civilization.

The border between a world island and the river of worlds operates as a portal. It can be given a variety of traits that allow voyagers to adapt to life on it, though these abilities usually reflect the world's characteristics rather than some planned set of abilities selected by an intelligent being.

The world spheres, the planes that float within bubbles upon the sea, are more difficult to enter than the islands. These realms must be entered through a portal on the outer edge of the sphere's surface. Not every world sphere features gates on its surface, requiring a traveler to use advanced spells and magic items to access it. Other times, these portals are located above the waterline, leaving them open only to creatures with the ability to fly.

A portal located on a sphere's edge works just like a gateway as described above. It can feature any traits, though like a world island these abilities are determined by the plane's characteristics rather than by directed, intelligent design. These portals can lead anywhere within the plane or world they access, and without divination magic there is little chance that an explorer can determine where a gate will take him.

As with the world islands, a sphere does not represent the true size of the world it bounds. To an outside observer, a sphere may be a few hundred miles across, or even smaller, yet it can contain within it an infinite world, plane, or even collection of the two. Researchers theorize that the world spheres and islands are merely shadows reflected through the planar bindings upon the river of worlds. Rather than physically encompass a world, they are merely aspects or avatars of its characteristics and place among the planes. This explains why water is not the most powerful of the four elements, even though some sages argue that it should be, given its importance on the river.

In addition to the worlds and islands that dot the river, in some isolated spots entire floating

cities built from the flotsam and jetsam of the planar tides ride the currents. These places are inhabited by a variety of creatures, including planar travelers stopping to rest and re-supply and aquatic creatures that dwell within the river itself. Furthermore, the powerful energy that sweeps across the river causes various magical phenomena to be much more common on the river of worlds than on mundane waterways. Ghost ships, sea-going fey, regions of magical flux, and other manifestations are relatively common, presenting additional hazards to mariners who brave its waters.

Physically, the river of worlds resembles a placid lake. A steady current pulls ships and other debris steadily in one direction, though it rarely reaches speeds above a brisk walk. Since compasses do not function on the river, travelers refer to this direction as "the flow." Directions are usually given with respect to the current. For example, a traveler may be told to sail four days with the flow to his right and two more against it to reach a specific world island. Luckily, the spheres and islands are large enough that even imprecise directions can lead a mariner to them.

A strong breeze, enough to propel a sailing vessel, usually blows across the river's waters. Unlike the flow, the wind is difficult to predict. It changes directions every five or six hours, and seems to shift from one direction to the next with neither rhyme nor reason. Theologians believe that the wind and the river current represent a careful, harmonious balance between the forces of law and chaos. While law rules the river's waters, the forces of chaos command the wind that swirls above it.

The river's waters are generally free of obstruction, but in some places mariners face a variety of hazards. The area around a plane or island tends to reflect a realm's characteristics. The waters around a fiery plane boil and bubble, while those near a frigid realm are choked with icebergs and other threats. In the space of a few days, a ship could encounter a wide variety of climates.

Game Rules

You can handle travel on the river of worlds using the standard rules for sea voyages, such as those presented in the *Seafarer's Handbook*. Presenting complete rules for waterborne adventures is beyond the scope of this section.

If you would rather not bother with any details of a sea voyage, you can simply assign a trip across the river an arbitrary length in days that fits your campaign or the adventure you currently are running for your group.

In addition to the obvious hazards of sailing, such as drowning, aquatic monsters, and bad weather, the river of worlds displays a wide range of traits and characteristics. In some areas, magic ceases to function, while in others a thick fog reduces visibility to nothing. Use the planar traits listed in Chapter 3 to add unique features and abilities to stretches of the river. To voyage from one world to the next, the characters may have to sail through an area of searing heat, a region fraught with icebergs, and a stretch of water where all magic refuses to function. The river of worlds is as varied as the many planes and realms that float upon it.

To determine the wind's direction on the river, roll a d4. Treat a result of 1 as with the flow, 2 as moving with the flow to its right, 3 as against the flow, and 4 as moving with the flow to its left. You can check for the wind's direction every 2d4 hours. Do not bother checking for the wind unless the characters' ship relies on it for propulsion. Otherwise, you can wait until the wind's heading is important enough to mention before determining it.

One of the greatest threats facing a traveler on the river of worlds is the array of monstrous beasts that lurk deep within its waters. A traveler might encounter a band of marauding sahuagin or a group of merfolk looking to buy or sell trade goods. Sometimes, though, the truly horrific beasts of the deep emerge from the river to smash a ship to pieces and devour the hapless sailors.

A variety of strange creatures lurk within the waters. Each hour, there is a 5% chance that the characters encounter a creature on the river. Roll on the threat table to determine the nature of the encounter, then on the appropriate sub-table to determine the exact threat. Normally, it is best to keep encounters appropriate to the party's level. If a random encounter indicates a powerful creature that could easily overwhelm the PCs, allow them to escape or describe the creature as lurking in the distance for some time before it swims away. Such encounters remind the players that the river of worlds is a dangerous place without forcing

them to fight a battle they have no hope of winning.

The encounter tables list a creature's CR. Tailor the number of monsters so that the EL makes them an appropriate challenge for the party's level.

THREAT TABLE

d%	Result
1–50	Roll on the aquatic monsters table
51–75	Roll on the intelligent aquatic creatures table
76–98	Roll on the travelers from another world table
99–100	Roll on the beast from the depths table

AQUATIC MONSTERS TABLE

d%	Creature	CR
1–6	Aboleth	7
7–15	Chuul	7
16–24	Dinosaur, elasmosaurus	5
25–32	Dire shark	9
33–35	Dragon turtle	9
36–45	Water elemental, Small	1
46–55	Water elemental, Medium	3
56–60	Water elemental, Large	5
61–65	Gibbering mouther	5
66–70	Kraken	12
71–79	Sea lion	4
80–89	Tojanida, juvenile	3
90–95	Tojanida, adult	5
96–100	Tojanida, elder	9

INTELLIGENT AQUATIC CREATURES TABLE

d%	Result	
1–20	Elf, aquatic	1/2
21–40	Locathah	1/2
41–50	Water mephit	3
51–70	Merfolk	1/2
71–90	Sahuagin	2
91–100	Triton	4

TRAVELERS FROM ANOTHER WORLD TABLE

d%	Result
1–20	Another ship laden with trade goods sails into view. The captain and his crew are traders from an alien world who could share news with the characters, offer them items for sale, or attempt to swindle them.
21–40	A lone wizard using a magical device to fly soars overhead. He seeks a specific gate and may ask the characters to aid them. If they have the information he needs, he may reward them with information of his own or a minor magic item. If they cannot help them, he may attack or use a spell to harass them depending on his alignment.
41–60	A swarm of outsiders rushes through the air. A few of them (numbers and strength appropriate to the party's level) decides to have some fun with the characters while the rest travel on. The characters could face demons, devils, or even a group of malicious elementals.
61–80	A dragon flies overhead. If the creature is evil, it may swoop down to plunder the PCs' ship or devour them. A good dragon may ignore them or stop to question them out of curiosity.
81–100	A mighty storm giant keeps his castle beneath the waves near the PCs' current location. The giant arises from the river to demand tribute for invading his territory. If the PCs are friendly and treat him with respect, he asks only for a few coppers. If they are arrogant, demanding, or obviously evil, he forces them to pay hundreds of gold pieces or smashes their ship to splinters.

BEAST FROM THE DEPTHS TABLE

d%	Result
1–10	Elasmosaurus
11–20	Dire shark
21–30	Dragon turtle
31–50	Large water elemental
51–60	Huge water elemental
61–65	Greater water elemental
66–70	Elder water elemental
71–80	Sea hag
81–85	Kraken
86–95	Adult tojanida
96–100	Elder tojanida

IN YOUR GAME

The river of worlds can serve as a complete maritime setting for your campaign, with the characters voyaging between the worlds on ships, via aerial creatures, or with magical

spells or items. The characters could be traders or explorers who go from world to world in search of artifacts, to complete quests, or simply to visit strange lands. In essence, you can treat the river of worlds like a huge ocean with many bizarre lands scattered across it. The PCs could sail to the plane of fire for a series of adventures, travel to a world covered in steamy jungles, then visit a realm where steam-driven engines exist side by side with arcane and divine magic. The characters could even be messengers or traders who work among the gods, moving from one deity's realm to the next on economic or political missions.

The islands and sites on the river can include many odd or mystifying sites. Many of the creatures encountered on the waters are outsiders and other mighty beings who not only wield magical and martial power but are intelligent, cunning creatures. A demon would not simply soar over the water in search of victims. Rather, it could recruit pirate ships and crew them with minor demonic creatures and other monsters. The PCs could fight a corsair captained by a vrock and manned by ghouls, half-fiends, and dretches. Consider the typical nautical NPCs that a party could encounter and replace them with outsiders, elementals, and other creatures that travel the planes.

The worlds that exist within the river could have little contact or extensive contact with its waters. Even the inhabitants of an island world may be unaware of their position in the cosmos if the passages to the river are located far out to sea. Developing the technology to open-ocean sailing is no easy task, while the areas where the river overlaps with terrestrial bodies of water could be difficult to find or located in remote areas.

In either case, unless a world's inhabitants have reason to seek out the river they may never realize it exists. Other worlds may conduct extensive trade on the river, especially if they have access to powerful magic or are accomplished mariners. In that case, these worlds could acquire a cosmopolitan, universal flair. Outsiders mingle with humans and elves at dockside markets, while a port city's foreign quarter plays host to a far wider range of races and cultures than the barbarians from beyond the empire's borders. In this sort of world, travel between the planes is seen as a dangerous but commonly undertaken task.

You could use this connecting realm in addition to the astral and ethereal planes, with both of those realms maintaining their position in the cosmology of your campaign world. The river of worlds might only allow access to various realms populated by mortal creatures. The elemental planes, the gods' realms, and other distant areas might exist outside of it. The river could even be a plane of its own, a monstrous realm with many smaller sub-worlds scattered throughout its waters.

The settlements on the river are usually floating islands constructed from timbers and other debris scavenged from the water. In some cases, smaller islands a few miles wide and long stand in the water. These small stretches of dry land host trading posts, shipyards, and other depots useful to the explorers and merchants who wander this realm. For ideas and guidelines on how these settlements could evolve, refer to the trade town description given under the wormhole entry below.

THE VORTEX: THE WINDS BETWEEN WORLDS

Sages, wizards, and other spellcasters have long debated the nature of the materials that separate the planes. Many believe that the astral and ethereal are the raw stuff of reality, buffer zones that serve to segregate the planes and instill some semblance of order into the great structure of reality. Others disagree. They see the astral and ethereal as "super planes," realms that dwarf other domains and, due to their immense size, provide ready access to a wide number of worlds. The material between the worlds is instead an alien, hostile environment that is difficult to travel yet potentially a pathway to worlds beyond count. They point to vortices, whirling tornadoes of raw celestial energy that are dotted with vast numbers of portals.

A vortex resembles the inside of a whirlpool or a great funnel of energy. Its walls consist of churning, shimmering, gray energy that has proven impervious to all known spells, attacks, and effects. In some areas, the walls are hundreds of miles apart, while in others barely a mile separates them. The energy flows like a whirlpool, creating tremendous force that pulls objects forever downward.

Along the vortex's sides appear gateways to other worlds. These passages are as varied as the destinations they lead to. Some are doorways to other worlds that a traveler must simply walk through, while others transform their users into forms suitable to survive in their destination realm.

Gaining access to these portals is typically far more difficult than actually using them. The powerful vortex winds grab and pull at anyone fool enough to journey by this pathway. Furthermore, a traveler is liable to be confronted by dozens, if not hundreds, of portals. They normally appear as gleaming beacons of light in the vortex's materials, stable points of energy that beckon to those trapped within the storm. Most daunting of all, these portals are almost invariably one-way passages. A traveler moving through one must find some other way home. Finally, the nature of the vortex makes it almost impossible to map out the various doorways within it. Even the most skilled mage can only explore a small fraction of a vortex's length before his spells fail and force him to escape to his home world or plummet down into the vortex.

Within the vortex, debris from hundreds of worlds swirls through the air. The interior is bathed in pale gray light the intensity of sunlight on a dreary, overcast day. At random intervals, the gates that surround the vortex's periphery belch forth dirt, wreckage, debris, and even living creatures.

Entering a vortex is a tricky task. When a portal opens into one, the rush of wind and energy often sweeps everything in the area into it. A vortex can catch adventurers by surprise and drag them to their deaths or at best strand them in an alien world. Most explorers use spells such as *fly* to navigate a vortex, while others tie themselves together or anchor themselves in their homeworld with a chain or similar item. Luckily for experienced casters, spells that allow travel through the planes work as normal in a vortex. Most experienced casters can enter one, explore it, and escape via *teleport* or a similar spell.

Several theories attempt to explain the vortices' place in the planar cosmology, but none have gained popular acceptance with theoreti-

cians and researchers. Some hold that a vortex is the remnant of a collapsed world or plane. Whether through natural processes, such as a malignancy, or powerful magic, a plane can collapse into its component parts. The raw energy forms a vortex. The portals that stud the vortex's sides are the remaining points of entry and exit into the original plane. While it may have collapsed into utter chaos, the bindings that connect it to different points in the cosmos remain in place.

Scholars liken these portals to pathways leading from one house to the next. One or both of the structures could collapse, but the path between them remains. This theory also holds that a vortex forms a loop with a size determined by the breadth of the original plane. Given the incomprehensible size of most planes, a vortex should be so long that most creatures would grow old and die before they could cross its entire length. These researchers posit the existence of micro-vortices, ones created by the collapse of tiny planes. If they could discover one of these theoretical constructs, they could study it and confirm much of the guesswork involving vortices.

Other sages disagree with this theory. They believe that there is only one vortex, and it winds its way between all the planes. They see the vortex as the raw vacuum between the planes. The flow of energy and air through it reflects the permutations and fluxes in the planar cosmology. In regions where many planes exist in close proximity, the vortex features howling, powerful winds and a legion of portals. In other, less crowded regions, the vortex is calmer and easier to navigate, though it features few doorways to other worlds.

To these academics, the vortex is literally a howling sea of air and energy upon which all of the planes, including the astral and ethereal, rest. They believe that the vortex is the key to understanding the planes and that it can serve as a backdoor to gain access to any point in the multiverse. All one must do is study the vortex, map its locations, and understand the pattern behind it, and one could learn how to journey through the planes with the same ease as a common peasant walks from his home to the fields each morning.

Regardless of the theories used to explain it, all agree that a vortex is a dangerous environment.

The planar winds sweep travelers and objects forever downward, making it difficult to remain in once place for long. Spells such as *fly* and *levitate* do little to prevent this movement unless their users consciously fight to resist the wind. Debris from countless worlds, ranging from stones and dirt to clusters of trees and occasional hapless creatures, whirl through the air.

The only exceptions to the wind's ceaseless assault are isolated pockets of stable islands and platforms. At some point in the past, travelers or even a race native to the vortex lashed together islands of debris that provide a stable point. These islands are under the influence of powerful abjuration and transmutation magics, allowing them to float through the vortex at a relatively slow rate. Bubbles of energy around them deflect the winds, providing the surface of these islands with a calm environment.

Game Rules

The howling winds within the vortex cause problems not only for those brave enough to enter one, but also for adventurers who open portals into it. Any open portal (one that creates a physical link between worlds) allows the vortex's powerful winds to sweep through it and draw objects through into the void.

The winds within a vortex have a severe force rating. They range from 30 to 50 miles per hour and impose a –4 circumstance penalty on all ranged attacks. Each round, a creature automatically moves 30 ft. down a vortex. While the winds have a generally downward motion, they swirl and buffet in such a manner that a creature moves rather slowly. If a creature hits a solid object while moving downward, it suffers damage as if it fell 30 ft. Moving through a vortex is somewhat like swimming. A creature can move at half its speed in a vertical direction with a successful Swim check (DC 20). On a failed check, it remains in place.

A creature capable of flight must expend 30 ft. of its movement to avoid being dragged downward. It can otherwise move as normal. If the creature does not attempt to resist the vortex's downward pull, allow it to make a move as normal. When it ends its move, apply the 30 ft. the creature moved downward during its move. Alternatively, if you prefer more detail and realism in your movement you can apply this downward movement as the creature

uses its action. For example, a creature with a speed of 30 ft. or less moves down 5 ft. for every 5 ft. of its movement it uses. For a creature with a speed of 60 ft. or more, it moves down 5 ft. for every 10 ft. of movement it uses. In essence, apply the vortex's effects in proportion to the creature's movement for the round. At the end of the creature's movement, apply any remaining obligatory downward movement that has not yet been spent.

An open portal into a vortex allows the planar winds to sweep through and suck creatures, debris, and other materials into it. Scholars theorize that the imbalance in planar energies between the vortex and a plane it opens onto causes the rush of air and material into it.

A 5-ft.-wide open portal creates an area of suction with a 50-ft.-radius spread. For every additional 5 ft. of width, extend this spread by 20 ft. Creatures within this area must make Strength checks (DC 10) or be dragged 4d6 feet toward the portal. In addition, failure on this check reduces a creature's speed to 0 ft. for all movement modes other than burrowing. A burrowing creature can escape by digging into the earth. Creatures that make this check may move at half speed but may not fly.

All inanimate objects are dragged towards the portal based on their weight. All objects move a base of 4d6 feet per round toward the portal. Reduce this speed by 1d6 for every 100 lbs. above 100 that the object weighs. For example, a 200-pound object would move 3d6 feet towards the portal per round.

A creature pulled into a portal is thrown 1d100 feet into the vortex and begins falling on its next round, as described above. Creatures that are bound together remain linked, while those able to fly or under the effects of spells such as *levitate* may immediately begin to use them. A creature that moves through a portal under its own power (as opposed to those dragged into one) are not thrown into the vortex. They start their movement adjacent to the portal they used.

While floating through a vortex, a traveler can come into contact with a wide range of objects, items, or other creatures. You can use the random vortex contents table to spawn debris that floats near the characters as they travel through a vortex. Roll 1d6 times on the table

per hour the characters spend in a vortex. Alternatively, you can use this table to inspire ideas and encounters for adventures that take place in the vortex.

When the characters first enter a vortex, you can pick its width or randomly determine it by rolling d% and treating the result as a percentage of one mile. For example, if you roll an 86 the vortex is 86% of a mile long.

Random Vortex Contents Table

d%	Result
1–5	Creature: A monster or NPC with a CR equal to the party's level – 2 drifts into view.
6–10	Creature: A monster or NPC with a CR equal to the party's level – 1 floats past.
11–15	Creature: A monster or NPC with a CR equal to the party's level hurtles by.
16–20	Creature: A monster or NPC with a CR equal to the party's level + 1 soars into view.
21–25	Creature: A monster or NPC with a CR equal to the party's level + 2 approaches the characters.
26–30	Creature: A powerful wizard who seeks to study the vortex inspects a portal near the characters' location.
31–35	Creature: A flock of demons, devils, or some other flying outsider on a mission to find a specific portal soars by. The creatures may attack the PCs if they sight them. These creatures should have an EL equal to the party's level + 1d3–1.
36–40	Creature: A creature shoots through a nearby portal and lands amidst the characters. It has a CR or level equal to the party's level. The creature could be on the run from its enemies, or it might even have knowledge of the vortex.
41–45	Hulk: A battered ship, an entire building, or a similar edifice floats near the characters. Creatures may dwell within it, or it could hold supplies the PCs need, a map of the portals in this area of the vortex, or a powerful, long-lost relic.
46–50	Corpse: The dead body of a giant, dragon, titan, or similar monstrous creature floats into view. Smaller creatures may use the body as a home, dwelling within its pockets or even pitching tents in its flesh. A tribe of primitive humanoids could worship the corpse as

a god, as they tear flesh from it to eat and even tend mold and giant maggots on its decaying surface.

51–55 **Bend:** The vortex bends sharply in a random direction, giving the characters the chance to swoop close to its side and escape through a portal.

56–60 **Settlement:** Using *sovereign glue* or similar magical items and spells, a group of creatures has established a settlement anchored to a chain running through a portal. This place could be a prison, a research station, or a forgotten refuge.

61–65 **Gone Fishing:** A group of clever humanoids uses a portal from their world to the vortex to fish for food, captives, and treasure. They use a huge net to reach into the vortex and snatch objects as they fall, relying on leather harnesses and straps to hold themselves in place. The creatures could be cannibalistic savages, curious wizards, or opportunistic thieves.

66–70 **Debris Field:** The characters enter an area of many large boulders, dust, trees, or similar debris that was sucked into the vortex at the same time, keeping the materials together. Flying predators could lurk amongst the debris, or it could serve as a refuge for the PCs.

71–75 **Energy Storm:** A sudden flux of planar energy causes bolts of lightning to arc from one side of the vortex to another. Each PC must make a Reflex save (DC 15) or suffer 2d6 points of electricity damage.

76–80 **Planar Bridge:** An ambitious culture or individual has managed to construct (though not necessarily complete) a bridge between two portals. The bridge might stretch across the vortex, or it could consist of a flight of stairs and a platform perched at the vortex's edge.

81–85 **Widened Area:** The vortex widens by 2d20%.

86–90 **Narrow Area:** The vortex narrows by 2d20%.

91–100 **Floating Island:** A collection of earth and debris has accreted here and spawned a gleaming force bubble that keeps everything within safe from the planar winds. An entire village could thrive on the larger islands.

In addition to the random events that can befall a party within a vortex, the nature of this portal and its relationship with the planes causes dramatic changes in its environment. A vortex can exhibit a wide variety of traits and features, as the planes that are located near it alter its environment. Each day the characters travel through a vortex, select 1d3 planar traits to use in the section they are exploring.

The portals that stud the vortex's walls tend to connect to the same plane or world within a given area. For example, a cluster of a dozen portals may all lead to a plane of burning seas and endless desert sands dominated by fire elementals. The 12 portals could all lead to different, widely separate points in that world. A nearby cluster could lead to a different world, and so forth. For this reason, gaining control of a section within a vortex can give a kingdom or a powerful figure the ability to quickly travel across a world.

The portals found within a vortex's walls are all gateways. They can feature the following traits: limited charges, spells, time travel, transformation, variable, and vortex.

In Your Game

The vortex is a useful tool if you want to make planar travel more dangerous, strange, and chancy. Sometimes, the planes can lose some of their mystery for veteran players who have ventured into the astral and ethereal planes many times before. Other times, those planes can be a bit too alien for your players to get a good grip on what the environment is like and how it operates from day to day. The vortex presents a radically different environment for the characters to explore, and its arrangement makes it easy for you to slip in portals to a wide array of planes and worlds that you want the characters to explore. Since the vortex can be infinite, eternally changing, and impossible to map, you can use it again and again, each time presenting the characters with a variety of new conditions, traits, and landmarks.

The creatures that dwell within the vortex deserve some consideration. In its natural state, the vortex is devoid of all life. It has sufficient air because the many open portals along its sides allow oxygen to leak into it. Compared to the infinite worlds it connects to, the vortex is so small as to be irrelevant. You can also choose to make portions of it a

vacuum, poisonous, and so on using the planar traits.

The creatures that dwell within the vortex come from a wide number of worlds. Wizards can travel through the vortex to explore the planes, create isolated sanctuaries where they can study and work in peace, and escape from powerful enemies who may seek to hunt them down. The creatures dwelling in a vortex could be explorers sent from distant worlds to plumb the vortex's depths. An accident could send them spiraling down the passageway, leaving them forever isolated from home. A magically advanced civilization could construct a platform and a series of staircases to access nearby portals. By anchoring their constructs in an open portal, the structure could be stable enough to survive.

Other cultures could see the vortex as an inescapable realm. They could throw criminals, dissidents, and other undesirables into it. Over time, these outcasts could form a simple society that survives on the castoffs the portals sometimes belch forth. Depending on how active the portals are, this tiny society could prosper or forever remain on the edge of collapse. If the portals provide plentiful food and water, small communities within the vortex could persist for many years. Some of the portals may be located below water, causing steady streams of fresh water to cascade into the vortex at different points. A community near such a stream could gather fish and other foodstuff from the water, allowing it to survive indefinitely. On the other hand, if little food and water is available in the vortex, the microsocieties that emerge could be dangerous to travelers. They could devolve into cannibalism, leading them to greet visitors warmly to gain their trust before killing and devouring them.

The strange, floating islands found within the vortex can vary in size depending on the needs of your campaign. Larger ones can house fortresses, research stations, and small villages. Strange, planar flora and fauna could live on them, giving settlers a steady source of food. These islands could be the shattered remains of entire demiplanes that were sucked into the vortex, wreckage from magical structures built within the vortex, or a naturally occurring phenomenon spawned by the intense energies that flow through it. The islands are a convenient location for dungeons, strange locations,

and adventures within a vortex. The characters could even colonize one and anchor it to a portal in order to use it as a forward base or isolated fortress.

For lower-level adventurers, the vortex presents a dangerous environment not because of the monsters or hazards it presents but because it can strand them far from home. One wrong step can send a character hurtling into the void. Luckily, the base rate of speed for the vortex is low enough that a quick-thinking party can save a falling comrade. As DM, you can always choose to alter this speed in order to increase the danger inherent in traveling the vortex. Bump the speed from 30 to 60, 90, or even 120 to emphasize the deadly environment. However, at these speeds a single fall can kill or strand a character. These limits make the vortex much deadlier for parties below 7th level, as they have limited access to abilities that can save them from falling or that can overcome the vortex's environment. The 30 ft. speed is a danger, but not one that is impossible to overcome.

To really bring the vortex to life, you should emphasize the howling wind, the strange flow of energy, and the alien environment. Any items the characters find in the vortex, from a simple castoff sword to an entire stone temple floating in the winds, should feature some element that is strange and alien. Refer to encyclopedias, Web sites, and magazines for pictures of odd sites and items to use during the game. Ancient Aztec, Roman, Greek, Chinese, and Japanese cultures had art styles sufficiently different from the medieval European standard in fantasy campaigns to set them apart.

Dip into your collection of monster books to find the weirdest creatures to throw at the party. The vortex is literally an otherworldly realm. The less familiar you can make it, the better it will work in your game. If the players see creatures they recognize and fight the same old foes, they may view the vortex as nothing more than a handy mass transit system to the planes.

When the characters enter the vortex, try to design at least one challenging encounter for each trip they take. Use the random vortex contents table to throw some odd sites and encounters at them to remind them that the vortex should never be taken lightly. A journey into it should always be a dangerous proposition.

It may be useful to give the characters a few magic items that they can use in the vortex to make travel easier. Ideally, the environment should remain a concern for the characters, but unless they can travel through the vortex, it poses little utility to them. Some of the items from Chapter 1, such as the *aethership* or the *rod of planar stability*, are particularly useful in the vortex.

The characters could enter a vortex for a variety of reasons. A villain could flee into a vortex, forcing the PCs to give chase if they are to finally defeat him. Similarly, a powerful artifact could be thrown into a vortex or a quest could lead the characters to enter one in order to find a specific planar portal. You can create planes or worlds accessible only through a vortex. Spells or magic items that allow planar travel only point out the location of a portal in a vortex that leads the characters to where they want to go.

Other adventures could revolve around the vortex itself. The characters may have to travel to a temple or wizard's tower long ago cast into the vortex, forcing them to voyage for many days along its length in search of their quarry. A magic item such as a *planar compass* could point the characters in the right direction or lead them to portals they must take to find their goal in the trackless, infinite pathway of the vortex.

WORMHOLES: PASSAGE TO INFINITY

Planar scholars of a philosophical bent often ponder the history and origin of the cosmos. If the gods made men, goblins, elves, and dwarves, who made the gods? And what spawned that process that led to the gods' genesis? While most folk are content to accept the creation stories offered by various cults, sects, and religions, many philosophers are too curious and inquisitive to accept stories and myths that rely on faith, rather than facts, to answer their questions. For these seekers of knowledge, wormholes offer the most tantalizing, and at the same time the most frustrating, glimpse into what may have come before, and what might come after, this cosmic reality.

73

If a vortex represents the empty void between the planes, wormholes honeycomb the raw planar material that serves as a buffer between the planes and some other reality. Or at least, that is what most sages believe. Wormholes exhibit a number of traits that suggest they originated beyond the cosmos and could connect it to entire universes beyond even divine reckoning.

Planar researchers believe that the entire cosmos, including the astral and ethereal planes, rests within a greater cosmic firmament, and within this layer sits other collections of planes and worlds. If the planes are islands, then the astral and ethereal planes, and the vortices that run between them, are like the ocean in which they sit. To extend the analogy further, this strange material is much like the sky that bounds them from above. Travelers could voyage across the waters, find new islands, and move from one end of the ocean to the other without ever achieving the means to soar into the sky above. To extend the analogy, a flier could reach high enough to find entirely new oceans or, as is the case with wormholes, new pathways and patterns in the islands below him.

Not all researchers agree that this analogy is an accurate representation of the cosmos. Instead, they see wormholes as cousins to vortices. While a vortex is a chaotic construct infused with energy, a wormhole is much more orderly, easier to navigate, and composed of solid, physical matter. They consider vortices to be the byproduct of the energy flow that exists between the planes. Wormholes are mere passages through the planar material that bounds the vortices and separates the planes. Some researchers take this a step further, theorizing that a vortex actually burrows through the planar material and leaves wormholes in its wake.

Regardless of the theories and models used to understand them, wormholes serve as tunnels between the planes. Much like vortices, they allow travelers to physically walk between planes with a few days of traveling. While a vortex is chaotic and difficult to navigate, a wormhole is more stable and static. At first glance, it appears to be nothing more than a huge subterranean passage.

Wormholes are named for their shape. They are round, rough tunnels of a damp, clay-like sub-

stance that is usually cool to the touch. They resemble channels dug by titanic worms, hence their name. Dim, gray light radiates from the walls, providing conditions similar to very early morning or late dusk. In most areas of a wormhole network, thick, gray mist prevents travelers from seeing beyond a short distance. The air is typically damp, and in many areas small puddles of water dot the wormhole's floor.

Rumors abound of entire lakes or even oceans that fill the lower reaches of the wormholes, but thus far explorers have yet to confirm such tales. Many sages point to the wormholes' shape and size as evidence of their link to vortices, and their seemingly random turns and twists, including frequent sharp turns up and down, lend support to this belief. In some areas, explorers are forced to employ climbing gear or spells such as *fly* to proceed along a wormhole, as it bends and turns up or down at a sharp angle.

Like vortices, wormholes are studded with many portals along their sides. These portals are usually connected to the wormhole via small side passages that branch off from its sides, ceiling, and floor. Most of them are gateways, though some minglings that function via corridors and tunnels lead into wormholes. Like a vortex, a wormhole's gates usually cluster together based on the plane or world they lead to. In any given section of these tunnels, the portals all lead to the same or closely linked worlds. Often, adventurers who stumble across a dungeon or underground portal to a wormhole mistakenly believe they have entered some strange portion of the underworld.

Wormholes support a surprisingly large number of living creatures. The ambient moisture and stable environment are conducive to life, and the relative ease with which a creature can move from a portal into a wormhole allows migrations and other large-scale intrusions to take place with relative ease. Unlike a vortex, which can drag a traveler to his doom, there is little about the wormhole's environment that can prove deadly aside from other residents and intruders.

However, in some areas wormholes are infested with strange, dangerous creatures. In areas with many portals that link to demonic or diabolic realms, those planes' evil residents can be found in great numbers. Other times, truly alien, bizarre creatures can be found shambling through the tunnels. These strange creatures, known as true outsiders, are said to originate from a realm beyond the cosmos. Sages who believe that wormholes connect to utterly foreign realms maintain that these creatures are evidence of their theory, but other scholars posit that such monsters are merely residents of undiscovered planes and worlds.

While demons and devils are a daunting threat, they are nothing compared to rumors of the colossal monstrosities known as planar worms. According to rumor and legend, these creatures are responsible for the formation of the wormholes. As no direct evidence of their existence has been uncovered, most reputable sages dismiss such claims as wild fantasies. Still, about once every decade an exploration party finds a new wormhole tunnel, or a section of tunnel caked with the crushed remnants of creatures, structures, and objects that once stood within it. The sages claim that these are merely fluctuations in the planar bindings, natural events akin to the variations in a vortex's winds and width.

A small cult of doomsday prophets known as the Heralds of the Worm maintains that the wormholes are infested with enormous, planar carrion worms that threaten to someday burst through the cosmos's binding and bring ruin to all the worlds and planes. Some of the heralds seek to prevent access to the tunnels. They believe that activity within them angers the worms and increases the likelihood of apocalypse. Other members of this loose sect endlessly patrol the tunnels, desperately hoping to meet a worm, offer it worship, and gain access to unimaginable power.

The Trade Towns

The settlements within wormholes are usually located in a section that offers easy access to multiple planes via portals. Entire trading towns have arisen in this where merchants from a variety of worlds can meet to do business. Rare spices, gems, jewels, weapons, and armor from a multitude of realms trade hands in these towns. An eclectic mix of creatures, from elves and dwarves to civilized half-fiends more interested in business and profit than the pursuit of evil, rub shoulders.

These towns usually depend on outside shipments for food and water, though in

WORMHOLE MIST TABLE

Mist Level	Concealment Range (miss percentage)				
	1/4 (10%)	1/2 (20%)	3/4 (40%)	9/10 (50%)	Total
Faint	101+ ft.	—	—	—	—
Light	61–100 ft.	101+ ft.	—	—	—
Medium	21–40 ft.	41–80 ft.	81–150 ft.	150+ ft.	—
Heavy	0–20 ft.	21–40 ft.	41–80 ft.	81–150 ft.	150+ ft.
Thick	0–4 ft.	5–20 ft.	21–40 ft.	41–60 ft.	60+ ft.

some cases the tepid water of the wormhole is enough to sustain them. The typical trade town features a tall, imposing wall to keep out rampaging monsters, while platforms for archers and spellcasters serve to repel aerial attackers. These settlements are usually managed, rather than ruled, by an alliance of merchants who want to promote and sustain trade between various worlds and realms. Typically, business is too profitable for anyone to consider attacking the settlement in open warfare. After all, war is bad for business. It drives away customers, causes losses of men and material, and exposes merchants to unwanted risks. Rather than allow a war to drain resources, the competing factions within a trade town rely on subterfuge, trickery, and deceit to win their way.

The merchants or overlords who control a trade town typically demand taxes on goods sold or brought into their markets. After skimming a profit off this revenue, they hire mercenaries to man the walls, build inns, taverns, and marketplaces for visitors, and provide a review board of disinterested judges to resolve any disputes. Owing to this settlement's planar origins, the review board is usually manned by lawful neutral creatures, such as ordinators (see Chapter 4), who can guarantee a fair and impartial judgment. The town guard frequently numbers golems, constructs, and mercenaries recruited from across the cosmos. These mindless or alien guards help ensure that they enforce the law without any preference to one group or faction. Still, bribery and other favors can help sway the guards to one faction or the other.

GAME RULES

Wormholes require few custom rules. As described above, they are fairly static, unchanging environments when compared to other types of portals. The air temperature usually remains within the acceptable bounds for living creatures, though in regions of many portals that connect to hot or cold worlds,

the temperature can correspondingly rise or plummet. The wormholes' distinctive trait is the sometimes thick, dense mist that persists within them. This mist can range from a slight haze to a dense cloud that obscures all vision. The wormhole mist table describes several different levels of concealment this mist can provide.

Aside from the mist, a wormhole can feature several planar traits as described earlier in this chapter. You can select traits that fit with the worlds the wormhole's portals connect to, or you can simply pick ones that fit the mood or encounters you want to present.

Wormholes can be mapped just like any other wilderness area. In addition to an overhead view of the terrain, you might want to add a cross section view to remind yourself of any elevation changes, features of the tunnel's roof or floor, and other odd locations. Remember that a wormhole is not necessarily bound by the same restrictions as a mountain range, forest, or other outdoor environment you may map. A spellcaster or flying creature could erect a lair at the top of a tunnel, while important, heavily used portals in a region could open high on the wormhole's sides. Stairs carved into the walls, crude elevators crafted from rope, stones, and timbers, or other conveyances may be necessary to allow access to the wormhole's floor.

The portals that lead to a wormhole can take on almost any form except a malignancy. Gateways can connect to them, and in some cases an ambitious wizard or trader could construct a passage to a wormhole in order to gain access to the large number of portals that stud the wormhole's sides. Such a gateway could also allow easy access to a trade town. A vortex can offer many points of entry to a wormhole, reinforcing the theory that the two portals are somehow connected. As mentioned above, in some cases a mingling can create a powerful correspondence between a wormhole and a

world. Invariably, the passageway between them leads through a cave or hallway that slowly transforms into a tunnel leading into the wormhole's main passage.

Navigation can be tricky in a wormhole, depending on how thick the mists are in an area. A team of explorers could lose the path back to their portal home, stranding them between the planes with little hope of returning short of spells such as *teleport*. As an optional rule, you can require the characters to make Survival checks to keep their bearings as they wander through a wormhole. The mist's thickness determines the DC of this check.

WORMHOLE NAVIGATION TABLE

Mist Conditions	Survival Check DC
Light	5
Medium	10
Heavy	15
Thick	20

One character in the party must make this check every six hours spent traveling through a wormhole. Make this check in secret, as the players should not have an idea that their characters are lost based on the check result. Other party members may attempt to aid the character making the check, as per the standard rules for assisting a skill check. Again, make any checks to assist in secret. On a successful check, the party maintains its bearings and may continue to travel as normal. On a failed check, the group becomes lost. As the characters travel, roll 1d8 to determine the actual direction they wish to move as soon as they cannot see any recognizable landmarks.

For example, the party declares that they want to head east from an outcropping on a wormhole's floor. You make their Survival check in secret and note that they failed it. After two hours of walking, they turn north. At that point, you roll 1d8 to determine their actual direction of travel. Use the random direction table to determine their true heading. Until the party notices they are heading in the wrong direction, they continue along their incorrect path. Each time the characters make a turn, alter their course to account for the errors they made in their directions. Find the direction they think they are moving on the random direction table and count up or down to the direction they want to go. Then, find the direction they are actually going and count the same number of steps from there to determine their actual heading. If a result forces you off the bottom or top of the table, wrap around to the top or bottom respectively.

For example, the characters want to head south but become lost and walk west. Later, they decide to turn east. Looking at the random direction table, you see that east is two slots above south on the table. Starting at west and moving two slots above it, you determine that they are now actually moving south-east.

Keep track of the characters' progress on your map as normal. For every hour they are lost, allow them to make a Survival check (in secret, as described above) to determine if they notice that they are lost. Obviously, the players can also determine this for themselves if their characters come across a terrain feature that they know should not be along their planned route.

These rules add an element of uncertainty and danger to a trip through a wormhole. On the other hand, they can make for a boring game if the characters become lost and spend an entire game session wandering around your map. These rules are best used for areas with plenty of encounters and sites that the characters can stumble into. Otherwise, speed up the game by telling the characters their current direction and letting them travel ahead a few hours. Do not narrate the entire trip, as that could become very boring very quickly.

