



LEVEL UP
ADVANCED 5TH EDITION

DUNGEON DELVER'S GUIDE

PAUL HUGHES



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LEVEL UP

DELVE DEEP

D*ungeon Delver's Guide* (DDG) is a comprehensive toolkit for running (and exploring!) dungeons.

This book presents hundreds of dungeon-themed tricks, traps, treasures, and monsters for use in 5E and *Level Up: Advanced 5th Edition* games. But a collection of cool goodies and baddies doesn't amount to anything unless it's animated by an equally engaging story. *Dungeon Delver's Guide* provides a framework for weaving together adventure ingredients into a coherent, tightly themed story.

Why Dungeons?

The first fantasy RPGs took place in dungeons. Eventually people left the depths behind and emerged blinking into the sunlight to see what the rest of the world had to offer. Cities and towns! The wilderness! Outer space, the planes, and beyond!

Fantasy roleplaying offers limitless avenues for exploration. Why would we want to return to the dark, cramped confines of the dungeon?

The fact is, we never really left the dungeon. Every year countless TTRPG dungeon adventures are published. It's hard to find a fantasy video game that *doesn't* include a dungeon delve or two. Over the years dungeon adventures have evolved to become opportunities for focused storytelling and heightened adventure. *Dungeon Delver's Guide* presents a modern approach to underground exploration.

Descending Into the Dark

If you're a player, chapter 1 of *Dungeon Delver's Guide* offers new heritages, cultures, backgrounds, and class archetypes that let you become a part of a dungeon-centric story. When you're a ratling decomposer druid or a grimlock sound sculptor, a dungeon adventure can be, not an expedition into the unknown, but a return home.

Chapter 1 also introduces new spells (including rare, powerful spells that must be found as treasure) and a new category of equipment, cultural equipment, which can be bought only from its seclusive creators (or seized as plunder).

Telling a Story

A dungeon is the perfect environment in which to tell a story. While it's quite possible to run a dungeon without a coherent narrative, a delve can give adventurers the opportunity to discover a mystery, struggle to solve it, and emerge triumphant with new lore learned and evils defeated. Where the campaign is a novel, a dungeon is a short story.

Every element of a dungeon can be enlisted to help tell that story. Architecture, room contents, and even intelligent inhabitants can all have their say, revealing the dungeon's history as adventurers explore it. Lore earned by adventuring can be more satisfying than information gained all at once through a handout or a knowledge check.

To encourage this kind of environmental storytelling, chapter 2 of *Dungeon Delver's Guide* offers three takes on designing dungeons. First we offer a bird's eye view, offering advice, strategies, and tools for dungeon designers. Next we zoom in closer with eight unique random dungeon generators populated with tightly themed enigmas, obstacles, and revelations suitable for any level of play. Finally, we take a close-up tour of eight complete, fully mapped mini-dungeons, each with its own mysteries to uncover over a game session or two.

And of course no dungeon would be complete without traps! This book offers a new approach to traps that uses *Level Up: Advanced Fifth Edition's* exploration challenge format. With multiple ways to discover, bypass, and disable every trap, each provides a challenge for any party—or a puzzle for clever players.

Further Excavations

Chapter 3 includes more tools Narrators can use to carve out and populate their dungeons, including new procedures for common dungeon activities such as listening at doors, tunneling, and contorting through tight spaces. Chapter 3 also presents

new magical treasures, as well as a selection of monsters and NPCs to act as centerpieces for your combat encounters.

For those who want to venture into a truly wondrous landscape, chapter 3 ends with a gazetteer of Underland, an underground realm of vast caverns, haunted cities, and silent seas.

Using This Book with 5e

This book can be used with either 5E or *Level Up*. If you're using 5E, you'll want to be aware of some new *Level Up* rules used in this book. You can incorporate them easily into your 5E game!

New Monsters and Magic Items: Parts of this book include references to new monsters and magic items that appear in *Level Up's* *Monstrous Menagerie* and *Trials & Treasures*. Whenever a new monster or magic item appears, it is listed alongside an alternative that also appears in 5E. For instance, a potential combat encounter might be listed as “aboeth or khalkos.” If you're playing 5E, you can use the aboeth; if you're playing *Level Up*, you can choose either the aboeth or the khalkos, a monster that appears in *Monstrous Menagerie*.

New Conditions: *Level Up* uses new conditions: confused, rattled, slowed, fatigue, and strife, which are described fully in appendix B: Conditions.



New Skills: *Level Up* introduces two new skills, Culture and Engineering. The Culture skill is used for representing a knowledge of cultures and customs. The Engineering skill is used for knowledge of, and training in, construction and machinery. It is particularly useful in finding and disarming traps.

Narrator: The Narrator is another name for the Game Master.

Skill Checks: This book uses the term “skill check” as shorthand for an ability check using a skill. Additionally, it sometimes refers to an ability check using a particular skill by its skill name, for instance, a “Deception check” instead of a “Charisma (Deception) check.” A skill check can be used with any ability. For instance, the Narrator is most likely to use Charisma for a Deception check, but they might decide that Intelligence is called for if the character tries to recall an obscure fact to masquerade as a sage.

Expertise Dice: Some features or traits grant you an expertise die for an attack roll or saving throw, or in a specific skill or tool proficiency. Expertise dice represent a particular aptitude for a task beyond mere proficiency.

When you make a d20 roll with which you have gained an expertise die, roll 1d4 and add the number rolled to the result of your check. You can never roll more than one expertise die on the same roll. If another class feature or situation grants an expertise die that applies to the same roll, you don't gain another die; instead, the size of the largest expertise die increases by one step for that check, from 1d4 to 1d6, or 1d6 to 1d8. For example, if you have gained two expertise dice, a 1d6 and 1d6, you now have a 1d8 expertise die. If you have a 1d8 expertise die on a check, further expertise dice have no effect.

Bloodied: A creature is considered bloodied when it has been reduced to half its hit points or fewer. There are no rules associated with being bloodied, but other game elements might interact with it. For instance, some monsters have abilities they can use only while bloodied.

Ongoing Damage: Some game effects, like being set on fire, deal ongoing damage. This damage occurs at the end of each of the affected creature's turns, and it continues until ended by a condition specified by the effect.

Monster Math Changes: We've slightly changed the way monster statistics are calculated behind the scenes. For instance, grapple escape DCs are calculated using a slightly different formula (and listed in the stat block as Maneuver DC). None of these changes require any tweaking: just use the monsters as they are written.

Speed: In *Level Up*, the capitalized term Speed is used as a shorthand for walking speed.

Mirror Planes: The fey mirror plane in which faeries dwell is called the Dreaming. The shadowy mirror plane of death is called the Bleak Gate.



CHAPTER 1

EXPLORING THE DUNGEON

The adventurers eye the pitch-black hole in the side of the cliff—the entrance to the Barrow of the Serpent Queen. “Are we all ready? Do we have enough torches?” asks Varskyle, the expedition’s leader.

“I have torches, and I can cast light,” says Hamza the warlock.

“Rope? The Oracle said that the room we’re looking for is pretty far down. Might be a climb.”

Gwyven the rogue holds up a fat coil. “I practically bought out the town supply. Hope it’s enough because I don’t think we’ll find any shops along the way.”

“Do we all have enough rations?”

“Food and water for seven days,” says Zidi the fighter, hiking her heavy pack on her shoulder. “If we’re not out of this dungeon by then, I don’t think we’re coming out.”

The adventurers consider those words as they stare into the forbidding darkness of the dungeon.

Heritages, Cultures, and Races

The following heritages and cultures use rules from *Level Up: Advanced 5E*. In these rules, instead of choosing a race, each player selects a heritage and a culture for their character. Neither heritage nor culture grants a bonus to a character's ability scores, but they offer other benefits, including a powerful Paragon Gift at level 10.

If you wish to create a 5E-style character instead, skip the heritages and cultures in this chapter. Instead, use appendix A, where each *Dungeon Delver's Guide* heritage (doppelganger, motley, mycelial, oozefolk, ratling, and rockborn) has a corresponding race suitable for use in a 5E game.

The subterranean realm is an unforgiving one. Those who venture into dark temples, trap-laden tombs, and endless caverns leave behind any hope of resupply or aid from the surface; they must rely on the meager supplies they can carry and on their own wits and abilities. This chapter is for players journeying into—or hailing from—these perilous caverns and labyrinths.

- For seven new heritages suitable for underground exploration, including the sewer-born ratling and the fungoid mycelial, see **Heritages**.
- For a list of cultures nurtured in the darkness of the earth, including the sunless mariner and the shape-changing faceless, see **Cultures**.
- To find an appropriate background for your dungeon dweller, from the driven deep hunter to the opportunistic dungeon robber, see **Backgrounds**.
- For a new dungeon-centric archetype for each core *Level Up* class, from the Arachnid Guardian adept to the Oozemancer wizard, see **Archetypes**.

- For new spelunking gear and new uses for old gear, see **Equipment**. This section also introduces new sets of cultural gear, such as tinker gnome automata, which are available only to tinker gnomes and their allies.
- New spells particularly useful for exploring dungeons can be found in **Spells**.

Heritages

Many of the species that dwell in Underland's winding caverns are little known on the surface world. Only the most well-traveled grimlocks, mycelials, oozefolk, rockborn, or motley have seen the light of the sun. Ratlings and doppelgangers, on the other hand, are familiar to, though rarely welcomed by, aboveground communities.

Doppelganger

With no facial features except pupil-less white eyes and a slash of a mouth, doppelgangers strike onlookers as uncanny in their blankness. However, doppelgangers are rarely seen in their true form.

Doppelgangers are shapechangers who can adopt the appearance of humanoids of any heritage or gender. While most doppelgangers can't invent a new identity out of nothing, they can imitate an existing person's voice and features so well that few can tell the difference between a doppelganger and the person it mimics. What's more, doppelgangers possess a preternatural sense for what other people are thinking, an intuition that eventually develops into the ability to magically read the thoughts of other creatures.

Like all people, doppelgangers aren't inherently evil, but powerful temptations lead some astray. When circumstance forces them to imitate another's face, doppelgangers have the opportunity to slip into that person's life, gaining the benefits of their property and privilege. Once they have done so, they must flee to evade detection—or eliminate the original and keep their life for themselves. Although some doppelgangers follow this path, others use a borrowed face to create a new self. Still others become adventurers, using their abilities to fight monsters and uncover dark secrets. Doppelgangers who resist the temptation to steal identities possess a quiet heroism that few truly appreciate.

Doppelganger Traits

Characters with the doppelganger heritage share the following traits:

Age. Doppelgangers age much as humans do, typically living a century or less. Their apparent age is a matter of choice.

Size. In their true form, doppelgangers can stand anywhere from 3 to 6 feet tall, but they can adopt the size and build of any Small or Medium humanoid. Your true size is Small or Medium.

Speed. Your Speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Shapeshifter. As an action, you can change your form and your voice to that of any Small or Medium humanoid creature you have seen before, or back into your true form. Your clothing and equipment are not transformed. You revert to your true form if you die.

Doppelganger Gifts

Doppelgangers are keen observers, with eyes that are able to see through darkness and sometimes into the minds of others. In addition to the traits found in your doppelganger heritage, select one of the following gifts.

Mindsight

Your deceptions and manipulations are aided by your eerie ability to understand what people are thinking. You gain an expertise die on Deception and Insight checks.

Telepathy

You can speak telepathically to any creature within 30 feet of you that you can see. The creature understands you only if the two of you share a language. You can speak telepathically in this way to one creature at a time.



Doppelganger Paragon

When you reach 10th level, you are an exemplar of doppelganger-kind, and you gain the following paragon gift.

Read Thoughts

As an action, you can magically read the surface thoughts of one creature within 60 feet that you can see. Additionally, until the end of your next turn, you have advantage on attack rolls and Deception, Insight, Intimidation, and Persuasion checks against the creature. You can use this trait a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Doppelganger Culture

Doppelgangers are widely distrusted. The existence of a creature with the ability to take another's form, and perhaps even read minds, is a horror to anyone with even the most innocuous of secrets. Doppelgangers are targets of intense paranoia and are banned from many communities; when they are discovered, they are often imprisoned or executed on the spot.

Most doppelgangers live in hiding and have had to rely on their parents and immediate family to teach them who they are. Others come to terms with their powers without any help at all. There has never been a doppelganger census. Still, some manage to find each other, and many cities unknowingly host a loose society of doppelgangers who gather in secret for protection and support.

Doppelgangers know as little about their origins as they do their numbers. However, rumors tell of a place far underground where doppelgangers walk freely in their true forms. Many doppelgangers venture into caves and dungeons in search of this mythical land.

Suggested Cultures

While you can choose any culture for your doppelganger character, the following cultures are linked closely with this heritage: cosmopolitan, faceless, itinerant, kithbáin halfling, Underlander.

Motley

Most people assume a motley's appearance is the result of some ancient curse, a horrible experiment, or the vestiges of wild magic running through their veins. Perhaps all these theories are correct. Whatever their true origins, today motley are not merely a haphazard collection of unfortunate individuals—as their varied physiologies might suggest—but a heritage of their own.

While every motley has a head, two legs, and a pair of arms, that is where their similarities end. At least one of a motley's arms always ends in a humanoid hand, but the others are those of different creatures—a gazelle's leg, a bear's forearm, and the like. Likewise, their faces are a patchwork of flesh taken from various beasts. Given a motley's startling appearance, other people are usually shocked when a motley utters words instead of chittering or growling.

Age. Natural-born motley mature quickly. After 7 to 10 years, they reach adulthood and choose a name unique to them. Some are said to live for centuries before dying of old age, but on average a motley's lifespan is around 200 years.

Size. You are between 5 and 7 feet tall and weigh anywhere from 150 to 250 pounds. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your Speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Motley Senses. You are proficient in Perception and gain an expertise die on Perception checks.

Natural Weapon. You gain a natural weapon, such as claws, horns, or teeth. Choose slashing, piercing, or bludgeoning damage. Your unarmed strikes deal 1d6 + Strength modifier damage of that type.

Motley Gifts

Despite your ungainly appearance, one of your animal features gives you a beast's grace. Select one of the options below.

Long Arms

During your turn, your reach with melee weapons is 5 feet greater than normal.

Long Legs

Your Speed increases to 40 feet. In addition, you gain an expertise die on saving throws made to resist being knocked prone.

Prehensile Tail

You have a tail that grants you an expertise die on checks made to balance, climb, or make Sleight of Hand checks. Your tail can carry objects weighing up to 5 pounds, but it can't wield a weapon or use a shield. In addition, you gain advantage on saving throws to avoid falling.



Motley Paragon

Starting at 10th level, you become a paragon of motleykind. You gain the following benefit.

Mutation. You gain a second Motley Gift.

Additionally, you gain one of the following traits.

Brachiator

You gain a climb speed equal to your Speed and an expertise die on Athletics checks.

Predator Weapons

The damage from your unarmed strikes increases to 1d8 + your Strength modifier, and your unarmed strikes are magical. When you hit a creature your size or smaller with your unarmed strike, you can choose to grapple that creature.

Fishkind

You grow gills and are able to breathe both water and air. In addition, you develop fins and gain a swim speed equal to your Speed.

In addition, you are slippery. You gain an expertise die on checks and saving throws made to escape a grapple.

Motley Culture

Motley are rarely embraced by the communities they are born into, leading many to embark upon an exile's journey for places more accepting of their strange nature. The few motley who reside in heavily populated areas often live as outcasts, struggling simply to survive. Knowing all too well the true nature of hardship, it's rare for a motley to be overtly cruel, but those who are soon earn a fearful reputation.

Motley must be creative to overcome their many disadvantages. When faced with a problem, they often find solutions no other person would conceive. Though many people can't see past a motley's animalistic appearance—assuming them no more intelligent than a mindless beast—motley can be as clever and quick-witted as any other people.

Suggested Cultures

While you can choose any culture for your motley character, the following cultures are linked closely with this heritage: caravanner, forgotten folx, forsaken, itinerant, lone wanderer, nomad, motley crew, tyrannized, underharvester, Underlander, wildling.

Mycelial

According to their legends, mycelials were woven from the hair and melodies of the gods. Before the first morning dawned, they lived beneath the stars and moonlight, delving deep and tasting the many flavors of earth, soil, and stone. When the sun was born, fiery and bright, the mycelials missed its birth, and it's said the sun has never forgiven this slight. While some mycelials do venture to the surface world, most avoid sunlight, preferring instead the cool dark of Underland.

Mycelials are a small, curious fungus-folk, resembling capped mushrooms with thick legs and dark, pupilless eyes. They eat rock and ore, breaking minerals down with powerful natural acids and collecting hard, inedible crystals and gemstones for trade. They speak in reedy whispers by pushing air through their gills, allowing them to sing beautiful, quiet songs.

Many Underland creatures regard mycelial as prey. As a result, mycelial tend to be cautious, observing newcomers from a distance before approaching. They use their spore clouds on strangers whose intentions are unknown.

Mycelial Traits

Characters with the mycelial heritage share a variety of traits in common with one another.

Age. Mycelials grow from spores and mature quickly. In mycelial communities, a sporeling is considered an adult by the age of 3. They usually live about 30 years, although mycelials who form bonds with longer-lived creatures have been known to live as long as the creatures they're bonded with.

Size. Mycelial bodies are diverse, ranging from squat to slender. They stand between 2 and 5 feet tall and are dense for their size, weighing 60 pounds on average. Your size is Small.

Speed. Your Speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Plant. You are a plant in addition to a humanoid. So long as rocks and soil are available, you can sustain yourself without other sources of food, although you still require water. While exploring, you consume 1 Supply every other day before suffering fatigue.

Soft Bodied. You can squeeze or contort through spaces as if you were one size category smaller than you are.

Spore Cloud. Mycelials naturally produce poisonous spores, which they can use to attack or defend themselves.

You can use a bonus action to release a puff of poisonous spores in a 5-foot-radius area centered on you. The spores lightly obscure the area and linger in air or water for 1 minute or until dispersed by a strong wind or current. Non-plant



creatures that enter the area for the first time on a turn or start their turn there must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 1d6 poison damage and is poisoned until the end of its next turn. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier. The poison damage increases to 2d6 at 4th level, 3d6 at 9th level, 4d6 at 14th level, and 5d6 at 19th level.

Once a creature has been affected by the spores, it is immune to this effect for 24 hours. You can use this trait a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Mycelial Gifts

Mycelials fungus biology and underground adaptations offer a diversity of talents. Choose one of the following heritage gifts.

Adaptability

You can change your body to survive various environments. You gain resistance to poison damage. In addition, whenever you finish a long rest, you can choose one of the following forms:

- **Amphibious.** You can breathe underwater and gain a swim speed equal to your walking speed.
- **Arboreal.** You gain a climb speed equal to your walking speed. When you fall, you can use your reaction to float gently to the ground, taking no damage from the fall.
- **Cold Adapted.** You gain resistance to cold damage.
- **Heat Adapted.** You gain resistance to fire damage.

You remain in your new form until you use this ability again. You can benefit from only one form at a time.

Overactive Enzymes

You can release a splash of digestive enzymes to harm your foes. You gain the *acid splash* cantrip, which you can cast without requiring components. Your spellcasting ability for this cantrip is your choice of Charisma, Constitution, Intelligence, or Wisdom.

You can also use your digestive enzymes to dig. You have a burrowing speed of 10 feet and can move through nonmagical earth and stone, but not solid rock. You don't leave a tunnel behind unless you spend time and effort to shore up the tunnel, reducing your burrow speed to 5 feet every 15 minutes.

Mycelial Paragon

When you reach 10th level, you are an exemplar of mycelial-kind. You gain the following paragon gift.

Specialized Spores

Creatures affected by your Spore Cloud no longer become immune to it. Additionally, once per day when you create the cloud you can choose one of the following conditions:

- Charmed
- Confused
- Frightened

While poisoned by your spore cloud, a creature is also affected by the chosen condition.

Mycelial Culture

Mycelials live moment to moment, enjoying the sensations of their environment. They value community and love sharing stories and songs.

Mycelials are short-lived and don't reproduce in large numbers, allowing them to maintain a stable or slowly growing population. Because they reproduce by spores, sometimes a meld of mycelials will spring up long after their ancestors have died or abandoned the area.

Mycelials form strong friendships and familial bonds, even with people from other heritages. They adapt themselves to the societies around them, finding niches where they can live their peaceful lives. When threatened with conflict, they are generally avoidant, moving to new areas rather than engaging in violence. Most mycelials don't feel a strong connection to any specific location, viewing the whole world as their home.

Suggested Cultures

While you can choose any culture for your mycelial character, the following cultures are linked closely with this heritage: meld-member, underharvester, Underlander.

Oozefolk

Death flows down in the tunnels of Underland. But when natural processes or bizarre, arcane energies grant a puddle of blood and ichor the spark of life, the puddle evolves into an ooze. Sometimes, the resulting ooze even awakens into sentience, becoming something stranger still: an oozefolk.

Many Uplanders find oozefolk difficult to look upon. Though they have four limbs and a head like other humanoids, their faces are a conglomeration of strange protuberances shaped into rough facsimiles of eyes, ears, nose, and mouth. Though they can see, hear, and smell as well as any other creature, their features are capable of creating only the most basic expressions. Perhaps most unsettling is the oozefolk's translucent skin—many a sage has spent decades trying to determine something substantive about the swirl of organs beneath their jelly-like exteriors, and all have definitively failed.

Oozefolk Traits

Characters with the oozefolk heritage share the following traits:

Age. An oozefolk's alien mind develops rapidly, soaking up knowledge like a sponge and reaching maturity in only half a year. However, the consciousness that holds together their slimy body can sustain the effort only so long. The oldest known oozefolk lived for 50 years, but most die after only a few decades.

Size. Your height and weight are determined by your first Hit Die. If your first Hit Die is a d6 or a d8, you stand between 2 and 3 feet tall, weigh anywhere from 70 to 130 pounds, and are Small. Otherwise, you are between 4 and 7 feet tall, weigh 200 to 500 pounds, and are Medium.

Speed. Your Speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Immutable Form. You have advantage on saving throws against effects that would alter your form.

Telepathy. You can speak telepathically to any creature within 30 feet of you that you can see. The creature understands you only if the two of you share a language. You can speak telepathically in this way to one creature at a time.

Oozefolk Gifts

The nature of an oozefolk's creation gives them a variety of strange qualities that differ from one to another. Choose two of the following:

Amorphous Body

While you are unarmored and not carrying any items, you can pass through an opening as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Jelly-Faced

You gain an expertise die on Deception checks. In addition, expertise dice you gain on Deception checks can be upgraded from a d8 to a d10 or from a d10 to a d12.



Psychic Resistance

You have resistance to psychic damage. Additionally, you gain proficiency with Intelligence saving throws.

Oozefolk Paragon

Starting at 10th level, you become a paragon of oozekind. You can use your climb speed even on difficult surfaces and upside down on ceilings. In addition, you gain one of the following traits.

Corrosive Body

You can use a bonus action to bubble corrosive liquids to the surface of your body or to draw them back in. While corrosive, a creature that touches you or hits you with a melee attack while within 5 feet of you takes acid damage equal to your proficiency bonus. In addition, your natural weapons and unarmed strikes deal an extra 1d4 acid damage.

Transparent Body

Your body is made of a substance as clear as water. You gain the following traits.

Invisible Focus. You can use an action to focus, spreading your transparent qualities to your equipment and any items you are carrying. You become invisible for 1 minute or until you lose concentration (as if concentrating on a spell). Once you have used this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.

Transparent. While you are unarmored, you have advantage on Stealth checks made to hide from creatures unaware of your presence.

Oozefolk Culture

Born spontaneously in the planet's lightless depths, newly spawned oozefolk are incredibly sensitive to other sentient minds. They may follow Underland travelers unnoticed for months or years as they learn what it means to be a living, thinking being. Even so, these strange people are known for being adaptable and fearless in the face of the unknown. They are just as willing to undertake a daunting new challenge as they are to abandon something that's proven to be beyond their capabilities.

As soon as an oozefolk reaches maturity, they feel their life force start to wane. Certain that death is fast approaching, it's only natural that they make their time in the world as significant as possible. Their freakish appearance makes them outcasts in most societies. Fortunately, they are well suited to a life of travel, and groups of adventurers are often quick to recognize the many advantages of an oozefolk's unusual biology.

Suggested Cultures

While you can choose any culture for your oozefolk character, the following cultures are linked closely with this heritage: kithbáin halfling, lone wanderer, nomad, motley crew, underharvester, Underlander, wildling.

Ratling

Ratlings are intelligent, rodent-like humanoids with gray, black, brown, or white fur and naked pink tails. They walk upright and from a distance could even be mistaken for halflings—if one overlooks their narrow snouts, long whiskers, and sharp, protruding teeth.

With twitchy reflexes and relatively short lifespans, ratlings tend to value quick thinking over careful deliberation. A plan seldom survives contact with a ratling. A sudden inspiration or temptation can inspire impromptu "improvements" that alter a scheme beyond recognition. Those not comfortable with improvisation are well advised to avoid ratling partners.

Ratlings' origins are not clear, although historical record suggests that they came into being relatively recently—perhaps only a few hundred years ago. Some believe that ratlings originated as giant rats in wizards' laboratories, although this theory is often advanced along with a demand that the local wizard make amends for ratling thefts. Another theory holds that ratlings are the descendants of wererats. Certainly, ratlings sometimes share the sewers with wererats and are often mistaken for them. Most ratlings believe a third story, speaking of a long-ago rat hero whose mighty deeds earned the approval of the gods and was elevated to a demigod before becoming the ancestor of all ratling peoples.

Whether the scions of arcane experiments, lycanthropic bloodlines, or a semi-divine hero, ratlings owe nothing to their progenitors. Often disrespected by larger folk, they make sure to take the food and the space they feel is due to them.

Ratling Traits

Characters with the ratling heritage share the following traits:

Age. Descended relatively recently from a short-lived species, ratlings live quickly and with gusto. They mature to adulthood around age 14 and can live as long as 60 years.

Size. Ratlings average around 3 feet tall and weigh between 40 and 60 pounds. Your size is Small.

Speed. Your Speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You cannot discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Keen Smell. Ratlings have survived by being able to scent out predators and food sources. You have proficiency in Perception and gain an expertise die on Perception checks that rely on smell.

Poison Tolerance. You are immune to ingested poison.

Ratling Gifts

Ratlings are known for traveling in hungry packs. In addition to the traits found in your ratling heritage, select one of the following gifts.

Bottomless Appetite

Your appetite is insatiable. Although you enjoy fine cuisine as much as anyone else, you can also eat foods that others can't stomach. Even when you're at death's door, food restores your strength and vitality.

Grab a Quick Bite. You can eat and digest huge quantities of food in seconds. If you have sufficient food for one day (1 Supply), you can eat it as an action. When you do so, you gain temporary hit points equal to twice your proficiency bonus. You can use this trait a number

of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Strength in Numbers

You are adept at working in a team. Whether in combat or in other pursuits, you are quick to exploit any advantage your companions create.

Group Tactics. You can make an ability check with advantage as part of a group check. Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you've taken a short or long rest.

Rat Swarm. Once on your turn, you can reroll an attack roll against a target within 30 feet if another creature has made a melee attack against the same target since the end of your last turn. You can use this trait a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Ratling Paragon

When you reach 10th level, you are an exemplar of ratling-kind, and you gain the following paragon gift.

Lucky Escape

You are adept at avoiding the negative consequences of others' hostility and your own unwise actions. Whenever you make a saving throw you are not proficient in, you gain a bonus to the roll equal to half your proficiency bonus (rounded down).

Ratling Culture

Small collectives of ratlings can be found anywhere. Some make their livings as itinerant merchants, entertainers, or pirates, while others live quiet existences in villages made up of neat, half-sized cottages. Most ratlings, however, skulk in the sewers and alleyways of large cities. In many urban areas, they have an unsavory reputation as thieves with no regard for private property, especially where food is concerned. Indeed, ratlings have tremendous appetites, and a hungry ratling let loose in a bakery or granary can eat as much as several humans twice their size. While some communities make sure that all their citizens, including ratlings,

are well-fed, others wage war upon their ratling population, attacking them on sight or banishing them to the sewers.

Some wealthy ratlings disdain the lifestyles of their scruffy, subterranean cousins, making sure to remain urbane and well-groomed at all times. These so-called “fancy ratlings” must fight for their place in high society. They resent insults and openly challenge anyone who levels slurs like “gutter rat” or who dirties their immaculate clothes or fur.

Nearly all ratlings share a love of community. Most ratlings can be found living in close quarters with their extended ratling family, holding food and possessions in common. Sometimes, a ratling adopts a non-ratling group as their pack. A ratling member of a guild or adventuring party will be loyal and selfless, and will expect the same from their fellows.

Suggested Cultures

While you can choose any culture for your ratling character, the following cultures are linked closely with this heritage: circusfolk, cosmopolitan, mischief maker, sewer rat.

Rockborn

Those unfamiliar with rockborn believe they are nothing more than quirky earth elementals. While motionless, they are sometimes mistaken for statues, or perhaps the remains of an adventurer petrified long ago. Though obviously born from the rock, the true history of these people is more complicated. Some believe that rockborn formed at the center of the earth at the dawn of time; at the very least, they have been around long enough to witness the rise and fall of untold empires.



In their natural forms, rockborn do indeed resemble earth elementals. However, those keen to fit in among Uplanders sometimes endure a lengthy procedure in which parts of their bodies are chiseled away until they resemble the people of the society they seek to enter. Even the most slender rockborn is heavier than the stoutest dwarf, and though they appear brittle, they are rarely so. An individual rockborn's skin tone often varies, like the striations found in stone. Their facial features, however, tend to settle into a single expression as they age. A reflective and dour rockborn appears sad on their deathbed, while a jovial one meets eternal rest with a smile on their face.

Rockborn Traits

Characters with the rockborn heritage share the following traits:

Age. Physically, rockborn are fully formed from their first moment of consciousness. However, rockborn children may take a century or more to fully mature. Some say that rockborn are immortal, but in truth most live only 1,000 years before they crumble and return to the earth from which they sprang.

Size. Rockborn are between 4 and 6 feet tall and weigh anywhere from 200 to 800 pounds. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your Speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Rock. As a being made from stone, you are immune to the petrified condition.

Roll. You can use a bonus action to curl into a boulder, or an action to uncurl. While in boulder form your Speed is reduced to 0, and you cannot use a shield, make attacks, use your arms, or cast spells with seen components.

While in boulder form you can use an action to roll yourself in a straight line up to 30 feet, or 60 feet down a decline. While rolling you can attempt to enter the spaces of creatures up to one size larger than you, forcing each to make a Dexterity saving throw against your maneuver DC. On a failure, a creature or object takes bludgeoning damage equal to 1d4 + your Strength modifier. If a creature succeeds on its saving throw, you do not enter its space and your movement stops.

Rockborn Gifts

Every rockborn's connection to the rock is different, granting them a particular talent or defense that sets them apart from less earthly mortals. Choose one of the following.

Rockamouflage

You are proficient with Stealth. You gain an expertise die on Stealth checks made to hide in a rocky environment. Your companions also gain this expertise die, provided you can see them and they are within 30 feet of you.

Stone Armaments

Stone speaks to you in a way that's hard to describe. You can repair stone weapons and armor by making a DC 15 mason's tools check. In addition, if you have an expertise die on an attack roll made using a stone weapon, you increase that die one step (from 1d4 to 1d6, 1d6 to 1d8, and so on).



Rockborn Paragon

Starting at 10th level, you become a paragon of rockborn-kind. You gain one of the following paragon gifts.

Rocking Roll

The damage dealt by your Roll trait increases to 1d12 + your Strength modifier. Objects take double damage from your Roll, and a creature that fails its saving throw is also knocked prone. In addition, once on your turn while rolling you can make a DC 15 Acrobatics or Athletics check, changing the direction of the rest of your movement up to 180 degrees.

Stonemeld

You gain a burrow speed equal to half your Speed. You can burrow only through nonmagical, unworked earth and stone, but your movement does not disturb the ground.

Rockborn Culture

Living such an incredibly long time prompts rockborn to carefully consider the implications of every action they take, a mindset utterly alien to more short-lived peoples. This legendary patience has given rockborn a reputation for being dedicated, and indeed rockborn often undertake tasks that require centuries to complete, such as carving a statue from a mountain or terraforming a valley until the river that runs through it changes course.

Rockborn can't seem to avoid ambitious goals, though not all such tasks involve the carving of stone. Some of the most remarkable spells are the creations of rockborn mages, and rockborn who meddle in mortal affairs may treat entire dynasties as pawns in political manipulations that take generations to reach fruition. Regardless of their interests, it's always wise to treat a rockborn with respect, as a feud with one can last a lifetime or longer.

Suggested Cultures

While you can choose any culture for your rockborn character, the following cultures are linked closely with this heritage: carven, collegiate, cosmopolitan, deep dwarf, deep gnome, lone wanderer, nomad, stoneworthy, tunnel halfling, underharvester, Underlander.

Cultures

The following cultures are more often encountered beneath the earth than above it. Some of these cultures are closely identified with a particular heritage, while others are more general. No heritage is monocultural, however; any culture may include creatures of any heritage, and vice versa.

Carven

The mind of a rockborn can't help but wander to the question of what they are and where they came from. As patient appreciators of time, rockborn know well the value of coordinated effort, so it's only natural for them to join together into a community. Carven societies dedicate themselves to carving the legends of their people into underground natural formations. Anyone with a passion for history or an appreciation for stonework is welcomed into their fold, as the more hands they have to carve the rock, the closer they come to the truth. Carven communities hold different beliefs about the origins of the rockborn, each vying for more adherents and more evidence



to support their claims. Some think they are elementals born from errant magic, others that they are the literal children of the planet. Still others believe that rockborn are statues bestowed with life by the Forge God or the creations of forgotten dwarven empires from eons ago.

Characters raised in the carven culture share a variety of traits in common with one another.

Rock Training. You gain proficiency with rocks as improvised weapons, and in your hands a Tiny rock deals 1d6 + your Strength modifier bludgeoning damage and has the thrown property (40/80 feet).

Stonecarver. You are proficient with mason's tools and gain an expertise die on checks made to carve stone.

Stonecunning. Whenever you make a History check related to the origin of stonework, you are considered proficient in the History skill and gain an expertise die.

Tough. Your hit point maximum increases by 1, and it increases by 1 every time you gain a level.

Languages. You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and Terran.

Faceless

The Faceless is a collective of doppelgangers and other shapechangers who share information and defend each other from harm.

The Faceless come from all walks of life, counting among their number thieves, adventurers, merchants, and even royalty. Each knows the true identities of those in their immediate circle, as well as the names of a few far-flung Faceless. Every Faceless swears to never knowingly hurt or expose their fellows. Beyond that, they share no common goals, and indeed their aims may even be opposed. A Faceless conclave that shelters doppelganger con artists may also include a skinchanger druid that disapproves of their deceptions, even as they protect the doppelgangers' lives and false identities.



With each member able to adopt many guises, a Faceless enclave naturally becomes a storehouse of secrets. Members of a Faceless community often share these secrets, as well as the magical tricks they use to protect their identities.

Characters raised in the Faceless culture share a variety of traits in common with one another.

Quick Change. You can change clothes, assume a disguise, or doff armor as an action.

Secret Lives. By asking around, you can learn the identities of any Faceless operating in a community, and whether the activities of a non-Faceless shapechanger are suspected. Furthermore, you make Investigation checks to gather rumors with advantage.

Stealthy Enchantment. You know the *friends* cantrip. Once you reach 3rd level, you can cast *charm person* once per long rest. You can cast these spells without components, and when casting them your spellcasting ability is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

Subtlety. You are proficient with your choice of either Deception, Insight, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth.

Languages. You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and three other languages.

Grimlock

It is a testament to the human spirit that, when a group of engineers became trapped underground thousands of years ago, they found a way to survive instead of dying terrified in the dark. Their descendants started being born without eyes, becoming the first grimlocks. Even the name “grimlock,” a reference to the grim fate of being locked in the earth, speaks to the ingenuity and grit of these brave souls. In the generations since the first grimlock was born, eyelessness has become a trait that parents can pass on to their children, even if they do not live in the depths of the earth.

Grimlocks live an isolated existence heavy with responsibility. Tasked with the self-imposed duty of keeping the geology of the regions they inhabit stable (a response to the tragedy that created their society) they build communities that run on reliable schedules and provide routine training for all.

They are a serious people, but not a joyless one, and their respect for innovation and problem solving has allowed them to not only persist for centuries, but to achieve levels of advancement unseen on the surface.

The original grimlocks were made up entirely of humans, but over time they absorbed people of other heritages who were willing to take up the responsibility of stabilizing the earth. Grimlocks welcome anyone who can adapt to unlit environments and is willing to help their community. Modern grimlock communities are surprisingly diverse, given their isolation. Those who lack darkvision often go blind in the lightless tunnels of a grimlock community, but their other senses sharpen to compensate.

Characters raised in the grimlock culture share the following traits:

Grimlock Training. Specialized training has equipped you to aid your community. Choose one of the following:

- **Maintenance.** You gain proficiency in the Engineering skill and with tinker’s tools.
- **Medic.** You gain proficiency in the Medicine skill and with herbalist’s kits.
- **Security.** You gain proficiency with the Stealth skill and with shortswords and shotguns.

Whatever’s At Hand. Underland is a dangerous place, and grimlocks learn to defend themselves with whatever’s handy, such as tools like pry bars and wrenches. You gain proficiency with improvised weapons.

Lightless Expertise. You never suffer disadvantage for being unable to see while making skill checks, so long as one of your other senses (such as touch or hearing) can compensate.

Languages. You can speak Common and Undercommon and you can read Grimlock texture writing, which uses the words and grammar of Undercommon. Because most grimlocks lack traditional sight, blind members of their society are not taught the written or signed forms of the languages they use to communicate. Grimlocks with darkvision learn the written and signed forms of Common and Undercommon normally.

Additionally, many grimlocks (especially those of human, halfling, or dragonborn heritage) do not have eyes; their faces are smooth where their eyes would usually be, and their skulls lack eye sockets. The following traits are most commonly seen in grimlocks whose heritages lack the darkvision ability. If you wish, you gain the following traits:

Blind. You are permanently blind and can’t see beyond the range of your blindsight. You can’t benefit from any ability or magical effect that would grant you visual sight or darkvision.

Your inability to see, however, is not without its advantages. You are immune to any illusion spell that relies on vision, such as blur, darkness, or invisibility, and you are also immune to attacks and effects that require meeting a creature’s eyes, such as a medusa’s petrifying gaze. Additionally, you gain an expertise die on Perception checks that don’t rely on sight.

Echolocation. While you are not deafened, you have blindsight with a range of 60 feet. You count as being able to see targets within the range of your echolocation.

Sensitive Ears. Any time you take thunder damage, you make a Constitution save against a DC of 10 or half the damage taken, whichever is higher. On a failure, you are deafened until the end of your next turn.

Meld-Member

Mycelial communities tend to be simple, consisting of family groups known as melds that live deep underground. Meld-members are curious but cautious. They know Underland is full of dangers, and thus approach unfamiliar creatures and people with considered care.

Mycelials maintain a strong oral tradition focused on passing on their songs and stories. They engage in trade with other peoples, exchanging the gems they uncover while eating softer ores for whatever they might need.

Characters raised in the meld-member culture share a variety of traits in common with one another.

Cautious Approach. You gain proficiency in Stealth. As long as you don't move more than 10 feet in a turn, you gain an expertise dice on Stealth checks.

Songs of the Circle. You've learned the songs and stories of your meld. You gain proficiency in History and Performance, and with one musical instrument of your choice.

Superior Darkvision. You are used to living in the dark and can see further in darkness and dim light than others of your kind. You have darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. If you already had darkvision, its range increases to 120 feet instead.

Spore Fortitude. Long exposure to mycelial spores has improved your ability to resist poisons. You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance to poison damage.

Languages. You can speak, read, write, and sign Common, Undercommon, and Mycelial.

Mischief Maker

A group of ratlings is called a "mischief"—for good reason, as many hapless victims of ratling pranks will tell you. Mischiefs of ratlings travel from place to place, mocking the mighty, shocking the stuffy, thwarting the wicked, and helping themselves to food and luxuries along the way.

A mischief often has a reason for traveling besides pleasure-seeking. Some ratling clans are skilled musicians or troupes of actors. Others are tinkers or traders, wicked pirates, or even altruistic out-

laws who protect the downtrodden. What every mischief shares is a communal social structure and mutual trust. Mischief ratlings constantly improvise, taking cues from each other as they engage in elaborate hijinks, with little thought for the long-term consequences.

Mischief makers lead thrill-seeking, exuberant lives and leave chaos in their wake. Discontent members of more staid communities, especially teens, often envy their freedom and impudence. A traveling mischief can collect humans, elves, gnomes, and other folks unsatisfied with their lives.

Characters raised in the mischief maker culture share a variety of traits in common with one another.

Follow My Lead. When you are involved in a group skill check, you are treated as proficient in the skill if anyone in the group is proficient in the skill.

Sudden Retreat. When a creature makes an opportunity attack against you, it does so with disadvantage.

Table for One. If you are Small, you can make a Deception check or use a disguise kit to appear to be Medium while standing on another Small humanoid's shoulders.

Tricks of the Trade. You are proficient in Deception, Performance, or Sleight of Hand, or with disguise kits (your choice).

Languages. You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and two other languages.

Motley Crew

Though every motley is unique, they share much in common and find comfort in each other's company. What develops from there is a loving community that is accepting of all types of people, embracing exiles, outcasts, and anyone else who seeks a peaceful life. Motley collectives may be permanent settlements or nomadic caravans, but no matter what form they take, all collectives value cooperation. In a motley collective, each member's peculiarity is turned into a strength. Someone with a monstrous pincer, for example, might help prepare pelts and construct dwellings, while a person with keen senses acts as a scout or guard. Those raised in a motley collective often make excellent adventurers, as they are quick to recognize able allies and opportunities that others would pass over.

Characters raised in a motley crew share a variety of traits in common with one another.

Expert Cooperator. When you use the Help action to aid another creature make an ability check, they also gain an expertise die.

Mimicry. You can mimic animal sounds and humanoid voices. A creature that hears the sounds can tell they are imitations with a successful Insight check against a DC of 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Wisdom modifier.

Steady Nerves. You are immune to the rattled condition.

Motley Weapon Training. You have proficiency with the light hammer, maul, warhammer, and war pick.

Superior Darkvision. You are used to living in the dark and can see further in darkness and dim light than others of your kind. You have darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. If you already had darkvision, its range increases to 120 feet instead.

Languages. You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and Undercommon.

Sewer Rat

Sewer rats are ratlings who live by their wits in the most inhospitable parts of cities. They venture out at night in search of food and other necessities, stealing whatever they can't scavenge. Able to wriggle through tiny spaces and laughing at locks, sewer rats operate much like a thieves' guild—albeit one more interested in food than riches.

Sewer rats make no distinction between scavenging from garbage piles and stealing from bakeries and warehouses. If something's not being used, it's fair game. It's hard to keep rats out of a storeroom, especially if the rats have nimble brains, access to thieves' tools, and more than a passing familiarity with magical defenses.

When sewer rats do take something valuable, they're happy to return it. Tolerant cities sometimes host a "sewer rat bazaar" where owners of stolen items can reclaim their property in exchange for colorful feathers or sweet treats.



While most sewer rats are ratlings, any humanoid willing to turn their back on polite society may be welcomed into a sewer rat enclave. Fugitives, exiles, and orphans alike can find companionship among a ratling family.

Characters raised in the sewer rat culture share a variety of traits in common with one another.

Dirty Rat. You make saving throws against disease with advantage.

Maze Runner. You can't become lost while retracing a route within 10 feet of a wall or cliff.

Sewer Born. You gain either a swim speed or a climb speed (your choice) equal to your Speed.

Sewer Sneak. You are proficient with thieves' tools and your choice of the Arcana, Acrobatics, Athletics, or Stealth skill.

Languages. You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and one other language.

Sunless Mariner

The oceans of Underland are sailed by an eclectic mix of merchants, pirates, explorers, adventurers, and agents of the various underground factions. While less affected by extreme weather than their surface counterparts, these subterranean seas possess hazards of their own, and those who sail them (and survive) are made resourceful and resilient indeed. Sunless mariners spend most of their lives on (or under) the water, operating boats and submarines on the shipping lanes that link Underland's ports. Crews of sunless mariners are sometimes all one heritage, but more often they are an eclectic mix of the people who make their homes underground. Elves, grimlocks, gnomes, dwarves, ratlings, and many others live side by side on these vessels, combining their talents to prevail against the unforgiving depths.

Unlike surface-world sailors, sunless mariners always know how to swim. It is not uncommon for a contingent of mariners to swim alongside their vessel, hauling it with ropes through narrow passages. Many ships that sail the sunless seas feature airlock-like chambers or magical fields that allow humanoids to enter the ship beneath the water.

Characters raised in the sunless mariner culture share a variety of traits in common with one another.

Resilient Lungs. Repeated underwater forays have strengthened your lungs. You can hold your breath for twice as long as normal.

Lightless Perception. If you do not have darkvision, you gain darkvision with a range of 60 feet. If you already have darkvision, its range increases to 120 feet.

Strong Swimmer. You gain an expertise die on Athletics checks related to swimming.

Sailor. You gain proficiency with water vehicles.

Water Magic. You know the *mending* cantrip. Once you reach 3rd level, you can cast *gust of wind* once per long rest. You can cast these spells without components, and when casting them your spellcasting ability is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

Languages. You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and Undercommon. You can also read and write Grimlock texture writing.

Underharvester

One of the most difficult aspects of life in Underland is finding enough food to eat—or protecting what food one can find. An underharvester is someone who's mastered the practice of gathering food in the harshest of environments, learning by painful experience (or wise lessons) what food is safe to eat. Mushrooms in particular are a valuable resource for underharvesters, something they take with them whenever they travel to a new area. Whiling away so many hours in the quiet darkness makes underharvesters an introspective lot, as does their penchant for using mushrooms to make their lives more enjoyable. Underharvesters use mushrooms in ways many others find quite odd, from mildly poisoning themselves to stay warm in the subterranean cold, filling their bellies with mushrooms with no nutritional value in order to stave off hunger pangs, or ingesting hallucinogenic spores for recreation or religious purposes.

Characters raised in the underharvester culture share a variety of traits in common with one another.

Expert Forager. Once per long rest, you can spend 4 hours of time to locate Supply for yourself and one other creature, or magical reagents worth up to 5 gold.

Shroomfinder. You gain advantage on checks made to find and identify mushrooms, as well as on checks made to cook mushrooms or use them as alchemical ingredients. In addition, you gain an expertise die on attack rolls and saving throws against plant creatures.

Sporekeeper. You keep on your person a number of pouches filled with various kinds of mushroom spores. When you have access to these pouches and use a medicinal, the medicinal's duration is doubled.

Languages. You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and Undercommon.

Underlander

Only the brave or foolhardy dare even the briefest foray into Underland, and few survive such treks long enough to make a habit of it. Underlanders are survivors through and through, having known the leanest of times in tunnels home to monsters and deadly traps alike. The harshness of subterranean life makes Underlanders extremely cautious about whom they trust, but once they form a bond with someone, their loyalty is ironclad. At the same time, Underlanders can be incredibly patient when danger is near—but when the moment to strike is at hand, theirs is sure.

Characters raised in the Underlander culture share a variety of traits in common with one another.

Ear for Echoes. You have blindsight out to a range of 10 feet. If you already had blindsight, its range increases by 10 feet.

Eat Like a Bird. You grew used to eating very little. You can go a number of days equal to half your Constitution modifier without suffering any fatigue from lack of Supply.

Tunnel Finder. You have advantage on checks made to navigate underground.

Superior Darkvision. You have darkvision out to a range of 60 feet. If you already had darkvision, its range increases to 120 feet instead.

Underlander. You gain an expertise die on checks made for journey activities while in Underland.

Languages. You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and Undercommon.

Backgrounds

When a party of heroes ventures into a dungeon or the caves of Underland, some of the adventurers may be doing so for the first time. Others are simply returning home. Below are backgrounds suitable for characters native to underground environments.

Deep Hunter

You are skilled at hunting monsters in underground environments. You have spent much of your training alone in the dark, honing your senses to pick out the slightest sound or notice the most subtle disturbance in loose sand. You are relentless in your pursuit, for you know the danger your quarry poses.

Are you a guardian of your community, or do you hunt for sport? Do you work alone, or do you hire yourself out as a guide for bored nobles in search of excitement? What monster have you sworn to catch?

Ability Score Increases: +1 to Wisdom and one other ability score.

Skill Proficiencies: Survival, and either Nature or Stealth.

Tool Proficiencies: Leatherworker's tools.

Suggested Equipment (Cost 12 gold): chalk, traveler's clothes, 2 hunting traps

Feature: Deep Lore. You've spent so much time underground that you have a natural feel for it. You always have a sense of how deep you are and which direction is north, provided that you've traveled in these regions before. You are

also generally aware of the physical and political geography of the region (e.g., "the old dwarf colony is this way and those tunnels are part of the wererat pack's hunting grounds"). You know where relatively safe places to camp are located and you can usually find fresh sources of water.

Adventures and Advancement: Once you've collected a few trophies from your hunts, people start offering you money in exchange for help against the subterranean monsters plaguing their communities. After a few such bounties, you gain the free service of up to 4 scouts (or scout variants). You can ask them to adventure with you or dispatch them to gather information on distant areas.

Connection and Memento. Roll 1d10, choose, or make up your own.

Deep Hunter Connections

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | The hunter that saved your life. |
| 2 | The rival hunter that pursues the same beast. |
| 3 | The rival hunter that took credit for your kill and branded you a liar. |
| 4 | The intelligent monster that mocks you every time it escapes your grasp. |
| 5 | The community or family that depends on you. |
| 6 | The city alchemist that pays well for your trophies. |
| 7 | A community of fey, deep gnome, or shadow elves that owe you their lives. |
| 8 | A monster you have befriended and sworn to protect. |
| 9 | The surface world ruler from whom you're hiding. |
| 10 | The monster that hunts you. |

Deep Hunter Mementos

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 | A prized bow string, arrow, whetstone, or other piece of equipment that has never let you down. |
| 2 | A locket containing the picture of a subterranean monster's victim. |
| 3 | An astonishing assortment of unusual jerkies. |
| 4 | A scar from the monster that got away. |
| 5 | Clothing bedecked with a dozen grisly trophies. |
| 6 | A lucky coin you flip when you're not sure of the way forward. |

Backgrounds in 5E

In *Level Up: Advanced 5E*, each background grants an ability score increase, as well as several new background benefits, such as connections and mementos.

If you're playing a 5E character, ignore the ability score increases in the following backgrounds. You can otherwise use the background as written, gaining a connection, a memento, and so on in place of the more common personality traits, ideals, flaws, and bonds.

- 7 The broken horn or tooth that nearly killed you.
- 8 A talking monster skull (you hear it talking, anyway).
- 9 A copper coin taken from a cavern filled with riches; you stumbled across the cavern while lost and have never found your way back.
- 10 A journal detailing your attempts to find a navigable passage to the Midnight Sea.

Dungeon Robber

You seek the treasures of empires long vanished. The world's dungeons are brimming with lost secrets and artifacts of unimaginable power—and they belong in a museum, or at least in your living room. While others call you a tomb robber, you consider yourself an archaeologist, a collector, or an explorer.

Are you associated with a wizards' college or institute of higher learning, or are you a private collector? Are you an idealist or a profiteer? What is the one relic or piece of knowledge that you'd trade anything to find?

Ability Score Increases: +1 to Intelligence and one other ability score.

Skill Proficiencies: History, and either Investigation or Religion.

Tool Proficiencies: Cartographers' tools.

Languages: Any six (three of them no longer spoken).

Suggested Equipment (Cost 18 gold): Cartographers' tools, miner's pick, traveler's clothes, shovel.

Feature: Unreliable Intelligence. You know conspiracy theorists, armchair historians, disgraced academics, and other people with useful, if unreliable, knowledge. While in a city, once per day you can find an NPC who can make an Intelligence check with a +10 bonus to recall a fact. When you do so, the Narrator secretly rolls a d6. On a 1, your contact's information is dangerously inaccurate.

Adventures and Advancement: As you build your reputation, shady people approach you with requests to "discover" items of uncertain ownership. After enough successes, a legitimate organization, such as a wizard's college

or esteemed museum, takes an interest in you. They offer you a position, which comes with funding granting a Wealthy lifestyle, access to free spellcasting services, and legal representation when you inevitably run afoul of the law.

Connection and Memento. Roll d10, choose, or make up your own.

Dungeon Robber Connections

- 1 A rival who always tries to steal what you rightfully find.
- 2 A rival who seeks powerful artifacts for evil ends.
- 3 A fence who can find a buyer for anything.
- 4 An underworld figure to whom you owe a staggering debt.
- 5 A master forger who can replicate plausible records of ownership, permissions to restricted areas, and so on.
- 6 An artist who can make perfect copies of artwork and paintings.
- 7 A collector who sends you after valuable curios.
- 8 Authorities who would like to question you about a relic's mysterious disappearance.
- 9 An admiring urchin who can get you anywhere in their city.
- 10 A rambling sage whose bizarre, shocking theories you half believe.

Dungeon Robber Mementos

- 1 A mysterious idol whose origin you seek.
- 2 A cultural item from Chapter 1: Equipment
- 3 A treasure map with no obvious connection to any known land mass.
- 4 An ancient piece of machinery that is undoubtedly very powerful, although all it currently does is light up.
- 5 A rare book that grants an expertise die on checks related to a specific civilization.
- 6 A gold coin bearing the face of a king who never existed.
- 7 Identification papers from the institution that has kicked you out.
- 8 A tablet carved with indecipherable glyphs.
- 9 A giant-sized key to an unknown door.
- 10 One piece of a seven-part artifact.

Escapee from Below

You spent long years captive to an Underland empire, where you grew accustomed to ways that aren't your own. You are now a stranger to your own people, having replaced their social mores with those you learned while underground. Your bizarre ways mystify them: you don't wake and sleep with the sun, you eat strange foods, and you often use words and phrases that they've never heard.

Who were your captors? Were they aboleth, deep dwarves, or even weirder creatures? Did you languish in a dungeon cell, or did you serve as a laborer, sailor, or gladiator? How did you escape? Do you have any unfinished business below the surface?

Ability Score Increases: +1 to Constitution and one other ability score.

Skill Proficiencies: Stealth, and either Perception or Survival.

Tool Proficiencies: Thieves' tools.

Suggested Equipment (Cost 25 gold): Common clothes, thieves' tools.

Feature: Alien Culture. Your prolonged captivity has granted you insight into the culture that kept you. You understand their customs, traditions, religion, political ties, and to some extent how they think. You are regarded as an expert in this culture and can usually recall some useful detail when you and your companions face a challenge involving this culture.

Adventures and Advancement: You find yourself drawn to the lands you once escaped. When you return there, you may have an opportunity to right wrongs or take revenge for past injuries. When you do, other escapees may look to you for leadership.

Connection and Memento. Roll d10, choose, or make up your own.

Escapee from Below Connections

- 1 The friend and fellow escapee from whom you were separated.
- 2 The family members who remain in captivity.
- 3 The cruel overseer who tortured you.
- 4 Members of an Underland resistance movement.
- 5 An evil commando squad that hunts escapees.
- 6 The kindly merchant who took you in when you first reached the surface.
- 7 A fellow prisoner, still in captivity, who claimed to be an heir to royalty.
- 8 The prominent merchant or politician you saw making deals with evil creatures in the Underland.
- 9 A mighty Underland creature with ambitions to conquer the surface world.
- 10 A ship captain who sails the Midnight Sea.

Escapee from Below Mementos

- 1 A partial map of your escape route.
- 2 Broken shackles or chains.
- 3 A precious heirloom, still hidden somewhere in Underland.
- 4 A delicious recipe (which no one would eat if they knew the ingredients).
- 5 A compass that points back where you came.
- 6 Twelve days worth of rations (dried mushrooms).
- 7 A tattoo that conceals the hidden routes and passwords you used to gain your freedom.
- 8 A trophy taken from the guard you overcame.
- 9 A strange board game or toy designed for hands with too many fingers.
- 10 A telepathic rat or other unusual pet.

Imposter

After a long period of captivity, you returned to the surface and were welcomed with open arms, despite your scars and aged appearance. You've resumed the life you left behind, re-establishing old connections. The only problem is, it's not your life to which you've returned—you are an imposter.

Whose identity did you adopt? Did you do so with their blessing, or did you leave them for dead? Might they return one day? If so, whose story will be believed?

Ability Score Increases: +1 to Charisma and one other ability score.

Skill Proficiencies: Deception, and either Perception or Survival.

Tool Proficiencies: Disguise kit.

Suggested Equipment (Cost 25 gold): Common clothes, disguise kit.

Feature: Cover Story. Whenever you struggle to maintain the masquerade that you are who you say, a surprising number of people are willing to help you through your “lapses of memory.” They might be deluding themselves, or perhaps they know your secret but provide you cover for reasons of their own. So long as you don't act completely out of character or get caught in an outrageous lie, you can usually find someone willing to cover for you. This cover most commonly takes the form of excuses for your strange behavior.

Adventures and Advancement: Each of your double's former acquaintances must be won over, until they like you more than they did your original. Even once that's accomplished, you won't truly be free of your past until you have reckoned with it. When evidence of your true nature surfaces—or when the person you are impersonating reappears—you must triumph in the court of public opinion. Once you have done so, you will have permanent, legal access to your former self's belongings, inheritance rights, and so on.

Connection and Memento. Roll d10, choose, or make up your own.

Imposter Connections

- 1 The accomplice who knows your secret and helps you for their own reasons.
- 2 The spouse or lover of your other self, whom you must win over.
- 3 The enemy of your other self, whose hatred you inherit.
- 4 Your other self's rich or noble relative, from whom you may inherit a fortune.
- 5 Your crooked former partner, who still searches for you, unaware of your new identity.
- 6 The Underland compatriot who knew both you and the person whose identity you stole.
- 7 The suspicious priest who noticed a change in your personality.
- 8 An acquaintance whose “inside joke” you pretend to understand.
- 9 The family pet that doesn't recognize you.
- 10 The person you left behind when you abandoned your old life.

Imposter Mementos

- 1 The precious diary containing your original self's secrets.
- 2 The locket or signet ring that proves your identity.
- 3 The scar that matches the one your original self had.
- 4 An anonymous blackmail letter.
- 5 An item that proves your real identity, which you keep hidden.
- 6 The fingerbone that whispers hints to you at opportune times.
- 7 The heirloom weapon you fraudulently wield.
- 8 Your trusty *hat of disguise*.
- 9 Your trusty *ring of mind shielding*.
- 10 The implements (useless to you) of your original self's magical training.

Archetypes

The following archetypes are excellent choices for use in a campaign in which dungeoneering and subterranean exploration are major themes—but a character with one of these archetypes can hold their own on the surface as well. Some of these archetypes are based on combat and magic traditions developed by underground dwellers; others were invented by treasure hunters and explorers.

Adept: Arachnid Guardian

Spiders are often regarded as frightening or dangerous—and indeed, they often are. But spiders also prey upon insects that destroy crops, gnaw at foundations, and carry disease. Arachnid guardians take inspiration from the positive aspects of spiders. Originally composed exclusively of shadow elves, today the order has expanded to include anyone who seeks to fight the dangers lurking in the darkness.

Archetypes in 5E

Each of the following archetypes (or subclasses) can be used in either 5E or *Level Up: Advanced 5E*. Some class names differ between the two games. If you're playing a monk, use the adept archetype, the Arachnid Guardian. A barbarian can use the berserker archetype, the Troll Slayer, and a paladin can use the herald archetype, the Stone Warden.

Some of the archetypes below refer to maneuvers. Many characters in *Level Up* gain access to deadly combat maneuvers. If you're playing 5E, ignore any feature that refers to maneuvers.

Guardian's Arsenal

Arachnid guardians train in a wider variety of weapons than most adepts. Beginning at 3rd level, you become proficient with hand crossbows, longbows, rapiers, scimitars, shortbows, and whips. These weapons count as adept weapons for you.

You also gain proficiency with poisoner's kits. When you use a poisoner's kit to harvest poisons, you do not poison yourself on a failed roll (though you still do not collect any poison).

Lurking Spider

Also at 3rd level, you gain some of the sneakiness and vigilance of a spider. You become proficient with the Stealth and Perception skills, and you can move through magical and mundane webs without treating them as difficult terrain or risk of becoming stuck.

Finally, you gain tremorsense with a range of 10 feet.

Wall Crawler

Beginning at 6th level, you gain a climbing speed equal to your Speed, as well as the ability to walk on walls and upside down on ceilings.

Ambush Predator

Also at 6th level, once per turn when you hit a creature that is unaware of your presence with an unarmed strike or weapon attack made with an adept weapon, you can spend exertion to deal additional damage to it. Each point of exertion you spend increases the additional damage you deal by an amount equal to your martial arts die. When you use this ability, you can spend a number of exertion points up to your proficiency bonus.

Web Spinner

At 11th level, you gain the ability to spin ropes and nets from magical spider silk. As a bonus action, you can spend 1 exertion point to conjure one of the following magical webs:

- **Rope:** You conjure a 50-foot-long rope made of magical spider silk. The rope weighs 1 pound but can support up to 8,000 pounds. It has an AC of 14, 10 hit

points, and can be burst with a Strength check equal to 10 + your proficiency bonus.

- **Net:** You conjure a net made of webs. It weighs 1 pound and functions as a normal net weapon, with the following modifications: It has a range of 20/60, can trap creatures of up to Huge size, and has an AC of 14 and 20 hit points. The DC of the Strength check to escape the net is equal to 10 + your proficiency bonus. You can create a stronger net by spending more exertion; for every additional point you spend, the net's hit points increase by 10.
- **Whip:** You conjure a whip made of spider silk. The whip functions as a +1 whip.

Regardless of what form your webs take, they dissolve after 1 hour.

Exertion

In *Level Up: Advanced 5E*, the adept gains a pool of exertion points. If you're playing a 5E monk, use ki points to pay for any feature with an exertion point cost.

From Nowhere

At 17th level, you learn the most coveted of all arachnid guardian abilities: the fearsome ethereal shifting of phase spiders. As a bonus action, you can spend 3 exertion points to shift to the Ethereal Plane. At the end of every minute you remain on the Ethereal Plane, you must spend 1 exertion point; otherwise, you immediately shift back to the Material Plane. You can return to the Material Plane deliberately as a bonus action, and doing so costs no exertion.



Bard: Sound Sculptor

Sound sculptors, as the name implies, are bards who have taken their skill with sound far beyond merely producing beautiful or inspiring music. True masters of sound, they use their music to see the unseen, damage their foes, and even protect themselves and their allies.

Sound Sculptor's Tools

When you select this archetype at 3rd level, you gain proficiency with the Performance skill and two musical instruments of your choice. If you are already proficient in Performance, you gain an expertise die instead. You also learn the *message*, *minor illusion*, and *thaumaturgy* cantrips, and they do not count against your maximum cantrips known.

Eyes of the Ears

At 3rd level, you learn to use sound to locate objects and creatures around you. As a bonus action, you can sing, stomp, or play a musical instrument, concentrating on your music as if it were a spell. Until the start of your next turn, any creature within 300 feet of you that can hear you automatically detects your presence, but you also gain blindsight with a range of 30 feet. If you already have blindsight, its range increases by 30 feet.