Finally, while this section uses compass directions, in a wormhole there is no such thing as north. Instead, use north and other directions on your maps to keep things clear and help you keep track of the players' location. As long as you can determine the party's direction of travel, the players do not have to use north, south, and other directions to describe their actions. For example, on your map you may have a trade town "north" of a portal the characters use. If the characters want to walk from the portal to the town, you can use that direction in your own notes along with this system. If the characters turn right while traveling north, they are now going east, and so forth.

In Your Game

Wormholes offer a much safer, less variable method of planar travel than vortices. For low-level characters, a wormhole provides a convenient access point to a variety of worlds. If

you want to set the characters on planar adventures early in a campaign, a wormhole and the trade towns within it provide a relatively safe, controlled environment for such adventures. The characters could find a portal to a wormhole (or they could be tasked with exploring one) and the trade town beyond. From there, they can access many different planes and worlds, allowing you to run a planar campaign without having to explain how relatively weak characters can survive in a distant, dangerous realm.

Many fantasy campaigns feature a town and dungeon combination, giving the characters a convenient place to battle monsters, find treasure, and then return home to rest up, sell any treasure they found, and meet up with friendly NPCs who can provide advice, quests, and other aid.

In a similar manner, you can use a trade town as the base for a plane-hopping campaign. The characters could use a trade town as their base, meeting up with friendly NPCs who ask them to undertake missions on their behalf and encountering a broad range of intelligent creatures to give them a sense of a planar campaign's scope. When it comes time to adventure,
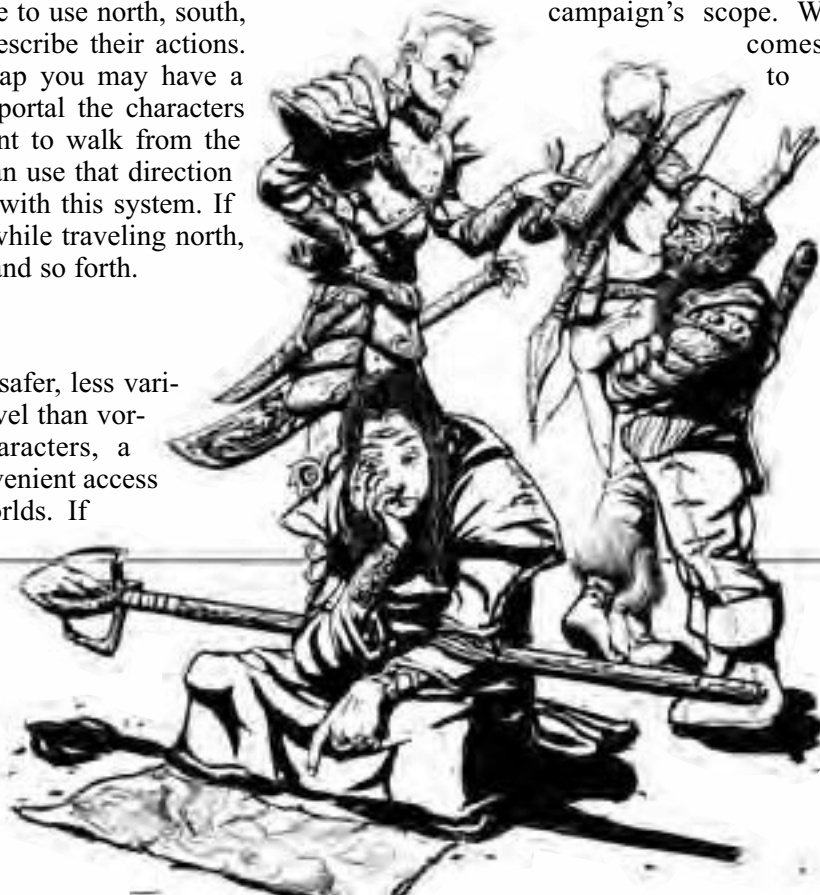
Random Direction Table

d8	Direction
1	North
2	Northeast
3	East
4	Southeast
5	South
6	Southwest
7	West
8	Northwest

the characters can travel to a nearby portal for a journey to a strange world. The actual content of the adventures can cover a wide range of possibilities limited only by your preferences and imagination.

The entire array of planes presented in Chapter 3 is available to you, as a portal from a wormhole can lead almost anywhere. If your players prefer combat and similar challenges, they can face off against monsters that infest worlds, raid caravans to the trade town, and lurk within the wormhole's infinite pathways. For more roleplaying- or political-oriented games, the PCs can engage in all sorts of skullduggery in the trade town and the nearby realms. A thieves' guild could arise in town, requiring skilled undercover work to defeat it. Rival trade consortiums and merchant princes fight a shadowy war to win control of trade routes or the town itself, with the PCs serving as spies, foot soldiers, and ambassadors.

A trade town gives you all the flexibility and the bizarre settings of a planar campaign without the need for high-level play or a reliance on powerful magic spells and enchanted items to make the campaign feasible. Since the wormhole provides a physical pathway from the PCs' homeworld to the outer realms, they can reach it from 1st level onward. Otherwise, the characters must gain enough levels to use spells necessary for planar travel or survive a trip through a vortex.

One drawback to using a wormhole is that it can make planar travel too easy. Unless you want the planes to play a major role in your campaign, gateways, malignancies, and minglings are better methods for moving the characters from one plane to another. In all three cases, the PCs can engage in limited planar travel. Most of those portals connect only two

planes. In contrast, a wormhole (or vortex) features dozens of portals to a wide number of worlds. If you want the planes to play a small or limited role in the campaign, a trade town and a wormhole might be overdoing it. If you think of trips to the planes as diversions from the normal campaign, then stick to the first three portal types discussed in this section. If you see them as a fundamental mainstay of your campaign, then a vortex or wormhole may perfectly fit your needs.

If you do opt to use wormholes as a major thoroughfare between the planes, a trade town can become an important center of political and economic power in your campaign world. Even if it is a relatively small settlement, in terms of the wormhole and the surrounding portals it is a critical link in trade routes, communications lines, and travel. The more time you anticipate the characters' spending there, the more important it is to include some detail on its inhabitants, layout, and government. While guidelines for creating a city are a bit beyond the scope of this book (see Fantasy Flight's *Cityworks* for more information on building and designing cities) there are a few basic guidelines and concepts you should keep in mind when putting a trade town together.

First and foremost, consider who built the settlement and why they did so. Settlements of any kind are a product of intelligent planning and creation. They do not spontaneously arise from thin air. There are a variety of different reasons why a trade town can arise. A merchant or a wizard could build one to help facilitate trade, with the settlement arising out of economic need. These towns could follow the pattern described above, with the government acting more like a corporation interested in profiting off of the services it provides (a secure market, safety from marauding creatures) than a benevolent, regulating body. On the positive side, this sort of government is much less likely to become entangled in visitors' personal lives. To help facilitate trade and attract as many visitors as possible, it tends to keep a hands-off attitude towards its citizens. As long as an individual's actions do not interfere with the flow of business they are unlikely to draw any official attention. This status is good for PCs who want to maintain a low profile, but it can cause them problems when their archenemy shows up in town. No matter how evil a creature or NPC may be, as long as

he does not cause trouble in town the government leaves him alone. The PCs could find themselves on the wrong end of the law if they are trigger happy or overly aggressive.

Here are a few other ideas that explain why a trade town may develop and what its origin means for its growth and appearance.

Defense: If planar monsters and incursions from other planes are a problem in an area, a trade town might be founded to defend a portal or serve as a bulwark against invaders. In this case, the trade town is more of a castle than a market place. Trade and commerce could still take place in the town, but the ruling government is most likely composed of military figures assigned to manage the castle. Justice is swift and extreme, as the commanders are alert to any attempts to infiltrate and subvert the fortress. Rather than an open, walled town, this place is most likely a grim fortress with thick walls, fortified towers, and plenty of barracks for troops. Chances are that such a structure was built and is currently maintained by a government from a world accessible by a nearby gate. That government may still control the fortress. In any case, a trade town built for defense is probably built so that the portal it is supposed to protect is kept within a fortified tower or keep.

Ghost Town: Not all trade towns grow and prosper. Some die off as trade routes dry up, while others may be overrun and destroyed by rampaging demons, devils, and other threats. Ghost towns within a wormhole can serve as dungeons rife with creatures and treasure, potential headquarters for the PCs' incursions into the planes, or lairs for monsters and villains. When building a ghost town, think about how and why the place was built just as you would with any other town. With its history in mind, you can design the layout and determine what sorts of monsters (if any) live there. A ghost town destroyed in an attack may still be infested by the creatures that destroyed it, while one that has remained unused for quite some time could host a wide range of scavengers and creatures looking for a convenient lair. The dead buried within the stronghold might animate as skeletons, zombies, or even more powerful undead.

Settlement: A trade town could arise as a refuge for travelers, castaways, and others stranded within a wormhole. The mists make navigation difficult, causing some explorers to lose track of their path and either enter the wrong portal or forget which portal they must take to return home. Trapped in the wormhole and facing the daunting task of trying portals at random, these explorers could found a small settlement that, over time, grows into a town. These settlements are especially common in areas where the planar mists are thick, as travelers run a much greater risk of becoming lost in such regions.

A settlement's government is determined largely by the character and moral leanings of whoever founded it. These trade towns can range from safe refuges that offer food, water, and healing to slave camps where weak, vulnerable wanderers are forced to serve the bandits who maintain it. The founder's alignment should play a major role in determining how the settlement functions and how it reacts to outsiders.

Once you have determined the basic purpose and function of a trade town, the rest is all details. Draw a map of the place, being sure to include any shops, inns, temples, and other important places the characters may want to visit. When creating the place's inhabitants, try to come up with a two- or three-sentence description of the important NPCs in town. Unless they are going to fight the PCs, these characters do not need complete stat blocks. If you want to run adventures set in a trade town or if it should serve as a place where the characters can find missions and quests, create NPCs who have conflicts and problems that need resolution. A trader may need someone to find a lost caravan, while a temple to a good deity may face harassment or clandestine attacks from an evil cult in town.

CHAPTER THREE
WORLDS BEYOND

One of the hallmarks of fantasy gaming is the sense of wonder it breeds, the feeling that anything could be behind a dungeon door, over the hills, or in the forest's black depths. RPGs are so much fun in part because of their freedom, spontaneity, and open-ended nature. With a special-effects budget limited only by your imagination, you can literally build whatever you can dream of when designing worlds for the characters to visit. This chapter serves as a guide to your world-building efforts. It covers the basics of designing a plane, such as creating new cultures, monsters, and threats and features details rules, planar traits, and other material you can use to make your job easier.

The first section of this chapter covers the basics of world design. It describes how you can make your planes alien (or familiar) to the players and includes a series of traits you can apply to the planes you design to give them a unique feel backed up by game rules. The next two sections cover creatures and cultures. The material on creatures gives you rules and advice on how to take standard fantasy monsters and make them strange, unknowable creatures. The section on cultures details the traits and aspects of a culture that you can tinker with to present the characters with a truly alien, foreign civilization. Finally, this chapter ends with several sample planes that you can use in your

game or look to for inspiration and guidance in building your own.

Game rules and statistics derived from the d20 SRD are designated as **Open Game Content**. Non-rules text is designated as closed content.

BUILDING WORLDS

While building a plane may seem like a daunting task, in reality it is only as complicated and involved as you want it to be. Many times, a plane makes only a short appearance in a campaign or serves as the setting for an adventure or two. In those cases, you only need to create enough detail and information on the plane to cover you for those game sessions in which it appears.

For example, in your campaign the characters have to chase a villain to a castle he built on a fiery world infested with efreet, red dragons, and similar creatures. In this case, the only details you need are the villain's castle, the area immediately around it, NPCs and other creatures the PCs may encounter,

and notes on the plane's environment and how it affects the party. As you can see, aside from considering the planar environment's effects there is little more work than you would normally have to do to create the typical adventure. In this case, you do not need to think about the plane's economy, its civilizations, and its geography beyond what you need to run your adventure. Keep that in mind when designing planes and try to avoid doing more work than is necessary to prepare an adventure. Creating new planes for the characters to visit may seem like a lot of work, but when you cut out all the details except what you need to know during a game session, it becomes much easier.

Plane Creation Checklist

When undertaking any work for your campaign, it helps to keep a checklist handy to keep your design efforts focused and to help make sure you cover all the material you need for your next session. The list given below covers the basic questions you need to answer when designing a plane.

1. What's Different?

This is probably the most important point you need to consider. How is this plane different from the party's home world? The more radically different it is, the more work you need to do to bring it to life. At this point, consider how you can reflect the differences via rules. For example, the characters cannot cast spells in a world where magic is nonexistent. On a desert world, the party needs to keep track of water and take precautions to avoid heat stroke. The sample worlds given later in this chapter should prove valuable in answering this question and building the rules behind an alien world's unique traits.

The easiest way to answer this question is to envision the world and how you want the characters to react to it. If the environment is freezing cold and icy, consider how you can introduce rules to reflect those conditions. The freezing cold weather has a much bigger impact on the players' thinking and their plans if their characters suffer penalties for exposure and lose hit points until they find shelter. Without a rules effect to back up the world's

unique traits, they remain little more than window dressing that the players may overlook or ignore. Use the traits as they are presented or as guides to designing your own rules.

At this stage, try to think of three different aspects of the world that make it different from the campaign setting where most of your adventures take place and the other planes you have designed so far.

2. What's the Same?

This may seem like a simple question, but in truth it can play an important role in making your planes vivid and easy to understand. Sometimes, DMs rush to make things too different when building new planes and worlds. You can overwhelm the players with too much detail, too many changes, or too many effects and modifiers that play a role in their characters' actions. Think of it this way: If everything the characters see or meet is different, the entire world becomes too overwhelming to handle. The few key, important differences that make a world different from your campaign setting are much harder to draw out if they have to compete with a lot of other, less important changes.

As a rule of thumb, a plane should present three key changes that make it different from the characters' home world. Any more differences than that are likely to make a world too alien unless you want the characters to spend a significant portion of a campaign there. While three changes may not seem like much, in practice they usually cover enough that you can create a world different enough to capture the players' attention but not so different that it is unfocused or difficult to understand. The key is to find three traits that play a role in creating the foundation for the entire world. For example, here are some common characteristics of most fantasy worlds that, if altered, can create a unique setting. More details, rules, and ideas for altering these traits are given below under trait categories.

Magic: Most fantasy games are defined by magic. Some of them are a lot like historical Earth, save for the introduction of spells and monsters. Others build entire civilizations with the assumption that magic is a readily available, easily controlled resource. If the PCs' spells and magic items stop functioning, have different effects, or are dwarfed by the power

NPCs can wield, they must approach adventuring much differently and rely on their innate abilities rather than their items.

Environment: Most fantasy worlds use a specific climate for their settings, from an Arabian desert to temperate lands of trees and rolling hills. By simply presenting a new environment, even one that seems familiar, you can force the players to make a lot of changes to how they approach an adventure. Finding clean water, food, and shelter can become much more important than tracking a villain if the PCs enter a hostile area, such as tundra or searing desert. The best part about tinkering with the environment is that it is very easy to use real-world terrain and features that the players are already familiar with. This sort of change presents new challenges to the players without adding any additional layers of novelty to the game. The players recognize the terrain, understand the conditions it presents to them, and can react to it without forcing you to spend much time explaining it to them. This process allows you to spend more time drawing out other, more important or interesting aspects of the plane.

Creatures: You can get a lot of mileage by picking a strange, overlooked, or uncommon monster and making it a world's dominant species. A plane infested with dinosaurs and lizardfolk is more interesting than one that features the same array of orcs, goblins, and giants as your normal campaign world. You can have a lot of fun considering how a strange race might evolve a culture. For example, a race of lizardfolk may build entire villages on the backs of huge dinosaurs. These mobile, nomadic cities present a unique setting for the adventures and play right into the monsters you selected for the plane. Push aside the monster books that you normally use in your campaign and start fresh with a new array of creatures. Even something as simple as removing orcs and replacing them with araneas as the primary evil race can do a lot to make a world unique.

3. What's Important?

This question is probably the hardest to answer of the three, but it also does the most to cut down on trivial details and allow you to focus on the major themes and features of a world or plane. In a nutshell, try to describe the plane you want to create in one sentence. This exercise serves two purposes. It

forces you to look at the key traits that make your world unique and it makes you condense them down to their key components. As discussed above, the only thing worse than making an alien world that is too much like your standard game setting is creating one that is too different. Thinking about the important traits and aspects of a world helps you focus your efforts and put the detail into areas that need it the most.

Your summary sentence can take a lot of different forms. Here are some examples to help you get a handle on the process:

"The Great Machine is a mechanical world where constructs and golems fill the roles of plants and animals."

"The Nightlands is a world of eternal night where vampire lords keep herds of human cattle."

As you can see, a one-sentence description of a world covers its basic appearance, important inhabitants, and general tone. Without too much detail, you already have a basic overview of the challenges the characters are likely to face in these areas and the type of development work you need to do to bring the world to life. For example, the Nightlands are controlled by undead creatures. Perhaps divine magic is weaker there and undead gain several benefits on that world.

Use a one-sentence summary of a plane or world as a guide to what you want to emphasize to the players and the details that should come out during play.

4. How Does it Fit In?

The final issue to consider in putting together a plane is its place in your campaign. If you want a plane to serve as a setting for an adventure or two, you should design it with a few memorable traits that are obvious and play an important role in how the game works. In this case, the plane's physical environment and monsters are probably the two most important aspects as far as the characters are concerned. The less time the characters spend in a world, the fewer opportunities you have to show them the details and structure of the plane. Furthermore, it does not pay to spend a lot of time explaining and discussing a world that will drop from the campaign after a few sessions. Go

for big, obvious changes that capture the characters' attention and have a direct impact on play.

On the other hand, if you plan on making a plane an important part of your campaign you can go for subtler, less obvious differences. In addition, detail and background information on it becomes much more useful. The longer you expect the party to spend on a plane, the more opportunities you have to show them your world and bring out its details and important aspects that might not be immediately apparent. In many ways, you can treat a world like a kingdom, city, or other area in your campaign world that would play host to a series of adventures. Flesh out NPCs, create plots and adventure seeds, and so on. The more you can tie such development into the world's unique characteristics, the better. For example, in a plane dominated by dinosaurs and lizardfolk the adventures you design should involve tyrannosaurs as opponents, lizardfolk cultists or shamans as villains, and so on. The more interaction the characters have with the characteristics that make your world unique, the more likely they are to stand out as important parts of the setting.

The Top Ten Easily Overlooked Changes

Food: The animals and plants on a world may be indigestible by the characters. They had better hope they brought enough rations.

Disease: As the exploration of the New World demonstrated, diseases migrate along with explorers. A disease could strike the PCs, or they could expose the natives to one.

Light: We take the sun for granted, but there is no guarantee that the PCs can find suitable light on a plane.

Gravity: This may seem like a science fiction concept, but a plane could have higher or lower gravity compared to the PCs' home.

Shape: Who says every world is a sphere? Rings, doughnuts, squares, and triangles are all possible forms a plane can take. Look to your dice for examples.

Sound: Imagine an utterly silent world, where sonic energy simply does not exist. Most spells

no longer function, and the characters must use gestures to communicate.

Time: The characters could travel to an era in the campaign world's past or future.

Up Is Down: Gravity does not always have to pull objects in one direction. Perhaps multiple directions or surfaces on the world count as "down."

Weather: Hot and cold are obvious choices, but consider a world eternally gripped by a thunderstorm, hurricane, or similar fierce weather.

Planar Nuts and Bolts

Once you have the basic idea of a plane's themes and important traits, you can then get to work drawing them out and putting them into practice. One of the key maxims in writing is "show, don't tell." A similar principle applies to designing things for your campaign. Rather than tell the players that a world has freezing weather, impose penalties on them for the weather. In the first case, your world's characteristics are just another bit of information the players have to absorb. In the second one, the PCs suffer consequences because of the conditions, bringing the world's details to the forefront of any situation and giving the players a reminder that they are dealing with a different environment.

This section introduces rules and advice for making your own game effects based on your planes' characteristics and traits. It introduces a series of planar traits, rules modules you can use to model various effects and characteristics of a world. By combining a few traits you can model almost any world you can imagine. In addition, this section includes guidelines and examples for creating your own traits and worlds.

Hazards

To help organize the environmental effects of the different traits, they are all presented as hazards. First presented in *Dungeoncraft*, hazards are a shorthand method for presenting dangers other than traps and monsters. Hazards include freezing weather, a raging fire, and similar threats. All hazards

can be broken down and described with the following attributes.

Name: A generic description of the hazard, such as the searing heat of a lava pit, a devastating blizzard, or a cloud of necromantic energy that drains life from those who wander through it.

Initial Save: The saving throw type and DC necessary to resist the hazard's effects. This may change over time, as per the save interval and interval penalty. A character must make this saving throw immediately after he is exposed to a hazard. If a character begins his turn exposed to a hazard, he makes his save before taking any actions.

Saving Throw Interval: Some environmental hazards become progressively more difficult to cope with over time. For example, a character marching through the desert in full plate may be able to stave off exhaustion for a short time, but eventually the strain and dehydration become too much for him to handle. The interval describes how often a character must make a saving throw as long as he is exposed to the hazard. Even if a character fails a saving throw, he must still make a new one and could take more damage from a hazard over time.

An interval can also be expressed as a distance or some other condition a character's actions can fulfill. For example, a character may have to make a Balance check for every 20 feet he walks across a 60-foot-long high wire. If he stands in place he can maintain his balance, but as he moves he risks losing his balance and falling.

Not all hazards have an interval. Once the characters overcome them they no longer pose a threat. Of course, if the characters expose themselves to the hazard again, they must make any appropriate saves or checks to resist it.

Interval Penalty: Some hazards are more difficult to resist over time. A character marching across the desert loses fluids and becomes more susceptible to heat exhaustion. Each time the saving throw interval passes, the penalty increases by its base amount. For example, Boris the Bold is dealing with an environmental hazard that has a saving throw interval of 10 minutes and an interval penalty of –2. He makes his first save without a penalty, but

10 minutes later he must save again at –2. After another 10 minutes, he saves again at –4. After still another 10 minutes, he must save again at –6. Each time Boris fails his saving throw, he suffers the ill effects of the hazard.

Interval penalties always count as circumstance modifiers.

Damage: This entry describes the effects inflicted on those who fail their saves against the hazard. These can include temporary or permanent ability damage, hit point damage, a magical spell or effect such as *slow*, disease, poison, or whatever else you can create.

In some cases, a hazard inflicts damage even if a character makes his saving throw. In that case, the damage on a failed saving throw is listed first, with the effects on a successful saving throw listed second. Some hazards, such as a river of flowing lava, are so incredibly dangerous that no character could ever hope to come into contact with them and escape unscathed.

Other times, a hazard inflicts more damage as a character is exposed to it over time. For example, a character suffering from starvation may not show many outward signs of its effects at first, but over time he rapidly loses strength. In most cases, it is enough to simply apply the same effects with each failed save. However, some effects inflict a rapid spiral that causes progressively more damage over time. These effects and rules for applying them are noted in the hazard's damage description.

Special Effects: This header covers any notes relating to the hazard that make it unique and provides rules to cover any special cases or exceptions it may entail. For example, a character wearing a thick fur coat may gain a saving throw bonus to resist a freezing snowstorm, while one wearing full plate in broiling heat may suffer a penalty to his saves. Since these rules cover a wide range of effects with a single set of standardized rules, most hazards have a few special effects and unique traits that are explained here.

Skills, Abilities, and Hazards: In some cases, rather than make a saving throw to resist a hazard a character may instead make a skill or ability check. For example, while traveling through a thorny, briar-choked forest the characters

may have to make Survival checks to carve a usable path and avoid taking damage. In this case, the skill check takes the place of a saving throw but the hazard otherwise works as normal. To resist the hazard, a character must make a skill check against the hazard's DC. If the hazard has an interval, the character must make another skill or ability check later on, possibly at a penalty if the hazard has an interval penalty listed.

The Hazard Stat Block

To make hazards easier to use, the following generic stat block is used to describe them. Not every hazard features all of the attributes listed above. In that case, simply remove the appropriate header from the stat block.

Name: Initial Save; saving throw interval; interval penalty; damage; special effects.

Here are two examples to illustrate the specific format. Many of the threats presented in the various planar traits use this hazard stat block.

Starvation: Constitution check DC 10; 1 day interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d6 subdual damage; Special: Characters can go three days without food before they suffer the effects of this hazard. A character who takes damage from this hazard is automatically considered fatigued. Damage inflicted by starvation cannot be healed until a character receives adequate amounts of food.

Thirst: Constitution check DC 10; 1 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d6 subdual damage; Special: Characters can go one day plus a number of hours equal to their Constitution without water before they suffer the effects of this hazard. A character who takes damage from this hazard is automatically considered fatigued. Damage inflicted by thirst cannot be healed until a character receives adequate amounts of drink.

Planar Traits

The planar traits are a bit like creature templates in that you can apply them to the typical plane to easily change it to a different setting. The traits are presented first. Each one gives a small section of rules or an adjustable scale you can set to achieve the effect you want. For example, the heat trait can be scaled from a steamy rainforest to a fiery, hellish landscape of flaming lakes and rivers of molten rock.

The planar traits are broken down into several categories for ease of use. In some cases it makes sense to include only one trait from a category, while in others you can pick out multiple traits from a single header. The terrain category is a special case. It usually affects the other traits you might choose, making it a good first choice when creating a plane. Remember that you can use one, a few, or all of the traits in a category to build a plane. While the traits may share themes, they are not automatically linked. When you use more than one trait from a given category, you can give them different strength ratings. For example, if you decide to use two evil traits you can give one a moderate rating and the other an overwhelming one. The strength levels do not have to match.

Modifying Traits: Many of the traits listed in this section offer different strength levels. The stronger the trait, the greater its effects. Many traits list multiple bonuses or modifiers. For example, the empower evil trait gives evil creatures bonuses to their attacks and spell save DCs. You can add more detail to a trait by varying the strength of the specific abilities it governs. Usually, you select one strength level for empower evil and apply all the modifiers listed for it. You can instead select different strength levels for each modifier and effect it has, allowing you to exercise more precise control over its effects. Usually, it is easier and simpler to use one strength level, but there is no reason why you cannot vary levels within a trait just like you can assign different levels to different traits.

Trait Collisions: Sometimes, a creature may be subject to more than one trait. Apply the usual rules for stacking bonuses and modifiers. If two traits ever have mutually exclusive effects, apply them in whatever order makes the most sense for your campaign. Otherwise, you can opt to ignore a trait in favor of another one in a specific situation.

Using the Traits

While at first glance the traits may seem restricted to specific types of planes and sharply divided between categories, they present a set of tools useful in a wide array of circumstances.

The first thing you need to keep in mind is that the trait categories are artificial groupings created to make organizing the traits easier. An evil world does not feature all of the traits listed under the evil category. It may use one or two of them, but it can use the elemental, necropotence, and law categories to fill out its important characteristics. An icy cold region of hell may use cold, elemental, and evil traits to describe it. Look at the traits as a whole rather than fixating on their categories.

While the traits are presented as tools for use in creating worlds and planes, you can also use them to modify regions in dungeons, wilderness areas, and specific regions or layers of a plane. The inner sanctum in a temple may have traits that echo a god's alignment and portfolio. For example, the cathedral of the god of fire may feature chaos and heat traits owing to its close association to a divine figure. A graveyard known for its sinister reputation might have a necropotent trait, while the site of a major arcane experiment could display several magic traits as the fundamental structure of magical energy bends and warps. While these traits were designed with the planes in

mind, you can use them in a wide range of circumstances to present and model weird environments, bizarre magical effects, and unique locations.

PLANAR TRAIT CATEGORIES

Terrain: The plane's physical geography, from realms of rock shards floating in a void to worlds like Earth with many climates and terrain.

Chaos: Realms of elemental chaos, dominated by chance and shifting terrain. All is malleable within a chaotic realm.

Cold: Frigid worlds encased in ice, from snowy, arctic lands to planes forever locked in an endless, deep freeze.

Elemental: Areas where a single element reigns above all others or is otherwise altered in its form and purpose.

Evil: Lands of raw malevolence, where the power of rampant evil can overwhelm the heroes who venture into them.

Good: Planes where heroes congregate, the gods of justice hold court, and the choruses of angels sing.

Heat: Desert worlds, fiery realms, and other planes where the air temperature is high enough to make life difficult for travelers.

Law: Strictly controlled, regulated, and coordinated, the planes of law are domains where nothing is ever left to chance.

Life: Some planes are dead and empty worlds, while others are infested with a staggering range of aggressive creatures.

Light: From realms of utter darkness to deserts scorched by two or more suns, every world is different.

Magic: In some worlds, mages can level cities. In others, they can barely muster the power to heat a bowl of soup.

Necropotence: Worlds dominated by the undead, where the power of death drowns out life itself.

Technology: Not every world cleaves to the

standard level of technology found in most fantasy settings.

Waterways: From lakes of magma and boiling seas to oceans of dust and lakes of water, planes exhibit a wide range of features that fill the role of waterways.

Weather: Planes and lands scoured by endless, howling storms or where the air is in a perpetual calm.

Terrain

A plane's terrain defines many of its other traits, such as its weather, temperature, and inhabitants. Usually, it helps to start by looking at this trait first then moving on to other details.

Planes might feature a single terrain type, such as a world of endless mountains, or they can have deserts, oceans, forests, and plains spread across them. Most of the time only part of a world's terrain matters. If the characters venture into a plane's deserts, you do not need to worry about detailing its mountains and oceans.

Unlike the other traits, terrain does not necessarily present any new mechanics. Instead, it builds a foundation on which you can stack other effects. Some of these traits work well together, while others are obviously incompatible. You can select a variety to cover an entire world, combine a few to create a unique area, or steal bits from several of them to make a unique landscape. The list given below covers some common terrain types. Use it as a model for creating your own or employ them as they are presented.

Air: These worlds are vast, open areas. Picture an object falling through the sky, except there is no ground for it to ever crash into, and you have a good idea of what these realms are like. Planes of air are similar to world-size bubbles of gas. The weather trait is critical to these planes. The creatures within them most likely hail from the plane of air or can at least fly. Islands of dirt and rock may float through these realms, providing the characters with convenient locations for their adventures. Otherwise, they must keep to the air. Luckily, if there is no ground the PCs never need worry about falling to their deaths. Of course, finding a way home could be another matter.

The core rules include all the game mechanics for flying characters and creatures you need to run adventures on these planes. Consider using a portal with the transformation trait to grant the PCs wings or give them access to flying magical items. Otherwise, this environment could prove too hazardous for the party to handle.

Desert: Hot, sandy, and devoid of plant life, deserts force the characters to hoard their food and water to survive. The heat trait is key to these worlds. On the other hand, you can throw the players an unexpected twist by using the cold trait to reflect the freezing desert nights. A planar desert could be as hot as a terrestrial one, or it could rival the depths of hell. Creatures with the fire subtype and those adapted to dry conditions are common on these planes. Lizards, red dragons, scorpions, and salamanders all make good monsters for these worlds.

Use the rules given for the heat and cold categories to simulate the extreme temperatures the characters face on these worlds. The weather can play an important role, as strong winds can cause dust storms. Use the light trait to present frigid deserts, as the dry conditions prevent snow and ice from forming over the land even if the sun fades from the sky.

Flooded: A flooded world may have once been a prosperous realm, but now the rising waters have swept away much of its past glory. Alternatively, the entire plane could have always been sunk beneath a few feet of water. In any case, the flooded trait indicates any plane that would seem like any other terrain trait save for the floodwaters that have swamped the area. Cities and towns rise halfway from the murk, while any surviving creatures must rely on fishing to survive. In a few areas, islands of dry land could persist. If the plane was the victim of a watery cataclysm, the survivors may fiercely battle to control such havens.

The fun thing about a flooded world is that you can throw almost any creature into it and determine how it would survive a great deluge. The waters could fill caves and dungeons, forcing drow and other underworld creatures to seek refuge on the surface. Elves might survive by moving their homes high into the tallest trees, while the dwarves could be

Alternate Forests

Alternate Forests	Description
Chaos	A forest of ever-moving trees, forcing the PCs to dodge them as they travel.
Cold	Trees encased in ice so thick that it forms a solid canopy of snow.
Evil	A forest of trees formed from damned souls. They screech and moan pitiably.
Good	A gleaming, emerald forest inhabited by elves, angels, and peaceful fey.
Heat	A stand of ever-burning trees that choke the air with their smoke and ash.
Law	Row after row of perfectly arranged, exactly identical trees.
Life	A "forest" that is actually a patch of hair on some mammoth, dormant creature.
Necropotence	A forest infested with undead trees. Use the treant's stats, but the trees cannot move.
Technology	A maze of antennas, solar collectors, and other devices used by an underground city.
Weather	A stand of trees with holes worn into them by the wind. When the winds blow strong enough, the trees whistle.

secure in their mountain peak fortresses. Aquatic creatures present an obvious source of enemies, or they could colonize sunken cities.

The waterways category goes a long way to defining a flooded world's nature. Imagine a land engulfed in lava, green slime, or another exotic material. The chaos trait is also a good fit. The waters could constantly shift and change the terrain features that poke up through them.

Forest/Jungle: A forest or jungle can range from a welcoming, bright realm populated by friendly sprites to a dark, foreboding place where goblins, spiders, and worse lurk behind every tree. In a planar realm, you can vary this terrain type's feel by tinkering with how the trees developed. One forest might have oaks that rise hundreds of feet into the sky, while another may actually be a forest of towering stone monoliths. Try to think of what trees would be like on this world. Consider its most important traits, the ones you want to bring to the forefront of the campaign, and use those to drive your description. The alternate forest table lists a sample forest type for several trait categories.

Gravity: The force that keeps creatures from flying off into space could be stronger or weaker on a given plane. Even if the action takes place on a flat plane, the characters might still enter an environment where they weigh less or more than what they are used to. Low gravity makes things easier on the party, as the PCs can leap over obstacles and move faster.

High gravity slows them down and reduces their fighting ability.

The Strength modifier applies directly to the characters when they visit a place with lighter or heavier gravity. Compared to the world's inhabitants, they are stronger or weaker respectively. A character whose speed is reduce to 0 or less due to gravity can still move at a speed of 5 ft. unless his speed was reduced due to encumbrance. If his speed was reduced due to wearing heavy or medium armor (as opposed to carrying equipment or a heavy load) he can still move with a 5-ft. speed. Finally, all ranged weapons have their range reduced in high gravity and increased in low gravity.

In addition to its relative strength or weakness, gravity can feature multiple directions on a given plane. You can nominate a single direction as down and have everything on a plane arranged with that in mind. Alternatively, multiple directions could count as "down" depending on one's position on a world. In any room, area, or plane, you can create multiple gravitational attractions. Select several directions for gravity's pull. An object moves towards the strongest pull, tumbling in its direction as per the standard rules for falling. For simplicity's sake, assume that if more than one gravitational force pulls a creature, the strongest one wins. If two gravities oppose each other, the stronger one wins but the modifiers it grants are reduced by the losing force's total modifier values. If the weaker force's modifiers are negative, ignore them and simply use the stronger one's as listed.

GRAVITY

Gravity Level	Speed	Strength Modifier	Range Increment
Faint	+20 ft.	+4	x2
Light	+10 ft.	+2	x1.5
Medium	+0 ft.	+0	x1
Heavy	–10 ft.	–2	x1/2
Overwhelming	–15 ft.	–4	x1/4

In areas without gravity, characters must move by swimming through the air. Objects float in space unless they somehow acquire velocity. Characters use the Swim skill, but reduce all speeds by half. Characters who can push themselves off an object must make a Strength check (DC 10) to move at their normal walking speed for a number of rounds equal to their Strength bonus +1, with a minimum of 1. Objects in motion tend to stay in motion until they hit an object. Once a character achieves a level of speed, he does not need to spend any actions to move. He continues to move in his starting direction and with his starting speed until he hits an object. Collisions deal damage as if a character fell half the distance equal to his speed. An object or character that hits an object must make a Reflex save (DC 10) or bounce off and move in a random direction at one-quarter of its pre-collision speed. A character may spend a standard action to grab hold of an object and automatically succeed at his Reflex save.

Zero gravity makes it easier to use ranged weapons at extreme distances, since they can soar through the air without gravity's interference. Multiply range increments by 4.

Mechanical: These worlds consist of iron cogs, metal plates, and other pieces of machinery. In place of rivers and valleys, there are streams of oil and grooves worn into the rusted, metal plates that form the ground. Mechanical worlds are artificial replicas of the natural environment. The stars in the sky, the mountains that tower above the horizon, the trees in a forest, all of these features are reproduced with metal and glass. In place of rivers and oceans are canals and pools. Perhaps a highly advanced race slowly destroyed its world and tried to rebuild it, or the entire plane is a grand experiment cast aside by a neglectful god or still under its watchful gaze. In any case, constructs replace everything that lives.

Golems, animated objects, and other constructs most likely dominate these worlds. In some cases an intelligent, living race could build and maintain this realm, perhaps on behalf of some powerful being. The magic and technology categories provide many useful traits for this terrain, as undoubtedly either or both play a role in maintaining the environment.

Mountains: Soaring into the sky, mountains present a daunting challenge for even the experienced ranger or outdoorsman. They are typically cold, have few easily followed trails, and their cliffs can send an adventurer falling to his doom. Planar mountains may stretch hundreds of miles into the air, leading to areas of airless vacuum. Volcanic cones may dot a mountain range, spewing smoke, ash, and lava into the air and down the mountain slopes. Caves in the mountains' rocky sides could lead deep into forgotten caverns and ancient dungeons.

The weather category, specifically the vacuum or thin air traits, is a natural fit for a mountainous plane. Areas rife with active volcanoes can use the heat category, while most other mountains can use the traits from the cold list. Flying and cold monsters fit into the mountains, while fiery ones work in volcanic areas. Giants, dwarves, goblins, and orcs are all commonly depicted as mountain dwellers.

Organic: This alien environment is a monstrous living being the size of an entire world. The hills are lumps of flesh, the rivers its blood and bile. Creatures that dwell within this world could be organisms that have adapted to life on or in the planar creature or they could be its immune system sent to defeat intruders. The ground glistens with slime and mucous, while in some areas mold and even trees could take root and thrive in rivers of spittle and plains of flesh. At random intervals, the ground shudders as organs beneath it rumble into motion or discharge bodily fluids.

Alternate Plains

Sample Plains	Notes
Glass	The characters stand on a massive sheet of clear glass, allowing them to see what lies below, such as tunnels or even underground cities.
Invisible	The ground is invisible, forcing the characters to use guesswork to plot their path. They see only empty space.
Mobile	The ground is always moving to some undetermined destination, much like a gigantic conveyor belt.
Tilted	The entire plane is tilted at a 45-degree angle. Watch out for avalanches.

In this bizarre landscape, almost any trait works fine. In areas within the creature, the heat category provides tools to simulate the stifling environment. Law, chaos, good, or evil traits can reflect the creature's alignment. If the creature is dead, it could spawn undead horrors that benefit from the necropotence category.

Plains: Flat, expansive, and generally featureless, plains may seem like a dull choice for terrain. A journey to another world is not about to stand out in the players' memories if they journey to a grassy field. On the other hand, there are situations in which plains are a good option. If you do not want the terrain to overshadow other features of the world, plains are a good choice. In addition, you can vary the material of the plains. A featureless grassy prairie is mundane. An endless glass floor floating in space is exotic. Like forests, plains can be as memorable and unique as you make them. The sample plains table lists some ideas.

Shaped: Not every world is a neatly formed sphere or a flat plane. A plane's surface can form a ring, cube, or some other exotic shape. Imagine a world built on the interior of a sphere. The sun hangs in the middle, providing an endless day, while a careful observer could see what lies far ahead if the world is small enough. A plain shaped like a bucket could have a sun that dips down from the sky, reaches its lowest point, then floats back up to the heavens. You can have a lot of fun by picking up random household objects and using them as the basis for a planet or plane's surface. Consider how gravity works, how a sun or moon orbits it, and so on.

Shaped worlds are natural candidates for the magic and technology traits. Perhaps powerful magic or an enormous machine formed the realm, or its shape alters magic in odd ways. The weather systems may be directed along specific axes, with wind and storms forced to follow specific paths by the world's strange shape, a sure sign of a plane dominated by law.

Splintered: Shattered into dozens or even hundreds of pieces, a splintered world consists of chunks of solid ground that float in some medium. Think of the asteroid belt, but instead of drifting through space the rocks float in water, air, vacuum, or some other material. Civilizations thrive on a few individual pieces, particularly those that retained their atmospheres. Others could be dead worlds, littered with ruins and overrun by zombies, ghouls, and skeletons. A splintered world may have been blasted by a great cataclysm, or it could have been created in its current form. Only creatures that can survive the separating medium can visit other realms, possibly allowing wildly divergent cultures to develop. A splintered plane could consist of radically different worlds, each with its own set of planar traits.

The chaos traits are ideal for this terrain, since the concept of a floating, randomly distributed world is innately chaotic. Magic and technology traits may play a major role in sustaining civilized areas against the hostile environment. The weather takes on an important new meaning, as a fierce storm in the plane's medium could send two chunks hurtling away from or crashing into each other. Alliances crumble and civilizations fall based on the ever-changing geography of the plane's habitable chunks.

Subterranean: Imagine a world where the subterranean tunnels never lead to the world above. Regardless of how far you journey up or down, all you find are more caverns and passages. Subterranean worlds are like infinite blocks of stone and dirt honeycombed with cracks. The endless stone stretches from one end of the plane to the other. Spiders, centipedes, and rats infest the land, while creatures

such as drow and troglodytes thrive and erect sprawling civilizations.

The endless darkness of a subterranean world may make it seem like a good candidate for the evil traits, but remember that not everything that dwells in the earth is evil. The dwarf or gnome version of paradise could be a subterranean plane. While the weather may seem irrelevant in an underground realm, magma flows can provide heat, polar areas could consist of ice caves, and a planar vortex could supply fresh air and howling winds. Creatures adapted to total darkness are ideal for this environment, though in some areas strange varieties of stone or fungi could provide light.

Swamp: The entire plane is trapped in a mire of thick, gooey mud. Buildings and trees may poke through the goop, while in some places patches of firm ground provide a solace from the endless mire. In this environment, bugs, rats, and other vermin thrive. Pools of stagnant water dot the landscape, along with forests of sickly, teetering trees. Though the terrain is difficult to travel through, life does thrive here. Small animals burrow nests in the trees, snakes

and fish swim through the waters, and the air is thick with flies. The creatures may not be hospitable to humanoid travelers, but a swamp is by no means lifeless.

Depending on the temperature, the swamp could be a steamy realm of lizards and dinosaurs or a frigid, desolate quagmire. The evil and necropotence trait categories are ideal choices for this type of terrain. Zombies and skeletons could lurk within the muck, ready to spring upon unsuspecting travelers. The grim, dark environment could reflect the baneful influence of demons, devils, or other evil creatures. Add a tinge of the supernatural to the swamp's description, such as ghostly apparitions that swirl through the waters or wailing souls of the damned trapped in the mud.

Tundra: Swept by frigid winds, locked in the cold's endless grasp, tundra worlds are lands of ice and snow. The sun may shine for only a few brief hours a day, if at all, and the few civilized realms always teeter on the edge of starvation and collapse. Ice covers the oceans, rivers, and lakes, while the weather frequently drives living things to seek shelter. Men,

beasts, and other creatures fight for caves and thermal springs. In such a world, the characters face as much peril from a snowstorm as from a frost giant or a wandering band of raiding barbarians.

Obviously, the cold traits are ideally suited to this environment. Light is another important trait, as it may be dark most of the time. You can tie the world's descent into an ice age with the decline of magic, or perhaps a rise in arcane energy tied to ice and cold helped form this world. Frost giants, ice mephits, and other creatures adapted to the cold thrive in these realms.

Water: A water world consists of an endless ocean. Perhaps an island or a small continent pokes above the waves, but in general the waves cover all. Most of the civilized races dwell beneath the ocean, though the plane does not necessarily have an ocean floor where they could erect cities. Rather, they might dwell in bubble-shaped towns that float through the water. By the same token, the water's reach could rise infinitely upward. No matter how far a traveler swam, he would never break the water's surface. In these worlds, water cur-

rents and shifting bodies of warm and cold water dictate the weather.

For an interesting twist on this concept, use the waterways traits to transform these worlds into realms of endless magma, slime, and other materials. While difficult to survive, they can provide the characters with a memorable adventure. Obviously, aquatic creatures should dominate in this environment. Consider the light traits and think about how a sun would operate in this environment. Perhaps it moves through the water, leaving deadly, boiling zones in its wake.

CHAOS

These traits are used to cover planes that are influenced by the power of pure chaos. In these realms, nothing remains static for long. The terrain shifts and changes, history rewrites itself, and little remains the same from day to day. Even the inhabitants of these places shift and change, acquiring new forms, abilities, and personalities. Usually, visitors to these places can avoid the change that inflicts everything native to these realms, but sometimes the power of

chaos is so great that all but the strongest adventurers suffer some sort of mutation.

Worlds under the influence of chaos are usually dominated by madness. The eternal change makes it almost impossible for a true society to ever arise. A creature may be a brilliant visionary one week and a gibbering, childlike simpleton the next. Still, these worlds are far from desolate wastelands. During their inhabitants' short periods of lucidity, they are frenetic in their efforts to build and establish homes. Many of them consider themselves to be personal servants of chaos, driven to alter their surroundings as much as possible.

Note that while the various traits in this section can be scaled depending on the level of chaos, you do not need to apply the same level to every trait. For example, you could select a heavy level of chaos for chaos ascendant and a low level for chaos lands. Furthermore, not every chaotic plane has all of these traits.

Arcane Instability

Magic requires a spellcaster to reproduce an exact set of words and gestures to create a predictable effect. Given the fundamental nature of chaos, such standardized results are sometimes impossible to generate on worlds impregnated with it. The arcane instability trait makes spellcasting a hazardous course of action. Each time a caster uses a spell, there is a percentage chance that his magic takes on a radically different form.

Level of Chaos	Magical Error Chance
Faint	5%
Light	10%
Medium	15%
Heavy	20%
Overwhelming	25%

Each time a caster tries to use a spell, roll d% and check the magical error chance. If the result of the roll is less than or equal to the listed percentage, the caster's spell mutates and changes. Randomly select a spell of the same level from the caster's spell lists. The easiest way to randomly pick a spell is to roll 1d20 and count down from the first spell. Use a smaller die for short spell lists. Resolve the spell against the original target. If the spell has an area of effect, center it on the target. Cones and similar effects extend from the caster to his tar-

get. Spells with a target listed as "you" affect the caster.

Chaos Ascendant

The planar fiber pulses with chaotic energy, bleeding into the creatures that dwell here. Those with an affinity for chaos thrive, their bodies' attunement allowing them to draw strength from the environment.

The chaos ascendant trait lends strength and vitality to creatures with a chaos subtype or alignment. Their muscles bulge, blood rushes through their veins, and their hair and skin shift colors as raw chaos permeates their forms. Depending on the level you select for this trait, they gain a variety of benefits.

Chaos Level	Str Bonus	Con Bonus	Fast Healing
Faint	+0	+2	0
Light	+2	+4	0
Medium	+4	+6	1
Heavy	+6	+8	2
Overwhelming	+8	+10	3

Chaos Lands

The ground shimmers as raw magic runs through it, turning lakes and forests into empty deserts. Rivers run red with blood. A moment later, the desert gives way to an endless ocean. These are the chaos lands, realms where the land itself constantly changes shape.

A chaos land is so thoroughly impregnated with the stuff of raw chaos that it constantly changes shape. Even the duration of these changes shifts over time, with some areas remaining stable for weeks or even months. You can modify this trait in a number of ways. The basic system given below allows you to randomly generate new terrain around the characters. You can also modify how often the terrain changes.

Chaos Level	Time Between Changes
Faint	1d6 days
Light	1d3 days
Medium	2d12 hours
Heavy	1d12 hours
Overwhelming	1d4 hours

The random terrain table can generate changes for you, or you can use it as a

BLIZZARD CONDITIONS

Level	Concealment Range (miss percentage)				
	1/4 (10%)	1/2 (20%)	3/4 (40%)	9/10 (50%)	Total
Faint	101+ ft.	—	—	—	—
Light	61–100 ft.	101+ ft.	—	—	—
Medium	21–40 ft.	41–80 ft.	81–150 ft.	150+ ft.	—
Heavy	0–20 ft.	21–40 ft.	41–80 ft.	81–150 ft.	150+ ft.
Overwhelming	0–4 ft.	5–20 ft.	21–40 ft.	41–60 ft.	60+ ft.

model for a custom-designed list of traits. You can give chaos lands a set of consistent traits, such as cold weather, or you can allow almost anything to change over time. Shifting the probabilities for certain results also allows you to customize this trait. For example, you could create a table that yields a forest-themed change on results of 1 to 80 and a few radically different results for rolls of 81 or higher. In this case the terrain displays seemingly static conditions, but once in a while they undergo a dramatic change.

RANDOM TERRAIN TABLE

d%	Result
1–10	Desert
11–20	Mountains
21–30	Forest/Jungle
31–40	Mechanical
41–50	Organic
51–60	Plains
61–70	Subterranean
71–80	Swamp
81–90	Tundra
91–100	Water

LAW'S BANE

Lawful creatures despise this area. The matter that forms it is composed of chaotic energy that works to subvert their efforts. Bad luck flows to them in a river, while in extreme cases they literally shrivel up and die.

This trait weakens creatures with a lawful subtype or alignment. They suffer a penalty to their Strength scores and to all actions they attempt. The action penalty lists a die type. Each time a lawful creature attempts to defeat a DC or AC, roll the appropriate die type and add the result to that DC. Lawful creatures suffer bad luck in chaos planes. They slip while performing a delicate task, or a target moves mere inches away from a sword blow. The plane conspires against their efforts to impose order upon it.

Chaos Level	Str Penalty	Action Penalty
Faint	–0	1d2
Light	–2	1d4
Medium	–4	1d6
Heavy	–6	1d8
Overwhelming	–8	1d12

COLD

A planar wind cleaves through the thickest furs, freezing flesh and forming tiny icicles on a warrior's plate armor. Snow pours from the sky, hindering travel and providing a hiding place for a lurking monster. A realm that uses the cold traits presents a dangerous environment for even a well-prepared expedition. The cold can kill just as easily as a broadsword or a dragon's breath.

This trait can apply to anything from a temperate world's polar region, to a realm where condemned souls are encased in ice, to a planet orbiting a slowly dying star. In any case, the cold traits allow you to tailor the danger the characters face from the environment. You can make the outdoors more difficult to handle by including snowdrifts and icy patches, or use a steady, freezing temperature to slowly sap the party's strength.

BLIZZARD CONDITIONS

Driven by a howling wind, snow can whip into the air and obscure vision. A powerful storm can temporarily, or perhaps permanently, subject an area to blizzard conditions. Depending on the wind's strength, visibility can drop to a short distance or nothing at all. Pick a blizzard's strength (faint, light, medium, heavy, overwhelming) and cross-reference the range listed for that strength with the concealment level on the blizzard conditions table.

In addition to the obscuring effects of swirling snow, a blizzard's powerful winds can knock a character prone. The wind trait, listed under the weather category, can simulate this obstacle. Select the wind strength that corresponds to the blizzard condition's strength.

Freezing Conditions

This cold trait presents a variety of different levels you can use. Like a dial, you can set it from a mild chill to a deadly freeze. A different hazard represents each level of cold. You can vary the hazard's level within a plane, or you can use a single setting for the entire realm.

Subdual damage inflicted by these hazards cannot be healed until the character warms up. Characters who take any subdual or normal damage from the cold are considered fatigued due to frostbite and hypothermia. This condition disappears if the character heals this damage. Characters who are fatigued cannot run or charge and suffer an effective penalty of –2 to Strength and Dexterity. Not that any effects that protect a character from cold damage also prevent damage from these hazards.

If a character falls to 0 hit points due to any of these hazards, they inflict normal damage even if they normally inflict subdual.

Warm clothes help protect characters against the effects of these hazards. Thick furs and similar garments grant a +2 circumstance bonus to resist the cold. A character wearing only light or no clothes suffers a –2 circumstance penalty to resist the cold.

Faint: Fortitude save DC 10; 2 hours interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage.

Light: Fortitude save DC 15; 1 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage.

Medium: Fortitude save DC 15; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage.

Heavy: Fortitude save DC 15; 10 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage; Special: There is a 10% chance each hour that any water and potions a character carries freeze solid. It takes 20 minutes for a liquid to melt. Exposing the frozen liquid to an open flame reduces this time to 5 minutes.

Overwhelming: Fortitude save DC 15; 5 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage; Special: There is a 10% chance each hour that any water and potions a character carries freeze solid. It takes 20 minutes for a vial to melt. Exposing the frozen liquid to an open flame reduces this time to 5 minutes.
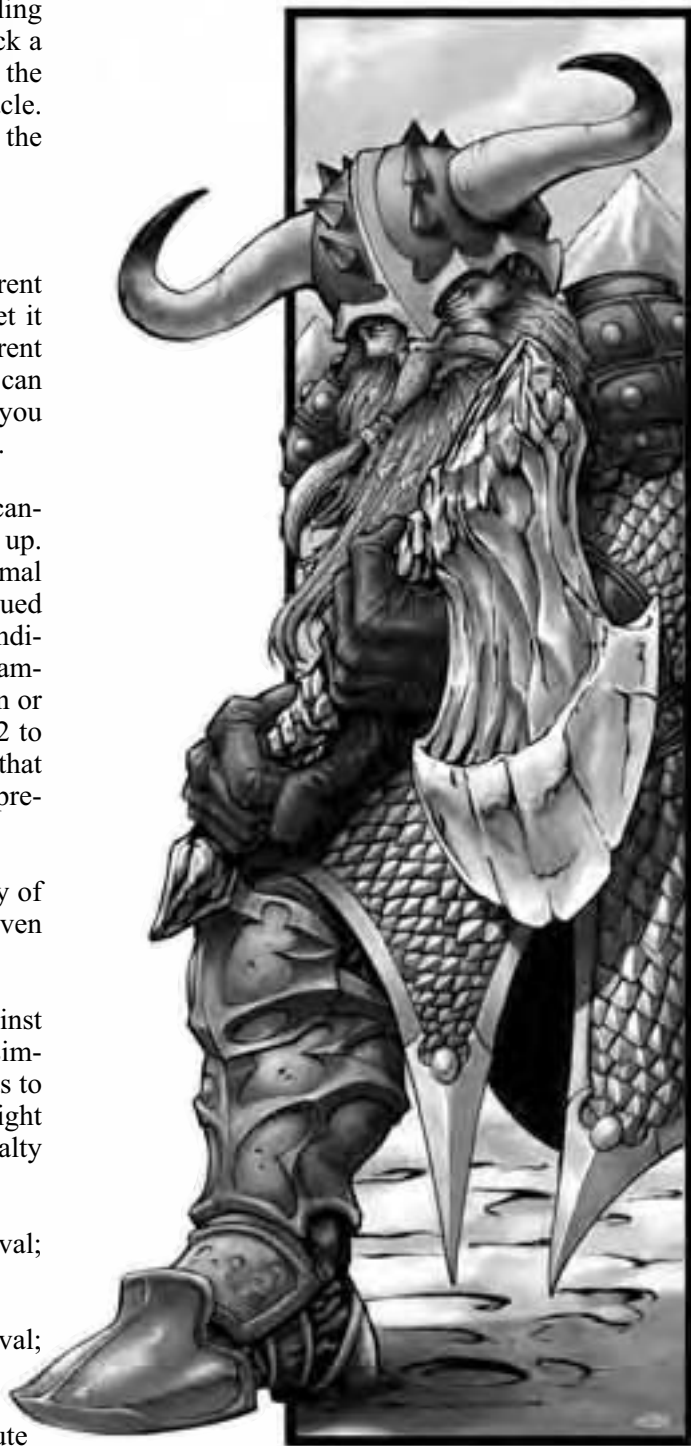
Snow

On a world locked in a cold environment, snow storms can leave drifts that reach over a human's head. Snow inhibits movement, provides cover, and can obscure line of sight. The level of snow determines the penalties characters face when moving and fighting in it. Choose a creature size from Tiny to Colossal. This size reflects the snow's depth. Medium-size snow is knee-deep to a creature of that same size and so on. The penalties and benefits a creature gains depend on its size relative to the snow.

Concealment: Deep snow can engulf a creature, granting it concealment against its enemies. For every size category beneath the snow's size, a creature gains a 10% miss chance against all attacks directed against it. This miss chance cannot rise above 50%.

Speed: Wet, thick, and heavy, snow proves a difficult obstacle for smaller creatures. While tall monsters can step over or through it, punier ones need to burrow through or climb over it. For every size category beneath the snow's level, a creature suffers a –10-ft. penalty to its speed and cannot run. This penalty applies only to walking speed. Flying, burrowing, and other movement modes suffer no penalties in snow.

Snowshoes and Skis: These handy tools make it much easier to move through snow. A creature equipped with either of these items suffers no penalties to his speed and can run through snow as normal. These items allow a character to remain atop the snow, denying him any concealment due to its depth. A pair of snowshoes or skis costs 5 gp.

ELEMENTAL

The same planar forces that infuse a world with evil, lock into the rigid course of law, or send it spinning into primal chaos can also alter how the basic elements function. The elemental traits allow you to pick one or more traits and change how they function. Fire may glow with a dull flame that barely singes skin. Electrical spells fail to function, while a dead silence sets in on a world without sound. The elemental traits allow you to make some fundamental changes to how the world works, introducing a variety of complications that can make an adventurer's life more interesting.

The elemental traits draw on a few traits from the magic category. Those abilities can dampen spells and effects based on their descriptors, including elemental ones such as fire and sonic. In addition to the effects listed here, use those traits to modify how spells function in planes with altered elements.

The traits given here list specific changes for many of the elements and energy types. In addition, the elemental ascendancy and enervation traits allow you to build environments where elemental creatures gain or lose potency.

ELEMENTAL ASCENDANCY

Many creatures draw on the fundamental, cosmic energy of their respective elemental patrons. Efreet sustain their forms and strength with raw fire, while water elementals depend on a plane's connection to their home realms. In some cases, planes feature enhanced connections and alignments with energy types. In a realm rocked by a continual lightning storm, creatures of air and electricity absorb the ambient energy and bathe in its comforting glow.

The elemental ascendancy trait reflects the strength and power creatures can draw from a plane. Each time you select this trait, pick any creature descriptor or subtype. Creatures with the chosen subtype gain Strength and Constitution enhancement bonuses. They also receive a damage bonus on all attacks and effects they use that have the same descriptor or subtype. In addition, spells and attacks used by any creature that shares this trait's descriptor gain the listed bonus damage. For example, an azer has the fire subtype. Any fire attacks, spells, and abilities it uses, such as its heat extraordinary ability, deal additional damage. Even non-fire creatures that use fire attacks would gain bonus damage. Do not multiply this bonus damage on a critical hit. Note that you can use this trait in place of or in addition to some of the category-specific booster traits, such as chaos ascendant.

ELEMENTAL ASCENDANCY

Level	Str Bonus	Con Bonus	Elemental Damage
Faint	+0	+0	+1d3
Light	+0	+2	+1d6
Medium	+2	+4	+1d8
Heavy	+4	+6	+1d10
Overwhelming	+6	+8	+1d12

ELEMENTAL ENERVATION

An elemental creature caught in a plane that lacks its fundamental energy is like a fish without water. Divorced from the source of its physical and magical strength, it slowly loses strength and fades away. Water elementals can make only the briefest trips into a plane of elemental fire, and vice versa. When exposed to such harsh, alien environments, elemental creatures must struggle to maintain health. If they linger too long, they eventually fade into oblivion.

The elemental enervation trait reflects the hostile conditions that can destroy some creatures. A being of pure evil cannot survive long on a plane of good, just as a sonic creature fades and withers in an utterly soundless land. The elemental enervation trait presents a series of hazards that drain a creature's Strength and hit points over time. Each time you select this trait, pick a descriptor or subtype. Creatures with the chosen subtype suffer this trait's effects. You can use this trait in place of or in addition to type specific such as empower evil.

Faint: Fortitude save DC 10; 2 hours interval; –1 penalty/interval; 2 points of damage, 1 point of temporary Strength damage.

Light: Fortitude save DC 15; 1 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 2 points of damage, 1 point of temporary Strength damage.

Medium: Fortitude save DC 15; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 4 points of damage, 1 point of temporary Strength damage.

Heavy: Fortitude save DC 15; 10 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 4 points of damage, 1 point of temporary Strength damage.

Overwhelming: Fortitude save DC 15; 5 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 4 points of damage, 1 point of temporary Strength damage.

ELEMENTAL VACUUM

The fundamental forces of the planes can wane and fade. In some cases they dwindle down to nothing, leaving a plane bereft of an energy type's merest influence. This effect is known as an elemental vacuum. The exact effects of this vacuum depend on the energy type affected by it and its level of strength.

For a given type of elemental vacuum, spells that feature a type's descriptor suffer the arcane weakness trait with a strength equal to the vacuum's power. See page 113 for details on arcane weakness. In addition to that trait's effects, spells and other effects that utilize an element suffer from the specific features listed below.

ACID

As acid loses its potency, it deals less damage and retains its caustic properties for a shorter period of time. At extreme vacuum levels, it becomes no more deadly than water.

Faint: Acid suffers a penalty of 2 point of damage per die rolled.

Light: Acid suffers a penalty of 4 points of damage per die rolled.

Medium: As the light strength rating, and acid deals no damage after the first round of effect.

Heavy: As the medium rating, plus acid suffers a penalty of 6 points of damage per die rolled.

Overwhelming: All acid is rendered inert, becoming the equivalent of water.

COLD

When the power of cold dwindles, spells lose their potency.

Faint: Cold effects suffer a penalty of 2 point of damage per die rolled.

Light: Cold effects suffer a penalty of 3 points of damage per die rolled.

Medium: Cold effects suffer a penalty of 4 points of damage per die rolled.

Heavy: Cold effects suffer a penalty of 6 points of damage per die rolled.

Overwhelming: Cold effects suffer a penalty of 8 points of damage per die rolled.

DARKNESS

As the power of darkness fades, light fills a plane to replace it. Hiding becomes much more difficult, as convenient shadows dwindle out of existence.

Faint: –1 circumstance penalty to Hide.

Light: –2 circumstance penalty to Hide.

Medium: –3 circumstance penalty to Hide. Objects no longer cast shadows.

Heavy: –6 circumstance penalty to Hide. The darkest areas of the world are lit as if by starlight.

Overwhelming: –10 circumstance penalty to Hide. The darkest areas of the world are lit as if by sunlight.

FIRE

Without elemental energy to ignite them, fires become impossible to ignite.

Faint: Fire effects suffer a penalty of 2 point of damage per die rolled. Items and creatures gain a +5 bonus to saves to avoid catching fire.

Light: Fire effects suffer a penalty of 3 points of damage per die rolled. Items and creatures gain a +10 bonus to saves to avoid catching fire.

Medium: Fire effects suffer a penalty of 4 points of damage per die rolled. Normal fires no longer burn.

Heavy: Fire effects suffer a penalty of 6 points of damage per die rolled.

Overwhelming: Fire effects suffer a penalty of 8 points of damage per die rolled.

SONIC

Worlds devoid of sonic energy are utterly silent.

Faint: Sonic effects suffer a penalty of 2 point of damage per die rolled. All creatures suffer a –5 circumstance penalty to Listen checks.

Light: Sonic effects suffer a penalty of 3 points of damage per die rolled. All creatures suffer a –10 circumstance penalty to Listen checks.

Medium: Sonic effects suffer a penalty of 4 points of damage per die rolled. Sound no longer exists. Casters use spells as if they were deaf. They have a 20% chance to lose any spell with a verbal component.

Heavy: Sonic effects suffer a penalty of 6 points of damage per die rolled. Spells with a verbal components have a 50% chance of failure.

Overwhelming: Sonic effects suffer a penalty of 8 points of damage per die rolled. Only silent or spells without verbal components function.

Evil

Evil planes are realms of pure malignant energy. The ground itself snaps at travelers and attempts to devour them, while the tremendous focus of vile power can subvert even the staunchest champion of good. Fear, hatred, and greed reign supreme in these lands.

Planes with evil traits usually serve as home to demons, devils, and other villainous outsiders. The gods of darkness create these realms as their homes, surrounding themselves with the souls of their followers and the many ambitious, greedy beings that serve them. On an evil plane, everything has a sinister shade. The trees seem to lean forward to grasp travelers, eternal darkness cloaks the sky, and the undead outnumber the living. These places commonly feature traits from the necropotence category, while others draw on the light and cold traits to reflect their fell natures. An evil plane can range from a fiery hell populated by devils to a seemingly mundane world where evil lords and diabolic priests rule.

Baneful Influence

An evil plane offers a threat much more insidious than a rampaging monster or a dangerous villain. The very fabric of these worlds can conspire to corrupt those who are pure of heart, compelling them to commit vile deeds that run counter to all they hold dear. A cloud of baneful influence covers an evil plane and forces creatures to give into their basest natures. Paladins run from battle, heroic rangers steal from their allies, and stalwart knights chop down both friends and foes in combat. A cloud rarely has a physical presence. Instead, it operates as an invisible field that alters those who enter it. Sometimes, though, it manifests as a rolling cloud of fog, a pool of inky blackness, or a similar form.

Clouds of baneful influence affect neutral and good-aligned creatures. They have no effect on evil creatures, as they need no supernatural encouragement to commit foul deeds.

A cloud of baneful influence can have from one to all of the traits listed below. The cloud's strength determines the Will save DC needed to resist its effects. If a cloud has more than one trait, characters must save separately for each one. The cloud's abilities count as a mind-influencing effect.

Level	Will Save DC
Faint	10
Light	15
Medium	20
Heavy	25
Overwhelming	30

Cowardice: Mundane objects gain a sinister cast, shadows seem to leap and jump, and the prospect of battle terrifies characters under the effect of this trait. Driven nearly mad by terror, they flee combat in a blind panic.

Before taking his action each round in combat, a character must make a Will save or immediately become shaken. Shaken characters suffer a –2 morale penalty on all attacks, checks, and saves. This counts as a fear-based effect, as do the other stages of the cowardice trait.

A shaken character must continue to make Will saves before his actions, and if he fails he immediately becomes frightened. A frightened character flees as well as he can. If unable to flee, he may fight. He suffers a –2 morale penalty on attack rolls, checks, and saving throws. A frightened character can use special abilities, including spells, to flee; indeed, he must use such means if they are the only way to escape.

If a frightened character is forced into combat, he must continue to make Will saves before his actions. On another failed save, he becomes panicked. A panicked character suffers a –2 morale penalty on saving throws and must flee. He has a 50% chance to drop what he's holding, chooses his path randomly (as long as he is getting away from immediate danger), and flees any other dangers that confront him. A creature may use a special ability or spell to escape. If cornered, a panicked character cowers. The character is frozen in fear, loses his Dexterity bonus to AC (if any), drops everything held, and can take no actions.

EMPOWER EVIL

Level	Attacks	Checks	Saves	Spell DCs
Faint	+1	+0	+1	+0
Light	+2	+1	+2	+0
Medium	+3	+2	+3	+1
Heavy	+4	+3	+4	+2
Overwhelming	+5	+4	+5	+3

Foes gain a +2 bonus on attack rolls against cowering characters.

Greed: A traveler's mind wanders to his companion's goods, noting their fine make and obvious value. In time, he grows to covet them. The evil realm's malignant influence plays on his growing attraction, eventually compelling him to steal against his will.

For each hour a character spends in this area, he must make a Will save. On a failed check, he attempts to steal an item carried by the nearest friend or ally. He may make a Sleight of Hand check to pick a pocket, discreetly place an unattended item into his backpack, or otherwise attempt to take something. As DM, you decide the exact actions the character takes. The PC loses control to the evil realm, forcing him to take actions he might not otherwise attempt. Until the character leaves the cloud of baneful influence, he makes no attempt to return the item. If confronted, he may opt to return it and has no recollection of how the item came into his possession. When running this effect, note each character's Sleight of Hand, Hide, and Move Silently bonuses and secretly use them to resolve theft attempts. Unless a character notices the robbery, he remains unaware of his loss until he attempts to use a lost item or goes through his possessions. For particularly dangerous results, mix greed with the hatred trait. The arguments this trait breeds can swiftly turn deadly.

Hatred: Simple arguments spill over into deadly battles in this environment. Requests become orders. Observations turn into unspeakable insults. Perhaps the plane alters the speaker's words, or it beguiles listeners into finding veiled insults and threats where none exist. In any case, dear friends turn against each other with deadly results.

Whenever a character is subjected to an emotionally trying situation, such as combat, an argument, or a similar clash, he must make a Will save each round before his action. On a failed save, he lashes out in a murderous rage. If engaged in combat, he makes a ranged or missile attack against a randomly selected target. If engaged in a conversation or argument, he attacks whomever he speaks with. In other stressful situations, he attacks a randomly selected target. The evil plane warps and twists perceptions, driving even the most mild-mannered explorer to kill over trivial incidents. The victim of this effect must make another save 1d6 rounds later or he continues to suffer this effect.

EMPOWER EVIL

In the dark lands dominated by the fell powers, the thick aura of evil lends strength and aid to its adherents. Black-hearted creatures channel mightier spells, swing their blades with renewed strength, and shrug off spells with the merest effort. In their home territory, these foul villains find vitality in the very land itself. For this reason, invading an evil land is a daunting prospect. The weakest kobold or demonling fights like a hardened warrior in a realm with this trait, forcing invaders to pay for every inch of conquered territory. From the dark lords' point of view, this trait emboldens their followers and pushes them to compete among themselves. In this manner, the strong rise to the top and the weak fall in battle. Best of all, the confidence this trait lends to their minions makes them eager to invade other lands.

Like many other traits, empower evil features five different strength levels. It grants an evil creature divine bonuses to attacks, skill checks, saving throws, and spell save DCs. Apply the spell DC modifier to spells cast by evil creatures. All creatures with evil alignments or the evil subtype qualify for these bonuses.

HATRED OF THE LAND

Enraged by the presence of good creatures, the very fabric of an evil plane lashes out at them. Trees rake them with their branches, the ground shifts to knock them prone, and bolts of lightning descend from the sky. A few evil planes are so thoroughly malevolent that they attack invading good creatures. These realms are perhaps the darkest places in all the planes. This trait appears in worlds ruled by dark gods or formed by the efforts of demons and devils. It is also common on organic worlds formed by the body of an evil being.

This trait's strength rating determines the strength of the attacking features of the world. In addition, the stronger this trait the more often it spawns an attacker. Set up the struggle with this trait just like you would any other encounter, save that the attack comes from the party's midst. For example, a tree or rock in the middle of the party's camp could animate to fight them.

The attack frequency shows how often this trait comes into play. Roll d% once after the listed time period passes. If the total result is less than or equal to the listed percentage, the party comes under attack.

Level	Attack Frequency
Faint	20%/24 hours
Light	20%/12 hours
Medium	20%/6 hours
Heavy	30%/3 hours
Overwhelming	40%/1 hour

The attackers should consist of animated objects with a total EL equal to the party's level – 1d3. This method presents them with an encounter that can prove troublesome but has little chance of defeating them. The creatures spawned by this trait usually attack with surprise, as they spring upon the party from behind or beneath them. They gain a +4 circumstance bonus to all Hide and Move Silently checks to surprise the PCs. Typical animated objects include trees, rocks, mounds of dirt, and other natural features.

If you want to increase this trait's deadliness, set the EL equal to the party's level or their level +1d4–1. In this case, the animated terrain presents a clear threat that slowly wears away their resources and can put

their lives in jeopardy. You can also tie the creatures' strength to this trait's rating. However, it is usually a good idea to rate the two separately. If you throw too many tough encounters at the party, they have little chance to survive.

Level	Attackers' EL
Faint	Party's level – 2
Light	Party's level – 1
Medium	Party's level
Heavy	Party's level + 1
Overwhelming	Party's level + 2

Insidious Weakness

The lands of evil cast a dark, foul gloom upon those who enter them. Even the most trivial task requires a Herculean effort as the power of evil seeks to smother the spark of life in all who stand against it. Evil worlds sometimes cause despondency, hopelessness, and depression in those who venture into them. This effect takes the form of a hazard that characters must resist. All non-evil creatures who visit the plane suffer this effect. The insidious weakness trait causes a slowly escalating morale penalty to all attacks, checks, and saves. A night's rest clears a character's mind and frees him from all penalties, but after waking he once again must resist this trait's effects.

Faint: Will save DC 10; 4 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; –1 morale penalty to attacks, checks, and saves.

Light: Will save DC 15; 2 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; –1 morale penalty to attacks, checks, and saves.

Medium: Will save DC 20; 1 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; –1 morale penalty to attacks, checks, and saves.

Heavy: Will save DC 20; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; –1 morale penalty to attacks, checks, and saves.

Overwhelming: Will save DC 20; 15 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; –1 morale penalty to attacks, checks, and saves.

Scorn the Righteous

The black lands dominated by evil wear away at the very body and soul of a good creature. Angels, paladins, and crusading clerics face their toughest challenge in these realms, as their shreds of self-doubt grow gargantuan under the relentless, crushing influence of an evil realm. The baneful nature of this trait literally saps the energy from good creatures, reducing weak ones to dead husks and turning even the stoutest soldier into a weakling.

Scorn the righteous has five different levels of strength. Good-aligned creatures and those with the good subtype automatically suffer its effects. They gain a circumstance penalty to their Constitution scores, all Will saves, and attacks as the realm's foul influence saps their strength and works to subvert their efforts. Note that the Constitution penalty disappears as soon as an affected creature leaves the plane.

Level	Attacks	Con	Will Saves
Faint	–1	–0	–1
Light	–2	–2	–2
Medium	–3	–4	–3
Heavy	–4	–6	–4
Overwhelming	–5	–8	–5

Good

From the heroic realms of good march forth the angels, paladins, and other heroic defenders of the weak. The sun shines with a golden radiance, bathing the wooded glades, rolling green fields, and calm azure seas with its invigorating light. The air always feels fresh, and even a rainstorm is a cheerful, refreshing boon. The realms of good resemble lands carved from storybook fantasies. Even the dourest traveler cannot help but smile and laugh in these consecrated lands. All that is horrid, unjust, greedy, and destructive in the universe is answered fivefold by this realm's warmth, peace, and calm. To look upon a realm of good is to look upon paradise itself.

The lands of good offer a welcome respite to a planar traveler. Those who bring no malice to these lands receive a warm welcome, for the lands of good are renowned for their hospitality. A simple village turns out a feast to welcome guests, and many adventurers have chosen to retire in peace rather than leave these places. Even the most violent demons must struggle to raise their weapons in anger while on a plane of good.

GLADE OF BENEVOLENT CHARITY

In some areas of a good plane, the majesty and beauty of the land is enough to move even the most hardened adventurer. In many ways, these lands are the perfect representation of all that humans, elves, dwarves, and other good-aligned races strive to build. In the presence of such wondrous sites, mortals find themselves committing acts of selfless bravery, heroism, and charity. The plane by no means forces such actions. Instead, it nurtures and guides them. Good, after all, is a choice. A hero's actions mean little if an outside agent forces him to make them.

The glades of benevolent charity are such wondrous places that good and evil creatures are swayed by them. Creatures who embrace the path of good are rewarded, while those who spurn it lose all hope as the beauty seems to turn its back on them.

Within a glade, a creature must act to help others, defend the weak, and offer charity to the needy. The glade's beauty is so overwhelming that this effect takes the form of a hazard, though remember that this effect is not a force that subverts or bends a character's will. Instead, the plane of good's example inspires heroic actions. In return, if the character succeeds at his task he acts with renewed hope and vigor.

Unlike most hazards, a glade presents a character with a bonus if he gives in and attempts a good deed. Obviously, the definition of a good deed is open to some interpretation. Examples include saving a person in danger, donating hundreds of gold pieces to a wandering mendicant, or battling an evil creature. As a rule of thumb, an appropriate challenge should have an EL equal to the party's level. Note that the interval applies to opportunities to do good during any single day. A PC can always opt to willingly fail his save by diving in to commit a good deed. Only good or neutral characters who hesitate must make saving throws. The save DC is low because this effect relies on the persuasive power of the example set by the glade rather than a brute force attempt to subvert a character's will.

Faint: Will save DC 10; must be made whenever an opportunity to do a good deed arises; –1 penalty/interval; +1 morale bonus to attacks, checks, and saves for one hour.

Light: Will save DC 10; must be made whenever an opportunity to do a good deed arises; –2 penalty/interval; +1 morale bonus to attacks, checks, and saves for two hours.

Medium: Will save DC 10; must be made whenever an opportunity to do a good deed arises; –3 penalty/interval; +1 morale bonus to attacks, checks, and saves for three hours.

Heavy: Will save DC 10; must be made whenever an opportunity to do a good deed arises; –4 penalty/interval; +1 morale bonus to attacks, checks, and saves for four hours.

Overwhelming: Will save DC 10; must be made whenever an opportunity to do a good deed arises; –5 penalty/interval; +1 morale bonus to attacks, checks, and saves for five hours.

STRENGTH OF THE RIGHTEOUS

While traveling on a plane of good, heroic adventurers and noble creatures feel energized, confident, and ready for anything. The bright sun emboldens them and the crisp pleasant air lends energy to their limbs. The strength of the righteous trait reflects this enhanced mental and physical condition. When confronted with an obstacle, a hero in the land of good fights with the strength of a dozen men.