Blast of Sound

At 6th level, you learn to use sound not just as a tool, but as a weapon. As an action, you can emit a powerful blast of sound in a 15-foot cone. Creatures caught in the blast must make a Constitution save against your spell save DC. On a failed saving throw, the target takes 2d8 thunder damage and is deafened until the end of its next turn. On a success, the target takes half damage and isn't deafened. The damage increases to 3d8 at level 11. At 17th level, the damage increases to 4d8 and the blast becomes a 30-foot cone.

Wall of Sound

At 14th level, you gain the most potent sound sculptor ability: the creation of walls of sound. As an action, you can create a wall of solid sound. The wall is composed of twenty 5-foot-square, 10-foot-tall sections of solid sound. The sections must be contiguous, and all sections must be within 120 feet of your position; otherwise, you can form the wall in any shape you desire. The wall's space is difficult terrain, and reverberations in the air make objects on the opposite side of the wall lightly obscured. Ranged attacks fired through the wall are made at disadvantage. A creature that enters the wall's space for the first time on a turn or that starts its turn inside the wall must make a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed save, the target loses concentration (if applicable) on any spell or effect they are concentrating on and is deafened for one minute. On a success, the target has disadvantage on Perception checks relying on hearing until it exits the section of wall, but is not deafened and does not lose concentration. You must concentrate to maintain the wall (as if concentrating on a spell), and it vanishes if you lose concentration. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, regaining all uses when you finish a long rest.

Berserker: Troll Slayer

Trolls, particularly cave trolls, are reasonably common in Underland, and so too are troll slayers. This much is known. What enjoys less consensus is whether "troll slayer" means "one who slays trolls" or "one who slays in the manner of a troll." There is plenty of evidence to support both interpretations. Certainly, a troll slayer's flaming weapons and acidic blood make short work of trolls, but their ability to manifest troll-like physical traits (such as rapid healing, claws, and a keen sense of smell) show an affinity, not an animus, for troll-kind. What everyone agrees upon, however, is that these berserkers are exceedingly dangerous.

Trollrage

When you select this archetype at 3rd level, you gain the ability to channel your fury in a manner that trolls find both terrifying and familiar. You learn a maneuver from the Tooth and Claw tradition that you meet the prerequisites for, and it does not count against your maneuvers known. When you enter a rage, choose one of the following options:

Fiery Armaments

Your melee weapon attacks deal an additional 1d6 fire damage. This damage increases to 2d6 at 15th level.

Troll Claws

You grow long, sharp claws like a troll, which allow your unarmed strikes to deal 1d6 slashing damage and count as weapons with the finesse and dual-wielding properties. At 10th level, the damage of your claws increases to 1d8. While your claws are manifested, Tooth and Claw maneuvers have their exertion cost reduced by 1, to a minimum of 1.

When you reach level 11, you can manifest both effects simultaneously.

Keen Smell

Also at 3rd level, you have advantage on Perception checks that rely on smell.

Acidic Blood

At 6th level, your very blood becomes anathema to the regenerative abilities of trolls. You gain immunity to acid damage. In addition, whenever a creature damages you with a bite attack, it takes 3d6 acid damage from your acidic blood.

Self-Knitting Flesh

Also at 6th level, you become extraordinarily resilient, gaining powerful healing abilities and allowing you to shrug off effects that would make harm done to you persistent. You are immune to effects that would prevent you from regaining hit points or that would lower your hit point maximum.

While you are raging, you can use a bonus action to expend one of your hit dice, rolling it and recovering hit points equal to the roll's result + your Constitution modifier.

Withering Wrath

At 10th level, your fury magically suppresses the regenerative abilities of your foes. While you are raging, a creature with a regeneration ability that starts its turn within 10 feet of you regains only half as many hit points as normal (rounded down).

You also gain the supernatural ability to devour life force from downed foes. When you reduce a creature to 0 hit points with a melee attack, you recover one expended hit die. For you to do so, the creature's CR must be at least half your character level (rounded down).

Troll Slayer Apotheosis

At 14th level, the love/hate relationship you share with troll-kind reaches its apex. When you rage, the reach of your melee weapon attacks increases by 5 feet. In addition, other creatures can no longer detect you using their sense of smell.

Cleric: Labyrinth Priest

Mazes are found in the myths and religions of cultures the world over, and you believe the greatest truths lie within the mystery of the labyrinth itself. With every warren and passage you navigate, your devotion and the power it grants increases, so surely there must be some truth at the heart of your worship.

TABLE: LABYRINTH PRIEST SPELLS

CLERIC LEVEL	SPELLS
1	<i>floating disk, skeletal hands (DDG)</i>
3	<i>knock, magic map (DDG)</i>
5	<i>gaseous form, passwall</i>
7	<i>stone shape, thunder bolt (DDG)</i>
9	<i>escape (DDG), passwall</i>

Light Step

When you choose this archetype at 1st level, your Speed increases by 10 feet while you are unarmored or wearing light armor. Also, armor you wear does not impose disadvantage on your Stealth checks.

Inspired Explorer

Also at 1st level, you always know which direction is north. You gain proficiency in Survival, and you gain an expertise die on Survival checks you make to navigate through mazes.

Additionally, whenever you cast a divination spell of 1st-level or higher, you gain an expertise die that you can apply to one Intelligence or Wisdom ability check you make within the next 10 minutes. You can possess only one expertise die gained in this way at a time.

Channel Divinity: Forge Ahead

Starting at 2nd level, you can use your Channel Divinity to remove afflictions from creatures you can see. As an action, you present your holy symbol and call out for guidance that removes the blinded, charmed, deafened, and frightened conditions, or one level of fatigue or strife, from one creature you choose within 30 feet of you.

Blessed Exploration

At 6th level, your faith grants you boons suitable for an underground denizen. You gain darkvision to a range of 90 feet. Additionally, choose one of the following benefits:

Minotaur's Memory

You can perfectly recall any route you have traveled.

Shadow Sustenance

If you haven't been in an area of sunlight for 24 hours, your body begins to fade and you no longer need to eat. This benefit ends when you enter an area of sunlight.

Insightful Knack

At 8th level, you can spend 1 minute studying your environment and attempt a DC 15 Insight check. On a success, you notice something of significance, such as a coded message, a secret door, a hidden chest, or the tracks or other signs of a nearby creature. The nature of the information you intuit depends on the location you are in—the Narrator can always decide there is nothing for you to intuit about your current location or may offer a clue leading to a more relevant location instead. Once you have learned something with this feature, you must finish a long rest before you can do so again.

Labyrinth

Starting at 17th level, you can expend one use of your Channel Divinity to cast the *maze* spell.

Druid: Decomposer

All things die, and all death begets life. This is the simple creed of decomposers, who find beauty in decay. Sometimes scorned by common folk as “filth witches,” decomposers adapt to urban environments far more capably than most other druids. In some cases, decomposers are benign, settling into the hidden cracks of the city and making use of what others throw away. Other decomposers are more hostile, behaving like parasites and decaying the city from within.

Life at the Bottom

At 2nd level, you are immune to ingested poisons. This also allows you to eat and drink spoiled provisions without consequence. In addition, whenever you would make a Survival check to forage, you can make the check with advantage. If you do, any food you find is rotting and spoiled, making it inedible for most creatures.

In the Cracks

Also at 2nd level, you can use a bonus action to assume a wild shape. In addition, you gain an additional form you can assume using your Wild Shape feature: a Medium swarm of Tiny beasts. When you adopt this form, you don't gain temporary hit points, and while in this form you can't gain hit points or

temporary hit points. In this form, you can move through other creature's spaces and pass through any space a Tiny creature could without squeezing. The only actions you can take while in this form are the Dash, Disengage, or Dodge actions. Your game statistics are unchanged, except for one of the following benefits, which you choose when you shift:

- You have resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage.
- You don't provoke opportunity attacks when moving out of a creature's reach.
- You have a climb speed equal to your Speed, and you can walk on walls and upside down on ceilings.
- You have a fly speed equal to your Speed.
- When you enter a creature's space for the first time on a turn, that creature must make a Dexterity saving throw against your spell save DC, taking piercing damage equal to your level + your Wisdom modifier on a failure, or half damage on a success.

If you revert to your normal form before 1 minute has passed, you regain the use of Wild Shape you expended to take this form.

Decomposing Touch

At 6th level, you learn to use your unique connection to the cycle of death and rebirth to your advantage. While in your normal form or swarm form, you can use an action to touch the corpse of a Medium or larger creature that has been dead for 10 days or less and magically regain one expended spell slot. The spell slot you regain can't be higher than 5th level or half your character level, whichever is lower. When you use this ability, the corpse you touch rapidly decomposes and becomes unrecognizable. You can't use this feature again until you finish a short or long rest.

Virulent

At 10th level, you can repurpose disease as a tool of decomposition. When you would contract a nonmagical disease, you can choose to become a carrier of the disease instead. You can be a carrier of only one disease at a time. While you are a carrier of a disease, the disease does not affect you, but it remains dormant in your system. When you touch a bloodied creature or hit it with a melee weapon attack, you can force the creature to make a Constitution saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failure, the creature contracts the disease you carry.

Additionally, you always have the *contagion* spell prepared, and you can cast it without expending a spell slot. Once you've cast *contagion* in this way, you must finish a long rest before you can do so again. When you cast *contagion*, you can choose to spread the disease you're carrying, instead of one of the diseases presented in the spell's description.

Vermin Master

At 14th level, adopting swarm form no longer expends a use of your Wild Shape, and you gain all the listed benefits, instead of choosing one. Additionally, you can cast spells while in swarm form even if they don't have a range of Touch or Self.



Fighter: Dungeoneer

A dungeoneer is at home in underground lairs, winding caves, and labyrinthian passages. They have adapted to the harsh conditions of dungeon environments and turned them to their advantage. Whether battling in cramped rooms shrouded in darkness, smashing down locked doors, dodging traps, or enduring natural hazards, experienced dungeoneers thrive underneath the earth, fighting on equal footing with the denizens they encounter there.

Close-Quarters Fighting

Starting at 3rd level, you have adapted to the confined conditions found in dungeons, and you fight best with a wall at your back.

Choose one of the following benefits:

Back to the Wall

While within 5 feet of a solid wall, you add your proficiency bonus to damage rolls with weapon attacks.

Tunnel Guardian

While within 5 feet of a solid wall, you gain +2 AC.

Dungeoneering Traditions

Also at 3rd level, you gain proficiency in one of the following combat traditions of your choice: Adamant Mountain, Razor's Edge, Tempered Iron. When you gain this feature you can choose one of the maneuvers you know and replace it with another maneuver of the same degree or lower from your newly chosen combat tradition.

Dungeon Crawler

Starting at 7th level, your experience exploring dungeons has made you a veteran of the depths, able to smash your way through common obstacles with ease or endure whatever hazards you encounter.

Choose one of the following options:

Aggressive Delving

- You make Dexterity saving throws to avoid or resist traps with advantage.

- You have advantage on ability checks to break objects such as locked or jammed doors and locked chests, and your attacks deal double damage to objects and constructs.

Defensive Delving

- You make Constitution saving throws to avoid or resist traps with advantage.
- You can hold your breath for a minimum of 5 minutes + your Constitution modifier before checking for suffocation or drowning.
- You have resistance to falling damage.

Shadow Sense

Starting at 10th level, you are at home in pitch darkness and fight even more effectively without light.

- You gain blindsight with a radius of 10 feet.
- You gain an expertise die to attack rolls while in darkness.

Close-Quarters Veteran

Starting at 15th level, you have mastered the art of fighting in cramped environments both offensively and defensively.

- If you selected Back to the Wall as your Close-Quarters Fighting feature, your damage bonus increases to 2 + your proficiency bonus.
- If you selected Tunnel Guardian as your Close-Quarters Fighting feature, your bonus to AC increases to +3.
- You gain the Close-Quarters Fighting feature you did not select at level 3.

Dauntless Delver

Starting at 18th level, you have become better at withstanding common attacks you encounter when exploring the depths, shrugging off blows that would severely harm other adventurers. When you take damage, you can use your reaction to gain resistance to bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage, as well as to acid, necrotic, and poison damage, until the start of your next turn. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, regaining all uses when you finish a long rest.

Herald: Stone Warden

Stone wardens are implacable defenders of the weak and the innocent. Originally a group of deep dwarves who were dissatisfied with the callous nature of their society, the tradition has since expanded to include any strong-willed, compassionate individual seeking to protect those who cannot protect themselves.

Tenets of the Stone Warden

All stone wardens hold similar tenets, regardless of the deity they serve.

- **Enduring Stone.** Those you defend must be able to trust in your resilience.
- **Stable as Stone.** You must be consistent, dependable, and fair in your dealings. Let no hint of caprice or pique cloud your judgment, but cleave to what is right.
- **Strong as Stone.** You must be willing to shoulder far more than your “share” to walk this path.

- **Will of Stone, Not Heart of Stone.** You must be incorruptible, implacable, and uncompromising, but this must be tempered with empathy and compassion. Strength without goodness is worse than weakness.

Archetype School

Add the protection school of magic to your list of herald spells.

Channel Divinity

When you choose this archetype at 3rd level, you gain the following two Channel Divinity options.

Earthen Resolve. When you are subjected to an effect that would alter your behavior (such as becoming charmed, confused, or frightened) or that would allow another creature to dictate your actions (such as the *command* spell), you can use your reaction to negate that effect on you.



Rock Skin. You can use an action to cover yourself in a magical layer of gray stone plates. You gain temporary hit points equal to your herald level + your Charisma modifier (minimum of 1). The temporary hit points last up to 1 hour. While the temporary hit points remain, critical hits against you are treated as normal hits.

Rooted Defense

At 7th level, while you are standing on a solid surface, you can use a bonus action to root yourself in place. While rooted, your Speed becomes 0, but whenever an effect would move you or knock you prone, you ignore that effect, and the ground within 10 feet of you becomes difficult terrain. In addition, while you are rooted, a creature you hit with a melee weapon attack must make a Strength save against a DC of 10 + your proficiency bonus. On a failure, the creature's Speed is reduced to 0 until the end of its next turn. You can end your rooted state as an action.

Shield of the Vulnerable

At 15th level, when a creature you can see damages you or a creature within 5 feet of you with a weapon or spell attack, you can use your reaction to reduce the damage by an amount equal to 1d6 + half your herald level (rounded down). You must be using a shield to use this feature.

Immovable Object

At 20th level, you can become a living fortification—immovable and unbreakable. You can use a bonus action to become an immovable object, gaining the following benefits for the next minute:

- You gain resistance to all damage.
- You can't be moved unless you choose to be, even if targeted by an effect that would teleport you or if the surface you are standing on gives way. If this results in you standing in midair, you gain a fly speed of 5 feet until the effect ends. If you are still in the air when the effect ends, you fall normally.

Marshal: Expedition Leader

An expedition leader has experience leading teams of adventurers into all manner of dungeons and cave systems; the best expedition leaders also have experience leading them *out*. They lead by example, with careful footing and a watchful eye, and are at home navigating the dark, cramped corridors of the underground world. Proper leadership can make or break any expedition into the unknown.

Lead By Example

When you select this archetype at 3rd level, choose one of the following benefits:

On Guard

When you use your Rallying Surge to allow a creature to regain hit points, that creature also gains an expertise die on one saving throw it makes in the next minute. The creature chooses whether or not to use the expertise die before making the save, and the die is wasted if not used before the effect ends.

On the Watch

Allies within the radius of your Commanding Presence gain an expertise die on ability checks made to avoid, locate, or disable traps.

Got Your Back

Starting at 7th level, when an ally falls unconscious while within range of your Commanding Presence, that ally has advantage on the next death saving throw they make (either as a result of taking damage or at the end of their next turn).

Explorer's Code

Also at 7th level, you learn to communicate with your allies using coded language, allowing you to hide additional messages in normal conversation. During the light activity portion of a long rest, you can teach this code to any friendly creature with which you share a language. It takes twice as long to convey a message this way. Observers might be able to detect that you're speaking in code, but only creatures who've been taught the explorer's code understand it.



Follow the Leader

By 11th level, you have developed your leadership style and are confident in your methods. Choose one of the following benefits:

Mindfulness

You attune your breathing to the vibrations of the world around you, increasing your ability to sense your immediate surroundings. You and creatures you choose within the radius of your Commanding Presence gain tremorsense to a range of 10 feet.

Speed Run

If an ally starts their turn within the radius of your Commanding Presence, you and that ally increase your Speed by 10 feet until the end of your next turn.

No Adventurer Left Behind

Starting at 15th level, creatures you choose that stabilize while within the radius of your Commanding Presence also regain hit points equal to your marshal level.

Team Tactics

Starting at 18th level, you can coordinate devastating combos with your companions. When you use your Commanding Presence to allow an ally to make an attack, that ally has advantage on the attack if targeting a creature you have already attacked this turn.

Ranger: Tenebrous Stalker

Graduates of a training program originally developed by grimlock security specialists, tenebrous stalkers are the unquestioned lords of the darkness. Tenebrous stalkers learn to use darkness as both a tool and a weapon, wielding it to hide from their foes—and strike them down.

Pierce the Dark

At 3rd level, your senses sharpen to allow you to perceive your lightless environment. If you have the ability to see, you gain darkvision to a range of 120 feet and the ability to see through magical darkness. If you have blindsight, the range of your blindsight increases by 30 feet.

Embrace the Dark

Beginning at 7th level, you can enshroud yourself in darkness. As an action, you can activate your shroud of darkness. Your shroud remains active for 1 hour, until you fall unconscious, or until you use a bonus action to deactivate it. While your shroud is active, light within 30 feet decreases from bright light to dim light, from dim light to darkness, or from darkness to magical darkness. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, regaining all uses when you finish a long rest.

Wield the Dark

Starting at 7th level, when you start your turn in an area of darkness or magical darkness, you gain a Darkness die, a d6. You can have only one Darkness die at a time. At any time, you can roll your Darkness die and apply the result to one of the following: your AC against one attack made by a creature you can see, an attack or damage roll you make with a weapon, or a Stealth skill check. You can apply your Darkness die even after making an attack roll or after the result of a creature's attack roll is declared.

At 15th level, your Darkness die increases to a d8.

Dark Resolve

At 11th level, you gain proficiency in Wisdom saving throws.

Call the Dark

At 15th level, you can summon darkness at will. You can use a bonus action to cast the *darkness* spell without components. You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, regaining all uses when you finish a long rest.

Rogue: Shadow Stalker

Using a combination of practiced expertise and mystical arts, shadow stalkers specialize in staying hidden and dealing deadly blows from the darkness. They get up close and personal with their targets, ducking into melee to deal a killing blow and trusting on their preternatural abilities to avoid detection. As they become more experienced, they gain the ability to occlude the very thoughts of their enemies, erasing the memory of their words and actions.

Hidden Attacker

Starting at 3rd level, you excel at staying hidden from your enemy's sight even when on the attack. If you start your turn hidden from one or more creatures, you can activate this power to remain hidden from them until the start of your next turn. Attacking does not reveal your position, and you

do not need cover to remain hidden. You can use this ability a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, regaining all uses when you finish a short or long rest.

Shadow Stealth

Also at 3rd level, you are nearly undetectable when in the shadows, cloaking yourself in inky darkness and dampening the sounds of your movements. You gain advantage on Stealth checks when in darkness.

Deadly Blades

Starting at 9th level, you specialize in dealing killing blows when you catch your enemy unaware or on the back foot. You deal an additional 2d6 Sneak Attack damage when you hit a creature with a melee weapon and have advantage on the attack roll.

Stash the Evidence

Also at 9th level, you are adept at disposing of the corpses of your victims and squirreling away valuables you find on your adventures. Perception and Investigation checks made to find items you have hidden are made with disadvantage.

Vanishing Words

Starting at 13th level, your words have the power to make people forget their interactions with you. As an action, you can make a Deception check contested by the Insight of one creature who can hear and understand you within 30 feet. If you win the contest, the target forgets anything you have said over the last 5 minutes. You can choose for the target to believe instead that you were either silent the entire time or engaged in meaningless small talk. The first time a bystander reminds the target of your interaction with them, the target can make a Wisdom saving throw to recall the conversation. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier.

Once you've used this ability, you must finish a long rest before you can do so again.

Erase from Memory

Starting at 17th level, you can draw on the power of darkness to literally disappear and make your enemies forget you were ever there. You can use a bonus action to magically become invisible for 1 minute. Attacking does not break this invisibility.

In addition, each creature within 60 feet that sees you use this ability must make a Wisdom saving throw. The DC of this saving throw is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier. On a failed save, the creature's memories of you over the past hour are erased; while they still remember the basic events of that time, their memories have been altered not to include you. The target's memories of actions you take after you use this ability are not affected.

Once you've used this ability, you must finish a long rest before you can do so again.

Sorcerer: Stoneheart

In contrast to the free-flowing fluctuations of magic, stone is often seen as implacable, unmoving, and indestructible. However, beneath the surface, magma churns, plates of stone shift and grind one another to dust, and dust under pressure begets stone once more. Sorcerers with connections to these subterranean pressures marry the endless patience of stone with the rushing immediacy of a volcanic eruption to create a force to be reckoned with.

TABLE: STONEHEART ARCHETYPE SPELLS

SORCERER LEVEL	ARCHETYPE SPELLS
1st	<i>longstrider, mage armor, thunderwave</i>
3rd	<i>force of will, shatter, spike growth</i>
5th	<i>meld into stone, slow, speak with plants</i>
7th	<i>conjure minor elementals, stone shape, stonewood</i>
9th	<i>conjure elemental, passwall, wall of stone</i>

Earthen Flesh

Your body is hardened to punishment. When you choose this archetype at 1st level, your hit point maximum increases by 1, and increases by 1 again whenever you gain a level in this class. In addition, when you choose this archetype, choose either bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage. If you end your turn without moving, you gain resistance to nonmagical damage of that type until the start of your next turn.

Stonestrider

Also at 1st level, you ignore difficult terrain caused by stone or earth. Additionally, standing up from prone costs you no movement when you're on unworked ground.

You can speak, read, write, and sign the Terran dialect of Primordial.

Quake

At 6th level, the very earth on which you walk reacts to your magic. When you cast a spell of 1st level or higher, you can choose one of the following:

- Choose a point you can see within 60 feet. Large or smaller creatures on the ground within 5 feet of that point must make a Dexterity saving throw against your spell save DC, falling prone on a failure.
- Sprouting rock formations erupt around you in a 5-foot radius. The ground in this area is difficult terrain for creatures other than you until the end of your next turn.
- Choose a Large or smaller creature you can see within 30 feet that is on the ground. The creature must make a Strength saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failure, its speed is reduced to 0 until the start of your next turn.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, regaining all uses when you finish a long rest.

Glide

At 14th level, you can pass effortlessly through natural stone. You gain a burrowing speed equal to half your walking speed. You can burrow through nonmagical, unworked earth, and when you burrow in this way, you leave no tunnel behind you. If you're burrowing through stone and you end your movement inside the stone, you take bludgeoning damage equal to your level as it attempts to crush you.

Additionally, stone in all its forms is no longer a hindrance to you. You ignore difficult terrain caused by molten rock, can walk on it as though it were solid, and take no damage from it unless submerged. Finally, your spells that manipulate stone can now be used on worked stone.

Heart of the Mountain

At 18th level, you perfect your connection to earth and stone. When you cast a spell from the earth school (or that has "earth" or "stone" in its name) that has a casting time of 1 action, you can cast it as a bonus action instead.

Additionally, you gain tremorsense to a range of 60 feet. If you are touching unworked stone, you can use an action to expand your consciousness through it, increasing your tremorsense to a range of 500 feet until the start of your next turn. This provides you with insight into the layout of nearby caves and any creatures on the ground in that area.

Finally, you can use an action to magically petrify yourself. While petrified in this way, you are aware of your surroundings and immune to all damage. You do not age, nor do you need to eat, sleep, or drink. While petrified in this way, you aren't incapacitated, but you can't take actions or reactions except to end this petrification as an action. You can't be petrified by any other effect, unless you choose to be.

Warlock: Fatewoven

Fatewoven are fortune tellers, soothsayers, and students of fate and destiny. Not content to merely exist within the web of fate, fatewoven wish to pluck its strings and read its patterns. Their motivations are as varied as fate itself; some wish to avert great disasters or fulfill ancient prophecies, while others seek to stack the deck of life in their favor.

Tangled Destiny

When you take this archetype at 1st level, your connection to the weave of fate begins to manifest in tangible ways. You learn the *guidance* cantrip and choose one of the following:

Destined Curse

You can use a bonus action to place a curse on a creature you can see within 30 feet. The curse lasts for 1 minute and ends early if you or the target dies, if you are incapacitated, or if you use another bonus action to end the curse. The curse has the following effects:

- When you deal damage against the cursed creature, it takes an additional 1d4 force damage. This extra damage increases by 1d4 at 10th level, and again at 15th and 20th level.
- You gain a pool of destiny dice, which begins empty. Each destiny die represents a small adjustment you can make to the web of fate. Whenever the cursed creature rolls with advantage or disadvantage, add one destiny die to this pool. When a creature other than you that you can see rolls a d20, you can spend a destiny die (no action required) to add 1d4 to the roll or subtract 1d4 from it. The pool disappears when you finish a short or long rest.

Once you have used this feature, you must finish a short or long rest before you can do so again.

Step Through the Web

You can use a bonus action to teleport up to your speed to an unoccupied space you can see. You can use this ability a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, regaining all uses when you finish a short or long rest.

Cautious Premonition

At 6th level, you can focus your connection to fate to determine the outcome of an action you are about to take. After you declare your action but before you resolve it, you can choose to have a premonition. Roll a d20. This roll will be used as the first attack roll or ability check you make during the action, if you perform the action. You can then decide whether to proceed with the planned action, accepting the rolled result, or take a different action, discarding the result.

If you choose not to proceed with the action, you can either take a completely different action (casting a spell or making an ability check instead of making a weapon attack, for example) or do nothing, but you can't take another action of the same type (such as casting a different spell or attacking with a different weapon). Your premonition only reveals the result of a single d20 roll; if you roll with advantage or disadvantage, you learn the result of only one of the two dice. Similarly, if you have an ability that would allow you to reroll, you do not get to see the reroll.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, but never more than once per turn. You regain all uses when you finish a long rest.

Overwhelming Visions

At 10th level, you can open a creature's senses to the full scope of possibilities before it. As an action, you force vivid visions of discarded pasts and possible futures into the mind of a creature you can see within 60 feet. The target must make a Wisdom saving throw against your spell save DC. On a failed save, the target takes 8d8 psychic damage and is stunned until the end of your next turn. On a success, the target takes half damage and isn't stunned. Furthermore, a creature that successfully

saves against the effect finds the wash of possibility insightful, gaining advantage on the next ability check or saving throw it makes before the end of your next turn. Once you have used this ability, you must finish a long rest before you can do so again.

Pluck the Strands

At 14th level, you gain the ability to influence fate directly. As a bonus action, you can select a number of creatures that you can see up to your spellcasting modifier. Until the start of your next turn, the creatures you choose have advantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws. Once you have used this ability, you must finish a long rest before you can do so again.

Wizard: Oozemancer

While many people regard oozes as mindless forces of destruction, oozemancers make these gelatinous creatures their allies and companions. Though it might make others' skin crawl, an oozemancer's fondness for their formless pets grants them a supernatural understanding of the creatures.

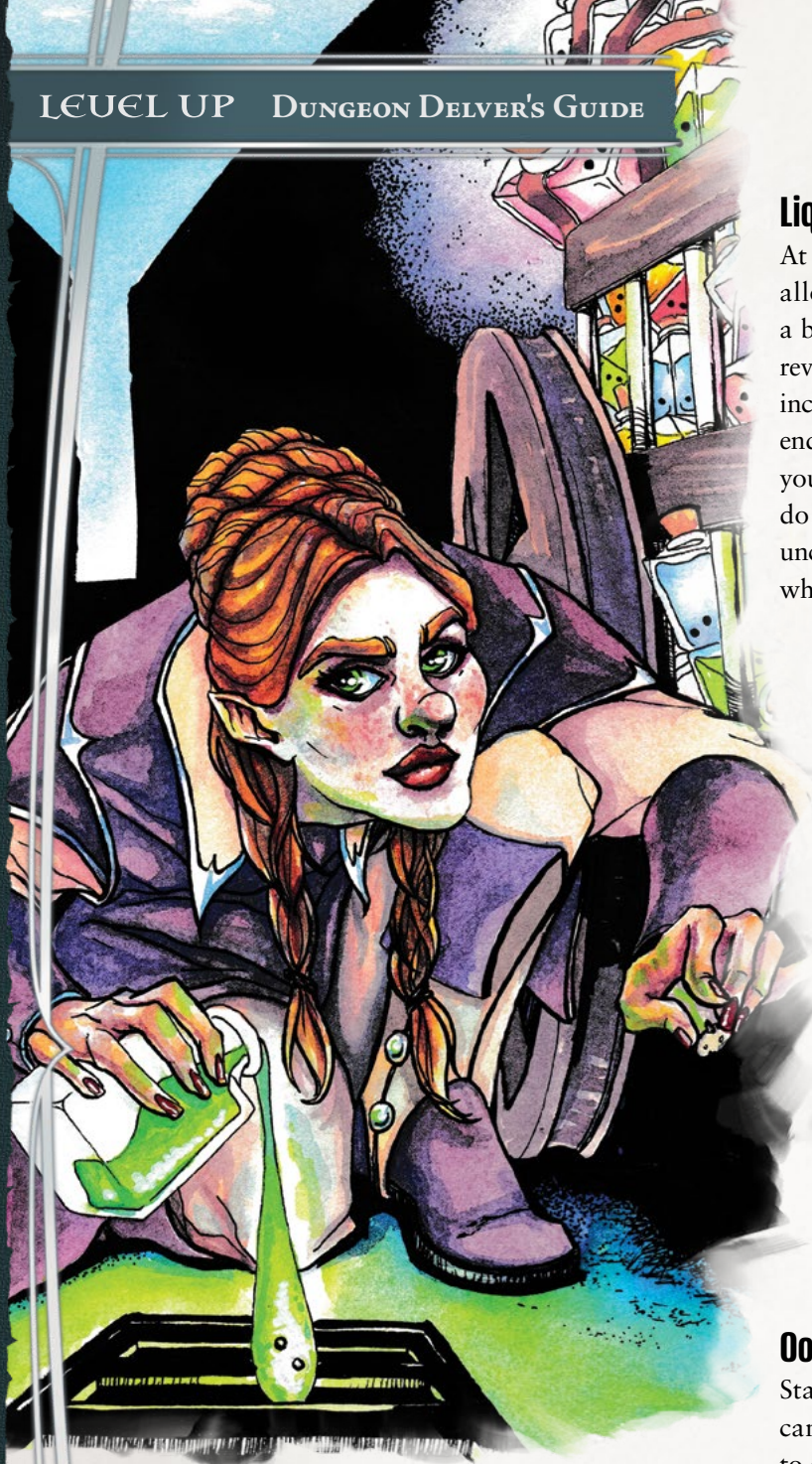
Ooze Familiar

When you choose this archetype at 2nd level, you master the conjuration of tame oozes. You add the *find familiar* spell to your spellbook. When you cast the spell, you can choose one of the normal forms for your familiar or choose a **gray ooze**. When you take the Attack action, you can forgo one of your own attacks to allow your familiar to make one attack of its own.

In addition, oozes you summon move extremely quickly, increasing their Speed to 25 feet.

Ooze Within

Also starting at 2nd level, your body becomes more ooze-like, allowing you to thwart attackers. Whenever you are subjected to a critical hit, the hit is treated as a normal hit instead. In addition, you are immune to Sneak Attack damage from class features or traits. Finally, you have advantage on ability checks and saving throws you make to escape a grapple.



Improved Ooze Familiar

Starting at 6th level, when you cast *find familiar*, you can choose to summon a **gelatinous cube** or **ochre jelly**. At 9th level, you can summon a **euphoria cube** (DDG) or **flash jelly** (DDG).

Liquid Form

At 10th level, you learn revolting arcane secrets that allow you to transform your body into slime. As a bonus action, you can adopt a liquid form. You revert to your normal form after 1 minute, if you are incapacitated, or if you use another bonus action to end the effect early. Once you have used this ability, you must finish a short or long rest before you can do so again. In liquid form, your statistics are unchanged except for one of the following options, which you choose when you transform:

- You liquefy your bones, organs, and equipment to gain an amorphous form. While you are amorphous, you can pass through an opening as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing. While in this form, you can't use or gain any benefit from your equipment.
- You liquefy your skin, causing your body and equipment to become covered with a viscous, sticky slime. While you are coated in this way, you leave slimy, wet prints on objects and surfaces you touch or walk upon. You gain a climb speed equal to your Speed and can walk on walls and upside down on ceilings. Additionally, when a creature within 5 feet hits you with a melee attack, it is covered with slime. The creature has disadvantage on the next attack it makes before the end of its next turn.

Ooze Without

Starting at 14th level, while you are bloodied, you can use a bonus action to cause your viscous blood to coalesce into a **black pudding** that appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of you. This ooze takes its turn immediately after yours and obeys your verbal commands. Without such commands, the ooze only defends itself. It disappears after 1 hour, when reduced to 0 hit points, or if it can't sense another creature at the end of its turn. Once you use this ability, you must finish a long rest before you can do so again.

Equipment

The underground is a barren, lightless environment where life does not naturally flourish. With no promise of a friendly settlement at the end of their journey, spelunkers and dungeoneers must rely on the supplies and equipment they bring with them. Even subterranean dwellers require specialized gear to thrive underground.

Uses for Existing Equipment

Just because your party is underground doesn't mean that all of your aboveground equipment is suddenly dead weight. Certain items may be even more useful in a dungeon or cave than on the surface.

Climbing Kit. This is the gold standard for parties venturing into underground environments. Not only are caves rife with surfaces that must be navigated by climbing, the individual components of a climbing kit are useful in their own right. In particular, a climbing kit contains crampons and pitons.

Crampons. Crampons is the more technical name for the spiked "boot tips" mentioned in the climbing kit. While wearing crampons, you are unaffected by difficult terrain caused by ice. Crampons can also deliver a nasty kick; once per turn when you make an unarmed strike while wearing crampons, the attack deals 1d6 piercing damage. Crampons are awkward when walking on flat surfaces, however. While wearing crampons, you have disadvantage on Stealth checks and you cannot use the Dash action.

Pitons. These heavy-duty metal spikes have a myriad of uses. They can be driven into the seams of doors to jam them shut or used to hang various things (such as pulleys or anything one wants kept dry in a flooded area). They can also be used to secure tripwires or as anchor points for tie downs.

Hammer or Miner's Pick. In addition to being suitable improvised weapons, these tools can be used to carve handholds, drive pitons, or even create makeshift ladders or stairs, though this process is both noisy and slow. Hammers and picks are also highly effective at smashing locks, doors, and similar objects. When used as improvised weapons, these implements are considered to have the Breaker property, dealing double damage to unattended objects.



Waterskins. As long as they don't leak, waterskins can be used as impromptu air bladders. A typical 1-gallon waterskin holds enough air to allow a Medium or smaller humanoid to catch their breath twice.

New Equipment

Air Bladder. An air bladder is similar to a waterskin but can hold up to 2 gallons of air when fully inflated, allowing for four breaths. It has a valve at the opening, eliminating the need for removing and replacing a cover or cap. When at least half inflated, an air bladder can also function as a flotation device, granting a creature holding it advantage on Athletics checks to avoid sinking.

Alchemical Weapon Oils. These oils can be applied to a weapon, increasing the damage the weapon deals and sometimes providing other benefits. Applying an alchemical weapon oil requires an action, and the effect lasts for 1 hour.

- **Corrosive Oil.** A weapon coated with this pungent green liquid deals an additional 2d6 acid damage.
- **Frigid Oil.** A weapon smeared with this bluish-white paste deals an additional 1d6 cold damage.
- **Glaring Oil.** Sometimes called “portable sunlight,” this cloudy, silvery-white oil sheds bright light in a 20-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet. A weapon treated with glaring oil deals an additional 2d6 radiant damage.
- **Lifebane Oil.** This viscous black liquid trails thin, mist-like tendrils of darkness at all times. A weapon coated with lifebane oil deals an additional 1d8 necrotic damage.
- **Scorching Oil.** This thin red oil ignites when exposed to air. A weapon coated with scorching oil deals an additional 1d6 fire damage and sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet.
- **Shocking Oil.** This vibrant yellow oil arcs with a powerful electrical current. A weapon coated with shocking oil deals an additional 1d4 lightning damage and sheds dim light in a 20-foot radius.

Ascender/Descender. These small metal devices allow better control of ropes when climbing up (ascender) or sliding down (descender), granting a creature using them an expertise die on Athletics checks to move in the corresponding direction. Despite their similar names, ascenders and descenders work differently. Ascenders are mechanical devices that assist in climbing. Descenders are small metal loops that facilitate better control of ropes while rappelling. A creature can use only one of these devices at a time. The listed price is for a set of one of each device.

Boat, Collapsible. When deployed, this two-person boat resembles a kayak or canoe. It can hold up to 500 pounds without sinking and can fold up enough to be carried by a single humanoid. (While folded, the boat has the Bulky property; a creature can

carry a number of bulky items equal to one plus its Strength modifier.) Setting up the boat (which comes with two folding paddles) or collapsing and packing it takes 20 minutes.

Cave Tent. This tent has a padded base and anchor points at the peak. It dampens sound and minimizes the vibrations produced by its occupants, which many underground predators use to hunt. Creatures sleeping or performing light activities inside the tent are invisible to tremorsense. However, a cave tent can keep out rain for only an hour before it starts to leak.

Luminescent Compass. The needle and directional markings of this compass are treated with a luminescent compound. It can be read easily in dim light or darkness.

Pole (10-foot), Collapsible. This lightweight but sturdy metal pole can telescope to a length of 10 feet but can also be locked at 3, 5, and 7 feet if desired. At its 5- and 7-foot lengths, it functions as a quarterstaff. At its 3-foot length, it functions as a club.

Rope Ladder. This collapsible ladder is made from two ropes connected to a series of rungs, with a pair of hooks at the top to anchor it. Rope ladders are easier to climb while carrying a lot of gear and can be used by creatures who lack the strength or coordination to scale a rope. A rope ladder must hang from a solid anchor point to be useful.

Basic Rope Ladder. This rope ladder has hempen ropes and wooden rungs. It is 10 feet long when deployed and can support up to 500 pounds of weight without breaking.

Heavy-Duty Rope Ladder. This model has silk rope and metal rungs. It is 25 feet long and can support up to 750 pounds, but thanks to the lighter materials it weighs the same as the 10-foot model.

Snorkel. This sturdy, angled tube allows a creature swimming beneath the surface of a body of water to breathe, provided the snorkel can poke above the water level. Snorkels are invaluable for cave swimming, where there may be pockets of air but the ceiling is too close to the water for a swimmer to position their head above the surface.

TABLE: NEW EQUIPMENT

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Air Bladder	8 sp	1 lb.
Alchemical Corrosive Oil	2,000 gp	—
Alchemical Frigid Oil	500 gp	—
Alchemical Glaring Oil	2,200 gp	—
Alchemical Lifebane Oil	600 gp	—
Alchemical Scorching Oil	500 gp	—
Alchemical Shocking Oil	400 gp	—
Ascender/Descender	50 gp	3 lbs.
Boat, Collapsible	100 gp	50 lbs.
Cave Tent	1 gp	10 lbs.
Luminescent Compass	65 gp	1/2 lb.
Pole (10-foot), Collapsible	1 gp	7 lbs.
Rope Ladder, Basic	2 gp	6 lbs.
Rope Ladder, Heavy-Duty	30 gp	6 lbs.
Snorkel	3 sp	—
Spore Netting	4 gp	1/2 lb.
Spring Holster	4 gp	1/2 lb.
Underwater Lantern	15 gp	1 lb.
Underwater Lantern, Alchemical	30 gp	1 lb.
Wand Bracer	5 gp	1/2 lb.

Spore Netting. Based on mosquito netting, spore netting is made from giant spider silk, allowing for an even finer weave. It can keep out toxic fungus spores as well as biting insects.

Spring Holster. This bracer-like device allows a creature to draw a very small weapon such as a dagger, shuriken, or derringer from a concealed position up the creature's sleeve. Drawing a weapon from a spring holster requires a reaction but can be done at any time.

Underwater Lantern. This sturdy metal lantern uses bioluminescent fungus in a sealable glass box to shed bright light in a 5-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet. As long as the fungus is tended once every 7 days, it remains useful indefinitely.

Underwater Lantern, Alchemical. Using the same compounds as alchemical torches, this lantern can burn for 1 hour, shedding bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 20 feet. It can be refueled for 25 gp.

Wand Bracer. This leather bracer has several channels (the usual number is five) along the underside. Each channel is sized to hold a wand or similarly shaped item, such as a throwing dagger or an individual lockpick. Once on your turn, you can draw an item stored in the bracer without using an action or interacting with an object. Stowing an item in the bracer requires an action.

Cultural Equipment

Underground dwellers carry specialized gear that helps them carve out an existence in the unforgiving depths. Aboleth, deep dwarves, shadow elves, grimlocks, sewer ratlings, and tinker gnomes all create unique equipment that they rarely share with outsiders.

An adventurer with the appropriate culture can buy cultural equipment during character creation. Beyond that, cultural equipment is available at the Narrator's discretion, either for sale from a friendly settlement or as treasure wrested from foes.

Aboleth Equipment

Aboleths take a different approach to equipment than most other sapient creatures; rather than working with non-living materials, they prefer to shape living things to their purpose. This doesn't mean that they don't create equipment, just that aboleth-created gear is noticeably alive. These devices have heartbeats, living organs, and body heat.

Adventurers with the sunless mariner background can buy aboleth equipment during character creation.

Gill Symbiote. This bizarre, collar-like mask fits like a sleeve over the user's lower face and neck. It extends tendrils down the user's throat when donned, a process that requires the wearer to make a DC 11 Wisdom save to avoid gaining a level of strife. Once in place, the symbiote allows the user to breathe air and water, but it also distorts the wearer's voice. Whenever the wearer speaks, other creatures must make a DC 10 Intelligence check

to understand what they are saying. In addition, a creature wearing a gill symbiote must make a DC 10 Intelligence check to cast a spell with vocalized components. On a failure, the creature expends the spell slot to no effect.

Octopack. This bulbous, fleshy mass attaches itself to the wearer's back and can sprout four tentacles on demand. The tentacles aren't able to hold items, but they grant advantage on checks to maintain a grapple and grant an expertise die on Athletics checks related to climbing.

Parasite Launcher. This bracer-shaped creature has ray-like skin and several rows of glowing, fluid-filled membranes on its "back," which typically sits atop the user's forearm. Swimming in the fluid are tiny, snake-like creatures with nasty, tooth-filled maws. The launcher is a ranged weapon with a range of 30/60. It is fired via mental commands rather than a physical trigger. On a hit, the parasite deals 1d4 piercing damage. A creature hit by the parasite launcher can use its reaction to make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw. On a success, the target tears off the parasite before it gains purchase. If the creature does not remove the parasite, the parasite begins burrowing into the target's flesh, dealing 1d4 piercing damage and 1d4 psychic damage at the start of each of the target's turns. A creature can use action to cut out the parasite, dealing 2d6 slashing damage to the target but ending the piercing and psychic damage. Unless removed, the parasite continues to burrow for a number of rounds equal to the proficiency bonus of the creature that fired the launcher. The parasite then dies inside the target, and the target suffers a level of strife from the trauma of the experience. The parasite launcher does not cover the user's hand, leaving it free to wield other devices or weapons. A parasite launcher can be fired from an arm that is wielding a weapon, but not a shield. The launcher holds eight parasites, and the "ammunition" regrows after 24 hours.

Sleepless Mask. This disturbing, fleshy mask covers the upper half of the wearer's face and features three, vertically placed eyes in the manner of an aboleth. While the mask is worn, each eye takes an 8-hour turn sleeping while the others remain awake, effectively sleeping for the wearer and allowing them to

stay awake indefinitely. The wearer must still sleep or meditate to receive the benefits of a long rest. In addition, the tendrils that the mask sends into its wearer's brain subtly influence them toward obedience to aboleths. The wearer suffers a -1d4 penalty on saving throws against aboleth abilities and the Sea Change disease.

TABLE: ABOLETH EQUIPMENT

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Gill Symbiote	50 gp	2 lbs.
Octopack	25 gp	5 lbs.
Parasite Launcher	500 gp	3 lbs.
Sleepless Mask	125 gp	1 lb.

Grimlock Equipment

The highly advanced grimlocks have their own unique inventions, which leverage both their incredible hearing and other creatures' dependency on sight.

Air Ink. An odorless, pitch-black gas that blocks light, air ink is usually deployed in grenade form. As an action, a creature can throw an air ink grenade up to 30 feet at a point it can see. When it lands, the grenade detonates, filling a 10-foot-radius area with inky darkness.

Two varieties of air ink exist: a "safe" version that merely blocks light and a "dangerous" version that also interferes with breathing. A creature inside an area of dangerous air ink must hold its breath or it begins to suffocate. In either case, the air ink lasts for 10 minutes. While the ink remains, the area it fills is heavily obscured. Only blindsight can penetrate the ink; even creatures with traits such as Devil's Sight can't see through it.

De-Scenting Powder. Available in either a shaker or a "bomb" that fills a 10-foot square, de-scenting powder rapidly absorbs scents from everything it touches, making creatures to which the powder has been applied impossible to detect or track by scent for up to 1 hour. A shaker contains 10 uses, each enough to cover a Medium or smaller creature.

Portable Telegraph. This boxy device is usually worn on a belt clip. When activated, it emits a high-frequency sound that most humanoids can't hear. Grimlocks use these telegraphs as either echo-



location devices or communication tools. When used for echolocation, the range of the grimlock's echolocation or blindsight increases by 10 feet, provided the grimlock doesn't move more than 10 feet on their turn. When used for communication, the telegraph can produce a sequence of long and short beeps, similar to those of traditional telegraphs. When used in this manner, the telegraph can transmit messages up to 500 feet. An experienced operator can use an action to transmit up to six words that only by grimlocks or other creatures with echolocation-based blindsight can hear.

Sonic Tripwire. Made up of two small metal boxes, a sonic tripwire can be used to trigger any trap or alarm that a normal tripwire could. Between the boxes, the device emits a beam of high-frequency sound that grimlocks can hear but most other creatures cannot. The tripwire triggers when the beam is interrupted.

TABLE: GRIMLOCK EQUIPMENT

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Air Ink Grenade, Dangerous	150 gp	1/2 lb.
Air Ink Grenade, Safe	100 gp	1/2 lb.
De-Scenting Powder Bomb	40 gp	2 lbs.
De-Scenting Powder Shaker	10 gp	1/2 lb.
Portable Telegraph	75 gp	1/2 lb.
Sonic Tripwire	50 gp	2 lb.

Deep Dwarf Equipment

Like the people that created it, deep dwarf equipment focuses on resilience and determination in the face of overwhelming odds.

All-Purpose Pick. This pick is obviously well-made, but the shape of its head and handle are a bit unusual. The wielder can treat the pick as a war pick or a miner's pick as they choose.

Folding Armor. This finely made plate armor is designed to work in conjunction with the wearer's size-altering magic. If the wearer is subjected to the enlarge effect of an *enlarge/reduce* spell, in addition to altering its size, the armor deploys vicious spikes concealed in the unfolding mechanisms, gaining an improved version of the Spiked property: a creature that begins its turn grappling or grappled by the wearer takes 1d4 piercing damage.

If the wearer is subjected to the reduce effect of an *enlarge/reduce* spell, the armor instead folds in on itself, reinforcing vulnerable areas and raising its AC bonus by 1.

Stone of Resolve. This brittle, cloudy orange crystal is found only in the deepest mines, but it is widely coveted for its mind-stabilizing properties. A creature can use an action to crush the crystal and inhale the dust, gaining advantage on saving throws against fear for 1 minute.

TABLE: DEEP DWARF EQUIPMENT

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
All-Purpose Pick	20 gp	6 lbs.
Folding Armor	3,000 gp	70 lbs.
Stone of Resolve	50 gp	—

Ratling Equipment

In the minds of most people, ratlings have two defining characteristics: ingenuity and mischief. Those traits are on full display with their choices of equipment.

Food Cannon. Named for its most common ammunition, this tube-shaped weapon uses black powder charges to fire whatever is packed into it. When loaded with foodstuffs or dirt, the food cannon blasts everything in a 15-foot cone with the contents of its barrel. Each creature in that area must make a DC 13 Dexterity save or be blinded until the end of its next turn. A creature can use an action to scrape off the debris from an affected creature, ending the condition early. The cannon isn't powerful enough to deal severe damage, but if hard debris is packed among the soft shot, each target also takes 1d4 bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage, depending on the nature of the debris.

Thing-Thing. One of the most distinctly ratling pieces of gear is the thing-thing, a generic name for two items combined into one. Examples include the quarterstaff-ladder (a quarterstaff with pop-out rungs) and the dagger-lockpick (thieves' tools on strings packed into the hilt of a dagger), but the possibilities are endless and frequently seem nonsensical to non-ratlings. A thing-thing costs as much as both items combined and weighs as much as its heaviest component. If one item is smaller than the other, the smaller item may be unobtrusive, requiring a DC 18 Perception check to find. Neither piece of a thing-thing can be consumable.

TABLE: RATLING EQUIPMENT

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Food Cannon	4 gp	8 lb.
Thing-Thing	special	special

Tinker Gnome Equipment

Tinker gnomes jealously guard their secrets. Each community might know the secret of only a few of the following pieces of gear.

Some tinker gnome inventions are automata that can move on their own. Each automaton comes with a necklace or other piece of jewelry that can be used to control it. A creature wearing the jewelry can use

a bonus action to make an automaton move up to its Speed or perform an action listed in its description. An automaton is an object that is immune to fire, poison, and psychic damage. It automatically fails all saving throws, but it is immune to all conditions except prone. An automaton's AC, hit points, and Speed are listed on the table below. A creature proficient in Engineering or with tinker's tools can restore all hit points to a damaged automaton during a long rest.

Clockwork Mule (Automaton). About 6 feet long and 4 feet wide, this automaton is little more than a Large cart with tracked treads. It has a carrying capacity of 1,000 pounds and is most often used to haul equipment, freeing up adventurers to carry only their most important gear.

Life Detector. This hand-held device helps answer one of the most important questions an adventuring party can ask: "*What's behind that door?*" As an action, a creature can use the device to detect creatures that aren't constructs or undead within 60 feet, displaying their current locations on a crystalline matrix. The device can penetrate barriers, but 2 feet of rock, 2 inches of metal, or a thin sheet of lead blocks it. This device is an exception to other tinker gnome items, as it is powered by divination magic (and so can be disrupted by *dispel magic* or thwarted by *nondetection*). Once the life detector has been used, it can't be used again for 4 hours.

Lock Master. This metal gauntlet has small probes and picks affixed to its fingertips. The wearer gains an expertise die on Dexterity checks made to open locks and disarm traps when using the lock master.

Map Minder (Automaton). Mapping the labyrinthine tunnels and passages of lost ruins is one of the most tedious yet vital jobs of an adventuring party. The map minder is a Small device that measures distances and directions, using parchment and an automated pen to map the surroundings it can see within 60 feet of it. Highly accurate, the map minder all but eliminates the chances of a party losing its way. It can be programmed to utilize special colors and symbols to indicate the location of doors, slopes, traps, and other features.

Rope Minder (Automaton). Rope is one of the most indispensable but cumbersome items in an adventurer's arsenal. A rope minder allows parties

TABLE: TINKER GNOME EQUIPMENT

ITEM	AC	HIT POINTS	SPEED	COST	WEIGHT
Clockwork Mule	17	30	30	750 gp	1,000 lbs.
Life Detector	—	—	—	600 gp	3 lbs.
Lock Master	—	—	—	750 gp	2 lbs.
Map Minder	13	15	30	800 gp	50 lbs.
Rope Minder	18	20	30	800 gp	200 lbs.
Torchbearer	17	18	30	500 gp	10 lbs.
Trapmaster	24	50	20	2,000 gp	1,000 lbs.

to venture into the unknown with a near-unlimited supply of rope and a solid base upon which to secure it. A Medium, quadrupedal cube, the rope master measures about 3 feet to a side and carries inside it a powerful winch outfitted with up to 2,000 feet of sturdy silken rope. Its sharp legs and arcano-mechanical hydraulic system allow the rope minder to scuttle up sheer surfaces and anchor itself in place. The rope minder can then dispense rope to its owners, allowing them to climb or descend.

Torchbearer (Automaton). A Tiny clockwork device typically shaped like a dog or cat, the torchbearer functions as a permanent mobile light source. The torchbearer emits a cone of nonmagical bright light from its eyes to a distance of 30 feet, and dim light for an additional 30 feet. The automaton's owner can use a bonus action to activate the light, dim it, or shut it off entirely. The light shines until it is shut off.

Trapmaster (Automaton). The trapmaster is unusual in that it is specifically designed to take damage and remain functional. Measuring 4 feet long, 3 feet wide, and 2 feet high, it is nothing more than a heavily armored, tracked automaton. The trapmaster can be sent forward to trigger traps, allowing parties to proceed safely. While it is of little use against trapped chests, locks, or other minor hazards, the trapmaster can be a true boon against more powerful traps, as its heavy armor is treated with alchemical substances that grant it resistance to acid, cold, force, lightning, necrotic, radiant, and thunder damage, in addition to the normal immunities of a tinker gnome automaton.

Shadow Elf Equipment

Shadow elves often find themselves on the front lines against the undead who stalk the caverns of the world below, and have armed themselves accordingly. Against foes whose mere touch can paralyze or kill outright, mobility, protection, and the ability to keep enemies at bay are top priorities.

To achieve these aims, the shadow elves turn to their bestial allies, the myriad of giant spiders living underground. Weaving armor from their silk and



creating their own versions of the spiders' webbing, shadow elves face their deathless foes not as quavering prey, but as apex predators.

Dark Iron. Found only in the most lightless depths of the world, dark iron is comparable to adamantine in many respects. Though incredibly durable, the metal has a critical weakness: it dissolves almost instantly in sunlight. Dark iron weapons or armor that spend 1 round in direct sunlight become pitted and obviously worn. A second round causes the item to acquire the broken condition (a broken weapon deals half damage and broken armor provides half its AC bonus, rounded down). A third round causes the item to disintegrate to nothingness.

Mycelium Stakes. These stakes are just as effective at destroying vampires as those made of wood, but they have an additional benefit: when driven into the corpse of a creature, the mycelium in these stakes creates a fungal colony that slowly consumes the corpse, preventing it from returning as an undead. The fungus can consume the corpse of a newly dead creature in 1d6 days, but it works much faster on undead flesh, destroying such remains in a mere 1d4 hours.

Radiant Trap. This metal sphere is perforated with dark iron plugs and filled with pressurized holy water. When the sphere is rubbed with glaring oil, takes at least 1 point of radiant damage, or enters an area of natural or magical sunlight, the plugs dissolve, spraying holy water in a 10-foot radius around the trap. Undead and fiends in the

TABLE: SHADOW ELF EQUIPMENT

ITEM	COST	WEIGHT
Mycelium Stake	15 gp	—
Radiant Trap	70 gp	2 lbs.
Spiderweb Bomb	60 gp	1 lb.

area must make a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw, taking 2d6 radiant damage on a failed save or half the damage on a success.

Spider Silk. This incredibly light and strong cloth is made from woven spider silk. It can be used to create light armor and textiles. Cloth and rope made from spider silk has twice the usual number of hit points, and the AC and the DC to break spider silk rope increases by 2. The difficulty of weaving with spider silk accounts for its high price.

Spiderweb Bomb. A creature can use an action to throw the bomb up to 30 feet at a point it can see. When it lands, the bomb detonates into a mass of sticky webs in a 10-foot radius. If there are at least two solid surfaces within 10 feet of the bomb, the strands adhere to them, creating a lightly obscured area of difficult terrain. The webs dissolve after 30 minutes. A creature in the bomb's detonation radius or that enters the area while the webs remain must make a DC 12 Dexterity save or be restrained. A restrained creature can escape the webs by using its action to make a DC 14 Strength check. Each 5-foot cube section of the webs can be hacked through (AC 11, 12 hit points, immunity to poison and

TABLE: SHADOW ELF MATERIALS

MATERIAL	DESCRIPTION	COST	PROPERTIES	REPAIRABILITY
Dark Iron	Comparable to adamantine in its physical characteristics, dark iron is an inky black metal with a faint purplish iridescence.	×4	Hardy, lightweight	Repair DC 25 smith's tools, access to a forge
Spider Silk	Spider silk is the spun webbing of giant spiders. It is incredibly light and strong. It can be used to make light armor.	800 gp + 10 × the usual price of the item	Comfortable, fortified	Repair DC 25 (sewing kit)

MATERIAL PROPERTIES

Comfortable. Armor with this property is comfortable enough to sleep in without penalty.

Fortified. Fortified armor increases the Armor Class it grants by 1.

Hardy. While wearing hardy armor, the first critical hit against you since your last short rest becomes a normal hit.

You cannot use this feature again until you make adjustments to the armor during a short or long rest.

Lightweight. If the armor normally imposes disadvantage on Dexterity (Stealth) checks or has a Strength requirement, the lightweight version of the armor doesn't.

psychic damage) or burned. A creature restrained by the webs when the webs are burned takes 2d4 fire damage.

Dungeon Mounts

While horses are poorly suited to dungeons and caverns, dungeon denizens tame and ride many other creatures. Besides mules and mastiffs, which can thrive as underground mounts, the following creatures can be used as mounts by those who can tame them. Their riders gain the advantage of their different forms of movement.

Dungeon Vehicles

Underland boasts many of the same vehicles that ply surface roads and seas. Shadow elf couriers use giant spider-drawn chariots, and galleys sail the Midnight Sea. Safe from inclement weather, airships fly through mammoth caverns and miles-long ravines.

A few vehicles are unique to the Underland. Aboleth-built submarines ferry treasure and thralls to underwater cities. Armed with torpedoes, aboleth submarines fight a never ending war against the fleets of sunless mariners.



TABLE: DUNGEON MOUNTS

MOUNT	COST	SPEED	CARRYING CAPACITY	STRENGTH
Giant Lizard	100 gp	30 ft., climb 30 ft.	420 lbs.	14
Giant Spider	400 gp	30 ft., climb 30 ft.	420 lbs.	14
Giant Toad	200 gp	20 ft., swim 40 ft.	420 lbs.	14

TABLE: UNDERWATER VEHICLE

VEHICLE	SIZE	AC	HIT POINTS	SPEED	CREW	COST	SUPPLY/ RATION CAPACITY	SPECIAL
Submarine	Gargantuan	16	600	60 feet/ 6 mph	12	50,000 gp	600	Submersible, armed (torpedo x4)

SPECIAL FEATURE

Submersible. Submersible vehicles seal themselves and travel safely below the surface of the water, providing sufficient air and pressure protection to keep their crew safe from the hazards of undersea travel. They can move in three dimensions underwater or travel along the water's surface.

TABLE: SIEGE WEAPONRY

WEAPON	COST	SIZE	AC	HIT POINTS	RANGE	TARGET	DAMAGE
Torpedo	1,500 gp	Large	15	100	500/2,000 ft.*	One	8d10 bludgeoning

*Torpedoes can fire only through water. They cannot be launched above the surface.

Dungeon Spells

Many of the following spells are particularly useful underground or indoors. At the Narrator's discretion, adventurers might be able to learn them just as they do any other spells, or they might be able to gain them only as a reward for completing a dungeon adventure, as if they were rare spells.

Spell Lists

Bard Spells

2nd-Level

Magic Map (div): Create a map showing the route you've traveled.

3rd-Level

Invisible Object (ill): Turn an object invisible.

4th-Level

Arcane Mirror (div): Scry through a distant mirror.

Awaken Portal (tra): Impart sentience to a door.

Thunder Bolt (evo): Thunder deals damage and deafens.

5th-Level

Escape (con): Escape to the surface.

6th-Level

Metabolic Stasis (tra): Create a zone of immortality.

Rare Spells

Some spells are rare, and some spell descriptions include one or more rare versions of a common spell. The Narrator determines which, if any, rare spells are available to discover or research.

A rare spell can't be chosen when selecting new spells at character creation or when gaining a level. Instead, rare spells must be learned through costly research or by studying a specially scribed scroll. When a character acquires a rare version of a spell, they may learn it during a long rest, provided it is on their spell list. For classes that only know a limited number of spells, a rare spell does not count against their number of spells known. For classes that prepare a limited number of spells, this spell must be prepared separately.

Cleric Spells

1st-Level

Skeletal Hands (nec): Skeletal hands grab at targets.

3rd-Level

Stonesense (div): Gain a preternatural understanding of stone.

4th-Level

Arcane Mirror (div): Scry through a distant mirror.

Awaken Portal (tra): Impart sentience to a door.

6th-Level

Conjure Aberration (con): Conjure a hideous being.

Metabolic Stasis (tra): Create a zone of immortality.

9th-Level

Antimagic Zone (abj): Negate magic permanently.

Druid Spells

2nd-Level

Magic Map (div): Create a map showing the route you've traveled.

3rd-Level

Stonesense (div): Gain a preternatural understanding of stone.

4th-Level

Thunder Bolt (evo): Thunder deals damage and deafens.

6th-Level

Ravaging Roots (evo): Roots smash stone and capture creatures.

Herald/Paladin Spells

3rd-Level

Stonesense (div): Gain a preternatural understanding of stone.

Sorcerer Spells

Cantrips

Amber Prince's Shocking Grasp (evo): Rare spell. Fire a shocking bolt.

1st-Level

Skeletal Hands (nec): Skeletal hands grab at targets.

3rd-Level

Invisible Object (ill): Turn an object invisible.

Stonesense (div): Gain a preternatural understanding of stone.

4th-Level

Thunder Bolt (evo): Thunder deals damage and deafens.

6th-Level

Ravaging Roots (evo): Roots smash stone and capture creatures.

Warlock Spells**1st-Level**

Skeletal Hands (nec): Skeletal hands grab at targets.

2nd-Level

Magic Map (div): Create a map showing the route you've traveled.

3rd-Level

Invisible Object (ill): Turn an object invisible.

4th-Level

Arcane Mirror (div): Scry through a distant mirror.

6th-Level

Conjure Aberration (con): Conjure a hideous being.

Wizard Spells**Cantrip**

Amber Prince's Shocking Grasp (evo): Rare spell.
Fire a shocking bolt.

1st-Level

Skeletal Hands (nec): Skeletal hands grab at targets.

2nd-Level

Magic Map (div): Create a map showing the route you've traveled.

3rd-Level

Invisible Object (ill): Turn an object invisible.

Stonesense (div): Gain a preternatural understanding of stone.

4th-Level

Arcane Mirror (div): Scry through a distant mirror.

Awaken Portal (tra): Impart sentience to a door.

Thunder Bolt (evo): Thunder deals damage and deafens.

5th-Level

Escape (con): Escape to the surface.

6th-Level

Conjure Aberration (con): Conjure a hideous being.

Metabolic Stasis (tra): Create a zone of immortality.

9th-Level

Antimagic Zone (abj): Negate magic permanently.

Shocking Grasp rare spell:**Amber Prince's Shocking Grasp**

Cantrip (evocation; affliction, arcane, attack, lightning)

Classes: Sorcerer, wizard

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Target: 1 creature

Components: V, S

Duration: Instantaneous

Electricity arcs from your hand to shock the target. Make a ranged spell attack (with advantage if the target is wearing armor made of metal). On a hit, you deal 1d8 lightning damage, and the target can't take reactions until the start of its next turn as the electricity courses through its body.