The effects of this trait apply to all good-aligned creatures and those with the good sub-type. They gain morale bonuses to saves and checks, an enhancement bonus to Strength, and fast healing from the soothing, life-giving energy of the plane.

Level	Saves	Checks	Str	Fast Healing
Faint	+1	+1	+0	0
Light	+2	+2	+2	0
Medium	+3	+3	+4	0
Heavy	+4	+4	+6	1
Overwhelming	+5	+5	+8	2

WEAKNESS OF THE VILE

While the bright sun and golden aura of these planes lift the spirits of good creatures, they fill evil beings with fear and uncertainty. They cower in awe before the might of good, while the peaceful, healing energy of the land flows through them and dispels their normally blood-thirsty thoughts. The weakness of the vile trait can turn even the most fearsome demon into a defenseless pacifist wholly unable to raise his sword in anger.

Weakness of the vile affects all evil-aligned creatures and those with the evil subtype. They move slowly and cautiously, as the searing light of good saps their strength. Even in the midst of battle, they must struggle to throw off this trait's influence in order to attack. Evil creatures suffer an enhancement penalty to Dexterity and have a flat chance each round that they are unable to commit violent acts. Roll d% each round. If the die roll is less than or equal to the listed pacifism percentage, the creature may take no action that would harm another living being for that round. This effect extends to physical attacks, spells, and special abilities. Note that some offensive spells, such as *charm monster*, are not subject to this effect, though a demon could not then order a charmed creature to attack unless it was not under the pacifism effect.

Level	Dexterity	Pacifism %
Faint	–0	10%
Light	–2	20%
Medium	–4	30%
Heavy	–6	40%
Overwhelming	–8	50%

HEAT

An endless desert stretches forth like an anvil for the sun's relentless hammer. Magma jets into the air across a rocky plan spider-webbed by veins of molten rock. Fire elementals gather in a city forged of iron, their lords venturing into an ocean of burning oil on the backs of red dragons. The heat traits encompass a wide range of worlds, from simple deserts to exotic lands of lava and deadly heat. Some evil realms, such as the depths of hell, prominently feature this trait. From apocalyptic landscapes to elementals worlds, heat presents a tremendous challenge to adventurers who journey to the planes.

The heat traits cover much more than worlds dominated by fire. A jungle world may be exceptionally hot, while the forge world where a smith god toils may feature endless warrens of fiery workshops and forges. Try not to fall into the trap of thinking that heat must form the dominant trait on a plane. It can just as easily play a supporting role as any other ability.

AMBIENT FIRE

This trait represents the eternal flames that may burn across an entire plane. A forest on the elemental plane of fire may forever remain in flames, while in a titan's workshop great waves of heat may erupt from machines. The flames hazard represents the danger of catching fire from an open flame or other heat source. Use it to spice up an encounter area or fill a fiery landscape.

Flames: Reflex save DC 15; 1 round interval; 1d6 damage; Special: On a successful save, the flames are extinguished. A character gains a +4 bonus on this save if he rolls on the ground or if the flames are smothered with a cloak or similar item.

ASH STORMS

The high temperatures usually found in these environments spawn hazards in addition to heat exhaustion. Ash storms form from the soot and smoke given off by a fiery plane's eternal fires. They are thick clouds of smog, cinders, and smoke belched forth by great fires. They can confuse explorers, choke them with their embers, and force them to slog through deep layers of debris.

Characters who fashion masks or use rags to cover their mouths gain a +4 circumstance bonus on all saves to resist an ash storm's effects. The covering prevents cinders and ash from entering a victim's lungs and choking him—the source of damage from this hazard. In addition to the hazards listed below, an ash storm hinders sight as per the blizzard conditions trait given under the cold category above. The ash storm's strength rating has the same effect on visibility as a blizzard of the same strength.

All ash storm hazards share the following special ability. On each failed save to resist the storm's effects, a character suffers a cumulative –1 circumstance penalty to Spot checks as soot and ash get into his eyes. Creatures wearing goggles are immune to this effect. Spending 5 minutes rinsing a character's eyes with clean water removes this penalty.

Faint: Fortitude save DC 10; 1 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 damage; Special: A faint ash storm usually lasts for 1d4 hours.

Light: Fortitude save DC 15; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 damage; Special: A light ash storm usually lasts for 1d4 hours.

Medium: Fortitude save DC 15; 15 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 damage; Special: A medium ash storm usually lasts for 1d2 hours.

Heavy: Fortitude save DC 20; 10 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 damage; Special: A heavy ash storm usually lasts for 1 hour.

Overwhelming: Fortitude save DC 25; 5 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 damage; Special: An overwhelming ash storm usually lasts for 30 minutes.

Extreme Heat

The fires that cloak a realm in eternal heat can weary, incapacitate, or even kill visitors who have no protection from the temperature. The following hazards represent different levels of heat present in planes, from a faint to an overwhelming rating.

All of the hazards have the following special rule. While exposed to heat, a character wearing thick, heavy clothes or armor of any type suffers a –4 penalty to his saving throw. If a

character is reduced to 0 hit points by heat, he begins taking normal damage from this hazard. A character cannot heal subdual damage dealt by heat until he cools off.

Faint: Fortitude save DC 10; 2 hours interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage.

Light: Fortitude save DC 15; 1 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage.

Medium: Fortitude save DC 15; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage.

Heavy: Fortitude save DC 15; 10 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage.

Overwhelming: Fortitude save DC 15; 5 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage; Special: In addition to the effects of this hazard, this intense heat automatically deals 1d6 points of damage per minute as characters sustain burns to their skin and lungs from the intensely hot air. Characters wearing metal armor are affected as if targeted by a *heat metal* spell. A character cannot heal subdual damage dealt by heat until he cools off.

Law

Rigid, unbending, and above all else predictable, the planes of law move to a single, steady beat. Order stands above all else, sapping creatures of their free will and casting a static monotony over all the land. Yet, some creatures find a heavenly beauty in such order. The lords of law see the cosmos as a great machine, one that could some day wind down to oblivion. Driven to maintain this great mechanism against the endless tide of chaotic destruction, they cultivate the planes of law and help bring forth the ironbound, unyielding patterns that lie within them.

At first glance, a plane of law may seem like any other world. Trees cluster together in forests, rolling hills give way to the horizon, and grass sways in the breeze. Closer inspection reveals disturbing details. The trees are all spaced exactly the same distance apart in neat, orderly rows. The grass is all the same height. The hills, when viewed from above, form a pattern of concentric circles that radiate outward from the highest elevation among them. Other realms of law bear little

resemblance to terrestrial worlds. Some feature the ultimate expression of regularity and order: an endless, featureless, perfectly flat plane.

The worlds of law are noteworthy to travelers for their static environments and the strong pull they exert to fit outsiders into their sacred patterns. A man walking across these realms finds himself stepping into a fixed, repeated pattern. In other cases, planar traits take the form of actual laws handed down by the scions of order. Magic might fail to work on a plane because its rulers decreed it.

Edict of Law

The planes of law abhor chance. If a burly warrior tries to smash down a door, luck must have no control over the result. Only the dictates of law, with its inflexible judgment of what must be, can play a role in the outcome. The edict of law trait represents this tendency by replacing all moments of chance in the game with static results. A warrior's attempt to hit a monster with his sword no longer becomes a matter of skill and luck. Instead, the pattern of law weighs each combatant's talent and dictates the outcome. In extreme cases, this every

action breaks down into the possible and the impossible; all variations in between, particularly degrees of difficulty, fade into oblivion.

This trait replaces all d20 die rolls with either a static number or a skewed range of results. The die or result a creature uses depends on its alignment. Replace all d20 rolls with the die ranges or results listed below. As you can see, this trait is a very powerful ally for the creatures of law. While it enforces the orderly, predictable feel of these planes, be sure to use its highest ratings in moderation.

Level	Lawful	Neutral	Chaotic
Faint	d20+1	d20	d20–1
Light	d20+5	d20–1	d20–5
Medium	d12+8	d20–5	d12
Heavy	d10+10	d12	d10
Overwhelming	20	10	0

Strength of Pattern

On some worlds dominated by law, the very fiber of the plane forces creatures to fall into predictable patterns of behavior. Law extends its grip beyond inanimate objects to include everything that enters its domain. Living crea-

tures can just as easily be herded into orderly behavior as trees and grass. Strength of pattern is a hazard that represents the brute force a plane can exert to force visitors into predictable actions. Areas touched by it are among the most sacred and well ordered of these planes.

This hazard forces characters to enter repetitive patterns of their most recent actions. On a failed save, a character must continue to repeat the last few motions he made. Each round, he must save again or repeat this action. Once he saves, he is free from the hazard until its next interval passes. In combat, a character must take the same action on his next turn. If this action is impossible, such as a wizard casting his last spell, he instead takes the listed damage as the plane's mystic feedback seeks to correct the error. There is no save to resist this damage. Once a character has taken damage, he is free from the hazard's effect. Creatures of the law subtype are immune to this effect; whether consciously or not, their actions automatically fit into the plane's overall patterns.

Faint: Will save DC 10; 1 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; repeat last action or 1d8 damage.

Light: Will save DC 15; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; repeat last action or 1d8 damage.

Medium: Will save DC 15; 15 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; repeat last action or 1d10 damage.

Heavy: Will save DC 20; 10 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; repeat last action or 1d10 damage.

Overwhelming: Will save DC 25; 5 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; repeat last action or 1d12 damage.

LIFE

On a plane of ice and snow, frost giants and other creatures of the cold reign supreme. Other worlds are literally infested with life. Trees and plants cover every available surface, while hordes of vermin race through the undergrowth. In contrast, other planes are dead worlds. Ash, wreckage, and ruins dominate the landscape, while not a single sound pierces the quiet. The life category is a bit different from

the other traits. It presents a few traits that you can use in your planes, but it also outlines some advice on choosing and presenting creatures for your worlds. Building a theme with the monsters and creatures that inhabit a land can help give it flavor, bring out its distinctive character, and form a memorable setting for the characters' adventures. The creatures and NPCs are the stars of your show, the main encounters that characters interact with. The better suited they are to your planes, the smoother your adventures.

CREATURE THEME

A creature theme works differently than the traits presented elsewhere in this section. Rather than feature a strength rating, it is more of a tool you can use to add an additional unifying trait to your planes. A creature theme is a unifying set of characteristics you use to select the monsters and humanoids found on a plane. Depending on the worlds you build, you probably need to design your own themes. The ideas given here are useful in some situations, but the stranger the planes you build the more unique the creature theme you need to use.

Creature themes are a good way to cultivate a unified look and feel for a plane. By tying the life forms present in a world to its environment and traits, you can present a believable, logical setting.

The creature types present the easiest way to form a theme. A world populated exclusively by aberrations has a much different feel than one inhabited by dragons. Consider which creatures of a given type are likely to form civilizations, the ones that function as beasts of burden, predators, herd animals, and so on. For an additional level of precision, look at the creature subtypes. Most outsiders are categorized by alignment, while other monsters are marked as fire and cold creatures. These groupings are a natural fit for planes dominated by an alignment or those under the grip of extreme heat or cold.

Consider how the standard fantasy races and monsters operate in your world, and look at scrambling their roles. Orcs can take the role of lawful good defenders of the land, while humans and elves roam the edges of civilization in violent, barbaric tribes. Perhaps the war between good and evil has taken a different turn, with conquering goblins

serving dragon kings that rule the land. Especially in realms dominated by evil, such changes give the players an easy way to understand your world and present them with a daunting challenge.

Undead and constructs may inhabit a world that has long ago been stripped of life. A magical conflict on par with a nuclear war could have destroyed ever last living thing, perhaps even leaving behind the continuing, deadly effects of arcane fallout. Ghouls lurk within smashed cities, forming abhorrent mockeries of civilization. Zombies and skeletons, the animated remains of the cataclysm's innocent victims, continue to go through their daily routines. On other worlds, golems and other constructs may represent the last creatures. Ecological disasters, wars, and other catastrophes could slowly kill off everything else. Even the undead wither away and disappear for lack of victims.

Plague World

In some planes, the native diseases are so virulent that they strike down visitors in the space of a few hours. These plague worlds present a terrible challenge, as many who visit them know nothing of the danger until it is too late. You can use diseases from other d20 books or invent your own to fit the world. The hazards presented below are a baseline you can use to judge a plague world's deadliness.

Plague worlds can take on many forms. In some cases, a rampant disease could kill everything in a region, turning it into a charnel house. Other times, the local creatures adapt to the disease. They all carry it but have developed sufficient immunities to avoid its deadly effects.

A character must save against a disease once. If he succeeds, he does not check again until he is exposed to it again. If his save fails, he suffers the disease's effects and must save again as per the standard rules for intervals. Once he makes a saving throw, he resists the disease and no longer takes damage from it. He heals any damage taken from it as normal. At that time, he gains immunity to that disease. Once a character has a disease, he cannot catch it again and take additional damage from it. A *remove disease* spell immediately heals all damage dealt by disease and cures it but does not grant a victim immunity as if he healed naturally.

Faint: Fortitude save DC 10; Special: Disease with 1 day interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1 point of temporary Con damage.

Light: Fortitude save DC 15; Special: Disease with 1 day interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1 point of temporary Con damage.

Medium: Fortitude save DC 20; Special: Disease with 1 day interval; –1 penalty/interval; 2 points of temporary Con damage.

Heavy: Fortitude save DC 25; Special: Disease with 1 day interval; –1 penalty/interval; 2 points of temporary Con damage.

Overwhelming: Fortitude save DC 30; Special: Disease with 1 day interval; –1 penalty/interval; 2 points of temporary Con damage.

Savage World

The forest crackles with an overwhelming tension. All is silent for a few lingering moments, until all the world seems to explode in a storm of violence. Rats, wolverines, hawks, and other animals descend upon the invaders, consumed with the desire to kill or be killed. Even the plants and trees join in the melee, rending and tearing with their long branches. Some planes react violently to any incursion into their territories. From the simplest creature to the grass and trees, all life turns against the intruders. Known as savage worlds, these places are shunned for their deadly natures but hold a strong appeal to explorers. Untouched by civilized hands, these planes are a burgeoning source of gold, rare furs, and other valuables. Many expeditions seek to tame these lands, but few return.

The savage world trait allows you to set the overall hostility of simple plants and animals against all visitors to a realm. Naturally occurring creatures, primarily beasts, magical beasts, and plants, act according to this trait's setting, though you can include other creature types if you so choose. Savage worlds only feature intelligent species at their lowest rankings, as under the more extreme conditions any effort to erect a stable society would be difficult.

Faint: There is a 10% chance per hour that a group of beasts, plants, or other creatures with an EL equal to the party's level – 2 attacks.

Light: There is a 15% chance per hour that a

group of beasts, plants, or other creatures with an EL equal to the party's level – 1 attacks.

Medium: There is a 20% chance per hour that a group of beasts, plants, or other creatures with an EL equal to the party's level attacks.

Heavy: There is a 20% chance per hour that a group of beasts, plants, or other creatures with an EL equal to the party's level attacks. These creatures gain the barbarian's rage ability.

Overwhelming: There is a 25% chance per hour that a group of beasts, plants, or other creatures with an EL equal to the party's level + 1 attacks. These creatures gain the barbarian's rage ability.

Light

The sun shines upon the world, bringing endless, gentle light to the lands beneath it. Or perhaps the sky remains eternally dark. Perhaps a few stars cast a feeble glow, but otherwise the land is encased in blackness. On a different plane, three suns pound the land with a merciless radiance, turning the entire world into an endless desert.

The light category may seem superfluous, but the amount of sunlight a world receives goes a long way to determining how it develops. Lands that receive just enough sunlight can grow lush with life. A little too much turns a world into a barren wasteland, and too little causes life to stultify.

The light keywords present two different effects you can add to a plane. One presents a tool you can use to help give your worlds a realistic, logical appearance. The other one makes light into an environmental hazard that can burn or blind characters caught within it.

Glare

On some planes, natural light takes on a strange characteristic that can prove bothersome and even deadly to visiting creatures. Their skin burns, their eyes suffer glare, and without finding cover they can sustain serious injury. Perhaps the world's light is somehow different, casting a glare that injures visitors, or a magical effect punishes all creatures that enter the land. In any case, the glare trait allows you to turn a world's light into a dangerous effect that can prove troublesome for the party. Forced to

travel by night, they may face the dangerous challenge of trying to explore a world where the sun can kill them.

Damage inflicted by this hazard counts as a fire effect. Heat or fire resistance protects against it. However, those abilities do not protect against the glare effects. Creatures native to the plane are likely immune to these effects. Otherwise, they are forced to work and travel by night.

Faint: Fortitude save DC 10; 1 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d3 damage; Special: All creatures that rely on sight suffer a –1 penalty to attacks and checks that require sight due to the glare.

Light: Fortitude save DC 10; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d3 damage; Special: All creatures that rely on sight suffer a –1 penalty to attacks and checks that require sight due to the glare.

Medium: Fortitude save DC 15; 15 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d3 damage; Special: All creatures that rely on sight suffer a –2 penalty to attacks and checks that require sight due to the glare.

Heavy: Fortitude save DC 15; 10 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d3 damage; Special: All creatures that rely on sight suffer a –2 penalty to attacks and checks that require sight due to the glare.

Overwhelming: Fortitude save DC 20; 5 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d3 damage; Special: All creatures that rely on sight suffer a –3 penalty to attacks and checks that require sight due to the glare.

Sunlight

The level of light a plane receives helps determine the level of life it can logically support. Keep in mind that as settings for a fantasy game, your planes do not need to slavishly follow the guidelines given here. If you want to create a world that thrives under the glow of a moon, go ahead. The strength ratings and descriptions given below are merely tools, not canonical examples of how you must design your campaign.

Faint: The world is cloaked in darkness. Either the sun burned out long ago or the entire place is devoid of light. A great disas-

ter may have destroyed the sun, leaving the world in ruins, or perhaps its strange ecosystem has adapted to darkness.

Light: The world receives the equivalent of bright starlight. Creatures with low-light vision can see as normal, but others must struggle in the gloom. Fungi and nocturnal creatures thrive.

Medium: The world is analogous to Earth. It receives the light of a sun and can feature the same general climates and conditions as the real world.

Heavy: Two or more suns glare down upon the world, or perhaps the sun never sets. In either case, the world has warm, wet weather. Jungles and thick forests cover many parts of the land, but in warmer climes the heat has produced deserts.

Overwhelming: Multiple suns hang in the sky, never dipping below the horizon long enough for the world to cool. A few isolated regions of thick forest and jungle arise where water is still available, but for the most part the world is a rocky wasteland.

Magic

Perhaps the most powerful force in all the cosmos, magic forms the basis for entire societies, is the key component of the abilities of gods and archmages, and can reshape the course of history. Its key attribute is its predictability. A wizard knows that if he performs certain motions while reciting a set of mystic words, he can reliably produce an effect. However, on some planes magic is much harder to control. It takes on random characteristics, runs beyond its user's control, or proves difficult to coax into being.

Magic permeates the very essence of the planes, making it a part of almost any world the characters visit. But like any other aspect of a world, it can take on a variety of forms. The various magic traits give you tools to configure arcane and divine power on your planes. When using a magic trait, you can opt to have it apply to arcane spells, divine magic, or even supernatural abilities. As a default, all traits apply to all types of magic equally. Spell-like abilities count as the spells they duplicate and the class ability they mimic. For example, a creature that

uses *teleport* as a sorcerer counts as an arcane caster for that ability. Varying the effects of the traits is a good way to differentiate between the caster types. Wizards, sorcerers, and other mages would dominate a world that suffocates divine magic and strengthens arcane spells. In a world where the reverse is true, clerics and other followers of the gods may hold power. You can also tailor traits to affect casters of certain alignments or races, specific schools and spell descriptors, and so on.

Note that magic items are considered immune to most of these traits unless specifically noted otherwise. Items are imbued with self-sustaining magic and do not normally need to draw on an outside power source. You can change this for your campaign if you like, but it makes applying many of the traits difficult. For example, arcane instability could make a magic sword stronger, but there are few guidelines for how a *cloak of the bat* would improve or degrade in its function. The dying magic trait is your best choice for altering how magic items work.

Arcane Instability

This trait is described under the chaos category on page 95. It works equally well on a world where magic is unreliable or difficult to control. Perhaps some process prevents arcane or divine energy from flowing properly, or the plane's physical characteristics prevent it from functioning normally. As an optional rule, you can link the spell's likelihood of success to the caster's ability to craft magic. Use the following Spellcraft DCs to determine if a spell functions properly rather than the flat percentage chances given under that ability. Otherwise, use the arcane instability trait as given under the chaos category.

Level	Spellcraft DC
Faint	5
Light	10
Medium	15
Heavy	20
Overwhelming	25

Arcane Potency

The weave of magic consists of myriad specific energies. Evocation spells rely on raw, brute force, while necromancy calls on the fell spirits of the dead. Some planes feature a mystic configuration that proves amenable to specific types of spells. On a world of magma and scorched, rocky plains, the ambient heat energy makes spells dealing with fire more powerful than normal. In some cases, specific types of spells gain potency based on the environment surrounding their users.

The arcane potency trait enhances a specific selection of spells. When you select this trait, choose a school of magic or one of the spell descriptors such as good, fire, chaos, and so forth. This trait enhances such spells based on its strength. You can select this trait more than once, picking a different school or descriptor each time and a different strength setting for it, if applicable. Spells affected by this trait gain an increased save DC and caster level.

Level	Save DC	Caster Level
Faint	+0	+1
Light	+1	+1
Medium	+1	+2
Heavy	+2	+2
Overwhelming	+2	+3

Arcane Weakness

On some planes, the magical energy needed to power certain types of spells stands opposed by the world's ambient energy. On the hallowed planes of good, necromantic spells prove difficult to cast properly. The interplay between the plane's structure and the mystic flow of energy leaves some spells malformed and weak.

The arcane weakness trait causes spells from certain schools or with specific descriptors to operate at reduced capacity. On a plane with this trait, an imbalance between magical forces reduces some spell types to shadows of their former selves. Each time you select this trait, pick a school of magic or a spell descriptor. Spells from that school or with that trait suffer a reduced caster level and save DC as they function weaker than normal. You can select this trait more than once, choosing a different school or descriptor and strength level, if applicable, each time. Spells reduced to caster level 0 or less fizzle out with no effect.

Level	Save DC	Caster Level
Faint	–1	–1
Light	–2	–3
Medium	–3	–5
Heavy	–4	–7
Overwhelming	–5	–9

DEAD MAGIC

On some worlds, magic is a thing of the past or an artifact of myth and legend. On these planes, magic items are erratic at best and sometimes fail to function. Supernatural abilities also falter, leaving even the mightiest creature defenseless.

The dead magic trait has no rating. It cancels out all magical abilities, items, and spells. A plane with this trait simply has no access to the source of magical energy. In these areas, magical items fail to function, all spells fizzle, and all supernatural and spell-like abilities cease to operate. Items brought into this realm return to normal once they leave it, as do all creatures with magical abilities and other effects.

MAGICAL DROUGHT

The power of magic can wax and wane on worlds, making it sometimes easy to command a powerful spell and at others impossible to command the simplest incantation. The magical drought trait allows you to add a layer of difficulty in casting spells. Before a caster can employ a spell, he must

first make a Spellcraft check to determine if he can summon and gather sufficient energy to power the spell. On a roll of 1 on 1d20, this check automatically fails.

Worlds with this trait tend to have a lower dependence on magic than other worlds. The difficulty in shaping spells makes it an unreliable resource for all but the most powerful mages. In some cases, the difficulty in casting spells may lead to magic's eventual disappearance. As apprentices grow unable to cast spells, the transferal of magical knowledge from one generation to the next slowly grinds to a halt. The PCs could enter a world where no one knows of magic, but their spells still function.

Level	Spellcraft DC
Faint	5
Light	10
Medium	15
Heavy	20
Overwhelming	25
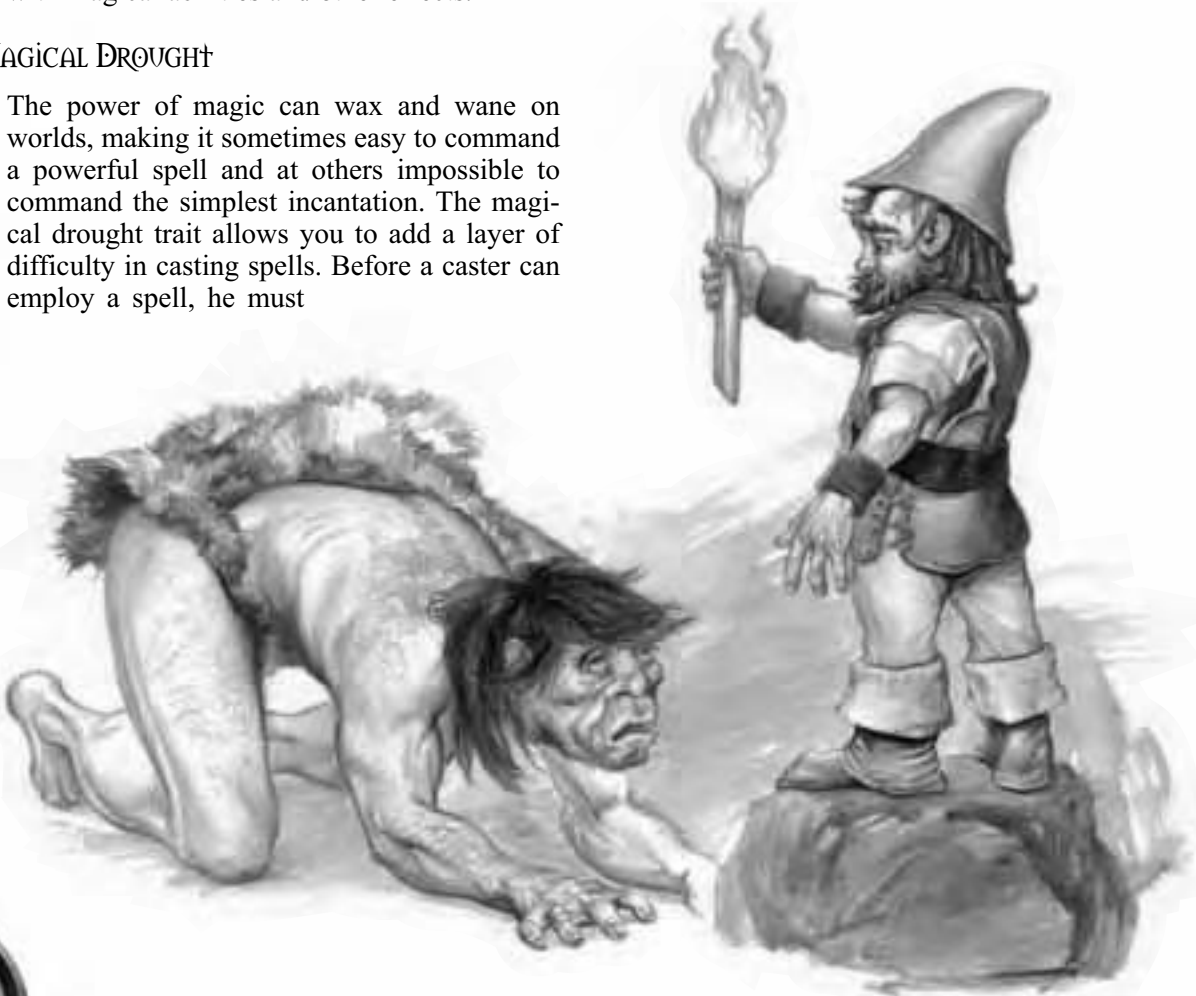
Magical Flux

The flow of magic can run like a stream or flow like a river. In the first case, spells trickle out with greatly reduced effects. In the second, they roar forth with tremendous power and fury. The magical flux trait reflects this instability. On some planes, all but the mightiest spells are muffled out of existence, while the simplest incantation can shake the world. Magical flux indicates that the level of magic in an area rises and falls. In one moment, it flows strong but in the next it grinds to a halt. This trait is a useful tool for worlds where magic is unreliable and difficult to control.

When a caster uses a spell, he must make a Spellcraft check to properly form it. If he succeeds, the spell functions as normal. If he fails, the magical flux of an area overwhelms his spell and causes it to run out of control or dwindle into nothing. A caster may always opt to fail this check and leave his spell's effectiveness to chance.

On a failed check, there is a 50% chance that the spell gains in power. Otherwise, it fades and weakens. Roll 1d6 and add the result to the spell's level and the caster's level if the spell gains power. Otherwise, subtract 1d6 from both the spell and caster level. If either the caster or spell level is reduced to 0 or less, the spell fails. It counts as expended but has no effect.

Level	Spellcraft DC
Faint	10
Light	15
Medium	20
Heavy	25
Overwhelming	30

Magical Veil

In an area under the effects of a magical veil, only skilled casters can pierce the aether to draw forth energy for their spells. Some sort of barrier prevents magic from flowing into the plane, such as a divine edict against certain types of casting or a physical barrier that interrupts the flow of magic. Whenever a caster uses a spell, he must make a caster level check with a DC determined by this trait's strength. If he succeeds, the spell functions as normal. If he fails, the incantation sputters out of existence. The spell counts as used but has no effect.

Level	Caster Level DC
Faint	5
Light	10
Medium	15
Heavy	20
Overwhelming	35

Necropotence

Realms with this trait are the domains of the dead, sprawling, dark lands where the undead are the norm and the living are condemned to short, miserable existences. In many ways, these realms are the diametric opposite of most habitable lands. Forests of dead and slowly dying trees, months of endless darkness, and entire kingdoms of the walking dead dominate the world. Vampires and lich-kings rule over realms populated by skeletons, zombies, and ghouls. The few living creatures that survive are forced into servitude, ruthlessly cultivated for food, or driven into hiding from the undying overlords who rule this land.

The necropotence traits grant the undead enhanced abilities. A plane with this trait is infused with necromantic energy, creating an environment that is tailored to the health and survival of all undead creatures. Depending on the strength level you select for this trait, the undead could gain a variety of benefits, from turn resistance to fast healing and additional supernatural powers.

In a world with this trait, the undead take on many of the positions and stations assumed by living creatures. A vampire king may rule over a court of ghosts and specters. Armies of ghasts struggle against legions of skeletons and zombies. Animals, plants, and other creatures are replaced with undead versions. In some ways, these worlds are stuck in a perpetual stasis.

Bane of the Living

Dead worlds sap the life from all foolhardy enough to enter them, rendering them lifeless husks should they linger. Perhaps the most dangerous realms in all the planes, the worlds of the undead are themselves anathema, monuments to the endless hunger and boundless evil of the living dead. Living beings foolish enough to visit them slowly lose their life force, rising to join the ranks of the living dead upon their deaths.

The bane of the living trait presents a series of hazards that reflect the continual, life-leeching capabilities of many necropotent worlds. Creatures exposed to these worlds slowly lose their life energy, gaining negative levels with each progressive hour that passes. The Fortitude save DC to remove a negative level equals the hazard's base DC without interval penalties. If an affected character remains in an area with this trait when he attempts to remove a negative level, he suffers his current interval penalty to his Fortitude save. A creature slain by this hazard rises as a wight 24 hours after its death.

Undead creatures are immune to this trait, as are constructs. All other creatures suffer its effects as normal. Spells and abilities that protect against level drain and negative levels offer solace against this hazard. Treat each exposure to it as a separate energy drain attack.

Faint: Fortitude save DC 10; 24 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1 negative level.

Light: Fortitude save DC 10; 12 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1 negative level.

Medium: Fortitude save DC 15; 6 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1 negative level.

Heavy: Fortitude save DC 15; 3 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1 negative level.

Overwhelming: Fortitude save DC 15; 1 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1 negative level.

Kingdom of the Dead

The lands of the dead are wholly their provinces. The power of the gods, be it the destructive fury of deities of good or the controlling influence of the dark ones, dissipates and fades in the face of a necropotent realm's seething energies. Worlds with this trait host mighty undead lords who refuse to bend to the gods' will. Even evil clerics, who normally work with the undead, find their attempts to rebuke and command the dead fruitless.

The kingdom of the dead trait grants undead creatures improved turn resistance. Creatures without turn resistance gain that ability with a rating equal to this trait's bonus. Drawing on the fell power of their native lands, the dead throw off attempts to blast them out of existence or bend them to a mortal's will. This turn resistance bonus does not apply to undead clerics, who draw upon the realm's might in equal measure to fuel their efforts.

Level	Turn Resistance
Faint	+1
Light	+2
Medium	+3
Heavy	+4
Overwhelming	+5

March of the Dead

In some worlds infested with necromantic energy, the dead can never rest easy. The plane's malevolent aura drives them onward, regardless of the injuries and punishment they sustain. When a living creature falls, its body almost immediately rises again as a zombie intent on destroying its one-time comrades.

The march of the dead trait allows you to grant fast healing to undead creatures. It also causes any living creature to return as an undead zombie soon after death. The rate of fast healing increases with this trait's strength, while the time period between a creature's death and its return as an undead creature decreases. Any living thing animated by this ability returns as a zombie. Creatures slain in such a way that they return as undead creatures other than zombies are not affected by this trait. For example, a creature slain by a wraith becomes one of those creatures. The fell magic behind that process overrides this trait. Undead creatures, elementals, and constructs are not affected by this trait's animation ability.

Level	Fast Healing	Zombie Animation
Faint	0	1 hour
Light	1	30 minutes
Medium	1	10 minutes
Heavy	2	1 minute
Overwhelming	3	1 round

Strength of Undeath

The bleak energy of a realm of the dead empowers and emboldens the creatures that dwell there. Skeletons and zombies stalk their prey with renewed vigor, while intelligent undead creatures exult in their newfound power. The primal energy of these worlds fosters the undead and allows them to prosper. Visitors to these worlds face not only a hostile environment, but enemies who shrug off mor-

tal wounds and fight with deadly speed and power.

The strength of undeath trait enhances undead creatures, granting them a bonus to Strength and Dexterity. They also gain bonus hit points based on their total Hit Dice. All of these effects count as enhancement bonuses.

Level	Str	Dex	Hit Points
Faint	+0	+2	+1/HD
Light	+0	+4	+2/HD
Medium	+2	+6	+3/HD
Heavy	+4	+8	+4/HD
Overwhelming	+6	+10	+5/HD

SHROUD OF DEATH

In the land of the dead, life's grip on a creature is ever so slightly weakened. Injuries heal slowly, minor wounds become major problems, and creatures on the brink of death slip over it far sooner than normal. Such is the power of the necromantic realms that living organisms feel an inexorable pressure to surrender to their final fate. Even the bravest warrior feels the clutch of death upon him, reminding him that the end is always near in these dark worlds.

The shroud of death trait makes it more difficult for creatures to heal, causes wounds to linger, and kills creatures before their hit point total falls to –10. The insidious effects of this trait's necromantic energy wear away at a living thing's basic ability to survive. The cure penalty reduces the amount of damage restored by any cure spell. The healing multiplier increases the time period necessary to naturally heal hit points and recover ability score damage. Multiply the standard time period by this multiplier to determine the rate of natural healing. The death threshold lists the hit point level at which a creature dies.

Level	Cure Penalty	Healing Multiplier	Death Threshold
Faint	–1	x1	–10
Light	–2	x2	–8
Medium	–3	x3	–6
Heavy	–4	x4	–4
Overwhelming	–5	x5	–2

TECHNOLOGY

On some worlds, the magical discipline known as science has advanced far ahead of its rival schools of study. Guns, cars, airplanes, and even more advanced equipment take the place of cure spells, enchanted weapons, and other tools commonly seen in fantasy worlds. Medusas, giants, and dragons are little more than stories told to frighten children and entertain adults. In such realms, the characters could wield absolute power with their spells. Other times, their enchantments are little use against laser rifles, mechanized robots, and battle tanks.

The technology trait category allows you to introduce radically new settings to your planar cosmology. Pitting paladins and wizards against machine gun–toting gangsters, alien cyborgs, and other menaces can provide a refreshing change of pace, but it presents some hidden pitfalls that can derail a campaign. Once the adventure is over, you may face the prospect of characters looting pistols, rocket launchers, and similar equipment from their foes. The traits presented here are designed to alert you to these problems and give you tools to handle the integration of technology into a fantasy campaign with as little (or as much!) complication as you want.

In addition to high-tech items, this category also covers worlds dominated by technological creations, such as golems, clockwork creatures, and other constructs. On some planes, such artificial life has long since conquered organic beings for complete dominance. In other cases, mechanical beings evolved and prospered via strange, unknown processes. This trait category allows you to develop worlds where living creatures give way to constructs.

A complete listing of technological items is beyond the scope of this book. The DRAGONSTAR *Starfarer's Handbook* and *Imperial Supply* supplement offers listings for many science fiction weapons, while the core d20 rules include basic stats for firearms.

ADVANCED TECH

In some worlds, the strange magic of technology has displaced, replaced, or perhaps even exists alongside arcane and divine magic. The advanced tech trait is useful shorthand for keeping track of the standard level of technology in a world. It can range from clubs and rocks to advanced robots and energy weapons. As mentioned above, you can consult the core rules for basic information on advanced weapons or use other d20 resources to fill out these details.

ARCANE MASQUERADE

When magic enters a world ruled by technology, the guiding laws of that realm mold and change magic to blend it into the environment. A wizard wandering through a world analogous to 21st century Europe may find that his spells manifest as coincidences, explainable effects, and other appearances that the plane's natives can explain using science. The victim of a *flesh to stone* spell grows utterly rigid, his muscles locked in place, rather than turning into a rocky statue. A *fireball* causes a nearby gas line to detonate, while *magic missile* takes the form of a small pistol that appears in its caster's hand, fires, and then disappears. The gods of a technologically advanced world may work to keep magic's existence a secret. The strange interplay between advanced science and powerful spells may produce secondary visual effects. In any event, a caster's spells appear as explainable phenomena.