This spell's damage increases by 1d8 when you reach 5th level (2d8), 11th level (3d8), and 17th level (4d8).

Antimagic Zone

9th-level (abjuration; arcane, divine, negation, planar, protection)

Classes: Cleric, wizard

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: 10 feet

Area: 10-foot cube

Components: V, S, M (opal worth at least 1,000 gp, consumed by the spell)

Duration: Permanent until dispelled

A permanent, immovable zone of antimagic fills the area, suppressing all magical effects within it. At the Narrator's discretion, sufficiently powerful artifacts and deities may be able to ignore the zone's effects. The zone is dispelled only if more than 10 percent of its area overlaps with that of another *antimagic zone* spell (which is also dispelled).

Area Suppression: When a magical effect protrudes into the zone, that part of the effect's area is suppressed. For example, the ice created by a *wall of ice* is suppressed within the zone, creating a gap in the wall if the overlap is large enough.

Creatures and Objects: While within the zone, any creatures or objects created or conjured by magic temporarily wink out of existence, reappearing immediately once the space they occupied is no longer within the zone.

Dispel Magic: The sphere is immune to *dispel magic* and similar magical effects, including *anti-magic field* spells.

Magic Items: While within the zone, magic items function as if they were mundane objects. Magic weapons and ammunition cease to be suppressed when they fully leave the zone.

Magical Travel: Whether the zone includes a destination or departure point, any planar travel or teleportation within it automatically fails. Until the spell ends or the zone moves, magical portals and extradimensional spaces (such as that created by a *bag of holding*) within the zone are closed.

Spells: Any spell cast within the zone or at a target within the zone is suppressed and the spell slot is consumed. Active spells and magical effects are also suppressed within the zone. If a spell or magical effect has a duration, time spent suppressed counts against it.

Arcane Mirror

4th-level (divination; arcane, communication, divine, scrying, utility)

Classes: Bard, cleric, warlock, wizard

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Self

Target: A mirror on the same plane of existence as you

Components: V, S, M (mirror worth at least 500 gold)

Duration: Concentration (1 minute)

You choose a mirror you've seen on the same plane of existence as you. You create a scrying sensor inside that mirror. You can instead name an area, such as a specific building or city: you create a scrying sensor inside a random mirror within that area. If there is no mirror in the area, the spell fails.

You can see and hear from the mirror as if you were within it. If there is at least one creature within sight of the mirror when you cast the spell, you can take control of that creature's reflection in the mirror. You can cause the reflection to act as you wish and to speak. Apart from the reflection's appearance in the mirror and the words it speaks, it has no effect on the real world.

Awaken Portal

4th-level (transmutation; arcane, architecture, divine, protection)

Classes: Bard, cleric, wizard

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Touch

Target: Huge or smaller door or window

Components: V, S, M (gold key worth at least 250 gp, consumed by the spell)

Duration: Until dispelled

You impart sentience to a door, window, gate, lid, or other object that can be opened, closed, and locked. You grant it an Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma of 10. The door retains its hit points, AC,



and other characteristics, and is considered an object. If the door is reduced to 0 hit points, it is killed and the spell ends.

The door is able to open, close, lock, and unlock by itself, and can speak and understand one language that you know. If *arcane lock* is cast on the door, the door can activate and deactivate the spell at will. The door is friendly to you and follows your orders.

Conjure Aberration

6th-level (conjuration: arcane, divine, evil, planar, summoning)

Classes: Cleric, warlock, wizard

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Medium (60 feet)

Components: V, S

Duration: Concentration (1 hour)

You wrench open a hole in reality and summon a creature from the cracks between the planes. This creature uses the statistics of a conjured aberration (detailed below). In addition, roll 1d4 or choose the aberration's general appearance.

1. Squid-like
2. Writhing ball of body parts
3. Humanoid with featureless face
4. Translucent worm

The creature is friendly to you and your companions and takes its turn immediately after yours. It obeys your verbal commands. Without such commands, the creature only defends itself. The creature disappears when reduced to 0 hit points. If your concentration is broken before the spell ends, you lose control of the aberration, which becomes hostile and attacks you and your companions. An uncontrolled creature disappears 1 hour after you summoned it.

Cast at Higher Levels. For each slot level above 5th, the aberration's AC increases by 1, its hit points increase by 10, and when it deals damage with an attack it deals 1d4 extra damage.

Rare: Vornift's Ecstatic Conjure Aberration. The conjured aberration has an additional 20 hit points and its attacks deal an additional 2d4 damage. However, when you first conjure it, you must immediately succeed on a DC 14 Constitution saving throw or lose control of the aberration.

CONJURED ABERRATION CHALLENGE — LARGE ABERRATION

AC 13 (natural armor)

HP 90 (bloodied 45)

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover), swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)

Proficiency your proficiency bonus; **Maneuver DC** your spell save DC

Condition Immunities fatigue, paralyzed, petrified, strife, unconscious

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Deep Speech, telepathy 120 ft.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* your spell attack bonus to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (4d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus extra damage equal to spell slot level. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (your spell save DC to escape).

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* your spell attack bonus to hit, reach 5 ft., one target grappled by the aberration. *Hit:* 25 (6d6 + 4) piercing damage plus extra damage equal to spell slot level.

Escape

5th-level (conjuration; arcane, teleportation)

Classes: Bard, wizard

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 10 feet

Target: You and up to 5 willing creatures

Components: V, S, M (silken cord)

Duration: Instantaneous

If you cast this spell while underground or inside a building, you teleport to the outdoor space you occupied most recently within the last 24 hours. You are teleported whether or not the destination is hazardous.

The spell fails if there is 100 contiguous feet of earth or stone or a thin layer of lead in a direct line between you and the destination.

Cast at Higher Levels. For each spell slot above 5th, you can teleport two additional creatures along with you.

Invisible Object

3rd-level (illusion; arcane, obscurement, shadow)

Classes: Bard, sorcerer, warlock, wizard

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: One object

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 hour

A Medium or smaller object becomes invisible, as do any inanimate contents inside it when the spell is cast. Objects removed from the spell's original target become visible. Objects placed in or on the target after the spell is cast remain visible, and dirt, dust, and other markings may reveal the invisible object's location. The spell ends if the object deals damage.

Attacks made with an invisible melee weapon are made with advantage.

Cast at Higher Levels. When cast with a 5th-level spell slot, the duration is 1 day. When cast with a 7th-level spell slot, the duration is permanent until dispelled.

Magic Map

2nd-level (divination; arcane, knowledge, nature)

Classes: Bard, druid, warlock, wizard

Casting Time: 1 action (ritual)

Range: Short (30 feet)

Area: Special

Components: S, M (blank parchment and special inks worth at least 25 gp, consumed by the spell)

Duration: Instantaneous

You create a map with yourself at the center, or update a map previously created with this spell. When creating a map, you choose its scale, from 100 by 100 feet to 100 by 100 miles. As part of the spell, you can make notes or other annotations on the map. The map only includes locations that you've seen and traveled through. The map doesn't show areas at a significantly different elevation from your current location. If you cast the spell while you are lost, the spell fails.

At the Narrator's discretion, some magical areas can't be mapped with this spell.



Metabolic Stasis

6th-level (transmutation; arcane, divine, nature, negation)

Classes: Bard, cleric, wizard

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: Short (30 feet)

Area: 50-foot cube

Components: S, M (diamond-dust-filled hourglass worth at least 1,000 gp, consumed by the spell)

Duration: Until dispelled

Creatures in the area when the spell is cast no longer age or require sustenance or Supply. The effect ends for a creature the first time it leaves the area.

Cast at Higher Levels. When cast with an 8th-level spell slot, affected creatures no longer need to breathe.

Ravaging Roots

6th-level (evocation; arcane, earth, nature, plants)

Classes: Druid, sorcerer

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Long (120 feet)

Area: 30-foot square

Components: V, S, M (dried willow tree root)

Duration: Concentration (1 minute)

Roots erupt out of an earth or stone surface that you can see within range, swelling as they smash stone and displace earth. When the spell ends, the roots wither away, but the damage remains.

Creatures: A creature that starts its turn in the area makes a Dexterity saving throw or is restrained by the roots, taking 5d6 bludgeoning damage. A creature already restrained by the roots automatically fails this saving throw. A creature can use its action to make a Strength check against your spell save DC, freeing itself or another creature on a success.

Ground: Ground and floors in the area (and underneath ceilings in the area, if you cast the spell on a ceiling) become difficult terrain.

Walls and Ceilings: Constructed walls and ceilings in the area take 5d6 bludgeoning damage at the start of each of your turns while the spell lasts. A structure reduced to 0 hit points by this spell collapses. Most structures of worked stone have around 27 (5d10) hit points per 10-foot-square section, while natural walls and ceilings have half as many hit points.

When a wall or ceiling collapses, the spell ends early. Each creature in or directly beneath the spell's area makes a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, it takes 5d6 bludgeoning damage, is knocked prone, and is buried by rubble. A creature buried by rubble that is underground is also unable to breathe. A creature can use its action to make a Strength check against your spell save DC, freeing itself or another creature on a success.

Skeletal Hands

1st-level (necromancy; arcane, control, divine, necrotic)

Classes: Cleric, sorcerer, warlock, wizard

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Short (30 feet)

Target: 1 creature

Components: S, M (finger bone)

Duration: Concentration (1 minute)

Dozens of skeletal hands reach from a wall or other vertical surface to grasp a creature within 5 feet of the surface. Make a melee spell attack. On a hit, the target takes 1d8 necrotic damage and is restrained until the spell ends. A creature restrained by the hands can use a bonus action to make a Strength saving throw to escape, ending the spell early on a success. On a failure, the target takes 1d8 necrotic damage. When the spell ends, the hands withdraw into the wall.

Cast at Higher Levels. The spell's initial damage and damage on a failed escape attempt increase by 1d8 per slot level above 1st.

Rare: Finor's Imprisoning Skeletal Hands. If you maintain concentration on the spell for the full duration, the target remains trapped by the hands until the magic is dispelled or you dismiss the spell as an action.



Stonesense

3rd-level (divination; arcane, divine, earth, nature)

Classes: Cleric, druid, paladin, sorcerer, wizard

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: 1 creature

Components: V, S, M (a rough figure of an earth elemental)

Duration: 8 hours

You imbue the target with a preternatural understanding of stone. The target gains tremorsense out to a distance of 60 feet.

Whenever the target makes a History check related to the origin of stonework, it is considered proficient in the History skill and gains an expertise die on the check. If the target already has the Stonecunning trait, it makes the check with advantage.

Additionally, if the target is underground, it can make a DC 10 Intelligence check to correctly determine the distance between itself and the surface, or to perfectly recall any path it has traveled in the past week.

Thunder Bolt

4th-level (evocation; arcane, attack, nature, sound, storm, thunder)

Classes: Bard, druid, sorcerer, wizard

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Long (120 feet)

Area: 20-foot-radius sphere

Components: V, S, M (tiny sheet of metal)

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Dexterity halves and negates deafness

A peal of thunder ripples from a point you can see within range. Each creature in the area takes 8d6 thunder damage and is deafened until the end of its next turn. If the area contains Large or larger nonmagical wood or stone objects, the objects take 8d6 thunder damage and creatures in the area that fail their saving throw take an additional 2d6 slashing damage from flying splinters. The thunderclap can be heard from 600 feet away.

Cast at Higher Levels. For every slot level above 3rd, the thunder and slashing damage increase by 1d6, and the thunderclap can be heard from an additional 100 feet away.

Rare: Elvatar's Thunderous Entrance. After the spell deals damage, you can teleport to the center of the area.



CHAPTER 2

BUILDING A DUNGEON

“I ask the Oracle where I can find the Sword of the Serpent,” declares a player.

“Uhh... fifty fathoms deep in the Valley of Snakes lies the Barrow of the Serpent Queen,” you improvise. You’d thought the players had forgotten all about that adventure hook from a few sessions ago.

“Great! The Valley of Snakes isn’t too far from here. Let’s head there now,” replies the player, to confirming nods from the rest of the party.

You look down at your notes, from which a map of the Barrow of the Serpent Queen is conspicuously absent...

This chapter is for Narrators who want to run dungeon adventures.

A dungeon adventure offers a lot of rewards, for both Narrator and players. It’s highly focused: with the players’ attention fixed squarely on the mysteries and challenges of each room, you’re constantly unveiling new discoveries for the players to marvel at. Compared to wilderness and urban adventures, a dungeon adventure is relatively easy to prep: it’s limited in scope, with a finite number of locations and inhabitants. And, most importantly, it offers a blank canvas for the imagination. We all have an intuitive sense of what a wilderness or a city (even a fantasy city) looks like. A dungeon is a more esoteric environment, so its appearance, its design, and even its natural laws are yours to create.

That said, dungeon design comes with its own set of challenges. It can be difficult to strike a balance between combat, exploration, and social scenes, or to make sure that players have a real but not paralyzing number of choices. Filling a dungeon with freshness and novelty is important too; after designing a few floors of monsters and traps, a dungeon can start to feel samey or drift away from its original theme, losing a sense of internal consistency. That's where this chapter's dungeon design tools come into play.

- For procedures you can use to create an effective dungeon map, from the detailed isometric map to the quick-and-easy bubble map, see **Mapping the Dungeon**.
- For themes and special rules you can use to help your dungeon tell a coherent story, see **Dungeon Theme**.
- For advice on how to design your dungeon's floor plan—and how to avoid ineffective dungeon designs—see **Designing a Dungeon's Structure**.
- Once you've got your dungeon map, what goes in each room? Use the NODES system to make sure that your dungeon is well-stocked with novel and memorable sights, challenging obstacles, rewarding discoveries, escalating dangers, and action set pieces that your players will remember long after their characters leave the dungeon. The NODES system can be found in **Stocking the Dungeon**.
- As the author of the game world, you need to describe the dungeon clearly without overwhelming the players—and change it in response to their actions. See **Running the Dungeon**.
- For a huge collection of narrative-first traps, tricks, and hazards, plus advice on turning traps from a grind to a blast, see **Traps**.
- For eight complete random dungeon generators you can use to create flavorful and strongly themed NODES-based dungeons, see **Random Dungeons**.

- If you need a dungeon in a hurry, grab one from **3-Page Dungeons**. Here you'll find eight complete dungeons, each designed for a different character level and around a certain dungeon theme.

Mapping the Dungeon

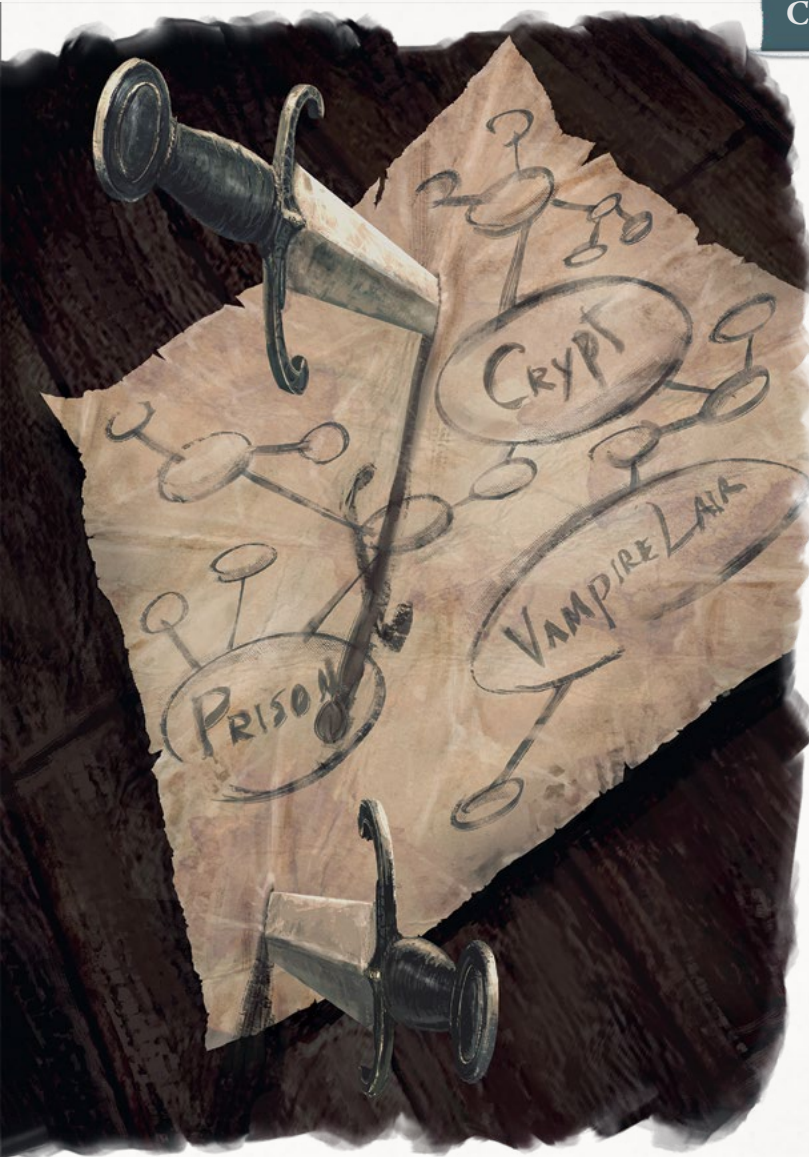
A dungeon map is either an important part of game prep (if you create or prepare your dungeon beforehand) or an emergent artifact of play (if you improvise the dungeon as you go along). In either case, you end up with a diagram of winding corridors and confounding chambers: the record of a structure that exists for a brief time in the players' collective imagination. As Narrator, you're responsible for designing that blueprint.

Grid Maps

Many dungeon maps are precise enough to show the exact measurements of every room and corridor in the dungeon. Some may also display the thickness of the walls, the location of doors, and the placement of furniture and other dungeon features. These maps are typically drawn on a grid, with each square representing either a 5 by 5-foot or 10 by 10-foot area.

Grid maps serve an important role in games where exploration is front and center. If players are expected to make their own maps in order to avoid becoming lost, or if accurate maps can reveal clues—for instance, if the players can find hidden rooms by identifying empty spaces on the map—then the size of every chamber and passage needs to be specified. Even if less detail is required, a large and complicated dungeon can benefit from a gridded map, where every architectural feature is accurately measured. Will the south door take us right back to the antechamber, or are there unexplored rooms in the way? If I cast *dimension door* and teleport 20 feet straight up, where will I appear?

Grid maps are also useful for games in which tactical combat is important. A precisely mapped dungeon, especially one stocked with balconies to climb and braziers to overturn, is an invaluable tool when creating battle maps for miniatures.



Of course, there's another reason to use grid maps. For many Narrators and players, creating and admiring precisely detailed maps is one of the pleasures of the game.

There are many beautiful standalone maps available free or for sale online. Many pre-existing adventures also come with dungeon maps. Even if you never use an adventure, you can always turn its map to your own purposes. You can even use a dungeon map from another game system or download a level map of a video game.

If you're inclined, you can make your own grid map. Many online mapping tools produce professional-looking maps. If you're interested in cartography, you can engage in a venerable pen-and-paper tradition and draw a map on graph paper.

Bubble Diagrams

Not every map needs to provide exact measurements and distances. Often, the relationship between areas is all the detail you need.

Also called “point crawl dungeons” or “flow chart dungeons,” bubble diagrams typically represent rooms as circles and corridors as connecting lines. An arrow between two bubbles can be used to represent one-way travel, such as a room with a door that only opens from one side. Room size and shape isn't represented accurately on the map: such measurements may be included in room descriptions or omitted entirely. Similarly, the corridors that connect the dungeon's rooms need not be measured exactly; unless the route between two rooms is particularly long or circuitous, for example, a simple line connecting the rooms can suffice.

A bubble diagram has the advantage of speed. You can sketch one quickly in a drawing program or on a scrap of paper.

Bubble diagrams are usually sufficient when you're playing a theater of the mind-style game. They can be supplemented with gridded battle maps for the dungeon's most important locations.

Winging It

Here's a secret: you don't actually need to prepare maps ahead of time in order to successfully run a dungeon.

Instead of designing a dungeon in advance, you might instead create a dungeon room-by-room as your players explore it. This chapter includes random dungeon generation rules that let you do just that. In that case, you—or a player!—might want to map as you go in case the party has to backtrack. It's easiest to keep a bubble diagram, though making a grid map as you go is perfectly doable.

When running a simple dungeon, in which each area's exits are included in the description, you may dispense with a map altogether. For a tiny dungeon in which, say, a front room leads to a bedroom and a kitchen, creating a map may be superfluous.

Maps from Other Perspectives

While most grid maps or bubble diagrams are drawn from overhead, with north at the top of the map and south at the bottom, rendering a dungeon in other ways can sometimes be useful.

A *side view map* presents a vertical instead of a horizontal slice of the dungeon. It's useful in dungeons where most areas are stacked on top of each other, instead of arranged on a flat plane. Two dungeons found later in this chapter, the Maze of the Mountain King and the Old Number Ten Mine, feature side view maps.

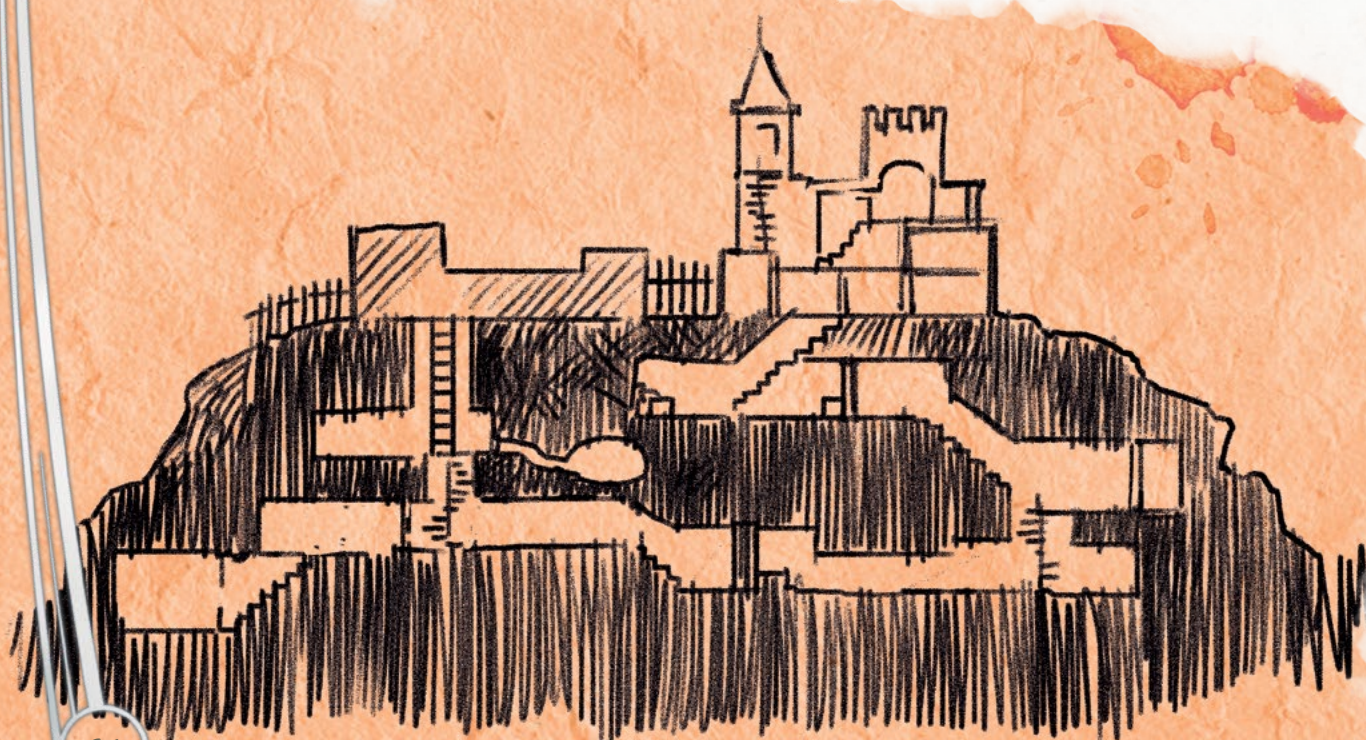
An *isometric map* combines an overhead view and side view, often placed on a diamond-shaped grid. It gives the impression of viewing a scene from a 45-degree angle, though it uses false perspective (areas farther away from the point of view aren't drawn smaller). It's a popular view in video games but can be used for pen and paper games as well. It's especially useful when rendering a map where both direction and elevation are important. The disadvantage of isometric maps is that they're not particularly easy or quick to draw: whereas an overhead view shows only the top of a cubic object, an isometric view typically shows three sides. The Palace of the Amber Prince is a two-page dungeon later in this chapter that uses an isometric map.

Sharing the Map with Players

Players can benefit from seeing a map of the dungeon in front of them as much as the Narrator—but it's not always easy to share it with them without revealing all the dungeon's secrets.

Playing remotely makes it relatively easy to keep players in the dark about what lies in unexplored areas. Virtual tabletop programs feature “fog of war” effects that black out unexplored sections of the map. Achieving the same effect on a physical tabletop requires a bit more creativity.

There are two ways to achieve a fog of war effect at a physical table: map generation or map concealment. With the generation approach, you draw the dungeon on a surface such as a whiteboard, battle mat, or piece of grid paper, or assemble a map made from dungeon tiles or modeled terrain. You can add new areas to the map as the party discovers them. This method has the advantage of flexibility, allowing you to create the map on the fly, but it can be time-consuming at the table. The concealment approach uses a pre-drawn map covered with sheets of paper or cardboard, which you lift or shift to reveal new areas. This method allows for more advanced planning, and often prettier artwork, at the cost of flexibility.



The oldest and lowest-tech way to share your map with players is through narration. As you describe each area of the dungeon, the players are responsible for making their own maps (or risk becoming lost, particularly if the dungeon is large or complex). In the early days of roleplaying, one player was often assigned the role of mapper. This player was responsible for listening to the game master's room descriptions—asking clarifying questions when necessary—and producing an accurate grid map on graph paper. While this is still a viable way to play, it's by no means necessary. Even if you decide that the players are responsible for mapping, a bubble diagram is usually sufficient.

You can also dispense with secrecy and share a complete, premade map with the players. Perhaps the characters obtain an in-game map from an ally or as part of a treasure. This method is the easiest for the players but often requires making a version of the map without the dungeon's inhabitants and other secrets marked on it. A secret door on a premade map isn't a secret door!

Dungeon Theme

Once you've decided how to map your dungeon, you need to populate it with tricks, treasures, mysteries, and monsters. Before you do so, you need a theme.

A dungeon is like a magnifying glass held to the game world. In a dungeon, as the available possibilities narrow, the players' attention becomes focused on their characters' immediate surroundings—what they can see, hear, and smell. As a Narrator, you have an opportunity to use this intense player focus to tell a story about your world. To keep this story as coherent as possible, most or all of the dungeon's features should relate to its theme in some way. When populating each area of your dungeon, ask yourself: what creature, danger, background detail, or action set piece can I add that will tell us something new about this dungeon's story?

Mundane Dungeon vs. Mythic Dungeon

Dungeons in most tabletop RPGs come in two varieties: **mundane dungeons**, which are realistic locations with an in-game history and goal-driven inhabitants, and **mythic dungeons**, in which the laws of logic take a back seat to evoking a specific feeling or game experience. While a dungeon can be perfectly natural and still create a compelling emotional experience, and a supernatural dungeon can maintain some measure of internal logic, most dungeons are primarily either mundane or mythic.

Mundane Dungeons

In most campaigns, mundane dungeons are the most common type. Unless it's a naturally occurring cave system, every dungeon was built for a reason, and its original purpose informs its architecture. Was the dungeon originally a temple? If so, it probably features a large, central area for worship. Was it a tomb? If so, it probably contains one or more burial chambers, which may be guarded, hidden, or protected by traps (or were looted long ago).

The dungeon's current use often differs from its original purpose. Scruffy bandits may lair in the ruins of a once-magnificent cathedral. What was once a bastion against hordes of undead may have since been overrun and claimed by those same undead. An old mine once operated by dwarves might now house a community of goblins or wererats.

When designing a mundane dungeon, you need to consider logistics at least a little bit. The dungeon's original designers and its current inhabitants both need living spaces, food sources, and so on. It might be interesting to see how the former and current dwellers make differing uses of the same space. The bandits living in a cathedral might draw water from the same well as the original priests but use the central shrine for a completely different purpose. (A particularly old dungeon may have had several waves of habitation; for the most part we only care about the location's original architects and the creatures that live there now, unless some middle group has had an outsized impact on its story or architecture.)

At its simplest, a place where humanoids live needs a place to sleep, a place to prepare food, and a water source. Humanoids with special training, like wizards and fighters, require places to study and practice.

What's more, humanoids like to have stockpiles of food, which can be supplied by hunting, farming, banditry, or magic. They may want tools and luxuries, which means they may need a way to shop, or at least to raid a caravan. Even evil minions usually don't work for free, which means that your little dungeon is now part of the world economy.

To make a dungeon feel realistic, you don't need to decide where everyone's food and pay comes from, who makes their beds, and how people go to the bathroom. Fleshing out these minor details can eat up preparation time that can be better used elsewhere. But every detail of that nature adds a level of polish. You can decide how much polish is necessary for each dungeon. Generally, you should add more detail for locations you want the characters to spend a lot of time in. For a one-session dungeon, a scattering of kitchens and barracks might be enough. But be prepared to make modifications on the fly! If a player asks where the wine cellar is so they can drug the wine, or a lavatory so that they can escape to the sewers, you can place it in an unexplored room.

Wild animals generally don't require specialized quarters or supply lines: hunting grounds and a bone-strewn sleeping lair is enough for most carnivores. Non-living creatures like constructs and undead don't need food at all, which makes them the perfect inhabitants of dungeons with difficult logistics, like long-lost libraries and buried temples.

Ancient Dungeons

While some dungeons are bustling with monsters, others are old and uninhabited (or contain uninhabited sections). Unless there's a magical effect preserving a dungeon in a pristine state, organic materials rot and metals degrade over time. You can use the following guidelines to evoke the sense of the passage of time in your dungeon. Most dungeons are fairly well-sealed against weather, so decay is slow. In a wet environment, objects can decay ten times faster; in an unusually dry environment, objects can last ten times as long.

After 20 years, corpses turn to skeletons. Unsealed foodstuffs rot.

After 200 years, paper and parchment yellows. Cloth and leather look worn. Copper develops a green patina and silver a black tarnish. Iron and steel can become discolored and spotted with rust. Sealed and preserved foods and drinks, such as wine, may spoil.

After 2,000 years, only fragments of paper and parchment survive. Cloth and leather have rotted away. Copper is coated with a green or black patina, and silver is black with tarnish. Pure gold remains bright, though gold alloys may darken. Steel and iron are brown with rust. Stone, glass, pottery, and bones remain well-preserved.

Mundane Dungeon Themes

The most common types of mundane dungeons are bastions, laboratories, mines, ruins, sewers, temples, tombs, and the caverns of Underland. For each of these themes, this book presents a random dungeon generator, suitable for any character level, as well as a prebuilt, two-page dungeon.

Bastions run the gamut from gleaming citadels to traditional prison dungeons to simple bandit lairs. Their architecture and decor vary depending on their inhabitants, but they're all built for defense—or, in the case of a prison bastion, to prevent their occupants from escaping. An active bastion dungeon is well-patrolled and features only a few entrances and exits (some of which may be hidden). A bastion may feature lots of barracks and store rooms to support its garrison. More so than in most dungeons, moving around a bastion is best done stealthily; guard patrols sound the alarm when intruders are spotted, and the bastion's rulers are likely to have contingency plans for break-ins by bands of adventurers. See *The Escalation Clock* in this chapter for more on how to run a bastion's security system. You can create a bastion using the random bastion generator found later in this chapter. For an example of a bastion, see *Maze of the Mountain King*, also later in this chapter.

A **laboratory** is any place used for magical research. Wizards are most commonly associated with laboratories, but any spellcasting class—and even non-spellcasters such as alchemists and

sages—might use a laboratory. A laboratory is a place of experiment and knowledge and typically includes workrooms, classrooms, and libraries. More often than not, a laboratory also contains magical guardians and spell effects unique to that location. You can create a laboratory using the random laboratory generator found later in this chapter. For an example of a laboratory, see Obsidian Peak, also later in this chapter.

A **mine** holds, or once held, valuable ore, gemstones, or more esoteric magical resources. Dwarves, humans, deep gnomes, and kobolds are traditionally miners. Mines have a ready-made reason to contain wealth, and the trappings of mining operations—mine carts, shafts, elevators, pumps, drills, and other machinery—offer many possibilities for puzzle-like interactions. Furthermore, mines are dangerous. They are home to natural hazards such as cave-ins and foul air, and ever since *Lord of the Rings*, mines have been places where adventurers may awaken sleeping

menaces or unintentionally delve into older, deeper dungeons. You can create a mine using the random mine generator found later in this chapter. For an example of a mine, see Old Number Ten Mine, also later in this chapter.

The past inhabitants of a **ruin** are more important than the current ones. A ruin might house intelligent inhabitants, but no one group dominates the dungeon: large sections of it are abandoned to time or unintelligent monsters, such as undead, or unliving guardians like constructs. Most areas haven't been used since the original inhabitants left. Depending on the ruin's age, surfaces might be dusty or moldy; wood and cloth might have rotted away; and metals might be rusty, tarnished, or covered with patina. For more information about the passage of time might affect a dungeon, see Ancient Dungeons in this chapter. You can create a ruin using the random ruin generator found later in this chapter. For an example of a ruin, see Palace of the Amber Prince, also later in this chapter.



Traversable sewers may not have been terribly common in real medieval cities, but vaulted sewers like those in 18th-century Paris are a fantasy trope for a reason. Sewers provide a private highway for thieves and a ready-made dungeon beneath every major city. They can be home to amphibious threats like aboleths, hidden menaces like cultists and assassins, and the occasional hapless guard patrol. Like mines, they tend to be high-tech, with pumps and water locks. As many video games have proven, too many water-level puzzles can be burdensome, but sewers are fun in small doses. You can create a sewer using the random sewer generator found later in this chapter. For an example of a sewer, see the Rotten Underbelly, also later in this chapter.

A temple can vary wildly depending on its inhabitants. A religious abbey, sanctioned by the local government, looks very different from a hidden shrine inhabited by evil cultists. In either case, small chapels and the central worship area will display all the wealth and magnificence the local priests can muster. Holy relics are protected by magical or mundane means. An adventure's plot might revolve around the spells being cast in the temple: spells like *resurrection* may be available only in a holy temple, while a temple occupied by evil cultists might be the site of a world-ending *gate* spell. You can create a temple using the random temple generator found later in this chapter. For an example of a temple, see Serpent's Maw, also later in this chapter.

Many adventures hinge on quests to recover lost relics, which as often as not end up in tombs. Tombs require less thought given to logistics than most adventure locales. (Many inhabitants of a tomb don't need to eat—though some want to!) Every part of a tomb, except the sought-after inner chamber, is designed to repel robbers. A tomb's defenses rely on traps and, of course, the dungeon's undead occupants. You can create a tomb using the random tomb generator found later in this chapter. For an example of a tomb, see Orden Barrow Mound, also later in this chapter.

Cavern systems in general, and the vast network of caves called Underland in particular, were created by geological forces, not intelligently designed. Caverns exist for no particular reason. These sunless realms may be host to creatures unlike anything encountered on the surface. Fungus is common and can act as an adversary, ally, or food source; intelligent creatures like aboleths and cloaklers vie for control over these cave systems. The deepest caves are often the most dangerous. Chapter 3 contains a gazetteer of Underland locations. You can create a cave using the random cavern generator found later in this chapter. For an example of an Underland location, see Sinister Submarine, also later in this chapter.

Mythic Dungeon

Mythic dungeons are designed more to engender a specific experience than to simulate a realistic location. In a mythic dungeon, when realism and theme conflict, you pare away the realism.

For instance, imagine adventurers exploring an underground cave and stumbling upon a narrow, vine-choked passage. Hacking their way down the tunnel, they find themselves in a spacious cavern ringed by trees and lit by glowing, golden birds that flit overhead. In the middle of this subterranean clearing sits a green dragon. Looking behind them, the adventurers see that the entrance tunnel has vanished: they can't go back the way they came.

How did the dragon get into this chamber when it can't fit through the entrance tunnel? What does it eat down here? Why are there trees and vines underground? How did the cavern's layout change?

By unmooring your dungeon from a previously understood reality, you place the players in a liminal state where they no longer know which rules apply and, therefore, believe anything might be possible. We enter a similar uncanny state when watching a mystery or thriller that presents a seemingly paradoxical situation—or when we're playing a roleplaying game for the first time and are still learning the rules of this new reality. This is not an inherently bad state for players to be in, so long as the Narrator can stick the landing and provide a compelling and satisfying adventure.



Most mythic dungeons function like mysteries the characters can solve. The dungeon has its own rules that set it apart from the normal world, but they're learnable and explainable. In the example above, perhaps the green dragon is a druid with access to spells like *passwall*, *tree stride* and *plant growth*, or maybe the dungeon contains a portal to another plane of existence such as the Dreaming. The players can solve the mystery presented by the dungeon, and when they do, it's as satisfying as uncovering the murderer's identity at the end of a twist-filled thriller.

Some dungeons go even further, exhibiting a weird, dreamlike logic that is never explained. Instead of providing a tidy explanation for the mysteries they present, mythic dungeons allow players to visit places that are beyond their ability to conquer and marvel at strangeness beyond their understanding.

It has been argued that the traditional RPG dungeon is a sort of mythic underworld or dreamland. The increasing danger as the characters travel

further from the surface, the maze-like and sometimes shifting structure of the architecture, and the dungeon's perverse propensity to thwart intruders are more a reflection of primal superstition and fear of the unknown than a simulation of reality. When the players enter such a dungeon, they enter a land between the conscious and the subconscious. They find themselves in a realm more akin to a horror or fantasy movie than a thriller or mystery.

When you're creating a mythic dungeon, you can decide how much of an explanation you need for each of the game rules you alter. In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *A Nightmare on Elm Street*, the characters' dream worlds are a kind of dungeon—"it's a dream" is the explanation, and it's nonspecific enough to allow for any fantastical encounter. In the novel *The Maze Runner*, the deadly maze's daily-changing layout can be learned, predicted, and explained technologically.

Presented roughly from most supernatural to most natural, here are some rationales for a mythic dungeon:

- The dungeon is a dreamland that operates on its own principles.
- A mad wizard did it.
- The dungeon itself is alive and has specific abilities like changing its own layout and summoning monsters. The dungeon is aware of and hostile to the characters.
- The adventurers are on an alternate plane of existence with its own learnable rules, or at a planar junction between two planes. A dungeon in the Dreaming will contain fey creatures and feature bargains and promises. A planar junction with the Far Realms might include melting architecture, sloppy slime that sprouts eyes and tentacles, and twisted and horrific inhabitants.
- The adventurers are in an area that's under a specific set of spell effects or monster abilities that follow all the rules of the game (operating as expected with *detect magic*, *dispel magic*, and so on). Bonus points if the effects are well-known and available to the players, like *guards and wards*, *programmed illusion*, and so on.

Since every mythic dungeon is so different, this book doesn't contain random generators specifically for mythic dungeons. Such dungeons are best designed from scratch, with every room supporting the desired theme in some way—with a monster encounter, a trick or trap, or just an evocative detail. Logistical necessities like eating and sleeping places may or may not be required. The random ruin generator in this chapter is a good starting point, but it should be heavily modified to match whatever mood you're trying to convey.

Mythic Dungeon Rules

When building a mythic dungeon, among the most important design elements are the dungeon's unique rules that set it apart from other subterranean places. The following example rules can be used to change the tone of your dungeon. You can even combine several rules in the same dungeon.

Each mythic dungeon rule comes with an optional non-supernatural explanation, such as its affinity with a certain plane of existence, or the net effect of vast quantities of magical stone used to build the dungeon. If you want your dungeon to be a solvable mystery, you can allow characters to discover these explanations. If you want your dungeon to be a dreamlike space, you don't need the explanation.

Dungeon Rules and Challenge Rating

In mythic dungeons, rules generally only penalize visitors to the area, including the adventurers. Permanent inhabitants are not affected by the rules' negative effects. If one or more rules makes a battle harder for the adventurers, increase the challenge rating of the encounter by 1.

Adventurers can exploit this effect. If adventurers adopt a mythic dungeon as a home base, they can eventually come to ignore the negative effects of the dungeons' supernatural rules (seeing normally in *Darkest Dark*, for instance). If the adventurers use this to gain an advantage in a battle against invading monsters, lower the encounter's CR by 1.

Clockwork Dungeon. Within the dungeon, objects reset when the adventurers aren't present. Doors re-lock themselves, sprung traps reset, levers return to their original position, and so on. This rule is useful for a deathtrap dungeon that has confounded numerous intruders over its history, such as a demilich's lair. It's good for fostering an uneasy sense that the adventurers are being watched and countered by hostile forces.

Explanation: Clockwork devices, *reloader gremlins* (Chapter 3), small constructs like *animated objects*, and intelligent inhabitants can reset devices when the adventurers aren't looking.

Darkest Dark. In this dungeon, places that would be areas of dim light are instead dark, and bright light is instead dim. Furthermore, visitors' darkvision doesn't work in such dungeons. This dungeon rule is good for fostering claustrophobic dread and also for imposing logistical considerations on the party. In a darkest-dark dungeon, someone needs to bring a light source—preferably multiple someones, since a torch's 20-foot radius of light won't let the characters see very far.

Explanations: The dungeon might be in or near the plane of shadow known as the Bleak Gate.

Dungeon of Chaos. The layout of a chaos dungeon changes periodically—perhaps every week or month. Passages, chambers, or even entire levels appear and disappear, and mazes re-route themselves when no one is looking. When new dungeon areas appear, new monsters, obstacles, and treasures appear as well. Who made all these changes to the dungeon? Who knows?

A chaos dungeon defies efforts to map or conquer it. A place without predictable rules, it forces players to accept the strange and novel as a standard part of the environment. A chaos dungeon provides the perfect excuse for an eternally fresh megadungeon, where every chamber contains new challenges for the characters to overcome, even when the characters revisit them.

Explanation: The dungeon might be connected to some source of chaos magic or a chaos plane. The dungeon itself might be alive, rerouting itself to repel (or lure in) adventurers who seek

to claim it. Other dungeon rules, like *Eternal Menagerie* and *Darkest Dark*, might apply to a living dungeon, as well. On the other hand, a living dungeon's ever-changing layout may be a completely mechanical affair, with machine-driven walls that reconfigure themselves on a periodic schedule.

Eternal Menagerie. The inhabitants of this dungeon don't seem to age or require food or water. An *Eternal Menagerie* lends itself to dungeons whose only purpose is to challenge the characters with a dizzying array of opponents, possibly as some sort of magical gauntlet or proving ground.

Explanation: The menagerie might be the creation of a powerful creature like a sphinx or archfey. Alternatively, the dungeon might be made of an arcane stone called bluestone, which slows the passage of time nearby, or it might be close to the Plane of Time, a reality in which all times collide.

Evil Dungeon. Within this dungeon, undead and fiends make saving throws with advantage. Furthermore, magical healing is reduced: whenever a spell or magical effect would allow a creature to regain hit points, that creature must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or the spell has no effect. An evil dungeon can make an adventuring party feel decidedly unwelcome. If the characters venture inside in pursuit of an evil creature like a vampire or demon, they can easily find themselves turning from the hunters to the hunted. This rule gives a strong boost to undead and fiendish creatures, making them far less likely to be affected by effects such as *banishment* and *Turn Undead*. It may be worth adding more than +1 to the Challenge Rating of encounters with undead or fiendish monsters.

Explanation: The area might be the cursed sanctum of an unholy temple or lie on a dangerous plane of existence like the Bleak Gate, the Abyss, or Hell.

No Long Rests. Within this dungeon, sleep is troubled by bad dreams and offers little comfort. While long rests are still necessary to prevent exhaustion, they give only the benefits of short rests. This

dungeon rule prevents characters from using game elements that provide havens. It creates a timer for a dungeon, forcing creatures to complete its challenges without the benefit of refreshed spell slots or other abilities that recharge on a long rest. This rule can be particularly dangerous and should be used with caution. If players can neither escape nor rest when they're out of resources, they may become trapped.

Explanation: The dungeon walls are made of a disturbing arcane stone called dreamstone, or the area is suffused with the corruption of the Far Realm. Alternatively, long rests can be prevented by adding a time limit to dungeon exploration.

No Teleportation. Within certain areas of the dungeon, visitors can't teleport, plane shift, or access extradimensional spaces like *bags of holding*. At high character levels, this rule is almost a necessity for dungeons in which the Narrator wants to control the characters' access to certain areas or prevent easy escape.

Explanation: The dungeon walls are carved from holystone, an arcane stone that prevents teleportation. Alternatively, the walls are covered with phase crystals (see *Maze of the Mountain King* in this chapter).

Unfriendly Doors. For visitors, the DC to break or pick locked doors increases by 10. Inhabitants of the dungeon can pass through doors without a key. This dungeon rule is good for creating puzzle mazes in which finding the proper key or password for each door is an important part of the challenge.

Explanation: Every locked door is affected by *arcane lock*. It can be dispelled as normal.

Enforcing Existing Rules. Even without changing the rules of the game, you can alter its tone by choosing which rules to ignore or enforce. Many groups don't keep track of arrows or torches spent, or the exact radius of their light sources, but in a survival horror game, doing so may build a sense of dread. On the other hand, in a mythic or high-fantasy dungeon, you might not bother with tracking equipment expenditure, encumbrance, light, time, or other mundane details that will slow down the narrative.

Designing a Dungeon's Structure

One of the reasons dungeons are so popular, both in tabletop RPGs and in video games, is that they provide a balance between complete designer control and complete player control. Dungeons serve up a steady stream of small, manageable choices (Should we fight or befriend the goblins? Open the door or rappel into the dark well?) in approximately the order the designer expects. This balance is achieved through a combination of **branches**, **loops**, and **gates**.

Branches

A branch is a crossroads where the adventurers must choose between two or more ways forward. For instance, let's say a group of adventurers enters a room and finds that it contains two exits: passages to the east and west. This is a branch.

Each time you create a branch, you give players a decision. Decisions let players think, and thinking is inherently fun (at least, it is for the type of people likely to play an RPG). Players want to make decisions about where to go, not be locked into a theme park ride that only has one destination. Branches are good.

In order for a branch to be a real decision, there has to be some reason to prefer one choice over another. "There are passages to the east and west" isn't a real choice; without further information, it's a coin flip. At every single dungeon branch, there should be some detail that players can use to distin-

guish between each of the exits. An arbitrary detail like "one door is made of wood and the other of iron" is OK, but it's even better when the detail provides real information about what's beyond the exit.

Remember that monsters in the *Monstrous Menagerie* and other *Level Up* books, including this one, come with lists of "signs": details that offer clues about a monster before you meet the monster itself. For instance, a troll's signs include rotting smells and heaps of cracked bones. If there's a troll to the east, you can consult the Signs table and announce that there's a rotting smell emanating from the east passage. That gives characters enough information to make a real decision. Similarly, if the characters are near a group of monsters without darkvision, they might be able to see the light of flickering torches down one of the passages. Even if there are no monsters directly to the east or west, some might have passed through the area recently, leaving tracks. A draft could indicate there's an exit from the dungeon nearby, and a sloping floor might hint that following a particular path leads to a higher or lower level of the dungeon.

How many exit choices should you offer at once? Around three should be the usual limit. Beyond this, it's difficult to offer meaningful distinctions between each door and passage, and it's even harder for the players to remember them all. "Let me get this straight, there's a rotting smell from the east passage, bones in front of the northeast passage, a draft from the north-northeast passage..." Of course, there may be exceptions to this rule! A grand concourse



or entrance chamber may logically have more than three exits, but such well-connected nodes should be somewhat rare.

Here's another reason to limit the number of exits from a room: each new exit is an addition to the adventurers' todo list. In dungeons, most navigation decisions aren't "do this or do that" but "do this now or do it later." Even if you take the west passage now, you can always come back later and take the east passage. That means that, in each further room, the option "backtrack and check out that east passage" is added to the adventurers' choices. All unexplored branches are essentially added to the adventurers' list of quests.

As in real life, people become uncomfortable when they have an overly long todo list. They may rush through locations in order to shrink the list instead of relishing each choice. Seven or so is probably the highest number of unfinished quests you can expect players to keep track of. Most people have difficulty remembering more than seven options of any sort, which means they're more likely to get confused and less likely to have fun.

To keep your players' todo list trim, limit the number of navigation choices offered in each area. If you have a room with seven exits, you've already filled up the players' todo list and won't have room for more branches further on!

Another way to avoid an ever-expanding todo list is to include some short paths in your navigation. If the adventurers follow the east passage and quickly hit a dead end, they can cross the east passage off their todo list, reducing their conceptual load.

Of course, most rooms with no exits should have *something* of note in them: multiple featureless dead ends are pretty pointless, even if you're designing a maze. As much as mazes and labyrinths are a classic of the fantasy genre, they're usually not that fun to explore in an RPG.

In conclusion: branching paths are good in moderation. Don't overdo it. Choosing between two or three interesting doors is fun. A dungeon that resembles a maze, with lots of dead ends and backtracking, or a hotel corridor with dozens of doors leading off a long hallway, is not.

Loops

In pen and paper RPGs as in video games, there's no luxury quite like skippable content. It takes a lot of work to prepare a dungeon's worth of tricks, traps, and combat encounters, and it can be tempting to guide characters through every one of these lovingly prepared areas.

Loops are a technique you can use to break out of that habit. Any two or more exits (or other means of travel, including teleporters, stairs, and so on) that both lead to the same location form a loop. Whenever you add a loop to the dungeon, you allow your players to choose one route or the other to reach their destination, potentially skipping one of your carefully designed scenes along the way. And that's good! When players know that they're not going to be forced into every scene, their choices feel all the more meaningful.

As a dungeon designer, you can decide how much "wasted work" you want to invest into easily skip-pable challenges. If the players can avoid even 10 or 20 percent of your clever puzzles and dastardly battles, they feel empowered. On the other hand, if the players can easily skip 75 percent or more of the dungeon, you might not be getting enough value from your preparation work. Your time is valuable, and you don't want to spend hours designing areas no one will ever see.

Besides allowing players to skip areas, loops also allow players to make interesting tactical decisions. In a dungeon with no loops, you always enter a room for the first time from the same direction: the direction that's towards the dungeon entrance. This means that the bad guys can script the encounter, with sentries and front-line fighters at the door, archers and spellcasters at the rear. The players have little choice but to fight through this gauntlet. Now imagine that the players can either walk in through the front door or loop around and go through the back entrance—or, even better, a secret back entrance. Clever players can now approach the battle on their own terms and be rewarded for doing so.

In order to provide any benefit, a loop must allow multiple ways to approach at least one interesting location, and preferably more than one.

The simplest loop—a featureless corridor that goes in a circle—has no benefit except perhaps as a race track. A loop that allows two ways to enter a combat encounter is better. Even better is a complex loop that runs through multiple rooms. For instance, in order to reach the throne room, you can go west to the throne room antechamber and ask the guards to give you an audience, or go east through the troll den and then loop around to a secret door behind the throne. If the players are smart enough to scout out their options instead of randomly choosing a path and barging forward, they can make informed decisions about which path they want to take, and indulge in the luxury of purposely skipping one of the paths.

Like any dungeon design technique, loops shouldn't be overused! Each loop you add makes a dungeon less linear. What does this look like when taken to the extreme? Well, it looks like an overland hex map, where most hexes can be avoided or approached from any direction. This is a perfectly good design for wilderness adventuring, but dungeons are at their best as more structured environments.

Gates

Gates are dungeon features that force the characters to earn their passage to a particular place in the dungeon. For a literal version, imagine a metal gate that only opens when a character pulls a lever.

While you certainly find the occasional locked metal gate in a dungeon, less obvious gates are used everywhere in dungeon design.

Consider the following example: The Narrator wants the characters to reach the dungeon's boss only after dealing with the boss's lieutenant. There are a few ways that this can be arranged:

- **Key gate:** The door to the boss's room can be opened only with a key the lieutenant carries.
- **Event gate:** The boss visits the dungeon only to avenge the death of its lieutenant.
- **Scripted gate:** The boss and the lieutenant are in the same room. When the adventurers enter the room, the boss flees while the lieutenant fights.

- **Architecture gate:** The door to the boss's room is in the lieutenant's room.

A smattering of gates in a dungeon can improve its flow. While you don't want to take away the players' agency by railroading them, there are many good reasons to gently guide the players through a dungeon! Even if the players drive their own fate, you as Narrator can keep a hand on the wheel. A story that slowly increases tension and builds up to a climax (a final fight against the boss) is a classic: it's more exciting than one in which players face an initial tough boss fight and then spend a few hours mopping up minions. You can't guarantee a big finish, but through dungeon design, you nudge the story in that direction.

By far the most common type of gate in dungeon design is the architecture gate. If room B can be reached only from room A, the characters must pass through the challenges in room A first. Taken to an extreme, this can lead to a row of successive dungeon rooms arranged like a railroad apartment, where you must fight an enemy in room A to reach the enemy in room B to reach the enemy in room C and so on, all the way to enemy Z. Without any choices along the way, this is a sterile design that robs players of agency. But a few architecture gates can make a dungeon stronger, providing built-in story structure and breaking up a dungeon into easily digestible chunks.

Key gates also have their place in dungeon design. With a key gate, characters become aware of a destination before they can reach it (there must be something interesting behind that locked door or *wall of force!*). Most players are tantalized by any location they can't enter, and the desire to reach it gives them a new goal to strive for. Don't add too many key gates though! Each unopenable door is permanently stuck on the players' to-do list until their characters can find the proper key.

One thing to keep in mind: in a game where anything is possible, nearly any gate can be broken! Characters can pick locks or cast *knock* on locked doors; circumvent obstacles using spells such as *dimension door* and *etherealness*; and even smash through walls, given enough time. You don't need to thwart efforts like these. At mid to high levels, most dungeon obstacles become suggestions, which adventurers can simply ignore if they wish.

Rooms

Branches and gates are varieties of doors. Obviously, doors don't make much sense without rooms to put them in.

A room's exact dimensions don't matter too much in play unless a) players are trying to make exact grid maps or b) combat breaks out. Obviously, option B is the more common of these two cases. Therefore, in any room in which you expect combat, room size should be driven by the needs of the combat.

In grid-based combat, each medium creature takes up 25 square feet of floor space and each large creature takes up 100 square feet. To avoid a combat area that's unmanageably cramped, a room should have at least twice this amount of space: so, if you expect a combat between 5 adventurers and 2 large ogres, you want a minimum of 650 square feet—thus, a 25 by 30-foot room should more than suffice. More available space leads to more movement.

If you expect either side to make effective use of ranged attacks, your room should feature hard-to-access areas such as balconies, or be large enough that melee fighters can't immediately close with ranged opponents. A 40- or 50-foot-wide room offers enough space for squishy ranged combatants to maneuver. In general, most big set pieces work more effectively in large rooms rather than in small ones.

While roleplaying game dungeon layouts are often designed with the game experience in mind, it's possible to start from the other direction, creating a dungeon that makes sense for its original inhabitants. Scenery, furniture, and real-world details add to verisimilitude, as do realistic floor plans.

Real-world trappings, in particular, can ground a scene. For a grand palace, you can include statues, paintings, and chandeliers to evoke the feeling of Louis XIV's Versailles. For a sewer, use the wide walkways and overhead pipes of the sewers of 19th-century Paris. It's not so much that details like this will be missed if absent, but they will be appreciated if present.

Real-world floor plans can also help here. When designing your dungeon, feel free to draw inspiration from (or outright steal) the floor plans of ancient

temples, medieval castles, or more modern structures. Keep in mind that real-world living spaces are often decidedly less mazelike than RPG dungeons, with wide corridors that allow easy, ungated access to different parts of the building. This can offer characters an overwhelming number of choices (we're back to kicking in random doors in a hotel corridor!). Natural locations (such as caves) and locations not intended for day-to-day use (such as tombs) tend to make better adventure sites than palaces and other living spaces. You can extract useful gaming material from maps of tombs, such as the Giza pyramid or the Dingtao Huangchangticou tomb; catacombs, such as those in San Giovanni or Paris; cave systems, such as the Oregon cave or Hang Son Doong; and mines, such as the Wieliczka salt mine.

Dungeon Size

How big should your dungeon be? It really depends on how much game time you want to devote to it. Do you want a dungeon to be a one-session side trek, or a campaign fixture?

Solving puzzles, dealing with traps, and role-playing social interaction scenes can take up a lot of time at the table, but nothing consumes game time like combat, especially as characters gain levels. At mid to high level, a single set piece battle can eat up half or all of a game session. Therefore, the number of potential combats in a dungeon has the biggest influence on the number of sessions it will take to explore. Let's say that, as a somewhat arbitrary baseline, 40 to 50 percent of dungeon rooms might contain a potential fight; most of the remaining rooms hold puzzles, mysteries, interesting scenery, and so on. Remember that depending on your group's interest in negotiation, every potential combat encounter may not result in an actual combat encounter! And remember that you can vary from the baseline. You can run a puzzle-based dungeon with only a handful of combats or none at all, or a royal rumble combat gauntlet if you wish. Adjust the expected play time accordingly.

Some groups might be able to run through three or more combats and several non-combat locations in a single game session, while other groups might require two sessions to cover the same ground. For



the sake of measuring a dungeon, let's say that two combat encounters and two exploration or social scenes represents one session of gameplay for the average group; if your group progresses faster or slower than this, keep that in mind as you size your dungeon.

Small dungeon: John Fourr pioneered the popular five-room dungeon format (<https://www.roleplaying-tips.com/5-room-dungeons/>) for use as a two- to four-hour adventure. In this format, there are usually two to three combat encounters (one for every two rooms), which seems like a plausible mix. Five rooms seems like a good target for a small dungeon.

For a manageable dungeon that you can get through in a session or two, put together a dungeon of about three to eight rooms connected by the required halls and corridors. On average, 50 percent or fewer rooms need to be populated with potentially hostile monsters. Assuming an average room size of around 1,000 to 2,000 square feet, some connecting

corridors, and potentially some areas of unexcavated rock, you'd want a dungeon area that's at least 100 feet on a side. Even in such a small space, you might have room for an interesting navigation feature or two, such as a loop or gate structure.

Medium dungeon: For a longer story arc lasting two or three game sessions, you can double the number of features of a small dungeon: nine to 15 rooms containing four to six potential battles should suffice, along with several loops and gates. A square medium dungeon might be 150 or 200 feet on a side.

Large dungeon: A large dungeon occupies a major chunk of the campaign, potentially providing enough XP (from combat and overcoming other challenges) for each character to gain a level or more. Tackling it will be a multi-session effort, and the characters might need to return to it several times to fully explore it. Furthermore, a large dungeon is likely to include several floors or levels connected by stairs.

A large dungeon might contain 16 to 25 rooms, usually with less than half that number in potential battles. Large dungeons tend to offer complicated navigation: gates and stairs can be used to divide the dungeon into smaller sub-dungeons, and connecting loops offer players many ways to navigate the dungeon.

Megadungeon: Common in the early days of RPG gaming, a megadungeon is a defining element of a campaign. Players return to the dungeon throughout the course of the game, winning their way to more and more dangerous areas.

A megadungeon is usually divided into explicit levels, with each level hosting more dangerous challenges as the party descends further into the earth (or ascends a tower). Players can expect that a deeper level is almost always more dangerous.

A good megadungeon needs to offer a great deal of variety, since players will be spending most of the campaign in it. Each level is often built around a different theme. Levels may be complicated by sublevels: changes in elevation within an area of the same difficulty or theme.

Megadungeons are rarely linear. They typically include more than one entrance; several sets of stairs down to lower levels; lots of loops and gates; and multiple set piece battles per level. A Narrator can run several gaming groups through the same megadungeon and they might take completely different routes, building a unique story along the way.

Megadungeons aren't for every group, but they can offer a fun, old-school play experience for those who want to make a dungeon delve the centerpiece of their campaign.

Dungeon Levels

Technically, a dungeon level is nothing but a floor or storey of an underground complex. However, long-standing RPG convention has it that each descent to a deeper dungeon level brings more danger. A “level one” dungeon is suitable for novice characters; by the time you reach a “level ten” or deeper dungeon, anything goes.

This trope can be hard to justify from a story perspective: why should fiercer monsters gravitate towards deeper levels of a dungeon? But psychologically and structurally, it makes a lot of sense. The deeper into the earth you go, the more isolated you are from the ordinary world, and the more you are at the mercy of the strange laws of the labyrinth. The dungeon, like an ocean, has its safe shallows and its dangerous depths. Whether or not we can justify it with in-game reasons, the idea has mythic resonance, and is a familiar trope in both tabletop and video game RPGs.

Furthermore, it makes game sense to increase the danger of deeper parts of the dungeon. As characters travel farther from the dungeon entrance, they increase in power as they gain experience and treasure. They should face greater challenges along the way, ending (hopefully) in a climactic encounter with a dreaded villain.

Once players know the rule that descent leads to danger, they can make informed decisions. Will they continue exploring this floor, or descend down the stairs where they can expect to find greater perils and greater rewards? Their choice lets them take control of the pacing of the game.

In this book, we've embraced the dungeon levels convention. When a party descends (or, in some cases, ascends) into the unknown, they can expect to find greater challenges waiting for them. Each dungeon, or floor of a large dungeon, is given a “level” from 1 to 20, which is a difficulty rating. In general, a level 1 dungeon is suitable for level 1 characters, and a level 20 dungeon is suitable for level 20 characters, but this isn't a hard and fast rule. Brave 2nd-level adventurers might venture into a level 3 dungeon or beyond, while 10th-level characters might return to slum or clean up loose ends in a level 5 dungeon.

Just as not every dungeon is a megadungeon, not every dungeon starts at level 1 and descends to greater challenges! Many dungeons have only one level, and many begin at a level higher than 1. Mid-career characters might explore a small, stand-alone level 5 dungeon with no stairs or sub-levels. High-level characters might enter a cave that leads

them straight to a level 19 dungeon level, and then ascend thousands of stairs to face climactic threats in a level 20 dungeon level.

Using an artificial conceit like dungeon levels can nag at some Narrators, who would like to align a dungeon's narrative purpose with its game purpose. Here are some fictional justifications for deeper, more dangerous dungeon levels:

- **Wild Frontier.** Many generations of adventurers have delved into nearly every large dungeon. While they've never reached the bottom, a few parties have explored the dungeons' mid levels, and the upper levels have been cleared out many times. The shallowest parts of a dungeon have been re-inhabited by opportunistic critters like kobolds and minor-league necromancers, while the deepest parts are still home to their original, ancient inhabitants.
- **It Came From Underland.** Miles underneath the petty diggings and constructions of surface creatures lie the sinister caves of Underland, a strange and dangerous ecosystem of terrible danger. When a delver digs too deep, horrid things come crawling up from the darkness. The deeper you go, the more Underland influence you encounter. (For more on Underland, see Chapter 4).
- **Living Core.** The dungeon has sentience, or at least purpose. It defends its pulsing core with increasingly dangerous traps and monsters. It may also feed on adventurous explorers, which explains why a trail of treasure leads deeper down.
- **Dungeonite.** There's a cosmic energy associated with the depths of the earth: perhaps it radiates from the core of the earth, or it's inherent in some exotic stone or metal ore. Perhaps some hellish plane of existence lies far beneath our feet. The arcane energies in deeper areas can spawn or strengthen terrible monsters.

Stocking the Dungeon

In previous sections we've taken a big-picture view of building a dungeon, choosing its theme and deciding where all the rooms and passages go. The more important question, of course, is: what's in all those rooms and passages?

Creating an adventure's worth of interesting features at once can be challenging. You may encounter writer's block, or find yourself filling each area with repetitive challenges. (A dungeon where every room contains hostile monsters is one of the most common ruts to get stuck in!) In these cases, it can be helpful to have a checklist to make sure you have varied adventure elements: something for the puzzle solver, something for the story lover, something for the combat fan, and so on.

The NODES System

In technical fields like mathematics, botany, and computer science, a node is a place where leaves bud from a branch or where lines meet. In other words, an intersection or branching point.

Most locations in a dungeon are physical nodes. Every room or corridor with multiple exits is an intersection of paths. More broadly, every place of interest is a story node, where characters make one choice or another. For instance, a dead end containing a trapped chest is a story node: will the characters leave the chest alone, open it and find the treasure, or spring the trap and leave their bones moldering in the dungeon?

NODES is also a handy mnemonic you can use to populate your dungeon rooms—your nodes—with entertaining variety. Your dungeon comes alive when it's filled with **Novelties**, **Obstacles**, **Discoveries**, **Escalations**, and **Set-pieces**.

When designing a dungeon, stock most of your rooms with items from the NODES checklist. Fill other rooms with theme-supporting scenery and logistical necessities like barracks. You don't need to hit everything in the checklist, especially in a smaller dungeon. (An ODES or NOD dungeon is fine!) A larger or themed dungeon can have multiples of a single type of node: a death trap

could be made of mostly trap obstacles with few or no combat encounters, and a campaign-defining megadungeon might have multiple factions, bosses, sub-bosses, and puzzles on each of its floors.

Novelties

Novelty is the driving force of tabletop RPGs. While you can enjoy the sense of mastery that comes with practicing and perfecting a repetitive computer game, you just can't have that same experience with a tableful of friends. A live game has a completely different alchemy. In a tabletop game, no two campaigns, no two adventures, and no two battles can be the same—and none of them have to be, with you as Narrator.

Every dungeon should offer something that the players haven't seen before in the campaign, or a twist on a familiar idea. (Don't worry: your dungeon idea doesn't have to be totally original—just new to your game table. Even well-worn fantasy tropes like devil-summoning cultists and wicked vampires are welcome the first time around.)

One of the best ways to introduce novelty into your game is with a fantastic vista.

- **Grand scale.** Dungeons are usually cramped, and it's nice to give breathing room to an important area by placing it against a huge backdrop. Give your players a view of vast caverns, endless corridors, subterranean oceans, and towering spires.
- **Dizzying depths.** Chasms are great, especially when spanned by narrow bridges. What's at the bottom? Blackness? Twinkling lights of unknown origin? Glowing lava?
- **Light.** Darkness is the default state underground, which makes light an even more effective tool. Bright, colored lights are a great aid to the imagination. Fill rooms with phosphorescent moss, glowing crystals, blazing braziers, dancing motes of fairy light, or stranger light sources like strobing lightning flashes from an underground storm, or the distant, burning skeleton of an immense giant. Large, bright spaces are especially welcome after long journeys through dark, constricted tunnels.

Quick-Start Dungeons

You can create a short dungeon delve with a classic structure by using the NODES elements in the order they appear in the mnemonic. Start with your mind-blowing Novelty in room one; show the characters an Obstacle; let them look around and find a Discovery that lets them bypass the obstacle; Escalate the action; and finish it up with a Set piece. This will give you a complete dungeon that takes about one session to play through. This same pattern can be used to structure adventures outside the dungeon as well!

- **Violation of natural laws.** Examples include Escher-like altered gravity, with furniture, stairs, and doors on the walls and ceiling; objects slowed or frozen in time, like unmoving torch flames; underground wilderness, such as forests; weather, such as snow or mist; and spell effects, like *fly* and *detect thoughts*, applied to all who enter. Mythic dungeon rules, such as Darkest Dark and Dungeon of Chaos, also apply here.
- **Art.** Memorable, large-scale artwork, such as tapestries, carvings, and statues, are a dungeon classic for a reason (particularly statues, which can also be monsters in their own right or signs of nearby medusas). Magical artwork, like illusions, can be even more spectacular. The most memorable dungeon art is the most unsettling! Why is there a mosaic of a hero being devoured by stirges, or a statue of a creepy clown whose juggling balls are suspended motionless in the air?
- **Strange materials.** Dungeons or dungeon sections made of bones, stained glass, flesh, or walls of force.

Not every novelty has to be visually impressive! Here are some less photogenic novelties that can spice up a dungeon:

- Travel by teleporter
- A dungeon populated by ghosts from the characters' past
- A regular, repeating noise, such as an echoing crash, the grinding of stone, or sinister giggling
- Claustrophobic or underwater tunnels
- Timed elements, such as dungeon levels that can only be reached at low tide
- Unusual architecture: odd-shaped or tilted rooms, balconies or bridges looking down on other levels.

Obstacles

Obstacles are non-combat challenges that block the way forward. They may require characters to think critically, pay a cost, or even retrace their steps and come back later. The most common types of obstacles are **locks**, **puzzles**, and **traps**.

Every obstacle should allow multiple solutions. Consider what happens to the adventure if the players don't think of a puzzle's clever solution. They should be able to bypass it or use brute force to solve it, usually at a cost. Perhaps ignoring the puzzle deprives characters of bonus treasure, or forces them to walk through a trap and risk damage. But they shouldn't run up against a wall that prevents them from proceeding with the adventure.

Locks

A locked door is a perfect example of an obstacle with many solutions. While there may be only one key to a lock, there are countless ways to get past a door! Characters can pick the lock if they are willing to risk traps, bash it down if they don't mind attracting attention, and use spells like *knock* and *dimension door* if they're willing to spend spell slots. In fact, countless published dungeons contain locked doors with no matching key anywhere in the

adventure! That said, it's good form to include at least one key for nearly every lock in the adventure.

Whenever you place a locked door in the dungeon, add an item to your mental to-do list: "I need to place the key." The next time you add a patrol or treasure, or the next time you're adding a Discovery from the NODES checklist, think, "Maybe this is where I should put that key." For instance, many trap descriptions say that they guard a minor treasure. If you know the players are looking for a key, you can put it on the body of the thief at the bottom of the pit trap.

When possible, a key should visually refer to its lock. Even if players encountered the lock a long time ago, the key should remind them of it—and vice versa. Here are some possibilities:

- **Lock:** A bronze door engraved with a stag's head. **Key:** A key carved of horn.
- **Lock:** A mithral door enameled with green vines. **Key:** A mithral key with a head shaped like a leaf.
- **Lock:** A black door set in the mouth of a giant skull. **Key:** A bone key set with literal teeth.
- **Lock:** A door shaped like a shield. **Key:** A key that resembles a sword.
- **Lock:** A keyhole shaped like an hourglass. **Key:** A sandstone key with the same peculiar shape.

Puzzles

Puzzles are obstacles that require a clever solution in order to advance. In a pinch, a character can make a skill check to solve a puzzle, but they're usually presented as a challenge to the character's player.

When designing a puzzle, remember the two rules of obstacle design: every puzzle should have multiple solutions, and failure shouldn't block progress in the adventure. Along with those, keep in mind this cardinal rule for puzzles:

Don't make the puzzle too complex.

As a Narrator, you generally don't want to spend minutes on end watching people agonize over a fiendishly difficult puzzle—unless you know that all the players like puzzles. While it might be fun for the members of the group who are puzzle-inclined, it kills the energy of the game for those who aren't.



Many puzzles are best done as solo or duo activities. While the entire group might work together to solve a very short, very easy crossword puzzle, sudoku, or cryptogram, a longer one will usually wear out its welcome. Generally, one or two players will eventually grab the paper and solve it themselves, while everyone else sits around with nothing to do. A long-form puzzle like this works best if you're sure all the players enjoy puzzles, or if you split the party and require some players to work on the puzzle while others engage in combat or another challenge.

On the other hand, it's almost impossible to make a puzzle too easy. It's amazing how often a group can overthink even a simple puzzle, seeing difficulty where you expected none—and a complex puzzle introduces more room for misstating on your part or misunderstanding on the players' part, making the puzzle impossible to solve. Failing to solve a puzzle is no fun. On the other hand, if the puzzle is too easy and the players get it right away, they'll feel like they outsmarted you—not the worst outcome in the world!

Here are some *classic puzzles*: that is, ones that were obviously designed, within the fiction of the game world, to be tests of wit.

- **Pattern puzzles:** After jumping from a red to an orange to a yellow platform, players have a choice between a green or purple platform. (They should pick green; the platforms are in rainbow order.)
- **Set puzzles:** In a room where each floor tile is numbered, players might discover that odd-numbered tiles are safe.
- **Pun puzzles:** A door marked “Ring to enter” might open when a ring is placed next to it.
- **Logic puzzles:** Two of the most well-known logic puzzles are the farmer, fox, and chicken riddle (“A farmer needs to cross a river with a fox, a chicken, and a grain sack, in a rowboat big enough for himself and one item. If left unchaperoned, the fox will eat the chicken and the chicken will eat the grain.”) and the liar and truth-teller riddle (“At a fork in the road are two guards, identical in appearance, one of which always tells the truth and one of which always lies. What is the one question you can ask to either of the guards to find out which path is the correct one?”) You can try your hand at these or other logic puzzles, but keep in mind that many folks are familiar with these two examples. Many other logic puzzles exist, some of which are too time-consuming to solve in an RPG game.

Among classic puzzles, *riddle puzzles* are deserving of special mention. They've been enshrined in fantasy literature since the sphinx's riddle in Greek myth, and they appear in *The Hobbit*, which has become the pattern for much of modern fantasy literature. In a dungeon setting, a riddle's answer often directs the adventurers towards the proper course of action. For example, a sealed, icy-cold door bears a riddle, “I eat, I live. I breathe, I live. I drink, I die.” The answer to this riddle is “fire,” which may be a hint that fire damage can open the door.

Here's a collection of riddles, both classic and original, that are suitable for a fantasy milieu:

- Glittering points that downward thrust, sparkling spears that never rust. (Icicles)
- I make you weak when you most need strength. I plague your life but preserve its length. I make your hands sweat, and your heart grow cold. I visit the weak, but seldom the bold. (Fear)
- Hard to keep it, quick to make it, herald or devil can never break it. (Your word, or a promise)
- A horrid monster hides from the day, with many legs and many eyes. With silver chains it catches prey, and eats it all before it dies. (Spider)
- I fell trees with no axe, I sail ships with no map. With no shovel, I shape dune; I whistle with no tune. (Wind)
- Some test their faith and fast and pray; I earn my power another way. Some tame the dragon in their veins; another path to me is plain. Some study, burning midnight oil; I earn my power without such toil. My spell's a gift, I think it free. What will the giver take from me? (Warlock)
- Wherever I walk I'm always alone, with sibilance and silent stone. If any calls me vain, he lies; I've never even seen my eyes. (Medusa)
- It swims in a cup and it sleeps on a knife; this little green killer thirsts for your life. (Poison)

You can find more riddles in *Trials & Treasures* and the *Monstrous Menagerie*.

If the group is frustrated by a puzzle, then a player might suggest a skill check. Perhaps a player's wizard with a 20 Intelligence should be able to solve a cryptogram easily even if the players can't. This is a perfectly reasonable fallback position. Allow an Intelligence check, or even a History, Religion, or

other skill check if it's appropriate to the puzzle. If the players are interested in the puzzle but stuck, then a successful check gives them a clue. If the players are not interested in solving the puzzle at all, then let them solve the puzzle with a skill check and move on.

More natural, and often more appropriate, than the classic puzzle is the *emergent puzzle*. It's a difficulty or obstacle that wasn't designed by an in-game villain or taskmaster; it's just an obstacle that can be passed with a little cleverness.

The best emergent puzzles are open ended and allow many possible solutions. When designing a puzzle, it's good if you have a solution in mind, just to prove that it can be solved; but don't be too attached to your own solution. Your players may come up with something equally brilliant. When you're inventing a challenge for clever or high-level characters, you can even present a problem that you *don't* have a solution for: the players will undoubtedly come up with something.

Emergent puzzles are solved most elegantly by using items found in the dungeon to bypass an obstacle in another place in the dungeon. For instance:

- Players must cross a thirty-foot-wide chasm, too far to jump. There are a dozen ways for characters to solve this puzzle, but they might make a bridge if they remember the forty-foot-long feast tables they found in the great hall.
- A passage is sealed with an iron wall with no keyhole in sight—but there is a rust monster somewhere else in the dungeon level.
- A treasure lies beyond a one-inch-wide hole. Elsewhere in the dungeon, a monster guards a *potion of gaseous form*.
- There's a trapdoor on the ceiling of a thirty-foot-tall room. You might have no particular solution in mind for this puzzle, but it could be solved with the *immovable rods* or *boots of levitation* found in the dungeon's treasure, by damming a subterranean river to flood the dungeon and float up, or by constructing a rickety pile of furniture.

Spells can also be used to solve many puzzles. The emergent puzzles above can also be solved trivially by characters that can cast *fly*, *disintegrate*, *gaseous form*, or *levitate*. Don't worry if players smash your elegant puzzle by casting a spell; these solutions are perfectly valid, though usually more costly since they use up a spell slot or charges from a magic item.

Emergent puzzles don't lend themselves to being solved with Intelligence checks. It can feel artificial for the Narrator to suggest a course of action for getting past a chasm. However, if players are stuck, you could call for an Intelligence check for a hint: "You think you could get across the chasm if you found something long enough to act as a bridge."

Remember that failing to solve a puzzle shouldn't stop progress through the adventure. Failing at a puzzle can, however, cause the players to miss out on treasure, require them to take a detour, or cost hit points and other resources the party would rather not spend. If players can't figure out how to get across a chasm, then whatever's on the other side should be optional, or there should be a more difficult and dangerous route around the chasm. If players can't solve a riddle on a magic door, let them chop the door down—at a cost. The noise might attract a nearby group of monsters, or the door might deal damage when destroyed. Remember, failure should lead to bad consequences for the *character* (taking damage, having to fight an extra battle, raising the stakes of the adventure), not bad consequences for the *player* (not getting to see the end of the adventure, feeling frustrated, spending a big chunk of a game session looking for the fun).

Contorting through Tight Spaces

Dungeons, particularly caverns, are filled with tiny spaces. The idea of squeezing through a narrow tunnel underground—and getting stuck, unable to retreat or advance—can send a thrill of terror through players that wouldn't bat an eyelash at encountering a pit fiend. If you or any of your players suffer from claustrophobia, you might want to skip this type of obstacle.

Ability Scores in the Dungeon (chapter 3) has rules for contorting through tight spaces that allow characters to squeeze through areas narrower than a

foot wide—at the risk of getting stuck. In a dungeon, a tight space is likely to be easy for some characters, such as the halfling rogue, to traverse and difficult for others, such as the human knight carrying the camping gear. Obstacles requiring contortion are best used to temporarily split the party: perhaps only one or two characters can wriggle through the bars of a portcullis to flip a switch or fetch an enticing piece of treasure.

Traps

While puzzles and locks make themselves obvious, traps present hidden dangers in seemingly innocent areas. They don't prevent travel down a particular path, but they may punish those who carelessly follow it.

Traps are such an important part of dungeon adventures that they're covered in greater detail later in this chapter.

Discoveries

In the NODES dungeon framework, "obstacles" and "discoveries"—problems and solutions—often go hand in hand. A discovery is something that makes traversing the dungeon easier or is a reward for its own sake, like treasure. The most common types of discoveries are **keys**, **treasure**, **social interaction**, and **secrets**.

A **key** is anything that allows the characters to progress past an obstacle elsewhere in a dungeon. Most often it's a literal key, but it can also take the form of a password, a magic medallion that dispels a *wall of force*, or even a disguise that allows passage through a guarded door. Remember that a lock and its key can be found in either order! You can let your adventurers discover a key to a door that players haven't encountered yet—or, if you're randomly generating a dungeon on the fly, to a door that doesn't exist yet.

Treasure often takes the form of a traditional, level-appropriate treasure hoard, but it's useful to grant smaller amounts of treasure as well. A single consumable magic item, or a gem or art object worth up to one-third of the monetary value of a typical hoard, is a bite-sized reward that you can stow almost anywhere in the dungeon without

significantly altering the party's wealth. A small treasure like this gives meaning to a trap, hidden area, or other obstacle, and provides contrast for rarer, richer troves.

Many parties value secrets as much as or more than wealth. Just as people keep watching television dramas for the steady stream of plot twists, an RPG adventure is more engaging when it offers mysteries and revelations. In the dungeon, not everything should be as it seems! Some of the creatures the party encounters should have secret goals and allies, which they can reveal through conversation—or through documents looted from their bodies. The dungeon's bad guy might know something about the adventurers' overarching quest. A dungeon's ancient architects might have left behind a few secrets of their own as well.

It's easy to forget to stock a dungeon with opportunities for social interaction, but of all the potential discoveries found within a dungeon, creatures willing to talk are perhaps the most compelling. For many players, navigating a web of social interactions and relationships is the essence of an RPG experience. Even players that prefer fighting and puzzle-solving might find non-combat encounters breathe life into a dungeon. An adventure's stakes are always heightened if it includes NPCs that the party cares about. Furthermore, social interactions often have material benefits: creatures in the dungeon can provide information about enemies and treasure, places to hide, and new goals and quests.

Social interactions are rewarding in and of themselves, and they turn what can be a lonely dungeon environment into a living place. A potential ally, an enemy willing to talk, or an untrustworthy entity proposing a deal can provide narrative juice, motivation, and meaning that enhances the rest of the dungeon.

When designing a dungeon, you can create your own rewards or use the following Discoveries table, which includes example keys, treasure, social interactions, and secrets rewards. The random dungeons later in this chapter each come with their own Discoveries tables specific to the dungeons' themes.

TABLE: DISCOVERIES

1–4	Key. It unlocks a locked door already discovered, or a door somewhere deeper in the dungeon.
5	Password. Jotted on paper or carved in riddle form on a wall. It allows passage past a magic door, guardian construct, or sentry.
6	Coins. Value varies by dungeon level. Level 1–2: 2d10 gp; 3–4: 2d10 × 10 gp; 5–10: 2d10 × 100 gp; 11–16: 2d10 × 1,000 gp; 17–20: 2d10 × 10,000 gp.
7	Valuable. Gem, art object, or other salable item. Value varies by dungeon level. Level 1–2: 10 gp gem; 3–4: 75 gp valuable; 5–10: 1,000 gp gem; 11–16: 7,500 gp valuable; 17–20: 2d8 5,000 gp gems.
8	Scroll. 50 percent chance normal spell, 50 percent chance rare spell; spell level is one-half the dungeon level (rounded down).
9	Potion. Varies by dungeon level. Level 1–2: <i>potion of healing</i> or other common potion; 3–4: <i>potion of greater healing</i> or other uncommon potion; 5–10: <i>potion of superior healing</i> or other rare potion; 11–16: <i>potion of supreme healing</i> or other very rare potion; 17–20: 1d4 <i>potions of supreme healing</i> or other very rare potions.
10	Arms and Armor. Varies by dungeon level. Level 1–4: masterwork weapon or other item; Level 5–10: <i>+1 weapon</i> or other uncommon item; 11–16: <i>+1 armor</i> or other rare item; 17–20: <i>+3 wand of the war mage</i> or other very rare item.
11	Map. A map of this dungeon or another dungeon level; directions to nearby treasure; or a map to a completely different dungeon.
12	Minor secret. A secret about a creature known to the party: an ally, an NPC back in town, or the campaign's villain. Perhaps they're not what they seem, have sinister allies, are being blackmailed, or possess something the party needs.
13	Major revelation. A cosmological truth about the nature of the gods, the disturbing cause of an ancient disaster, or a piece of information that's hard to reconcile with what's known—like the long-dead corpse of a NPC the characters saw recently.
14	Clue. A riddle or incomplete notes that, if understood, offer a clue to a puzzle or a way past a trap.
15	Factions. The party's enemies are not united: one group is battling with another and may be interested in an alliance with the adventurers.
16	Allies. Friendly and helpful creatures live within the dungeon.
17	Traders. Creatures with information or treasure to sell.

- 18 **Adventuring party.** Potentially a rival or ally, depending on the circumstances.
- 19 **Loner.** A creature separated from its group. It might be a scout or spy, a disgruntled exile, or even a potential party member.
- 20 **Hoard.** A Treasure Hoard appropriate to the dungeon level.

Escalation

Escalation demonstrates and heightens the danger of the dungeon. In an escalation scene, players discover that defeat is closer than they realized.

Dungeons, even more than most adventures, benefit from a steady increase in tension and perceived danger over the course of the delve. The first room or two of the dungeon whets the party's appetite and entices them in: as they travel further from the entrance—and possibly descend to deeper dungeon levels—they should face increasing dangers that demonstrate new and shocking ways that the dungeon can kill or endanger them. These threats often culminate in an epic action set piece (which we'll discuss more later).

Escalation scenes are the advancing clock that drives this tension.

Combat Escalation

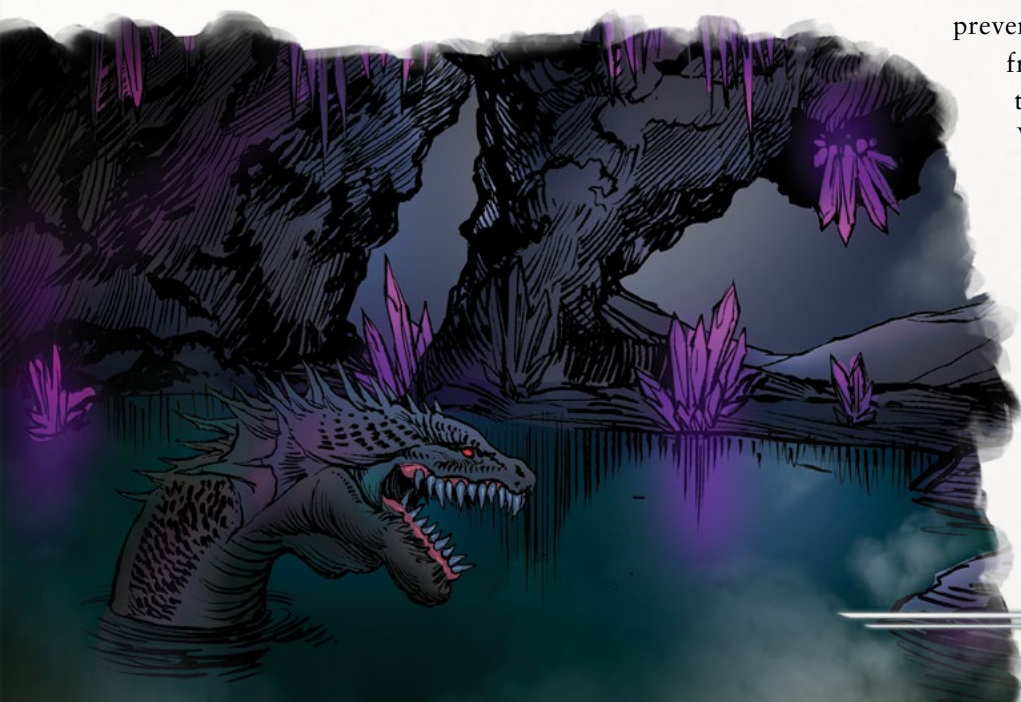
By far the most common type of escalation is an encounter with hostile creatures. A combat encounter drains hit points, spell slots, and other resources; can signal entry into a more dangerous

area; and, if enemies escape or sound the alarm, can lead to a raised alert level throughout the dungeon. Furthermore, each combat has its own self-contained time limit: you must kill or defeat your enemies before they do the same to you! In many dungeons, combat encounters are the main driver of pacing and urgency.

When escalating the action, you don't need to pit the characters against the dungeon's big bad guy: save that for the dungeon-defining set piece. An escalation scene is more often an easy or medium-difficulty encounter against a sentry patrol or a creature with beast-like intelligence. Its purposes are to support the theme of the dungeon with plausible inhabitants, to force the players to spend resources they'll wish they had later, and to give them a scare.

Make sure that each combat encounter feels different from the last. That's pretty easy to do: with hundreds of monsters available in the *Monstrous Menagerie* and other monster books (including this one), there are plenty of new tricks to use. Even battles against the same monster can be made to feel new. In a goblin stronghold, one fight against goblins can be composed of melee attackers, one can feature hard-to-reach goblin archers or a spellcaster variant, one fight can include a pet basilisk, and one can be an explosive mix of torch-wielding goblins and oil-filled pit traps.

When determining your dungeon's inhabitants, don't restrict yourself to the most obvious choices related to the theme. While a temple may well contain acolytes and high priests, variety prevents both you and your players from growing bored. What creatures have the priests summoned? What allies and pets do they have, and what off-beat variants can be used? For one or two really surprising choices, you can try flipping to a random page in the *Monstrous Menagerie* or another bestiary and try to imagine how that monster could be tied to the dungeon's theme.



Non-combat Escalation

Not every escalation scene requires combat. Escalation can include failing a Stealth roll and setting off an alarm (for instance, coming within sight of sentries, or accidentally knocking over a pile of pots and pans), becoming aware of a time limit (for instance, overhearing that prisoners are to be executed at nightfall), entering a more dangerous area (such as the well-patrolled inner sanctum of the dungeon's main adversary), or spending resources (having to use up a high-level spell slot to bypass an obstacle). It might also involve a social encounter (for instance, sweet-talking your way past guards, but arousing their suspicions).

While traps are usually classified as obstacles, elite traps (see Traps) can be used to escalate tension. Like a puzzle, a normal trap can slow down the pace as players figure out how to navigate it safely. An elite trap, on the other hand, is an active threat that attacks over several rounds: it functions more like a combat than a puzzle. When players get locked in a room that slowly fills with water, or are forced to flee from a pursuing *sphere of annihilation*, they discover that the dungeon is more dangerous than they had realized.

The Escalation Clock

You can manage the pacing of the dungeon adventure without tracking the dungeon's escalation level. You can do this by feel, having things generally get harder as the adventure goes on. If you place greater challenges and harder combats further from the dungeon entrance, the characters naturally encounter heightened dangers as they move forward.

You can also track a literal escalation level over the course of the adventure, using a countdown dice pool with a pool of 4 dice to measure a bastion's alert level or the time left until the evil cultists' ritual is complete. As the countdown advances, each combat encounter includes extra monsters, or a monster is replaced with a tougher one. When the countdown reaches zero, the dungeon's toughest monsters come looking for the adventurers! (See chapter 8 of the *Adventurers' Guide* for more information about countdown pools.)

When you track escalation, the dungeon grows more dangerous the longer the players explore it. Whenever they spend time resting, engage in combat, or leave signs of their presence, the dungeon responds. If you're tracking escalation level, you may wish to have random checks for monsters every few game minutes or every time the players take a rest. Roll a d20 and add the current number of dice in the countdown dice pool, with a random encounter occurring on a result of 1–6. Or you can create a custom table of dungeon-specific effects that occur at each escalation level.

Example Escalation Table

4	All's Well. Guards make Perception checks with disadvantage (they're sleeping, playing poker, etc). No checks for random monsters.
3	Suspicious Aroused. Guards make Perception checks normally. Adventurers make disguise and Deception checks with disadvantage. Check for sentry patrols when the players spend more than 10 minutes in an area.
2	This is Not a Drill. Guards peer into the shadows with weapons drawn. Doors are locked. Check for sentry patrols when players enter an empty room or corridor.
1	Red Alert. Caltraps and other booby traps have been deployed. Guards make Perception checks with advantage. Sentry patrols contain double the number of creatures.
0	All-Out War. Large sentry groups, headed by the dungeon leader's strongest lieutenants, roam the halls. Doors are locked and barricaded. Sentries yell or bang gongs to summon reinforcements.

Escalation Rewards

While an escalation scene doesn't always lead to a reward, it often grants incidental treasure. When players defeat foes or disarm an elite trap, you can use the *Trials & Treasures* rules for incidental treasure or roll on the Discoveries or Minor Treasure table.

Set Pieces

While an escalation scene offers a glimpse of danger, a set piece is a battle, chase, or other action scene with a real chance of failure. It's often the climactic scene in a dungeon or dungeon level, and success often means the characters have reached their goal. For instance, triumphing in a set piece battle might allow characters to descend to the next level of the dungeon (or escape it), defeat the evil creatures menacing the area, or free the prisoners they are searching for.

If you're rushing to prepare a dungeon for an upcoming game session, the most valuable way you can spend your time is to plan the set pieces. They are likely to be the most interesting and memorable scenes in the dungeon. In fact, a good low-preparation dungeon creation strategy is to plan out one or two set piece battles and improvise or randomly generate the rest.

Combat Set Pieces

A combat set piece usually features a dangerous foe in an interesting location. Often, the players are familiar with the battle's main villains when they enter the battle: perhaps they've seen signs of them throughout the dungeon, and maybe they've even been pursuing them for several game sessions. If so, now's the time when that foreshadowing pays off. Players will be especially excited to match themselves against an enemy they already hate.

In addition, a set piece battle frequently includes several of the following elements:

- Pillars, furniture, and other objects to use as cover or hide behind.
- Weaker monsters that serve this opponent (for instance, vampire spawn), either present at the beginning of the battle or arriving mid-fight (or both).
- Environmental dangers (for instance, encounter elements like lava or a precarious ledge; traps; or effects unique to the monster, such as a dragon's lair features).
- Objects that players can interact with. If a creature can use an action or attack to push an enemy into a hazard like a bonfire or

pit, the expected damage from the hazard shouldn't be less than what the encounter's weakest monsters can deal with a single attack. It's usually worthwhile to include an object that can cause a condition: for instance, grease that can be spilled to make a floor slippery, or water that can be thrown on coals to create blinding steam.

- A non-combat action the players can take to advance the combat (for instance, a coffin that can be destroyed to weaken the vampire, a caged paladin that will help if freed, or a *dragon slayer* sword stuck into the ceiling of a dragon's lair). The non-combat action might even end the combat entirely! A battle feels very different if the party can flee as soon as they've translated glyphs or picked a lock, or if guardian constructs stop attacking as soon as their magical power source is destroyed.

Non-combat Set Pieces

Pulse-pounding non-combat set pieces are significantly harder to create than combat scenes. One reason that RPG battles are so fun is because players understand the game's combat rules well enough to have a sense of the danger they're in, how close they are to defeat, and what tricks they can use to influence the situation in their favor. Furthermore, tension rises over several rounds as everyone pitches in to help the party achieve victory. In a non-combat scene, you need to recreate all that drama without the aid of the combat rules.

Chase

Instead of a fight—or immediately after it—monsters may choose to flee from characters, or vice versa. A chase can be a multi-round affair with as many twists and turns as a combat scene. A fleeing villain knows the area and probably has some tricks in store, such as allies, traps, and secret doors to slow down the adventurers. Players are well-advised to keep their quarry in sight—but if they don't, they can fall back on their tracking expertise to trail the villain, meaning that the chase doesn't have to end in failure after one bad break for the characters.

Although it rarely happens, characters may feel themselves outmatched and need to flee themselves. As a Narrator, you shouldn't try to engineer this outcome, but embrace it if it happens. Being pursued or hunted by a superior force can be one of the most tense and suspenseful scenes in an RPG.

A chase scene is a great way to tour previously-visited parts of a dungeon or to get characters lost in an unexplored area. Characters can't map while they're moving at top speed! Chapter 8 of the *Adventurer's Guide* has more rules for running a chase.

Social Scene

Once the players have won their way to the inner sanctum of the dungeon's main villain, they may not want to fight at all—they might prefer to talk instead!

Perhaps you've already prepared for a tense negotiation scene in which the fate of the world hangs in the balance. More likely, though, you planned a combat encounter, only to have the players call for a surprise parley. First, decide whether a negotiation is reasonable. If it is, be prepared to sacrifice your lovingly prepared combat set piece for a player-driven, possibly campaign-altering, plot twist. Doing so communicates to players that they really do have the freedom to make major choices within your game. On the other hand, no matter how high someone's Persuasion check is, some fights are inevitable. If monsters have nothing to gain from negotiation, then roll for initiative.

If you're running a social scene as the climax of a dungeon trek, make sure everyone knows what the stakes of the scene are. They need to be high enough to merit this pride of place in the adventure.

Elite Trap

An elite trap, especially one that's high-level relative to the characters, can be a satisfying climax to an adventure. The garbage disposal scene was the climax of the Death Star dungeon delve in *Star Wars: A New Hope*, and most of the dungeons in the Indiana Jones movies conclude

with an elite trap set piece such as a rolling boulder or a puzzle floor. In *Dungeon Delver's Guide*, the **collapsing dungeon** (see Traps) is designed to be a dramatic set piece that contains a chase element.

Unique Mechanic

Often, the key to creating a non-combat climax is inventing a unique game mechanic for the set piece and then focusing the action on that mechanic. Typically, adventurers must complete a challenge before time runs out. Here are some examples:

- **Engineering Challenge.** The players must succeed on a certain number of skill checks to disable a doomsday machine. A total of six successes with thieves' tools or the Engineering skill might allow victory, while six failures spells defeat. Various other checks can be used, giving all the characters something to do. For example, an Arcana check might reveal a spell that grants an automatic success, while an Athletics check could weaken the machine's armor casing and lower the DCs for the rest of the checks. There's a time limit too: perhaps the room is slowly filling with water or poison gas, or the device will activate after three rounds.
- **Death Puzzle.** The party must solve a series of riddles or puzzles, but each failure—and each turn of inactivity—causes the room to fill with damaging goutts of flame, **skeletal immortals** (DDG), or other dangers. When the final puzzle is solved, the characters escape to freedom or find the powerful magic item they seek.
- **Takeoff.** The characters steal an airship or other flying vehicle from an enemy fortress, but in order to escape they'll need to evade the castle's defenses. Some characters can make checks to get the airship moving while others shoot enemy ballistas or repair leaks in the airship's balloon. Track the airship's altitude, letting the characters know what elevation the airship needs to reach to escape.

Set Piece Rewards

A set piece encounter usually guards a major reward like a treasure hoard. (That's not a hard-and-fast rule, though. Sometimes survival is enough of a reward!) If the set piece is a combat encounter, determine the contents of the treasure hoard ahead of the battle. Many intelligent foes are able to use magic weapons and other items against the party.

Failure Plans

Since set pieces are designed to push characters to the limit, they can occasionally lead to the characters' failure. In general, you don't need to have a failure plan for every routine battle, but you should at least consider what will happen if players lose against set piece opponents. Might they be captured? Will they survive but lose something they value? Is there a chance they could all be killed? Any outcome is acceptable as long as you communicate the risks to the players. You don't need to prepare a backup adventure for the contingency that the players lose a battle, but it helps to have an idea of where the story could go next.

Multiple Set Pieces

A large dungeon may feature two or more set pieces. In this case, one set piece might be somewhere around the middle of the dungeon. Perhaps the characters must battle the main villain's lieutenant, overcome a monster or trap that guards a useful magic item, or face the leader of a second dungeon faction. Players might be able to choose whether they want to face this intermediate set piece or avoid it altogether.

If there are multiple set pieces, the hardest is usually at the end of the dungeon and is often difficult to avoid. If characters fight two set piece battles without a short rest between them, the second will be more challenging than it otherwise would be.

Dungeon Scenery

The NODES checklist is useful for the dungeon as a whole, but not every room needs to contain a risk, a reward, or a never-before-seen wonder! Some contain the prosaic living areas needed to make the dungeon work as a habitation. Bedrooms, kitchens, and the like might house monsters and hide treasure, but they might just be themselves.

As a general rule, you can stock 25 to 50 percent of dungeon rooms with theme-supporting scenery (shrines in a temple, burial niches in a tomb, etc). It's not a waste of space to support the reality of the space. Besides, what might seem like incidental window dressing might end up being integral to the adventure. The big cauldron in the kitchen might become a linchpin of some puzzle solution; the barracks, if barred shut, might be a great place for the players to take a rest; and the big (inanimate, not trapped) statue might end up acting as a ladder to an out-of-reach trapdoor or a counterweight on top of a pressure plate.

Running the Dungeon

You've gotten your dungeon designed, your set pieces are set, and your chambers are chock full with interesting stuff. Now the players kick down the door of the first room. How do you turn that dungeon map into an environment that comes alive in the players' imaginations? How do you organize the room's contents so that players can quickly absorb the essentials?

When players first enter an area, describe elements roughly in order of importance. You can use the mnemonic DICE to organize the area's description.

- **Description:** A *brief* room description should come first, because it lets the players mentally place everything that comes next. One to three words—"kitchen," "wide hallway," "big throne room,"—are enough to start. Unless mapping is very important to the game, room dimensions can be described later, or not at all.
- **Inhabitants:** In most cases—especially if they're trying to kill the characters—the creatures in the room are its most important feature.

- **Contents:** Only mention important features the characters can interact with or investigate, such as chests, levers, a pit filled with purple flame, and so on. It's vital that you mention any feature that might be trapped or hazardous.
- **Exits:** Knowing where the exits are isn't as important as what's in the room, but they should be mentioned once you've described the area's more relevant features.

When you've run through this list, you may have left many room elements unmentioned! That's good. Players get a better sense of an area if they actively ask questions about it, rather than trying to focus on a long monologue.

Players should be able to discover every element in the room by asking questions about things mentioned in your initial room description. You should tell them about the well in the corner of the room; but unless their characters have particularly high passive Perception scores, you don't have to describe the glint of gold at the bottom until they ask about the well. Similarly, if you mentioned that a room is a library, you don't necessarily need to detail all its bookshelves. (Although you should highlight the bookshelves if they are trapped, contain magic scrolls, can be pulled down onto opponents' heads, or are otherwise notable!)

When players re-enter a room (or after they finish a long fight), remind them of the important contents of the room, especially any containing undiscovered secrets.

Published adventures may include read-aloud text boxes describing a room. While you can always read this text as it appears, you may want to paraphrase it in your own words. If you do so, consider reorganizing the description so that the important features are listed first.

Linger on the Significant

You don't need to lavish descriptions on every room exit and piece of masonry. For each dungeon or dungeon level, establish a general room description. What are doors made of? How high are the ceilings? Are the walls neat granite blocks or jumbled sandstone? Are they covered with dripping slime? When you vary from this pattern in a specific room, do so to signal something of note, such as a trap, secret, or important location.

Always spend a few extra words describing the area around a trap or secret. If a hallway contains a pit trap, don't simply say "the hallway continues forward 50 feet." At the very least, the addition of a single adjective, like "dusty" or "uneven," could be enough to indicate that an area is rarely traversed or unusually constructed. For more, see Traps.

Improvising

Some Narrators are perfectly happy to enter a game session with nothing but a vague adventure idea and confidence in their ability to wing the rest. Others find that their best ideas come to them while preparing beforehand.

Even if you prefer to design your dungeons ahead of time, you may occasionally find yourself on the spot to do a little bit of adventure creation on the fly. You can't predict everything your players will try, and you may find yourself running an area of the dungeon you haven't reviewed, or even off the map entirely. Maybe some aspect of the adventure isn't working for your group and needs a tweak. In these cases, it can be helpful to have a few improvisation tricks handy.

Stay One Room Ahead

If you're creating a dungeon as you go, how much of the dungeon do you need to generate? If you're running a published dungeon without having memorized it beforehand, how much of the dungeon do you need to study?

At times, you'll be creating or reading a room's description as the characters enter it. That's fine. But when you have the time—for instance, during times when the players are debating their next move—you can try to get one step ahead by finding out who

lives in the adjoining rooms. Doing this allows you to adjust the description of the current room to hint at what's nearby.

If there are creatures in the next room, do the characters hear them—or do they hear the players? Have the monsters left any signs of their passage in this room? (Check out the monsters' Signs section in the *Monstrous Menagerie* or another *Level Up* book, or decide whether the monster could have left footprints or other clues.) Do the monsters have darkvision? If not, characters might be able to see torchlight under a door or through a keyhole.

Besides creatures, any other nearby features that create noise or light can be worked into the room's description. If the characters can hear the ticking of a clock or see flashing lights from the next room, they have enough information to make interesting decisions.

Fractal Description

A fractal is a geometric figure in which the pattern repeats recursively. If you zoom into one piece of the figure, you find new complexity and new details to focus on, and this goes on forever. By using the fractal description technique, you can turn your dungeon—or your game world!—into an infinite pattern that rewards examination at any level.

To use this technique, simply commit to providing an interesting detail whenever players examine something (or roll high on a Perception or Investigation check). This is a pure improv technique, since you can't possibly prepare interesting details for every object and surface that the players could possibly be curious about. Although the players don't have narrative control over such a game, the narrative is still player-driven: the things they're most interested in naturally become the focus of the game.

As an example, maybe you happened to place a desk in the corner of an evil priest's study. A character searches it for hidden drawers and rolls a 20. Using fractal description, you reward their interest in the desk (and the natural 20) by inventing a hidden drawer on the spot. If you don't know what the drawer contains, you might choose something from the Discoveries table. On the other hand, if something about the evil priest, or the dungeon itself, sparks an idea about the contents of the

drawer, you can invent them on the spot. Perhaps the drawer contains a detail related to a previously dropped clue or a hook for further adventure, such as a note from the high priest of a nearby town with instructions to complete their wicked scheme. Now the players have another name to investigate, that of the high priest. There's probably a session or two of material in befriending the high priest or ransacking their temple, during the course of which the players will examine and investigate further and you can fractally invent more adventure hooks. The end result: the players feel continually drawn into an unfolding series of mysterious, seemingly related plots, even though these revelations are merely the result of you reacting to the players' actions.

Pacing

As Narrator, one of your responsibilities is to adjust the game's pacing: adding danger when things are starting to drag, giving people time to relax after a series of tense scenes, and, when possible, keeping an eye on the clock so the session ends at a dramatic moment.

To make all this work, you may need to modify your dungeon adventure on the fly. Feel free to cut a minor encounter that feels like it will slow down the action or to reveal the answer to an easy puzzle that has brought the game to a standstill. Check who's getting bored: after a big battle, could the high-Charisma player use a social interaction scene instead of a second battle? Or, conversely, can you liven up a long stretch of exploration by introducing some bad guys to fight? Create, move, or remove whole rooms at will (but take notes about the changes you made!).

If you've only got an hour left in your game session, and there are several rooms to get to before the big set piece at the end of the dungeon, decide whether you want to cut some filler rooms and get right to the set piece, or stretch the filler rooms out and end on a cliffhanger. Both of these solutions are better than ending the session mid-battle (or making the session run long and forcing some players to drop out).

Even when running a prepared adventure, a little improvisation can improve the game experience. Remember that no part of your dungeon map, or your adventure, is canon until the players have experienced it.

Dungeon Design Cheat Sheet

NODES System

Novelties

- ♦ **Grand scale.** Vast caverns, endless corridors, subterranean oceans, and towering spires.
- ♦ **Dizzying depths.** Chasms, cliffs, bridges.
- ♦ **Light.** Phosphorescent moss, glowing crystals, blazing braziers, dancing motes of fairy light.
- ♦ **Violation of natural laws.** Altered gravity, underground wilderness, wild spell effects.
- ♦ **Art.** Statues, carvings, tapestries, illusions.
- ♦ **Strange materials.** Bones, stained glass, flesh, or walls of force.

Escalation

- 4 **All's Well.** Guards make Perception checks with disadvantage. No checks for patrols.
- 3 **Suspicious Aroused.** Guards make Perception checks normally. Disguise and Deception checks made with disadvantage. Check for patrols when players spend more than 10 minutes in an area.
- 2 **This is Not a Drill.** Guards actively investigate. Doors locked. Check for patrols when players enter an empty area.
- 1 **Red Alert.** Caltraps and other booby traps deployed. Guards make Perception checks with advantage. Sentry patrols contain double the number of creatures.
- 0 **All-Out War.** Large sentry groups, headed by strong lieutenants, roam the halls. Doors locked and barricaded. Sentries summon reinforcements.

Obstacles

- ♦ **Locked door.** A bronze door engraved with a stag's head.
- ♦ **Pattern or Set Puzzle.** After jumping from a red to an orange to a yellow platform, players have a choice between a green or purple platform.
- ♦ **Pun Puzzle.** A door marked "Ring to enter" opens when a ring is placed next to it.
- ♦ **Riddle Puzzle.** Glittering points that downward thrust, sparkling spears that never rust. (Icicles)
- ♦ **Emergent Puzzle.** Players must cross a thirty-foot-wide chasm, too far to jump.
- ♦ **Trap.**

Set Piece

- ♦ **Chase.** Danger of getting lost.
- ♦ **Social scene.** Stakes should be clear.
- ♦ **Elite trap.**
- ♦ **Unique mechanic.** Complete tasks before time runs out.
- ♦ **Combat.** Cover; weak minions; environmental dangers and objects that characters can interact with; non-combat actions to give enemies or adventurers and advantage or allow victory.

DICE Room Description

- ♦ **Description.** Keep it to a few words.
- ♦ **Inhabitants.**
- ♦ **Contents.** Important features the characters can interact with or investigate.
- ♦ **Exits.**

Discoveries

- ♦ **Key.** Unlocks a door elsewhere.
- ♦ **Minor Treasure.** Level 1–2: 2d10 gp; 3–4: 2d10 × 10 gp; 5–10: 2d10 × 100 gp; 11–16: 2d10 × 1,000 gp; 17–20: 2d10 × 10,000 gp.
- ♦ **Major Treasure.** Use the appropriate treasure hoard table for the party's level.
- ♦ **Secret.** Minor secret about an ally, an NPC back in town, or the campaign's villain; major revelation about the nature of the campaign setting.
- ♦ **Social interaction.** An enemy faction interested in a deal; friendly creatures; traders; another adventuring party; lone creature separated from its group.

Dungeon Size

Small dungeon: 3–8 rooms; about one of each NODES element; loop or gate. One session of play.

Medium dungeon: 9–15 rooms; about two of each NODES element; several loops or gates. Several sessions of play.

Large dungeon: 16–25 rooms; gates or stairs divide it into smaller sub-areas, each with NODES and loops. One character level of play.

Megadungeon: Multiple dungeon levels, each of which is designed like a medium or large dungeon; levels have different themes and connect to each other in multiple ways. Centerpiece of a campaign.

Traps

As Gwyven approaches the Serpent Queen's bejeweled throne, he notices a slightly raised flagstone, undoubtedly a pressure plate that would unleash some deadly trap if he stepped on it. He leaps over the suspicious section of floor and onto the throne—and hears an ominous click as he depresses the pressure plate in the seat.

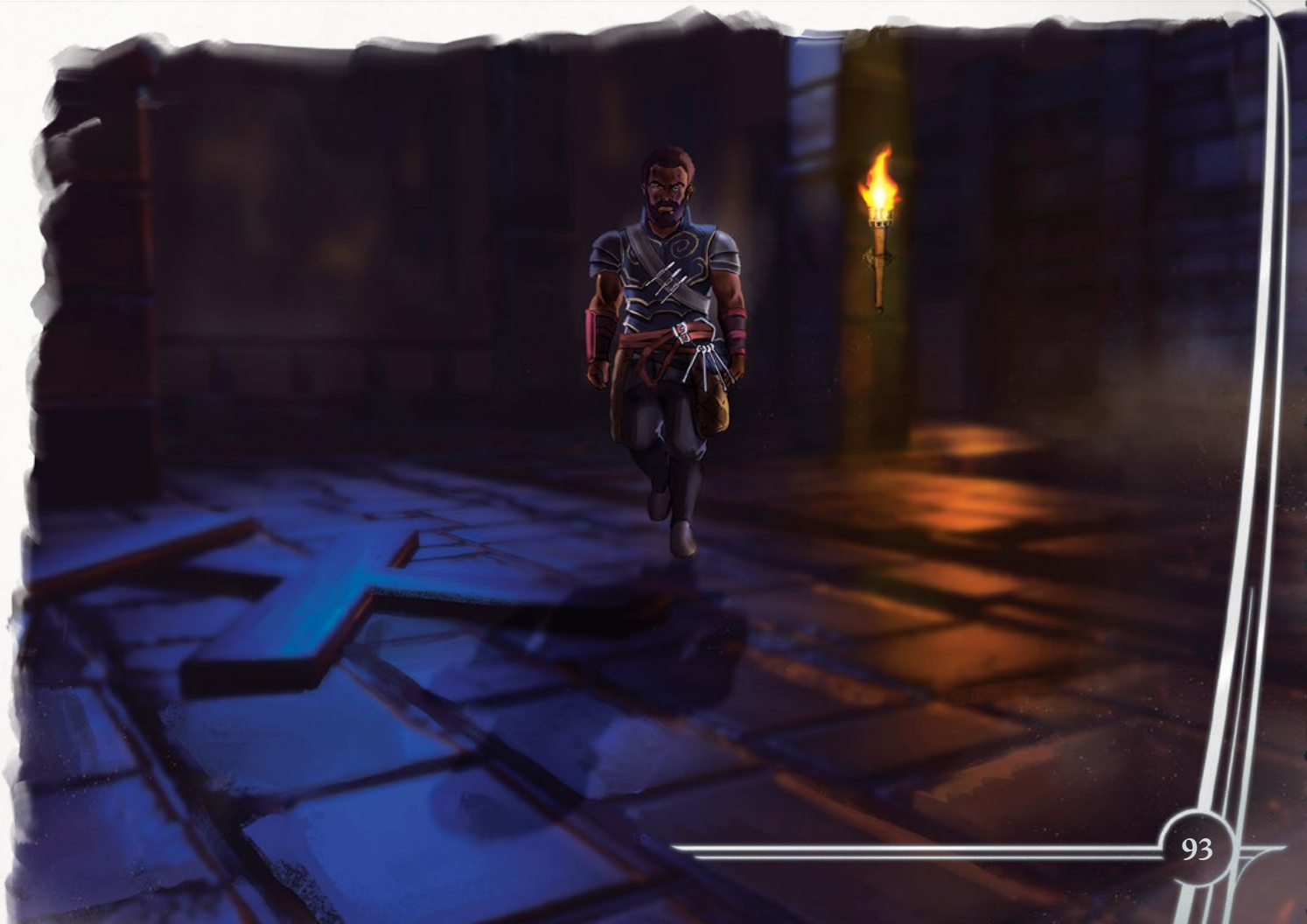
Traps are a defining characteristic of dungeons. No hidden shrine or lich's tomb is complete without a deadly surprise waiting to be sprung on unwanted visitors. But too often, traps feel like an arbitrary tax on the characters' hit points. Done poorly, traps cause play to bog down as paranoid players poke and prod every door and passageway for unseen dangers. For these reasons, Narrators are often advised to use traps sparingly, or even steer clear of them entirely.

Throw that advice out the window!

Just as combat tests both a character's abilities and their player's tactical skill, good traps allow for multiple solutions. A character invested in high Perception and Investigation, trap-specific abilities, and a set of thieves' tools can disarm any trap they encounter. At the same time, a clever player should be able to bypass the same trap simply by paying attention and playing a hunch.

Making choices and exploring the unknown are what make a dungeon fun. Telling players that they trigger a trap because their passive Perception is low—or that they avoid a trap because their passive Perception is high—offers them neither choice nor the opportunity to explore. Traps are most fun after they're discovered but before they've been neutralized. Should the rogue disarm the device? Should the wizard cast a spell? What does that inviting-looking lever do? With uncertain but probably dire outcomes on the line, every success and failure feels earned.

You can make traps fair and fun if you remember to **telegraph every trap** and abide by the **red herring rule**.



Telegraphing Traps

Players can't see through their characters' eyes or hear through their ears. As the Narrator, it falls on you to supply them with the information they need to make choices for their characters.

Besides the sensory information your descriptions provide, the *level of detail* you offer gives your players valuable information. The more details you lavish on a given location, the more important that location seems. This can work against you, such as when the players read too much into an offhand detail and as a result waste time investigating a random piece of furniture. But you can make it work to your advantage, as well. An area containing a trap or other hidden feature should be described with specificity, so that your players know it's intended as a location they should explore, and not just an empty space that needs to be traversed on their way from A to B.

If possible, a location's details should relate to the trap that it conceals. You don't need to give so much information that you completely reveal the trap, but you should offer enough that the players can make the connection after the fact. If a trap has claimed the lives of previous explorers, there may be bones or other remains nearby—possibly charred if the trap creates a fiery explosion. If the dungeon's denizens know how to avoid a trap, or need to visit it frequently to reset it, they may leave footprints. A trail of footprints that ends abruptly tells another story entirely! A good clue instills caution and increases tension, but doesn't necessarily tell the players how to proceed. Instead, it asks a question: *what do you do next?*

In addition to using clues and details to telegraph danger, you can achieve a similar effect by presenting the same trap multiple times. The first time, the party learns (perhaps through a painful process of trial and error) how to defeat the trap. The second time,



the players know exactly how to bypass the trap, affording them a sense of accomplishment, as well as adding a feeling of cohesion to the area. Once the party has mastered a trap, there's not a ton of benefit to using it a third or fourth time: that's when you can mix things up by using a variant of the trap. Many of the traps in this chapter come with variants.

What happens if you don't telegraph danger in any way? Players learn that every location, no matter how seemingly insignificant, might harbor another such trap. Thus, their only sensible course of action is to examine every door, room feature, and length of hallway. The game can become a slow-paced grind.

Red Herring Rule

The converse of "telegraph every trap" is the "red herring" rule. Red herrings (suspicious locations or objects that don't reward further investigation) shouldn't outnumber genuine traps and secrets. When you present the players with specific details about a dungeon feature, you're telling them that their characters have sensed something significant. Avoiding red herrings can help you regulate the game's pace and keep the action moving forward.

Sometimes you might introduce an unusual object, perhaps a relic of the unknowable past, which the players aren't intended to figure out. A giant stone foot sticking out of a wall, for instance, might not be the mark of anything but the world's strangeness. Once their keen sense for detail has been triggered, however, players may become fixated on the object and refuse to leave without unraveling the mystery. If such a scene is running longer than you intended, you can either announce to the players that "there's nothing more to see here" or reward their interest by using fractal description to introduce a significant detail or discovery. You can even let the scene fizzle out once the players grow bored: sometimes details are there just because they are there.

What happens when you elaborately describe too many features of the dungeon? When everything is special, nothing is. Too much detail interferes with the players' ability to recognize traps and other items of significance, which may result in them slowing down the game with endless Investigation and Perception checks.

Using Traps

The traps presented here are **exploration challenges**. The exact size and placement of a trap is up to the Narrator. Each trap uses the following format:

Tier. A trap of a specific tier is most suitable for characters in that tier. For example, second-tier traps are challenges for characters of level 5 through 10.

Challenge. A trap with a challenge rating equal to the party's level is usually a suitable challenge. You can heighten or reduce the danger by using a trap with a challenge rating 50 percent higher or lower than the party's level. Outside of this range, a trap might be too difficult or too trivial.

DC. Unless noted elsewhere, all ability checks and saving throws use the trap's DC. Each trap has two DCs separated by a slash; the first is for a check by a single character, and the second is for group checks. If you wish, you can also use the group check DC if several characters take different actions to disable an elite trap during the same round.

XP. The XP the characters receive for overcoming the trap. Disabling or avoiding a trap without a die roll (through a spell or action that automatically succeeds) or by scoring a Critical Success on a check grants the trap's full XP. Partially overcoming a trap, or doing so with one or more Successes but no Critical Successes, or failing to disarm a trap and suffering its full effects, grants half the trap's XP.

Trap Description. An italicized description of the trap's appearance. You can read or paraphrase this description to the players, or you can vary the description to match the trap's specifics. In any case, each trap's description should telegraph the trap's presence and list important elements the characters can investigate further.

Trap Features. A list of the trap's key features, along with the ability checks characters can make to learn further information about them.

Possible Solutions. Most traps allow a character to make an ability check, or occasionally an attack roll, to bypass or disarm the trap. Unless otherwise noted, a successful check triggers the trap's Success, Critical Success, Failure, or Critical Failure conditions (see below). The most obvious skill uses are listed under Possible Solutions, but players may think of other skills to use, as well.

Some traps list no Possible Solutions: there is no obvious way to defeat such a trap with an ability check. It must either be defeated with specific spells or actions (see below) or avoided altogether. Traps like this might be missing Success or Failure conditions as well.

Critical Failure. The listed effect occurs when a creature triggers the trap's Critical Failure, usually by rolling a 1 on a check while trying to solve the trap. A group check in which all the characters fail also triggers a Critical Failure.

Failure. The listed effect occurs when an attempt to disable or avoid a trap results in a failure.

Success. The listed effect occurs when an attempt to disable or avoid a trap results in a success.

Critical Success. The listed effect occurs when a creature triggers the trap's Critical Success, usually by rolling a 20 on a check. A group check in which all the characters succeed also triggers a Critical Success.

A Critical Success usually disables a trap. On a Critical Success, you can also allow adventurers to bypass a trap but leave it active (to hide evidence of their passing or to slow down pursuit).

Searching an Area

Players can search for traps, hazards, and other dangers in different ways. One player might ask questions about what their character sees, hears, and smells. Another might describe their character taking specific actions, such as tapping the walls or floors. Some players use spells and class features to discover threats, while others make ability checks (or rely on their passive Perception score) to examine their surroundings. All these approaches are valid and can be used in concert. The best traps can be discovered and disarmed using multiple strategies.

Exploration

Ability checks are tools players can use to learn more about a trap. For instance, a successful Investigation or Perception check against a trap's DC reveals the hidden pressure plate that activates the trap.

Generally, an Intelligence or Wisdom check doesn't trigger a trap or result in a Success or Failure. For instance, recalling lore about a cursed altar might require a History check, while a successful Perception check reveals a clue carved into the altar's base. Such a check doesn't activate the altar's magic; it merely provides information or it doesn't.

The exception to this is an Investigation check. Unless a player specifies otherwise, an Investigation check involves approaching, examining, and moving objects. If such activities could be dangerous, failing an Investigation check triggers the trap's Failure or Critical Failure conditions. To compensate for these risks, Investigation offers greater rewards. A successful Investigation check can uncover clues that can't be found in other ways (such as revealing a key hidden in a drawer or a trap door concealed beneath a carpet).

A character can also use tools and a steady hand to search for clues. When appropriate, allow a character proficient in thieves' tools to make an ability check with their thieves' tools as an alternative to making an Investigation check.

If a player says "I search the area" but doesn't offer specifics, treat this as an Investigation check made to inspect every feature in the area. Normally, a failure on such a search triggers a trap's Failure condition (the character brushes a tripwire while inspecting the floor, for instance). However, if the character takes appropriate precautions while investigating ("I cast *levitate* and search the area from three feet up"), they can sometimes avoid such Failures.

Once a character has failed a search check, they've learned all they can about the area and can't search with that ability again until the situation changes.

Examining a Feature

Examination isn't a game term. There's no number next to "examining" on the character sheet. But it's one of the most important tools in a party's exploration toolkit.

Examining a feature of an area involves asking the Narrator for more details about it. Sometimes, distant examination of a trap can reveal important information without requiring a die roll. Such examination must be specific to pay off. Imagine the party encounters a statue in a charred hallway. If an adventurer asks, "Is there anything suspicious about the statue?" you might call for a check. On a success, you reveal the statue's mouth is slightly parted and smells of brimstone. On the other hand, if the adventurer asks "Is there anything suspicious about the statue's mouth?" you might reveal the same information without requiring a die roll. A close examination of the statue's mouth might be required for this information. Thus, while one player is rewarded for asking the right questions, another player can learn the same information by making a check.

Players who ask a lot of questions about a dungeon feature may want information you don't have. Which side are the door's hinges on? Are there visible screws or bolts? Make up the answers on the spot! Your impromptu answers may lead to further opportunities for player actions. If the players can foil a trap by doing something clever, like taking a door off its hinges, then your trap has been successful. The players not only solved a fun puzzle, they had the chance to feel immersed in a world that acts in a logical and plausible way. (Just make sure their clever solution can't be used to solve too many traps and puzzles in a row!)

Solving a Trap with Spells and Other Actions

Many traps can be bypassed or disabled without a check. For example, pressing a hidden button might automatically disable a deadly device. Similarly, a character might use *mage hand* or a 10-foot pole to trigger a trap from a distance, staying clear of the trap's range.

A trap's description specifies actions and spells that let a creature automatically avoid a trap's dangers. Players might also think of other ways to bypass a trap. Based on how appropriate the solution is, you can decide that it doesn't work, requires a check, or automatically succeeds. For instance, the description for a hidden pit trap lists avoiding or bridging the pit among its possible solutions. Casting *fly* and floating over the trap isn't mentioned, but such a solution should automatically succeed. Walking over the pit on a tightrope, on the other hand, might require an Acrobatics check.

Sometimes certain elements of a trap can be destroyed. For instance, an adventurer can bash a trapped lock. Many trap elements are objects with a listed Armor Class and hit points. When a character attacks an object without these stats, you can decide whether the object is vulnerable to attacks. Guidance on destroying objects can be found in chapter 7 of the *Adventurer's Guide*. Sometimes, attacking a trap element without destroying it outright triggers the trap!

Many traps can be discovered and disabled with magic. *Find traps* and *detect magic* provide information about all sorts of traps, and most magical traps can be disabled (or at least suppressed) with *dispel magic* and *antimagic field*. Many other spells can be used to circumvent or disable traps. Some of these solutions are listed in the trap's description; you can adjudicate others as they arise.

Traps as Combatants

A trap can be combined with a combat encounter. If it's likely to be triggered during the battle, add the trap's challenge rating to the encounter as if it were a combatant. For instance, if an adventurer could fall into a hidden pit trap, adjust the challenge of the encounter accordingly. In the thick of battle, however, players are unlikely to investigate the mysteries of a cursed altar; thus, the altar's challenge rating need not be accounted for when determining the combat's difficulty.

Elite Traps

Most traps are akin to puzzles: they can be avoided or disabled with a clever solution or with one or two ability checks or saving throws. Once a trap has been solved or triggered, it generally poses no more danger to those who know its secrets.

An elite trap functions more like a combat encounter. It typically poses a threat to multiple characters for multiple rounds. Just as an elite monster is twice as dangerous as a standard monster of its challenge rating, an elite trap can threaten and test every member of the party.

While it's possible to disable or circumvent an elite trap through clever play alone, more commonly the characters must spend several turns using ability checks, attack rolls, and spells to overcome such traps. A sufficiently dangerous elite trap can even act as a dungeon set piece, such as a gallery filled with scything blades that guards an archmage's sanctum or lich's treasure vault.

When combining an elite trap with a combat encounter, treat the trap as two normal traps of its challenge rating.

Creating Traps

When creating a trap, decide how it is triggered and what happens when it activates. Once activated, the trap might target one or more creatures, or an entire area. The trap might make an attack roll, or the affected creatures might be forced to make a saving throw.

Think of several ways that the trap could be foiled, using checks, tool uses, spells, and other actions.

Finally, create a clue, hint, or significant detail that alerts observant players that something might be amiss before the trap activates.

Most elite traps call for an initiative roll and require some combination of successful ability checks, attack rolls, or other actions to deactivate. Decide what initiative count the trap acts on. Elite traps grant twice as many experience points as a standard trap of their challenge rating. An elite trap usually targets most or all of the creatures in the area. An elite trap that deals damage each round uses the Multiple-Target Damage column; one that deals damage once, like a Crushing Room Trap, uses the Single-Target Damage column.