The arcane masquerade trait features an Intelligence check DC that an observer may attempt to determine that a spellcaster, magical creature, or other manifestation of magic is
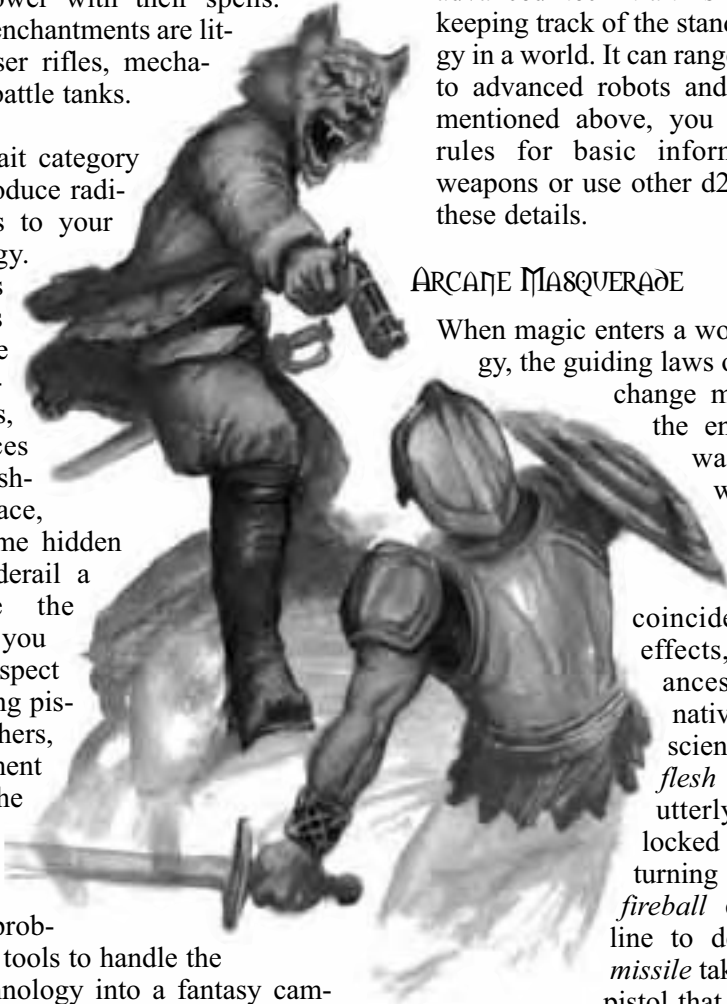
Advanced Tech

Level	Technology
Faint	None: Civilization has yet to rise.
Light	Primitive: Clubs, slings, cloth armor.
Medium	Standard: Metal armor, swords, catapults.
Heavy	Modern: Firearms, cars, planes, computers.
Overwhelming	Science Fiction: Cyborgs, lasers, spaceships.

indeed a supernatural entity or effect. An observer is never forced to make this check. Instead, he makes it only if he seeks an arcane explanation. Note that events captured on video allow an observer to make a check to note any odd events, but once a check fails it cannot be attempted again.

This trait provides you with a convenient tool to allow characters the full use of their abilities without drawing inordinate amounts of attention. You can combine it with portal traits such as transformation to give the characters equipment and clothing appropriate to a modern or futuristic plane. In some cases, you may want to focus on scenarios more subtle than a fighter jousting with a car and the wizard defeating the city's entire police force. This trait makes it much easier for the PCs to blend in without robbing them of their resources.

Note that this trait leaves equipment, weapons, armor, and other items unchanged. Unless you use portal traits to alter the PCs' appearance and items, they might still stick out due to their gear. A man with a sword does not need to dish out any magical effects to attract attention.

Level	Intelligence DC
Faint	10
Light	15
Medium	20
Heavy	25
Overwhelming	30

Mechanical Supremacy

Artificial life reigns supreme on some planes. The magic behind golems, shield guardians, and similar creatures runs rampant on them, imbuing these normally mindless creatures with independent intellects. Constructs can grow, learn, and master skills just like living things on these planes. Freed from the typical restraints they must shoulder, they produce civilizations that rival anything erected by men, elves, dwarves, and other humanoid races.

These constructs show the full range of personalities and alignments, with good and evil kingdoms rising to battle for supremacy. Mechanical sages and wizards probe into the mysteries of organic life, fascinated that intelligence can seem to spring naturally from the environment. Others view living things as anathema, working to stamp them out to prevent them from overwhelming the realm.

Planes with this trait can present a mix of organic and artificial life, or they can feature constructs exclusively. In the former case, the intelligent golems may use beasts of burden and live alongside humans and other civilized races. Sometimes, the divide between them proves too great and leads to war, but more often the two sides segregate themselves according to alignment rather than origin. Dwarves and their lawful good stone golem allies battle orcs and endless waves of chaotic evil flesh golem raiders, while in other areas oppressive constructs force humans into slavery. Constructs, as intelligent, free-willed creatures, have the same capacity for benevolence and malice as any other race. You can pick a general alignment for them in keeping with your ideas for a plane.

On some planes, organic life has either died off or never evolved in the first place. These realms feature artificial life and nothing else, leading to forests of trees carved from jade, fields of thin, flexible metal grass, and other sights. You can build an utterly alien landscape or create artificial analogs to natural features.

The mechanical supremacy trait grants all constructs bonuses to their Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. These awakened machines also gain 2 + Int modifier skill points per Hit Die with quadruple skill points for the first Hit Die. They gain one feat plus an additional feat for every three Hit Dice they have. As a default, these constructs keep these abilities when they travel else-

where while any brought into this plane remain mindless. You can modify this ruling if you want to restrict constructs to certain planes or think it would be fun to have the party wizard's golem suddenly gain a personality.

Level	Int	Wis	Cha
Faint	6	8	6
Light	8	10	8
Medium	10	12	10
Heavy	12	14	12
Overwhelming	14	16	14

TECHNOLOGICAL AURA

Guns, laser rifles, and starships have long made appearances in fantasy gaming. From the earliest days of RPGs, designers have mixed the two to present a unique clash of cultures. With robots and lasers on one side and knights and wizards on the other, you can present the players with a memorable adventure. Problems arise in the aftermath of such scenarios. Once the characters have finished their high-tech enemies, their foes' weapons, armor, and other equipment may remain. Unless you are ready to handle fighters armed with blasters, wizards commanding tanks, and rogues scattering land mines, you need to create a logical, cohesive reason why such items cannot fall into the PCs' hands.

The technological aura trait posits that science is nothing more than a different type of magic. A machine gun operates according to known physical properties and laws, just like *magic missile* predictably creates an effect based on the gestures, components, and phrases used to produce it. Just as magic loses its power when brought to certain planes, so too does technology fail to function on many worlds. For example, a windmill or a grindstone is too simple to qualify as a technological item. Both of these inventions can function anywhere. On the other hand, a pistol or a robot might sputter on a fantasy world, just as an enchanted blade loses its magic in a science fiction setting.

This trait's strength determines how long technological items created on this plane can function on others. You can categorize anything as technological, from a catapult to a starship the size of a planet. As a rule of thumb, items subject to this trait should have some aspect of their operation that does not rely on easily observable workings. For example, a club is too simple to stop functioning on a different world. A pistol, on the other hand, is a bit more mysterious. The explosive force that propels a bullet could be explained as magic, as could a car's engine. Remember, though, that you can define almost anything as "technology." Scrolls, magic swords, and similar magical items could qualify for this trait when they travel from the PCs' home world to a plane where magic is unknown. In any case, this trait allows you to play with technology in your campaign without worrying about long-term consequences. If the characters loot weapons and items from their enemies, this trait ensures that their new toys become useless soon after they leave a high-tech world.

The time period listed for this trait's five strengths represent how long an item can remain functional once it leaves its plane of origin. After the time period passes, the item ceases to function. It cannot be repaired, though it returns to normal if brought back to its plane of origin. Multiple planes with this trait can share technology if you so choose, allowing a PC to carry a pistol or robot from one science fiction world to another.

Level	Time Period
Faint	1 month
Light	1 week
Medium	1 day
Heavy	12 hours
Overwhelming	0

TECHNOLOGICAL VIRUS

On some planes, life has long since given way to the inexorable rise of the machines. The very nature of the plane is hostile to organic creatures. Living things that enter such places are subject to horrific effects that wear away their bodies and slowly turn them into mechanical beings. Tiny machines, so small that they are invisible to the naked eye, infiltrate their victims' bodies and alter them from the inside out. These microscopic killers slowly drain their victims of life, eventually killing them and animating them as ghastly mixtures of organic and artificial beings. On other planes, the ambient energy present in the world morphs and twists living things, forcing them to adopt bodies compatible with the plane's structure and killing them in the process.

The technological virus trait reflects this dangerous condition. It presents a series of hazards ranked by strength that can kill organic crea-

tures. A creature killed by these hazards rises in 2d6 hours as a mechanical construct. These creatures count as animated objects. If these objects somehow gain intelligence, such as from the mechanical supremacy trait, they have wholly new personalities.

These hazards affect only living creatures. Elementals, constructs, and undead creatures are immune to them.

Faint: Fortitude save DC 10; 1 hour interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d6 damage.

Light: Fortitude save DC 15; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d6 damage.

Medium: Fortitude save DC 20; 15 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d6 damage.

Heavy: Fortitude save DC 20; 10 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d6 damage.

Overwhelming: Fortitude save DC 25; 5 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d6 damage.

Waterways

The rivers, oceans, and lakes of a plane go a long way to defining its character. Remember that while water covers over half of the Earth's surface, few people think of it as an aquatic world. This trait category allows you to spice up your planes by introducing a variety of different substances that can fill the role normally filled by water. From seas of flaming oil to streams of sludge and slime, these unique terrain features add a new dimension of the alien to the outer planes.

The waterways traits differ from the other categories in that they present terrain features rather than global rules you can use to make a world different. When creating a plane, pick one of these traits to fill in the world's oceans and use it to build a strange environment for the PCs to explore.

Not every plane needs to have strange waterways. You can use these features to populate a dungeon, add a strange location to a wilderness adventure, or present the characters with a daunting obstacle.

Air Currents

Planes highly attuned to the element of air might feature few landmasses. Instead, the characters must navigate the open air between floating islands, clouds, and other points. Air currents take the place of rivers, as they can pull ships and flying creatures along and force them in specific directions. The currents could be regular, or they may change unpredictably.

Weak Air Currents: Strength DC 10; 1 round interval; Moved 2d6 feet in the current's direction; Special: A character or vessel moving with a current gains an additional 2d6 ft. of movement per round. For travel over long periods, increase the group's speed by 5 feet.

Moderate Air Currents: Strength DC 15; 1 round interval; Moved 5d6 feet in the current's direction; Special: A character or vessel moving with a current gains an additional 5d6 ft. of movement per round. For travel over long periods, increase the group's speed by 20 feet.

Strong Air Currents: Strength DC 20; 1 round interval; Moved 10d6 feet in the current's direction; Special: A character or vessel moving with a current gains an additional 10d6 ft. of movement per round. For travel over long periods, increase the group's speed by 40 feet.

Boiling Water

The ideal waterway for planes of fire, boiling water burns creatures foolish enough to enter it and forms a difficult obstacle to any character who lacks an item or spell that protects him from heat damage.

Boiling Water: No save; 1 round interval; 1d6 damage; Special: A character fully submerged in boiling water takes 10d6 damage per round.

Dust

A tremendous cataclysm can disintegrate huge swathes of the landscape, turning it into a thick layer of dust. A rampant magical effect causes a desert to shift and move like a liquid body, allowing skiffs to move across the sands. Creatures swim through the dirt, and deep within it lie the forgotten ruins of an ancient civilization. Dust waterways are useful in planes with a close connection to the earth element.

Treat dust exactly like water. Spells and effects that alter how a character interacts with water, such as *water breathing*, work exactly the same when dealing with liquid dust. Characters who fall into it must swim or they risk drowning.

Drowning/Suffocation: Constitution check DC 10; 1 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; Special: A character can hold his breath for a number of rounds equal to twice his Constitution score. After that interval, apply the effects given for this hazard. On a failed check, a character immediately drops to 0 hit points. On the next round, he drops to –1 hit points and is dying. On the third round, he dies.

MAGMA

From active volcanoes to a fire giant's castle in the midst of a burning plain, magma is the ultimate waterway for an inferno.

Magma: No save; 1 round interval; 10d6 damage; Special: A character fully submerged in magma takes 100d6 damage per round.

SLIME

A thick, viscous mixture of organic material, water, and unidentifiable goop, slime is a catch all term for anything that appears disgusting and flows in great quantities across a plane. This sludge can have a variety of effects. It may burn like acid, prove poisonous to organic creatures, or serve just as well as water.

Acidic Slime: No save; 1 round interval; 1d10 damage; Special: Acidic slime ignores an object's hardness.

Adhesive Slime: Reflex DC 15; 1 round interval; Special: A creature that fails its save against this slime is caught in place and may be dragged along by its current. A Strength check (DC 15) is necessary to break free. A creature stuck beneath this goop drowns as if it fell in water.

Fiery Slime: No save; 1 round interval; 1d6 damage; Special: This slime deals fire damage. Creatures and items exposed to it must check to see if they catch fire.

WEATHER

The planes hold a wide range of worlds, from flame-blasted realms of elemental fire to endless wastelands ravaged by a great cataclysm. Some of these worlds feature weather much like the typical inhabited world, while others have an array of strange effects. The weather traits allow you to tinker with storms, rain, and other natural effects. You can produce a rain of fire that pummels the ground with burning embers, storms of howling ghosts that drive living creatures mad, and heat waves so intense they cause fires to spontaneously erupt.

Unlike other traits, the various weather effects tend to have a strong link to specific categories and types of worlds. Each has a short description of planes that normally feature it, though you are under no obligation to follow those suggestions.

You can modify the weather traits to cover different conditions by changing the damage they deal and altering their descriptions. A ferocious hailstorm that pounds the characters with giant chunks of ice might use the rain of fire threat altered to deal cold damage.

ACID RAIN

In worlds hostile to life, acid rain serves to sweep the land clean of anything unable to find sufficient cover. The plants that survive must adapt to this searing downpour, while most creatures dwell within caves and take care to never venture far from them. And acid rain storm can last as long as you need it to for purposes of an adventure or campaign, or 2d100 minutes if you want to determine the duration randomly.

Acid rain strips life from the terrain. Over time, even rocks show signs of melting and wear. The plants and animals adapted to the acid thrive, easily overrunning all other species. Intelligent creatures may fashion shelters from stone and acid-proof materials, such as the thick leaves and bark of plants adapted to this environment.

Mechanical worlds, places devoid of life, and evil realms are the places most likely to have this feature. Acid rain punishes living things, making it difficult for most of them to survive for long.

Acid damages any large items a character carries, such as armor, shields, backpacks, and so forth. Such objects must save as per the standard rules for objects.

Faint: Fortitude save DC 10; 10 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1 damage.

Light: Fortitude save DC 15; 5 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d2 damage.

Medium: Fortitude save DC 20; 2 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d3 damage.

Heavy: Fortitude save DC 20; 1 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 damage.

Overwhelming: Fortitude save DC 20; 5 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d6 damage.

Flash Freeze

A wave of intense cold sweeps over the land, coating everything in a fine layer of ice. It freezes creatures in place, trapping them in ice and slowly draining their strength. A flash freeze is as deadly as it is fast. In one moment, it can transform a temperate woodland scene into a wintry vista. Only creatures that notice its progress toward them stand a chance of survival unless they are tough or resistant to extreme cold.

Planes locked in endless cold, chaos worlds, and lands wracked with unstable magic are the most likely to feature this trait. Planes with this trait tend to have lower populations, as the flash freeze kills off many creatures in an area. A flash freeze lingers in an area according to the needs of your adventure or, if you prefer a random method, 3d6 rounds.

Flash freeze is described with a series of hazards that represent various strengths for this trait. The freeze inflicts cold damage, while the penalty to speed it causes represents the formation of ice on a creature's limbs. On a successful save, a creature still sustains half the listed speed penalty. A creature with a speed reduced to 0 or less is rendered helpless and immobile by the flash freeze. Even creatures that are immune to cold damage still suffer penalties to their speed. A successful Strength check (DC 10) as a standard action allows a creature to remove any speed penalties it suffers. A trapped creature must make a Strength check (DC 15) as a full-round action to escape.

Faint: Fortitude save DC 10; 5 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d3 damage, –10 speed.

Light: Fortitude save DC 15; 4 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 damage, –10 speed.

Medium: Fortitude save DC 15; 3 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d6 damage, –10 speed.

Heavy: Fortitude save DC 20; 2 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d8 damage, –10 speed.

Overwhelming: Fortitude save DC 20; 1 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d10 damage, –10 speed.

Ghost Wind

The wind bears many things, such as dust, rain, or a deep chill. On some planes, the power of death is so great that the weather carries the spirits of the fallen, casting them across the land in a shrieking torrent of souls. A ghost wind can drive a creature insane with its unholy influence, as its tormented souls spread fear and madness before them. A ghost wind initially appears just like a mundane breeze. As it gains strength, spectral faces appear within it, stretched taut by the wind's force. As the faces lengthen, they begin to moan and howl. This unholy din wears away a listener's sanity.

Evil and necropotent realms are prime candidates for this weather effect, as are lands infested with chaos. A ghost wind could even originate in a mundane campaign world, spawned by a powerful necromantic ritual or belched forth by a gate to the realm of the dead.

Several hazards, organized by strength, represent the ghost wind. A ghost wind causes temporary Wisdom damage and forces its victims to behave as if under the effects of *confusion* cast by a 15th-level sorcerer with a 16 Charisma. A ghost wind can last as long as necessary for an adventure's purposes or 1d4 minutes.

Faint: Will save DC 10; 10 round/1 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage, affected by *confusion* for 1d4 rounds.

Light: Will save DC 15; 8 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1 point of temporary Wisdom damage, affected by *confusion* for 1d6 rounds.

Medium: Will save DC 15; 6 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d2 points of

temporary Wisdom damage, affected by *confusion* for 1d8 rounds.

Heavy: Will save DC 20; 4 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d2 points of temporary Wisdom damage, affected by *confusion* for 1d10 rounds.

Overwhelming: Will save DC 20; 2 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 points of temporary Wisdom damage, affected by *confusion* for 1d12 rounds.

Rain of Fire

Inky black clouds hang overhead, while a breeze carries a faint smell of brimstone. The air grows hot but intensely dry, in the space of moments drying out puddles and wilting plants. With a thunderous crack, the storm begins. Burning embers streak from the sky, igniting the land below in a searing holocaust. In a few moments, flames engulf the area.

Rain of fire is common in realms dominated by flame, such as fire elemental planes, evil realms, and desert worlds. This weather trait invariably reduces the landscape to an ashen wasteland, as it spawns raging fires that sweep across the land.

Faint: Reflex save DC 10; 2 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 fire damage.

Light: Reflex save DC 15; 10 round/1 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 fire damage.

Medium: Reflex save DC 20; 5 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 fire damage.

Heavy: Reflex save DC 20; 2 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 fire damage, exposed to flames hazard listed below.

Overwhelming: Reflex save DC 25; 1 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 fire damage, exposed to flames hazard listed below.

Flames: Reflex save DC 15; 1 round interval; 1d6 damage; Special: On a successful save, the flames are extinguished. A character gains a +4 bonus on this save if he rolls on the ground or if the flames are smothered with a cloak or similar item.

Creating Hazards and Traits

With over 50 traits to choose from, this chapter gives you the tools to cover most situations. Still, sometimes you need a specific tool or effect that this book does not cover. In such situations, use the following guidelines to build your own traits and hazards.

The first and most important factor in creating a trait is determining its basic game mechanics. Does it deal damage? Who or what does it affect? What conditions does it reflect? Try to picture the trait in your mind and imagine how the characters interact with it. If it physically injures the characters, impedes their progress, or drains their life, then you have an idea of the mechanics it needs.

Ability score damage works best with traits that weaken or enhance creatures without affecting their physical health. A plane could reduce an evil creature to a weakling, but such an effect is not likely to kill it. Ability score damage strips away the characters' abilities, making them more vulnerable to attacks, but on its own it only rarely threatens their lives.

Strength damage makes warrior types less effective in combat. They hit less often and deal less damage, making fights last longer on average. It also renders all characters unable to carry heavy loads. In some cases, the party may have to abandon heavy items to continue moving. In extreme cases, this damage can deny a fighter the use of Cleave, Power Attack, and other feats that rely on Strength.

Dexterity damage makes all characters vulnerable to physical attacks and effects that require Reflex saves. Fast, mobile characters lose access to feats such as Spring Attack and Dodge, crippling their main combat abilities. Rogues, bards, and monks have a difficult time using skills such as Hide and Move Silently.

Constitution damage is perhaps the most dangerous effect, as it saps a character's maximum hit points and can kill him should his score drop to zero. Fortitude saves resist many effects that require a saving throw to avoid instant death.

Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma damage

cripples a party's ability to use magic. Remember that a caster needs a minimum ability score to use spells of a certain level. Reducing these scores strips away the party's most powerful abilities and can leave them far more vulnerable.

Hit point damage obviously weakens the party, making them less able to handle combat encounters and more likely to deplete their potions, healing spells, and other resources. Encounters are more likely to kill or incapacitate characters.

You can include other effects in hazards beyond ability score and hit point damage. Some hazards reduce a character's speed, grant him saving throw penalties, reduce his AC, and duplicate spell effects. If you have a hazard you cannot simulate using damage or modifiers, look to the spell lists for effects that mimic its function. Level drain, petrification, and other effects all fall neatly into areas already charted out by spells. For inspiration, page through lists of spells and find effects that appeal to you or fit the mood of your game.

After deciding how your hazard attacks the characters, you need to determine its saving throw DC, interval, and interval penalty. These three factors tie into how much damage the hazard deals. Ones that inflict a lot of damage should have long intervals or low save DCs unless you want them to quickly overwhelm the characters. For example, a mechanical world features sword blades falling from the sky in place of rain. If you want the characters to immediately sprint for cover when this rain hits, set the damage and save DC high, and the check interval short. If the characters take a lot of damage in a short period of time, they obviously cannot withstand a hazard for long.

One of the key pitfalls in hazards lies in their saving throws. If a hazard's effects reduce a character's save bonus, either directly or indirectly through ability damage, be sure to keep the initial save DC low. Otherwise, the characters can hit a death spiral where a single, missed save can doom them to successive failures that kill them. In general, lower save DCs work best for hazards. Only the most dangerous obstacles should have DCs as high as 20 or 25, with 10 and 15 the most common ones. Since a hazard can affect every character in the party, a lower DC allows PCs with good saves

to gain the benefit of their abilities while those with poor ones suffer setbacks.

The hazard's interval should be tied to the threat it poses. Hazards that present a continual danger need short intervals, while those with longer intervals represent gradual effects that slowly increase in intensity. Be careful about setting a hazard's interval too short and save DC too high. Such a combination can quickly overwhelm the characters, as the hazard wears them down before they can escape it or figure out a method to counteract its effects.

An interval penalty of –1 or –2 is enough to make a major difference as checks accumulate. Penalties higher than that can make a hazard impossible to resist in a short period of time. If a hazard has a very long interval, such as an hour or more, a severe penalty can work to surprise the party and remind them of the lurking danger they face. In that case, the characters probably need to make few enough saves that the penalty does not grow too large.

Details beyond Traits

While the traits give you the rules material you need to bring a world to life, there are other details beyond game mechanics that you need to take into account. The descriptions and environments you use to depict a plane bring it to life in your players' minds. All the rules in the world mean little if you apply them in a dull, mechanical fashion.

Focus on the important environmental details and bring them out repeatedly during an adventure. If the weather is exceptionally hot, mention the thick sweat that drips down the characters' skin, soaking their clothes and making their armor uncomfortable. Think about a hot or cold day (as appropriate) that you experienced and use that to drive your description. Often, the smaller details have the biggest impact in this regard. During a rain storm, talk about how the driving downpour soaks into the characters' clothes, turning their socks into soggy rags around their feet. An acid rain causes thin trails of smoke to rise from everything it burns.

When dealing with creatures, alter a monster's appearance to keep the characters guessing. Its stats remain the same, but the new description you use can confuse the players and remind them that they are on an alien world. Use the random appearance generator from Chapter 4 to add new visual traits to an existing creature. Best of all, you do not need to alter any rules or create a new creature to use this method.

In the end, your skill as DM determines whether your planes come across as vivid and interesting. The rules here are a starting point. Use them as the basis for the descriptions and strange worlds that you weave.

Random Planar Traits

Sometimes the characters take a strange turn and hurtle into a region you have not yet mapped out or designed. A rash jump into a portal, an emergency use of *plane shift*, or a similar event can put you in the position of needing to quickly create a plane. The following tables allow you to quickly generate an array of traits along with their strength ratings, if necessary. You can also use random planar generation to spark your imagination. The effort of finding a logical framework for a random set of traits can inspire you to come up with a unique, memorable background.

To randomly generate a plane, roll on the random terrain chart to determine the general layout of the plane or the area the characters enter. Then roll on the trait generation table. Refer to the appropriate trait listing earlier in this chapter for more information. Use the trait strength table for those features that have multiple strength ratings. The elemental and magic tables provide details for those two trait categories. For traits and details not covered by these charts, pick one at random from the list presented in the individual trait's description.

It is possible that a random combination may prove impossible to reconcile. For example, you may roll the extreme heat and freezing conditions traits. In this case, you can either assign them to different areas in the world or replace one of the incompatible traits with a new one. Furthermore, sometimes you may find that a few traits make logical fits for a world. Go ahead and add those, perhaps generating one or two traits randomly then filling in this rest based on your first few results.

Random Terrain Chart

1–7	Air
8–14	Desert
15–21	Flooded
22–28	Forest
29–35	Jungle
36–42	Mechanical
43–49	Mountains
50–56	Organic
57–65	Plains
66–72	Splintered
73–79	Subterranean
80–86	Swamp
87–93	Tundra
94–100	Water

Total Traits to Generate

1–20	1
21–40	2
41–60	3
61–80	4
81–90	5
91–100	6

Random Planar Traits

1–2	Terrain–Gravity
3–4	Chaos–Arcane Instability
5–6	Chaos–Chaos Ascendant
7–8	Chaos–Chaos Lands
9	Chaos–Law's Bane
10–11	Cold–Blizzard Conditions
12–13	Cold–Freezing Conditions
14–15	Cold–Snow
16–17	Elemental–Elemental Ascendancy
18–19	Elemental–Elemental Enervation
20–21	Elemental–Elemental Vacuum
22–23	Evil–Clouds of Baneful Influence
24–25	Evil–Empower Evil
26–27	Evil–Hatred of the Land
28–29	Evil–Insidious Weakness
30–31	Evil–Scorn the Righteous
32	Good–Glade of Benevolent Charity
33–34	Good–Strength of the Righteous
35–36	Good–Weakness of the Vile
37–38	Heat–Ambient Fire
39–40	Heat–Ash Storms
41–42	Heat–Extreme Heat
43–44	Law–Edict of Law
45	Law–Strength of Pattern
46	Life–Plague World
47–48	Life–War World
49–50	Light–Glare
51–52	Light–Sunlight
53	Magic–Arcane Instability
54–55	Magic–Arcane Potency
56	Magic–Arcane Weakness
57–58	Magic–Dead Magic
59	Magic–Magical Drought
60	Magic–Magical Flux
61–62	Magic–Magical Veil
63–64	Necropotence–Bane of the Living
65–66	Necropotence–Kingdom of the Dead
67–68	Necropotence–March of the Dead
69–70	Necropotence–Strength of Undeath
71–72	Necropotence–Shroud of Death
73–74	Technology–Advanced Tech
75–76	Technology–Arcane Masquerade
77–78	Technology–Mechanical Supremacy
79–80	Technology–Technological Aura
81–82	Technology–Technological Virus
83–84	Waterways–Air Currents
85–86	Waterways–Boiling Water
87–88	Waterways–Dust
89–90	Waterways–Magma
91–92	Waterways–Slime
93–94	Weather–Acid Rain
95–96	Weather–Flash Freeze
97–98	Weather–Ghost Wind
99–100	Weather–Rain of Fire

Random Trait Strength

1–20	Faint
21–40	Light
41–80	Medium
81–95	Heavy
96–100	Overwhelming

Random Element Trait

1	Acid
2	Chaotic
3	Cold
4	Darkness
5	Earth
6	Electricity
7	Fire
8	Sonic
9	Water
10	Roll twice more

Random Magic School/Descriptor

1–4	Abjuration
5–8	Conjuration
9–12	Divination
13–16	Enchantment
17–20	Evocation
21–24	Illusion
25–28	Necromancy
29–32	Transmutation
33–36	Acid

37–40	Chaotic
41–44	Cold
45–48	Darkness
49–52	Death
53–56	Electricity
57–60	Evil
61–64	Fear
65–68	Fire
69–72	Force
73–76	Good
77–80	Lawful
81–84	Light
85–88	Mind-affecting
89–92	Sonic
93–96	Teleportation
97–100	Roll twice more

SAMPLE WORLDS

The following planes serve as examples of what you can do with the various traits presented earlier in this chapter. Use them as settings for adventures, examples for your own design work, and components in your campaign's system of worlds and planes.

Each of the sample worlds includes a one sentence summary that describes its basic traits, background, a description of its appearance, notes on its inhabitants, and a list of traits that apply to it. Traits are listed by name, with their strength (if applicable) followed by category listed in parentheses. For traits that have easily summarized effects, their specific details are listed in the trait summary.

Many of the sample planes are built on classic archetypes of fantasy literature and gaming. These examples are by no means canonical guides to these places. Instead, think of them as templates or starting points for your own planar campaigns.

The sample worlds use the traits as a basis for entire settings that you can quickly put together. They combine several traits together to form a model you can use for your own planes. With a few tweaks, you can design dozens of planes with a few adjustments to the basic examples.

CHAOS MOUNTAIN

Summary: A planar mountain infused with chaos, this world offers gateways to paradise for those who can brave its treacherous environment.

The chaos mountain is a testament to the fury and energy of the endless legions of chaos. Many eons ago, an ambitious lord of chaos known as Nimbrel schemed to pierce the planes and unleash a massive legion of gibbering chaos beasts. By creating a multitude of portals to a variety of planes, he hoped to weaken the planar bonds and plunge the entire cosmos into entropy. In the end, Nimbrel was too ambitious. His plan required focus and coordination beyond the capacity of chaos legions. Yet, he did not completely fail. The chaos mountain still stands, a monument to his ambition and the potential for destruction inherent in all chaos creatures.

The chaos mountain is a massive peak that cuts through a variety of planes. Many portals are set along its slopes, with each of these gateways connecting to a different world. At the mountain's highest points, it breaks into planes that are otherwise inaccessible to travelers. Some claim that Nimbrel's legion of workers and mighty spells fell apart when they came into contact with these planes. Whether these realms terrified the chaos lord into stopping his work or lured him into a life of peace and tranquility, none can say.

The mountain forms its own plane. The land at its base extends a few miles in every direction, a bare, rocky plane devoid of life. The mountain is 200 miles wide at its base and extends 100 miles into the sky. At its uppermost point, it is barely a few hundred feet across. Caves, paths, and caverns dot its sides. In many places, the pathway is no more than three feet across. Chaos beasts are common here, as are predators from the many worlds to which the mountain connects.

The weather around the mountain is continually stormy. At times, howling winds composed of the souls of chaos creatures who died in the mountain's construction descend upon travelers, tearing away their sanity with long, mournful shrieks and cries. Even in the absence of this supernatural gale, the wind drives snow and freezing gusts against the mountain. Many

icy creatures lurk upon the mountain, and rocs swoop down to pluck travelers from the pathways.

TRAITS

Blizzard Conditions: Range of sight is restricted by swirling gusts of snow (Overwhelming, Cold); Chaos Ascendant: Chaos creatures gain +4 Strength, +6 Constitution, fast healing 1; Freezing Conditions: Fortitude save DC 15; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage (Medium, Cold); Ghost Wind: Will save DC 15; 6 round interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d2 points of temporary Wisdom damage, affected by *confusion* for 1d8 rounds, lasts 1d4 minutes, 5% chance per hour (Medium, Weather).

THE FENS

Summary: The home plane of hags and other twisted creatures, the fens are a mammoth, planar swamp infested with evil.

A visitor to the fens would likely describe this place in one word: claustrophobic. Between the stifling heat, the tightly packed, sickly trees, and the overwhelming sense of evil, the land feels as if it seeks to crush the life out of every living thing that dares venture into its bounds. The sky is forever overcast, supplying at best a dim light.

The fens are an endless swamp, thick with dying trees, mushrooms, and murky water. Alligators, lizards, and other creatures adapted to the hot weather thrive here. Clouds of insects swarm through the humid air, crawling between gaps in armor to bite and sting travelers. Only the hags enjoy life here. The powerful, ambient evil force that infests this plane lends them strength, while the heat, insects, and dim radiance suit their natures. The fens are apparently endless, though no one has gone to the trouble to extensively map them. Even the hags have trouble navigating the swamp's physical obstacles. The air a hundred feet above the trees moves at a supernaturally fast pace, and the hags use crude umbrellas and tarps to catch these winds and travel great distances. The hags love to drop from the air and attack those who wander the swamps.

The fens are a popular destination for evil spellcasters and researchers. The hags brew potions and wander the planes to steal magic

items, selling them for gold, slaves, and other useful trinkets. Some of these wretched creatures grow ambitious. They seek to extend their power beyond their home plane, recruiting creatures from other worlds as spies, servants, and scouts. Other hags work as guardians and watchers for other evil beings. A villain might entrust a hag with hostages, stolen items, and other things he may want to keep hidden away. Sometimes, the greedy, mercenary hags deal with heroes, selling them information or prophecies at a steep price. While these predictions are not always trustworthy, for enough gold a hag gladly betrays its allies and customers.

The swamp itself holds little of value. The hags long ago dredged it for anything of value. Aside from alligators, the odd dinosaur, and a vast array of vermin, it holds nothing of note.

Traits

Elemental Ascendancy (Acid): Creatures with the acid sub-type gain +6 Strength, +8 Constitution, all acid attacks deal +1d12 damage (Overwhelming, Elemental); Empower Evil: Evil creatures gain +5 to attacks, +4 to all skill checks, +5 to saves, and a +3 bonus to their spells' save DCs (Overwhelming, Evil); Extreme Heat: Fortitude save DC 15; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage (Medium, Extreme Heat); Sunlight: This world receives the equivalent of bright starlight. Creatures with low-light vision can see as normal, but others must struggle in the gloom. Fungi and nocturnal creatures thrive (Light, Light); Air Currents: Strength DC 15; 1 round interval; Moved 5d6 feet in the current's direction; Special: A character or vessel moving with a current gains an additional 5d6 movement per round. For travel over long periods, increase the group's speed by 20 feet (Moderate, Waterways).

The Great Machine

Summary: In the world of the great machine, constructs work tirelessly to overcome chaos's relentless advance.

Visitors to the great machine find themselves standing on a great plane of bronze. Rivers of oil flow through channels carved into the ground, while in the distance mammoth gears slowly tick from one monstrous tooth to the next. In the opposite direction, the plane disappears into darkness. The great machine is, as its name indicates, a vast planar mechanism. Its many cogs, gears, and chains shudder and jerk to some unknown beat, grinding away to a purpose none can guess. A dim, continual radiance cloaks this plane in a continual, evening glow.

Golems and other constructs, granted intelligence by this plane's strange magic, inhabit the machine. They construct small shelters of metal scavenged from the machine's inner workings, resting within them between their long bouts of working to ensure that the machine continues its function. The golems and their mechanical allies must be vigilant, for chaos creatures of all types (see Chapter 4) wage a continual war against them. In some areas of the machine, the elemental force of chance has overwhelmed the machine's structured order. Gears spasm and shudder in erratic patterns, and the very structure of this planar mechanism melts and fades. Sages theorize that the machine is an important component of the endless war between law and chaos. Its structured regularity is anathema to the chaos lords, and as such they commit waves of their followers to its destruction.

In many areas the great machine is a blasted battlefield, with golems and the occasional paragon of law standing against massive hordes of minor chaos creatures. Thus far, the machines have held their ground. The great machine continues to tick down to its unknowable destiny, but the forces of chaos press forever onward. Whatever the machine's purpose may be, it might never reach it without the aid of heroes.

Traits

Arcane Instability: 10% chance spells turn into different spells (Light, Chaos); Strength of Pattern: Will save DC 15; 15 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; repeat last action or 1d10 damage (Medium, Law); War World: There is a 20% chance per hour that a group of animated objects with an EL equal to the party's level attacks. This trait applies only if a member of the party is chaotic (Medium, Life); Mechanical Supremacy: Constructs gain +14 Int, +16 Wis, +14 Cha (Overwhelming, Technological).

HELL

Summary: A fiery inferno inhabited by devils that torment the souls of the wicked.

The classic realm of evil, hell is a fiery plane where devils endlessly torment the souls of the damned. The dukes of hell reign over this place with iron fists, demanding absolute loyalty from their followers. Meanwhile, they all endlessly plot to subvert and cheat hell's diabolic order. Ambition rules over all in this terrible place, as the devils seek solely to advance and grow their personal power.

Hell is a twisted mockery of all that is good and wholesome in the cosmos. The forests are twisted, charred stands of withered trees. Its few seas boil from the heat and churn in the wake of massive, ravenous beasts. All evil and lawful outsiders are perfectly at home here. The souls trapped in hell take the form of ghosts, zombies, or lemures. The devils pass their time tormenting these poor creatures, who, regardless of their wounds, arise again to face another day of unending pain.

The dukes of hell divide this plane into separate realms, each with a distinct character based on its ruler's nature. The traits listed below cover the general conditions within this dreaded place. You can add additional traits to cover specific regions.

TRAITS

Extreme Heat: Fortitude save DC 15; 10 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage (Heavy, Heat); Empower Evil: +3 attacks, +2 checks, +3 saves, +1 spell DCs (Medium, Evil); Arcane Potency: Fire spells gain +1 save DC, +2 caster level (Medium, Magic); Magical Veil: Divine magic used by good casters, DC 15 caster level to us spell (Medium, Magic).

THE NIGHTLANDS

Summary: The Nightlands is a world of eternal night where vampire lords keep herds of human cattle.

Gripped in eternal twilight, the Nightlands are a haven for powerful undead creatures. Centuries ago, this plane was much

like any other land. Human, dwarf, and elf kingdoms controlled much of the world, while orcs, goblins, and other barbarians nipped at their borders.

This carefully maintained balance was destroyed when the world's sun sputtered out and died. While the living fought and bickered over their trivial concerns, an unholy alliance of vampires and liches gathered to seize the world. They wrought a mighty ritual that extinguished the sun. In a single night, the undead legions boiled from burial grounds, tombs, and underworld caverns to conquer the living. Divided by centuries of warfare, the men, orcs, and elves proved no match for the endless legions of skeletons and zombies. Their conquest complete, the undead lords enslaved the surviving humanoid populations and, in many cases, used them as food stock to satisfy the undead legions' thirst for the living.

Currently, the vampire lords and lich-kings have completed a ritual that channeled heat energy from the plane of fire to the Nightlands, staving off an ice age. Though these dread lords worked together to conquer their world, rivalries, hatreds, and jealousies divide them. Their undead legions regularly march to war, while living creatures kept for food have become a valuable commodity. Their ghoul keepers brand them at an early age and herd them in large, walled farms. In a few places, resistance against the undead continues. Groups of orcs, elves, and humans, all of whom have long since cast aside their differences, fight a guerilla war to free their kin and smash the undead. They infiltrate the cities of ghouls and ghosts, seeking artifacts and weapons they can use to strike down the undead overlords. In some cases, they flee to other worlds in search of aid.

TRAITS

Sunlight: no sun (Faint, Sun); Arcane Potency: Necromancy+2 save DC and caster level (Heavy, Magic); Kingdom of the Dead: +5 turn resistance (Overwhelming, Necropotence); March of the Dead: creatures animate as skeletons or zombies one hour after death (Faint, Necropotence).