TABLE: TRAP STATISTICS

CHALLENGE	NORMAL XP	ELITE XP	DC	SINGLE-TARGET DAMAGE	MULTIPLE-TARGET DAMAGE
1	200 XP	400 XP	13/13	5	3
2	450 XP	900 XP	14/13	10	7
3	700 XP	1,400 XP	14/14	15	10
4	1,100 XP	2,200 XP	15/14	20	13
5	1,800 XP	3,600 XP	15/14	25	17
6	2,300 XP	4,600 XP	16/14	30	20
7	2,900 XP	5,800 XP	16/14	35	23
8	3,900 XP	7,800 XP	17/15	40	27
9	5,000 XP	10,000 XP	17/15	45	30
10	5,900 XP	11,800 XP	18/15	50	33
11	7,200 XP	14,400 XP	18/15	55	37
12	8,400 XP	16,800 XP	19/16	60	40
13	10,000 XP	20,000 XP	19/16	65	43
14	11,500 XP	23,000 XP	20/16	70	47
15	13,000 XP	26,000 XP	20/16	75	50
16	15,000 XP	30,000 XP	21/17	80	53
17	18,000 XP	36,000 XP	21/17	85	57
18	20,000 XP	40,000 XP	22/17	90	60
19	22,000 XP	44,000 XP	22/17	95	63
20	25,000 XP	50,000 XP	23/18	100	67

List of Traps

Acid Bucket Trap

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 1 (200 XP); **DC 13/13**

A faint, acrid smell wafts through the half-open door.

A bucket filled with acid balances precariously on top of the door. Opening the door triggers a Critical Failure.

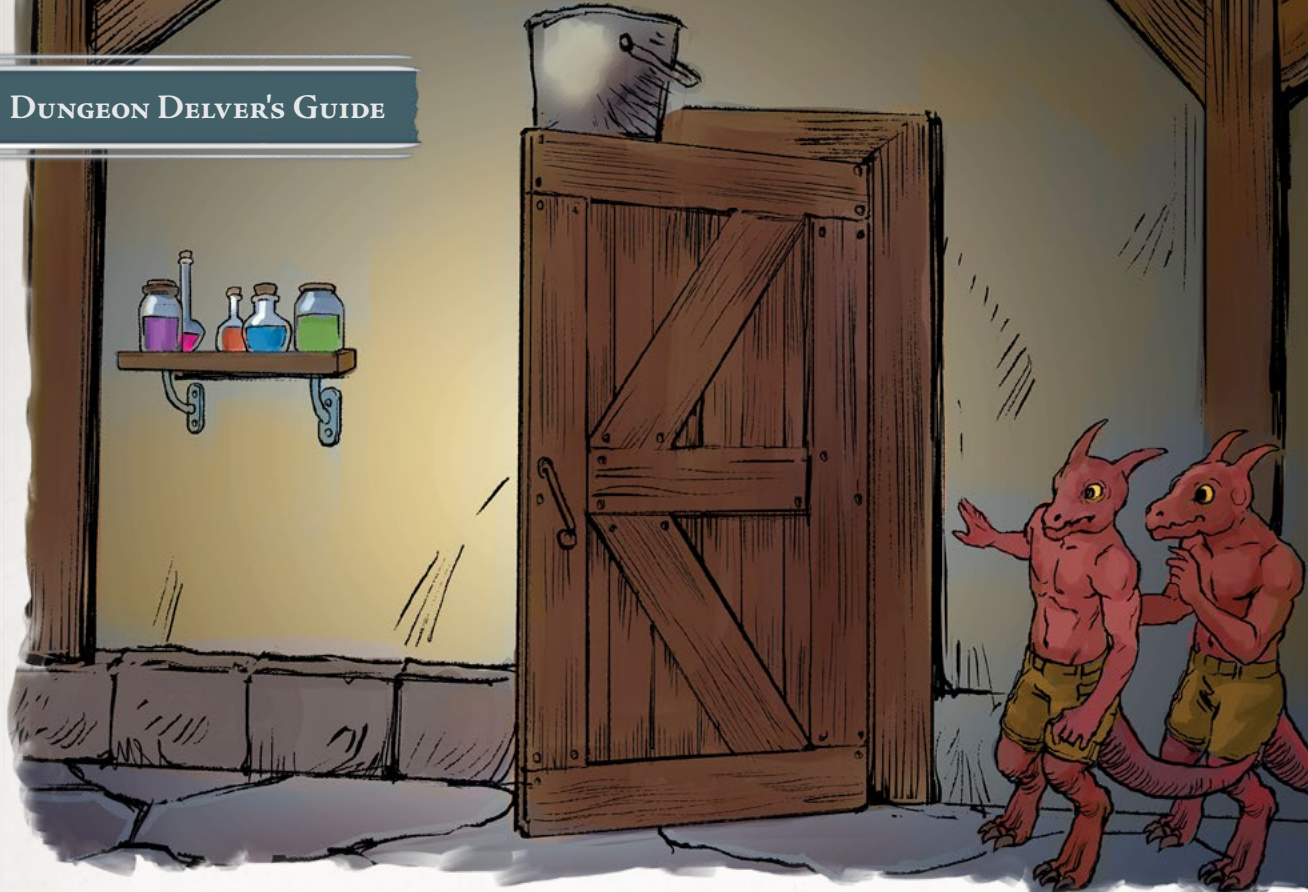
Exploration. A Perception check or an examination of the floor reveals pockmarks where the acid has eaten away the stone (or, if the Narrator prefers, the footprints of small creatures that have slipped through the doorway without opening the door further). An Investigation check or an examination of the top of the door reveals the acid-filled bucket.

Keeping Clear. Magic (such as the *mage hand* cantrip), a long pole, or a similar item can be used to trigger the trap from a distance, resulting in a Success.

Possible Solutions

- A Medium creature can make an Acrobatics check to slip through the partially open door. A Small creature automatically succeeds on the check.
- A Sleight of Hand check removes the bucket from the door.

Critical Failure or Failure. The bucket spills its contents across the threshold. Each creature within 5 feet of the door when the



bucket falls makes a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 5 (2d4) acid damage, plus an additional 5 (2d4) acid damage at the end of its next turn. A creature can use an action to wipe off the acid, preventing the damage on the second turn.

Success. The bucket spills acid into an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the door.

Critical Success. The trap is not triggered, and the creature obtains the bucket of acid, which can be thrown up to 20 feet as an improvised ranged weapon. A target hit by the bucket takes 2d4 acid damage, plus an additional 2d4 acid damage at the end of its next turn.

Black Dragon Pool Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP); DC 17/15

The floor of this area is sunken like a tiled pool or bath and filled with three feet of cloudy water. Half submerged in the liquid are three stone cylinders sitting on their edges like wheels.

What seems to be water is actually acid. A creature or object that enters the acid triggers a Failure.

Pool. The pool's liquid is cloudy, but not so much that it obscures the enameled tiles that line the bottom of the pool, which are painted with black dragon heads. A Perception check, or sniffing the air, reveals a sharp, acidic smell.

Cylinders. The stone cylinders are four feet in diameter and one foot long. They can be rolled in straight lines back and forth across the pool. An Investigation check reveals a footprint on one of the cylinders.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Dexterity check to jump on a cylinder and roll it across the pool.
- If the adventurers gather suitable materials, they can make an Engineering check to build a bridge or arrange stepping stones across the pool.
- A creature can jump over the pool.

Critical Failure or Failure. A creature that enters the pool for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) acid damage

on a failure or half damage on a success. Metal objects, as well as organic objects such as wood, cloth, or rope, also take this damage. Other inorganic materials, such as glass and stone, are unaffected.

A creature takes full damage from the trap only if partially or completely submerged in the acid. A creature that is merely touched or splashed by the acid instead takes 7 (2d6) acid damage or half damage on a success.

Success or Critical Success. The creature avoids the pool.

Black Dragon Pool Trap Variant: White Dragon Pool Trap

This room is freezing. Instead of acid, the pool is filled with water covered with a sheet of ice. No stone wheels are present.

If the total weight on the ice exceeds 300 pounds (for instance, if two Medium creatures or one Large creature moves onto the ice), the ice breaks. A creature that falls in the icy water triggers a Failure.

The trap has the following features:

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by transmutation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the ice requires a spellcasting ability check and causes the ice to melt, disabling the trap.

Pool. The ice is cloudy, but not so much that it obscures the enameled tiles that line the bottom of the pool, which are painted with white dragon heads. An Investigation, Nature, or Perception check, or testing the ice, reveals that it is weak and may collapse under heavy weight.

Cold damage dealt to the pool thickens the ice, allowing it to support an additional pound for each point of cold damage dealt. Fire damage weakens the ice by one pound per point of fire damage dealt.

The trap has the following conditions:

Critical Failure or Failure. A creature that enters the pool for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 42 (12d6) cold damage on a failure or half damage on a success.

Success or Critical Success. The creature avoids the pool.

Black Tentacles Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP); **DC** 16/14

A tapestry depicts a ship being pulled beneath the waves by the tentacles of some huge, aquatic beast.

The tapestry conceals a door. Touching the door's handle triggers a Failure.

Exploration. A Perception or Investigation check, or moving the tapestry, reveals a locked door of black iron behind the tapestry. (At the Narrator's discretion, the door may lead either to another area or an alcove containing a Minor Treasure.)

Once the door is discovered, an Arcana, Investigation, or Perception check, or examining the door, reveals a small magical *glyph of warding* on the door's handle.

Characters that make a Stealth check to hide may eventually see denizens of the dungeon pass through the door, speaking a password that disables the trap for 1 minute.

Keeping Clear. Opening the door without touching the handle, such as with *mage hand* or a similar effect, doesn't trigger the trap.

Spell Effect. This is an evocation effect created by a 4th-level spell. Casting *dispel magic* on the tapestry triggers a Critical Success.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Arcana or thieves' tools check to weaken the glyph.

Critical Failure or Failure. The glyph casts *black tentacles* on a 20-foot square next to the door. The trap is then disabled.

Success The trap is temporarily weakened. For 1 round, each Success counts as a Critical Success.

Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

Bookcase Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP); **DC** 15/14

On one wall is a bookcase bearing a brass plaque that reads, "Give a book, take a book". Against the opposite wall stands a statue of a wizard with hand outstretched towards the bookcase.

The bookcase has 18 books on it. A Failure is triggered at the end of a creature's turn if that creature possesses a book from the bookcase and the bookcase has less than 18 books on it. The trap isn't triggered if the statue's vision of the bookcase is blocked with a blindfold or similar item.

Bookcase. Each of the books is a rare book worth 100 gp.

Spell Effect. This is an evocation effect created by a 5th-level spell. Casting *dispel magic* on the statue disables the trap.

Statue. An Investigation check or an examination of the statue reveals a glowing glyph on the statue's outstretched palm. A creature that makes an Arcana check recognizes the glyph as a *glyph of warding* that triggers an unknown spell under unknown conditions.

The statue is an object with AC 17, 50 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. A creature that damages the statue without destroying it outright triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Sleight of Hand check to take a book without the statue sensing it.

Critical Failure or Failure. A *magic missile* spell fires from the glyph on the statue's palm, targeting the triggering creature. It fires seven missiles for 1d4 + 1 force damage each. The trap resets after 24 hours.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is not triggered.

Bright Mirror Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP); DC 16/14

In a dark room, a frame on the wall contains a mirror. When dim light falls on the metal, it begins to glow.

When bright light falls on the mirror, a Failure is triggered.

Exploration. While in dim light, the mirror's glow correlates to the amount of light that falls upon it. A creature that makes an Arcana or History check recalls that dangerous energy imbalances are sometimes associated with such glowing mirrors.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by evocation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the mirror requires a spellcasting ability check and triggers a Success.

Mirror. Turning the mirror towards the wall or covering it with an opaque object such as a cloth prevents light from falling on it. The mirror is a 600-pound object with AC 10 and 1 hit point. Breaking it triggers a Critical Failure. Using a second mirror to reflect the metal's light back at it also destroys the mirror without triggering a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Strength check to remove the mirror from the wall and set it down without breaking it.

Critical Failure. As Failure, but it creates a 60-foot sphere of burning light centered on the mirror.

Failure. A 30-foot cone of burning light shines from the metal. Each creature in the area makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 24 (7d6) radiant damage on a failed save or half damage on a success. The trap is then disabled for 24 hours.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is permanently disabled.

Brown Mold Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); DC 16/14

In a frigid room, a frost-covered glass bottle rests on a table.

The bottle is filled with **brown mold**. The area 30 feet around the bottle is unnaturally cold. When a source of heat, such as a warm-blooded creature, comes within 5 feet of the brown mold, a Failure is triggered. If a flame comes within 5 feet of the brown mold, a Critical Failure is triggered.

A Minor Treasure may be at the bottom of the bottle.

Exploration. Examining the bottle from a distance reveals that it is filled with a brown, furry mold. A creature that makes an Arcana or Nature check recognizes the brown mold and knows that it grows rapidly in heat and is vulnerable to cold.

Keeping Clear. The bottle can be broken or moved from a distance with magic or a long object, or simply avoided.

Spell Solve. Cold damage destroys the brown mold.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Acrobatics check to move through the area quickly enough to avoid negative consequences.

Critical Failure. As a Failure, and the bottle breaks. The mold expands over surfaces to surround the heat source in a 10-foot radius.

Failure. The triggering target is subject to the effects of brown mold (*Trials & Treasures*, chapter 3).

Success or Critical Success. The brown mold isn't disturbed.

Caltrops Trap

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 1 (200 XP); **DC 13/13**

The black-tiled floor is speckled with silvery glints in the dim light.

Metal caltrops cover a stretch of floor. The first time a creature moves in the area, it triggers a Failure.

Exploration. A Perception check or an examination of the source of the silvery glints reveals the nature of the trap. A creature that attempts an Investigation check automatically discovers the caltrops. The caltrops can be spotted easily in bright light.

Navigating the Caltrops. A creature aware of the trap can avoid its effects by moving carefully at half speed, spending 10 feet of movement for each 5 feet moved. A creature can use an action to collect or sweep the tiny metal objects from a 5-foot-square space.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Acrobatics check to move at full speed through the area.

Critical Failure or Failure. The triggering creature makes a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, it takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage and its walking speed is reduced to 0 until the end of its turn. Thereafter,

its walking speed is reduced by 10 feet until it regains at least 1 hit point.

Success or Critical Success. The triggering creature avoids the trap.

Caltrops Trap Variant: Slippery Floor

The floor is covered with steel ball bearings, greased with glistening lard, or sparkles with ice. Any reference to caltrops refers instead to ball bearings, grease, or ice. Replace the Failure or Critical Failure condition with the following:

Critical Failure or Failure. The triggering creature makes a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, it falls prone.

Chaos Crystals

4th tier (elite supernatural trap)

Challenge 18 (40,000 XP); **DC 22/17**

A cyclone of flame and frost engulfs the area.

A pair of crystals suffused with elemental energy orbit one another in the center of the area. Surrounding them is a 60-foot-radius, opaque, spherical cyclone of fire and ice. The cyclone spreads around corners but may be contained by at least 1 foot of stone. The area inside the cyclone is difficult terrain. A creature triggers a Critical Failure when it enters the area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn inside the area. Nonmagical objects that are not worn or carried are destroyed when they enter the cyclone.

Exploration. A creature that makes an Arcana or Nature check recognizes that the energy is magical or elemental in nature. An Investigation check reveals that the energy emanates from a central point.

Eye of the Cyclone. A creature that reaches the center of the cyclone discovers a 5-foot-diameter area of safety. In the middle of this area, two elemental crystals are locked together in a close orbit. A creature that makes an Arcana check determines that mental power might be able to control the crystals.

A creature that touches one of the crystals, or starts its turn holding a crystal, triggers a Failure. Together, the crystals are treated as a single object with AC 20, 60 hit points, and immunity to all damage except bludgeoning,

slashing, and force damage. Destroying the crystals triggers a Success; each attack against the crystals that doesn't destroy them outright triggers a Failure.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by evocation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the crystals while within the eye requires a spell-casting ability check and triggers a Success.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Strength or thieves' tools check to remove a crystal from its orbit.
- A creature within 5 feet of the crystals can make an Intelligence check to mentally separate the crystals.

Critical Failure. The creature makes a Strength saving throw. On a failure, it takes 27 (5d10) fire damage and 27 (5d10) cold damage, is pushed 30 feet away from the center of the cyclone, and is knocked prone. On a success, it takes half damage and is not pushed or knocked prone.

Failure. As a Critical Failure, but the creature takes either the fire or cold damage, not both.

Success. The crystals' connection is weakened. Another Success counts as a Critical Success.

Critical Success. The crystals are separated, and the trap is disabled. While the crystals are small, they are difficult to move: as an action, a creature can make a Strength to move a crystal physically or an Intelligence check to move a crystal using mental power. If the crystals are reunited, the trap resets.

Collapsing Dungeon

2nd tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 7 (5,800 XP); **DC 16/14**

Cracks criss-cross the ceiling. With each motion and loud noise, tremors shake the floor.

When a creature disturbs or destroys a focal point central to the dungeon (such as a pillar, a sacred object, or a magic rune), the dungeon

begins to collapse. Once the collapse begins, it can't be undone. Creatures in the dungeon must escape before the dungeon is completely destroyed.

Exploration. An Engineering check or an examination of the dungeon's focal point reveals that the dungeon's structure is unstable, and that it could be shored up with support beams. An examination of the ceiling or floor reveals cracks along the ceiling, as well as dust and dirt that sifts down to the floor. When a creature touches the dungeon's focal point, creatures within 30 feet of it feel a faint tremor.

Collapse. Roll initiative. On initiative count 20, a 40 by 40-foot unstable area appears centered on the focal point. Each successive turn on initiative count 20, the size of the unstable area increases by 20 feet in all directions.

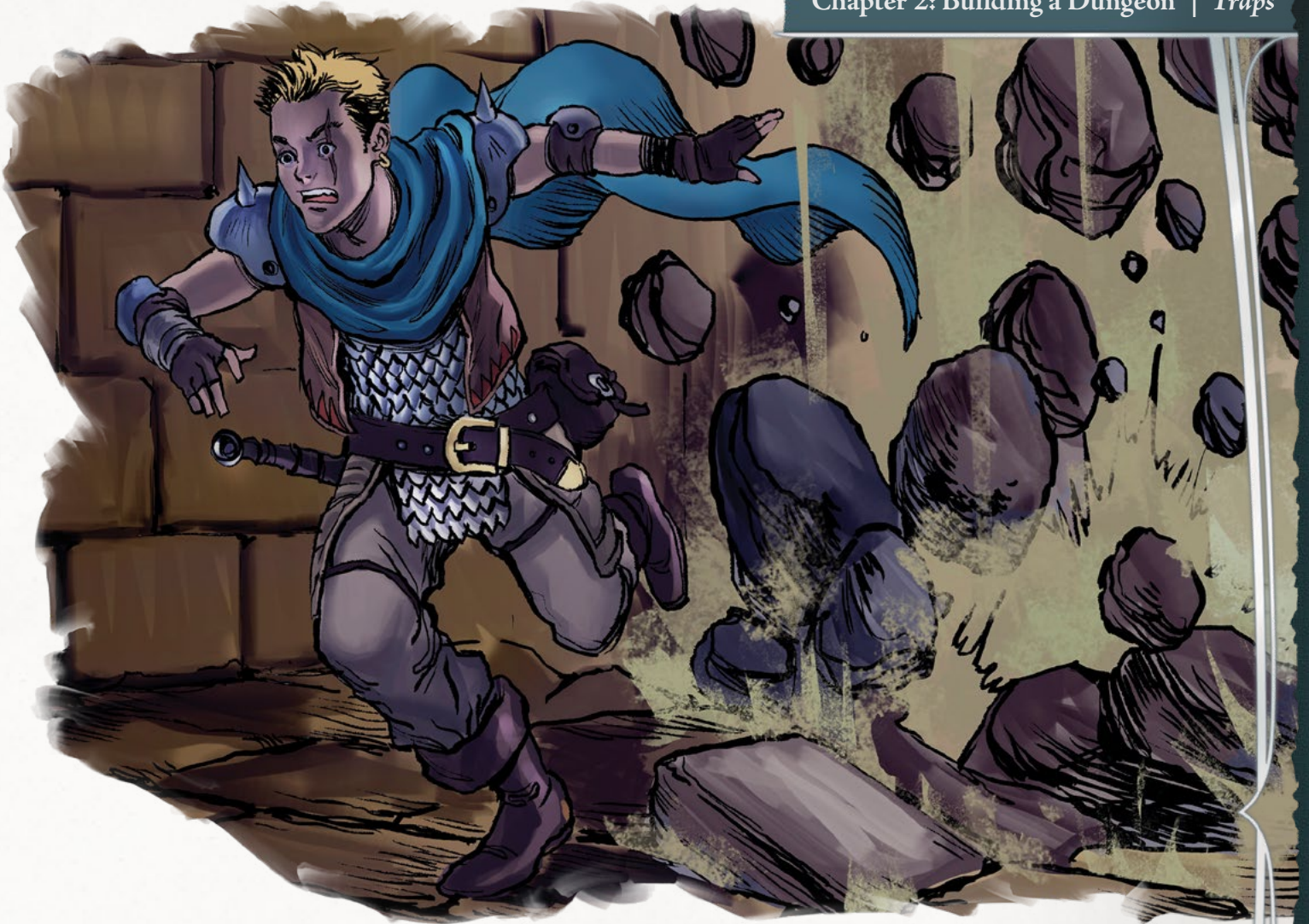
A creature that starts its turn inside the unstable area makes a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure or success, the creature triggers this challenge's Failure or Success effect. A roll of 1 triggers a Critical Failure.

Once the unstable area completely encompasses the dungeon, the dungeon's ceiling collapses, burying all creatures and objects in rubble. Each creature in the dungeon suffers a Critical Failure, and the effect ends. If the dungeon is composed of multiple levels, a collapse occurs once the unstable area encompasses a level but affects only that level until the unstable area spreads further.

Once the collapse begins, a Large object (such as a statue or a *wall of stone*) propped against the ceiling in the unstable area prevents the area from growing for 1 round.

Shoring Up. Before the collapse, a creature can spend a minute and make an Engineering check to shore up the dungeon's structure. If the dungeon's structural integrity relies on magical energy, an Arcana or Religion check may be made instead. If the dungeon is shored up, there is a 50 percent chance it does not collapse when the focal point is disturbed.

Once the collapse begins, a creature can make a Strength check to hold up the ceiling or an Engineering check to prop it up. Doing so tempo-



rarily halts the collapse, preventing the unstable area from growing for 1 round. A creature must be in the unstable area to prop up the ceiling.

Critical Failure. The creature is knocked prone and becomes trapped under the falling rubble, taking 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage. While trapped, the creature can't breathe and doesn't need to make Dexterity saving throws against this challenge. As an action, a creature can make a Strength check to free a trapped creature. Once freed, a creature's escape route might be blocked by fallen rubble, at the Narrator's discretion.

Failure. The triggering creature is struck by the falling rubble, taking 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage.

Success or Critical Success. The creature avoids the falling rubble.

Collapsing Dungeon Variant: Deeper Dungeons

The collapse of deep and ancient dungeons can be particularly catastrophic.

Deep Collapsing Dungeon: The deep collapsing dungeon is CR 10 (11,800 XP) and has a DC of 18/15. On a Failure or Critical Failure, a creature takes an additional 14 (4d6) bludgeoning damage.

Deeper Collapsing Dungeon: The deeper collapsing dungeon is CR 13 (20,000 XP) and has a DC of 19/16. On a Failure or Critical Failure, a creature takes an additional 31 (9d6) bludgeoning damage. On each turn, the unstable area increases by 30 feet instead of 20 feet.

Deepest Collapsing Dungeon: The deepest collapsing dungeon is CR 17 (36,000 XP) and has a DC of 21/17. On a Failure or Critical Failure, a creature takes an additional 52 (15d6) bludgeoning damage. On each turn, the unstable area increases by 40 feet instead of 20 feet.

Commanding Voice

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 1 (200 XP); **DC** 13/13

A bas relief of an angry deity glowers from the wall.

Approaching within 10 feet of the bas relief without displaying the god's holy symbol triggers a Critical Failure.

Exploration. A creature that makes a Religion check identifies the name and holy symbol of the depicted god. A Perception check or an examination of the bas relief reveals a tiny magic glyph near the god's mouth. A creature that makes an up-close Investigation check automatically finds the glyph but may trigger the trap.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by enchantment magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the bas relief requires a spellcasting ability check and triggers a Critical Success.

Mark of Favor. A creature wearing or holding the appropriate holy symbol as it approaches the bas relief triggers a Success.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to scrape away the glyph, or make an attack roll with a bludgeoning weapon against AC 15 to destroy the bas relief.

Critical Failure. The bas relief casts *command* (DC 13) on each creature within 60 feet, ordering them to "Flee!" The booming voice can be heard up to 300 feet away.

Failure. As a Critical Failure, except only the triggering creature is affected.

Success. The trap is disabled but resets after 1 minute.

Critical Success. The trap is permanently disabled.

Commanding Voice Variant: Holy Writ

A passage from the god's sacred text is etched beneath the bas relief. For example: "All who are wounded shall serve." A creature that makes a Religion check knows the appropriate ritual response, such as "All who serve shall be healed." A creature that speaks the ritual response aloud as it approaches the bas relief triggers a Success.

Contagion Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP); **DC** 17/15

The lid of the sarcophagus is carved to resemble a recumbent skeleton.

The mummified remains inside the sarcophagus are cursed. Touching the cursed remains, either directly or with an object, triggers a Failure.

Sarcophagus. Smaller carvings on the sarcophagus depict animated skeletons going about daily life: worshiping in temples, tilling fields, or marching to war. Inside the sarcophagus, an inanimate mummy grips a rune-covered scroll. A creature that makes a History or Religion check identifies the runes as the names of ancient plagues.

Scroll. The scroll is a *spell scroll* of *contagion* or some other Minor Treasure.

Spell Effect. This is a necromancy effect created by a 5th-level spell. Casting *remove curse* or a successful *dispel magic* on the mummy triggers a Critical Success.

Spell Solve. The mummy's grip on the scroll is too tight to release with *mage hand*, but it's possible to do so with *telekinesis*.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Sleight of Hand check to remove the scroll without touching the mummy.
- A creature can smash the remains with an attack with a bludgeoning weapon.
 - Critical Failure or Failure.** The triggering creature is targeted by a *contagion* spell (flesh rot).
 - Success or Critical Success.** The trap is disabled.

Contagion Trap Variants: Other Contagion Traps

Instead of a sarcophagus and mummy, the room contains:

- A wine rack holding two bottles of wine. One bottle's label identifies it as "Talasay '47." The other is "Mindfire '47." The Mindfire bottle is cursed. A creature that makes a History check

identifies the Talasay as a rare vintage worth 250 gp. A creature that makes a Medicine check recognizes “mindfire” as the name of a disease. A creature that makes an Investigation check notices that the inner surface of the Mindfire label has a spell written on it. A creature that uncorks and wafts either bottle can make a History check to identify its contents. Both bottles contain Talasay wine, but the contents of the Mindfire bottle are cursed. A creature that drinks the Mindfire wine is targeted by a *contagion* spell (mindfire).

- A fingerbone floating inside a vial filled with murky liquid. The vial is labeled “Fingerbone of Gaz’Ak the Blind.” A creature that makes a History check recalls that Gaz’Ak was an evil prophet of times past. The first creature to touch the fingerbone is targeted by a *contagion* spell (blinding sickness).

Crossbow Trap

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 1 (200 XP); **DC 13/13**

A ragged painting of an epic battle hangs on the wall.

Hidden behind the painting is an alcove containing a heavy crossbow (and a 50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure). A floor-level tripwire stretches from the wall below the painting to the opposite wall. A creature that walks across the floor trips the wire, triggering a Critical Failure.

Exploration. A distant examination of the painting reveals that it is riddled with punctures. A creature that makes an up-close Investigation check automatically discovers the alcove behind the painting but may trigger the trap. A Perception check or an examination of the floor reveals a taut wire strung across the floor.

Tripwire. Sweeping the floor with a pole or other object triggers the trap harmlessly. A creature aware of the tripwire may simply step over it.

Possible Solutions

- A creature aware of the tripwire can make a thieves’ tools check to disarm it.

Critical Failure. The crossbow makes a ranged attack with advantage against the triggering creature, attacking with a +4 bonus and dealing 5 (1d10) piercing damage on a hit. Once fired, the crossbow can’t fire again until the trap is reset.

Failure. As a Critical Failure, but the attack is not made with advantage.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

Crossbow Trap Variant: Ballista Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); **DC 16/14**

A curtain (instead of a painting) conceals a Large ballista. The trap has the following alternate Critical Failure effect:

Critical Failure. The ballista makes a ranged attack with advantage against each creature in a 5-foot-wide line, attacking with a +7 bonus and dealing 27 (5d10) piercing damage on a hit. Once fired, the ballista can’t fire again until the trap is reset.

Crossbow Trap Variant: Cannon Trap

4th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 19 (22,000 XP); **DC 22/17**

A paper screen depicting a nautical scene (instead of a painting) conceals a Large cannon. The trap has the following alternate Failure or Critical Failure effect:

Failure or Critical Failure. The cannon fires shrapnel in a 120-foot cone. Each creature in the area makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) bludgeoning damage and 22 (4d10) slashing damage on a failure or half damage on a success. Objects take this damage as well. Once fired, the cannon can’t fire again until the trap is reset.

Crossbow Trap Variant: Poison Crossbow Trap

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 2 (450 XP); **DC 14/13**

A creature hit by the crossbow also takes 5 (1d10) poison damage.

Crushing Pit Trap

2nd tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 6 (4,600 XP); **DC** 16/14

One of the exits from this room is a metal door bearing a sign that reads "Invited Guests Only."

Door. A character that makes an Engineering or Investigation check discovers that the door's insides contain complex machinery.

The door is locked. Opening the door without using the proper key causes the room's floor to collapse. A creature can make a thieves' tools check to pick the door's lock. On a failure, the door remains locked and the floor collapses. On a success, the door unlocks but the floor still collapses. On a critical success, the door unlocks and the floor doesn't collapse. Opening the door in any other manner (except for using the proper key) causes the floor to collapse.

Floor. A successful Perception check or an examination of the floor reveals unobtrusive seams and hinges, as if the entire room is the lid of a pit trap.

When the floor collapses, all creatures in the room plummet into a 30-foot-deep pit, taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall. Two opposite walls inside the pit then begin moving inward. Roll initiative. Each round on initiative count 10, the pit narrows by 5 feet. When it reaches 0 feet, each creature inside the pit takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage. The trap is then disabled. After 1 hour, the walls of the pit retract to their starting position and the floor snaps back into place.

Possible Solutions

- A creature that can reach both walls of the pit (most creatures have a reach approximately equal to their height) can make a Strength check to keep the walls apart.
- A creature using an object wide enough to reach both walls makes its Strength check to prop open the walls with advantage. On a Critical Failure, a nonmagical object is destroyed, and a magical object is damaged. A magical object damaged a second time is destroyed.
- A creature can make an Engineering check to determine how best to slow the walls. Success or failure on this check doesn't result in a trap Success or Failure. A success on this check grants advantage to the next ability check made against the trap within the next minute.
- With a Strength check, a creature can jam spikes under the walls of the pit, triggering a Success.
- The pit's walls are smooth and slippery. A creature climbing them must make an Athletics or Acrobatics check, making no progress on a failure. Success or failure on this check doesn't result in a trap Success or Failure.
 - Critical Failure or Failure.** The walls continue closing.
 - Success.** The walls stop moving until the end of the triggering creature's next turn.
 - Critical Success.** The pit's walls move 5 feet apart. Moving the walls back to their starting positions disables the trap.

Crushing Pit Trap Variant: Statue Pit Trap

Against one wall stands a statue of an armored ape giving the thumbs up.

Instead of a door, the trap has the following feature:

Statue. An Engineering or Investigation check, or an examination of the statue, reveals that the statue is bolted to the wall and that the ape's hand can be rotated at the wrist. Spinning the ape's hand so that its thumb points down causes the room's floor to collapse. A creature can make a thieves' tools check to disable the mechanism inside the statue. On a failure, the floor collapses. On a success, the floor doesn't collapse.

Crushing Room Trap

2nd tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 10 (11,800 XP); **DC** 18/15

Beyond a metal door lies a 15 by 15-foot room, its walls and floor covered in brownish stains. On the far side of the room is a 2-foot-tall alcove.

The metal door automatically snaps shut and locks 30 seconds after it is opened. When the door closes, two opposite walls begin moving inward. Roll initiative. Each round on initiative count 10, the room narrows by 3 feet. When the room reaches a width of less than 5 feet, Medium creatures must squeeze. When it reaches 0 feet, each creature inside the room takes 49 (14d6) bludgeoning damage. The walls then retract to their starting position, the door unlocks, and the trap resets.

Alcove. The alcove is wide enough to fit a single Small creature or a Medium creature that makes a DC 15 Dexterity check. A creature inside the alcove avoids the crushing walls. The alcove contains a Treasure Hoard or a Minor Treasure.

Door. The iron door is an object with AC 17, 100 hit points, and immunity to piercing, slashing, lightning, poison, and psychic damage. Forcing open the door requires three Strength checks. The door has no lock, but it has two hinges. Each hinge can be removed with a thieves' tools check. The door falls off when both hinges are removed.

Exploration. A Perception check or an examination of the door before it closes reveals that the door is on a spring and closes by itself. An Engineering check or an examination of the lock or handles reveals that it has an automatic locking mechanism that prevents it from being opened from the inside. An Investigation check or an examination of the floor or walls reveals that the brownish stains are dried blood, and that the floor and walls aren't mortared together; rather, the walls seem to rest on the floor.

Possible Solutions

- A creature that can reach both walls (most creatures have a reach approximately equal to their height) can make a Strength check to keep the walls apart.
- A creature using an object wide enough to reach both walls can make a Strength check with advantage to prop open the walls. On a Critical Failure, a nonmagical object is destroyed, and a magical object is damaged. A magical object damaged a second time is destroyed.
- A creature can make an Engineering check to determine how best to slow the walls. Success or failure on this check doesn't result in a trap Success or Failure. A success on this check grants advantage to the next ability check made against the trap within the next minute.
- With a Strength check, a creature can jam spikes under the walls, triggering a Success.

Critical Failure or Failure. The walls continue closing.

Success. The walls stop moving until the end of the triggering creature's next turn.

Critical Success. The walls move 3 feet apart. Moving the walls so that they are 15 feet apart disables the trap.



Cursed Altar

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 2 (450 XP); **DC** 14/13

A black stone altar is carved with the symbol of a death god. Atop the altar are 14 tarnished silver coins and a golden chalice.

Removing an item from the altar, or knocking an object off with a weapon, pole, or similar item, triggers a Critical Failure.

Exploration. A Religion check reveals that many altars are enchanted to punish interlopers. An Investigation check, or an examination of the coins, reveals that the coins are also stamped with the god's symbol. The golden chalice is worth 100 gp.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by necromancy magic. Casting *remove curse* or a successful *dispel magic* on the altar triggers a Critical Success.

Possible Solutions

- With a Religion check, a creature can perform a 10-minute ritual to purify the altar, with a success triggering a Critical Success.
- A creature can make a ranged attack to knock the coins or the chalice off the altar. The chalice has AC 10, but the coins have AC 14.

Critical Failure. The trap is triggered. If the triggering creature is a humanoid, it gains 10 (3d6) temporary hit points, and the humanoid creature nearest to them within 500 feet takes the same amount of necrotic damage. This damage can't be avoided or reduced in any way. The altar's magic then ends.

Failure. The altar and the items on it dissolve into smoke, and the magical effect ends.

Success. An item is knocked off the altar, and the trap isn't triggered. The magical effect ends once all the items are knocked off the altar.

Critical Success. A successful ritual ends the magical effect, allowing items on the altar to be removed safely. A Critical Success with a ranged attack knocks 1d4 + 1 items off the altar.



Cursed Altar Variant: Altar to Knowledge

The altar is carved with the holy symbol of a god of knowledge or magic. It radiates transmutation magic instead of necromancy.

Critical Failure: A humanoid creature that triggers the trap must succeed on a DC 14 Intelligence saving throw or gain an extra ear on their forehead. A creature with this extra ear treats every suggestion, piece of advice, or command directed at them as a *suggestion* spell (DC 12). The effect ends after 1 hour, until the effect is ended by a *dispel magic*, *remove curse*, or *lesser restoration* spell, or until the creature makes three successful saving throws against the suggestions. The extra ear disappears when the effect ends.

Cursed Altar Variant: Altar to Nature

The altar is made of wood and carved with thorns and flowers that glow with an eerie violet light. It radiates evocation magic instead of necromancy.

Critical Failure: A humanoid creature that triggers the trap must succeed on a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw or begin to glow, as if affected by the *faerie fire* spell. The effect lasts 1 hour or until a *dispel magic* or *remove curse* spell ends the effect.

Cursed Altar Variant: Altar to the Sun

The altar is made of white stone and carved with a stylized sun. It radiates evocation magic instead of necromancy.

Critical Failure: A humanoid creature that triggers the trap is struck blind. This blindness lasts until all items are returned to the altar or until a *lesser restoration* spell ends the effect.

Darkness Statue

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 1 (200 XP); **DC 13/13**

An ebony statue of a trickster god has a black gem set in its forehead. The statue has one hand behind its back and one hand on its lips.

Touching the gem triggers a Failure.

Gem. A Perception or Investigation check, or an examination of the gem, reveals that the gem is worthless black glass. Smashing the gem results in a Critical Failure. Covering the gem blocks the *darkness* effect.

In the Darkness. Each time the trap is triggered, the statue animates for one round and makes a Sleight of Hand check (+5 bonus), attempting to pickpocket a creature within 5 feet of it. This check is made with advantage if the creature is unable to see. The statue then adopts its original position, piling any stolen items behind it, and becomes inanimate. Searching the area or looking behind the statue reveals any pilfered items.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by evocation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the gem triggers a Success.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to remove the gem, or an Arcana check to dampen the gem's magic for one round and allow it to be removed safely.

Critical Failure. The glass gem shatters in its socket, releasing a *darkness* spell centered on the statue. The *darkness* is permanent until dispelled. See *In the Darkness*.

Failure. The gem casts *darkness* with a duration of 1 minute. The trap automatically resets after 1 minute. See *In the Darkness*.

Success. The gem can be removed safely, disabling the trap.

Critical Success. As a Success, except the gem retains some of its magic. It can be used like a *spell scroll of darkness*.

Darkness Statue Variant: The Cyclops Eye

Instead of a statue, the black gem is set in the eye of a cyclops carved in bas relief on the wall. The *In the Darkness* feature is replaced with the following:

In the Darkness. Each time the trap is triggered, a grinding sound is heard as a slab of stone within the area of darkness noisily retracts, exposing an alcove containing an item from the Minor Treasures table. The alcove stays open for 1 round, and then the slab noisily grinds shut again. While closed, the stone slab can be discovered with a DC 20 Investigation check and can be opened with a DC 18 Strength check. The slab is an object with AC 20, 20 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Drop Ceiling Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP); **DC 15/14**

Several inanimate skeletons lie on the floor, their helmets dented and their skulls crushed. A warhammer with a golden head hangs from the wall on a pair of hooks.

A Failure is triggered if the hooks on the wall ever support less than 10 pounds of weight—for instance, if the hammer is lifted from the hooks.

Ceiling. A successful Investigation or Perception check, or an examination of the ceiling, reveals that the ceiling isn't mortared to the wall and probably slides up and down. The ceiling can be propped up with something tall and sturdy.

Hooks. The hooks are 3 feet up the wall. A successful Engineering check, or an examination of the hooks, reveals that they attach to some sort of mechanism inside the wall. Holding or weighing down the hooks while the hammer is removed triggers a Success.

Skeletons. A Medicine check reveals that the skeletons were killed by blunt force to the head.

Warhammer. The warhammer on the hooks has a 10-pound head made of solid gold. It's worth 500 gp.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to disable the hooks.
- A creature can make an Engineering check to wedge spikes or similar objects into the gaps between the walls and ceiling.

Critical Failure or Failure. The ceiling plummets, stopping 4 feet above the floor. Creatures whose heads are at least 4 feet above the floor when the ceiling drops must make a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 16 (3d10) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. After 1 minute, the ceiling grinds back to its original position.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

Explosive Runes Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP); **DC** 16/14

A cozy study contains shelves lined with books and an iron desk. Resting on the desk is a metal-bound book.

Opening the spellbook without speaking the passphrase "Hungry Flame" triggers a Failure.

Book. The metal-bound book is a spellbook containing *burning hands*, *scorching ray*, and *glyph of warding*. The book's cover is emblazoned with a stylized golden sun. The words "Hungry Flame" are written on the book's spine. The book's pages are metal and are immune to fire damage. A creature that makes an Arcana or History check knows that many mages use passwords and other tricks to protect their spellbooks against thieves.

Glyph. An Arcana, Investigation, or Perception check reveals that the sun symbol is a *glyph of warding*.

Spell Effect. This is an evocation effect created by a 3rd-level spell. Casting *dispel magic* on the sun symbol triggers a Critical Success.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Arcana or thieves' tools check to disable the glyph.

Critical Failure or Failure. The glyph explodes as the explosive runes version of a *glyph of warding*. Each creature within 20 feet of the glyph must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 22 (5d8) fire damage on a failure or half damage on a success.

Success. The glyph is damaged. A second Success triggers a Critical Success.

Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

Explosive Runes Trap Variant: City of Brass Trap

Instead of a spellbook, the explosive runes are inscribed on a brass door etched with pictures of efreets strolling the streets of a vast metropolis. A creature that makes an Arcana or History check identifies the city as the City of Brass. Opening the door without speaking the passphrase "City of Brass" triggers a Failure.

Falling Axe Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 2 (450 XP); **DC** 14/13

A scarred wooden chest is flanked by two axe-wielding suits of armor.

If the wooden chest changes weight by more than 5 pounds or is moved, or if a suit of armor is jostled or moved, a Critical Failure is triggered.

Exploration. An Engineering check or an examination of the suits of armor reveals that the armor is inanimate but contains mechanisms of some kind. A Perception or Investigation check, or an examination of the floor, reveals that the chest rests on a counterweight pressure plate.

Opening the chest doesn't trigger the trap. The chest contains minor treasure weighing at least 5 pounds (such as a 10-pound gold statuette worth 500 gp or an appropriate item from the Minor Treasures table).

Suits of Armor. Each suit of armor is an object with AC 18, 20 hit points, and immunity to lightning, poison, and psychic damage. Attacking a suit of armor and failing to destroy it triggers a Failure. Destroying a suit of armor prevents it from making further attacks, turning any Critical Failure into a Failure. If both suits are destroyed, the trap is disabled.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to disable a suit of armor's mechanism (preventing that armor from attacking) or the pressure plate under the chest (allowing the treasure to be taken safely).
- A creature can make a Sleight of Hand check to replace the treasure inside the chest with other items of equal weight, so that the pressure plate isn't triggered.

Critical Failure. Both suits of armor swing their axes. Each suit of armor makes a melee attack with a +5 bonus against a creature within 5 feet of a suit of armor or the chest, dealing 4 (1d8) slashing damage on a hit. After a hit or miss, the trap resets and can be triggered again.

Failure. As Critical Failure, but only one suit of armor swings its axe.

Success. The trap isn't triggered.

Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

Falling Axe Trap Variant: The Doormen

In the Doormen trap, the suits of armor flank a scarred wooden door instead of a chest. Any reference to the chest is ignored. The trap is triggered if a character steps or puts weight on the 5 by 5-foot pressure plate hidden directly in front of the doorway. Opening the door does not trigger the trap. While the door is open, the pressure plate can be jumped over.

The trap has the following alternate Exploration feature:

Exploration. A Perception check or an examination of the floor reveals the pressure plate in front of the door. An Investigation check or an examination of the door reveals that the scars on the door were caused by axe blades.

Falling Room Trap

1st tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 3 (1,400 XP); **DC** 14/14

This 10-foot-square room has metal walls, ceiling, and floors. The only exit is a hatch in the ceiling. A wooden board lies on the floor.

The room is a malfunctioning elevator. When the room's door closes while the room contains more than 50 pounds of weight, the room plunges 30 feet down its elevator shaft before coming to a sudden halt. Each creature in the elevator takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall. The room's door now leads to a lower dungeon level or (if no lower level exists) a small room containing a treasure hoard or a Minor Treasure. Opening the ceiling hatch allows a creature to climb the elevator shaft and return to the original floor.

While the room occupies the lower level, re-closing the door while the room contains at least 50 pounds of weight causes the elevator to rocket 30 feet back to its original position. Upon arrival, each creature in the elevator is catapulted against the ceiling, taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage.

Board. The wooden board is a sign reading "Out of Order," lying upside down.

Door. The door opens inward into the elevator room. An Engineering or Investigation check, or an examination of the door, reveals that the door connects to a mechanism that triggers when the door closes.

Room. A Perception check, or jumping up and down inside the room, reveals that the room trembles when creatures move about inside, as if it weren't fixed in place.

Hatch. The hatch on the ceiling is metal. It's locked, and also warped and damaged as if it had been struck.

Possible Solutions

- Opening the hatch requires both a thieves' tools check to pick the lock and a Strength check to force it open.
- Two successful melee attacks against AC 17 open the hatch.

- A creature that makes a Strength check to pry back the room's wall reveals gears and other machinery. A creature can make an Engineering check to repair the exposed machinery, allowing the elevator room to move between floors safely. A *mending* spell automatically repairs the exposed machinery.

Critical Failure or Failure. The attempt has no effect.

Success or Critical Success. The creature succeeds in its goal.

Falling Room Trap Variant: Plummeting Room Trap

2nd tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 14 (23,000 XP); **DC** 20/16

The elevator's shaft is 120 feet deep. Each time the elevator would descend, it descends only 30 feet, dealing 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall as normal. The elevator also descends 30 feet each time a creature triggers a Failure. Once the room has descended four times, it reaches the bottom of the shaft. Further Failures (or closing the door again) cause the room to rise 30 feet, dealing 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage each time, until it returns to its starting position—at which point its direction reverses and the process repeats.

At the Narrator's discretion, opening the door at each of the elevator's stops might reveal another level of the dungeon or nothing but the bare wall of the elevator shaft. In either case, the very bottom of the shaft leads either to another dungeon level or a small room containing treasure.

False Door Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 3 (700 XP); **DC** 14/14

Behind a cracked floor is a 10-foot-square stone door with handles on both the right and left sides.

Turning one of the door's handles alone does nothing. Turning both handles at the same time triggers a Failure.

Exploration. An Engineering or Investigation check, or an examination of the door, reveals that the door's hinges are set into the floor horizontally instead of vertically along the sides. A Perception check or an examination of the floor

reveals that there are two cracks in the floor, each about 3 feet in front of a door handle. (The door handles are 3 feet above floor level.)

Possible Solutions

- A creature that braces the door or holds it up while the handles are turned can make a Strength check to prevent it from crashing down.

Critical Failure or Failure. The door bangs down like a drawbridge. Each creature in the 10-foot-square area directly in front of the door makes a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 16 (3d10) bludgeoning damage from the falling door. On a success, the creature can move out of the way. A solid wall is revealed behind the false door, possibly with a clue written on the wall.

Success or Critical Success. As a Failure, but the door opens harmlessly.

False Hoard Trap

0th tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 1 (400 XP); **DC** 13/13

In a corner of the room, a seemingly inanimate dragon skeleton rests atop a mound of glittering treasure.

The dragon skeleton is held together with fine wire. A wire attached to the dragon's tail leads into a hole in the wall. If the wire, skeleton, or treasure is disturbed (by gathering the treasure, for instance), stone slabs descend from the ceiling to block the room's exits. A creature directly beneath a slab must decide whether to move into or out of the room. Poison gas hisses from a nozzle hidden under the treasure pile. Roll initiative. Each round on initiative count 10, each creature in the room must make a Constitution saving throw or take 3 (1d6) poison damage. The nozzle continues producing gas for 1 minute, at which point the gas stops and the trap resets.

Hoard. An Investigation check or an examination of the treasure reveals that it consists of worthless costume jewelry, polished tin cutlery, and thousands of copper pieces painted to look like electrum and gold coins. What appears at first to be worth thousands of gold pieces is worth perhaps a hundred.

Skeleton. An Arcana or Nature check, or an examination of the skeleton, reveals that it is a wooden carving, painted white to resemble bones and held together by fine wires. A further examination of the wires reveals that one runs from the dragon's tail to a hole in the wall.

Wire. Before the trap is triggered, a creature can make a thieves' tools check to fix in place the wire on the dragon's tail. A successful check triggers a Critical Success. On a failure, the trap is triggered.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Strength check to lift a stone slab. The slab must be propped open or it falls again. Succeeding on this check does not grant a Success on the trap, but it may allow creatures to escape the room.
- A creature that locates the source of the gas can make a Strength check to push the treasure aside, followed by a Dexterity check to plug the nozzle with a wad of cloth or a similar object.

Critical Failure or Failure. The creature makes no progress in disarming the trap.

Success. The nozzle stops producing poison gas for 1 round.

Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

False Trapdoor Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP); **DC 15/14**

The room contains several wooden crates in various states of disrepair. Set into the high ceiling is a metal trapdoor secured with a heavy sliding bolt.

Pulling back the sliding bolt requires a Strength check. Unbolting the trapdoor while underneath it triggers a Failure. Unbolting the trapdoor while not underneath it triggers a Success.

Ceiling. The ceiling is 20 feet high, so reaching the trapdoor might be difficult.

Crates. There are six crates in total, each 4 feet on a side. Three of the crates have been smashed. An Investigation check reveals boot prints on one of the smashed crates. A creature that makes an Engineering check can deduce that the crates were

probably smashed by a heavy weight dropped from above. (Previous explorers stacked three of the crates in order to reach the trapdoor and inadvertently triggered the trap.)

Floor. An Investigation or Perception check, or an examination of the floor, reveals that the tiles beneath the trapdoor are cracked.

Trapdoor. Opening the trapdoor reveals an alcove containing a heavy stone block. A Minor Treasure is also hidden in the alcove.

Possible Solutions

- A creature aware of potential danger when opening the trapdoor can make a Strength check to ease the trapdoor open, or an Engineering check to use a quarterstaff or similar object as a brace.

Critical Failure or Failure. The trapdoor swings open, causing the stone block to fall. A creature beneath the trapdoor must make a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 17 (5d6) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. A rope connects the block to the ceiling. After 1 minute, the rope retracts, drawing the block back into the alcove, and the trap resets.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is triggered but the stone block doesn't strike the triggering character.

Flammable Gas Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP); **DC 15/14**

Sitting beside each door is a barrel half-filled with water, in which float the stubs of several torches and a few candles. A dark crack stretches across the floor down the center of the room.

Entering the area while carrying an open flame, or magically creating fire inside the area, triggers a Failure. Only the areas within 5 feet of an entrance are safe from this effect. Open flames within these areas flicker and turn blue.

Exploration. A Perception check or sniffing the air reveals the faint smell of rotten eggs. An Investigation check or an examination of the floor or ceiling reveals that the crack in the floor is caked with soot. A creature that makes an

Engineering check knows that enclosed, poorly ventilated spaces can have problems with gas buildups.

Floor Crack. Examining the crack in the floor reveals that it leads to a pitch-black hole a few inches in diameter. Closer examination reveals that the smell of rotten eggs is stronger around the hole, which descends hundreds of feet to a natural cavity filled with dangerous, flammable gas.

Spell Solve. A *gust of wind* or a similar effect dissipates the gas for 10 minutes.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Strength, Dexterity, or Engineering check to clog the crack with cloth or similar items. Failure on this check doesn't result in a Failure but doesn't deactivate the trap.

Critical Failure or Failure. A burst of flame fills the area. Everyone in the room, except for those within 5 feet of the room's entrances, makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 17 (5d6) fire damage on a failure or half damage on a success. The explosion extinguishes any open flames and consumes the accumulated gas, making the trap inactive for 10 minutes.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

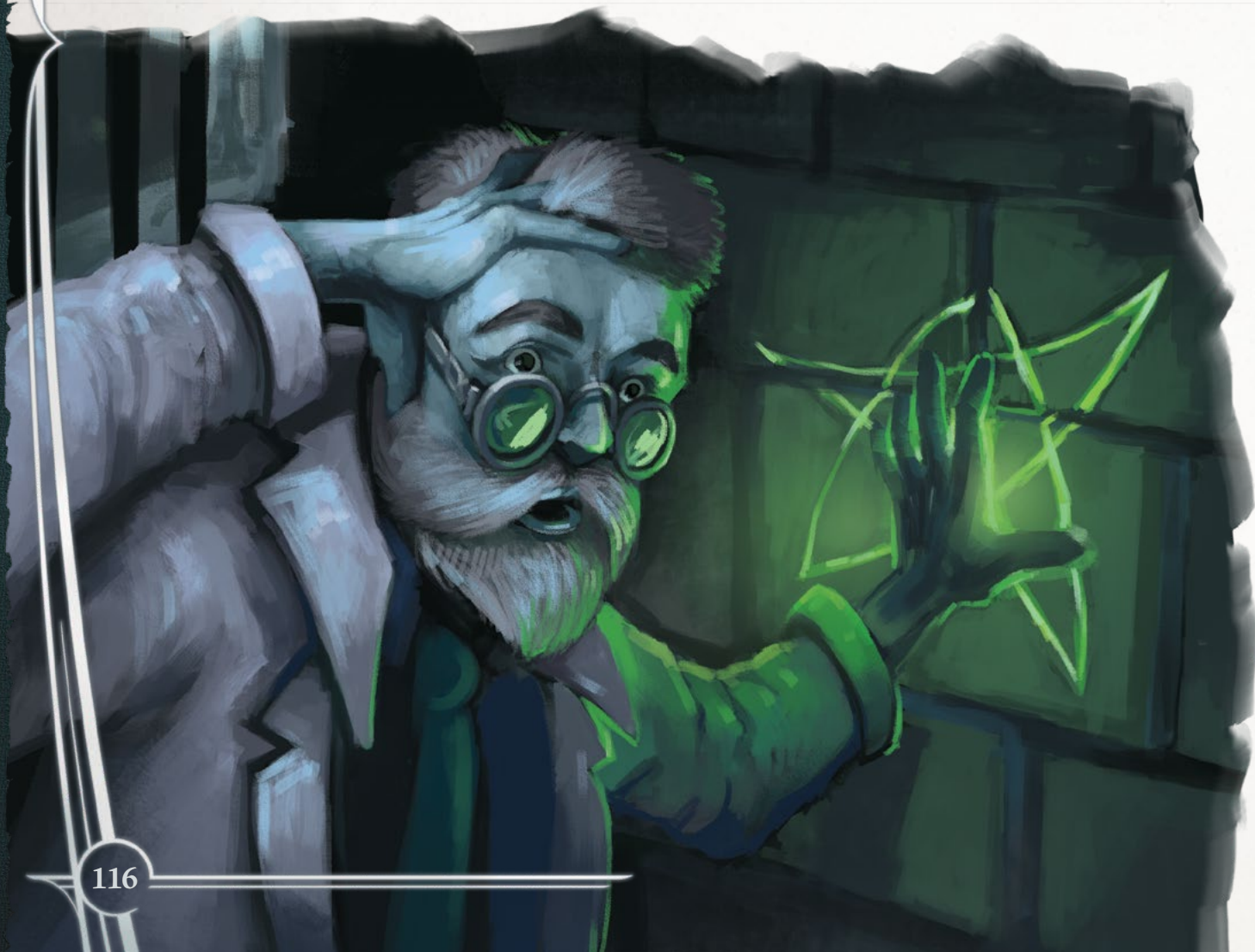
Floating Sphere of Annihilation

4th tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 20 (50,000 XP); **DC** 23/18

The walls of this room are inscribed with glowing runes. A 5-foot-diameter sphere of inky darkness hovers several feet above the floor.

An unusually large *sphere of annihilation* is magically suspended in place. When intelligent creatures approach within 30 feet of the sphere,



the runes on the walls activate the sphere. Roll initiative. On initiative counts 15 and 5, the sphere moves 30 feet in a straight line towards the closest creature within 300 feet of the sphere's starting position, stopping once it enters that creature's space. The sphere destroys nonliving obstacles it passes through. If it moves into a creature's space, that creature makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 66 (12d10) force damage on a failure. A creature reduced to 0 hit points by this damage dies, its body and gear utterly obliterated. The sphere returns to its original position if there are no living creatures within 300 feet of its starting space.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by necromancy magic. Casting *dispel magic* on one of the runes requires a spellcasting ability check and triggers a Success.

Runes. The walls, floor, and ceiling each bear one glowing rune. A creature that makes an Arcana check recognizes that the runes cause the sphere to move towards living creatures. There are six runes. If all six runes are destroyed, the sphere no longer moves on its own and can't be moved in any way.

Sphere. A creature that makes an Arcana check identifies the sphere as a large *sphere of annihilation* and can recall details about this magic item. The sphere acts like other *spheres of annihilation* with regard to the destruction of matter and the effects of coming into contact with a planar portal. Unlike other, smaller spheres, its movement can't be mentally controlled—only temporarily halted.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Arcana or thieves' tools check to destroy one of the six runes inscribed on the walls (see the Runes feature).
- A creature that makes an Arcana check to control the sphere can force the sphere to remain stationary until the start of the creature's next turn.

Critical Failure or Failure. The sphere moves an additional 30 feet the next time it moves.

Success or Critical Success. The attempt is successful.

Forbidden Tome

4th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP); **DC** 21/17

A sinister-looking, iron-shod book sits closed atop an ancient stone pedestal. An iron chain with warding sigils carved into every link affixes the book to the pedestal. Everything in the room except this chain seems to writhe and pulse unnervingly.

Opening the book or removing it from the pedestal triggers a Failure.

Book. The book is a tome of forbidden lore so vile that merely opening it warps reality itself. A creature that makes an Arcana or Religion check realizes that the chain's warding sigils once allowed the book to be opened safely, but their magic has failed. If the book is opened safely, a creature that spends at least 1 hour reading it gains advantage on the next Arcana or Religion check it makes in the next 24 hours. At the Narrator's discretion, the book may also contain some critical piece of information unavailable from any other source. The book is an object with AC 14, 40 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Damaging the book without destroying it outright triggers a Critical Failure.

Pedestal. The pedestal is formed from the stone of the floor itself and can't be moved. Damaging or otherwise disturbing the pedestal triggers a Failure.

Chain. The chain's links are etched with warding sigils, but their magic is currently inert. The chain is an object with AC 18, 80 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Breaking the chain triggers a Critical Failure.

Spell Solve. A *magic circle* spell cast around the book contains its fell power and allows it to be opened safely for the spell's duration.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Arcana or Religion check to reactivate the chain's warding sigils.
 - Critical Failure.** As a Failure, except a **murmuring worm** also appears and attacks the creature nearest the book.

Failure. Reality bends and twists. Until the book is closed or properly warded, non-aberration creatures within 30 feet of the book treat the area as difficult terrain. In addition, a creature that enters the area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn within the area takes 14 (3d8) psychic damage and 14 (3d8) force damage and must succeed on an Intelligence save or gain a level of strife. Finally, a Critical Failure triggers at midnight every night until the book is either closed or properly warded. Destroying the book also ends this effect.

Success. The chain's warding sigils are reactivated, allowing the book to be opened safely.

Critical Success. As a Success, and the next creature to read the book gains a permanent expertise die to Arcana checks. Only one creature can receive this benefit, with all future Critical Successes treated as an ordinary Success.

Gas Vacuum Trap

3rd tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 12 (16,800 XP); **DC** 19/16

A chest rests on the floor of a spotlessly clean, high-ceilinged room. A faint shimmer of magical force blocks the doorway into the room.

A Perception or Investigation check, or looking into the room, reveals a cloud of gas roiling near the room's ceiling. A second magical force field separates the gas from the lower portion of the room. A creature that makes an Arcana check deduces that the magical field blocking the door and the one blocking the gas are two sides of a magical cube of force. The force cube can be destroyed with a successful *dispel magic* spell or by dealing it at least 50 force damage.

Vacuum. The space inside the force cube is a vacuum. Destroying the cube causes the room to flood with air from outside the room and with poison gas from the cloud above the cube.

Spell Effect. This is an evocation effect created by a 5th-level spell. Casting *dispel magic* on the force cube triggers a Critical Failure.

Spell Solve. A creature that teleports into the cube is exposed to vacuum (*Trials & Treasures*, chapter 3) but not to the poison gas. Once the force cube is destroyed, a *gust of wind* or similar effect dissipates the gas.

Possible Solutions

- When the force cube is destroyed, each creature within 30 feet must make a Strength saving throw. A creature that braces itself against a solid surface before the cube is destroyed makes the saving throw with advantage.

Critical Failure or Failure. The creature is pulled into the room, takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage, and is knocked prone—just in time for the gas cloud to settle over them. A creature that enters the gas-filled area for the first time on a turn, or that starts its turn inside the area, takes 22 (5d8) poison damage.

Success or Critical Success. The creature is not pulled into the room.

Geas Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP); **DC** 18/15

A table has been set with a vase of flowers, an envelope sealed with wax, a shortsword, a scroll, and a string of prayer beads.

Breaking the seal on the envelope triggers a Failure.

Magic Items. The sword, scroll, and prayer beads radiate magic. Touching or moving any of the three items causes the other two to vanish instantly. The sword is a +2 *shortsword*; the scroll is a *spell scroll* of *geas*; and the beads are a *necklace of prayer beads*.

Envelope. An Arcana or Investigation check, or an examination of the envelope, reveals a *glyph of warding* on the envelope's wax seal. Inside the envelope is a note that reads: "In exchange for this gift, do not harm the lord of this place."

Spell Effect. This is an abjuration effect created by a 5th-level spell. Casting *dispel magic* cast on the envelope's seal triggers a Success.

Spell Solve. Breaking the envelope's seal with *mage hand* or a similar effect triggers a Success.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Dexterity check to open the envelope without breaking the seal. A creature proficient in the Sleight of Hand skill or with forgery kits can add their proficiency bonus to the roll.

Critical Failure or Failure. The *glyph of warding* activates, casting *geas* on the creature that broke the seal. The victim telepathically hears the command “Do not harm the lord of this place.” When the victim meets a particular creature within this dungeon, they understand that this is the creature they are forbidden to harm. Dealing damage to that creature or targeting the creature with a spell that forces a saving throw is forbidden by the *geas*. The *geas* can’t be removed while any member of the party possesses one of the three magic items found beside the note.

Success or Critical Success. The *geas* spell is not cast, and the trap is disabled.

Ghost Trap

1st tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 4 (2,200 XP); **DC 15/14**

Although the air is still, the sound of howling wind fills the room. Atop a lectern rests a book, its pages whipping back and forth as if blown by gusts of wind.

A creature that touches the book or begins its turn carrying the book triggers a Failure.

Exploration. A creature that makes an Arcana or Religion check senses the presence of unquiet spirits. On a critical success, the creature realizes the book on the lectern is possessed by a **ghost**. The book is a rare tome titled *On Immortality* and is worth 250 gp. A *detect magic* spell cast on the book reveals an aura of necromancy, while a *detect evil and good* spell reveals the presence of undead.

Possession. A Success is triggered if Turn Undead, *dispel evil and good*, or a similar effect is used to drive the ghost from its host, if the ghost chooses to leave its host, or if the host drops to 0 hit points.



If a possessed creature takes damage, it makes a Charisma saving throw. On a success, a Success is triggered.

If the book is destroyed or is the target of Turn Undead, *banishment*, *dispel evil and good*, or *dispel magic* while inhabited by the ghost, the ghost appears within 5 feet of it. If the ghost is reduced to 0 hit points, the ghost is destroyed. The book is an object with AC 11, 15 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Critical Failure or Failure. The triggering creature makes a Charisma saving throw. On a failure, the ghost that inhabits the book possesses the creature, and the trap is disabled.

The possessed creature is unconscious. The ghost enters the creature’s body and takes control of it. The ghost can be targeted only by effects that turn undead, and it retains its Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. It grants its host body immunity to being charmed and

frightened. It otherwise uses the possessed creature's statistics and actions instead of its own. It doesn't gain access to the creature's memories but does gain access to its proficiencies, nonmagical class features and traits, and nonmagical actions. The ghost can't use limited-use abilities or class traits that require spending a resource.

Success or Critical Success. The ghost leaves its host. If the book is within 60 feet, the ghost is forced back into it, and the trap resets. Otherwise, the ghost appears next to the target. The target is then immune to this ghost's Possession for 24 hours.

Ghost Trap Variant: Demon Trap

Variable tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge varies

The area is filled with a sense of foreboding and dread. An onyx altar caked with blood and scratched with occult symbols squats in the center of the space. On the altar rests a fire-blackened skull wearing a jeweled crown.

Instead of a ghost possessing a book, a demon possesses a crown. The trap has the following alternate feature:

Crown. The crown is possessed by a **demon** instead of a ghost. A *detect magic* spell cast on the crown reveals auras of abjuration and conjuration magic; a *detect evil and good* spell reveals the presence of fiends. Spells and magical effects that target undead have no effect on the trap, while effects that target fiends work normally. Otherwise, the trap functions identically to a Ghost Trap. If a creature dies while possessed by the demon, its soul is dragged to the Abyss; the creature can't be resurrected by any means short of a *wish* or *true resurrection* spell.

The trap is elite and has a challenge rating equal to the demon's Challenge Rating. Use the Trap Statistics table to determine the trap's DC and XP values, or use one of the following examples.

Hezrou Trap: Challenge 9 (10,000 XP); DC 17/15

Nalfeshnee Trap: Challenge 14 (23,000 XP); DC 20/16

Balor Trap: Challenge 19 (44,000 XP); DC 22/17

Gnashing Teeth Trap

Oth tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 2 (450 XP); DC 14/13

A bust of a fanged frog protrudes from an iron door. The door's handle is positioned inside the frog's open mouth.

Turning the handle triggers a Critical Failure.

Exploration. An Engineering or Investigation check reveals that the frog's mouth is hinged. The door is latched shut and the handle must be turned to open it. A Perception check or an examination of the fangs reveals faint, rust-brown blood stains.

Frog Head. The frog head can be attacked. It has AC 19, 27 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Its mouth can be propped open with any solid object strong enough to survive the trap's damage.

Keeping Clear. Magic (such as the *mage hand* cantrip), a long pole, or a similar item can be used to trigger the trap from a distance, resulting in a Success.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to disable the trap.
- A creature can make a Dexterity check to turn the handle without triggering the trap.
- A creature can make a Strength check to hold open the mouth while another creature turns the handle. On a failure, both creatures are subjected to the trap.

Critical Failure or Failure. The frog's mouth snaps shut, making a melee attack with a +7 bonus against any creature or object inside the mouth. On a hit, the target takes 9 (2d8) piercing damage and is trapped as the frog's mouth clamps down on it. While trapped, the creature's Speed becomes 0. A creature can use an action to make a Strength check, prying open the mouth and freeing a trapped creature or object on a success. If this check fails, the trapped target takes an additional 2 (1d4) piercing damage. Once the handle is turned, the door is unlatched and can be pushed open.

Success. The trap isn't triggered, and the handle can be turned.

Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

Gnashing Teeth Variants: Other Gnashing Teeth

Instead of a frog's head guarding a door handle, the gnashing teeth may be:

- A demonic face on a treasure chest; the chest's lock is in the demon's fanged mouth. The trap is triggered when the wrong key or a lockpick is inserted into the lock. The chest contains a Minor Treasure.
- A wall-mounted, bronze shark head with a Minor Treasure in its mouth. The trap is triggered when the treasure is removed.

Guilty Soul Trap

3rd tier (supernatural trap)

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP); **DC 18/15**

A statue of a stern angelic figure looms over the interior of this room. An ornate sign outside the room reads "Repent."

A creature that enters the room without first reciting a prayer of penitence triggers a Failure.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by transmutation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the statue requires a spellcasting ability check and triggers a Success for the next creature to enter the room.

Statue. The statue is made of solid bronze but has been painted to appear eerily lifelike. It holds a thick tome in one hand and a scythe in the other.

Spell Solve. A creature under the effects of a *nondetection* spell can pass through the room without incident.

Possible Solutions.

- A creature can make a Religion check to recite the proper prayers of contrition before passing by the angelic statue. The prayers take 1 minute to recite, but once completed the character can pass the statue safely for 24 hours.

Critical Failure. The statue animates, shouting "Impenitent wretch!" and swinging its scythe at the triggering creature. The creature must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 35 (10d6) slashing damage on a failure or half damage on a success.

Failure. A creature that enters the room without demonstrating proper contrition is knocked prone, is stunned for 1 minute, and suffers a level of strife. The statue then demands that the creature confess their most serious misdeed. At this point, the Narrator should ask the player what their character's most serious misdeed is and what the character tells the statue. If the answers match, the statue magically amplifies the creature's confession so that it is audible within 300 feet. The statue says "Be cleansed" and deals 10 (3d6) radiant damage to the creature, who is then allowed to rise and depart. Lying to the statue or otherwise failing to make an earnest confession triggers a Critical Failure.

Success. The creature is allowed to pass by the statue in peace.

Critical Success. The statue casts *bless* on the creature as it passes. The effect lasts for 10 minutes.

Hidden Pit Trap

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 2 (450 XP); **DC 14/13**

The floor ahead is rough and uneven.

The floor is stone-covered plaster or flimsy wood concealing a 30-foot-deep pit. Placing more than 300 pounds of weight on the floor (typically by two or more Medium creatures walking on it at once) triggers a Critical Failure. The pit can cover any area of floor, from a 5 by 5-foot pit blocking a narrow hallway to a 50-foot-wide pit that fills an entire room.

There's a 25 percent chance that the pit contains the remains of previous adventurers, along with a Minor Treasure.

Exploration. A Perception or Investigation check reveals that the floor is unstable, or that there are no signs of travel through this particular area. Probing or tapping the floor above the pit reveals that the area below is hollow.

Keeping Clear. Once discovered, the pit can be bridged or circumvented. The party can travel over the pit one character at a time. Only a Large creature or one wearing heavy armor triggers it on their own.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Engineering check to fortify the floor so that it supports more than 300 pounds of weight. On a failure, the floor appears to be fortified but is not.
- A creature can jump over the pit.
 - Critical Failure or Failure.** The pit's cover collapses, dropping creatures and objects into the pit. The trap's cover is destroyed, and creatures that plummet into the pit take 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall.

Hidden Pit Trap Variants: Other Pits

Challenge varies

Pit traps are dungeon classics and appear in a lot of adventures. You can mix and match the following features to customize your pit trap. Some variants increase the pit trap's challenge rating and the DC of checks made to discover it. You can combine multiple features: for instance, a *locking-lidded, poison-spiked pit trap* has a challenge rating of 7 and a DC of 17/14.

Different Description (+0 Challenge, +0 DC). You can vary the description of the floor around the pit trap—the important thing is that you draw attention to the floor in your description. Other options include:

- The floor ahead is dusty and in disrepair.
- The bricks of the floor ahead are jumbled up, as if this area was recently excavated or inexpertly repaired.
- A dire bearskin rug covers the floor.



- The floor in this area looks as if it has been swept.
- A sack rests in the middle of an empty expanse of floor. (Note: The sack is bait. It contains rocks and perhaps a mocking note.)
- Ahead, a 15-foot-long board lies on the floor. (Note: The board is a bridge; walking on it doesn't trigger the trap.)

Acid Pit Trap (+9 Challenge, +4 DC). This pit is filled with acid. Creatures within 10 feet of it hear a faint hissing sound, though they can't necessarily pinpoint its source. A Perception check or an examination of the floor allows a creature to detect a faint acrid smell and identify that the hissing comes from below.

A creature that falls into the pit takes no falling damage but is immersed in acid. A creature that enters the acid or starts its turn in the acid takes 38 (7d10) acid damage.

Gelatinous Cube Pit Trap (+2 Challenge, +1 DC). This pit contains a trapped **gelatinous cube**. A creature that falls into the pit doesn't take falling damage but enters the cube's space.

Lidded Pit Trap (+0 Challenge, +0 DC). This pit has a cover that opens like a trap door or swings on a pivot. A lidded pit trap is similar to a hidden pit trap, except that it can be triggered and reset, perhaps with a concealed lever.

Cover. Once the pit is detected, an iron spike or similar object can be wedged under the cover to prevent it from opening. Alternatively, it can be held shut magically with an *arcane lock* spell.

Locking-Lidded Pit Trap (+1 Challenge, +0 DC). This pit has a weighted or spring-loaded cover that opens like a trap door or swings on a pivot. Once a creature has fallen into the pit, the cover automatically resets and locks to prevent the creature's escape. While the pit is locked, it can't be triggered.

Lock. A creature outside the pit can make an Investigation check to find the hidden lever, loose brick, or catch that locks or unlocks the pit's lid. A creature that makes an Engineering or thieves' tools check can lock or unlock the pit. Only creatures that can reach the pit's lid can attempt this check, and the check is made with disadvantage if the creature can't see (if they are inside the lightless pit, for example). A creature can make a Strength check to break the lock and push open the pit's lid. The pit lid is an object with AC 20, 40 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Monster Pit Trap (+9 Challenge, +4 DC). Trapped at the bottom of this pit is a monster with a challenge rating between 4 and 6, such as an **elemental**, **ghost**, or **otyugh**. When approaching the pit, smells and sounds may alert the adventurers to the monster. The monster tries to keep creatures that fall into the pit from escaping.

Spiked Pit Trap (+2 Challenge, +1 DC). The bottom of this pit trap is lined with 2-foot-tall metal spikes.

Spikes. A creature that falls into the pit takes 11 (2d10) piercing damage from the spikes, in addition to any falling damage.

Poison-Spiked Pit Trap (+4 Challenge, +2 DC). The bottom of this pit trap is lined with 2-foot-tall, poisoned metal spikes.

Spikes. A creature that falls into the pit takes 11 (2d10) piercing damage from the spikes, in addition to any falling damage. A creature that takes damage from the spikes makes a Constitution saving throw, taking an additional 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failed save or half damage on a success.

Hourglass Room

2nd tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 5 (3,600 XP); DC 15/14

Fine sand covers the floor of this circular chamber. The only way forward is through a door on the far side of the room.

Both the room's entrance and the far door are positioned just above the surface of the sand. A creature that steps into the room sinks waist deep into the fine particles (Small characters sink chest deep instead). The sand is difficult terrain for creatures moving through it.

A magic sensor above the opposite door activates if a living creature enters the room, causing a trap door in the center of the room to open. Sand begins pouring through the trap door. Roll initiative.

- **Round One:** A creature that starts its turn in the sand must make a Strength saving throw or be pulled 10 feet toward the center of the room. A creature that enters the trap-door's space is pulled beneath the sand and sucked through the trap door. The creature falls 30 feet into an identically shaped room below the upper chamber, taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and landing prone.
- **Round Two:** The level of sand in the upper chamber lowers; creatures standing in the chamber are now 10 feet below the doors and must make an Athletics check to reach either door.
- **Round Four:** The sand empties entirely from the upper chamber. The floor there is no longer difficult terrain.

- **Round Five:** At the start of round five, the two chambers rotate, so that the upper chamber becomes the lower chamber and vice versa. A creature in either area when the chambers rotate make a Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage and falls prone. On a success, the creature takes half damage and doesn't fall prone.

The trap repeats until disabled or once all living creatures leave the room. Creatures capable of flying can navigate the area safely, even when the chambers rotate.

Walls. A Perception check or an examination of the room reveals that the walls of the chamber slope slightly toward the center of the area, like the sides of an hourglass.

Doors. Opening the door on the far side of the upper chamber reveals a blank stone wall. An identical door in the lower chamber opens into a control room containing the enormous gear that turns the chambers, a set of stairs that return to the landing outside the upper chamber's entrance, and a passageway that leads deeper into the dungeon.

Landing. A creature that searches the landing outside the chamber's entrance can make an Investigation check to discover a secret door. A set of steps beyond the door descends to the control room. The stairs allow creatures to bypass the hourglass chambers.

Sensors. A *detect magic* spell reveals an aura of divination magic from the sensor. There is an identical sensor in the lower chamber. Casting *dispel magic* on a magical sensor deactivates it, preventing that sensor from detecting living creatures in the area.

Trap Door. A creature able to access the trap door while it is clear of sand can jam it shut with a thieves' tools check. This prevents the sand from moving between the two chambers but doesn't stop the chambers from rotating.

Possible Solutions

- The gear that turns the chambers is powerful enough to pulverize any nonmagical object caught in its teeth. A creature that jams the gear with a magic weapon, *immovable rod*, or similar item can attempt an Athletics or Sleight of Hand check.
- A creature can make an attack roll with a magical bludgeoning weapon to destroy the gear.

Critical Failure. The gear slips, causing the chambers to rotate every round for the next 1d4 + 1 rounds. During this time, attempts to jam or destroy the gear are made with disadvantage.

Failure. The gear continues turning as normal.

Success or Critical Success. The gear stops turning, and the chambers cease rotating. Removing an item jammed into the gear resets the trap; destroying the gear permanently disables it.



Ice-Breather Trap

3rd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP); **DC** 19/16

A 10-foot-tall statue of a barbarian or frost giant dominates the frigid room. The statue appears to be made of ice.

A Failure is triggered when someone within 30 feet speaks the word “ice” or when the statue is subjected to fire damage.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by evocation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the statue requires a spellcasting ability check and triggers a Success.

Statue. When a creature first approaches within 30 feet of the statue, a *magic mouth* spell animates the statue’s mouth: “Speak not my name at any cost: a river’s skin in the season of frost.”

The statue is made of magical ice that doesn’t melt. It is an object with AC 13, 50 hit points, and immunity to fire, poison, and psychic damage. Damaging the statue without destroying it outright triggers a Failure.

A Perception check or an examination of the statue’s face reveals that its mouth is nearly clogged with ice crystals.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Arcana check to disable the statue’s magic.

Critical Failure or Failure. The mouth releases a 30-foot cone of frigid air. Each creature in the blast makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 38 (7d10) cold damage on a failed save or half damage on a success. The trap immediately resets.

Success. The trap is disabled for 24 hours.

Critical Success. The creature can permanently disable the trap or change the triggering word from “ice” to another word.

Illusory Balcony Trap

Challenge 1 (200 XP); **DC** 13/13

A wooden balcony runs along one side of the room at a height of 20 feet, extending 5 feet out from the wall. The broken remains of a humanoid skeleton lie at the base of a ladder connected to the balcony.

Only the 5-foot-square sections at either end of the balcony are real. The ladder connects to the real section of balcony on one side; the other side supports a treasure chest containing a Minor Treasure. The rest of the balcony is an illusion. A creature that tries to walk on an illusory portion triggers a Failure.

Balcony. An Investigation check or touching the illusory portion of the balcony reveals it to be false. Creatures who know the balcony is an illusion can see through it. A creature that climbs the ladder can see the treasure chest across the illusory section of the balcony.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by illusion magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the balcony requires a spellcasting ability check and dispels the illusion.

Skeleton. Examining the skeleton reveals that its skull has been smashed. A Medicine check or an examination of the skeleton’s skull reveals that the person died from falling.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can reach the section of balcony with the treasure chest by climbing, jumping, laying a bridge over the illusory section of balcony, or through many other methods.

Critical Failure or Failure. The creature steps through the illusory balcony and plummets 20 feet, taking 7 (2d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall.

Success or Critical Success. The creature avoids falling.

Intoxicating Brazier

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 1 (200 XP); **DC 13/13**

Scented smoke wafts from four glowing braziers.

A creature that breathes for at least 1 minute within 30 feet of a brazier triggers a Critical Failure.

Smoke. Dousing a brazier with water creates a cloud of drugged steam, resulting in an immediate Critical Failure for everyone in the area. The trap is then disabled. Using magic or some other means to extinguish a brazier without water results in a Critical Success. Leaving the area, holding one's breath, or otherwise avoiding the smoke results in a Success. A strong wind clears the smoke for 1 minute. A creature can tip over a brazier with a Strength check, triggering a Critical Success and dealing 7 (2d6) fire damage to a creature within 5 feet of the brazier on the opposite side.

Trap. A creature can make a Medicine check to recognize the smell of godsmoke, an intoxicating and expensive incense. A creature that makes an Insight check or that pays close attention to others in the area can recognize small oddities in their behavior before the drug kicks in.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Survival check to extinguish the brazier.

Critical Failure or Failure. The triggering creature makes a DC 10 Constitution saving throw. On a success, the creature is unaffected by the godsmoke for 10 minutes. On a failure, the creature is poisoned for 10 minutes. While poisoned in this way, the creature feels light-headed and overconfident.

Success. The creature isn't affected by the godsmoke, and the brazier is extinguished.

Critical Success. As a Success, and the characters can retrieve a dose of unburned godsmoke incense, which is worth 100 gp.

Invisible Caltrops Trap

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 2 (450 XP); **DC 14/13**

Droplets of dried blood dot the floor, as if the area was once the site of a battle.

An area of floor is covered with large, invisible caltrops. A magically invisible chest containing a Minor Treasure sits in the center of the area. The first time each turn a creature enters the area, it triggers a Failure.

Caltrops. An Investigation check or probing the area with a pole or other object reveals the presence of the invisible caltrops. Once a creature is aware of the caltrops, it can use an action to collect or sweep the caltrops from a 5-foot-square space.

Chest. A Perception check or an examination of the floor reveals a rectangular area free of dust (the section of floor beneath the invisible chest). Scattering powder or small objects in the area outlines the chest. The chest contains a Minor Treasure, perhaps a *spell scroll of invisible object* (DDG).

Spell Effect. This is an illusion effect created by a 3rd-level spell. Casting *dispel magic* on the caltrops dispels the illusion.

Spell Solve. *Detect invisibility*, *faerie fire*, and similar spells reveal the invisible caltrops.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Investigation or Perception check to move at half speed through the area without triggering a Failure.

Critical Failure or Failure. The triggering creature makes a Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, it takes 2 (1d4) piercing damage and its walking speed is reduced to 0 until the end of its turn. Thereafter, its walking speed is reduced by 10 feet until it regains at least 1 hit point. A creature that knows the locations of all of the caltrops and moves at half speed through the area automatically succeeds on the saving throw.

Success or Critical Success. The triggering creature avoids the trap.

Lightning Bolt Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); **DC** 16/14

A foot-tall lapis lazuli statuette of a dragon sits at the center of a copper-tiled floor.

A creature that steps on the floor within 10 feet of the statuette triggers a Failure.

Dragon Statue. The statue weighs 50 pounds and is not attached to the floor. It is worth 2,000 gp. The dragon's mouth is open and directed towards the floor. A Perception check reveals a magical *glyph of warding* on the statuette.

If the statuette is knocked over or removed from the copper floor, the trap is disabled.

Spell Effect. This is an evocation effect created by a 3rd-level spell. A *dispel magic* spell cast on the statue disables the trap.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can jump over the copper floor, landing on the other side of the floor or onto the statuette.
- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to create a safe path by prying up copper tiles.

Critical Failure or Failure. A bolt of lightning arcs from the statue's mouth to the copper floor. Each creature standing on any part of the copper floor must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) lightning damage on a failure or half damage on a success. Once the trap has been triggered, it is permanently disabled.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is not triggered.

Lightning-Blast Statue

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 3 (700 XP); **DC** 14/14

A life-size statue of a humanoid stands atop a squat marble plinth. In one hand, the statue holds an amber-tipped scepter leveled at the room's entrance.

A creature that approaches within 10 feet of the statue's scepter or starts its turn in that area triggers a Failure.

Scepter. A Perception check or an examination of the statue reveals that the scepter can be removed from the statue's hand. A riddle is written in Common on the scepter: "I am the Prince's to command / Until another comes to hand."

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by evocation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the scepter requires a spellcasting ability check and disables the trap.

Statue. A creature can push the statue off the plinth with an Athletics check. On a success, the statue shatters against the floor. The statue is a nonmagical object with AC 14, 50 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. While the statue holds the amber-tipped scepter, it also has immunity to lightning damage. Shattering the statue or reducing it to 0 hit points disables the trap.

Possible Solutions

- To disable the trap, the statue's scepter must be swapped with an object of similar size, such as a magical rod, a weapon, or even a torch. Simply removing the scepter from the statue does not deactivate the trap; the scepter continues firing so long as it remains within 500 feet of the statue. A creature can make a Sleight of Hand check to replace the scepter without activating the lightning.

Critical Failure. As a Failure, except the lightning targets each creature within 10 feet of the scepter.

Failure. A bolt of lightning arcs from the end of the scepter. The triggering creature must make a Dexterity saving throw, taking 17 (5d6) lightning damage on a failure or half damage on a success.

Success or Critical Success. The creature safely swaps out the scepter, disabling the trap.

Lock Trap

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 1 (200 XP); **DC** 13/13

A sturdy metal door features a boxy lock studded with sharp rivets. (Note: The lock may be on a chest instead, in which case the chest contains a Minor Treasure.)

Attempting to pick the lock with thieves' tools triggers Critical Failure. Any other method of opening the lock results in a Success. (As is the case with most locks, there is a decent chance the key is somewhere nearby!)

Exploration. An Engineering or Investigation check reveals that the keyhole is large enough to contain a trap. A Perception check or an examination of the floor reveals a drop of dried blood on the floor near the lock.

Lock. A creature can make an Investigation or thieves' tools check to probe the lock for traps. This check is made with advantage. On a success, the creature identifies the trap and makes Dexterity checks to disable the trap with advantage. Failing the check triggers a Critical Failure.

The lock can be smashed with a DC 19 Strength check or by attacking it (AC 19, 20 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage).

Protection. A character wearing gauntlets is immune to the trap's damage but has disadvantage on Dexterity checks to pick the lock.

Spell Solve. *Knock* unlocks the door but does not disable the trap.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to disable the trap.

Critical Failure. A blade extends from the lock, jabbing at the fingers of a would-be lockpicker. The triggering creature takes 5 (2d4) slashing damage. A creature damaged by the blade has disadvantage on Dexterity checks involving manual dexterity (such as disarming traps) until it regains at least 1 hit point.

Failure. As a Critical Failure, except the blade deals 2 (1d4) slashing damage.

Success. The trap is disabled.

Critical Success. The trap is disabled, and the door is unlocked.



Lock Trap Variant: Paralysis Needle Trap*2nd tier (constructed trap)***Challenge 5** (1,800 XP); **DC 15/14**

The middle of this locked wooden door is set with a metal plate. The plate is etched with an image of a skull with a lolling forked tongue. The skull's nose is the keyhole.

This trap is armed with paralysis poison. It has the following Critical Failure and Failure condition:

Critical Failure or Failure. A tongue-shaped blade extends from the lock, jabbing at the fingers of a would-be lockpicker. The triggering creature takes 5 (2d4) piercing damage. A creature damaged by the blade makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) poison damage on a failure or half damage on a success. Also on a failure, the creature is poisoned for 1 hour. While poisoned in this way, the creature is paralyzed.

Lock Trap Variant: Scorpion Needle Trap*1st tier (constructed trap)***Challenge 3** (700 XP); **DC 14/14**

A jumble of bones leans against a locked door.

This trap is armed with poison extracted from a giant scorpion. It has the following Critical Failure and Failure conditions:

Critical Failure or Failure. A needle extends from the lock, jabbing at the fingers of a would-be lockpicker. The triggering creature takes 1 piercing damage. A creature damaged by the blade makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 16 (3d10) poison damage on a failure or half damage on a success.

Lock Trap Variant: Plague Gas Lock*3rd tier (constructed trap)***Challenge 14** (11,500 XP); **DC 20/16**

This iron door's lock resembles a skull; the skull's nose functions as the keyhole.

This trap has the following Critical Failure and Failure conditions:

Critical Failure. A 15-foot cone of diseased air blasts from the lock. Each creature in the area makes a Constitution saving throw. Creatures within 5 feet of the lock make this saving throw with disadvantage. On a failure, a creature takes 21 (6d6) necrotic damage and contracts slimy

doom (see the *contagion* spell). On a success, the creature takes half damage and doesn't contract the disease.

Failure. As a Critical Failure, except the cone of diseased air is 5 feet.

Lock Trap Variant: Shock Lock*2nd tier (constructed trap)***Challenge 8** (3,900 XP); **DC 17/15**

A locked wooden door has a copper lock.

This trap has the following Critical Failure and Failure conditions:

Critical Failure. The creature's lockpick touches an electrically charged filament. The triggering creature makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 27 (5d10) lightning damage on a failure or half damage on a success. Also on a failure, lightning arcs to each other creature within 15 feet of the triggering creature. Each other creature makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 27 (5d10) lightning damage on a failure or half damage on a success. The trap is then deactivated until a crank on the opposite side of the door is turned, recharging the filament.

Failure. As a Critical Failure, except the lightning doesn't arc to additional creatures.

Magic Comet Trap*2nd tier (constructed trap)***Challenge 9** (5,000 XP); **DC 17/15**

A mosaic of a burning city menaced by five comets covers the floor. The name "Ab Aldriz" is worked into the mosaic, as is a mysterious sigil that covers nearly the entire mosaic.

A creature triggers a Failure when it first walks onto the sigil, or starts its turn standing on the sigil, without having spoken the words "Ab Aldriz" in the last hour.

Ab Aldriz. A creature that makes a History check recalls that an ancient city was destroyed when an angry wizard named Ab Aldriz summoned comets to strike it. The wizard was angry for not having his accomplishments recognized by the city.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by evocation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the sigil requires a spellcasting ability check and disables the trap.

Sigil. The sigil is a large and branching symbol that stretches across the entire mosaic. A creature that makes an Arcana check recognizes it as a *glyph of warding* that triggers an unknown spell under unknown conditions.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Stealth check to walk across the mosaic without stepping on any part of the sigil.

Critical Failure or Failure. Five miniature comets fire from the mosaic, targeting the triggering creature. The creature makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 45 (10d8) fire damage on a failure or half damage on a success. The trap can't target the same creature again for 24 hours but can still target other creatures.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is not triggered.

Mirror Trap

1st tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 4 (2,200 XP); **DC** 15/14

A mirror hangs on the wall, its silver frame etched with strange sigils.

The mirror reflects light normally. A living creature that touches the mirror or its frame seems to disappear as it is teleported to an extradimensional space “inside” the mirror. Creatures outside the mirror can't see creatures trapped inside. Creatures inside the mirror can interact with each other and can observe the area outside the mirror as if looking through a window, but they otherwise do not have line of effect to the area outside the mirror.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by conjuration magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the mirror requires a spellcasting ability check and disables the trap. Creatures trapped inside the mirror appear in unoccupied spaces outside the mirror, and the mirror becomes a nonmagical item worth 500 gp.



Mirror. A creature that makes an Arcana check knows that the sigils on the mirror's frame produce some sort of teleportation magic when activated. A creature that investigates the mirror (without touching it) can make a Perception or Investigation check. On a success, they hear shouting or other loud sounds created by creatures trapped inside the mirror.

Spell Solve. A creature trapped inside the mirror can escape using magic that allows extradimensional travel (such as *dimension door*).

Possible Solutions

- A creature outside the mirror can counteract the magic sigils with an Arcana check.
- A creature on either side of the mirror can shatter the mirror by making an attack roll (AC 14).

Critical Failure or Failure. If the triggering creature is outside the mirror and within 5 feet of it, it teleports inside the mirror. An *aleas* (DDG) in the form of the triggering creature appears in the creature's space. Disabling the trap does not destroy the aleas.

Success. The mirror cracks. A second Success triggers a Critical Success instead.

Critical Success. The mirror shatters, and the trap is disabled. Creatures inside the mirror when it shatters appear in unoccupied spaces outside the mirror. The mirror's frame becomes a nonmagical item worth 50 gp.

Necromantic Bridge

4th tier (elite supernatural trap)

Challenge 18 (40,000 XP); **DC** 22/17

A bridge made of bones spans a sinister-looking pool of black water before vanishing into the waterfall that feeds the pool. The surrounding area is devoid of life. No moss grows on the walls, and no signs of vermin are present.

A living creature that isn't a necromancer that steps onto a section of bridge at least 20 feet from the either end triggers a Failure.

Bridge. The bones making up the bridge are held together with bits of red-gray sinew. An Investigation or Perception check, observing the bridge for at least 1 minute, or witnessing a creature cross it reveals that the bridge is animated. A creature that makes an Arcana or Religion check recognizes that the bridge is friendly to undead and necromancers and grants them safe passage. Creatures carried by a construct or undead can cross the bridge safely, though they still need to deal with the waterfall.

Water. Both the waterfall and the pool below are black and unwholesome looking. A creature that enters the pool or waterfall for the first time on a turn or starts its turn in the water takes 54 (12d8) necrotic damage. Constructs and undead are immune to this damage. A creature that makes a Religion check suspects that the waterfall flows from one of the rivers of the dead.

Dealing at least 50 cold damage to the pool freezes it. Creatures can walk across the frozen pool without taking necrotic damage.

Waterfall. Holding aloft a large flat object (such as a door or table; shields other than tower shields are too small) allows a creature to pass safely under the falls.

Magical Effect. The bridge is a 9th-level necromancy effect. A successful *dispel magic* or an effect that turns undead destroys the bridge, causing it to collapse into the pool below.

Spell Solve. Magic that makes a creature appear to be undead (such as *arcanist's magic aura*) allows that creature to cross the bridge but does not shield them from the waterfall. Spells that create solid walls can make structures that allow passage under the falls. A creature protected by a *resilient sphere* can cross the bridge without touching it and can pass beneath the waterfall safely.

Possible Solutions

- A creature that knows or has prepared at least two necromancy spells of 1st level or higher registers as a necromancer and can cross the bridge safely. The bridge forms a "covered bridge" structure that allows the creature to pass beneath the waterfall as they approach. A creature can make an Arcana or Religion check to "spoo" this necromantic capability.

Critical Failure. As a Failure, but the creature is first slammed against a wall or crushed in a giant, bony fist, taking an additional 21 (6d6) bludgeoning damage.

Failure. An arm made of animated bones forms out of the bridge's structure and attempts to shove them into the water below. The creature must make a Dexterity or Strength saving throw (creature's choice). On a failure, the creature is flung into the pool, taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall, and is subjected to the effects of the water.

Success. The creature fools the bridge into believing it is an undead creature, a necromancer, or the like, and can cross the bridge safely.

Critical Success. As a Success, and the bridge treats the creature's companions as their entourage, allowing other creatures to pass safely for the next minute.

Obsidian Tendrils Trap

4th tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 20 (50,000 XP); **DC** 23/18

A foot-wide, foot-tall obsidian bridge spans a pool of bubbling lava.

A creature triggers a Failure each time it enters a 5-foot space above the lava on its turn. This includes any space up to 50 feet above the lava, as well as the area of the obsidian bridge.

Lava. The lava bubbles and ripples as if stirred from within. A creature that enters a space within 5 feet of the lava or starts its turn there takes 55 (10d10) ongoing fire damage. An Investigation or Perception check, or observing the pool for 1 minute, reveals black tendrils that occasionally emerge from the surface of the lava.

Dealing at least 50 cold damage to the pool in a single turn causes a 5-foot-square area of the lava to harden into solid obsidian for 1 minute, during which time that area is safe to traverse.

The Narrator determines the size of the pool, but it should be at least 30 feet on a side and offer no obvious route around it. The larger the pool, the more difficult the challenge.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by transmutation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the lava requires a spellcasting ability check and dispels the effect on a 5-foot-square area of lava.

Possible Solutions

- An Acrobatics or Athletics check allows a creature to move or fly above the lava at half its speed without triggering Failures until the end of its turn.
- As an action, a creature can make an Investigation, Nature, or Perception check to watch the surface of the lava. On a success, the creature identifies a safe route across the pool. Until the start of its next turn, the creature can use its reaction to grant itself or a creature that can hear it a Critical Success against the trap.
- A creature can take the Ready action to ready a melee attack against an obsidian tendril. The first time before the start of the creature's next turn that it makes a Strength saving

throw against an obsidian tendril, it can use its reaction to make a melee attack against the vine (AC 18). On a hit, the creature triggers a Success. On a failure, the creature must make the saving throw as normal.

Critical Failure. As a Failure, but the creature makes the Strength saving throw to avoid the obsidian tendril with disadvantage.

Failure. A jagged tendril made of animated obsidian emerges from the lava to grasp the creature. The creature makes a Strength saving throw. On a failure, it takes 11 (2d10) slashing damage and is restrained. The tendril then pulls the restrained creature to within 5 feet of the lava. A creature can use an action to make a Strength check, freeing a restrained creature on a success. The tendrils are objects with AC 18, 50 hit points, and immunity to fire, poison, and psychic damage. Once a tendril has been destroyed, moving into the 5-foot-square area it guards no longer triggers a Failure.

Success. The creature avoids the tendril.

Critical Success. The creature avoids the tendril and automatically succeeds on Strength saving throws against this trap until the end of its turn.

Oil Pool Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 3 (700 XP); **DC** 14/14

The entire floor of this area is sunken and filled with two feet of water. A 12-inch-wide metal grate is set into the ceiling above the pool.

A layer of lamp oil floats atop the water. If a lit torch or candle is dropped into the water (perhaps by a creature hiding above the metal grate), a Failure is triggered.

Grate. A Perception check or an examination of the ceiling around the grate reveals that the ceiling is blackened with soot. An Engineering check or an examination of the grate reveals that it can be removed by someone standing in the pool. A creature that reaches the grate can push it up and squeeze through the foot-wide opening into a tiny crawl space. The crawl space might be empty or contain a hostile creature holding

a candle and a flint and steel. The crawl space might also contain a Minor Treasure.

Pool. An Investigation check, or tasting the water, reveals that it is covered with a thin layer of lamp oil. Depending on the size of the area, creatures might need to wade through the oily water to reach an exit, but it might be possible to jump over the pool. Entering the pool doesn't trigger a Failure. Igniting the oil triggers a Failure—which might be desirable if there is no one in the pool at the time.

Critical Failure or Failure. The oil atop the water ignites and burns for 1 round. A creature in the pool or up to 5 feet above it when the oil ignites takes 10 (3d6) ongoing fire damage. A creature can end this ongoing damage early by diving into the water or by using an action to extinguish the fire on itself. A creature that is totally submerged in the water is immune to the damage. Once the fire has burned itself out, the trap is disabled.

Poison-Dart Skulls Trap

3rd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 12 (8,400 XP); **DC** 19/16

In the center of the room, a 3-foot-tall skull sits atop a carpeted dais. Something glints inside the skull's single, huge eye socket. Human-sized skulls, each also with one eye, are set into the walls.

Stepping onto the huge skull's dais triggers a Failure.

Central Skull. A creature that makes a History or Nature check identifies the large skull as that of a cyclops. An examination of the skull reveals a Minor Treasure inside it, easily retrievable by reaching its eye socket.

Dais. The dais is two steps high and covered with faded red carpet. An Engineering or Investigation check, or an examination of the dais or carpet, reveals that the carpet conceals pressure plates that activate when weight is put on the dais.

Wall Skulls. A Perception check, or an examination of the wall-mounted skulls, reveals that the skulls are artificial and that their eyes are tubes that extend into the wall. A creature can make an Engineering or Sleight of Hand check to plug or otherwise disable one of the four

smaller skulls' eye sockets, removing one dart from the trap's barrage. On a failure, the creature only believes the eye hole has been disabled.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to disable the pressure plates.

Critical Failure or Failure. A dart fires from each of the four wall-mounted skulls. Each dart makes a ranged attack with a +8 bonus against a random target in the room. A target hit by a dart takes 3 (1d6) piercing damage and makes a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 11 (2d10) poison damage on a failed save or half damage on a success.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

Poison Gas Trap

1st tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 3 (1,400 XP); **DC** 14/14

A grimacing stone mask with jade eyes is set 15 feet up on the wall.

Each time an eye is removed, a Failure is triggered.

Mask. A Perception check or an examination of the mask's jade eyes reveals that the eyes are carved to fit inside the mask but are not attached to it. Each gem is worth 100 gp. An Investigation check reveals a faint noxious smell near the mask's mouth. Examining the mouth reveals that the teeth are not particularly sharp or covered with poison, and that the mouth isn't hinged and can't close.

The mask is an object with AC 17, 30 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Breaking it ruptures the cavity holding the poison gas, triggering a Failure.

Spell Solve. An eye can be removed from a distance with *mage hand* or a similar effect. A strong wind (such as *gust of wind*) reduces the poison cloud's diameter by 20 feet. If this reduces its diameter to 0 feet, the trap is disabled.

Critical Failure or Failure. A hissing sound is heard as gas seeps into the area through the mask's mouth. Roll initiative. On initiative count 10, a 30-foot-diameter cloud of gas

emanates from the mask, spreading around corners. Each round on initiative count 10 for the next minute, the size of the cloud increases by 10 feet, to a maximum of 120 feet. A creature that starts its turn within the cloud makes a Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 10 (3d6) poison damage and is poisoned until the start of its next turn. On a success, the creature takes half damage and isn't poisoned. A creature can make a Sleight of Hand check to jam the eye back into the hole, disabling the trap and preventing the poison cloud from growing larger. Another object of similar size can be jammed into the hole with a Sleight of Hand check, but the check is made with disadvantage if the object isn't an exact fit.

Success or Critical Success. The trap isn't triggered.

Poison Gas Trap Variant: Green Dragon Poison Gas Trap

2nd tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 13 (20,000 XP); **DC** 19/16

This trap is armed with young green dragon poison. Instead of a mask, the area contains a 15-foot-tall stone statue of a dragon with emerald eyes worth 1,000 gp each. The cloud deals 42 (12d6) poison damage instead of 14 (4d6) poison damage.

Poison Gas Trap Variant: Sleep Gas Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 3 (1,400 XP); **DC** 14/14

Instead of a jade mask, the room contains a dust-covered bed with a gold brocade canopy and a faded bed skirt. An inanimate skeleton lies atop the bed.

A creature that fails a Constitution saving throw against the poison takes no damage but is poisoned for 1 hour. While poisoned, the target is also unconscious. An unconscious creature repeats the saving throw whenever it takes damage.

Instead of the Mask and Spell Solve features, the trap has the following feature:

Bed. The gold brocade canopy is worth 100 gp. Changing the bed's weight significantly—for instance, by climbing onto the bed or removing the canopy—triggers a pressure plate under one of the bed's legs.

An Investigation check or looking under the bed reveals the pressure plate.

Ratling-Catcher Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP); **DC** 15/14

The passage features two gates made of metal bars; the first is open while the second, 10 feet farther down the passage, is closed.

The second (farther) gate is locked. When a creature jostles, hits, or tries to open or close either gate, a Failure is triggered.

Gates. Both gates are objects with AC 19, 30 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and a damage threshold of 10. The gaps between the bars are 6 inches wide. Each gate bears a lock that automatically engages when the gate is closed. An Engineering or Investigation check, or an examination of the hinges, reveals that jostling a gate could set off mechanisms built into the hinges.

A single key unlocks both gates. The trap is disabled while the key is in either lock.

Spell Solve. *Knock* opens one gate.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Strength check to bend or break a gate's bars, creating a space wide enough to allow passage.
- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to unlock a gate. On a critical success, the creature unlocks the gate, allowing that gate to be opened and closed without triggering a Failure.
- A creature can make an Engineering check to disable the mechanism on one gate, allowing it to be opened and closed without triggering a Failure. On a critical success, the gate is also unlocked.
- A Sleight of Hand check allows a creature to open or close an unlocked gate without triggering a Failure.
- A creature can make an Acrobatics check to contort through the bars.

Critical Failure or Failure. If either gate is open or unlocked, it swings shut and locks.



When a gate closes, a creature within 5 feet of it can make a Strength saving throw. On a failure, the gate closes and locks as usual. On a success, the character prevents the gate from closing this turn, although the trap is still active. A large, sturdy object propped in the gateway also prevents the gate from closing.

Success or Critical Success. The creature succeeds in their attempt.

Ratling-Catcher Trap Variant: Electrified Ratling-Catcher Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 5 (1,800 XP); DC 15/14

On a Failure, in addition to the other effects, electricity courses briefly through the metal gates. Each creature touching either gate (either directly or with a metal object) takes 2 (1d4) lightning damage. On a Critical Failure, the damage increases to 5 (2d4) lightning damage.

Reverse Gravity Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP); DC 15/14

The walls are covered with floor-to-ceiling bookcases. On the ceiling, metal spikes hang down like icicles.

Gravity is reversed in this room. An unsecured creature or object that enters the room triggers a Failure. (Note: If this room contains creatures, they stand on the ceiling.)

Exploration. A Perception check or an examination of the bookshelves reveals that the books are shelved upside down against the tops of their shelves. The ceiling is 30 feet high. The bookshelves look easy to climb.

Books. As an action, a creature can make an Arcana or Investigation check to scan the bookshelves. On a success, the creature notices a spellbook (containing *levitate* or another 2nd-level spell) on a shelf across the room.

Spell Effect. This is a transmutation effect created by a 7th-level spell. A successful *dispel magic* disables the trap.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Athletics or Acrobatics check to climb along the bookcases. The check is made with advantage if the creature is upside down (i.e. right side up relative to the room's gravity).

Critical Failure or Failure. The creature or object falls to the ceiling. Creatures that can levitate or fly don't fall. The room's ceiling is 30 feet high, so a creature that falls from the floor takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage from the fall. A creature that takes falling damage also takes 10 (3d6) piercing damage from the spikes on the ceiling.

Once on the ceiling, a creature can move around the spikes safely but treats the area as difficult terrain.

Success or Critical Success. The creature moves through the room safely until the end of its turn.

Reverse Gravity Trap Variant: Random Gravity Trap

This room is identical in appearance to the Reverse Gravity Trap except that it has an upside-down door on the wall adjoining the ceiling.

Roll initiative. Each round on initiative count 20, gravity reverses direction. Each unsecured creature and object in the room when gravity changes falls up or down, as appropriate. Creatures take falling damage and spike damage when falling up, and falling damage only when falling down. A creature holding onto the bookshelves when gravity reverses must make a Dexterity saving throw or lose its grip.

Once a creature has noticed the location of the spellbook, the next two successful Arcana or Investigation checks reveal the locations of other valuable books, each containing a spell, information, or a Minor Treasure.

Rolling Icosahedron

3rd tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 13 (20,000 XP); **DC** 19/16

At the top of a dais sits a 5-foot-tall, 20-sided stone. Each triangular facet is tiled with a mosaic depicting a crowned humanoid.

If a creature approaches within 30 feet of the stone without swearing allegiance to the ancient empire that crafted it, the stone begins to magically roll of its own accord. Roll initiative. Each round on initiative count 15, the stone takes an action based on the nature of the portrait that is currently uppermost on the stone—smiling, frowning, or shouting. On the stone's first turn, a frowning mosaic portrait is currently uppermost. At the end of each of its turns, roll a d20 to determine what action the stone takes on its next turn.

The stone magically senses the locations of living creatures within 60 feet. The stone moves in straight lines and can move up slopes as steep as 45 degrees. If a creature or object stands between the stone and its destination, the stone collides with the obstacle, dealing 49 (14d6) bludgeoning damage. If this damage reduces the obstacle to 0 hit points, the stone continues its movement. Otherwise, its movement ends for the turn. A creature can make a Strength saving throw to halt the stone's progress without taking damage.

1–5 Shouting Face: The stone moves 60 feet in the direction of the closest creature within 60 feet. When the stone stops moving, it emits a burst of flame. Each creature within 30 feet makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 52 (15d6) fire damage on a failed save or half damage on a success.

6–15 Frowning Face: The stone moves 60 feet in the direction of the closest creature within 60 feet. Each time the stone moves within 5 feet of a creature, that creature must make a Constitution saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) necrotic damage on a failure or half damage on a success.

16–20 Smiling Face: The stone moves 30 feet in the direction of the closest creature within 30 feet. The first time the stone moves within 5 feet

of a creature, it stops moving and emits a blue glow that magically restores 10 (3d6) hit points to that creature. The stone doesn't move again until the next round.

If there are no creatures within 60 feet of the stone at the start of its turn, it moves 60 feet towards its original position. Once at its original location, the trap resets.

Icosahedron. The stone is an icosahedron—a shape with 20 sides. A creature that makes a History check knows that the portraits represent twenty emperors from a long-past empire. On a critical success, the creature remembers that the stone was used to secure palaces against traitors.

The stone is an object with AC 19, 400 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and vulnerability to bludgeoning, force, and thunder damage.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by evocation and transmutation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the icosahedron requires a spellcasting ability check and disables the face that's currently uppermost, dispelling that effect only. For instance, while a shouting portrait is uppermost, *dispel magic* causes any future rolls of 1–5 to have no effect. If the shouting and frowning effects are dispelled, the stone stops moving and the trap is disabled.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Strength check to move the sphere. On a success, the stone is pushed up to 10 feet, and its uppermost face is rerolled as if it had ended its turn.
- A creature can make an Engineering check to create an obstacle. The obstacle's AC and hit points are determined by the objects used to create it.

Critical Failure or Failure. The attempt has no effect.

Success or Critical Success. The attempt is successful.

Sacred Flame Gem Trap

0th tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 2 (900 XP); **DC 14/13**

A marble pedestal heaped with treasure stands in the center of the room. Floating a few inches above the treasure is a fist-sized gem etched with a holy symbol.

A creature that ends its turn within 30 feet of the gem and within line of sight triggers a Critical Failure.

Exploration. A creature that makes an Arcana check suspects that the gem won't fire at creatures not in its line of sight. A creature that makes a Religion check recognizes the deity associated with the gem's holy symbol and knows that the god's followers sometimes use such gems to guard sacred treasures from the unfaithful.

Gem. The gem is sacred to a particular deity and does not fire at creatures visibly wearing that god's holy symbol. Covering the gem (with a bedroll or similar object) prevents the gem from firing. Moving the gem 30 feet away from its pedestal triggers a Critical Success.

Spell Effect. This is an evocation effect created by a 1st-level spell.



Possible Solutions

- The gem is an object with AC 20, 10 hit points, and immunity to piercing, psychic, and poison damage. Attacking the gem without destroying it outright triggers a Failure. Destroying the gem disables the trap.

Critical Failure or Failure. The gem fires a beam of radiant energy at the triggering creature. The creature must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or take 4 (1d8) radiant damage. The target gains no benefit from cover for this saving throw.

Success. The trap is disabled for 1 round. Any Success triggered during this time counts as a Critical Success.

Critical Success. The trap is disabled. The gem magically shrinks and becomes a nonmagical gem worth 100 gp.

Shock Door Trap

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 2 (450 XP); DC 14/13

A copper-handled wooden door is branded with an arcane glyph.

Touching the copper door handle (either directly or with a metal object) triggers a Critical Failure.

Glyph. A creature that makes an Arcana check recognizes that the glyph is a *glyph of warding* that holds a spell (a powerful version of *shocking grasp*).

Handle. The door handle crackles and emits sparks if an object touches it. A creature can turn the handle safely by wrapping it in thick leather or another nonconductive material, or by using *mage hand* or another long-distance method, triggering a Success.

Magical Effect. This is a magical effect created by evocation magic. Casting *dispel magic* on the glyph triggers a Success.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Strength check to force open the door without touching the handle, or an ability check with thieves' or carpenters' tools to remove the door from its hinges.

- A creature can attack the door with a bludgeoning weapon.

Critical Failure or Failure. The triggering creature takes 9 (2d8) lightning damage, and the trap resets.

Success or Critical Success. The creature is not shocked, and the trap is disabled.

Sigil Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 3 (700 XP); DC 14/14

A foot-tall, blue-glowing sigil is engraved on a stone door.

Touching the door triggers a Failure.

Sigil. A creature that makes an Arcana check recognizes the sigil as a symbol for "lightning" and knows how to pronounce the sigil. If a creature fails this Arcana check by 5 or more, they recognize the sigil but their pronunciation of the sigil is incorrect. An examination of the sigil reveals that it crackles with electricity. A creature that makes a History check knows that mages often use sigils to booby-trap their possessions.

A creature that correctly pronounces the sigil disables it for 1 minute. A creature that mispronounces the name of the sigil triggers a Failure.

Spell Effect. This is an evocation effect created by a 3rd-level spell. *Dispel magic* triggers a Critical Success.

Spell Solve. Using magic like *mage hand* to open the door triggers a Success.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make an Arcana or thieves' tools check to disable the sigil.

Critical Failure or Failure. The door blazes with lightning. Each creature within 5 feet of it makes a Dexterity saving throw, taking 14 (4d6) lightning damage on a failure or half damage on a success. The trap is then disabled for 1 minute.

Success. The door can be opened once without triggering the trap.

Critical Success. The trap is permanently disabled.

Sigil Trap Variants: Other Elements

Sigil traps exist that bear sigils with different names and shapes. Each glows a different color and deals a different damage type. For instance, a fire sigil trap glows orange.

Sigil Trap Variant: Sigil Sequence Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 9 (5,000 XP); **DC 17/15**

Instead of a single sigil, the trapped surface is inscribed with a line of three sigils. All three sigils must be disabled separately to disable the trap. When this trap is triggered, it deals 42 (12d6) lightning damage on a failed Dexterity saving throw, or half damage on a success. For each deactivated sigil, the damage is reduced by 14 (4d6). Each creature that fails the saving throw is teleported to a specific location elsewhere in the dungeon. This is a 5th-level evocation effect. Until this trap is completely disabled, it can be used as a permanent teleportation circle by creatures that have seen the sigils.

Snake Hatch

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 2 (450 XP); **DC 14/13**

A 1-foot-tall stone door has no visible means of opening it.

A lever in a different room, possibly the next room the party explores, opens and closes the stone hatch with a grinding sound that's audible for 100 feet. When the hatch opens, a **giant constrictor snake** slips out and begins stealthily hunting. This trap might be triggered by creatures in the next room while the adventurers are near the hatch, or the adventurers might find the lever and release the hungry snake themselves. In either case, they are likely to be its first choice of prey.

The alcove behind the hatch may hold a Minor Treasure.

Hatch Room. An Engineering check in the hatch room, or an examination of the stone hatch, reveals no opening or closing mechanism nearby. A Perception or Survival check in the hatch room, or an examination of the floor, reveals traces of the monster (such as tracks or odd smells) near the hatch.

Forcing open the hatch requires a DC 20 Strength check. It is an object with AC 20, 40 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Blocking the hatch with a heavy object prevents the monster from emerging.

Lever Room. An Engineering check in the lever room, or an examination of the lever, suggests that such levers are often used to operate counterweight doors or similar mechanisms. A creature can make a thieves' tools check to disable the mechanism.

Snake Hatch Variant: Green Slime Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 3 (700 XP); **DC 14/14**

The hatch is on the ceiling. Instead of a snake, the trap holds **green slime**, which drops on a creature directly beneath the hatch.

Snake Hatch Variant: Black Pudding Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP); **DC 15/14**

The trap holds a **black pudding** instead of a snake.



Snake Hatch Variant: Crusher Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP); **DC** 18/15

The hatch is large. The trap holds a **crusher** or **super-mutant rust monster** (*DDG*) instead of a snake.

Snake Hatch Variant: Minotaur Champion Trap

4th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 17 (18,000 XP); **DC** 21/17

The hatch is large. The trap holds a **minotaur champion** or **troll hulk** (*DDG*) instead of a snake. The minotaur champion may be skeletal (see **skeleton**).

Spear Trap

1st tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 1 (200 XP); **DC** 13/13

The wall of the hallway bears a painting of a spear-wielding knight fighting a dragon. In the middle of the knight's chest is a small round hole ringed with painted blood.

A hidden pressure plate is set into the floor beneath the hole. Stepping on the pressure plate triggers a Critical Failure.

Floor. A Perception check or an examination of the floor reveals the pressure plate.

Hole. A creature that investigates the hole at close range may trigger the trap. A bright light shone into the hole reveals a glint of metal. A solid object, like a shield, held in front of the hole takes damage in place of the triggering creature.

Opposite Wall. An examination of the walls reveals a nick in the stone wall opposite the hole.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to disable the pressure plate.

Critical Failure or Failure. A spear juts from the hole, making a melee attack with a +5 bonus against the triggering creature. On a hit, the target takes 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage. On a miss, the spear slams into the opposite wall.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

Spear Trap Variants: Other Spear Traps

Instead of a painting of a knight, the spear trap may be concealed in the following ways:

- A wooden chest is pushed against a wall, below a ragged tapestry depicting a dragon resting on a pile of treasure. (The spear hole is hidden behind the tapestry. The chest contains a Minor Treasure.)
- An otherwise blank wall has a small tube protruding from it. A cork balances on the end of the tube. (The trap can't be triggered if the cork is inserted into the tube. The protruding spear is a magical +1 *spear*, and the trap makes its attack and damage rolls with a +1 bonus. Once the trap is triggered, the spear can be taken.)
- A red circle is painted on the floor. A Perception check or an examination of the ceiling reveals a small hole in the ceiling above the circle. (The spear projects from the hole, targeting any creature standing on the red circle.)

Supercharged Metal Cube

4th tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 16 (30,000 XP); **DC** 21/17

Multiple arcs of lightning connect a 10-foot-tall metal cube to a wall-mounted sword and a brazier.

A creature or metal object that moves within 30 feet of the contraption on its turn or starts its turn there triggers a Failure.

Cube. An Engineering or Investigation check, or an examination of the cube, reveals that it is riveted together. Examining the cube from above reveals a trapdoor on the top face of the cube.

The cube is a nonmagical object with AC 17, 100 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. *Disintegrate* destroys it. Damaging the cube without destroying it outright triggers a Critical Failure.

Lightning. A Perception check, or an examination of the objects connected by arcs of lightning, reveals that all the objects are made of metal. A metal object thrown within 30 feet of the cube becomes connected to the cube by an arc of lightning.

Arcs of lightning can be blocked by non-metal objects. A creature can approach the cube safely if protected by an object made of stone, wood, or similar material that is at least 1 inch thick.

Sword. At the Narrator's discretion, the sword may be a magic weapon, such as a *flame tongue* sword that deals lightning instead of fire damage.

Possible Solutions

- A creature that can get close enough to the cube can attempt a thieves' tools check to remove a panel from the side of the cube. The trapdoor in the top of the cube can be opened without a check. In either case, a floating, glowing mote of elemental lightning is revealed, set into a slot within the cube. Touching the mote (either directly or with a metal object) triggers a Failure. A creature that pries out the mote with a non-conductive object, such as a wooden stake, or that triggers a Failure and succeeds on their saving throw, can remove the mote from the slot. Removing it from the slot disables the trap. Once removed, the mote can be attuned to, in which case it functions as a *wand of lightning bolts*.

Critical Failure. Each creature and metal object within 60 feet of the cube is subjected to a Failure.

Failure. Lightning arcs to the triggering object or creature. If it is an object, it takes no damage but any creature that touches it triggers a failure. If it is a creature, it makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 63 (18d6) lightning damage on a failed save or half damage on a success. Also on a failed save, a creature is pushed 30 feet away from the cube and knocked prone. The lightning does not go around corners.

Success or Critical Success. The trap isn't triggered.

Sword Guardian Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP); **DC** 16/14

A black metal statue stands in the middle of a hallway. The statue depicts a woman with four arms and the lower body of a snake. The statue holds swords in three of her hands; the fourth holds out a basket in your direction.

Stepping on a pressure plate beside the statue or jostling the statue triggers a Failure. A creature must avoid three pressure plates to pass by the statue. The pressure plates are disabled while the basket holds at least 10 pounds of weight.

Floor. An Engineering or Investigation check, or an examination of the floor, reveals that the floor next to and behind the statue is composed of pressure plates. The statue can be approached safely from the front.

Statue. An investigation of the statue reveals that the words "Pay Your Respects" are engraved on the bottom of the basket. A character that makes an Arcana or Religion check recognizes the statue as a marilith, a type of demon. An Investigation check, or an examination of the statue, reveals that the marilith has articulated arms.

The statue is an object with AC 19, 75 hit points, and immunity to cold, lightning, fire, piercing, poison, and psychic damage. Damaging the statue without destroying it outright triggers a Critical Failure.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to disable one pressure plate or one of the statue's arms.
- A creature can make a Strength check to break one pressure plate or one of the statue's arms.

Critical Failure. The statue makes three melee attacks, each with a different arm. Each arm attacks with a +7 bonus, has a reach of 10 feet, and deals 9 (2d8) slashing damage on a hit.

Failure. As a Critical Failure, but only one arm attacks.

Success. One pressure plate or one arm is disabled. Disabling all three pressure plates or arms triggers a Critical Success.
Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

Sword Guardian Variant: Sword Guardian Riddler

The message at the bottom of the sword guardian's basket is a riddle. An appropriate item placed in the basket disables the trap; other items do not.

- "Golden head bearing a crown, golden tail up or down." The trap is disabled if one or more gold coins is placed in the basket.
- "Born in fire, formed in water, polished silver, end in slaughter." The trap is disabled if a weapon made of iron or steel is placed in the basket.

Symbol of Death Trap

3rd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 11 (7,200 XP); **DC** 18/15

A black iron door is engraved with a silver skull.

Words on the door read: "Only my servants shall pass unharmed."

The door is inscribed with a hard-to-spot *symbol of death*. Opening or breaking the door triggers a Failure. The trap isn't triggered if the door is opened by a creature holding a skull, wearing the image of a skull, or even using a mirror to reflect the skull on the door. Other methods, such as disguising oneself as an undead creature, might also allow the door to be opened safely.

Door. The door is iron. A creature that makes an Arcana or Religion check suspects that the door might bear a trap that can be bypassed by creatures that appear to be death's servants.

Glyph. An Investigation check reveals a tiny magical glyph. Once the glyph is discovered, a creature that makes an Arcana or Religion check can identify it as one created by the *symbol* spell.

Spell Effect. This is an abjuration effect created by a 7th-level spell. A *dispel magic* cast on the glyph disables the trap.

Possible Solutions

- Once the glyph is discovered, a creature can make an Arcana or Religion check to disable its magic.

Critical Failure or Failure. The glyph begins to glow, shedding dim light in a 60-foot radius for 10 minutes. A creature that enters the area for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there makes a Constitution saving throw, taking 55 (10d10) necrotic damage on a failed save or half damage on a success. At the end of the 10 minutes, the glyph ceases to glow and the trap is disabled.

Success. The glyph is damaged. Another Success counts as a Critical Success.

Success or Critical Success. The trap is disabled.

Water-Filled Room Trap

2nd tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 8 (7,800 XP); **DC** 17/15

High on each wall is an inanimate gargoyle head with a gaping mouth. The cracks in the walls are green with algae.

If the door to the room closes, it automatically locks. When it does so, water begins gushing from the gargoyles' mouths. Roll initiative. On initiative count 20 and 10, the water level in the room rises 1 foot. Once the water is higher than a creature's height, that creature must swim. After 3 minutes, the room completely fills with water and begins to drain at a rate of 2 feet per round. When the room is completely drained, the door unlocks.

Door. An Engineering or Investigation check, or an examination of the door, reveals that it is fortified with two metal bands, each of which has a separate lock. Experimentation reveals that the locks allow free entry into the room but not out. The door gently closes by itself if not held open. The door has AC 15, 27 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage, and a damage threshold of 15.

Depending on the dungeon's floor plan, there may be other doors in the room, each of which is similarly locked and fortified.

Gargoyles. An Investigation or Perception check, or an examination of the gargoyles, reveals that the gargoyles' tongues are coated with algae. Their throats are spouts that lead into the walls.

Spell Solve. *Knock* unlocks one of the door's two locks. *Water breathing* and similar spells allow creatures to survive the flooded room.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a thieves' tools check to unlock one of the door's two locks. This check is made with disadvantage if the lock is underwater. The lower lock is two feet high and the upper lock is four feet high.
- A creature can make a Strength check to plug a gargoyle's spout with an object.
- A creature that casts a spell that deals cold damage can make a spellcasting ability check to plug a gargoyle's spout with ice.

Critical Failure. A critical failure to pick a lock permanently raises the lock's DC by one. A critical failure to jam a gargoyle's spout causes the spout to crack, raising the DC for that spout by one.

Failure. The attempt fails.

Success. One of the door's locks is picked, or one of the water spouts is jammed until the start of the triggering creature's next turn. When both of the door's locks are unlocked, the door can be opened, pouring water into the nearby rooms and disabling the trap. While one vent is plugged, the water level doesn't rise on initiative count 10. While all four are plugged, the water doesn't rise on initiative count 20 or 10.

Critical Success. The creature picks both the door's locks or permanently jams one of the water spouts.

Water-Filled Room Trap Variant: Water-Filled Dungeon Trap

3rd tier (elite constructed trap)

Challenge 15 (26,000 XP); **DC** 20/16

This variant is best used on the bottom floor of a multi-level dungeon. This room's doors aren't waterproof and don't lock: ignore all text about locks. When the water level rises, it rises for the entire dungeon instead of merely inside the room, starting at the bottom of the dungeon and rising until the entire dungeon is submerged. When placing this trap, make sure that escape is possible for adventurers—and decide what happens to dungeon denizens that can't breathe water!

Wind Tunnel Trap

0th tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 1 (200 XP); **DC** 13/13

Wind roars down a passage.

A creature or object that enters the passage for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there must succeed on a Strength saving throw or trigger a Failure. Movement against the direction of the wind requires a Strength check (see Possible Solutions).

Additionally, ranged weapon attacks can't be made against the direction of the wind, open flames in the tunnel are extinguished, and fogs and gases are dispersed.

A wind tunnel trap can also be used underwater to represent a strong current.

Wind. The wind is loud and can be heard for 100 feet.

Spell Solve. A *gust of wind* cast against the direction of the wind reduces the number of feet the wind tunnel pushes creatures and objects by 15 feet. Teleportation allows the wind wall to be bypassed.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Strength check to move against the wind. This check is made with advantage if the creature can find handholds or otherwise secure itself as it goes.

Critical Failure. If the target is an object, it is pushed 30 feet in the direction of the wind. If the target is a creature, it must make a Strength saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 3 (1d6) cold damage, is pushed 30 feet in the direction of the wind, and is unable to move against the wind until the start of its next turn.

Failure. As a Critical Failure, but the creature doesn't take cold damage.

Success. The creature is not pushed and can move against the wind without making a Strength check until the end of its turn, spending 2 feet of movement for each foot of movement.

Critical Success. As a Critical Success, but the creature does not need to spend additional movement to move against the wind.

Wind Tunnel Trap Variant: Howling Wind Tunnel Trap

Challenge 15 (13,000 XP); **DC** 20/16

On a Critical Failure, the creature takes 52 (15d6) cold damage instead of 3 (1d6) cold damage.

Yellow Mold Trap

2nd tier (constructed trap)

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP); **DC** 16/14

A yellow-gold skeleton slumps atop a mottled, yellow-gold throne.

The skeleton and throne are covered with **yellow mold**. A creature that moves within 30 feet, or disturbs the skeleton or throne, triggers a Failure.

Exploration. An Investigation or Survival check, or an examination of the skeleton or throne, reveals that both appear to be covered with a furry, yellow mold. A Perception check reveals a musty smell and tiny yellow spores floating in the air. A creature that makes an Arcana or Nature check identifies the substance as yellow mold.