THE SAVAGE FOREST

Summary: The land itself seeks to exterminate all who invade the savage forest.

The savage forest appears at first glance to be nothing more than a thickly wooded land. The trees grow close together, and ferns and other undergrowth choke the few patches of clear ground. Disarmed by the plane's tranquil facade, heedless travelers stretch out, relax, and prepare for a pleasant stay. Such rash actions invariably lead to the death of those foolish enough to enter this dreaded plane.

The savage forest acts much like a gigantic organism that sees all non-native life as a dangerous, foreign virus that must be eliminated. The trees grasp at visitors with their branches, seeking to rend and tear them with supernatural strength. Wolves, birds, and other mundane animals gather in packs to hunt down and kill all who enter this land. Even the air is an enemy, as it holds many diseases that can overwhelm and kill a traveler.

Despite these dangers, the savage forest draws more than its share of explorers. Supposedly, the forest and the animals within it were charged to guard some great treasure by a powerful druid. This nature priest's magic was so powerful that he was able to bend the ecosystem of an entire world to his will. While the druid's name, intentions, and the details of the treasure he hid are lost to the mists of time, his legacy lives on.

The presence of plant-choked ruins within the savage forest is a testament that something or someone once dwelled here. Whether they were destroyed as part of the druid's ancient pact, none can say. Sometimes, fugitives and powerful spellcasters flee here to escape their enemies and establish a secure base. By using powerful spells to protect their domains, they gain the services of a legion of unwitting guardians.

TRAITS

Plague World: Fortitude save DC 20; Special: Disease with 1 day interval; –1 penalty/interval; 2 points of temporary Con damage (Medium, Life); War World: There is a 20% chance per hour that a group of beasts, plants, or other creatures with an EL equal to the party's level attacks. These creatures gain the barbarian's rage ability (Heavy, Life); Hatred of the Land: 40%/1 hour plants animate and attack (Overwhelming, Evil).

The Shattered Sphere

Summary: Dozens of rock chunks float within space, forming the world known as the shattered sphere.

The stars shine down upon the shattered sphere, a realm consisting of a dozen large chunks of rock floating in space. Each of these asteroids is no more than 200 miles wide at its longest measure. Many are much smaller. The light from a distant sun casts its glow on these aerial islands, allowing small forests and sickly crops to survive, providing a subsistence-level existence for the men and gnomes that dwell upon this plane. Hundreds, if not thousands, of smaller rock islands swarm between and around the 12 major islands. These tiny satellites are no larger than a mile across, but they hold a treasure trove of gold, silver, iron, and mithral. From a great distance, the shattered sphere appears as a small asteroid belt that orbits an otherwise empty solar system.

The small, scattered human and gnome settlements dispatch flying ships to the orbiting rocks to establish mining camps, extracting the shattered worlds' mineral wealth. They return the ore to the subterranean halls carved from the major rocks' interiors, where it is processed and traded with other worlds via a wormhole that connects to this world. Several wide, pitch black cave mouths lead to portals that connect to the wormhole, making the shattered sphere an economically prosperous world, though it is far from a cheery or fertile one.

The scattered, lawless nature of the smaller asteroids makes them the ideal hiding spot for criminals, evil wizards, and other villains. Many fugitives seek out this world, as the gnome and human settlements care little for a person's morals or background so long as he can heft a pick and work the mines. Life in the sphere consists of days of backbreaking labor punctuated by brief furloughs in its dingy, cramped settlements. After a short period of sleep, heavy drinking, and carousing, the miners again return to the belt. Many fugitives masquerade as workers or toil long enough to buy a small air ship and establish an isolated hideaway deep within the belt.

Traits

Terrain (Splintered); Sunlight: Equivalent of starlight (Light, Sun); Waterways: Air currents blow between the asteroids, allowing grand flying ships to sail them between colonies and mining outposts.

The Underkingdom of Nepentra

Summary: The people of Nepentra saved their world, but at the price of their freedom.

In ages past, Nepentra was a vibrant world that bustled with commerce, magical research, and exploration. Planar travelers who ventured into this land found a warm reception, as traders and sages lined up to do business with them. The Overking ruled with a wise, just hand. As the most powerful sorcerer in all the land, he and his family wielded magic with unrivaled skill. Nepentra's people lived in peace and tranquility, until a great host of chaos marauders darkened the sky. Driven by madness and an unstoppable drive to destroy, the invaders poured through great rifts in the planar firmament and sought to make Nepentra their own.

The Overking and his soldiers fought valiantly. For many months, they held off the invaders. Finally, the tide began to turn. The hordes of chaos saw defeat in their future, and they swore to leave as much devastation in their wake as possible. A council of chaos lords wrought a powerful curse that drove the Overking insane while granting him virtual immortality. Wracked with madness, he unleashed powerful spells that destroyed the last of the invaders while also turning his lands into lifeless wastelands. Forced by necessity to retreat underground, the few surviving people of Nepentra founded a new kingdom in the world's deep caverns. The Overking continued to rule, his madness evolving into a quiet, subtle megalomania. His people had no idea that it was his decision to unleash the firestorms that ravaged the land, and none could guess that his growing madness would make him a tyrant.

Today, the kingdom of Nepentra survives in a series of gigantic caverns dotted with small towns and castles. The Overking's powerful magic spawned a magical sun that floats through the caverns, providing a natural cycle of day and night while allowing

crops and forests to grow. Yet, his other edicts have proven less benevolent. The Overking acts as a powerful magical sink, preventing all but the most skilled casters from working magic.

The temples have been cast down, instead replaced with a state religion that venerates the Overking. His name lost to the ages, he goes by his title and demands absolute obedience. So strong is his rule that the power of law flows through the land, weakening chaos creatures while granting the Overking and his direct servants increased power. Magical abilities are strictly regulated in this world, and anyone caught casting a spell, aside from the Overking's templars, is hunted down as a fugitive. A small band of freedom fighters seeks to overthrow the tyrant, but as the people believe he saved them from destruction even his most egregious abuses of power are forgiven.

TRAITS

Edict of Law: In place of a d20, lawful creatures roll 1d12+8, neutral ones 1d20–5, and chaotic ones 1d12. For purposes of this plane, anyone who opposes the Overking counts as chaotic, while his followers are lawful (Medium, Law); Magical Drought: Spellcasters must make a Spellcraft check (DC 20) to successfully cast a spell; (Heavy, Magic).

VESTRIAL, THE DYING WORLD

Summary: The jungle devours all in Vestrial, destroying its remaining civilization and sweeping away all life.

An observer would mistake Vestrial for a lush, verdant jungle teeming with life. At first glance, the many trees, rushing rivers, and scattered chittering of insects indicate that this is a place of life and prosperity. Yet, nothing could be further from the truth. The jungles of Vestrial are poisoned, warped and twisted by rampant insect life that seeds the soil with acidic secretions. The many trees that flourish here have adapted to the soil's high acid content, driving out all other plant life and dominating the entire world. Sadly, these plants have highly acidic leaves and wood, making them inedible to all but the insect creatures that infest this area. Anyone attempting to eat the local plants suffers 1 point of acid damage. Here and there, the bleached bones of great herds

of animals poke through the top soil and the few ferns that can survive in these conditions.

The races of Vestrial fight against the environment, but theirs is a losing struggle. The acidic plants take root in their stone cities, crumbling walls and buildings with their caustic secretions. The largest, most vicious insects descend upon settlements with murderous intent, hunting down other living creatures for food. In many areas, the rivers and lakes have turned acidic, injuring anyone who swims in them, destroying ships, and killing off all aquatic life. In a few areas, settlements cluster around cabals of powerful wizards and clerics who use their spells to ward off the jungle. Each day, volleys of fire, lightning, and cold energy arc from these settlements to incinerate the trees and destroy insects that wander too close. Few of these cities remain, but those that survive are typically too strong and well defended to fall easily.

A growing network of barbaric wanderers supports the jungle's growth. These scrawny, desperate savages gather in cults around a single, powerful druid. This divine spellcaster uses his magic and talent with nature to keep his charges safe. In return they support the jungle's endless march and fight alongside giant insects, vermin, and other creatures that have adapted to the acidic jungle. Most of them show horrific signs of scarring, as the druids splash acid on potential cultists to test their resolve and strength. All of them have partially melted faces, scars, and extensive tattoos. Whether the druids brought this ecological apocalypse upon Vestrial or they are merely opportunists who seek to take advantage of the situation, none can say.

TRAITS

Acid Rain: Fortitude save DC 20; 2 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d3 damage; Special: There is a 10% chance per day that an acid rain storm lasting 1d4 hours strikes an area (Medium, Weather). In addition to this trait, the natural food in Vestrial's jungles is completely inedible and its water fouled. Only food and drink found in the few civilized areas is fit for consumption.

The Wastelands

Summary: Blasted by a magical holocaust, the wastelands are studded with the fallen ruins of an ancient civilization.

The sand stretches endlessly, vanishing only in the distance where the horizon meets the ground. Here and there, the jagged stone and metal wreckage of an ancient civilization pokes though the dunes. Here and there, tracks lead off through the desert, the few remaining signs of life.

The wastelands were not always an empty, sun-blasted realm. In ages gone, a great, advanced civilization stretched from one end of the plane to the other. Towers of steel and glass stretched hundreds of feet into the air, while mighty wizards forged magic powerful enough to spawn whole new worlds. This arcane and divine might powered a golden age of learning and prosperity. Yet, the same magical forces that propelled the golden age doomed it to extinction. Jealousy and hatred still festered between the nations of the world, and in time they fought a great war to determine who would claim absolute rule. Comets plunged from the sky, the earth cracked and groaned under the strain of a million marching boots, and the searing light of arcane fire swept the land. In the end, the victors choked on the ashes of their victory. Almost all life had been eradicated in the struggle, leaving only empty husks in place of cities, endless dunes in place of oceans, forests, and fields.

Now, the wastelands beckon to adventurers. Great troves of enchanted items and magical knowledge lie buried within its sands, the last remaining testament to the great civilization that once stood there. In many cases, the magical devastation invoked during the war eradicated entire cities and castles, but many small towns and fortresses protected by mighty charms survived. These ruins hold the legacy of some of the most powerful spell casters in all the cosmos. Many expeditions have sought to dig up these lost treasures, toiling beneath the relentless desert sun and burrowing through the deadly, shifting sands for priceless treasures.

These efforts are far from safe. The warring armies employed thousands of golems and constructs, many of which still walk the land. Programmed to fight to the end, they seek out and destroy all intruders who enter their lands. In other areas, the few survivors suffered horrible mutations. Transformed into hateful, murderous creatures, they stalk, kill, and devour any living things they encounter. Use aberrations and strange humanoids, such as grimlocks, for these twisted beings.

The surviving ruins feature extensive tunnels, passages, and chambers. The Ancients, as the shattered civilization is known, used these as subterranean hideaways and shelters from the fighting and storage areas for their food, water, and important magical resources. Even after dodging the constructs and twisted beasts of the desert, explorers must cope with the wretched undead that starved to death within these halls and the many traps left behind to foil intruders. Still, a successful expedition can unearth valuable spell books, magic items, and great troves of gold and gems.

Traits

Ash Storms: Fortitude save DC 15; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 damage; Special: A light ash storm usually lasts for 1d4 hours (Light, Heat); Extreme Heat: Fortitude save DC 15; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d4 subdual damage (Medium, Heat); Glare: Fortitude save DC 10; 30 minute interval; –1 penalty/interval; 1d3 damage; Special: All creatures that rely on sight suffer a –1 penalty to attacks and checks that require sight due to the glare (Light, Sun).

CHAPTER FOUR

Threats & Civilizations

The planes host a vast array of creatures and civilizations. From the strange creatures that lurk between the cosmic fabric to the eternal war between the forces of pure law and elemental chaos, the planes are filled with monsters and creatures that you can throw at the characters in your campaign. This chapter provides advice for depicting strange civilizations and tailoring creatures for use in a planar campaign, and presents a variety of new monsters to surprise your players. If Chapter 2 gave you the tools to send the characters to the planes and Chapter 3 presented a menu of options for building them, this chapter outlines the enemies, monsters, and allies the characters can meet there.

Planar Civilizations

One of the challenges that the characters can face in planar adventures is meeting and dealing with exotic cultures. Consider the various historical empires and cultures in the real world and how their societies, architecture, and social structures developed. Now, imagine if they originated on different planes. Needless to

say, the planes can spawn a staggering variety of civilizations and social groups. The text of this section is designated as closed content.

Creating Civilizations

Depicting a planar civilization as a truly unique and different culture is no easy task. On the one hand, it is important to keep the groups the PCs encounter at least somewhat recognizable. If the characters have no means by which they can communicate with a group, never mind navigate its conventions and traditions, their encounter with it can be frustrating rather than challenging.

The best way to start designing a planar civilization is to follow much of the same advice given for creating new worlds. Start with one or two unique traits that set a civilization apart from other groups the PCs have encountered. Think about how those traits would make a society different and how you can use them to illustrate the group's unique traits to the players and their characters. Telling the PCs that a group of planar barbarians regard pain as a near-sacred sensation is nowhere near as effective as describing how the barbarians brand themselves with hot iron, insert metal pins into their skin, and ritually scar themselves. If the barbarians expect the PCs to engage in similar

practices to show their good faith as ambassadors, then that unique cultural trait becomes an important part of the game as the players grapple with exposing their characters to such dangers. The best unique cultural traits have a direct bearing on one or more decisions the PCs must make during the course of a campaign.

Cultural Basics

There are a few key questions you need to consider when designing a culture. Depending on the exact nature of how a society works, some of these questions might be more important than others.

What race or races comprise the society? A culture can include one or many races, and the traditional depictions of different monster races need not apply. A group of neutral and good orcs might rule a plane, while evil dwarves seek to overthrow their just rule.

Who is in charge? Chances are, if the PCs approach a civilization as envoys or ambassadors they need to interact with its rulers at some point. Think about who is in charge and how they hold on to power.

What are the group's goals? Think about the civilization's plans and its overarching needs. A society of wizards may be content to study magic and keep to itself, while a militaristic one might always seek new enemies to conquer.

What are the group's conflicts? Consider the competing power groups that have evolved in the civilization. How would they react to visitors? Is there any open conflict in the society, or are politics and social maneuvering the primary weapons?

How does the group view visitors? Some societies are fiercely xenophobic. They treat all strangers as enemies. Others are more open to newcomers and welcome them with open arms.

How does the group view the planes? If the society has not yet developed the magical resources needed for planar travel, it may see the characters as strange, otherworldly beings or even gods. The more the group knows about the planes, the less likely that the characters can use their origin to awe the natives or impress them.

Details and Unique Traits

After you have thought about the civilization's basic traits, you should consider any strange traits or characteristics that set it apart from other realms. There is no magic formula for creating cool details for a race. Usually, it is easiest to pick a single trait and exaggerate it or diminish it to an extreme degree. For example, a planar society may have no concept of personal property. Everything, from the simplest tool to the most powerful magic item, is owned equally by all members of the society. In another realm, the gods may rule over an oppressive theocracy that tries to control every aspect of its citizens' lives.

History books, references, and the Internet are all good sources of information on historical cultures. You can steal a few details from different civilizations, combine them together in a unique mix, and use that as the foundation for the realms the characters explore in their planar adventures. Print out or photocopy pictures of artifacts or depictions of ancient scenes to help bring a strange setting to life. Try to use details from lesser-known cultures, such as India, the South Pacific, Africa, and South America. While most gamers can recognize details taken from Greek or Roman civilization, the same cannot be said for Incan or Indian history.

Listed below are a few examples to inspire your imagination. You can also use these details for wholly new cultures you develop.

Animals: We take dogs, cats, and horses for granted as domesticated animals, but imagine a society that used trained dinosaurs, purple worms, or similar creatures.

Economics: The society might have a few rich families served by thousands of destitute citizens, or perhaps everyone shares the profits and products of commerce.

Magic: Arcane or divine spells could be strictly illegal, especially if one group of casters controls the government.

Plants: Replace all plant-related goods, from wood to grain, with fungi. Perhaps a specific plant is so important to the society that it is worth more than its weight in gold.

Social Class: Some races or social classes might be consigned to specific areas

of cities, denied basic rights and privileges, and otherwise restricted to certain activities. Meanwhile, other groups are given special rights and benefits. In a society ruled by sorcerers, perhaps only spellcasters can become full citizens.

ADAPTING CREATURES TO THE PLANES

In most fantasy campaigns, the planes are a strange, frightening place where some of the most fearsome monsters imaginable lurk. Sometimes, though, you may want to use an existing monster or an old standby with a few new tricks and tweaks. This section presents some simple tools and advice you can use to make any encounter, even one with familiar monsters, mysterious and challenging. Experienced players sometimes lose their sense of wonder when they fight a monster they have already faced a dozen times before. For planar adventures, the more you can do to inject strange monsters and uncertainty into an encounter, the better.

The quickest and easiest way to give an existing monster a fresh twist is to alter how you present it to the characters. The PCs might face a dire lion, but if you describe it as a serpentine monster with rainbow scales and bright red frill, they are unlikely to recognize it. The game stats you use come straight from the lion's description, but the players fixate on the weird description and assume they face a new creature.

The random appearance table allows you to spawn a new description for an existing creature with a minimum of effort. This convenient shortcut lets you cut down on the design work needed to generate a new monster. You can pick out a creature that offers the closest fit to what you need, and then tweak its description using the table below. Keep in mind that the creature's appearance should match its attack methods. The tables are designed to allow you to start with the creature's basic effects and body form and work from there. In addition, you can use these tables to create a random monster and then work up game stats for it.

As an additional method to confuse your players and generate unique looks for your creatures, use a random method to pick out pages from your favorite monster sourcebook. You could roll 2d100 or flip to a random page. Once you have picked a page from the book, randomly select a picture from it. Use that as the basis for your creature's description, modifying it with results from the appearance tables.

When using the tables, remember that at times you may generate a silly or nonsensical result. Unless you want to create a comical creature, be sure to edit the results to suit your needs.

d%	Basic Body Type
1–10	Bipedal, basic human form
11–20	Bipedal, walks on knuckles
21–30	Four-legged, horse-like body
31–40	Four-legged, legs equally positioned around central body
41–50	Four-legged, squat like a crocodile
51–60	Four-legged, long limbed like a giraffe
61–70	Eight-legged, similar to a spider
71–80	Four-legged humanoid, similar to centaur
81–90	Many legged, similar to a centipede
91–100	Spherical body, moves by rolling

d%	Covering or Hide
1–10	Bare skin, scattered patches of hair
11–20	Thick, shaggy fur
21–30	Short, dense fur
31–40	Serpentine scales
41–50	Feathered
51–60	Thick, dense plates
61–70	Bony shell, like a turtle
71–80	Insect carapace
81–90	Transparent flesh
91–100	Metallic outer shell

d%	Bite Attack Appearance
1–10	Long, jagged fangs
11–20	Needle-like teeth
21–30	Hundreds of teeth, arrayed in row after row
31–40	Two massive tusks
41–50	Pincers that extend from the side of its mouth
51–60	Sharp, bony ridges in place of teeth
61–70	Long, sharp proboscis
71–80	Sharp beak
81–90	Rings of muscle and teeth like a lamprey
91–100	Barbed tongue

d%	Claw Attack Appearance
1–10	Curved, bladed claw
11–20	Humanoid hand with long, sharp nails

21–30	Hands with small mouths in their palms
31–40	Clawed paws
41–50	Hook tentacles
51–60	Spiked protrusions
61–70	Thick bony shell
71–80	Barbed tail
81–90	Sharpened, piercing fingers
91–100	Retractable claws

d%	Random Color Generation
1–10	Red
11–20	Orange
21–30	Yellow
31–40	Green
41–50	Blue
51–60	Purple
61–70	Black
71–80	White
81–90	Brown
91–100	Flesh colored

d%	Exotic Features
1–5	Eye stalks
6–10	Long, frog-like tongue
11–15	Slimy film
16–20	Horrid stench
21–25	Milky eyes
26–30	Long, ropy tail
31–35	Lion's mane
36–40	Long, pointed ears
41–45	Horn
46–50	One–eyed
51–55	Overly long limbs
56–60	Spined
61–65	Forked tongue
66–70	Human face
71–75	Long, pointed nose
76–80	Vertically placed mouth
81–85	2d6 eyes
86–90	Fish eyes
91–95	Antenna
96–100	Spined frill

Planar Creatures

The new monsters given in this chapter represent several planar groups or unique creatures that wander the cosmos. The text of this section is designated as **Open Game Content.**

The Automatons

In the depths of history, a race of known as the Anarrians developed the art and science of producing golems, shield guardians, and other constructs to an unparalleled level. Using a combination of arcane talent, mechanical genius, and magical theory, the Anarrians produced a vast array of mechanical creatures powered by magic to do their bidding. Some of these servants worked to build houses, castles, and other structures. Others were butlers, cooks, and messengers. Most of them, though, served in the Anarrians armies of conquest. By seizing several key points in the vast network of planar wormholes, the Anarrians were able to establish reliable passages to several worlds rich in minerals, water, and other natural resources. Despite their skill in forging arcane machines, or perhaps because of it, the Anarrians had reduced their world to a barren wasteland. Murky, oily clouds blotted the sky, the once-green fields were scorched brown by massive workshops that worked to produce magical goods, and the iron, silver, and gold held within the mountains had long since been stripped out and forged into tools and machines.

Desperate to replenish their dwindling supplies, the Anarrians cast their gaze across the planes. They started by founding colonies on worlds with few intelligent creatures or low levels of magical development. In time, though, such arrangements proved untenable. The Anarrians were forced to import much of their labor and materials to begin harvesting resources, an effort that required tremendous amounts of badly needed food, water, and metals to start. In time, the Anarrians' greatest rulers devised a brutal but effective plan to expand their holdings. By invading heavily populated worlds, they could easily turn their conquered enemies into slaves who would work their freshly taken fields, mines, and workshops. This infusion of self-sufficient labor would allow the Anarrians to expand without putting stress on their already fragile base of resources.

The Anarrians conquered portions of several worlds, but in due time their appetite for conquest outweighed their ability to fight. They underestimated their enemies' will to fight, and several protracted campaigns put unendurable strains on their supply lines.
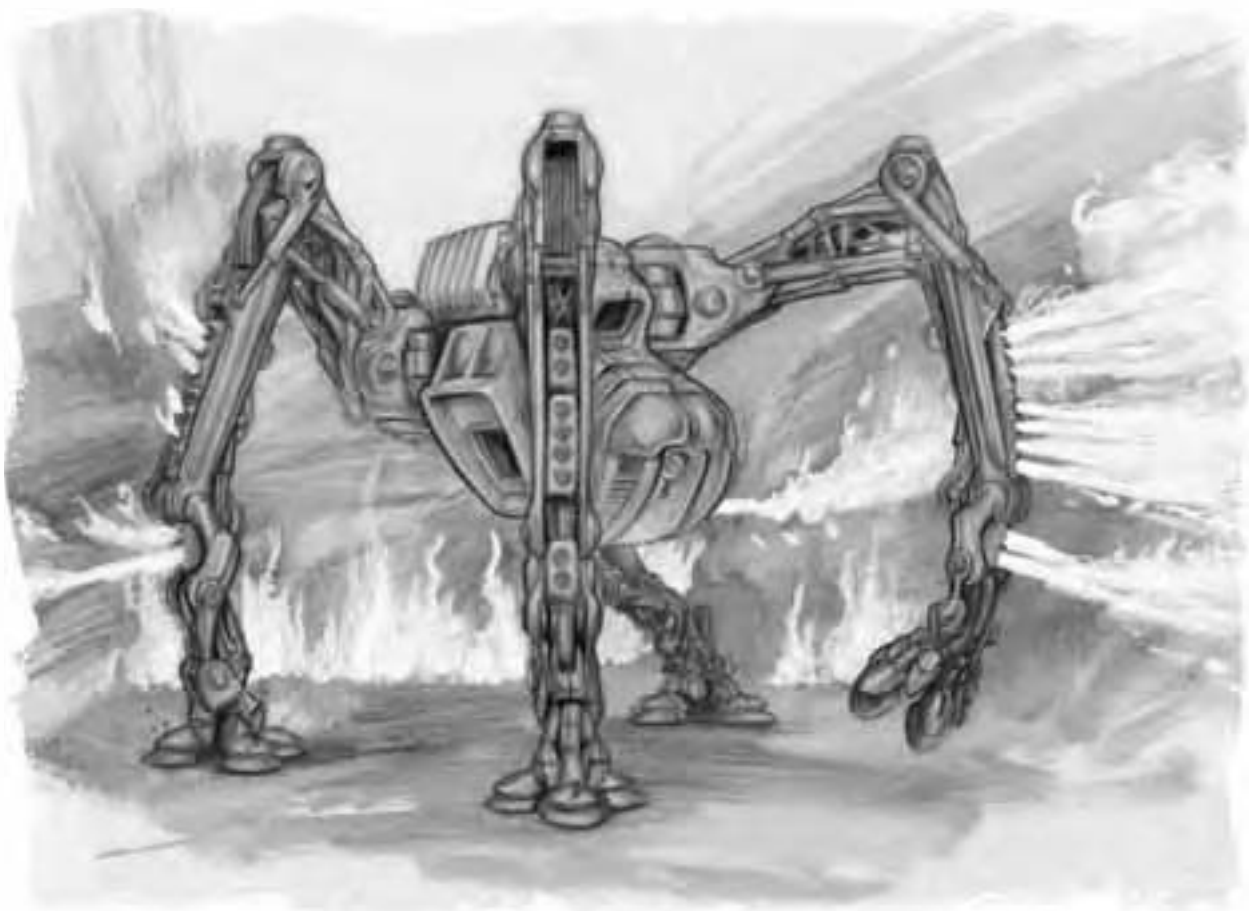
Their fighting machines sputtered and collapsed on the battlefield, while the civilians who remained behind grappled with starvation and thirst. With each passing day, the Anarrians' supplies dwindled while they stood no closer to victory. Soon, a great revolt shattered the power of the leaders who had ordered the invasions. Caught without supplies, their conquering hosts were scattered to the winds in a stunning series of defeats.

In short order the Anarrians devolved into savagery, forced to fight over the scraps of their dead civilization. A few of their great wizards escaped to the planes with the secret of their magic, but in a short period of time knowledge of the constructs and the gates to other worlds was lost. Anarria passed from the annals of the planes, a mere footnote listed among other ambitious realms with a taste for expansion.

While Anarria has passed into history, the tools of its military power remain active. Their automatons have spread across the planes. In some cases, ambitious mages use ancient plans to rebuild them as servants. Other times, some of the machines that remain from the ancient wars of conquest still wander the wormholes and gateways of creation, destroying all living things they encounter. Rumors swirl of massive armies of automatons that move like clouds of locusts across the land, destroying everything in their path as they continue to obey commands given to them thousands of years ago.

DREADNOUGHT

Huge Construct
Hit Dice: 20d10 (110 hp)
Initiative: –2
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)
AC: 21 (–2 size, –2 Dex, +15 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 21
Base Attack/Grapple: +15/+29
Attack: Bladed leg +19 melee (2d6+6)
Full Attack: Bladed leg +19/+14/+9 (2d6+6)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Fire blast, holocaust engine, impaling spikes
Special Qualities: DR 15/magic, spell immunity, spell-like abilities
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +6
Abilities: Str 22, Dex 7, Con —, Int —, Wis

11, Cha 10
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, squad (2–5), swarm (4–16)
Challenge Rating: 12
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 21–30 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment: —

A mechanical, four-legged spider-like creature picks through the terrain ahead of you with careful precision. Suddenly, the metallic tubes on its legs blast the area around it with a fiery storm, leaving the area around it a scorched, charred wasteland.

The dreadnought once served as the primary siege engine and terror weapon in the Anarrians' conquering armies. Equipped to spread as much devastation as possible, the dreadnought's piercing legs and fiery cannon have leveled many settlements over the centuries. Small swarms of these machines still scour the planes, sweeping away everything in their path in a bid to win a war that ended centuries ago.

COMBAT

In battle, the dreadnought uses simple tactics to overcome its enemies. It tries to use its fire blast attack to soften an opponent before wading in with its bladed legs. If multiple dreadnoughts can gang up on a single target or group of enemies, they coordinate their fire blasts to engulf them in a hellish inferno. Dreadnoughts rarely use their holocaust engine attack unless they are on the verge of defeat. At that point, they unleash their fiery innards to either destroy their enemies and survive or to inflict one last parting shot on the enemy.

Fire Blast (Su): As a standard action, the dreadnought can unleash a cone of fire 60 ft. long from the tubes set on its legs. Any creature caught in this blast suffers 14d6 points of fire damage. A DC 20 Reflex save halves this damage. The dreadnought can use this ability once every four rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Holocaust Engine (Su): By triggering all four of its fire blasters at once and consuming all of its onboard fuel, the dreadnought can spread a wide swathe of destruction in the area around it. All creatures within a 60-ft. burst of the con-

struct suffer 16d6 points of fire damage. A DC 24 Reflex save halves this damage. The dreadnought can activate this ability once per day, and it loses the use of its fire blast for 1d4 hours after employing it. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +4 racial bonus.

Impaling Spikes (Ex): The dreadnought uses its long mechanical legs and retractable blades to impale its enemies. On a successful critical hit with its bladed leg, it skewers its victim. Each round, the victim automatically suffers damage from the bladed leg and he must make a Strength check (DC 18) to pull himself free. The dreadnought can attack as normal with its leg while it has a victim impaled upon it.

Spell Immunity (Ex): The powerful magic that spawns a dreadnought renders it immune to a wide range of spells. Only a few spells have any effect on it. *Rusting grasp* deals normal damage to it. *Heat metal* and *chill metal* deal damage to it as per the spell descriptions. *Repel metal or stone* affects it as normal. *Shatter* deals it damage as if it were a crystalline creature. *Disintegrate* affects it as normal. Other spells simply fail to have any effect on the dreadnought. In addition, the dreadnought is immune to supernatural abilities and spell-like effects, save for those that duplicate the spells listed above.

Spell-like Abilities (Sp): 1/day—*gate, teleport.* Caster level 20th.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

SPIKED DEMOLISHER

Large Construct
Hit Dice: 8d10 (44 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)
AC: 19 (–1 size, +10 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 19
Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+14
Attack: Spiked hammer +9 melee (2d8+6)
Full Attack: Spiked hammer +9/+4 melee (2d8+6)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Spike shower, staggering blow

Special Qualities: DR 5/magic
Saves: Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 7, Cha 8
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, squad (2–12)
Challenge Rating: 4
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 9–16 HD (Large); 17–28 HD (Huge)
Level Adjustment: —

This towering, metallic humanoid looks like a suit of armor spawned from some infernal workshop. Its face is crafted to resemble a snarling human, while long, sweeping steel horns are set on its helmet. Short, sharp spikes cover its chest, arms, and shin guards. It hefts a spiked, steel hammer the size of man with casual ease.

Spiked demolishers formed the vast bulk of the automaton armies. Serving as foot soldiers in the metallic legions, they marched into battle to conquer their masters' enemies. Demolishers frequently travel with dreadnoughts and venomhatchers, helping them complete missions programmed into them in ages past. In some cases, these machines still guard ancient outposts, dungeons, and other areas that hold treasures once hoarded by the Anarrian nobility. More than one small town or village has been leveled after curious adventurers unwittingly opened a cache containing these guardians, setting them loose to exterminate all creatures that could pose a threat to the riches they guard.

COMBAT

Demolishers fight with a grim, relentless strength. They ignore the injuries they sustain in favor of focusing their attacks on their enemies. This tactic can prove their undoing, as clever adventurers place as much open ground between themselves and these constructs as possible to rain missile fire and spells upon them.

Spike Shower (Ex): Once per hour, the spiked demolisher can fire a volley of razor sharp spikes from its hull in a cone 30 ft. in length. Creatures in this area must make DC 13 Reflex saves or suffer 2d4 points of damage. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Staggering Blow (Ex): The demolisher's brute strength allows it to land a crushing blow against its foes, staggering them and leaving them knocked senseless. Once per round, the demolisher can use a full attack action to make a single attack. If it hits, its target must make a DC 18 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1d3 rounds. The save DC is Strength-based.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

VENOMHATCHER

Large Construct
Hit Dice: 10d10 (55 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
AC: 20 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +9 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 18
Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+14
Attack: Leg stab +9 melee (1d8+3)
Full Attack: Leg stab +9/+4 melee (1d8+3)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Acid stream, venom cloud
Special Qualities: Acid resistance 30, blindsight 60 ft., DR 10/magic, spell immunities, spell-like abilities
Saves: Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +4
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 13, Cha 11
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, team (2–6), horde (4–20)
Challenge Rating: 8
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 11–20 (Large); 21–30 (Huge)
Level Adjustment: —

Before you stands a strangely organic, four-legged mechanical creature with a long, sinuous head that extends to jet black, inky fluid. In a matter of moments, every living thing touched by that foul material turns brown and dies.

Venomhatchers were designed to clear an area of native life, wiping away forests, towns, and even large groups of enemies to clear the way for the Anarrian invasion force. These organic machines were rarely deployed in close ranks with other troops, as their attacks tend to cover a wide area that wrought devastation on both

sides of a fight. Venomhatchers were sent on long, circuitous routes through the planes with orders to destroy any living thing they encountered. Experienced adventurers have learned to tread carefully in sections of wormholes that show signs of widespread destruction, as groups of these biomechanical constructs are still active in some areas.
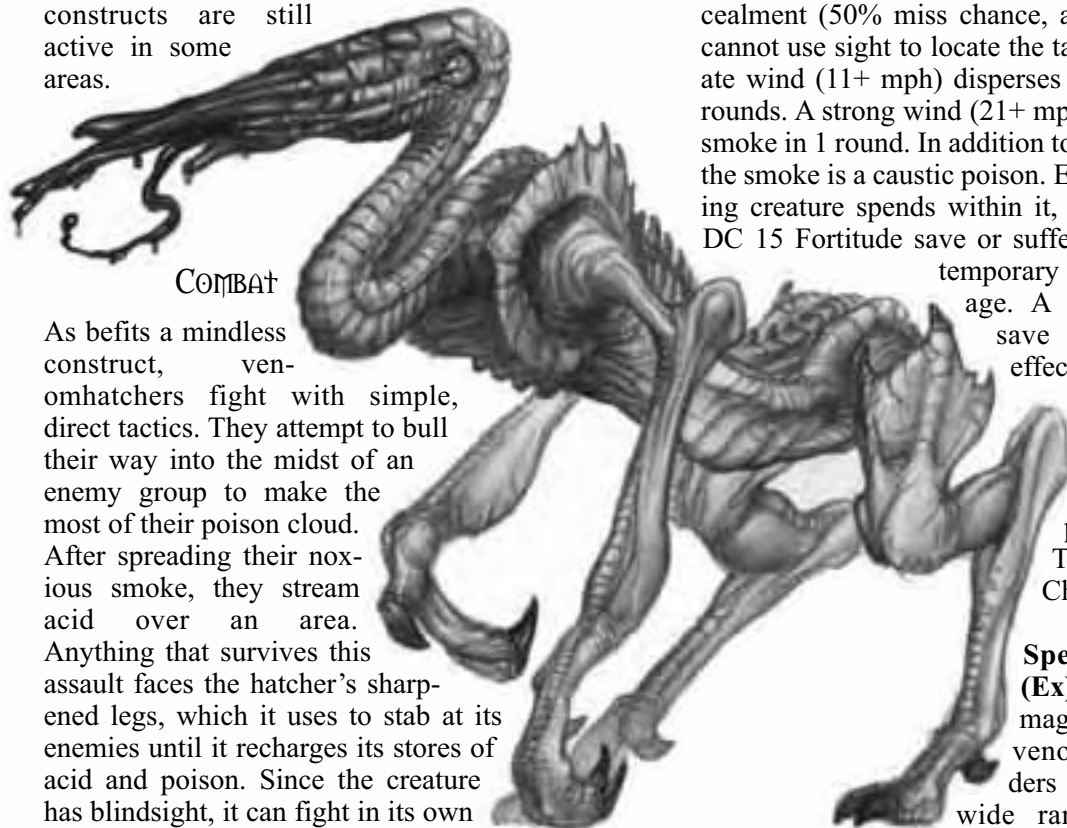
Combat

As befits a mindless construct, venomhatchers fight with simple, direct tactics. They attempt to bull their way into the midst of an enemy group to make the most of their poison cloud. After spreading their noxious smoke, they stream acid over an area. Anything that survives this assault faces the hatcher's sharpened legs, which it uses to stab at its enemies until it recharges its stores of acid and poison. Since the creature has blindsight, it can fight in its own cloud without penalty.

Acid Stream (Ex): The venomhatcher can eject a stream of thick, sticky, black goo that burns and melts everything it touches. As a standard action, it can create a 30-ft. cone of this material. Every creature in this area suffers 8d6 points of acid damage. A DC 15 Fortitude save halves this damage. In addition, the slime sticks to creatures and continues to harm them. For three rounds after suffering the initial damage, victims take 2d6 points of acid damage with a DC 15 Fortitude save cutting this damage in half. The acid remains in the area it struck for three rounds. Any creature that walks into it must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer 1d6 points of acid damage. The acid evaporates into a sickly gray mist after its effects end. A venomhatcher can use its acid stream once every four rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Venom Cloud (Ex): Three times per day, the venomhatcher can unleash a thick cloud of toxic smoke from its body that extends in a 30-ft. area around it and 20 ft. in the air above it. The smoke is stationary once created. It obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet. A creature 5 feet away has one-half concealment (attacks have a 20% miss chance). Creatures farther away have total concealment (50% miss chance, and the attacker cannot use sight to locate the target). A moderate wind (11+ mph) disperses the smoke in 4 rounds. A strong wind (21+ mph) disperses the smoke in 1 round. In addition to blocking sight, the smoke is a caustic poison. Each round a living creature spends within it, it must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer 1d2 points of temporary Strength damage. A character must save against this effect each round he remains in the cloud, regardless of the results of his previous saves. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Spell Immunity (Ex): The powerful magic that spawns a venomhatcher renders it immune to a wide range of spells. Only a few spells have any effect on it. *Rusting grasp* deals normal damage to it. *Heat metal* and *chill metal* deal damage to it as per the spell descriptions. *Repel metal or stone* affects it as normal. *Shatter* deals it damage as if it were a crystalline creature. *Disintegrate* affects it as normal. Other spells simply fail to have any effect on the venomhatcher. In addition, the venomhatcher is immune to supernatural abilities and spell-like effects, save for those that duplicate the spells listed above.

Spell–Like Abilities (Sp): 1—day: *gate, teleport*. Caster level 20th.

Construct: Immune to mind-influencing effects, poison, disease, and similar effects. Not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, energy drain, or death from massive damage.

The Avatars of Thought and Action

In the first moments of the universe's existence, some of the most fundamental building blocks of the cosmos came into being. Before the gods, before the first intelligent humanoids, before the first sparks of magic lit the endless dark, beings of pure thought and action formed from the primordial mists. Some sages believe that these creatures were the first steps in the creation of the cosmic order. They embody the qualities, beliefs, and actions that form the foundation of all intelligent life: death, hope, knowledge, and other traits. What became of these beings is a mystery. Some researchers posit that these beings of raw emotion, thought, and potential splintered into the gods. Others see them as cosmic shepherds who venture beyond the fabric of reality, seeding worlds from raw nothingness and maintaining the perfect universal balance between chaos and order, good and evil, life and death.

The avatars of thought and action are the sole remnants of these entities' influence on reality. These beings are the purest, most absolute representation of the traits they embody. Some of them remain isolated from reality, content to turn their interests and studies outward. Others are driven to spread the power of their trait across the planes, actively seeking out enemies to defeat and avatars of qualities that oppose their own. Many great, heroic quests have involved the avatars. An avatar of knowledge may be the only being that knows the answer to a sphinx's riddle, while an avatar of rage might be the force behind a sudden barbarian invasion.

In any event, a nearly countless number of avatars exist for each quality, though a particular plane or world may have none, a few, or many. The avatars exert a planar distortion wherever they travel, helping to shape a world's development towards the traits and qualities they embody. For example, a world torn apart by war may host several dozen avatars of rage, while one known for its advanced learning and mastery of arcane studies could be home to a small conclave of avatars of knowledge.

Avatars arise when a plane takes a sudden, drastic turn to reflect one of these creature's desires. The raw material of the planes spawns them newborn into the world. At their creation, they in some ways represent the raw planar stuff given intelligence. They remember the events that spawned them, the circumstances that led to their creation, and the general arrangement and function of the planar system. Some avatars try to influence their home plane, driving it closer to the ideals and thoughts that spawned them. Others pay no heed to their birthplace, instead striking out on their own to advance their nature however they see fit.

All avatars share a few common abilities listed below.

Cosmic Link: An avatar of a given type automatically senses the presence of other avatars that share its nature within 100 miles of its current position. While within this range, the avatars can communicate via telepathy. No barrier, regardless of its thickness or composition, can prevent this communication.

Eternal Form: When an avatar is reduced to zero or fewer hit points, it immediately disappears along with any of the items and equipment that formed with it. For example, an avatar of death disappears along with its scythe when it perishes, but any other equipment it may have carried remains behind.

Avatar of Death

Medium Outsider (Evil)
Hit Dice: 12d8+24 (78 hp)
Initiative: +6
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
AC: 20 (+2 Dex, +8 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 18
Base Attack/Grapple: +12/+15
Attack: Scythe +19 melee (2d4+7/19–20/x4)
Full Attack: Scythe +19/+14/+9 melee (2d4+7/19–20/x4)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Death's cold grip, death's scythe, eye of doom
Special Qualities: DR 10/good, spell resistance 21, spell-like abilities
Saves: Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +12
Abilities: Str 17, Dex 14, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 19, Cha 16
Skills: Bluff +13, Concentration +12, Heal +14, Hide +12, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Listen +14, Move Silently +12, Sense Motive +14, Spot +14

Feats: Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Spell Focus (Necromancy), Weapon Focus (scythe)
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 10
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Neutral evil
Advancement: —
Level Adjustment: —

Before you stands the classic representation of death, wearing his black robes and carrying a scythe. He extends a skeletal hand towards you, beckoning you to draw closer.

An avatar of death embodies the fundamental force of decay, the finitude of all life, and the ultimate fate that awaits every living thing. As death is so widespread, these avatars can be found in almost every plane. These avatars oppose any efforts to prevent death on even the smallest scale. They are known to hunt down those who acquire a reputation for saving innocent lives, and sometimes ally with foul villains to spread diseases, touch off wars, and otherwise encourage destruction. An avatar may slip into a peaceful kingdom to murder the royal family, igniting a civil war as the various claimants fight to seize the throne. Even those who ally with death must beware, for in the end the reaper claims all souls.

Combat

An avatar of death fights with a cold, calculating attitude. It carefully weighs the odds in a conflict and sees no dishonor in turning tail and running from a superior foe. The avatar cares only for killing mortals, not whether its victims are mighty warriors or simple peasants. When an avatar does strike, it prefers to use its skills to move close enough for a kill before striking. Ideally, it slips into a camp or otherwise strikes when its enemies are least prepared.

Death's Cold Grip (Su): The air around an avatar of death feels cold, foul, and somehow wrong. Flies, ants, and other small creatures die when they draw too close to this fearsome creature, while injuries stubbornly resist magical efforts to mend them. Any creature within 60 ft. of an avatar of death dies as soon as its hit points fall below zero. Spells and effects that cure hit points of damage restore only half their normal amounts.

Death's Scythe: An avatar of death carries a *+3 keen scythe*. As with all items spawned along with an avatar, this item disappears when its owner is destroyed.

Eye of Doom (Su): It has been said that once an avatar of death has looked upon a person with its inner eye, that unfortunate victim is doomed to a horrible fate. Once per day, an avatar of death may use its eye of doom ability to place a curse upon a creature. The avatar's hollow eyes glow a fiery red as it glares at its foe. Treat this effect as a gaze attack. If a target is exposed to this effect, it must make a DC 19 Will save or suffer a –4 circumstance penalty to all saving throws. In addition, each time the victim suffers hit point damage, increase the total he suffers by 2. These effects last for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): At will—*death's knell;* 3/day—*animate dead, enervation* (DC 18), *fear* (DC 18), and *finger of death* (DC 21). Caster level 14th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 2
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral good
Advancement: —
Level Adjustment: —

A beautiful elf female clad in robes and bearing a staff tipped with a gleaming gem stands before you. A soft radiance surrounds her. Its warm glow lifts your heart and banishes any weariness or doubts that plagued your heart.

An avatar of hope is the physical representation of the fundamental force that drives so many heroic efforts. Hope is a fragile thing, but where it wanders the hearts of good men strengthen with a steely resolve. While this avatar offers little in the way of martial or magical talent, her strength lies in her ability to sustain her allies in the face of the most overwhelming odds. Demons and devils hate this being with good reason, for many of their efforts have been foiled by ragged legions sustained by this being's power. Still, hope is a fragile thing in both figurative and literal terms. Without heroes to defend her, she is defenseless in the face of evil's howling legions.

Combat

In battle, an avatar of hope stands near the front lines but avoids direct confrontation. Her role is to inspire and lead, though not necessarily by example.

Fury of the Righteous (Su): Once per hour, the avatar of hope can strike terror into the hearts of evil creatures. Exposed to the power of righteous hope, foul-hearted creatures see that they can never truly conquer the forces of good. All evil creatures within a 60-ft. burst of the avatar must make DC 18 Will saves or suffer a –2 morale penalty to attacks, checks, and saves. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Song of Bravery (Su): As long as the avatar of hope continues to sing, she may use her Perform check in place of any Will save attempts that good creatures within 60 ft. of her make. The avatar must spend a standard action to begin singing, but afterward she only needs to use a free action to sustain her performance. Effects such as *silence* cancel this ability. Each time a good creature within this ability's range makes a Will save, the avatar makes a Perform

Avatar of Hope

Medium Outsider (Good)
Hit Dice: 3d8+3 (16 hp)
Initiative: +7
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 100 ft. good (20 squares)
AC: 13 (+3 Dex), touch 13, flat-footed 10
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+3
Attack: Quarterstaff +3 melee (1d6)
Full Attack: Quarterstaff +3 melee (1d6)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Fury of the righteous
Special Qualities: DR 10/evil, song of bravery, spell immunity, SR 25, vessel of hope
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +8
Abilities: Str 10, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 24
Skills: Diplomacy +15, Heal +12, Perform +15, Spot +12
Feats: Improved Initiative, Iron Will

check. The creature making the saving throw uses the higher of the two results. The avatar gains the benefits of this ability.

Spell Immunity (Su): The avatar can never be unwillingly affected by a spell, supernatural ability, or spell-like ability used by an evil creature.

Vessel of Hope (Su): The avatar of hope brims with energy that inspires good creatures and rallies them against the forces of evil. All good-aligned creatures within 100 ft. of the avatar gain immunity to fear-based effects, a +4 morale bonus to attacks, and a +2 morale bonus to skill checks.

Avatar of Justice

Medium Outsider
Hit Dice: 10d8+30 (75 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)
AC: 23 (+4 natural, +9 armor), touch 10, flat-footed 23
Base Attack/Grapple: +10/+14
Attack: Greatsword +18 melee (2d6+9/19–20/x2)
Full Attack: Greatsword +18/+13 melee (2d6+9/19–20/x2)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Executioner's blade, eye of justice
Special Qualities: DR 10/chaotic, fast healing 3, relentless pursuit, SR 24
Saves: Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +9
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 11, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 12
Skills: Search +10, Sense Motive +42, Spot +17, Survival +17
Feats: Cleave, Power Attack, Track, Weapon Focus (greatsword)
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, gathering (2–30)
Challenge Rating: 9
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always lawful neutral
Advancement: —
Level Adjustment: —
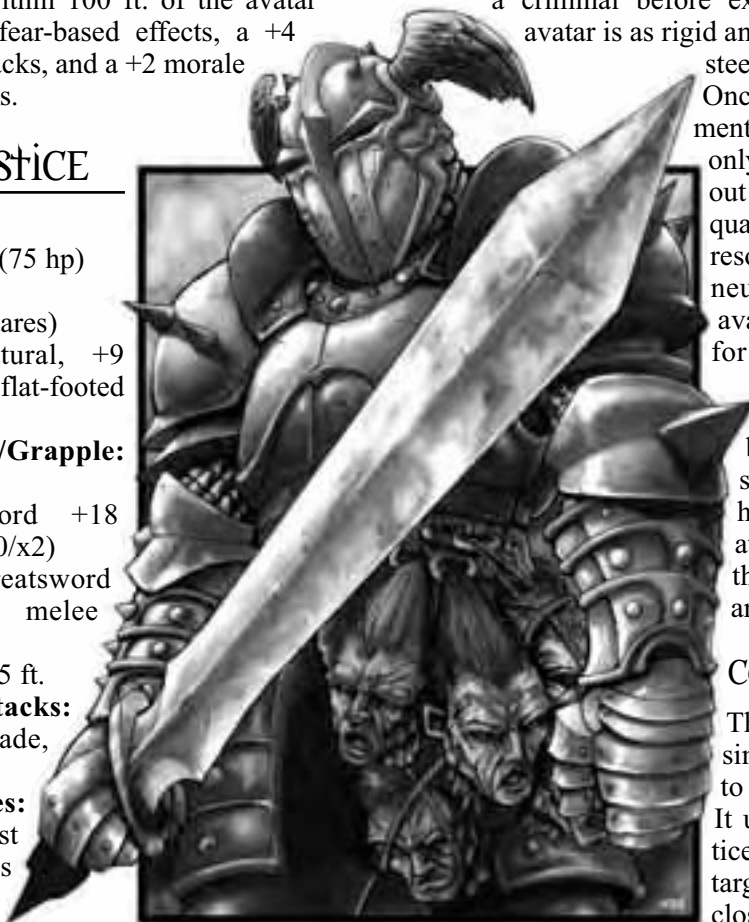
Before you stands a platemail-clad warrior. The armored figure bears a greatsword and wears a belt with severed heads lashed to it. The names of various crimes—rape, murder, torture— are written on the heads with dried blood.

Wherever the forces of chaos threaten to overwhelm civilization and breed wanton murder, rape, robbery, and other crimes, an avatar of justice appears to punish the guilty. This grim, silent figure speaks only when it must question a criminal before executing him. The avatar is as rigid and unyielding as the steel armor it wears. Once it passes judgment, execution is the only sentence it carries out and it pursues its quarry with a tireless resolve. As a lawful neutral being, the avatar cares nothing for extenuating circumstances. At times, these beings have pursued otherwise heroic figures who at times dance along the line between law and chaos.

Combat

The avatar relies on simple, direct tactics to defeat its enemies. It uses its eye of justice ability to render a target helpless before closing in to finish its sentence with its blade. If possible, the avatar tries to approach its target when he is alone, but it has no qualms about hacking through bodyguards and other defenders to reach the guilty.

Executioner's Blade: The avatar of justice wields a *+3 keen greatsword.* As with all equipment wielded by an avatar, this weapon disappears when the avatar dies.

Eye of Justice (Su): By focusing its righteous glare upon a single foe, the avatar of justice can compel a guilty man to remain rooted in place to receive his just punishment.

Every 10 rounds as a standard action, the avatar focuses his gaze against a single target who must make a DC 20 Will save or be affected as if by a *hold monster* spell. Caster level 15th. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +4 racial bonus.

Relentless Pursuit (Su): When an avatar of justice selects a person whose crimes it must punish, it gains an unerring ability to locate and pursue that target. Regardless of where the avatar's victim flees, it always has an exact knowledge of his distance and relative direction. If the avatar's quarry flees to another plane, it gains knowledge of the closest portal that leads to that realm.

AVATAR OF KNOWLEDGE

Medium Outsider
Hit Dice: 6d8 (27 hp)
Initiative: +0
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares)
AC: 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10
Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+4
Attack: Quarterstaff +4 melee (1d6–2)
Full Attack: Quarterstaff +4 melee (1d6–2)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Eye of knowledge
Special Qualities: All–knowing, SR 20, wisdom of the ages
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +12
Abilities: Str 7, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 28, Wis 20, Cha 20
Skills: Decipher Script +29, Knowledge (all) +31, Listen +27, Sense Motive +25, Spot +27
Feats: Alertness, Great Fortitude, Iron Will
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: None
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: —
Level Adjustment: —
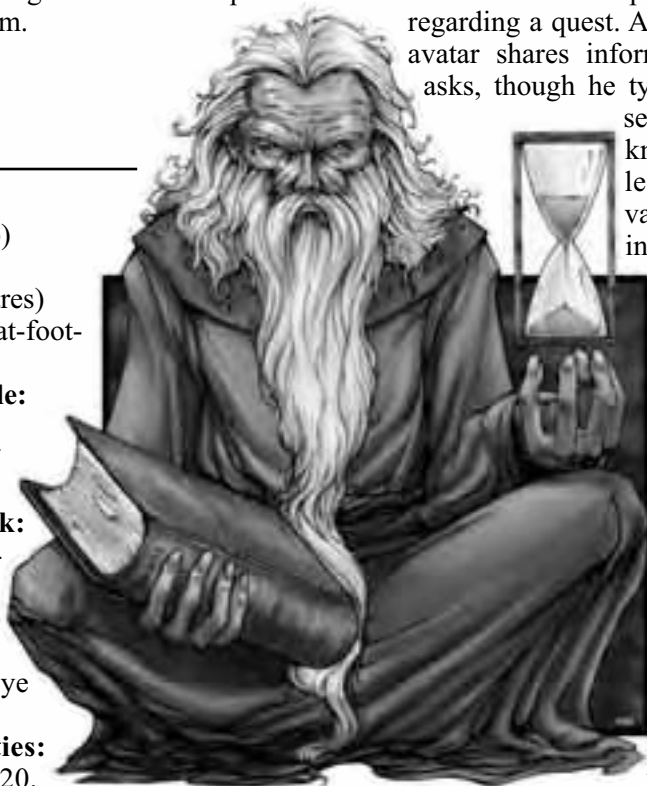
An old man clad in white robes and bearing a thick book and an hourglass sits hunched over a desk. Neatly arranged in his mountain cave are row after row of bookcases, each stuffed with ancient tomes of undeterminable origin.

The avatar of knowledge is a historian of sorts, the living embodiment of the collected events, discoveries, and philosophies of an entire plane. He typically secrets himself in a distant, inaccessible location such as a mountain cave. There, he can contemplate the world's development and read the infinite books of his library.

Many heroes must trek to the avatar's lair in order to find an important piece of information regarding a quest. As a force for neutrality the avatar shares information with anyone who asks, though he typically requires a task or service before he shares his knowledge. Otherwise, learning would lose its value. Usually, these quests involve finding a creature, magic item, or other rare object and returning it to the avatar so he may study it. Sometimes, he tasks several groups or individuals that seek the same information with an identical task. Only the group or person who completes it first receives his wisdom.

COMBAT

An avatar of knowledge avoids combat whenever possible. When forced to fight, he wields his staff with unsteady hands and attempts to flee. The avatar can never be coerced into surrendering knowledge, and he would rather die than allow his learning to be forced from him.

Eye of Knowledge (Su): By peering into a creature's past, the avatar of knowledge learns of its weaknesses and fears. If the avatar of knowledge spends a full-round action doing nothing but watching a creature, he may use a free action to provide advice that gives his allies a +4 competence bonus on attack rolls against that target for the rest of the encounter.

All-Knowing: The avatar of knowledge has access to all fields of study, no matter how

strange or obscure. His Knowledge skill bonus applies to all possible specialties and sub-groups of that skill. For example, he uses his listed Knowledge (all) skill for checks concerning arcana, the planes, religion, nature, and any other topics. However, he must consult his library to use this ability. Each skill check takes 4d6 hours. No one save the avatar can read the writing in his volumes, and they disappear along with his body should he die.

Wisdom of the Ages (Su): By peering into the sands of his hourglass, the avatar of knowledge can view any event in any time period for the world he currently resides on. Treat this as the spell *scry* except that the target gains no saving throw.

Avatar of Pain

Medium Outsider
Hit Dice: 8d8+32 (68 hp)
Initiative: +5
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
AC: 22 (+5 Dex, +7 natural), touch 15, flat-footed 17
Base Attack/Grapple: +8/+11
Attack: Scourge +14 melee (1d6+7 and pain) or claws +11 melee (1d6+3 and pain)
Full Attack: Scourge +14/+9 melee (1d6+7 and pain) or claws +11/+6 melee (1d6+3 and pain)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Scourge of agony, torturous touch, wave of pain
Special Qualities: DR 5/good, pleasant seeming, SR 17
Saves: Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +6
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 13
Skills: Bluff +11, Climb +13, Heal +12, Rope Use +16, Spot +12, Tumble +15
Feats: Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (scourge), Weapon Specialization (scourge)
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 7
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: —
Level Adjustment: —

A human female clad in blood soaked bandages and bearing a scourge stands before you. Blood flows down her body, dripping into a pool that slowly grows at her feet. A mere glance from her causes a minor headache to well up from the base of your skull, and you are forced to avert your eyes from her.

The avatar of pain is the embodiment of cruel sadism, the byproduct of every greedy, vile tyrant who takes joy in crippling and harming others. She takes it upon herself to spread misery far and wide, using her magical abilities to cloak her identity. She may take the form of a nobleman's lover to insult him and break his heart in front of his court, forever destroying the love between him and his wife. Other times, she uses a pleasing front to lure a trusting soul to an isolated spot where she can torture and kill him at her leisure. To the avatar, emotional pain is every bit as appealing as physical agony.

Combat

The avatar of pain is a hellion in combat. She focuses on the weakest, least heavily armed targets. Her only goal is to cause as many injuries as possible. She cares little for dueling or fighting fair. If possible, she uses coup de grace actions to kill her enemies' friends. The anguish and grief such actions cause please her as much as rending a victim's flesh.

Scourge of Agony: The avatar of pain fights with a long, braided stretch of leather studded with hooks, barbs, and blades. This weapon counts as a *+2 scourge* that deals 1d6 points of damage and has a reach of 15 ft. It may be used against adjacent opponents. The avatar may make disarm attacks without the risk of losing her own weapon, and when making trip attacks she may choose to drop her weapon rather than allow her target to trip her.

Torturous Touch (Su): Whenever the

Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)

AC: 18 (–1 size, +9 natural), touch 9, flat-footed 18

Base Attack/Grapple: +15/+28

Attack: Huge greatclub +18 melee (2d6+13)

Full Attack: Huge greatclub +18/+13/+8 melee (2d6+13)

Space/Reach: 5 ft./10 ft.

Special Attacks: Club of destruction, fist of destruction, furious rage, roar of anger

Special Qualities: DR 10/lawful, monstrous growth, SR 22

Saves: Fort +13, Ref +9, Will +7

Abilities: Str 28, Dex 10, Con 18, Int 6, Wis 7, Cha 11

Skills: Climb +24, Intimidate +15, Jump +24, Listen +13, Survival +13, Swim +24

Feats: Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatclub)

Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary, mob (2–12)

Challenge Rating: 8

Treasure: Standard

Alignment: Always chaotic neutral

Advancement: —

Level Adjustment: —

A monstrous humanoid stands before you. It carries a gnarled, twisted club in one hand while it glares at you with reddened, blood-shot eyes. It wears nothing but a loincloth, and the air around it seems to seethe and crackle with tension, as if this creature barely holds back a monstrous, destructive impulse.

The avatar of rage embodies the raw, chaotic force of destruction. It channels a world's anger into its actions, smashing anything that comes before it. The avatar leaves a long swathe of devastation in its wake, as it gleefully slays creatures regardless of their intent or alignment and plows through buildings and walls. Some cunning warlords have channeled an avatar along a specific path, turning it into an unwitting weapon against their enemies.

COMBAT

The avatar is utterly unimaginative in combat. It charges the nearest foe and seeks to smash him flat. The avatar's simple tactics make it easy to trick, as it blunders into ambushes, traps, illusions, and other deceptions.

Club of Destruction: The avatar of rage's massive, twisted club counts as a *+3 huge*

avatar of pain strikes a foe with a melee attack, regardless of the weapon she wields, her foe must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or suffer a –2 circumstance penalty to attacks, checks, and saves due to intense pain. As a circumstance penalty, this ability's effects stack each time a creature fails its save. This penalty lasts for 1d10 minutes. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Wave of Pain (Su): Once per hour, the avatar of pain can summon the raw force of agony and project it towards her foes. This attack extends as a 60-ft. cone. All creatures within it must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be stunned with pain for 1d6 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Pleasant Seeming (Su): At will as a free action, the avatar of pain can use the spell *change self*. Caster level 10th.

AVATAR OF RAGE

Large Outsider

Hit Dice: 15d8+60 (127 hp)

Initiative: +0

greatclub. As with other equipment carried by avatars, this item disappears when the avatar of rage dies.

Fist of Destruction (Ex): The avatar ignores hardness when attacking items. The elemental forces of rage and destruction it embodies allow it to smash through the stoutest inanimate object.

Furious Rage (Ex): At will as a free action, the avatar of rage can enter a boiling, vicious rage. It gains a +4 bonus to Strength and Constitution and may take an additional standard attack action each round. This fury ends when the avatar spends five consecutive rounds without a living target within 30 ft. of its position. Otherwise, it attacks the nearest living thing, whether friend or foe.

Roar of Anger (Su): Once per hour, the avatar of rage can unleash a primal scream that knocks creatures flat and buffets them with raw energy. This attack takes the form of a 60-ft.-long cone. All creatures caught within it must make DC 17 Fortitude saves or suffer 3d6 points of damage and be knocked prone. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Monstrous Growth (Su): For every 10 consecutive rounds the avatar engages in combat, it grows one size category larger. Each time it becomes larger, it gains a +4 bonus to Strength and Constitution, though it sustains the AC and attack penalty due to size. For every 10 rounds it spends outside of combat, its size reduces by one category back down to Large.

Chaos Lords

The lords of chaos are perhaps one of the most insidious threats to all the planes found across the cosmos. Dedicated to tearing the planes' fabric asunder and transforming all of creation into a writhing sea of chaos, these dark gods bid their subjects to go forth and spread death and destruction on a cosmic scale. The lords themselves are shadowy, unknowable figures. Some sages believe that they existed before the coming of the gods and once ruled the sea of raw chaos from which all of creation emerged. Others argue that they are invaders from an entirely separate cosmic realm. Greedy, ambitious wizards, sorcerers, and even warriors seek out chaos's servants and pledge their souls in return for dark powers.

The powers of chaos loathe all non-chaotic creatures. They fight good and evil beings with equal fervor, but they save their hatred for the scions of law. Many sages find both sides of this titanic struggle distasteful, and most would prefer to see both pure law and chaos grind each other into dust in their endless conflict. The struggle between pure law and absolute chaos is said to have been waged since before the dawn of the cosmos, and some doomsday prophets believe that it will lead to the eventual destruction of all of creation.

There are many known lords of chaos, though most scholars believe that these beings are infinite in number. Worshipped as gods by desperate mortals, they gather and encourage sects on almost every known world. Sages have been repeatedly frustrated in their efforts to catalog and study these beings. Their worshippers use different names for the same deity, even members of the same cult. Each cultist creates personal iconography to depict his god.

Clerics of the chaos lords may choose chaos and any one other domain. Those that select War may choose any weapon. In place of the standard chaos domain granted power, a chaos cleric may choose to gain the ability to use chaotic sunder once per day. The cleric uses a touch attack to deal 1d4 points of damage per cleric level. The victim may make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the cleric's Charisma modifier) for half damage. Creatures killed in this manner arise as chaos spawn (see below) unless they are treated with *remove curse*.

Chaos Cults

Chaos cultists usually congregate in areas wracked by civil unrest or in wild, barbaric lands where shamans and ambitious chieftains are willing to forge pacts with dark creatures. The cults work to undermine civilization, seeking to touch off riots, revolts, and other large-scale disturbances to wreck the social order. The cultists operate in secret, usually recruiting members through bribery, promises of power, and other temptations. Soon after induction into the cult, the new members participate in a grand celebration that culminates in the manifestation of a chaos god. All those present in the festivities are forever warped and changed. They gain the chaos spawn template (described below) and become fanatical adherents to the cult of raw chaos.

CHAOS TRAITS

The beasts of chaos share a variety of traits. Rather than repeat them throughout their entries, they are summarized here. Not every chaos lord has all of these abilities.

Chaos Legionnaire (Ex): Creatures in the service of chaos gain several abilities. They are immune to all mind-influencing effects, disease, and sleep effects. They have resistance 20 to a randomly determined energy type. Roll once on the table below.

d%	Energy Type
1–20	Acid
21–40	Cold
41–60	Electricity
61–80	Fire
81–100	Sonic

Child of Chaos (Ex): Chance and random luck swirl about the lords of chaos like a storm. Any creature that tries to fight them must struggle with this effect. Bad luck plagues chaos's enemies. Whenever the enemy of a child of chaos must roll dice while fighting it, he must roll two separate sets and take the lower result. For example, a fighter attempts to strike a madness giant with his greatsword. He must roll 2d20 to attack, taking the lower die result. If he hits, he rolls two sets of 2d6 for damage, again taking the lower result. This effect applies to attack rolls against a child of chaos, saving throws to resist its abilities and effects, and damage inflicted against it.

Liquid Body (Ex): The servants of chaos rarely have stable, static forms. Their organs shift and move within their bodies, while their skin hardens and softens in the space of minutes. Each creature with the liquid body takes half damage from a specific attack type. Roll once on the table below to determine the attack type against which a specific creature gains this protection.

d%	Attack Type
1–33	Bludgeoning
34–66	Slashing
67–100	Piercing

CHAOS MINION

Medium Outsider (Chaos Legionnaire, Chaos, Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 6d8+12 (39 hp)
Initiative: +6
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
AC: 16 (+2 Dex, +4 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 14
Base Attack/Grapple: +6/+6
Attack: +6 quarterstaff melee (1d6)
Full Attack: +6/+1 quarterstaff melee (1d6)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Call of chaos, spell-like abilities
Special Qualities: Child of chaos, DR 10/lawful, liquid body, SR 20
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +6
Abilities: Str 11, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 12, Cha 16
Skills: Bluff +10, Concentration +9, Hide +9, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (the planes) +8, Listen +7, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +7
Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (Transmutation)
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, coven (2–5), cult (3–18)
Challenge Rating: 7
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Advancement: By character class
Level Adjustment: +9

This strange, twisted humanoid appears as an obese man dressed in billowy robes that threaten to tear from its bulk. Tentacles, hoofs, and malformed limbs sprout from its body. The creature's robes normally conceal these growths, but sometimes they tear free.

Chaos minions are the foot soldiers in the endless war against order and law. Many of them are wizards and sorcerers who delved too deeply into the secrets of chaos, while others are chaotic worshippers who died and earned the honor of a minion's form. These creatures usually lead mobs of chaos mutates, cultists, and others who offer allegiance to the chaos lords.

COMBAT

A chaos minion prefers to fight with plenty of allies alongside it, allowing it to make the most

of spells such as *haste* to defeat its enemies. Usually, it summons the chaos mutates pledged to it before fighting begins. If it has time, it strengthens them with *haste*, *bull's strength*, and similar magic, while it saves defensive spells such as *blink* for itself.

While minions are fanatic in their devotion to chaos, they are no fools and flee from any situation in which they face a powerful opponent. They usually strike from ambush, using their mutates and followers to distract an opponent long enough to destroy him with a spell such as *flesh to stone*.

Call of Chaos (Su): The chaos minion can call upon the elemental forces of mutation and change to spawn followers to defend him. Once per day, he may summon 2d4 chaos mutates to aid him in his struggle. These creatures appear the round after the minion uses this ability and they obey him to the best of their ability. They remain in the minion's service for 1d4 hours or until slain.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp): As a creature of arcane energy, the chaos minion commands a variety of spells. He may cast any spell from the Transmutation school a number of times per day based on its level. At will—any 0-level spells; 3/day—1st- and 2nd-level spells; 2/day—3rd-level spells; 1/day 4th-level spells, *flesh to stone*, and *telekinesis*. Caster level 11th. The save DCs (14+spell level) are Charisma-based.

CHAOS MUTATE

Medium Outsider (Chaos Legionnaire, Chaotic, Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 2d8+2 (11 hp)
Initiative: +4
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
AC: 14 (+4 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 14
Base Attack/Grapple: +2/+5
Attack: Slam +5 melee (1d8+3)
Full Attack: Slam +5 melee (1d8+3)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Chaotic surge
Special Qualities: Child of chaos, DR 5/lawful, form of chaos, liquid body, SR 12
Saves: Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +3
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 11, Con 13, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 10
Skills: Climb +9, Jump +9
Feats: Improved Initiative
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, pack (2–12), mob (10–100)
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Advancement: 3–8 HD (Medium-size); 9–16 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment: —

A puddle of slime that generates wings, arms, tentacles, and other random body parts from its goo, this creature is the horrible spawn of raw chaos.

Chaos mutates are sentient chunks of raw chaos. While individually weak, they commonly appear in numbers great enough to form a threat to even the stoutest kingdom. Their true threat lies in their unpredictable nature, as they rapidly shift from one form to the next during combat.

COMBAT

Chaos mutates typically serve other, more powerful chaos lords. As beings of pure entropy, they tend to make little distinction between inanimate objects and liv-

ing creatures. To these simple monsters, any object that bears the ordered taint of law must be destroyed. Thus, they fight with simplistic, direct tactics.

Chaotic Surge (Su): Once per encounter, the chaos mutate surges with chaotic energy and attacks with maniacal vigor. Typically these creatures use this ability when they near death, for the effort required to sustain it drains and kills them. The mutate gains a +6 bonus to Strength and Dexterity, giving it a total +3 bonus on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, and AC. When the chaos mutate uses this ability, it cannot be killed unless it is reduced to –20 hit points. While below 0 hit points, it may continue to fight as normal, though it does not check to stabilize. Each round, the mutate suffers 5 hit points of damage. This ability lasts 1d4 rounds.

Form of Chaos (Su): Once per round, the chaos mutate may manifest a random trait as a move-equivalent action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. Roll on the mutate trait table to determine what it gains. The mutate's ability lasts 2d4 rounds. It cannot change abilities or gain a new one until its current one expires.

d%	Chaos Mutate Trait
1–10	Fly with good maneuverability at its current speed
11–20	Tentacles give +5 ft. reach
21–30	Sharp fangs or claws give +2 bonus to damage
31–40	+4 bonus on all saves
41–50	Fire resistance 10
51–60	–2 penalty to Strength and Constitution
61–70	Speed reduced by half
71–80	Affected by *confusion*
81–90	–2 penalty on all saves
91–100	Roll twice on this table

CHAOS SPAWN

This monster type includes any creature warped by the power of raw change into a new, twisted form. Driven mad by the experience, these poor beasts are either rendered permanently insane or they become fanatical servants of the lords of chaos. Chaos spawn make up the vast bulk of the armies of change, and they operate on almost every known plane of existence.

CREATING A CHAOS SPAWN

"Chaos spawn" is a template that can be added to any creature. A chaos spawn uses its base creature's abilities and game statistics except as noted below.

Creature Type: The chaos spawn counts as an outsider.

Hit Dice: +2d8; the bonuses for gaining two Hit Dice as an outsider are included in the stats below.

Speed: There is a 50% chance the creature gains the ability to fly at its normal speed with poor maneuverability. Creatures that cannot fly have a 50% chance of being able to swim at their normal speed. Creatures that neither fly nor swim have a 50% chance to burrow at half their normal speed.

AC: +2 natural bonus to AC

Base Attack: +2 bonus to all attacks

Attacks: The chaos spawn gains tentacles, claws, pincers, or a similar physical attack that deals damage based on its size. It may use this attack once per round in addition to its normal attacks at a –5 penalty, or a –2 penalty if it has the Multiattack feat. It only uses this extra attack if it uses the full attack action. If the chaos spawn has no weapons or any other attacks, it can use this strike with its full base attack bonus.

Chaos Spawn Size	Attack Damage
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8
Huge	2d6
Gargantuan	2d8
Colossal	3d6

Special Attacks: The chaos spawn retains its special attacks and gains the ability to sunder its enemies with the power of raw chaos.

Chaotic Sunder (Su): Three times per day, a chaos spawn can pour raw chaotic energy into a target. Non-chaotic creatures suffer 1d4 points of damage per the spawn's HD. For example, a 12 HD spawn would inflict 12d4 points of damage with this attack. The victim may make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the spawn's Charisma modifier) for half damage. Creatures killed in this manner arise as chaos spawn unless they are treated with *remove curse*. Apply this template to the victim.

Special Qualities: In addition to the base creature's qualities, the chaos spawn gains the chaos legionnaire, child of chaos, and liquid body abilities as described above.

Saves: The spawn gains a +3 bonus to all its saving throws.

Abilities: The spawn's mind decays, though its physical body gains strength. It gains +2 Str, +2 Con, –2 Int, –2 Wis, +2 Cha.

Challenge Rating: As base creature +2.

Alignment: All chaos spawn become chaotic neutral.

SAMPLE CHAOS SPAWN

This sample chaos spawn is a 1st-level human barbarian who dabbled too deeply in the chaos cult that operates in the wilderness near his tribe's lands.

CHAOS SPAWN HUMAN BARBARIAN (1ST LEVEL)

Medium Outsider (Chaos Legionnaire, Chaotic)
Hit Dice: 1d12+2d8+6 (27 hp)
Initiative: +1
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares), fly 40 ft. (poor)
AC: 16 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +3 studded leather armor), touch 11, flat-footed 15
Base Attack/Grapple: +3/+5
Attack: Greatclub +6 melee (1d10+3)
Full Attack: Greatclub +6 melee (1d10+3), tentacles +1 melee (1d6+2)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Barbarian rage, chaotic sunder (3d4 damage, Fort DC 10)
Special Qualities: Child of chaos, fast movement, liquid body
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +3
Abilities: Str 14, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 10
Skills: Climb +6, Jump +6, Survival +4, Swim +6
Feats: Weapon Focus (greatclub)
Environment: Northland wastes
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 3
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Advancement: By character class

Wandering far from his tribe in hopes of finding and slaying a beast noteworthy enough to increase his prestige, this miserable wretch came across a small coven of chaos minions and spawn. They offered him great power, and he foolishly accepted. He now appears as a twisted humanoid with runny, seemingly melted flesh. A pair of great bat wings sprout from his back, tearing through his armor as they grow out of his body.

MADNESS GIANT

Huge Outsider (Chaos Legionnaire, Chaotic, Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 20d8+140 (230 hp)
Initiative: –2
Speed: 40 ft. (8 squares)
AC: 21 (–2 size, –2 Dex, +15 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 21
Base Attack/Grapple: +20/+39
Attack: Slam +30 melee (3d8+11)
Full Attack: Slam +30/+25/+20/+15 melee (3d8+11)
Space/Reach: 10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Babble of insanity, roar of planar instability
Special Qualities: Child of chaos, DR 10/lawful, liquid body, SR 25
Saves: Fort +19, Ref +10, Will +14
Abilities: Str 32, Dex 6, Con 24, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 15
Skills: Climb +26, Intimidate +22, Jump +31, Listen +15, Search +13, Spot +15, Swim +31
Feats: Cleave, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (slam)
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, swarm (2–12)
Challenge Rating: 15
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Chaotic neutral
Advancement: 21–30 (Huge); 31–45 (Gargantuan)
Level Adjustment: —

A large, crawling humanoid with a multitude of faces howling in its flesh, a madness giant looks like a monstrous hill giant warped and changed by the power of raw chaos. It crawls along the ground, standing only when confronted by enemies or if it must topple a particularly large structure or obstacle.

The madness giant is perhaps one of the most feared minions of the chaos lords. These brutes revel in spreading insanity and destruction, leaving in their wake shattered settlements and mobs of innocents rendered into babbling fools. Frequently, the victims of this brute's madness trail behind it in a grim parody of a parade, worshipping the giant as a god in their insanity. These hordes take part in the giant's destructive binges, fanning out to start fires, hunt down fleeing innocents, and drag food and other treasures to their lord.

Combat

In battle, the madness giant relies on its babble of insanity ability to render enemies helpless. Opponents who are too strong to fall to that attack face the giant's massive fists and its array of spell-like abilities. Most giants lack the intelligence and foresight to employ tactics any more complicated than bashing the nearest target. Sometimes, a giant may be distracted by a tempting object to crush, pausing in the midst of battle to hammer a tower to the ground or smash a hut to pieces.

Babble of Insanity (Su): The many mouths on the giant's body spew a continual stream of maddening babble, slowly wearing away the sanity of creatures that draw within listening range. If a creature can hear the giant's babble it must make a DC 21 Will save. On a successful save, the creature resists the madness effect for 10 rounds, after which it must make another save. On a failed save, the creature is overcome by a strange, chaotic insanity. There is a 50% chance each round that it capers and gibbers randomly, following the giant wherever it goes. Otherwise, the creature acts as if under the effects of *charm monster*. It does whatever it can to help the madness giant, including attacking its enemies or pinning victims down to forcibly expose them to the madness effect. This insanity lasts for one week and can be broken with *dispel magic* (and similar effects) or *remove curse*. Treat this effect as a spell cast by a 15th-level sorcerer.