An examination of the skeleton reveals that it clutches a mold-covered object. The object might be an art object, like a crown worth 750 gp, or a Minor Treasure.

Spell Solve. Sunlight or fire damage destroys the yellow mold.

Possible Solutions

- A creature can make a Stealth check to move through the area without triggering a Failure.
- A creature can make a Sleight of Hand check to take the object held by the skeleton without triggering a Failure.

Critical Failure. As a Failure, but the triggering creature automatically fails the saving throw against the yellow mold.

Failure. The creature must make a Constitution saving throw against the effects of yellow mold (see *Trials & Treasures*, chapter 3).

Success or Critical Success. The yellow mold isn't disturbed.

Random Dungeon Delves

This section contains random dungeon generators, each of which lets you map and stock a complete dungeon of any size. Each generator is themed around a common type of dungeon locale: **bastion**, **cavern**, **laboratory**, **mine**, **ruin**, **sewer**, **temple**, and **tomb**.

You can use each of these generators to produce a dungeon map of rooms and passages, populated with novelties, obstacles, discoveries, and specific room details, as well as level-appropriate combat and noncombat encounters and treasure.

These generators are intended to inspire you: once they've done so, feel free to follow your inspiration and not the printed instructions! You might use a generator only to help you create a random map and ignore the rest. Conversely, if you already have a map you want to use, you can skip the map generation process, instead rolling on the Passage Contents and Room and Chamber Contents tables for each dungeon location. Or you can browse through the entries, cherry-picking your favorites to add the finishing touches to a dungeon of your own creation.

An Interconnected Locale

A dungeon is a **locale**, more similar to a small town or village than a forest or city. The inhabitants of a dungeon are likely to have relationships with each other and with their shared environment. The goblins on the west side of the ruin have probably heard rumors of the big wall of fire on the east side, even if they don't know what's beyond it.

We've tried to build this sense of connection in our random dungeon locales in a few ways.

Guards and Overlords. In each random dungeon generator, at least one monster entry has a relationship with other monsters in the dungeon (for instance, it's patrolling on behalf of, or rebelling against, the dungeon's overlord).

Locks and Keys. In each random dungeon generator, the Obstacles table contains specific **locks** (either literal or figurative). Each lock description comes with a matching **key**. Place it in a different part of the dungeon, wherever it makes sense. Similarly, each Discoveries table contains a Keys

entry; its matching lock should be elsewhere in the dungeon. If you randomly generate a Lock and then a Key, or vice versa, make them match.

But the most powerful tool for making a dungeon come to life is **customization!** As Narrator, you can decide that a particular monster is aware of another creature in the dungeon. You can even connect an encounter to an existing story thread in your campaign.

How to Generate a Map

As Narrator, you can plan out the dungeon ahead of time or generate it on the fly and learn the emergent story at the same time as the adventurers.

Each dungeon type has a node size, and each node contains either a room or a passage. For instance, each area of a bastion is 50 by 50 feet. If you generate a straight passage, it is 50 feet long. If you generate a room that isn't big enough to fill up the entire node, place it wherever you want in the node; the rest of the node is filled with solid stone, with passageways through the stone for each of its exits.

In order to make a coherent dungeon, you will need to overrule the dice at times:

- When you generate an area adjacent to an already-generated area, ignore what the generator says about exits in that direction. If you already know there's an exit, there's an exit.
- When you generate a room exit that would leave the bounds of the dungeon, you can either ignore it or use it as a dungeon exit.
- If you generate a passage that connects to an existing one, the new passage has the same width as the old one.
- When you complete a dungeon level by placing a dead end or a room with no exits, leaving no remaining areas to explore, check whether you've already placed either a major encounter or stairs to another floor. If not, then place an encounter or stairs in this node.
- Don't randomly generate exits if the room's exits have already been determined by Obstacles, Set Pieces, etc.

Bastion

From underground lairs to mighty castles, bastions are well-defended homes inhabited by creatures worried about attacks from the outside world. A bastion usually contains barracks, food preparation and storage areas, and a throne room or other command center.

Tiers. Tier 0 and 1 bastions are usually bandit lairs. Tier 2 and higher bastions are frequently the mighty castles of rulers and conquerors.

Bastion Size. Each 50-foot-square node of a bastion contains either a room or passage. A small bastion is about 150 feet square (a 3 × 3 grid of nodes); a medium one is 250 feet square (a 5 × 5 grid); and a large one is 350 feet square (a 7 × 7 grid).

Alert. After each of the first 3 encounters, one additional creature is added to each future encounter. The extra creature is of the encounter's lowest-CR type.

Creating a Bastion

To generate a new map, roll on the Description table for the initial area and follow its instructions, and then do so again to see what's past each exit, and so on. If you're filling a premade map, roll on Inhabitants and Contents for each location.

Bastion: Description

1	Narrow passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d6: 1–2 2 1/2 ft. 3–6 5 ft.
2–7	Passage. 10 feet wide. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits.
8	Wide passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d4: 1 15 ft. 2–3 20 ft. 4 30 ft.
9–14	Small room. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For room size, roll 1d4: 1 15 × 15 ft. 2 15 × 20 ft. 3 20 × 20 ft. 4 20 × 30 ft.

15–20	Large chamber. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For chamber size, roll 1d6: 1 30 × 30 ft. 2 30 × 40 ft. 3 40 × 40 ft. 4 50 × 50 ft.
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Bastion: Passage Contents

1–10	Empty
11–14	Roll on Passage Scenery
15–18	Roll on Escalations
19–20	Roll on Obstacles

Bastion: Room and Chamber Contents

Roll 1d20 in small room, 1d20 + 2 in large chamber

1–3	Empty
4–8	Roll on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
9–11	Roll on Novelties
12–14	Roll on Obstacles
15–16	Roll on Discoveries
17–19	Roll on Escalations and on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
20+	Roll on Set Pieces

Bastion: Exits

If the die roll is odd, a room's exits are blocked by doors. Otherwise, they are open.

1–3	No exits
4–5	One exit left
6–7	One exit straight
8–9	One exit right
10–11	Two exits, left and right
12–13	Two exits, left and straight
14–15	Two exits, straight and right
16–18	Three exits, left, straight, and right
19–20	Stairs. Roll 1d8 to determine stair type. Then roll again on this table for other exits 1–2 Stone stairs down 3 Stone spiral staircase down 4 Trapdoor down (50 percent chance concealed under rug or furniture) 5 Ladder up or down (50 percent chance each) 6 Stone spiral staircase up 7 Trapdoor up 8 Stairs going 1d4 levels up and 1d4 levels down

Bastion: Novelties

- 1 Cannon; nearby are cannonballs and barrels of powder
- 2 Magic wall map of the area around the stronghold, identifying the locations of any non-hidden creatures
- 3 Arched bridge leading to an iron door halfway up a wall
- 4 Immense, monstrous statues on either side of a door
- 5 Drawbridge made of *wall of force*
- 6 Miniature model of this fortress, populated by tiny illusions of its inhabitants
- 7 Beast heads mounted on the wall; although bodiless, they are alive and can bite
- 8 A marble table around which sit the spirits of dead warriors re-enacting an ancient feast
- 9 Hundreds of life-sized, sculpted warriors standing in battle array
- 10 A war banner 20 or 30 feet on a side
- 11 Portrait gallery; each portrait enchanted with a permanent *magic mouth*
- 12 Narrow shafts that carry sound; perfect for eavesdropping or communicating between distant chambers

Bastion: Obstacles

- 1 **Lock:** A door that demands today's password. **Key:** A list of passwords, each next to a day of the week
- 2 **Lock:** A door bearing a family crest. **Key:** A key bearing the crest
- 3 **Lock:** A door with an indentation in the shape of a gauntlet. **Key:** A gold-plated gauntlet
- 4 **Lock:** Huge door with 7 locks. **Keys:** A keyring with 7 keys
- 5 Locked wardrobe. Inside the wardrobe is a concealed door
- 6 *Arcane locked* door bearing a bronze face that changes its facial expression every minute. The door is unlocked to any creature imitating the expression
- 7 A bricked-up door, requiring a DC 16 Strength check to smash. Nearby is a secret door in a fireplace that bypasses the door
- 8 Door concealed behind a full-length mirror leaning against the wall. The edges of the mirror are covered with fingerprints as if it is often moved
- 9 Door on a balcony high up the wall. The ladder to the balcony is missing



- 10 Mounted bronze deer head, dull except for one shiny antler. Turning the antler opens a secret door
- 11 Throne room; pressing a button on the throne's right armrest opens a **hidden pit trap**, pressing the left button opens a secret door
- 12 Only the (harmless) ghost of the bastion's former seneschal knows the location of a secret door
- 13–20 Trap based on the dungeon level: level 1–2 **crossbow trap** or **lock trap**; 3–4 **falling axe trap** or **locking-lidded pit trap**; 5–10 **ballista trap** or **spiked pit trap**; 11–16 **crushing room trap** or **green dragon poison gas trap**; 17–20 **cannon trap** or **supercharged metal cube**

Bastion: Discoveries

- 1–4 Roll 1d4 on the Obstacles table. You find the key listed in that entry. Make a note of the matching lock. The next Obstacle encountered is that lock
- 5 Lone creature from a guard patrol (roll 1d4 on Escalations table), not particularly loyal and willing to talk
- 6 Guard patrol (roll 1d4 on Escalations table), dissatisfied with their commander and willing to turn a blind eye or even aid intruders
- 7 Guard patrol (roll 1d4 on Escalations table), exchanging revealing gossip about their commander and not paying attention to surroundings
- 8 Messenger with urgent news
- 9 An armory containing ranged weapons, ammunition, and ballistas. A dozen *+1 arrows*. 50 percent chance of a *javelin of lightning* or other Minor Treasure
- 10 A richly furnished bed chamber containing a four-poster bed, a desk, wardrobes, and treasure chests containing a Treasure Hoard
- 11 A chest containing officers' armor and uniforms
- 12 Treasure vault filled with several splintered chests and one locked iron chest containing a Treasure Hoard

Bastion: Escalations

50 percent of guards possess a Minor Treasure.

- 1 Guards: on patrol. If they meet creatures not dressed as guards, they sound the alarm and attack
 - Level 1–2: **noble** with 1d4 **guards**
 - Level 3–4: 2d4 **hobgoblins** or **soldiers**
 - Level 5–10: **knight** with **acolyte** and 2d4 **soldiers**
 - Level 11–16: **blackguard** or **holy knight** with **priest** and **soldier squad**; 2 **gladiators** with **mage**
 - Level 17–20: **ascetic grand master** or **knight captain** with **soldier squad**; **archmage** with **gladiator** and 1d6 **thugs**
- 2 Guards: off duty but alert
 - Level 1–2: 2d4 **bandits** or **warriors**
 - Level 3–4: **veteran** with 2d4 **bandits**
 - Level 5–10: **duelist** with **apprentice mage** and 1d4 **thugs**; 2 or 3 **veterans**
 - Level 11–16: **gladiator** or **high priest** with 2 or 3 **veterans**
 - Level 17–20: **assassin** or **mage** with 2d6 **cutthroats** or **spies**
- 3 Guards: guarding a particular location
 - Level 1–2: 1d8 **guards** or **kobolds**
 - Level 3–4: 1 or 2 **bugbears** with 2d4 **goblins**
 - Level 5–10: **ogre** or **warhordling orc eye** with 1d4 **orc urks** or **thugs**
 - Level 11–16: **frost giant** with 1 or 2 **ettins**
 - Level 17–20: **marilith** or **minotaur champion** with 2d6 **guards** or **warriors**
- 4 Inhabitants: planning to ambush a different inhabitant, perhaps a group of guards or the local overlord (roll or choose from Set Pieces). They may be disloyal, ambitious, or looking to exact revenge for a past betrayal
 - Level 1–2: **apprentice mage** or **thug** with 1d4 **bandits**
 - Level 3–4: **priest** with 1d4 **guards** or **soldiers**
 - Level 5–10: **cambion** with 1d4 **thugs**
 - Level 11–16: **vampire mage**, **vampire**, or **wraith lord**
 - Level 17–20: **archpriest** with **skeleton horde** or **water elemental**

- 5** Guardians: guarding a location
 Level 1–2: **animated armor**
 Level 3–4: **rug of smothering** with **gargoyle**
 Level 5–10: 2 or 3 **mummies** or **walking statues**
 Level 11–16: **chain devil** with 1 or 2 **mummies** or **walking statues**
 Level 17–20: 2 **chain devils**, **clay guardians**, or **giant elementals**
- 6** Guardians: following instructions
 Level 1–2: **gargoyle** or **hound guardian**
 Level 3–4: 1 or 2 **bolt-throwers** or **ogre zombies**
 Level 5–10: 1 or 2 **clockwork sentinels** or **fire elementals**
 Level 11–16: **iron guardian** or **nalfeshnee**
 Level 17–20: 2 **crushers**, **glabrezus**, or **stone guardians**
- 7–10** Roll 1d6 on this table to determine an encounter group. The group is nearby (in the nearest unexplored room) and may be detected by tracks, noises, flickering torchlight, or other signs

Bastion: Set Pieces

Set piece encounters usually feature a Treasure Hoard.

- 1–2** **Raiders' Lair.** The area is home to a well-guarded settlement or camp. The bastion's denizens may raid nearby areas for food and treasure or merely defend themselves against outside threats.
 Level 1–2: **goblin boss** with **goblin warlock** and 3 or 4 **goblins**; 4 or 5 **hobgoblins**
 Level 3–4: **bandit captain** with 2 **thugs** and 2d6 **bandits**
 Level 5–10: **gladiator** or **warhordling war chief** with 1d6 + 1 **berserkers**
 Level 11–16: **hill giant chief** with **cave bear** and 1d4 + 1 **hill giants**; 3 **frost giants**
 Level 17–20: **troll hulk** (DDG) with 4 or 5 **trolls**
Setting: The room features a large drum, gong, bugle, or other loud instrument. If combat starts, a creature tries to sound the alarm, summoning a guard patrol (choose one from Escalations).
- 3–4** **Army Headquarters.** The inhabitants are part of an organized military, either defending a fortification or prison or preparing to conquer the local countryside.
 Level 1–2: **scout** or **soldier** with 2d4 **guards**
 Level 3–4: **hobgoblin captain**, **knight**, or **veteran** with 1d4 + 4 **hobgoblins** or **soldiers**

Level 5–10: **blackguard**, **cambion**, or **holy knight** with **priest** and 1d4 **knights**

Level 11–16: **archmage** or **knight captain** with **mage** and 1d4 **knights**

Level 17–20: **blademaster** with 3 **gladiators** or **holy knights**; **archmage** with 5 **gladiators**

Setting: Ladders lead to balconies or ledges. If the alarm has been sounded, creatures with ranged attacks are up high.

- 5–6** **War Caster.** A spellcaster commands an army. Their eyes are fixed on conquest.

Level 1–2: **priest** with 1d8 **guards**

Level 3–4: **minstrel** or **priest** with 1d6 **thugs**

Level 5–10: **mage** or **necromancer** with **soldier squad** or **wraith**

Level 11–16: **archmage** with 3 or 4 **elementals**

Level 17–20: **archpriest** or **blademaster** with 3 or 4 **champion warriors** or **gladiators**

Setting: This lair features an exit concealed behind a throne, tapestry, or other room feature. Besides their other spells, the primary spellcaster has prepared either *expeditious retreat* or *sanctuary* to escape.

- 7–8** Prison cells contain friendly creatures that could aid the adventurers if freed.

Bastion: Minor Treasure

- 1** +1 *weapon* that glows like a torch when wielded
- 2** Magically animated playing cards; the face cards trash talk each other during games
- 3** Bundle of 12 pieces of +1 *ammunition* that ignite when fired, dealing an additional 1d6 fire damage
- 4** *Spell scroll* containing a spell appropriate to the area's tier (tier 0: cantrip or level 1 spell, tier 1: level 2–3 spell, tier 2: level 4–5 spell, tier 3: level 6–7, tier 4: level 8–9)
- 5–6** Bag of coins or cache of rare wine worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 10 gp, tier 1: 100 gp, tier 2: 1,000 gp, tier 3: 10,000 gp, tier 4: 100,000 gp)
- 7** 1d6 vials. Roll 1d6: 1–3 *potions of healing*, 5–6 *potions of greater healing*
- 8** Cup, ewer, or drinking horn of precious metal, worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 25 gp, tier 1: 75 gp, tier 2: 750 gp, tier 3: 2,500 gp, tier 4: 25,000 gp)
- 9** A dozen masterwork weapons or shields, worth 150 gp each
- 10** Signed order from the bastion's commander allowing free entry

Bastion: Treasure Hoards

Dungeon Level 1–2

Valuables: 1d4 × 100 gp worth of silver and gold coins
 Magic (30 percent chance): *+1 weapon or gauntlets of ogre power*

Dungeon Level 3–4

Valuables: 2d4 × 100 gp worth of gold coins or trade goods
 Magic (40 percent chance): *armor of resistance or berserker axe*

Dungeon Level 5–10

Valuables: 1d6 × 1,000 gp worth of gold coins or gems
 Magic (50 percent chance): *+2 weapon or bracers of defense*

Dungeon Level 11–16

Valuables: 1d4 × 10,000 gp worth of platinum coins or gems
 Magic (60 percent chance): *+2 shield or rod of rulership*

Dungeon Level 17–20

Valuables: 1d4 × 100,000 gp worth of gold coins, gems, or jewelry
 Magic (70 percent chance): *+2 armor or belt of storm giant strength*

Bastion: Passage Scenery

- 1 Dusty suit of armor or mounted monster head
- 2 Weapons crossed on the wall
- 3 Racks or barrels hold spare weapons and ammunition
- 4 Three camp stools gathered around a small table
- 5 Tapestries line the walls
- 6 Brackets hold unlit torches
- 7 Pushed into a corner is an archery target bristling with arrows
- 8 A shrine or statue of a war god

Bastion: Small Room Scenery

- 1 Tables bearing candles and decks of cards are scattered around the room
- 2 Armory containing spears, shortswords, crossbows, and light armor. 50 percent chance of holy water, acid, alchemist's fire, or caltrops
- 3 Elegant dining room for six or so guests. Table settings are worth 200 gp. Two bottles of vintage wine, worth 50 gp each, stand on a side table
- 4 Barracks with neatly made beds, weapon racks, and a table heaped with armor, game boards, and personal possessions

- 5 Comfortable barracks used by high-level guardians. On the walls are weapon racks, armor stands, paintings, and a full-length mirror
- 6 A shrine on which are laid fresh offerings
- 7 A guardroom containing benches and tables, cards and game boards, wine jugs and plates of half-eaten food
- 8 A small kitchen containing a fireplace, wine ready to mull, cheeses, and barrels of biscuits
- 9 A pantry stocked with flour and beans and hung with herbs
- 10 A library containing works of strategy and history, as well as atlases and sheafs of papers
- 11 A latrine: the smelly privy may lead down to a lower level
- 12 A locked room containing spy holes that let you see what's happening in adjoining areas

Bastion: Large Chamber Scenery

- 1 A comfortable lounge with couches, overstuffed chairs, bookshelves, and a wine bar
- 2 An armory containing plate armor, chain mail, horse barding, and swords
- 3 Audience chamber or throne room. Columns or martial statues line the walls
- 4 A banquet hall with a huge central table stacked with drinking horns and platters
- 5 A mess hall for servants or soldiers. Rows of tables and chairs are set with clay bowls
- 6 A guardroom decorated with war banners and shields. Several round tables are littered with candles, card decks, and empty bottles
- 7 A kitchen; a cauldron of soup simmers inside a blazing fireplace
- 8 A store room containing barrels of foodstuffs and crates of weapons
- 9 A training room with target dummies. The floor is strewn with armor and weapons, and several cracked mirrors line one wall
- 10 A prison containing several prisoners manacled to a wall
- 11 A ballroom with a balcony accessible by a rickety staircase. On the balcony are dozens of instruments
- 12 A crypt containing stone caskets

Cavern

Under the earth lie twisting passages, vast caverns, and underground rivers, all cloaked in endless darkness. The environment itself can be just as dangerous as its inhabitants.

This generator lets you map a cave system. For Underland travel, see Underland Realm in *Trials & Treasures*.

Tiers. Tier 0 and 1 adventurers measure themselves against natural caves and caverns. Tier 2 and 3 adventurers delve deeper, into Underland itself.

Cavern Size. Each 70-foot-square node of a cavern contains either a cavern or a section of passage. A small cavern system is about 210 feet square (a 3 × 3 grid of nodes); a medium temple is 350 feet square (a 5 × 5 grid); and a large one is 490 feet square (a 7 × 7 grid). Underland is a vast megadungeon in which a single cavern system can extend for miles.

Treacherous Terrain. Naturally occurring caves are often slippery and riddled with pits and stony outcroppings. Whenever a creature uses the Dash action, it must make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw at the end of its turn, falling prone on a failure.

Creating a Cavern

To generate a new map, roll on the Description table for the initial area and follow its instructions, and then do so again to see what's past each exit, and so on. If you're filling a premade map, roll on Inhabitants and Contents for each location.

Cavern: Description

1–2	Narrow passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. At its narrowest, the passage is 1d6 + 1 feet wide.
3–6	Passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. The passage is about 10 feet wide.
7–8	Wide passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. At its narrowest, the passage is 1d20 + 10 feet wide.
9–14	Small cavern. Roll on Cavern Contents and Exits. For approximate cavern size, roll 1d6:
1	10 × 10 ft.
2	15 × 15 ft.
3	15 × 20 ft.
4–5	20 × 20 ft.
6	20 × 30 ft.

15–20 **Large cavern.** Roll on Cavern Contents and Exits. For approximate cavern size, roll 1d8:

1	30 × 30 ft.
2	30 × 40 ft.
3	40 × 40 ft.
4	40 × 50 ft.
5	50 × 50 ft.
6	50 × 60 ft.
7	60 × 60 ft.
8	70 × 70 ft.

Cavern: Passage Contents

1–10	Empty
11–14	Roll on Passage Scenery
15–18	Roll on Escalations
19–20	Roll on Obstacles

Cavern: Cavern Contents

Roll 1d20 in small cavern, 1d20 + 2 in large cavern.

1–3	Empty
4–8	Roll on Small or Large Cavern Scenery
9–11	Roll on Novelties
12–14	Roll on Obstacles
15–16	Roll on Discoveries
17–19	Roll on Escalations and on Small or Large Cavern Scenery
20+	Roll on Set Pieces

Cavern: Exits

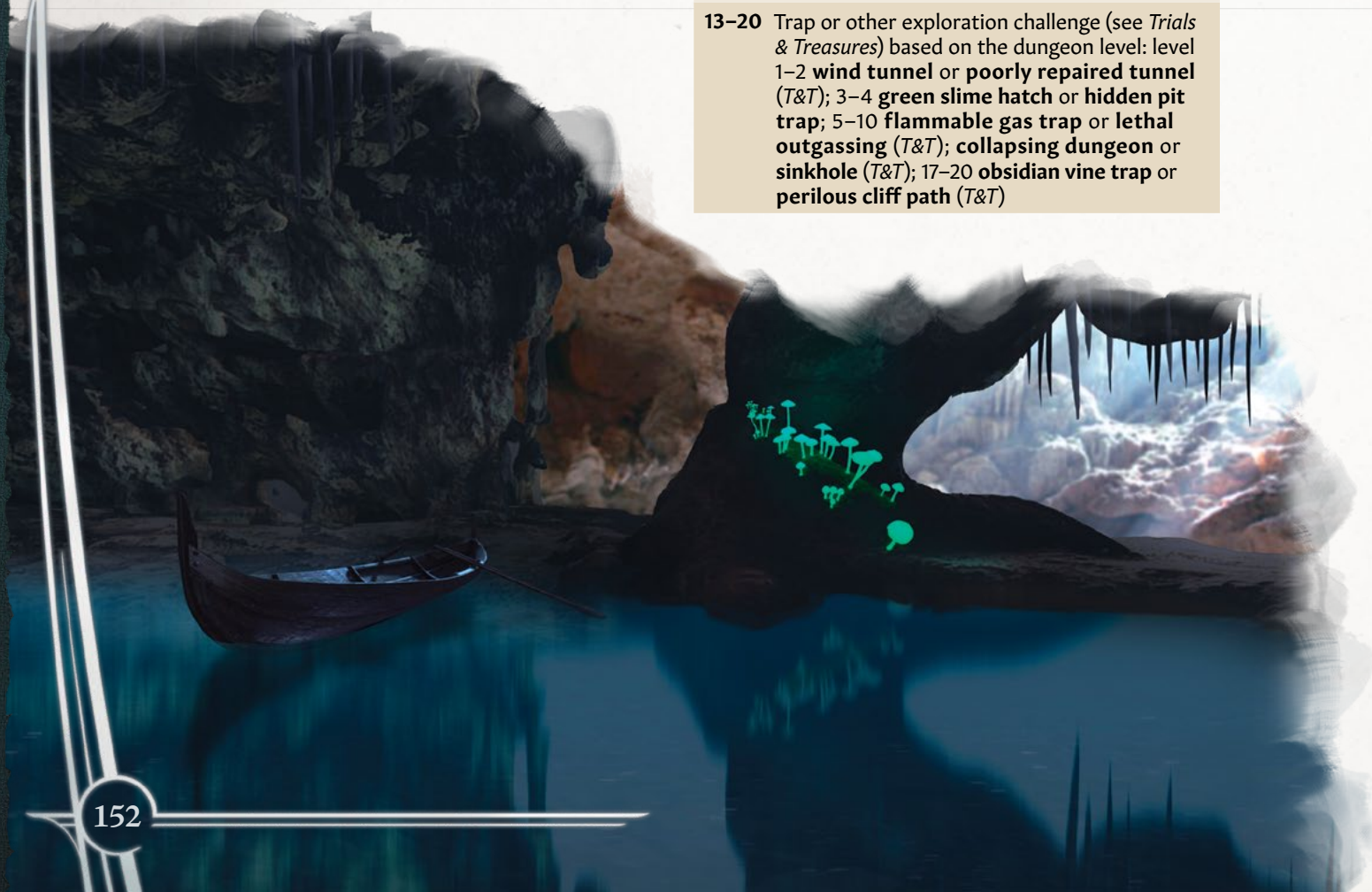
1–3	No exits
4–5	One exit left
6–7	One exit straight
8–9	One exit right
10–11	Two exits, left and right
12–13	Two exits, left and straight
14–15	Two exits, straight and right
16–18	Three exits, left, straight, and right
19–20	Ascent or descent. Roll 1d8. Then roll again on this table for other exits.
1	Sloping passage down
2–3	Vertical climb down
4	Vertical passage descending 1d4 levels
5–6	Vertical climb up

Cavern: Novelties

- 1 Crystals or mushrooms that cast dim light cover the walls
- 2 Stalactites and stalagmites made of transparent or invisible stone fill the area
- 3 Rocks are coated with a reflective metal or algae that turns surfaces into distorted mirrors
- 4 Natural, fluted stone pillars support high ceilings, giving the area the appearance of a temple
- 5 An island sits in the middle of a lake of magma, silvery water, or ice
- 6 A grove of trees or giant mushrooms
- 7 Cavern spanned by multiple, naturally-occurring stone bridges
- 8 Tiers of towers, gates, doors, statues, and stairs are carved into the sloping rock walls
- 9 A shield-sized crystal embedded in the ceiling sheds bright light throughout the area
- 10 A chasm spanned by a narrow bridge or flat-topped pillars like stepping stones

Cavern: Obstacles

- 1 **Lock:** Narrow passage, 3 inches wide, carved with the words "Gates of Gathor."
Key: A written command phrase, "Gates of Gathor, open the door," which causes the passage to grind open to a width of 10 feet
- 2 **Lock:** Passage choked with petrified fungus.
Key: A nest of mouselike fungus creatures that eat petrified fungus
- 3–4 **Tight squeeze:** at its narrowest, the passage is $1d12 + 10$ inches wide
- 5–6 **Collapsed ceiling:** An exit is blocked by $1d6 + 4$ feet of rubble. The rubble can be excavated as if it were dirt (see Tunneling, chapter 3)
- 7–8 **Chasm:** The chasm is $1d20 + 10$ feet wide and more than twice as deep. At the bottom may be magma, an underground river, or another dungeon level
- 9–10 **Underwater area:** The exit to an adjoining area is through a flooded passage that is $1d6 \times 10$ feet long. The adjoining area may be partially or fully underwater
- 11 **Fast-flowing underground river:** The river is $1d10 + 10$ feet wide. A creature that starts its turn in the river moves 60 feet downstream. The river may lead to rapids
- 12 **Magma:** A 10- or 15-foot-wide stream of magma blocks the way
- 13–20 **Trap or other exploration challenge** (see *Trials & Treasures*) based on the dungeon level: level 1–2 **wind tunnel** or **poorly repaired tunnel** (T&T); 3–4 **green slime hatch** or **hidden pit trap**; 5–10 **flammable gas trap** or **lethal outgassing** (T&T); **collapsing dungeon** or **sinkhole** (T&T); 17–20 **obsidian vine trap** or **perilous cliff path** (T&T)



Cavern: Discoveries

1	The key listed in entry 1 of the Obstacles table
2	The key listed in entry 2 of the Obstacles table
3	Pool of water containing 1d4 + 4 large, edible fish
4	Pool of glowing water fed by a dripping stalactite. Drinkers gain blindsight out to a range of 60 feet for 24 hours. The water ceases to glow and loses its potency 1 minute after being removed from the pool
5–6	1d6 fragrant mushrooms. If eaten, roll 1d4 to determine their effect. The mushrooms lose their potency 1 hour after being harvested <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 For 5 days, the creature gains the plant type, gains blindsight to a distance of 10 feet, and doesn't need to eat 2 The creature gains 3 temporary hit points per character level. While it has these temporary hit points, it has advantage on Perception checks that rely on smell 3 The creature gains telepathy out to a distance of 120 feet until it finishes a long rest 4 The creature gains the benefit of the <i>detect magic</i> spell until it finishes a long rest
7	Cache of supplies containing useful equipment and an incomplete map
8	Corpse; among its possessions is a journal listing either the name of a powerful dungeon creature (see Set Pieces) or one of the treasures it guards (see Treasure Hoards)
9	Lone creature from a guard patrol (1 or 2 on Escalations table), not particularly loyal and willing to talk
10	Guard patrol (1 or 2 on Escalations table) escorting a prisoner; the prisoner offers aid or information to its rescuers
11	Ore vein. If mined and smelted over several weeks, the vein produces 100 pounds of metal. The type of metal varies by dungeon level: 1–2 copper, 3–4 silver, 5–10 gold, 11–16 platinum, 17–20 mithral or adamantine
12	Vein of gems. 1d10 gems can be collected without mining. If mined for several weeks, the vein produces a maximum of 50 more gems. The type of gem varies by dungeon level: 1–4 10 gp gem such as quartz, 5–10 100 gp gem such as garnet, 11–16 1,000 gp gem such as sapphire, 17–20 5,000 gp gem such as ruby

Cavern: Escalations

50 percent of guards possess a Minor Treasure.

1	Guards: may attack intruders who don't immediately show peaceful intent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1–2: 1d4 goblins Level 3–4: reivilock with 1d4 grimlock technicals; 2 ogres Level 5–10: dread troll, ogre mage, or fire giant Level 11–16: minotaur champion; 2 fire giants Level 17–20: stone giant with 2 hill giants
2	Guards: guarding a particular location <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1–2: 1 or 2 troglodytes Level 3–4: kobold broodguard with 2d6 kobolds; 3 or 4 bugbears Level 5–10: shadow elf champion warrior with 2d8 shadow elf warriors; 1d4 + 5 azers Level 11–16: driider, shadow elf high priest, or shadow elf mage with 2 shadow elf champion warriors; 2 driders Level 17–20: 2 cyclops myrmidons or cloud giants
3	Guardians: hunting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1–2: 1d4 swarms of bats or swarms of rats Level 3–4: black pudding Level 5–10: bulette or slime mold (DDG) Level 11–16: giant grick with 3 or 4 gricks; 2 purple worms Level 17–20: mutant rust monster (DDG) and supermutant rust monster (DDG)
4	Guardians: in lair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1–2: 1d4 giant bats or giant centipedes Level 3–4: 1 or 2 mimics or wallflowers Level 5–10: 2 or 3 euphoria jellies (DDG) or flash cubes (DDG) Level 11–16: roper with 1d6 + 6 piercers Level 17–20: 2 cloakers
5	Guardians: wandering <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Level 1–2: 1 or 2 gray oozes, rust monsters or violet fungi Level 3–4: 1 or 2 cave bears or dire centipedes Level 5–10: 2 stone sharks Level 11–16: purple worm Level 17–20: murmuring worm with otyugh; 2 cloakers

- 6** Denizens: warring against, or hiding from, local overlord (roll or choose from Set Pieces)
 Level 1–2: 1d4 **flumphs** or **kobolds**
 Level 3–4: **priest** with 1d4 **deep dwarf soldiers**, **deep gnome scouts**, or **scouts**
 Level 5–10: 1 or 2 **xorn**
 Level 11–16: 2 **champion warriors** with 2d10 **warriors**; 2 **gladiators** with **mage**
 Level 17–20: 2 **fomorians**

- 7–10** Roll 1d6 on this table to determine an encounter group. The group is nearby (in the nearest unexplored room) and may be detected by tracks, noises, flickering torchlight, or other signs

Cavern: Set Pieces

Set piece encounters usually feature a treasure hoard.

- 1–2** **Hail the Conquering Villains.** A raiding party has captured the residents of a rival settlement. They mean to exile, sacrifice, or even pit the captives against each other in gladiatorial games—and they'll do the same to meddling adventurers.
 Level 1–2: **kobold broodguard** with 1d4 + 4 **kobolds**; **bugbear** with 1d4 **hobgoblins**
 Level 3–4: **bandit captain** with **dire wolf** and 1d8 + 8 **bandits**
 Level 5–10: **shadow elf champion warrior** with 20 **shadow elf warriors** and either **shadow elf mage** or **high priest**; 3 **salamanders** with 4 **azers**
 Level 11–16: **minotaur champion** with **gorgon** and 3 **minotaurs**; **storm giant** with 2 **frost giants** and 2 **ogres**
 Level 17–20: **ancient sapphire dragon** with 4 **kobold broodguards** and 20 **kobolds**; **ancient red dragon** with 2 **half-red dragon veterans** and 20 **kobolds**
Setting: The chamber contains cages of prisoners. Releasing all the prisoners distracts the enemy combatants with the lowest CR, removing them from the battle.
- 3–4** **Exile.** A powerful champion was exiled from its kind. Without allies, it considers every creature to be its enemy—or its prey. It might grant a few moments of life to creatures that offer it a way to hurt the creatures that exiled it.

- Level 1–2: **cave ogre**; **ogre**
 Level 3–4: **hobgoblin warlord**; **troll**
 Level 5–10: **deva**
 Level 11–16: **troll king** (*DDG*)
 Level 17–20: **empyrean**; **King Fomor**

Setting: In other areas of the dungeon are groups of the creatures that exiled the creature (for instance, ogres in a level 1 or 2 dungeon). These creatures might join adventurers against the exile, or vice versa.

- 5–6** **False Adventuring Party.** A group appears to be humanoid adventurers. In fact, they're monsters that prey on the caverns' humanoid denizens. If the characters talk to other cavern inhabitants, they may hear rumors of friendly seeming creatures who suddenly change form and attack.

- Level 1–2: **doppelganger**
 Level 3–4: 2 or 3 **doppelgangers**
 Level 5–10: 2 **assassins** or **ogre mages**
 Level 11–16: 2 **rakshasas**
 Level 17–20: **vampire assassin**, **vampire mage**, and **vampire warrior**; 3 **rakshasas**

Setting: The cave is filled with ill-gotten treasure—some of which is not what it seems. Depending on dungeon level, the treasure may be guarded by:

- Level 1–2: **false hoard trap**
 Level 3–4: **mimic**
 Level 5–10: **ghost trap**
 Level 11–16: **nalfeshnee trap**
 Level 17–20: **hidden cannon trap**

- 7** A cave-in behind the party seals off the cavern complex's entrance. There are other exits from the complex, but they lead into miles of winding, deserted Underland tunnels. On each day of travel through these tunnels, the party's navigator must make a Nature or Survival check to find their way. Three successes, or one critical success, allows the party to escape the maze.
- 8** The way is blocked by a settlement of deep dwarves, shadow elves, grimlocks, troglodytes, mycelials, or other underground dwellers. There are too many to fight, although the adventurers might be able to defeat or elude patrols. The easiest way through the settlement is to negotiate safe passage with its leaders.

Cavern: Minor Treasure

1	2d6 edible mushrooms
2	Glowing lichen casts bright light for 20 feet and dim light for an additional 20 feet. The lichen glows for 1 month after it's harvested
3–4	Cultural equipment, such as deep dwarf stone of resolve
5–6	Gems worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 10 gp, tier 1: 100 gp, tier 2: 1,000 gp, tier 3: 10,000 gp, tier 4: 100,000 gp)
7	1d6 vials. Roll 1d6: 3–4 <i>potions of healing</i> , 5–6 <i>potions of greater healing</i>
8	Mushroom-based alcoholic beverage that causes drinkers to be poisoned for 1 hour. While poisoned, drinkers can cast <i>clairvoyance</i> at will
9	Map to a valuable mineral deposit (see Discoveries 11 and 12)
10	Cache of 1d6 magical shadow elf weapons made of dark iron: they're <i>+1 weapons</i> but they crumble in sunlight. On dungeon level 11 or higher, they're <i>+2 weapons</i> instead

Cavern: Treasure Hoards**Dungeon Level 1–2**

Valuables: 1d4 × 100 gp worth of silver and gold coins or gems

Magic (30 percent chance): *gloves of swimming and climbing* or *vicious weapon*

Dungeon Level 3–4

Valuables: 2d4 × 100 gp worth of silver and gold coins or 1d6 masterwork weapons worth 150 gp each

Magic (40 percent chance): *ring of resistance* or *wand of enemy detection*

Dungeon Level 5–10

Valuables: 1d6 × 1,000 gp worth of gold coins, gems, or metal ore

Magic (50 percent chance): *ring of animal influence* or *wand of web*

Dungeon Level 11–16

Valuables: 1d4 × 10,000 gp worth of gold and platinum coins or jewelry

Magic (60 percent chance): *ring of the ram* or *sword of sharpness*

Dungeon Level 17–20

Valuables: 1d4 × 100,000 gp worth of electrum, gold, and platinum coins and jewelry

Magic (70 percent chance): *Harvest* or *ring of invisibility*

Cavern: Passage Scenery

1–2	The passage twists and turns: visibility is reduced to 10 feet
3	The passage climbs and drops; it is difficult terrain
4	The passage has a three-foot ceiling; Medium creatures must crawl
5	The passage is a fissure with a ceiling hundreds of feet high
6	The passage's walls are wet
7	The passage's walls are covered with stone spikes. A creature pushed into a wall takes 3 (1d6) piercing damage
8	The passage is crossed by a shallow, 10-foot-wide stream that emerges from and flows into narrow flooded tunnels
9	The passage is round and perfectly smooth. DC 13 Nature check: it may have been bored by a purple worm
10	The passage is a round tube with a deep fissure stretching its entire length. A stream runs at the bottom of the fissure

Cavern: Small Cavern Scenery

1	The floor and ceiling are festooned with stalagmites and stalactites. The area is difficult terrain
2	Stalagmites, stalactites, and columns make most of the cavern difficult terrain, though there is an open space in the middle
3	Delicate sheets of stone hang from the ceiling like drapery
4	Translucent crystals cover the walls and ceiling. Crystal columns connect the roof and floor
5	Surfaces are covered in a delicate lattice of white crystals that resemble frost or snow
6	Lovely stone formations that resemble lilies grow from the floor
7	Walls, stalactites, and stalagmites are fluted with thin, vertical channels
8	Crystalline, hollow stone tubes, an inch or two thick, hang from the ceiling
9	Stalactites of vivid blue, green, and yellow hang from the ceiling
10	The cave features a bubbling, geothermal pool. Once per day, a creature can bathe in the pool during a short rest to recover 1 level of exhaustion

- 11 A waterfall spills from a hole in the wall or ceiling to feed a subterranean lagoon
- 12 A perfectly still pool is disturbed every few minutes by a drop of water from a stalactite
- 13 The floor is submerged in 1d4 feet of water
- 14 The cavern features a pool with a stalagmite-covered island in the middle
- 15 The cavern features an open pit filled with a pool at the bottom. There's a 50 percent chance that the pool contains a Minor Treasure
- 16 Vertical shafts in the ceiling or floor lead to the room's exits
- 17 Half the cavern is a sunken area, 10 feet lower than the rest
- 18 The cavern is composed of two chambers connected by a narrow opening
- 19 A column 5 to 15 feet in diameter dominates the center of the cavern
- 20 The cavern contains an abandoned camp, including tents, firepit, and old refuse. There is a 50 percent chance that a Minor Treasure is found among the detritus

Cavern: Large Cavern Scenery

- 1 The floor and ceiling are festooned with stalagmites and stalactites. The area is difficult terrain
- 2 Purple worm skeleton
- 3 Sharp, translucent crystals cover the walls and ceiling. The floor is difficult terrain. Foot-wide crystal bridges crisscross the cavern
- 4 Lovely stone formations that resemble lilies grow from the floor
- 5 The cavern features a wide, still lake. Stone pedestals serve as stepping stones
- 6 Waterfalls spill from the wall or ceiling, feeding a lake or river

- 7 Stone pillars rise from a lake to support the cavern's high, arched ceiling
- 8 A river meanders down the center of the cavern before draining into a vertical shaft
- 9 A steaming lake surrounds an island. A creature that begins its turn in the lake or enters it for the first time on a turn takes 5 (1d10) fire damage
- 10 Craggy islands dot the surface of a vast, underground lake
- 11 The room's exits can be reached only by climbing the cavern walls
- 12 The cavern is composed of two chambers connected by a narrow opening
- 13 Magma cascades through a hole in the ceiling, feeding a meandering magma river
- 14 The ground is hot to the touch, burning unprotected feet. A weight of 500 pounds placed on a particular 10-foot-square area of floor, or dealing 10 bludgeoning damage to an area of floor, causes it to crumble into a magma chamber below
- 15 The cavern is ringed by several tiers of naturally-occurring balconies
- 16 The wreck of a subterranean sea vessel
- 17 Natural stone bridges crisscross a lake of magma or water
- 18 The cavern stretches hundreds of feet above or below the entrance. Exits may connect to other dungeon levels
- 19 A forest of giant mushrooms, each dozens of feet tall, fills the cavern. The area is difficult terrain, and visibility is limited to 10 feet
- 20 A lake of glowing white or pitch-black water fills the cavern. Water taken from this lake functions like a *light* or *darkness* spell for 24 hours

Laboratory

Great war mage colleges, secluded wizard's towers, and alchemists' workrooms are all examples of laboratories. Laboratories are places of research and typically include unique magical and alchemical effects that can't be found anywhere else. In addition to living spaces, a laboratory requires workrooms and libraries.

Tiers. While laboratory inhabitants often include students and apprentices, the masters of large laboratories are commonly tier 3 or 4.

Laboratory Size. Each 50-foot-square node of a laboratory contains either a room or a section of passage. A small laboratory is about 150 feet square (a 3 × 3 grid of nodes); a medium one is 250 feet square (a 5 × 5 grid); and a large one is 350 feet square (a 7 × 7 grid).

Magic Auras. Adventurers trained in Arcana have advantage when making Investigation or Perception checks to examine magical phenomena.

Creating a Laboratory

To generate a new map, roll on the Description table for the initial area and follow its instructions, and then do so again to see what's past each exit, and so on. If you're filling a premade map, roll on Inhabitants and Contents for each location.

Laboratory: Description

Roll 1d12 + 8 to generate the first area of the dungeon. Then roll 1d20 on this table to determine what's beyond each exit, and so on.

1	Narrow passage. 5 feet wide. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits.
2–7	Passage. 10 feet wide. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits.
8	Wide passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d4:
1	15 ft.
2–3	20 ft.
4	30 ft.
9–14	Small room. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For room size, roll 1d4:
1	15 × 15 ft.
2	15 × 20 ft.
3	20 × 20 ft.
4	20 × 30 ft.

15–20 **Large chamber.** Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For chamber size, roll 1d6:

1	30 × 30 ft.
2	30 × 40 ft.
3	40 × 50 ft.
4	50 × 50 ft.

Laboratory: Passage Contents

1–10	Empty
11–14	Roll on Passage Scenery
15–18	Roll on Escalations
19–20	Roll on Obstacles

Laboratory: Room and Chamber Contents

Roll 1d20 in small room, 1d20 + 2 in large chamber.

1–3	Empty
4–8	Roll on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
9–11	Roll on Novelties
12–14	Roll on Obstacles
15–16	Roll on Discoveries
17–19	Roll on Escalations and on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
20+	Roll on Set Pieces

Laboratory: Exits

If the die roll is odd, a room's exits are blocked by doors. Otherwise, they are open.

1–3	No exits
4–5	One exit left
6–7	One exit straight
8–9	One exit right
10–11	Two exits, left and right
12–13	Two exits, left and straight
14–15	Two exits, straight and right
16–18	Three exits, left, straight, and right
19–20	Stairs. Roll 1d8 to determine stair type. Then roll again on this table for other exits
1–2	Stone stairs down
3	Stone spiral staircase down
4	Trapdoor down (50 percent chance concealed under rug or furniture)
5	Floor tile inscribed with a red X. Anyone standing on it is teleported to the level below
6	Stone spiral staircase up

Laboratory: Novelties

- 1 Complex illusions conceal the walls, ceiling, and floor so that a visitor appears to be in a snowy wilderness or an expanse of starry space. The room's exits are clearly visible
- 2 Vaulted chamber with excellent acoustics. Every whisper can be heard by all creatures in the chamber
- 3 A creature that knows at least one language can understand every word spoken in this room, no matter the language
- 4 Library with floor-to-ceiling shelves and no ladders. A ghostly hand (as *mage hand*) retrieves books on command (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 5 Pristine ballroom floor being swept by dozens of animated brooms
- 6 The ceiling of this observatory mirrors the current state of the sky. Several telescopes sit in the center of the room
- 7 Shadowy, illusionary dancers perform an endless ballet in a dark and dusty theater
- 8 Huge, multilevel hall with **wind tunnels** instead of stairs
- 9 Tiles on the walls cycle through text as if displaying an unrolling scroll; you can touch a tile to temporarily pause it, or tap it with a new scroll to change the displayed text
- 10 Room like a large-scale alchemist's kit. Fireplaces boil cauldrons, colored liquid races through coiled tubes overhead, and acids and poisons drip into cisterns on the floor
- 11 Model planets, each large enough to stand on, orbit a burning sphere
- 12 An enchanted scriptorium. Books float to tables and animated pens copy pages

Laboratory: Obstacles

- 1 **Lock:** From a locked stone door protrudes a carved lion head with missing eyes. The door unlocks if cat's eye gems are inserted. **Key:** A bag containing a pair of cat's eye gems
- 2 **Lock:** *Arcane locked* stone door inscribed with the words "Knock to enter." The *knock* spell opens the door. **Key:** *Wand of knocking*, a wand topped with a stone fist, which can cast *knock* once per 24 hours
- 3 **Lock:** Translucent stone door made of blue crystal. **Key:** A translucent blue crystal key
- 4 **Lock:** *Arcane locked* door bearing a riddle. The door opens when the answer is spoken. **Key:** An ancient book, *Jest Book of Infinite Mirth*
- 5 Heavy stone doors (DC 18 + half dungeon level Strength check to push open), inscribed with "Magic prevails where might fails." Any magical wind or force, including *mage hand*, pushes open the doors
- 6 An intensely bright white dot floats in the middle of this freezing, snowy laboratory. Touching the dot deals 3 (1d6) cold damage per dungeon level
- 7 Bookcase filled with books in many languages. (Examination or DC 15 Perception check: The only book in Common, *New Directions in Architecture*, has no dust on the top. Pushing it opens the door)
- 8 Segment of the wall is illusory and can be passed through effortlessly. (Examination or DC 15 Perception check: a slight draft)
- 9–12 Trap based on the dungeon level: level 1–2 **illusory balcony trap** or **invisible caltrops**; 3–4 **lightning-blast statue** or **sigil trap**; 5–10 **bookcase trap** or **reverse gravity trap**; 11–16 **explosive runes trap** or **gas vacuum trap**; 17–20 **floating sphere of annihilation** or **necromantic bridge trap**

Laboratory: Discoveries

- 1–4 Roll 1d4 on the Obstacles table. You find the key listed in that entry. Make a note of the matching lock. The next Obstacle encountered is that lock
- 5 Tea room populated by intelligent animated objects: walking tables, talking cups, lazy sofas, and the like. They are happy to gossip about other inhabitants
- 6 Familiar carrying a message
- 7 Guard patrol (roll 1d4 on Escalations table) responding to a magical mishap, such as an escaped monster or magical fire; they accept help from anyone, even intruders
- 8 Dressing room with a vanity with attached mirror. Once per day while sitting at the vanity, anyone can cast *alter self*
- 9 Bedroom with a luxurious bed, a vanity covered with perfumes, and a wardrobe full of clothes. The wardrobe contains a seemingly empty silver jewelry box containing an invisible piece of jewelry. The box is magical: any object placed inside the box becomes invisible while in the box
- 10 Comfortable office shielded by a *private sanctum* spell, blocking teleportation, scrying, sound, and vision (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 11 Blazing fireplace with strange forms swirling in it: a permanent portal to the Plane of Fire
- 12 Machine room containing several pulsing crystals suspended in midair, a wall covered with clacking intermeshed gears, and a brass tube emerging from the wall at head height. Up to five times each day, a creature that speaks into the tube can cast *sending* through the device

Laboratory: Escalations

50 percent of guards possess a Minor Treasure.

- 1 Guards: question intruders about their reason for being there
 Level 1–2: **apprentice mage** with **imp**; **druid**
 Level 3–4: **scout** with **hell hound**
 Level 5–10: **mage** with **flesh guardian** or **ogre zombie**
 Level 11–16: **archmage** with **grimalkin** or **water elemental**
 Level 17–20: **archmage** with **chain devil** or **clay guardian**

- 2 Guards: may attack intruders who don't speak the right password
 Level 1–2: 1d4 **guards** or **flying swords**
 Level 3–4: **apprentice mage** with **walking statue**; **green hag**
 Level 5–10: **mage** with **flesh guardian** or any **elemental**
 Level 11–16: **mage** with 2 **flesh guardians** or 2 **chuul**
 Level 17–20: **arcane blademaster**; 3 **mages**
- 3 Denizens: maintain an uneasy alliance with the local overlord (roll or choose from Set Pieces) but are on the lookout for betrayal
 Level 1–2: **cult fanatic**
 Level 3–4: 2 **gargoyles**
 Level 5–10: 1 or 2 **night hags** or **scorpion-folk imperators**
 Level 11–16: **alchemist**, **mage**, or **shadow elf mage** with **shield guardian**
 Level 17–20: **lich**
- 4 Guards: unwillingly bound to guard a location, following the letter of their instructions
 Level 1–2: 1d4 **spark mephits** or **steam mephits**
 Level 3–4: **shadow demon**
 Level 5–10: **ogre mage** or **chain devil**
 Level 11–16: 2 **ogre mages** or **bone devils**
 Level 17–20: 2 **chain devils** or **invisible renders**
- 5 Guardians: attack if approached
 Level 1–2: 1d4 **gear spiders** or **sprites**
 Level 3–4: **bearded devil** or **scarecrow harvester**
 Level 5–10: **chimera** or **ur-otyugh**
 Level 11–16: **dead man's fingers**; 2 **air elementals**
 Level 17–20: **greater sphinx**; 2 **guardian nagas**
- 6 Guardians: attack on sight
 Level 1–2: **animated armor** with **flying sword**
 Level 3–4: **rug of smothering** with 2 **animated armors**
 Level 5–10: **elder black pudding**; 2 **black puddings**
 Level 11–16: 2 **salamanders** or **shambling mounds**
 Level 17–20: 2 **guardian nagas** or **giant elementals**
- 7–10 Roll 1d6 on this table to determine an encounter group. The group is nearby (in the nearest unexplored room) and may be detected by tracks, noises, flickering torchlight, or other signs

Laboratory: Set Pieces

Set piece encounters usually feature a Treasure Hoard.

- 1 Arcane Academy.** The magic school's instructors have always educated young spellcasters responsibly—until the new chancellor arrived.

Level 1–2: **doppelganger** with 1 or 2 **apprentice mages**; **green hag** with 1d6 **guards**

Level 3–4: **mage** with 1d4 **guards**

Level 5–10: **mage** or **necromancer** with 2 or 3 **shadow demons**

Level 11–16: **vampire mage** with **giant earth elemental**; **archmage** with 2 or 3 **elementals**

Level 17–20: **archmage** with 1 or 2 **horned devils**

Setting: The luxurious office is filled with *programmed illusions* masquerading as the new chancellor.

- 2 Philosopher's Stone.** The laboratory's spellcasters are dedicated to pure research—never mind that their new spells or concoctions drain life from the nearby countryside.

Level 1–2: **goblin warlock** or **kobold sorcerer** with **gargoyle**; **sea hag** with 1d4 **ice mephits**

Level 3–4: **mrow mage**; **mage** with 1d6 **guards**

Level 5–10: **alchemist** with 1 to 3 **clockwork sentinels** or **scarecrow harvesters**; **mage** with 2d6 **animated armors**

Level 11–16: **alchemist** or **mage** with 2 **stone guardians** or **glabrezu**

Level 17–20: **lich** with **giant elemental** or **rakshasa**

Setting: An alchemical laboratory. Any miss with an attack breaks equipment, causing an effect as if the attacker targeted the missed creature with a *wand of wonder*.

- 3 Summoning Gone Wrong.** Fiends have killed their summoners and now threaten to wreak destruction far and wide.

Level 1–2: 2 or 3 **shadows**

Level 3–4: **malcubus** or **shadow demon** with 1d4 **quasits**

Level 5–10: **cambion** with 2 **elementals** of any type

Level 11–16: 2 or 3 **horned devils**

Level 17–20: **balor** with 2 or 3 **vrocks**

Setting: The floor of the room is marked with an error-ridden magic circle. A creature can use an action to fix the error with an Acana check (DC 10 + half dungeon level). After three successes, the magic circle binds fiends within it.

- 4** An archmage offers a test, such as the demonstration of a spell of each characters' choice. In return, the archmage grants a boon, such as a scroll of the same level as the demonstrated spell, or acceptance to a spellcasters' guild.

Laboratory: Minor Treasure

- 1** Scroll containing a rare version of a spell from the wizard spell list (such as *amber prince's shocking grasp*)
- 2** Book of forbidden lore containing a rare version of a spell from the warlock spell list, such as *Sebirus's Imprisoning Skeletal Hands (DDG)*
- 3–5** *Spell scroll* containing a spell from the wizard list appropriate to the area's tier (tier 0: cantrip or level 1 spell, tier 1: level 2–3 spell, tier 2: level 4–5 spell, tier 3: level 6–7, tier 4: level 8–9)
- 6–7** Rare book worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 10 gp, tier 1: 100 gp, tier 2: 1,000 gp, tier 3: 10,000 gp, tier 4: 100,000 gp)
- 8** Rare book that imparts a (possibly false) cosmic or magical secret (such as the cosmic dangers of using psionics)
- 9** Research notes that allow a random cleric spell to be learned as a wizard spell
- 10** Research notes that include the true name of several powerful devils
- 11** Poetry or musical score containing a rare version of a spell from the bard spell list (such as *Elvatar's thunderous entrance*)
- 12** Instructions for building a homunculus

Laboratory: Treasure Hoards

Dungeon Level 1–2

Valuables: 1d4 × 100 gp worth of gold coins, jewelry, or alchemical equipment

Magic (30 percent chance): *brooch of shielding* or *wand of the war mage +1*

Dungeon Level 3–4

Valuables: 2d4 × 100 gp worth of gold coins or rare books

Magic (40 percent chance): *boots of levitation* or *headband of intellect*

Dungeon Level 5–10

Valuables: 1d6 × 1,000 gp worth of gold coins, jewelry, or powdered gems

Magic (50 percent chance): *robe of eyes* or *wand of the war mage +2*

Dungeon Level 11–16

Valuables: 1d4 × 10,000 gp worth of gold and platinum coins, jewelry, or rare books worth 1,000 gp each

Magic (60 percent chance): *mantle of spell resistance* or *wand of lightning bolts*

Dungeon Level 17–20

Valuables: 1d4 × 100,000 gp worth of platinum coins, diamonds worth 5,000 gp each, or components for making magic items

Magic (70 percent chance): *robe of the archmagi* or *staff of striking*

Laboratory: Passage Scenery

- 1 Wall-mounted scarab or butterfly collection
- 2 Wall-mounted diagrams of various magical circles
- 3 Bookshelves along the walls
- 4 Thick carpet (grants advantage on Stealth checks made to move silently)
- 5 Dozens of everburning candles or torches
- 6 Wall rack containing nonmagical staves, wands, and other focuses. 50 percent of a magical wand, such as a *wand of secrets*, among them
- 7 Hatstand hung with flamboyant hats
- 8 Rack containing pipes and snuffboxes

Laboratory: Small Room Scenery

- 1 A table of dusty alchemical equipment
- 2 Unlit braziers filled with coal
- 3 Scrolls in labeled vases (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 4 Library under a permanent *silence* spell. Entrances bear a sign that reads "Silence!"
- 5 Wizard's study with books on lecterns, candles inside skulls, and an empty birdcage (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 6 A desk with locked drawers contains papers of no importance (50 percent chance of a false bottom concealing a Minor Treasure)
- 7 Pinned to the walls of this cluttered study are dozens of pictures: maps, anatomical illustrations, and sketches of renowned figures (possibly including the adventurers). The pictures are connected by a cat's cradle of red string
- 8 Den with mounted monster heads, comfortable chairs, sherry, and stacks of books on arcane topics
- 9 Bedroom cluttered with wizard staves, monster skulls, figurines, books, crystal balls, and the like (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)



- 10 A dusty bed chamber contains a bed with a rotting canopy and a wardrobe of moth-eaten clothes
- 11 Kitchen where sumptuous dishes are prepared. A locked trapdoor leads to an alcove containing vintage wines worth several hundred gold pieces
- 12 Dining room with comfortable chairs around white-clothed tables
- 13 Pantry stocked with flour and beans and hung with herbs
- 14 Cellar with a wine rack and several beer barrels
- 15 Latrine containing a book of forbidden lore. Half of its pages are torn out (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 16 Luxurious bath with pipes that deliver heated water
- 17 Dressing room with a vanity, mirror, and wardrobe. Two *unseen servants* stand ready to obey any orders
- 18 Bedroom with a single canopied bed. The canopy depicts fairies sprinkling dust. The first time each day anyone lies on the bed, the bed casts the *sleep* spell on them
- 19 Bedroom that appears to be on fire. Bed, tables, chairs, books, and bookcases all have harmless *continual flame* spells cast on them
- 20 Bathtub containing toy galleys and sailing ships engaged in an endless sea battle; the vessels ram each other and fire illusory ballista bolts but do no damage. Bathrobes and soaps fill one corner of the room

Laboratory: Large Chamber Scenery

- 1 Library with scrolls in latticed shelves (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 2 Charred library; all the books' spines are burned beyond recognition (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 3 Library of forbidden tomes, each chained to the bookshelf (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 4 Library of drearily cheerful children's literature with titles such as *Happy Bear's Jolly Day*, *The Sunshine Bunch*, and *The Postman Always Leaves Cake*. In fact, each book is a forbidden tome with a false cover (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)

- 5 Luxurious lounge containing comfortable chairs, sofas, and game boards, as well as a fully stocked bar
- 6 Common room with bookshelves, mounted trophies, and a set of shabby chairs drawn around a fireplace
- 7 The walls are pitted and black. The charred remains of practice dummies lie on the floor. Against one wall are buckets and barrels half full of rank water
- 8 Workroom with scarred wooden tables stacked with magical texts, vials of colored liquid, and strange magical instruments such as dowsing rods and distorting magnifying glasses (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 9 Half-completed ritual circle of no obvious use
- 10 Laboratory containing alchemical equipment and bars of lead beside identically sized bars of soap, ivory, and matted hair. Notes indicate that lead-to-gold experiments have repeatedly failed
- 11 Scriptorium in which a single book is being copied a dozen times. It may be an autobiography of a local archwizard, a book of forbidden lore, or a recently discovered book of ancient knowledge (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 12 Magnificently comfortable bedchamber. Every wall and sharp corner is padded. Doors can be locked only from the outside
- 13 Richly furnished bed chamber containing a four-poster bed, a desk, wardrobes, and a painted wooden chest (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 14 Two beds on either side of the room. A piece of string runs down the middle of the floor. The room on one side of the string is messy
- 15 Active kitchen where all the work is done by *invisible servants*
- 16 Dining room with every place set. When anyone sits down, a meal appears on their plate
- 17 Dozens of taxidermied monsters in lifelike poses
- 18 Crated telescopes, alchemical glassware, and other breakables
- 19 Guardroom containing benches and tables, cards and game boards, wine jugs and plates of half-eaten food
- 20 Chapel containing a statue, an altar on a dais, and hangings bearing religious symbols

Mine

Almost every sapient species digs something they want out of the earth. Dwarves dig for adamantine, shadow elves for mithral and dark iron, grimlocks for copper, and everyone mines for iron, gold, salt, and precious stones. When metal and ore are abundant, mines are busy places, but once the supply of that material dwindles, they become eerie, crumbling labyrinths in the lightless depths of the world.

Tiers. Of all types of dungeons, mines are the most likely to descend deep into the earth; a single mine can encompass multiple tiers. Tier 4 mines are relatively rare, since few miners can sustain their labors among the dangers of the utter depths.

Mine Size. Each 50-foot-square node of a mine contains either a room or passage. A small mine is about 150 feet square (a 3 × 3 grid of nodes); a medium one is 250 feet square (a 5 × 5 grid); and a large one is 350 feet square (a 7 × 7 grid). Most mines are multilevel affairs.

Hazardous Environment. Mines can be dangerous places without a single hostile creature or trap present. Cave-ins, darkness, pockets of poisonous or explosive gas, heavy mining machinery, and yawning mine shafts can spell doom for the unwary. Those with training in Engineering or Nature have advantage on Perception or Investigation checks to spot mine hazards.

Creating a Mine

To generate a new map, roll on the Description table for the initial area and follow its instructions, and then do so again to see what's past each exit, and so on. If you're filling a premade map, roll on Inhabitants and Contents for each location.

Mine: Description

1–2	Narrow passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d6: 1–2 2 1/2 ft. 3–6 5 ft.
3–9	Passage. 10 feet wide. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits.
10	Wide passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d4: 1–2 15 ft. 3–4 20 ft.