Roar of Planar Instability (Su): Once per hour, the madness giant can unleash a horrifying roar that tears apart the bindings of reality. All its mouths sound a jagged, high-pitched shriek that causes its surroundings to blur and change. Roll d% to determine the effects of this ability. All of the spells listed are cast as a 15th-level sorcerer.

d%	Result
1–10	*Earthquake*
11–20	*Maze*
21–30	*Mass charm*
31–40	*Sunburst*
41–50	*Storm of vengeance*
51–60	*Implosion*
61–70	*Time stop*
71–80	*Reverse gravity*
81–90	*Delayed blast fireball*
91–100	*Creeping doom*

DEMON, CLAWED

Large Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 10d8+30 (75 hp)
Initiative: +2
Speed: 50 ft. (10 squares)
AC: 19 (–1 size, +2 Dex, +8 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 17
Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+15
Attack: Claw +12 melee (2d6+4)
Full Attack: 2 claws +12 melee (2d6+4), bite +9 melee (1d8+2 and poison)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Master at arms, poison, rend
Special Qualities: Blindsight 60 ft., DR 10/good, prodigious leap, SR 16
Saves: Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +9
Abilities: Str 18, Dex 14, Con 17, Int 7, Wis 15, Cha 8
Skills: Climb +14, Jump +14, Listen +12, Spot +12, Swim +14, Survival +12
Feats: Cleave, Multiattack, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (claw)
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, mob (2–12)
Challenge Rating: 8
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always chaotic evil
Advancement: 11–20 (Large); 21–28 (Huge)
Level Adjustment: —

A towering, humanoid creature, this beast has overly long arms that it keeps raised before it. Its slender, lithe fingers end in obsidian claws that stretch forth over a foot in length. The beast's hairless body is covered with the scars of many ancient struggles. Though its eyes are stitched shut, it turns its head towards you as if it can see.

Clawed demons are common shock troops and slaves among the legions of the damned. These simple brutes are easily captured and beaten into submission by more powerful demons, though their prodigious combat abilities make taking one prisoner a daunting prospect. In their natural habitat, clawed demons wander the planes in search of fresh meat and easy victims. Cruel and savage in the extreme, they take great pleasure in capturing intelligent creatures and slowly torturing them to death.

Once, these creatures served as the elite lieutenants and commanders of a powerful demon lord. When their leader fell in battle to his enemies, these demons were bound, their eyes torn from their sockets, and their once impressive intellects destroyed. Sages speculate that they recall something of their fate, as they fight with a savage fury exceptional even for demonkind.

COMBAT

In battle, clawed demons fight with the echoes of their ancient skill and cunning. They lurk in ambush, springing from shadows to drag down their prey and rend it to pieces. In large battles, they leap over their enemies to attack from behind, using their speed and maneuverability to its utmost.

Master at Arms (Ex): The clawed demon is surprisingly skilled in wielding its claws as weapons. Drawing on dim memories of its once-great prowess, it gains the benefits of Expertise, Improved Trip, and Improved Disarm when fighting with them. It cannot use these feats if it does not attack with its claws.

Poison (Ex): Thick, yellowish venom drips from the clawed demon's fangs. The demon delivers this poison with its bite attack. Fortitude save DC 18, initial damage 1d4 Strength, secondary damage 1d4 Strength.

Rend (Ex): If a clawed demon hits with both claw attacks, it latches onto the opponent's body and tears the flesh. This attack automatically deals an additional 2d6+6 points of damage.

Prodigious Leap (Ex): A clawed demon's Jump checks have no maximum distance based on its speed.
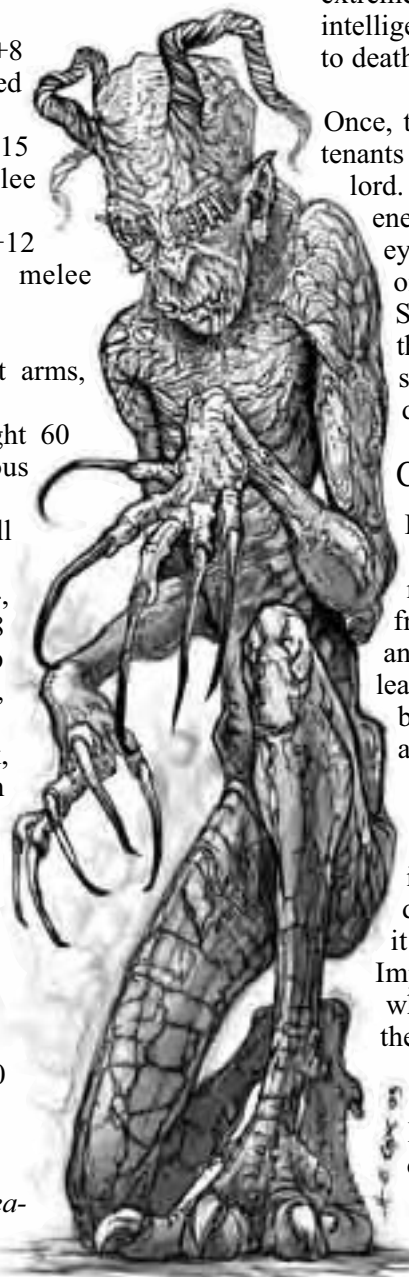
Devil, Putrid (Malphagor)

Medium Outsider (Evil, Extraplanar, Lawful)
Hit Dice: 8d8+40 (76 hp)
Initiative: +4
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares)
AC: 18 (+8 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 18
Base Attack/Grapple: +8/+10
Attack: +11 claws (1d8 + disease)
Full Attack: +11 claws (1d8+2 and disease), +8 bite (1d4+2 and disease), +8 entrails (1d6+2 and constrict)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Constrict 1d6+2, improved grab, plague carrier, spell-like abilities
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 3, immunity to disease and poison, mantle of terror, spell resistance 19, telepathy 100 ft.
Saves: Fort +11, Ref +6, Will +6
Abilities: Str 15, Dex 11, Con 20, Int 13, Wis 10, Cha 17
Skills: Concentration +15, Hide +11, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (the planes) +11, Listen +10, Sense Motive +10, Spot +11
Feats: Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (claws)
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary or coven (2–8)
Challenge Rating: 9
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always lawful evil
Advancement: 9–16 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment: —

A putrid devil appears as a cloaked, diseased figure. Flesh dangles from its rotting face and limbs, while its clothing conceals its bloated gut. Its entrails hang from its belly like tentacles, reaching forth to grasp its foes.

Putrid devils are pariahs among their own kind, harbingers of death and disease who strike down humans, orcs, giants, and even other devils with equal ease. They exist only to spread their diseases, as they can harvest the souls of evil folk who die from them and compel them into service on their rotting plane.

Combat

Putrid devils loathe all life that has not embraced the comforting grip of disease. They prefer to use hit-and-run tactics, relying on their spell-like abilities and mantle of terror to incapacitate their foes. Once they have dealt

with any enemies who remain active, they infect the rest with their diseases. Their mission completed, they leave to allow their sickness to run its course. Sometimes, these fiends take active steps to destroy temples, hospitals, and other areas that offer comfort to their victims. Other times, they target doctors, clerics, and others who tend to the sick and weak to create a convenient vector for their contagions.

Improved Grab (Ex): The putrid devil may use this ability only with its entrails attack. It gains a +4 competence bonus to grapple checks made with its entrails and may use its constrict special attack against creatures caught in them.

Plague Carrier (Ex): Supernatural disease (claw and bite, Fortitude save (DC 20), incubation period 1 day; damage 1d6 temporary Constitution). Unlike normal diseases, the putrid devil's contagion continues until the victim reaches Constitution 0 (and dies) or receives a remove disease spell or similar magic. Each creature that spends more than a total of 10 minutes per day within close proximity (30 ft.) of the infected victim must save to avoid catching the disease. An afflicted creature that dies turns into a bubbling pool of ooze and festering, putrid flesh.

Spell-like Abilities (Sp): 3/day—*eyebite* (DC 19)*, hold person* (DC 16)*, insect plague, ray of enfeeblement* (DC 14)*, stinking cloud* (DC 16). Caster level 11th. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Mantle of Terror (Su): The putrid devil's horrifying appearance and its otherworldly nature combine to drive lesser creatures mad. Any creature that sees the putrid devil must make a DC 17 Will save or be affected as though by the spell *confusion* for 1d4 rounds. Caster level 11th. The save DC is Charisma-based. Gripped by panic and horror, the victims of this ability panic and act at random. Once a creature saves against this ability, whether it fails or succeeds, it does not have to check again for the rest of the encounter even if it sees other putrid devils.

Dimensional Predator

Large Magical Beast
Hit Dice: 8d10+24 (68 hp)
Initiative: +4
Speed: 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 50 ft. good (10 squares)
AC: 21 (–1 size, +4 Dex, +8 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 17
Base Attack/Grapple: +7/+12
Attack: Bite +8 melee (2d6+1)
Full Attack: Bite +8 melee (2d6+1), wing +6 melee (1d6+1), wing +6 melee (1d6+1), tail +6 melee (1d4+1 and sting)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Tail sting
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., planar lurker, scent, SR 15
Saves: Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +3
Abilities: Str 13, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 4, Wis 13, Cha 10
Skills: Spot +12, Survival +4
Feats: Flyby Attack, Multiattack, Snatch
Environment: Planar vortex
Organization: Solitary or flock (2–12)
Challenge Rating: 5
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 9–12 (Large); 13–22 (Huge)
Level Adjustment: —

A sharklike creature soars through the air, diving down towards its prey. It looks like a hammerhead with long wings instead of fins and a tail that tapers down to a whiplike point.

The dimensional predator is a common menace to planar travelers. Like the mundane sharks it resembles, it swims through the cosmos in search of its next meal. These beasts flash into existence, swoop down on their targets, and then slip back into the ethereal in a matter of moments. Sometimes, a party of explorers loses a member to these creatures without realizing his fate.

Combat

Dimensional predators prefer to attack weak, injured parties rather than fresh, well-rested ones. Like sharks, once they catch scent of fresh blood they are relentless hunters. They prefer to use their plane lurker ability in combination with Flyby Attack, materializing, swooping in to attack, and then slipping back into the ether to prepare for another strike.

Tail Sting (Ex): The dimensional predator's tail is cloaked in a faint nimbus of elemental energy. It makes touch attacks when fighting with its tail, and in addition to the physical damage victims must make a Fortitude save (DC 15) or be stunned for 1d3 rounds.

Planar Lurker (Su): The predator can slip between the fabric of the planes, allowing it to fade out of existence while casting its senses into its immediate area. Treat this as the spell *ethereal jaunt* as cast by a 12th-level sorcerer. The predator can move into and out of the ethereal as a move-equivalent action.

GLASS SPIDER

Colossal Outsider (Extraplanar)
Hit Dice: 35d8+420 (577 hp)
Initiative: +2
Speed: 100 ft. (20 squares)
AC: 25 (–8 size, –2 Dex, +25 natural), touch 0, flat-footed 25
Base Attack/Grapple: +35/+66
Attack: Bite +42 melee (2d8+15)
Full Attack: Bite +42 melee (2d8+15), leg crush +37/+37/+37/+37 melee (2d6+7)
Space/Reach: 40 ft./25 ft.
Special Attacks: Cosmic disturbance, overrun, planar engulf, spin web
Special Qualities: DR 25/magic, mystic prism, SR 30
Saves: Fort +33, Ref +19, Will +24
Abilities: Str 40, Dex 6, Con 34, Int 4, Wis 16, Cha 20
Skills: Climb +40, Craft (web) +22, Listen +28, Move Silently +23, Spot +28, Survival +28, Swim +40
Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Endurance, Great Cleave, Diehard, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Track
Environment: Any

Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 18
Treasure: Double standard
Alignment: Always neutral
Advancement: 36–45 HD (Colossal)
Level Adjustment: —

A crystalline spider creature weaves a web that covers the terrain around it. Its body is almost completely transparent, though monstrous organs pulse and throb within its body. It is about the size of a house, and the air and ground around it seem to bend and morph as if seen through a jar of water.

Glass spiders are the remnants of an earlier epoch, the period of timeless eternity before the gods formed the cosmos into its current state. Some sages believe that the spiders are forerunners of all intelligent creatures, the prototypical form of life that first walked the universe's endless planes. Others claim that the spiders constructed the wormholes, and that these creatures are merely the servants of vastly powerful beings who overshadow even the mightiest gods and demons. A small splinter sect of fanatics maintains that the spiders are the heralds of the end of the world. The cosmos is winding down, these zealots proclaim, and the spiders are spawned by reality to help tear apart the multiverse and set the stage for reality's next iteration. Whatever the truth, glass spiders are monstrous planar

marauders who can single handedly destroy entire cities. Their massive size, magical abilities, and capability to travel the planes make them among the most dangerous creatures known to the civilized races.

Sages theorize that the spiders play an important role in the planes' development. Many times, they enter a plane to hunt a specific, large creature, but their planar engulf ability inadvertently spreads smaller species, including humanoids, across a number of worlds. A glass spider might attack a purple worm, slay it, and then carry a small tribe of goblins to a different plane when it moves to find a new hunting ground. Unless the spider is ravenously hungry, it is unlikely to notice the goblins as they scurry away to explore their new home. In this manner, a variety of species have spread across the multiverse.

COMBAT

Glass spiders rely on their vast bulk and near invulnerability to destroy their enemies. They generally hunt larger creatures such as dinosaurs, dragons, and titans, though a hungry spider may simply arrive in a plane and attack an entire city.

Cosmic Disturbance (Su): The spider's presence in most planes is anathema, a reminder that there exist things older than the cosmos itself. All living creatures within 100 ft. of the spider suffer 5 points of damage per round as the world shifts and twists around them. All ranged attacks have a 20% chance of missing in addition to any concealment. Targets shift and move, or perhaps missiles and rays curve and bend on their journey to their targets. All spellcasters must make caster level checks (DC 15) before using any spell. This check is made in addition to any SR a creature may have. If the check fails, the spell is lost.

Planar Engulf (Su): Three times per day, the spider can shift itself and the area around it to a different plane of existence. Usually, spiders use this tactic to drag prey to their planar lairs where they can feast in peace. The spider can transport itself and the area in a 100-ft. radius around it in all directions to a plane of its choice. The spider always arrives at the exact point it wants, along with the dirt and rock beneath it and any creatures unlucky enough to travel with it. Creatures in this ability's area do not receive a saving throw to resist it. They are automatically transported along with the spider.

Spin Web (Ex): As a full-round action, the spider can fill a 60-ft. radius area with a thick, sticky web three times per day. The spider can cast this web at a range of up to 100 ft. It makes a ranged touch attack to place the web where it wishes, and if it misses use the standard rules for grenade-like weapons to determine where it ends up. The spider does not suffer any penalties due to range for this attack, but it cannot use it beyond its maximum range. Treat this effect as a *web* spell, save that creatures cannot burn their way free; the Strength DC to break free is 25 and the Escape Artist DC is 30. Creatures that occupy the web's space must make Reflex saves (DC 26) to avoid being caught in place. Otherwise, they must navigate through the web as per the spell's description.

Trample (Ex): A glass spider can trample Gargantuan or smaller creatures for automatic damage. Opponents who do not make attacks of opportunity against the spider can attempt a Reflex save (DC 20) to halve the damage. This attack deals 3d8+20 points of damage.

Mystic Prism (Su): The glass spider's reflective body is formed along several dimensions other than those visible to the naked eye. When spells targeted against the spider approach it, the magical energy within them is shunted into these weird curves in space, altered, and returned to the material world. Whenever the glass spider is targeted with a spell effect, there is a 50% chance that it instinctually molds the raw energy into a new effect and directs it back at the caster. This effect takes the form of any spell of the spider's choice that has the same or lower level as the spell used against it. The spider may always choose to allow the spell to affect it. The spell is used at the original caster's class and level, and its saving throw DC is the same as if it had been cast by the original caster. Apply this ability's effects only after checking to see if a spell overcomes the spider's SR.

The Scions of Law

The universe moves in a somewhat orderly progression. Night follows day, most portals function in a consistent manner, spells work as their casters expect, and so forth. To the scions of law, this predictability is not enough. They see any deviance from patterns as the first steps to anarchy, chaos, and the ultimate unraveling of the entire cosmic structure. Stern and unbending, these overlords of absolute, utter order demand that the universe lock into their dictates and follow them without question. While the lords of chaos spread rampant death and destruction, the scions of law by no means offer salvation from them. They would remake the entire planar system in their vision of perfection, transforming living creatures and inanimate objects into a unified, obedient system. To the scions, freewill and choice are the fundamental enemies of stability.

The scions pose the greatest threat in areas where chaos runs rampant. With a terrible enemy bearing down upon them, many civilizations have made the mistake of equating the cold, uncaring lords of law with saviors. The scions never have their allies' best interests in mind. Rather, they seek to exterminate chaos before forcibly converting the survivors to the path of law. Many vibrant, wondrous civilizations have been transformed into dull, monotonous, orderly realms of law.

Law commands fewer cultists and mortal followers than chaos, primarily because those creatures who reach out to the scions in worship are promptly transformed into adherents of law (see below). While the scions' extensive rules of engagement allow them to ally with and use living creatures, in the end there can be only absolute obedience or death.

Worlds dominated by these conquerors slowly turn into lands rendered in perfectly formed crystal. One by one, each object is changed to exactly copy the scions' idea of the fundamental aspect of every thought, object, and creature in the cosmos. For example, all forests, jungles, and groves on the world change so that the trees within them are all the same exact crystalline structure. When the time comes for the leaves to fall, every tree sheds the same exact crystalline leaf at the same time. All creatures change into the same perfect representation of their race, with herbivores dutifully allowing predators to catch and kill them in the same sequence of events across the cosmos. Any object or creature that fails to fit into one of the scions' templates is wiped from existence, its body or physical form used to form other, more proper objects. Living creatures act without free will, instead fulfilling the same scripted actions again and again.

In your campaign, the scions of law could serve as temporary allies, but in the end they can accept only a world's defeat or

assimilation into their order. Worst of all, they truly believe in the fundamental benevolence of their actions. They perceive any opposition to it as the desperate objections of those who simply refuse to see the truth. To the scions, anyone who opposes their plans by definition supports the destruction of the universe.

Cults of Law

Few beings outside of the scions' followers offer prayers to elemental law, but in some cases madmen, those who seek succor from the ravages of chaos, and those foolish enough to believe they can bend law to their own uses take up its worship. Law cults meet in secret, though in some cases they operate openly to rally commoners and nobles alike against the depredations of raw chaos. In time, though, members of these cults are forcibly converted into adherents of law. The scions trust no one except those creatures compelled to obey their dictates.

A cleric who worships the scions of law prays to them as a group. Though these beings are individually powerful, nothing is known of their individual traits or characteristics. Some sages believe that they are pure order given purpose, and as such any detail that would separate them from the concept of law would change their appearance in mortals' minds and thus promote chaos. Law cultists use a plain circle forged from silver as their symbol. Their rites consist of bringing order to chaos, such as carefully arranging a pile of stones and meditating on the eternal truths of law.

Clerics of this cult gain access to the Law and War domains. The scions' favored weapon is the heavy mace. In place of the Law domain's granted ability, clerics of law gain the ability to use the adherent of law's force of law special attack once per day. See that template below for details. The cleric counts his levels in that class as his Hit Dice when using the ability.

Traits of Law

All followers of law have the following traits and abilities. They are summarized here to save space, rather than list them with each creature's description.

Legionnaire of Order: All followers of the scions of law gain several benefits and immunities. They are immune to poison, sleep-effects, and mind-influencing effects.

One Mind: Those who follow the scions of law share in part a single mind, allowing them to exchange information and thoughts over the vast expanse of the planes. Nothing can block this communication, though it functions on a primal, instinctual level rather than as direct conversation. For example, if the characters encounter a single champion of law, all of the scions' followers have memories of the battle and know of the PCs. The forces of law do not actively talk to each other, debate, or discuss tactics. Instead, they merely contribute to and draw from a massive, ephemeral store of racial memories. This trait alone makes them deadly foes, as a creature that fights against the forces of law finds its secrets and abilities quickly propagated across all of the scions' followers.

Perfection of Law: The absolute order and perfect form of lawful creatures manifests as a hard, crystalline structure. All creatures of law have DR 5/– in addition to any other DR they have. Account for this DR before applying the effects of any other DR types they may have.

Source of Order: Creatures of pure law never roll dice. Chance and luck may direct their enemies' efforts, but their own actions function according to the dictates of law. Whenever a creature with this ability must roll dice, treat the result as half the maximum possible result of the die. For example, when rolling 1d20 to attack, a creature of law always counts its result as 10. This has many implications for creatures of law. They can never stabilize when they fall below 0 hit points, as a d% roll for them always has a result of 50, and in most cases they either always hit a character or always miss. They never score critical hits, as such results rely on luck and chance. In battle, the creatures of law compensate for this ability by using grapple attacks, flanking, and taking other actions to gain bonuses to their attacks.

Creatures with this ability have all their random values given in absolute terms to account for this ability. These values are listed in parentheses after the standard attribute or stat presentation.

Adherent of Law

An adherent of law may have once been any creature, but it has since been warped and changed into a crystalline follower of absolute law. These creatures all share the same appearance based on their race, but their capabilities and talents are determined by their previous forms and experiences. Adherents of law look like statues carved from massive chunks of crystalline rock. None of their distinctive traits remain, though they still carry and use the gear they carried in their previous incarnations.

Creating an Adherent of Law

"Adherent of law" is a template that can be added to any creature. An adherent of law uses its base creature's abilities and game statistics except as noted below.

Creature Type: An adherent of law counts as an outsider with the following subtypes: lawful, legionnaire of order.

Hit Dice: The adherent gains two Hit Dice as an outsider. It gains 2d8 hit points plus twice its Constitution modifier. The other benefits of these extra Hit Dice are summarized below.

Speed: The adherent retains its original movement types and speed.

AC: The adherent's dense, rocky form gives it a +4 natural AC bonus. This bonus does not stack with or replace any existing natural bonus the base creature possesses. Use the higher of the two bonuses.

Base Attack: An adherent gains a +2 base attack bonus.

Special Attacks: An adherent of law gains the ability to force the pattern of law on to its enemies, turning them into adherents against their will.

Force of Law (Su): Three times per day, an adherent of law can force the scions' view of ordered reality on a target. With a successful touch attack, the adherent partially (or perhaps completely) transforms a target into a fellow adherent of law. The target suffers 1d4 points of damage per the adherent's HD. For example, a 6 HD adherent would inflict 6d4 points of damage with this attack. The victim may make

a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the adherent's Charisma modifier) for half damage. Creatures killed in this manner arise as adherents of law unless they are treated with *remove curse*. Apply this template to the victim. Any equipment it carries remains unchanged.

Special Qualities: An adherent of law gains the legionnaire of order and one mind special qualities as described above.

Saves: The adherent gains a +3 bonus on all saving throws.

Abilities: Adherents are physically tougher than normal and have stronger, more robust personalities. They gain the following ability modifiers: +2 Str, +2 Con, +2 Cha.

Challenge Rating: As base creature +1.

Alignment: Always lawful neutral.

Advancement: Once a creature becomes an adherent of law, it remains locked into its current incarnation. It can never gain class levels or additional HD.

Sample Adherent of Law

This unfortunate was a human warrior who aided in the unsuccessful attempt to defend his home world from an incursion of law. Now, he is one of countless warriors who march to war at the scions' command.

Human 1st-level Fighter Adherent of Law

Medium Outsider (Lawful, Legionnaire of Law)
Hit Dice: 1d10+2d8+9 (28 hp)
Initiative: +4
Speed: 20 ft. (4 squares), base 30 ft. (6 squares)
AC: 20 (+4 natural, +4 scalemail, +2 large wooden shield), touch 10, flat-footed 20
Base Attack/Grapple: +5/+7
Attack: Longsword +6 melee (1d8+2)
Full Attack: Longsword +6 melee (1d8+2)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Force of law (3d4, Fort DC 11)
Special Qualities: One mind
Saves: Fort +7, Ref +3, Will +3
Abilities: Str 14, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12
Skills: Climb +6, Ride +4, Swim +6
Feats: Improved Initiative, Toughness,

Weapon Focus (longsword)
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary or squad (12)
Challenge Rating: 2
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Lawful neutral

As is customary for the forces of law, after conquering a new world they set about forcibly recruiting every living creature they can track down into their ranks. This warrior perhaps served as a nobleman's elite guard. He still wears the fine armor and well-crafted sword he received as part of his posting, though now he fights for law with unquestioning obedience. He appears as a human warrior arrayed in armor, save that his body is made of blue, crystalline rock and any unique physical features he once sported have now been replaced with the scions' view of the orderly human archetype.

Champion of Law

Medium Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful, Legionnaire of Order)
Hit Dice: 16d8+48 (120 hp)
Initiative: +2 (12)
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 50 ft. perfect (10 squares)
AC: 24 (+2 Dex, +12 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 22
Base Attack/Grapple: +16/+21 (31)
Attack: Longspear +21 (31) melee (1d8+7/11 or 1d6+7/10)
Full Attack: Longspear +21 (31)/+16 (26)/+11 (21) melee (1d8+7/11 or 1d6+7/10)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Searing radiance of order, word of law
Special Qualities: DR 10/chaos, longspear agility, one mind, perfection of law, source of order, spell resistance 20
Saves: Fort +13 (23), Ref +12 (22), Will +11 (21)
Abilities: Str 20, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 13
Skills: Climb +25 (35), Diplomacy +21 (31), Intimidate +21 (31), Jump +25 (35), Listen +21 (31), Search +22 (32), Sense Motive +21 (31), Spot +21 (31)
Feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (longspear)
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, delegation (3), war party (10)

Challenge Rating: 10
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always lawful neutral
Advancement: —
Level Adjustment: —

A gleaming, crystalline humanoid carrying a longspear and wearing a cloak and loincloth stands before you. Light reflects from its skin, dazzling your eyes. It regards you with a cold, rocky stare.

Champions of law are the commanders and leaders of law's minions, primarily enforcers of law and weaker adherents of law. They are judges, ambassadors, and governors who take orders directly from the scions of law. As such, they are commonly trusted with the most important missions in the name of law. Usually they act alone, but in the face of powerful enemies and dire threats they can gather together in groups numbering more than a hundred. Since law never tolerates variations in the abilities and capabilities of its minions, they must use the raw force of numbers to defeat their most powerful enemies.

Combat

Champions of law fight without regard for their own safety. As a byproduct of their absolute obedience, they gladly throw themselves into deadly situations, untenable positions, and other precarious spots. To a champion of law, death is not a threat. When one is destroyed, the scions soon reform it and bid it to continue its service. Thus, champions fight solely to slay the enemy. Their lives never enter into consideration when devising tactics and goals.

Searing Radiance of Order (Su): As a standard action, the champion of law can cause a blinding flash of light to gleam from its crystalline body. All chaotic creatures within a 60-ft. burst around the champion must make DC 19 Fortitude saves or be blinded for 2d4 rounds and suffer 6d6 points of damage. Creatures that succeed at this save take half damage and are not blinded. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Word of Law (Su): The champion of law exerts a regular, predictable pattern not only on events and actions around it but upon free-willed creatures. Once per round as a free action the champion can issue a three-word command to a single creature. The creature must make a DC 19 Will save or obey the command for one round. Creatures never heed obviously suicidal commands. The champion speaks in the primal tongue of creation, allowing it to use this ability against any creature with an Intelligence of 3 or higher. This is a mind-influencing effect. Caster level 16th. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Longspear Agility (Ex): The champion of law is an expert in wielding the longspear. When an opponent moves within its weapon's reach, it simply shifts its grip and wields its spear like a quarterstaff. The champion can gain the benefits of the longspear's 10-ft. reach and inflict 1d8+7 points of damage with it, or attack adjacent creatures and deal 1d6+7 points of damage. The champion can change its grip as a free action once per round, though it must decide how it wants to wield it before making any attacks.

ENFORCER OF LAW

Medium Outsider (Extraplanar, Lawful, Legionnaire of Order)
Hit Dice: 9d8+21 (61 hp)
Initiative: +1 (11)
Speed: 30 ft. (6 squares), base 40 ft. (8 squares)
AC: 23 (+1 Dex, +5 chainmail, +2 large steel shield, +5 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 22
Base Attack/Grapple: +9/+12 (22)
Attack: +13 (23) longsword melee (1d8+3/7)
Full Attack: +13/+8 (23/18) longsword melee (1d8+3/7)
Space/Reach: 5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks: Chance slayer, order's decree
Special Qualities: DR 5/chaos, one mind, perfection of law, source of order, spell resistance 16
Saves: Fort +8 (18), Ref +7 (17), Will +8 (18)
Abilities: Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 17
Skills: Craft (crystal) +12 (22), Diplomacy +17 (27), Listen +18 (28), Sense Motive +16 (26), Spot +18 (28), Survival +16 (26)
Feats: Alertness, Toughness, Track, Weapon Focus (longsword)
Environment: Any
Organization: Solitary, squad (5), or war band (20)
Challenge Rating: 6
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Always lawful neutral
Advancement: —
Level Adjustment: —

Before you stands a crystalline humanoid wearing a breastplate, chain skirt and helm, carrying a sword and shield. It turns a dull face, devoid of emotion, towards you as it moves to attack.

The enforcers of law are the lowest-ranking troops that serve the scions of law. They are responsible for hunting down and destroying the weakest creatures of chaos, and when the scions invade a world these creatures form the bulk of their legions. When encountered alone, they commonly serve as emissaries who attempt to convince local rulers and nobles to ally with the forces of law. Though their emotionless, monotone voices sometimes make their potential allies nervous, they tend to win debates with inescapable logic and seemingly flawless conclusions.

COMBAT

In battle, enforcers seek to maximize terrain to gain an advantage over their enemies. They gladly sacrifice their lives for the betterment of the group, stepping into dangerous spots to create a flanking opportunity or running into a wizard's line of sight to draw him into wasting his spells. The enforcers place little value on their own lives, as they can perish confident that the scions of law will give them a new form in due time. Thus they fight without concern for their own safety, seeking only to defeat their foes.

Chance Slayer (Su): Once per round, an attack directed against the enforcer is treated as if the attacker rolled a 10 on his attack roll. The enforcer does not consciously use this ability. Instead, his mere presence alters the scheme of probability and causes events to proceed in a predictable, orderly fashion. This ability activates after the DM sees the die roll's result and can only be used on a roll of 15 or higher.

Order's Decree (Su): The enforcer's fundamental nature withers and kills creatures of chaos that cross his path. When fighting enemies with chaotic alignments, the enforcer gains a +4 competence bonus to his attacks and a +2 enhancement bonus to damage. These bonuses apply only to attacks made directly against chaotic creatures. Attacks against lawful or neutral ones do not gain this benefit.
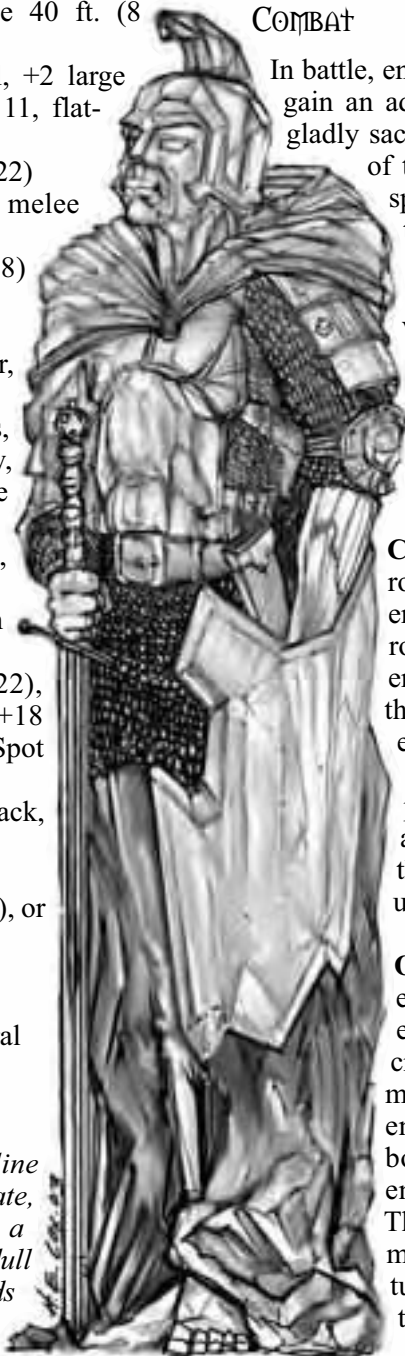
Vortex Howler

Gargantuan Magical Beast
Hit Dice: 24d10+192 (324 hp)
Initiative: +4
Speed: 50 ft. (10 squares), fly 80 ft. good (16 squares)
AC: 20 (–4 size, +14 natural), touch 6, flat-footed 20
Base Attack/Grapple: +32/+56
Attack: Bite +32 melee (3d8+12)
Full Attack: Bite +32 melee (3d8+12), claw +30 melee (1d8+6), claw +30 melee (1d8+6)
Space/Reach: 20 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks: Breath weapon, improved grab, swallow whole
Special Qualities: Darkvision 60 ft., electricity immunity, fire and cold resistance 15
Saves: Fort +22, Ref +14, Will +10
Abilities: Str 34, Dex 10, Con 26, Int 4, Wis 15, Cha 11
Skills: Listen +10, Spot +10
Feats: Cleave, Alertness, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack, Snatch, Wingover
Environment: Planar vortex
Organization: Solitary
Challenge Rating: 14
Treasure: Standard
Alignment: Neutral
Advancement: 25–32 HD (Gargantuan); 33–45 HD (Colossal)
Level Adjustment: —

A flying, serpentlike creature with a long beak and powerful arms soars through the planar vortex toward you. As it approaches, electricity sparks from its mouth as it gazes at you with hunger in its eyes.

The vortex howler is one of the most feared predators native to the wind-swept passages that stretch between the planes. Some sages believe that the howlers somehow developed within the planar vortex, while others believe they are creatures native to the elemental plane of air. In either case, their long, keening shriek is both the source of their name and a harbinger of danger to all who journey between the planes.

Combat

A vortex howler prefers to make swooping passes at its targets, seeking to grab them in its arms or swallow them in its mammoth beak.

Usually, it uses its breath weapon only after the first pass reveals its prey to be more formidable than normal. Otherwise, it is content to grab a succulent morsel and then fly off to a quiet, private place where it can devour its meal in peace.

Breath Weapon (Su): Once per hour, the vortex howler can unleash a line of electricity 20 ft. wide and 120 ft. in length. Any creature caught in this attack must make a DC 26 Reflex save or suffer 8d6 points of electricity damage. Those who successfully save take half damage. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Improved Grab (Ex): The howler may use this ability with its bite or claw attacks. If it grapples with its bite, it attempts to swallow its prey. If it grabs hold with a claw, it attempts to drag its prey away and devour it.

Swallow Whole (Ex): The vortex howler can swallow creatures of Huge or smaller size by making a successful grapple check against targets it grapples with its bite attack. Once inside, the opponent takes 2d8+12 points of crushing damage plus 12 points of acid damage per round from the howler's gizzard. A swallowed creature can cut its way out by using a light slashing or piercing weapon to deal 30 points of damage to the gizzard (AC 21). Once the creature exits, muscular action closes the hole; another swallowed opponent must cut its own way out.

The howler's interior can hold one Huge, four Large, 16 Medium, or 64 Small or smaller opponents.

Index

Random Terrain Chart

1–7	Air
8–14	Desert
15–21	Flooded
22–28	Forest
29–35	Jungle
36–42	Mechanical
43–49	Mountains
50–56	Organic
57–65	Plains
66–72	Splintered
73–79	Subterranean
80–86	Swamp
87–93	Tundra
94–100	Water

Total Traits to Generate

1–20	1
21–40	2
41–60	3
61–80	4
81–90	5
91–100	6

Random Planar Traits

1–2	Terrain–Gravity
3–4	Chaos–Arcane Instability
5–6	Chaos–Chaos Ascendant
7–8	Chaos–Chaos Lands
9	Chaos–Law's Bane
10–11	Cold–Blizzard Conditions
12–13	Cold–Freezing Conditions
14–15	Cold–Snow
16–17	Elemental–Elemental Ascendancy
18–19	Elemental–Elemental Enervation
20–21	Elemental–Elemental Vacuum
22–23	Evil–Clouds of Baneful Influence
24–25	Evil–Empower Evil
26–27	Evil–Hatred of the Land
28–29	Evil–Insidious Weakness
30–31	Evil–Scorn the Righteous
32	Good–Glade of Benevolent Charity
33–34	Good–Strength of the Righteous
35–36	Good–Weakness of the Vile
37–38	Heat–Ambient Fire
39–40	Heat–Ash Storms
41–42	Heat–Extreme Heat
43–44	Law–Edict of Law
45	Law–Strength of Pattern
46	Life–Plague World
47–48	Life–War World
49–50	Light–Glare
51–52	Light–Sunlight
53	Magic–Arcane Instability
54–55	Magic–Arcane Potency
56	Magic–Arcane Weakness
57–58	Magic–Dead Magic
59	Magic–Magical Drought
60	Magic–Magical Flux
61–62	Magic–Magical Veil
63–64	Necropotence–Bane of the Living
65–66	Necropotence–Kingdom of the Dead
67–68	Necropotence–March of the Dead
69–70	Necropotence–Strength of Undeath
71–72	Necropotence–Shroud of Death
73–74	Technology–Advanced Tech
75–76	Technology–Arcane Masquerade
77–78	Technology–Mechanical Supremacy
79–80	Technology–Technological Aura
81–82	Technology–Technological Virus
83–84	Waterways–Air Currents
85–86	Waterways–Boiling Water
87–88	Waterways–Dust
89–90	Waterways–Magma
91–92	Waterways–Slime
93–94	Weather–Acid Rain
95–96	Weather–Flash Freeze
97–98	Weather–Ghost Wind
99–100	Weather–Rain of Fire

Random Trait Strength

1–20	Faint
21–40	Light
41–80	Medium
81–95	Heavy
96–100	Overwhelming

Random Element Trait

1	Acid
2	Chaotic
3	Cold
4	Darkness
5	Earth
6	Electricity
7	Fire
8	Sonic
9	Water
10	Roll twice more

Random Magic School/Descriptor

1–4	Abjuration
5–8	Conjuration
9–12	Divination
13–16	Enchantment
17–20	Evocation
21–24	Illusion
25–28	Necromancy
29–32	Transmutation
33–36	Acid
37–40	Chaotic
41–44	Cold
45–48	Darkness
49–52	Death
53–56	Electricity
57–60	Evil
61–64	Fear
65–68	Fire
69–72	Force
73–76	Good
77–80	Lawful
81–84	Light
85–88	Mind-affecting
89–92	Sonic
93–96	Teleportation
97–100	Roll twice more

Portals & Planes

By Mike Mearls

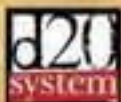### The definitive d20 System resource for plane travel.

This invaluable sourcebook provides DMs and players everything they need to create and run planar adventures and campaigns.

• Complete rules and guidelines for creating characters suitable at plane travel and world-hopping, as well as new prestige classes, feats, spells, and magic items.

• Comprehensive descriptions of several different portal types, including their traits, characteristics, and game statistics.

• Rules and guidelines for designing an endless variety of new worlds and planes.

• Guidelines for altering existing creatures to create planar variants, and complete descriptions of many new extraplanar monsters and allies.