11–16	Small room. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For room size, roll 1d4: 1–2 15 × 15 ft. 3–4 15 × 20 ft. 5–6 20 × 20 ft.
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17–20	Large chamber. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For chamber size, roll 1d6: 1 30 × 30 ft. 2 30 × 40 ft. 3 40 × 40 ft. 4 50 × 50 ft.
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Mine: Passage Contents

1–10	Empty
11–14	Roll on Passage Scenery
15–18	Roll on Escalations
19–20	Roll on Obstacles

Mine: Room and Chamber Contents

Roll 1d20 in small room, 1d20 + 2 in large chamber

1–3	Empty
4–8	Roll on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
9–11	Roll on Novelties
12–14	Roll on Obstacles
15–16	Roll on Discoveries
17–19	Roll on Escalations and on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
20+	Roll on Set Pieces

Mine: Exits

1–5	No exits
6	One exit left
7–8	One exit straight
9	One exit right
10–11	Two exits, left and right
12	Two exits, left and straight
13	Two exits, straight and right
14–15	Three exits, left, straight, and right
16–20	Ascent or descent. Roll 1d10. Then roll again on this table for other exits. 1–2 Sloping tunnel down 3 Ladder down 4 Shaft down 5 Ladder up 6–10 Shaft going 1d4 levels down

Mine: Novelties

- 1 Deposit of beautiful (but worthless) crystals that refract light sources around the area in prismatic rainbows
- 2 Abandoned giant spider lair choked with webs; the mummified, long-dead bodies of humanoids or other subterranean creatures hang from the ceiling
- 3 A wooden shack serves as a makeshift foreman's office. It's cozily lit with oil lamps and is a good place to rest
- 4 Security checkpoint where guards search workers for contraband such as ore or precious stones
- 5 Healthy vein of whatever the mine was built to extract. The area is well lit. Tools, piles of ore sorted by quality, and carts of mined-out dirt and stone fill the area
- 6 Elevator beside an underground waterfall. The journey up or down is made to the sound of rushing water, and spray is ever-present
- 7 A smaller deposit of some valuable material the mine wasn't built to extract, marked for later extraction
- 8 Workshop filled with broken mine carts and other equipment in need of repair
- 9 Pitch dark area filled with resonant crystals that hum eerily and distort speech
- 10 Ancient, subterranean room that the mine broke into. The room is empty but features impressive wall carvings
- 11 An enormous, supernaturally durable crystal or boulder. Too big to extract, the miners eventually gave up and mined around it, making it the centerpiece of an otherwise empty chamber
- 12 Chamber filled with bioluminescent fungus. Pieces of makeshift furniture indicate that someone has been relaxing here

Mine: Obstacles

- 1 **Lock:** Broken, immobile mining elevator. One of the gears has broken teeth, preventing the winch mechanism from working. **Key:** A replacement gear.
- 2 **Lock:** Shut-down mining machine blocks a passage. **Key:** A power crystal that allows the characters to move the machine.
- 3 **Lock:** A massive crystal blocks a passageway. **Key:** A barrel of alchemical solvent that can safely dissolve the crystal

- 4 **Lock:** A passage blocked by a cave-in. Abandoned grimlock explosives have been set but detonate only when exposed to the correct sonic frequency. **Key:** A modified portable telegraph (see Equipment) that emits the proper frequency and can detonate the explosives, clearing the passage
- 5 An apparent cave-in is actually a nonmagical optical illusion caused by the uniformity of color and texture of the stone. DC 20 Perception check to spot a tight but navigable path along one edge
- 6 Section of the wall embedded with colorful crystals. DC 15 Perception check to notice one of the crystals looks unusually polished for one still in the earth. Pressing the crystal opens a secret door
- 7 Close examination (DC 15 Investigation or Perception check) of the wooden walls of this supported tunnel reveals a set of seams. The door opens freely away from the tunnel's interior, and closes automatically on a spring
- 8 An extra button hidden on the underside of a mining machine's control panel (DC 15 Investigation check to notice) raises a secret door
- 9–12 Trap based on the dungeon level: level 1–2 **caltrops trap** or **false hoard trap**; 3–4 **falling room trap** or **lidded pit trap**; 5–10 **crushing pit trap** or **false trapdoor trap**; 11–16 **crusher trap** or **hezrou trap**; 17–20 **deepest collapsing dungeon trap** or **plummeting room trap**

Mine: Discoveries

- 1–4 Roll 1d4 on the Obstacles table. You find the key listed in that entry. Make a note of the matching lock. The next Obstacle encountered is that lock
- 5 A forgotten chunk of some precious substance (gold, mithral, a ruby, etc.) has rolled into a dusty corner. It is worth 500 gp (or 5,000 gp on dungeon level 10 or higher)
- 6 Unusually sociable earth elemental embedded in a stone wall. Is actively helpful so long as nobody tries to mine the wall it's embedded in
- 7 Broken-down mining machine. Can be repaired with a DC 18 Engineering check or scrapped for 225 gp worth of parts
- 8 Local surveying party and security detail. Friendly toward other humanoids unless they have a specific reason not to be
- 9 Abandoned supply room. Contains 2d8 tins of dwarven rations, two pickaxes, an ascender/descender set (see Equipment), and four coils of hempen rope

- 10–11** Ore vein. If mined and smelted over several weeks, the vein produces 100 pounds of metal. The type of metal varies by dungeon level: 1–2 copper, 3–4 silver, 5–10 gold, 11–16 platinum, 17–20 mithril or adamantine
- 12** Vein of gems. 1d10 gems can be collected without mining. If mined for several weeks, the vein produces a maximum of 50 more gems. The type of gem varies by dungeon level: 1–4 10 gp gem such as quartz, 5–10 100 gp gem such as garnet, 11–16 1,000 gp gem such as sapphire, 17–20 5,000 gp gem such as ruby

Mine: Escalations

50 percent of guards possess a Minor Treasure.

- 1** Miners, working on behalf of local overlord (roll or choose from Set Pieces). May be suspicious or hostile
- Level 1–2: 1d6 + 1 **commoners** or **kobolds**
- Level 3–4: 1 or 2 **azers**
- Level 5–10: **azer forgemaster** or **fire elemental** with 2 or 3 **azers**
- Level 11–16: **genie** (earth) with 2d4 **dust mephits**
- Level 17–20: 2 **genies** (earth)
- 2** Guards: on the lookout for thieves
- Level 1–2: 1d4 **goblins** or **guards**
- Level 3–4: 2d4 **deep dwarf soldiers**, **deep gnome scouts**, **mountain dwarf soldiers**, or **scouts**
- Level 5–10: 3 to 5 **azers**
- Level 11–16: **genie** (earth)
- Level 17–20: **master assassin**; 2 **assassins** and 3 **thugs**
- 3** Raiders or interlopers
- Level 1–2: 2d4 **kobolds**
- Level 3–4: **doppelganger** or **intellect devourer**
- Level 5–10: **blackguard** or **cambion** with 2d4 **soldiers**
- Level 11–16: **assassin** with 2d4 **thugs**
- Level 17–20: **rakshasa** with 1d4 **doppelgangers**
- 4** Guardians: guarding their lair
- Level 1–2: 3 or 4 **goblins**
- Level 3–4: **kobold broodguard** or **thug** with 2d4 **kobolds**; **revilock** with 1d4 **grimlocks**
- Level 5–10: 2 **minotaurs**
- Level 11–16: **dread troll** with 1 or 2 **trolls**; **troll hulk** (DDG)
- Level 17–20: **adult black dragon lich**; **adult shadow dragon**; **adult black dragon**

- 5–6** Guardians: lurking
- Level 1–2: 1d4 **giant centipedes**, **giant fire beetles**, or **rust monsters**
- Level 3–4: 3 or 4 **ghouls**, **giant spiders**, or **shadows**
- Level 5–10: 3 or 4 **dire centipedes**, **gricks**, or **mimics**
- Level 11–16: 2 or 3 **earth elementals** or **xorn**
- Level 17–20: **minotaur champion** or **purple worm**

- 7–10** Roll 1d6 on this table to determine an encounter group. The group is nearby (in the nearest unexplored room) and may be detected by tracks, noises, flickering torchlight, or other signs

Mine: Set Pieces

Set piece encounters usually feature a Treasure Hoard.

- 1** **Active Mine.** Miners have claimed the riches of this mine.
- Level 1–2: **kobold broodguard** and 2 or 3 **kobolds**; 2 **azers**
- Level 3–4: **azer forgemaster** with 2 or 3 **azers**; **salamander**
- Level 5–10: **cambion** with 2d6 **thugs** and 2d10 **commoners**
- Level 11–16: **mountain dwarf lord** with 2 **mountain dwarf defenders** and 2d6 **mountain dwarf soldiers**; 2 **gladiators** with 1d6 + 4 **azers**
- Level 17–20: **minotaur champion** with 2d4 **minotaurs**; 2 **genies** (earth) with 3 or 4 **earth elementals**
- Setting:** A wide chamber criss-crossed with mine cart tracks and levers to release the carts.
- 2** **Subterranean Predator's Lair.** The mining operation has attracted an underground predator (or pack of them). Its bone-littered lair must be cleared to make the mines safe again.
- Level 1–2: **dire centipede** with 1 or 2 **giant centipedes**; 2 **ankhegs**
- Level 3–4: **anhkeg queen** with 2d4 **ankheg spawn**; **bulette**
- Level 5–10: **ur-otyugh** with 1 or 2 **otyughs**; 3 or 4 **stone sharks** (DDG)
- Level 11–16: **supermutant rust monster** (DDG) with 1 or 2 **mutant rust monsters** (DDG)
- Level 17–20: 2 or 3 **purple worms**
- Setting:** A foul, sulfurous stream flows lazily through the middle of a bone-filled den. Characters with a sense of smell must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw each turn or be poisoned until the start of their next turn.

3 Too Deep, Too Greedily. The mine broke into the resting place of some horrible thing that should not have been disturbed. Darkness permeates and magma flows here.

Level 1–2: 2 or 3 **ghouls**

Level 3–4: 2 **intellect devourers**

Level 5–10: **forgotten god** and 1 or 2 **blackguards**; 2 **salamanders**

Level 11–16: **draconic horror** (DDG) and 3 or 4 **gibbering mouthers**

Level 17–20: **balor general** or **balor** and 4 to 6 **shadow demons**

Setting: This dark cavern is lit only by the magma that comprises most of the floor. Irregularly spaced islands of varying sizes rise from the magma.

4 Unquiet Earth. The earth itself rebels against the miners' intrusions.

Level 1–2: 2 to 4 **dust mephits** or **magmins**

Level 3–4: **earth elemental** and 1d4 **dust mephits**

Level 5–10: **genie** (earth) and 1 or 2 **earth elementals**

Level 11–16: **giant earth elemental** and **stone guardian**; 2 or 3 **devas**

Level 17–20: **sand worm** and 1 to 3 **stone guardians**; 2 **planetars**

Setting: A jumble of geological permutations creates a confusing battlefield for combatants, with massive crystals and boulders sitting side-by-side with pools of quicksand.

Mine: Minor Treasure

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1 | Several well-labeled vials of an explosive chemical (treat as <i>necklace of fireballs</i>) |
| 2–8 | Precious ore, gems, metal bars, or a single adamantite drill bit worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 10 gp, tier 1: 100 gp, tier 2: 1,000 gp, tier 3: 10,000 gp, tier 4: 100,000 gp) |
| 9 | 1d6 vials. Roll 1d6: 1–3 <i>potions of healing</i> , 5–6 <i>potions of hill giant strength</i> |
| 10 | +1 <i>war pick</i> (or, on dungeon level 10 or deeper, <i>prospector's pick</i>) |
| 11 | <i>elemental gem</i> containing an earth elemental |
| 12 | A lockbox containing the miners' wages (tier 0: 100 gp, tier 1: 250 gp, tier 2: 2,500 gp, tier 3: 25,000 gp, tier 4: 250,000 gp) |

Mine: Treasure Hoards

Dungeon Level 1–2

Valuables: 1d4 × 100 gp worth of metal ore or uncut gems

Magic (30 percent chance): *bag of holding* or *circlet of blasting*

Dungeon Level 3–4

Valuables: 2d4 × 100 gp worth of bars of precious metal or gems

Magic (40 percent chance): *brazier of commanding fire elementals* or *gem of brightness*

Dungeon Level 5–10

Valuables: 1d6 × 1,000 gp worth of bars of precious metal or gems

Magic (50 percent chance): *wand of enemy detection* or *winged boots*

Dungeon Level 11–16

Valuables: 1d4 × 10,000 gp worth of gems

Magic (60 percent chance): *ring of telekinesis* or *stone of controlling earth elementals*

Dungeon Level 17–20

Valuables: 1d4 × 100,000 gp worth of gold and platinum coins, mithral and adamantium bars, or gems

Magic (70 percent chance): *ring of elemental command* or *vorpal blade*

Mine: Passage Scenery

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | Mined-out node. Whatever the mine was built to extract has been exhausted |
| 2 | Connecting room or passage. Exists primarily as a waystation between other locations. Signs mark the exits |
| 3 | Heaps of dirt and low-value ore waiting to be carted out of the mine |
| 4 | Broken mining cart sitting next to a track |
| 5 | Collapsed tunnel leading to an inactive area of the mine |
| 6 | Graffiti scratched or chalked across the walls |
| 7 | Roosting bats. The ground is carpeted in guano |
| 8 | Rivulets of water run down the walls. The water is safe to drink but gathering more than a few drops would take hours |
| 9 | A miner's pick still buried in the wall |
| 10 | A stack of lumber used to shore up unstable areas |



Mine: Small Room Scenery

- 1 Worker's ready room. Pick axes and mining helmets are lined up neatly on shelves along the walls
- 2 Worker's room. As above, but the room is a mess. Personal effects are mixed among the improperly stored equipment
- 3 Supply room. Spare pick axes, lanterns, and other common mining gear is stored here
- 4 Break area. Tables and chairs sit empty
- 5 Decommissioned security checkpoint
- 6 Latrines
- 7 Supply room. Barrels of nails, stacks of timber, and boxes of rations are neatly stacked and cataloged
- 8 Deposit of worthless, mundane crystals
- 9 Section of natural cave
- 10 Assembly station for mining supports. Cluttered with timber and sawhorses
- 11 Area is damp and drippy. Stalactites and stalagmites cover the ceiling and floor, respectively
- 12 Ancient, dried-out bones of some underground creature huddled in a corner

Mine: Large Chamber Scenery

- 1–2 Underground lake in a cavernous natural cave
- 3 Mess hall. Rows of dining tables sit beneath lanterns hanging from the ceiling
- 4 Kitchen. Stoves and cooking pots sizzle and bubble. Crates of edible fungus abound
- 5 Heavy mining machines are parked here, awaiting further usage or repairs
- 6 Ore processing machines. Grinders, crushers, and conveyor belts crisscross this noisy area. Perception checks based on hearing are made at disadvantage
- 7 Staging area for mine expansion. Dozens of pre-built supports of varying sizes are stacked in piles around the room
- 8 Processing. Inbound supplies are received, sorted, and sent off to other areas of the mine. Workbenches and sorting tables sit beside piles of crates
- 9 Central switching station for an elaborate minecart network. Several mine carts (either full or empty) are parked here, ready to be dispatched into other parts of the mine
- 10 Slain purple worm partially broken down for food and removal from the mine. Resembles a whaling operation
- 11 Summoning circle
- 12 Docks line the banks of an underground river or lake

Ruin

A weathered castle, a haunted palace, an abandoned labyrinth—any of these constructions may fall into ruin. A ruin is distinct from other dungeons in that it no longer serves a particular purpose. It may be inhabited piecemeal by different groups, but no one ruler or gang controls more than a fraction of it.

Tiers. Ruins can be any tier, with older and more remote ruins tending to house stronger monsters.

Ruin Size. Each 50-foot-square node of a ruin contains either a room or passage. A small ruin is about 150 feet square (a 3 × 3 grid of nodes); a medium one is 250 feet square (a 5 × 5 grid); and a large one is 350 feet square (a 7 × 7 grid).

Marks of Decay. Uninhabited sections of ruins are covered with layers of dust and grime. Survival checks made to follow or track creatures, or to search for signs of travel through an area, are made with advantage. Furthermore, efforts to break a ruin's furniture or doors are made with advantage.

Creating a Ruin

To generate a new map, roll on the Description table for the initial area and follow its instructions, and then do so again to see what's past each exit, and so on. If you're filling a premade map, roll on Inhabitants and Contents for each location.

Ruin: Description

1	Narrow passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d6: 1–2 2 1/2 ft. 3–6 5 ft. 2–7 Passage. 10 feet wide. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits.
8	Wide passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d4: 1 15 ft. 2–3 20 ft. 4 30 ft.
9–14	Small room. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For room size, roll 1d4: 1 15 × 15 ft. 2 15 × 20 ft. 3 20 × 20 ft. 4 20 × 30 ft.
15–20	Large chamber. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For chamber size, roll 1d6:

1	30 × 30 ft.
2	30 × 40 ft.
3–4	40 × 40 ft.
5	40 × 50 ft.
6	50 × 50 ft.

Ruin: Passage Contents

1–12	Empty
13–15	Roll on Passage Scenery
16–17	Roll on Escalations
18–20	Roll on Obstacles

Ruin: Room and Chamber Contents

Roll 1d20 in small room, 1d20 + 2 in large chamber

1–5	Empty
6–10	Roll on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
11–12	Roll on Novelties
13–15	Roll on Obstacles
16–17	Roll on Discoveries
18–19	Roll on Escalations and on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
20+	Roll on Set Pieces

Ruin: Exits

If the die roll is odd, a room's exits are blocked by doors. Otherwise, they are open.

1–3	No exits
4–5	One exit left
6–7	One exit straight
8–9	One exit right
10–11	Two exits, left and right
12–13	Two exits, left and straight
14–15	Two exits, straight and right
16–18	Three exits, left, straight, and right
19–20	Stairs. Roll 1d8 to determine stair type. Then roll again on this table for other exits, 1–2 Stone stairs down 3 Stone spiral staircase down 4 Trapdoor down 5 Ladder up or down (50 percent chance of each; 50 percent chance the ladder is broken or missing) 6 Stone spiral staircase up 7 Trapdoor up 8 Stairs going 1d4 levels up and 1d4 levels down

Ruin: Novelties

- 1 A mundane object—such as a serving dish, chamber pot, or artisan’s tool—that illustrates what day-to-day life was like in the ruin
- 2 A pile of rubble where one wall has caved in. A muffled voice can be heard from under the rubble. Underneath the rubble is a mechanical bronze statue that endlessly recites poetry
- 3 A dressing room containing a shattered mirror and wardrobes filled with rotten finery. A single robe is in good shape and radiates illusion magic. While wearing it, a person is blind and deaf to the real world and sees and hears the past experiences of its original wearer, a noble or monarch. Experiences may include a flirtation at a ball, boring judgments in an audience chamber, or hunting
- 4 A cobwebbed ballroom containing ghostly illusions (or animated skeletons) of dancing couples dressed in the fashionable garb of hundreds of years ago. If you watch for some time, a dancer discovers one of her jewels is missing. The jewel is still hidden in a corner
- 5 A skull mounted on the wall like a trophy. One of the ruin’s denizens can magically see through the skull’s eyes and speak through its mouth (see Set Pieces to determine the creature)
- 6 A seemingly magnificent throne room: illusion magic hides the fact that the throne is stripped of gold, the cloth hangings and carpet are rotted, and the statues are smashed. An object takes its true form once removed from the room. The effect can be dispelled as a 4th-level spell. DC 13 Perception check: a smell of rot
- 7 Room is lit by flitting, flaming bats that shed light like torches (as **bats** with immunity to fire damage)
- 8 Marble room decorated with statues, gilt mirrors, and ceiling frescoes; the floor is knee-deep in slimy water
- 9 Exits are through the fanged mouths of grotesque carvings
- 10 Statues stand atop battlemented balconies
- 11 A plaque dedicated to the ruin’s founder or architect. Touching the plaque triggers a permanent *magic mouth* that speaks the dedication aloud
- 12 The enormous remains of what was once a titan-sized statue

Ruin: Obstacles

- 1 **Lock:** A lock set in the middle of a carved heraldic shield. **Key:** A key with a grip like a sword pommel
- 2 **Lock:** A lock seized by rust; attempts to pick the lock are made with disadvantage unless it is oiled. **Key:** A rusty key
- 3 **Lock:** A lock inscribed with a riddle. **Key:** A key with a handle carved to resemble the riddle’s solution.
- 4 **Lock:** A crescent-shaped depression in a door. **Key:** A crescent-shaped necklace
- 5 A cave-in blocks the way forward. It takes several minutes of work to dig out a passage wide enough to crawl through
- 6 A crumbling wall blocks passage. DC 10 Perception check: Cracks in the wall outline a secret door with no obvious way to open it. A DC 13 Investigation check reveals the brick that must be pressed to open the door
- 7 A fresco—perhaps depicting a cloaked man opening a door, a three-headed dog, or the gate to a white-walled city—is split by a faint crack down the middle. Pushing on the fresco opens the secret door.
- 8 Against a wall is a heavy piece of furniture, such as a grandfather clock or empty bookcase. A DC 10 Perception check reveals scrapes on the floor near the furniture. Moving the furniture reveals a concealed door.
- 9 Wooden door with a bell. Unless precautions are taken, the bell rings when the door is opened, alerting creatures within 50 feet.
- 10 Malfunctioning machine door with a missing gear: an Engineering check is required to repair (DC 10 + dungeon level)
- 11–20 Trap based on the dungeon level: level 1–2 **false hoard trap** or **spear trap**; 3–4 **false door trap** or **snake hatch**; 5–10 **ghost trap** or **mirror trap**; 11–16 **deep collapsing dungeon trap** or **yellow mold trap**; 17–20 **minotaur champion trap** or **rolling icosahedron trap**

Ruin: Discoveries

- 1-4 Roll 1d4 on the Obstacles table. You find the key listed in that entry. Make a note of the matching lock. The next Obstacle encountered is that lock.
- 5 Harmless undead spirits, unaware of onlookers, re-enacting a scene from their lives that reveals a secret
- 6 Adventurers (entry 3 on Escalations table), looking for help defeating a dangerous threat (roll on Set Pieces)
- 7 A friendly hermit or outcast
- 8 A frieze that casts a new light on the area's history (depicting a great cyclops or skeleton civilization, for instance)
- 9 An inanimate (or animate) skeleton wearing the signet ring of a royal house and bearing a Minor Treasure associated with the house
- 10 A trail of chalk marks that leads to a Treasure Hoard—or the corpse of an explorer
- 11 The inanimate skeletons of royalty and nobles lying among ruined luxury. 1d4 Minor Treasures can be found
- 12 Behind a locked door or trapdoor, a Treasure Hoard. The lock is guarded with a level-appropriate **lock trap** variant (DDG)

Ruin: Escalations

50 percent of guards possess a Minor Treasure.

- 1 Guards: patrolling on behalf of the local overlord (roll or choose from Set Pieces)
 - Level 1-2: **cutthroat** or **scout** with 1d4 **bandits**
 - Level 3-4: 1 or 2 **ogres**
 - Level 5-10: **blackguard** or **cambion** with 1d4 + 1 **thugs**
 - Level 11-16: 3 or 4 **ettins** or **minotaur**
 - Level 17-20: **chain devil** or **ogre mage** with 3 or 4 **werewolves**

- 2 Inhabitants
 - Level 1-2: 1d4 **goblins** or **kobolds**
 - Level 3-4: 2 **bugbears** with 1d6 **goblins**
 - Level 5-10: 1 or 2 **trolls**
 - Level 11-16: 2 **cyclopes** or **medusas**
 - Level 17-20: **minotaur champion**; 4 **minotaurs**
- 3 Adventurers exploring the ruins
 - Level 1-2: **acolyte**, **scout**, and **spy**
 - Level 3-4: **druid** or **priest** with **berserker**
 - Level 5-10: **mage** with 2 **knights**
 - Level 11-16: **assassin** with **gladiator**
 - Level 17-20: **archmage** with 3 **veterans**
- 4 Guardians: lurking
 - Level 1-2: 1d4 **giant poisonous snakes** or **rust monsters**
 - Level 3-4: 1 or 2 **dire centipedes** or **gelatinous cubes**
 - Level 5-10: **otyugh**
 - Level 11-16: 3 or 4 **ghosts**
 - Level 17-20: **rakshasa** with 1d4 **weretigers**
- 5 Guardians: guarding a location
 - Level 1-2: 1 or 2 **shadows**
 - Level 3-4: **blazing black pudding** (DDG)
 - Level 5-10: 4 or 5 **ghasts**
 - Level 11-16: 3 or 4 **vampire spawn**
 - Level 17-20: **wraith lord** with 1 or 2 **wraiths**; 3 **cyclopes**
- 6 Guardians: following instructions
 - Level 1-2: 1d4 **flying swords** or **skeletons**
 - Level 3-4: 3 or 4 **animated armors** or **death dogs**
 - Level 5-10: 3 **walking statues**; **clay guardian**; **invisible stalker**
 - Level 11-16: **iron guardian**; 3 or 4 **water elementals**
 - Level 17-20: 2 **giant fire elementals**; 2 **shield guardians**
- 7-10 Roll 1d6 on this table to determine an encounter group. The group is nearby (in the nearest unexplored room) and may be detected by tracks, nearby noises, the flickering of torches, or other signs

Ruin: Set Pieces

Set piece encounters usually feature a Treasure Hoard.

- 1 **Settler's Lair.** This part of the ruin has been recently conquered by an outside group.
 - Level 1–2: **kobold broodguard** with 3 or 4 **kobolds**; 3 or 4 **bugbears**
 - Level 3–4: **bugbear chief** with 2 to 4 **bugbears**; 3 **azers**
 - Level 5–10: **alpha werewolf** with 3 or 4 **werewolves**; 3 **cyclopes**
 - Level 11–16: **high priest** with 2d4 **priests**
 - Level 17–20: 2 **adult shadow dragons** with 2d6 **kobolds**; **adult red dragon** with 2 or 3 **salamanders**

Setting: A settler patrol (3 or 4 of the weakest monster) is away exploring the ruin. Once combat begins, the patrol returns within 3 rounds.
- 2 **Spirits of the Past.** These undead have haunted the ruins for centuries, since the days they ruled as mortals.
 - Level 1–2: **ghast** with 2 **ghouls**
 - Level 3–4: **wight** with 2d4 **zombies**
 - Level 5–10: **skeletal warlord** (DDG) with 2d6 **skeletons**
 - Level 11–16: **vampire warrior** with 2 or 3 **vampire spawn**
 - Level 17–20: **dread knight** with **skeletal warlord** (DDG) and 2d10 **skeleton immortals** (DDG); **lich** with **demilich**

Setting: The leader of the group rests in a sarcophagus. Once combat begins, it or another creature must use an action to raise the lid.
- 3 **Gate.** A planar rift to the hells threatens to overwhelm the area unless it is sealed.
 - Level 1–2: **imp** with 1d6 **lemures**
 - Level 3–4: 2 or 3 **horde demons** or **bearded devils**
 - Level 5–10: **cambion** with 1d4 **horde demons** or **bearded devils**
 - Level 11–16: **rakshasa** with 1 or 2 **night hags**
 - Level 17–20: **marilith** with 2 or 3 **vrock**s

Setting: A planar gate pulses in a corner of the room. A creature can use an action to make an Arcana check (DC 10 + half dungeon level); three successes close the portal. Fiendish reinforcements may arrive through the portal.
- 4 **Fallen Empire.** An immortal ruler schemes to regain the dominion they once possessed.
 - Level 1–2: **cult fanatic** or **dragon cultist** with 2 to 4 **kobolds**
 - Level 3–4: **lamia** with 3 or 4 **jackalweres**

Level 5–10: **spirit naga** with 1d4 **giant constrictor snakes**

Level 11–16: **deva** or **forgotten god** with **archpriest** and 1d4 **priests**; **planetary** with 2 to 4 **couatls**

Level 17–20: **empyrean** with 2 **fomorian**s

Setting: While sitting on their throne, the leader can cast *sanctuary* with a spell save DC of 10 + the dungeon's level and a recharge of 5–6.

- 5 A **sphinx** or similar creature provides aid and oracular wisdom to the worthy.
- 6 Treasure Hoard guarded by an elite trap such as a **collapsing dungeon** or **ghost trap**.

Ruin: Minor Treasure

- 1 Glowing, shattered mirror (if repaired for 25,000 gp, acts as a *crystal ball*)
- 2 Deed of land ownership—and possibly of nobility
- 3 *Spell scroll* containing a spell appropriate to the area's tier (tier 0: cantrip or level 1 spell, tier 1: level 2–3 spell, tier 2: level 4–5 spell, tier 3: level 6–7, tier 4: level 8–9)
- 4–6 Cache of ancient coins worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 20 ep, tier 1: 100 gp, tier 2: 500 gp, tier 3: 1,000 pp, tier 4: 10,000 pp)
- 7 1d6 vials. Roll 1d6: 1–3 *potions of healing*, 5–6 *potions of poison*
- 8 Necklace, crown, or other jewelry, worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 25 gp, tier 1: 75 gp, tier 2: 750 gp, tier 3: 2,500 gp, tier 4: 25,000 gp)
- 9 In a dusty, cracked vase, flowers that look freshly cut. The vase is filled with a potion that prevents its drinker from aging for 10 years
- 10 Half of a crystal; when reunited with its other half, the crystal displays a message from the past
- 11 Pottery shards or clay statues of interest to scholars but otherwise worthless (tier 0: 10 gp, tier 1: 50 gp, tier 2: 200 gp, tier 3: 500 gp, tier 4: 5,000 gp)
- 12 An ancient battleaxe. The wooden shaft disintegrates when touched, but its adamantine head can be affixed to a new one



Ruin: Treasure Hoards

Dungeon Level 1–2

Valuables: 1d4 × 100 gp worth of copper, silver, or gold coins, or a gold idol worth the same amount
 Magic (30 percent chance): *immovable rod* or *wand of secrets*

Dungeon Level 3–4

Valuables: 2d4 gp worth of silver, electrum, and gold coins or art objects
 Magic (40 percent chance): *handy haversack* or *ring of protection*

Dungeon Level 5–10

Valuables: 1d6 × 1,000 gp worth of gold and platinum coins or gems
 Magic (50 percent chance): *+1 armor* or *boots of speed*

Dungeon Level 11–16

Valuables: 1d4 × 10,000 gp worth of platinum coins or jewelry
 Magic (60 percent chance): *belt of dwarvenkind* or *flame tongue*

Dungeon Level 17–20

Valuables: 1d4 × 100,000 gp worth of coins of all denominations, gems, jewelry, and artworks, piled in heaps
 Magic (70 percent chance): *loun stone of mastery* or *ring of three wishes*

Ruin: Passage Scenery

- 1 Dusty suits of armor stand against a wall
- 2 The area is charred as if by a long-past fire
- 3 Worm-eaten tapestries depicting the interests of the ruin's original inhabitants
- 4 Brackets hold the stubs of burnt-down torches
- 5 An arrow drawn on the wall in chalk
- 6 A cracked wall or ceiling; a DC 18 Strength check could smash it, filling the corridor with rubble and perhaps opening another passage
- 7 A door ripped off its hinges
- 8 A fresco depicting an ancient ruler on a throne or in battle
- 9 Toppled statues make the area difficult terrain
- 10 Niches in the wall hold inanimate skeletons. 50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure
- 11 The cracks between the stones are green with mold
- 12 Fragments of old bones litter the floor

Ruin: Small Room Scenery

1	A chamber that's empty of furniture but hung with rotting paintings and tapestries. A chandelier lies smashed on the ground
2	An armory containing rotted bows and arrows. 30 percent chance of a dozen <i>+1 arrows</i> , a <i>javelin of lightning</i> , or similar magic item, in noticeably better condition than the other weapons
3	A musty dining room with rotted food on dusty plates
4	Cramped sleeping quarters for soldiers or servants; bunk beds line the walls. The beds are stuffed with moldy straw
5–6	A once luxurious bedroom with rotting bed covers, broken chests, and wardrobes filled with moth-eaten finery
7	A cold, dark bedchamber: the bed's sheets are bloodstained, and there is no fireplace or lighting
8	A dusty, untended shrine
9–10	A kitchen covered in spiderwebs. 50 percent chance of a locked cabinet containing vintage wines worth several hundred gold pieces
11	A store room containing crates of rusty tools and weapons
12	An empty prison containing shackles and torture implements
13	A workshop with ruined clocks of all sizes
14	A forge with stacks of rusty swords
15	Ranks of inanimate skeletons lie on bunks with rotting mattresses
16	A chapel to a death god
17	Sarcophagi, their lids carved to resemble armored knights
18	The cracks between the stones are green with mold
19	A campsite left by a group of previous adventurers; 50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure or half-completed map of the ruins
20	A trap that was triggered long ago but is now harmless

Ruin: Large Chamber Scenery

1	Stone benches, a defunct fountain, and smashed marble statues
2	A once beautiful throne room: the doors have been stripped of their gold inlays, statues are missing from pedestals, the fresco on the ceiling is faded and cracked, and the throne is marked with cavities where gems have been pried out
3–4	A columned audience chamber lined with defaced statues
5–6	A ruined banquet hall: long tables are broken, chairs are overturned or smashed, and shards of dusty glass litter the floor
7	A fire-blackened mess hall filled with tables and benches that crumble if any weight is placed on them
8	A store room containing paintings, statues, and furniture draped with dusty drop cloths
9	A library of scrolls that crumble when unrolled
10	A crypt containing 1d4 empty sarcophagi, their lids smashed
11–12	The ceiling on one side of the room has collapsed, creating an area of difficult terrain
13	A laboratory with a stitched-together corpse bound with electrum chains. A notebook describes repeated failed attempts to create a flesh golem
14	The cracks between the stones are green with mold
15	A ballroom in which every surface is carved with elaborate curlicues inlaid with gold. There is a raised stage in one corner
16	A chamber carpeted with bone fragments
17	A portrait gallery lined with aged and sinister-looking paintings
18	A chamber dedicated to some sport: a bowling alley, indoor pool, or wrestling arena
19	Water drips from the ceiling, puddling in small pools across the floor
20	Echoes in the chamber are accompanied by ghostly wails or whispers

Sewer

The typical sewers beneath fantasy cities are magnificent public works from a bygone age. A mishmash of deserted concourses, covered riverways, claustrophobic tunnels, and buried ruins, they are a royal road for thieves, monsters, and adventurers alike.

Tiers. Sewers are rarely tier 3 or 4. Below the sewers, deeper and more dangerous areas are usually ruins, tombs, or other locations.

Sewer Size. Each 100-foot-square node of a sewer contains passages. Some of these passage nodes also contain a room or chamber at an intersection or dead end. A sewer typically spans the oldest or richest parts of a city and can cover as much as a square mile.

Disease. Sewers are filthy. A humanoid that takes damage while in a sewer is exposed to disease. At the end of its next long rest, the creature must succeed on a DC 11 Constitution saving throw or be infected with sewer plague.

Creating a Sewer

To generate a new map, roll on the Description table for the initial area and follow its instructions, and then do so again to see what's past each exit, and so on. If you're filling a premade map, roll on Inhabitants and Contents for each location.

Sewer: Description

1-5	Narrow passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d6:
1	1 1/2 ft. pipe
2-3	2 1/2 ft. pipe
4-6	5 ft. tunnel
6-11	Passage. 10 feet wide. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits.
12-14	Wide passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d6:
1	15 ft.
2-3	20 ft., 5-foot-wide walkways on either side of flowing water
4-6	30 ft., 10-foot-wide catwalk or gallery above flowing water
15-20	Chamber. Roll on Chamber Contents and Exits. For chamber size, roll 1d6:
1	20 × 20 ft.
2	30 × 30 ft.

3-4	40 × 40 ft.
5	40 × 50 ft.
6	50 × 50 ft.

Sewer: Passage Contents

1-10	Empty
11-14	Roll on Passage Scenery
15	Roll on Novelties
16	Roll on Obstacles
17	Roll on Discoveries
18-20	Roll on Escalations

Sewer: Chamber Contents

1	Empty
2-5	Roll on Chamber Scenery
6-8	Roll on Novelties
9-11	Roll on Obstacles
12-13	Roll on Discoveries
14-16	Roll on Escalations and on Chamber Scenery
17-20	Roll on Set Pieces

Sewer: Exits

All exits are passages. Roll 1d12 on Description table for passage size.

1	No exits
2-3	One exit left
4-7	One exit straight
8-9	One exit right
10	Two exits, left and right
11-12	Two exits, left and straight
13-14	Two exits, straight and right
15-16	Three exits, left, straight, and right
17-20	Ascent or descent. Roll 1d12 to determine type. Then roll again on this table for other exits.
1-2	Slimy stone stairs down
3-4	Grating up
5	Grating down
6	Pipe up
7-8	Pipe down
9	Metal ladder up
10	Metal ladder down
11	Sloping waterway up or down (50 percent chance of each)
12	Pulley elevator up or down (50 percent chance of each)



Sewer: Novelties

- 1 A filthy altar surrounded by torches and arcane markings
- 2 Cult shrine to a prohibited faith
- 3 Amidst moldy bedrolls, a faded map of the sewers with various locations marked is pinned to the wall
- 4 Makeshift classroom. A selection of thieves' cant glyphs and their meanings is written on the wall
- 5 Bioluminescent, telepathic mold grows on the walls. It is friendly and converses telepathically with passers-by
- 6 A pool of congealed alchemical slurry. A creature that touches the slurry regains 3 (1d6) hit points, recovers a 1st-level spell slot, and becomes poisoned for 1 hour. The slurry then becomes inert
- 7 A gigantic snakeskin fills most of the room. The scales glow with a soft, iridescent light
- 8 A disused side passage is overgrown with edible fungus
- 9 A partially collapsed tunnel conceals a clean and dry area that provides sanctuary for one long rest

- 10 Makeshift docks line the banks of an underground river or lake
- 11 Steel or stone supports are spaced evenly around the area, indicating something unusually heavy above
- 12 Water flows from a pipe high on the wall, creating an oddly beautiful waterfall

Sewer: Obstacles

- 1 **Lock:** The entire area is flooded with sewage, and the valve to drain it is missing a handle. **Key:** A handle that fits the valve
- 2 **Lock:** An iron door has rusted shut (DC 18 Strength check to open). **Key:** A flask of a solution that dissolves the rust, allowing the door to operate freely
- 3 **Lock:** Jammed sluice gate. **Key:** Long bar that can pry open the gate
- 4 **Lock:** Iron grate secured with a padlock that has rusted solid (DC 18 Strength check to open). **Key:** A set of bolt cutters that can cut through the padlock
- 5 Pocket of poisonous gas. Area is affected as per the *cloudkill* spell

- 6 Vast pool of raw sewage with no apparent way across
- 7 Fast-moving storm drain current with no bridge across
- 8 A dry "sluice gate" in an odd place conceals an exit
- 9 Magical illusion of a mass of waste blocking an exit. DC 13 Perception check: no smell
- 10–11 A submerged exit leads to a flooded tunnel
- 12–13 A tight squeeze through an exit tunnel, 1d12 + 12 inches wide
- 14 Draining a cistern reveals a concealed exit
- 15–20 Trap based on the dungeon level: level 1–2 **acid bucket trap** or **slippery floor trap**; 3–4 **oil pool trap** or **poison gas trap**; 5–10 **gelatinous cube pit trap** or **ratling-catcher trap**; 11–16 **monster pit trap** or **water-filled room**; 17–20 **plague poison lock** or **water-filled dungeon**

Sewer: Discoveries

- 1–4 Roll 1d4 on the Obstacles table. You find the key listed in that entry. Make a note of the matching lock. The next Obstacle encountered is that lock.
- 5 Supply cache. Contains 2d6 days of rations, 1d4 50-foot coils of rope, two sets of climber's gear, a healer's kit, a hatchet, 1d4 ladders, a pickaxe, and two daggers
- 6 Armory. Contains 1d10 nonmagical simple or martial weapons and two suits of Medium or Small leather armor
- 7 Ratling larder. Crates of food are patrolled by cats that keep tiny vermin at bay
- 8 Cultist cache. Boxes and jars filled with ritual components and 2d6 *spell scrolls* of level 1d4 - 1 (results of 0 indicate a cantrip) are crammed in poorly concealed shelves
- 9 Minor Treasure hidden behind a waterfall of filth
- 10 Recently hatched dragon, smaller than a wyrmling (use stats for a **lizard**)
- 11 The sewer connects to the cellar of a noble's townhouse or other aboveground structure
- 12 The bottom of a wishing well; the area is strewn with 6d6 gp worth of copper and silver coins

Sewer: Escalations

50 percent of guards possess a Minor Treasure.

- 1 Guards: on patrol on behalf of the surface city or the sewer's local overlord (roll or choose from Set Pieces). Demand to know intruders' business
 - Level 1–2: 1d8 **bandits** or **guards**
 - Level 3–4: 1d8 **soldiers**; 3 **thugs**
 - Level 5–10: **veteran** with 1d6 **thugs**
 - Level 11–16: 2 or 3 **blackguards** or **gladiators**
 - Level 17–20: **assassin** with 1d6 + 4 **cutthroats** or **thugs**
- 2 Guards: skulking near their secret lair
 - Level 1–2: 1d8 **cultists**
 - Level 3–4: 3 or 4 **cutthroats** or **thugs**
 - Level 5–10: 2 or 3 **doppelgangers**
 - Level 11–16: 2 **cambions**, **night hags**, or **vampire spawn**
 - Level 17–20: **vampire** with **vampire spawn**
- 3 Intruders: stealthily passing by on their way somewhere else
 - Level 1–2: 1 or 2 **cutthroats** or **thugs**
 - Level 3–4: **doppelganger** or **oozefolk oozemancer** (DDG)
 - Level 5–10: **alchemist** or **assassin**
 - Level 11–16: **vampire**, **vampire assassin**, or **vampire mage**
 - Level 17–20: **master assassin**, **master thief**, or 2 **assassins**
- 4 Denizens: hunting
 - Level 1–2: 2 or 3 **ratling scavengers**
 - Level 3–4: **dire centipede**, **gelatinous cube**, or **gelatinous tube**
 - Level 5–10: 2 or 3 **euphoria jellies** (DDG) or **flash cubes** (DDG)
 - Level 11–16: **troll hulk** (DDG)
 - Level 17–20: 2 **assassins** or **ur-otyughs**
- 5 Denizens: in lair
 - Level 1–2: 2d4 **giant rats** or **poisonous snakes**
 - Level 3–4: 3 **ghouls** or **shadows**
 - Level 5–10: **otyugh**, **ur-otyugh**, or **sewer chimera**
 - Level 11–16: 2 **elder black puddings** or **otyughs**
 - Level 17–20: **rakshasa** with **cambion**
- 6–8 Roll 1d6 on this table to determine an encounter group. The group is nearby (in the nearest unexplored room) and may be detected by tracks, noises, flickering torchlight, or other signs

Sewer: Set Pieces

Set piece encounters usually feature a Treasure Hoard.

- 1–2 Criminal Hideout.** A gang or thieves' guild has a base here.
- Level 1–2: 1 or 2 **thugs** with 1d4 **bandits** or **wolves**
- Level 3–4: **crime boss** or **gladiator** with 1 or 2 **thugs**
- Level 5–10: **assassin** with 1 or 2 **veterans**
- Level 11–16: **archmage** or **master assassin** with 2 **assassins**
- Level 17–20: **master assassin** or 3 **gladiators** with 3 **assassins** and 1 **mage**
- Setting:** The area resembles an underground shantytown with numerous tight passages and close corners. Visibility is limited to a range of 20 feet before a corner or makeshift structure blocks line of sight.
- 3–4 Sewer Predator.** Something hungry and dangerous lurks under the water.
- Level 1–2: 2 **giant constrictor snakes**, **gibbering mouthers**, or **will-o'-wisps**
- Level 3–4: **giant crocodile** and 1d4 + 1 **crocodiles**; **sewer chimera**
- Level 5–10: **ur-otyugh** and 1 or 2 **otyughs**; **hydra**
- Level 11–16: **troll hulk** (DDG) and 2 or 3 **trolls**
- Level 17–20: **draconic horror** (DDG) and 2 or 3 **murmuring worms** or **behirs**
- Setting:** The creature's watery lair is full of unpredictable currents. On initiative count 20 each round, a wave sweeps through the area in a random direction. Creatures that fail a Strength saving throw (DC 10 + half dungeon level) are pushed 30 feet in the direction of the flow. The predators can choose to fail or automatically succeed on this saving throw.

- 5–6 Cult Cell.** Cultists hide their illicit activities below cities for many of the same reasons ordinary criminals do, and the reach of the sewer tunnels means they can snatch victims from anywhere.
- Level 1–2: **cult fanatic** with 1d4 **cultists**
- Level 3–4: 1 or 2 **cult fanatics** with 2 **oculites** (DDG)
- Level 5–10: **forgotten god** or **glabrezu** with 1d4 **cult fanatics**
- Level 11–16: **aboleth**, **aboleth champion** (DDG), and 1d6 **maw swarms** (DDG)
- Level 17–20: **aboleth fallen ascendant** (DDG), **aboleth**, and 2 or 3 **aboleth champions** (DDG)
- Setting:** The area features an altar and a central pool filled with black water that obscures the vision of trespassers only. Creatures with a swim speed gain total concealment while beneath the water. Cultists attempt to herd interlopers near the water.
- 7–8** Tide-driven stone gates close behind the adventurers, forcing them to escape via a 100-foot underwater swim through fetid water. At the start of each of its turns, each creature in the water must succeed on a Constitution saving throw (DC 10 + half dungeon level) or become poisoned and unable to hold its breath. At the end of the swim, a metal grate (DC 10 + half dungeon level Strength check to break) blocks the exit.
- 9–10** A sluice gate opens, creating a waterfall that sweeps the adventurers to a new area or out of the sewer. Each creature must make three Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution saving throws (their choice), taking 2 (1d4) damage per dungeon level per failure.

Sewer: Minor Treasure

- 1 Set of directions that leads to treasure—possibly in a mansion accessible through the sewer
- 2 *Spell scroll* containing a spell appropriate to the area's tier (tier 0: cantrip or level 1 spell, tier 1: level 2–3 spell, tier 2: level 4–5 spell, tier 3: level 6–7, tier 4: level 8–9)
- 3–6 Treasure worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 10 gp, tier 1: 100 gp, tier 2: 1,000 gp, tier 3: 10,000 gp, tier 4: 100,000 gp). Roll 1d10 to determine treasure type: 1–3 coins, 4–6 jewelry, 7–8 obviously stolen housewares, 9 fiendish idol, 10 forbidden tome
- 7 1d6 vials. Roll 1d6: 1–3 *potions of healing*, 5–6 *potions of water breathing*
- 8–10 Ring, necklace, or other jewelry, worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 25 gp, tier 1: 75 gp, tier 2: 750 gp, tier 3: 2,500 gp, tier 4: 25,000 gp)

Sewer: Treasure Hoards

Dungeon Level 1–2

Valuables: 1d4 × 100 gp in copper, silver, or gold coins
 Magic (30 percent chance): *pipes of the sewers* or *ring of swimming*

Dungeon Level 3–4

Valuables: 2d4 × 100 gp in gold coins or jewelry
 Magic (40 percent chance): *cloak of protection* or *ring of water walking*

Dungeon Level 5–10

Valuables: 1d6 × 1,000 gp in gold coins, bulky housewares, or jewelry
 Magic (50 percent chance): *dagger of venom* or *ring of evasion*

Dungeon Level 11–16

Valuables: 1d4 × 10,000 gp in gold and platinum coins or gems
 Magic (60 percent chance): *folding boat* or *nine lives stealer*

Dungeon Level 17–20

Valuables: 1d4 × 100,000 gp in gold coins, gems, or property deeds
 Magic (70 percent chance): *luck blade* or *well of many worlds*

Sewer: Passage Scenery

- 1–4 Footbridges across drainage channel in middle of passage
- 5–7 Filthy, stinking mud makes the area difficult terrain
- 8–9 Mundane graffiti or thieves' cant glyphs on walls. May contain useful information

- 10–11 Drainage channel covered with boards. There's a table and chairs and a couple of bookcases full of moldy books
- 12 An open secret door reveals empty barrels and crates
- 13 Predator's den containing gnawed bones and other garbage
- 14 Cement or stone blocks attached to chains, used by a local criminal element to dispose bodies
- 15 Sewer grate leads to a secret aboveground hideout
- 16 Ossuary. Neat stacks of humanoid bones fill niches. Memorial plaques identify the remains
- 17 Outflow tunnel. Water streams through a heavy grate into a nearby body of water, such as a river or lake
- 18 Benches and tools fill a makeshift workspace. The usual board flooring is reinforced with heavier beams and metal braces.
- 19 Abandoned, one-person hovel containing candles and a sleeping pallet
- 20 A stack of 10-foot poles affixed with hooks, used for dredging drainage channels

Sewer: Chamber Scenery

- 1–3 Storm runoff reservoir. The water is relatively clean and clear
- 4–7 Reservoir full of raw sewage
- 8–9 Flow control room. A vast array of pipes and valves
- 10–11 Fast-moving water with several sturdy access bridges across the flow
- 12 Maintenance storage area. Spare lengths of pipe are stacked neatly on pallets. Tools hang on peg boards behind locked gates
- 13 Barrels of lye and other chemicals (treat as acid) are covered in tarps
- 14 The exits are hatches like those found on a submarine
- 15 Eggs incubating in a nest of warm filth; depending on the tier, the eggs may hatch into giant centipedes, crocodiles, dinosaurs, or otyughs
- 16–17 One exit leads to ancient ruins. Switch to the **ruin** tables for the areas in this direction
- 18–19 One exit leads to catacombs. Switch to the **tomb** tables for the areas in this direction
- 20 One exit leads to natural caves. Switch to the **cavern** tables for the areas in this direction

Temple

Sand-choked shrines to ancient gods, abandoned abbeys, and cultists' crypts are built as places of worship and havens for the faithful, but are also designed to guard against profane intruders. A temple usually contains barracks, living areas, and well-defended sacred spaces.

Tiers. Temples range from catacombs at tier 0 to vast, underground cathedrals at higher tiers, with tiers 0 to 2 being the most common.

Temple Size. Each 50-foot-square node of a temple contains either a room or passage. A small temple is about 150 feet square (a 3 × 3 grid of nodes); a medium one is 250 feet square (a 5 × 5 grid); and a large one is 350 feet square (a 7 × 7 grid).

Signs of Faith. Adventurers clad in appropriate robes or holy symbols make Deception checks with advantage when trying to masquerade as inhabitants of the temple.

Creating a Temple

To generate a new map, roll on the Description table for the initial area and follow its instructions, and then do so again to see what's past each exit, and so on. If you're filling a premade map, roll on Inhabitants and Contents for each location.

Temple: Description

1	Narrow passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d6: 1–2 2 1/2 ft. 3–6 5 ft.
2–7:	Passage. 10 feet wide. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits.
8	Wide passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d4: 1 15 ft. 2–3 20 ft. 4 30 ft.
9–14	Small room. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For room size, roll 1d4: 1 15 × 15 ft. 2 15 × 20 ft. 3 20 × 20 ft. 4 20 × 30 ft.

15–20 Large chamber. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For chamber size, roll 1d6:

1	30 × 30 ft.
2	30 × 40 ft.
3–4	40 × 40 ft.
5	40 × 50 ft.
6	50 × 50 ft.

Temple: Passage Contents

1–10	Empty
11–14	Roll on Passage Scenery
15–18	Roll on Escalations
19–20	Roll on Obstacles

Temple: Room and Chamber Contents

Roll 1d20 in small room, 1d20 + 2 in large chamber

1–3	Empty
4–8	Roll on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
9–11	Roll on Novelties
12–14	Roll on Obstacles
15–16	Roll on Discoveries
17–19	Roll on Escalations and on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
20+	Roll on Set Pieces

Temple: Exits

If the die roll is odd, a room's exits are blocked by doors. Otherwise, they are open.

1–3	No exits
4–5	One exit left
6–7	One exit straight
8–9	One exit right
10–11	Two exits, left and right
12–13	Two exits, left and straight
14–15	Two exits, straight and right
16–18	Three exits, left, straight, and right
19–20	Stairs. Roll 1d8 to determine stair type. Then roll again on this table for other exits. 1–2 Stone stairs down 3 Stone spiral staircase down 4 Trapdoor down (50 percent chance concealed under rug or furniture) 5 Round pit with metal ladder rungs, descending 1d4 levels 6 Stone spiral staircase up



Temple: Novelties

- 1 Huge, unlocked door made of semiprecious stone. The door's etchings illustrate the mythical creation or destruction of the world
- 2 A vaulted, echoing chamber filled with 10-foot-tall statues. The statues sing beautiful liturgical music
- 3 This room's ceiling is radiant with a permanent *sunlight* spell. The ground is covered with grass and flowers. A tree grows in the middle of the room
- 4 Altar on an island rising from a lake of magma
- 5 Massive wall or cliff face pierced with sleeping cells. Ladders provide access to each cell
- 6 A giant-sized throne, empty or supporting a Gargantuan inanimate skeleton
- 7 Ritual room with a floor etched with an arcane circle; flaming skeletons hang from the ceiling like chandeliers
- 8 Nave of a cathedral decorated with animated stained glass windows or tapestries
- 9 An immense sword is planted into the floor and can't be removed. It radiates divination magic. A creature that touches the sword gains the benefits of a *detect evil and good* spell for 10 minutes

- 10 Morgue containing six stone slabs, each of which supports an apparently fresh corpse. A magic field encompasses the room; any corpse in the room gains the benefit of *gentle repose*, and it can answer three questions per day as if targeted by a *speak with dead* spell
- 11 A font or fountain fills with 5 gallons of water or holy water when touched
- 12 A cloud of illusory butterflies, moths, or tiny angels fills the area, limiting visibility to 10 feet

Temple: Obstacles

- 1 **Lock:** An animated statue or stone guardian stands in front of a door, attacking anyone who tries to pass. **Key:** A clay figurine with the word "stag" carved into its chest. Speaking this password deactivates the guardian
- 2 **Lock:** *Arcane locked door*, above which is written "Passage is denied to unbelievers." The passphrase "Only the divine name opens the gates" causes the door to open. **Key:** A holy book on a lectern, with a bookmark at the passage "Passage is denied to unbelievers. Only the divine name opens the gates"

- 3** **Lock:** A permanent *wall of fire* covers an archway of green stone. **Key:** A chest containing 10 pendants of green stone, each depicting a figure walking through fire. Anyone wearing a pendant can walk through the *wall of fire* unharmed
- 4** **Lock:** A magically sealed white door. Anyone who can't see the door can open it. **Key:** A tapestry shows a blindfolded person opening a white door
- 5** Doorways to the left and right; one door is blocked by a portcullis. A lever beyond the open door lowers one portcullis and raises the other
- 6–7** Tapestry depicts the gates to a divine or fiendish domain. Concealed behind the tapestry is a door. (Examination or DC 15 Perception check: a draft ruffles the tapestry)
- 8–9** An unlit fireplace flanked by two wall-mounted candelabras. (Examination or DC 15 Perception check: One of the candelabras is shinier as if frequently touched. Pulling the candelabra opens a secret door)
- 10** Door inscribed with the words "The Door of Night." It unlocks in total darkness and locks when in light
- 11** Before crossing a certain threshold, unbelievers must make a Wisdom saving throw (DC 10 + half dungeon level) or become frightened. Frightened creatures who proceed take 2 (1d4) psychic damage per dungeon level
- 12** Creatures must make a Deception or Religion check (DC 10 + half dungeon level) to recite a prayer before entering the area. A creature that fails to recite the proper prayer suffers 1 level of strife
- 13–20** Trap based on the dungeon level: level 1–2 **commanding voice trap** or **intoxicating brazier trap**; 3–4 **cursed altar** or **sacred flame gem trap**; 5–10 **bright mirror trap** or **sword guardian trap**; 11–16 **contagion trap** or **geas trap**; 17–20 **forbidden tome** or **guilty soul trap**

Temple: Discoveries

- 1–4** Roll 1d4 on the Obstacles table. You find the key listed in that entry. Make a note of the matching lock. The next Obstacle encountered is that lock
- 5** Lone creature from a guard patrol (1 or 2 on Escalations table), not particularly loyal and willing to talk

- 6** Guard patrol (1 or 2 on Escalations table) controlled by a heretical faction that seeks to overthrow the temple's leader. From now on, 50 percent of Escalations are with the heretical faction
- 7** Guard patrol (1 or 2 on Escalations table) loyal to a paranoid leader trying to root out heretics. From now on, 50 percent of Escalations are with the heretical faction
- 8** Acolyte washing the floor; trusting and helpful
- 9** A dusty armory contains a locked and trapped chest. Inside is a *+1 weapon* that deals +2d6 radiant damage to creatures that worship the temple's deity
- 10** Behind a sliding wall (DC 12 Perception check) is an abandoned chapel to another god. It contains a Minor Treasure and can be used as a haven until enemies discover it
- 11** A comfortable lounge with furniture and bookcases on the floor, walls, and ceiling. Gravity in this room is relative: anyone can effortlessly walk up the wall and across the ceiling. 50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure in an end-table drawer on the ceiling
- 12** Locked treasure vault containing chests of coins and holy items (one Treasure Hoard and one Minor Treasure)

Temple: Escalations

50 percent of guards possess a Minor Treasure.

- 1** Guards: may attack intruders unless they're wearing the proper robes or holy symbols
 Level 1–2: **acolyte** with 1d4 **zombies**
 Level 3–4: 3 or 4 **soldiers** or **scouts**
 Level 5–10: **blackguard** with **guard squad**; 2 **priests** with 1d6 **scouts**
 Level 11–16: **priest** with 3 **shadow demons**
 Level 17–20: **mage** with 2 **invisible stalkers**
- 2** Guards: may attack intruders who don't speak the right password
 Level 1–2: 1d8 **cultists** or **guards**
 Level 3–4: **priest** with 1d4 **acolytes**
 Level 5–10: **bone devil** or **ogre mage**
 Level 11–16: 3 or 4 **clockwork sentinels** or **veterans**
 Level 17–20: **knight captain** with **guard squad**; **mage** with **shield guardian** and **earth elemental**

3 Denizens: a faction that predates and is hostile to the local overlord (roll or choose from Set Pieces)

Level 1–2: 1d4 **acolytes** or **skeletons**

Level 3–4: **cult fanatic** with 1d8 **cultists**

Level 5–10: 2 or 3 **mummies**, **skeletal champions**, or **walking statues**

Level 11–16: **ascetic grandmaster**, **vampire**, or **vampire assassin**

Level 17–20: 2 **bone devils** or **cyclops myrmidons**

4 Guards: patrolling

Level 1–2: 1d4 **guards** or **flying swords**

Level 3–4: **acolyte** with 1d8 **zombies**

Level 5–10: 2 or 3 **hell hounds** or **horde demons**

Level 11–16: 4 or 5 **wights** or **zombie knights**

Level 17–20: **adult black dragon lich**; **demilich**

5 Guardians: protecting a sacred space

Level 1–2: 1 or 2 **death dogs** or **spies**

Level 3–4: **ghost** or **mummy**

Level 5–10: **hydra**

Level 11–16: 4 **elementals** (one per element)

Level 17–20: **stone guardian** with 3 **walking statues**; **solar**

6 Guardians: lurking

Level 1–2: **animated armor** or **ghast**

Level 3–4: 2 **gargoyles**

Level 5–10: 2 or 3 **mummies**

Level 11–16: **crusher** with **flame-spitting statue**; 2 **invisible stalkers**

Level 17–20: 2 **chain devils** or **erinyes**

7–10 Roll 1d6 on this table to determine an encounter group. The group is nearby (in the nearest unexplored room) and may be detected by tracks, noises, flickering torchlight, or other signs

Temple: Set Pieces

Set piece encounters usually feature a Treasure Hoard.

1–2 **Return of the Kings.** Freed after a long imprisonment, immortal monsters prepare to venture forth and restore their ancient empire or religion. They need knowledgeable advisors—or captives—who can inform them about the state of the modern world.

Level 1–2: **priest** with 1d4 **skeletons**

Level 3–4: **priest** with 1 or 2 **zombie knights**; 2 **lamias**

Level 5–10: **deva** or **forgotten god** with 2 **high priests**

Level 11–16: **mummy lord** with 3 or 4 **mummies**

Level 17–20: **dread knight champion** with 3 or 4 **skeletal champions**; **balor** with 2 **priests** and 4 **veterans**

Setting: Throne room decorated with tapestries. Behind one tapestry is a permanent *gate* leading to another plane.

3–4 **Secret Society.** The leaders of this shrine are dedicated to hiding secret knowledge, prophecies, or an artifact from the outside world. They fight anyone who reaches their inner sanctum.

Level 1–2: **priest** with 1 or 2 **acolytes**

Level 3–4: **priest** with **nightmare** or **walking statue**

Level 5–10: **guardian naga** with 1 to 3 **basilisks**

Level 11–16: **archpriest** with **clay guardian**; 2 **planetars**

Level 17–20: **greater sphinx** with 2 **sphinxes** or **stone guardians**; **lich** with 6 **hell hounds**

Setting: The floor's tiles represent a labyrinth. Whenever a creature first walks on its turn, it can make an Intelligence check. The result is the number of feet it can move on its turn without stepping over a line. The first time on its turn that a creature steps over a line, it takes psychic damage equal to the dungeon's level. The room's inhabitants are immune to this damage.

5–6 **Holy Terror.** The leaders of this cult are preparing a ritual to loose an extraplanar being into the world or summon a powerful undead creature. Their plans are on the verge of completion.

Level 1–2: **cult fanatic** with 1 or 2 **cultists**

Level 3–4: **priest** with **cambion** or **malcubus**

Level 5–10: **high priest** with 1d4 **mummies** or **skeletal champions**; 3 **cambions** with 1d6 + 3 **thugs**

Level 11–16: **archpriest** with **chained one** and 1d8 **cultists**; **archmage** with 4 **knights** and 2d8 **cultists**

Level 17–20: **archpriest** or **planetar** with **solar** and 5 or 6 **priests**

Setting: A 20-foot-diameter portal is forming on the far side of the room. It is an object with AC 10, 20 × the dungeon's level hit points, and immunity to bludgeoning, piercing, slashing, psychic, and poison damage. If the portal is destroyed, the ritual is ruined. Ladders lead to a balcony around the room.

- 7–8 The characters gain an audience with a powerful being in service to the temple's god, such as an **archpriest** or **solar**. The being offers them a choice of two magic treasures, one holy, one cursed. Characters can use their knowledge of religion and clues from the temple's artwork and statuary to determine which is the holy item.
- 9–10 Characters who immerse themselves in a magical pool gain a vision of the past that illuminates the present.

Temple: Minor Treasure

- 1–2 Book of prayers or forbidden lore containing a rare version of a spell from the cleric or warlock spell list (such as *Sebirus's Imprisoning Skeletal Hands* (DDG))
- 3–4 *Spell scroll* containing a spell from the cleric list appropriate to the area's tier (tier 0: cantrip or level 1 spell, tier 1: level 2–3 spell, tier 2: level 4–5 spell, tier 3: level 6–7, tier 4: level 8–9)
- 5 Jeweled holy symbol, gem, or bag of coins worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 10 gp, tier 1: 100 gp, tier 2: 1,000 gp, tier 3: 10,000 gp, tier 4: 100,000 gp)
- 6 Holy symbol, garment, or weapon that once belonged to a holy person. Acts as a single bead of *necklace of prayer beads*
- 7 1d6 vials. Roll 1d6: 1–2 holy water, 3–4 *potions of healing*, 5–6 *potions of greater healing*
- 8 Heretical documents that portray the faith in a startling new light or reveal corruption within its ranks
- 9 Holy book that reveals a cosmic secret (such as a previously unknown familial or romantic relationship between a good and evil god)
- 10 Sentient item, such as a skeletal hand, a *+1 weapon*, or a holy symbol. It has Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores of 10 + 1d6, can communicate telepathically with a creature touching it, and has a goal it wishes to fulfill

Temple: Treasure Hoards

Dungeon Level 1–2

Valuables: 1d4 × 100 gp in jewelry, rare silks, or bulky tapestries
 Magic (30 percent chance): *pearl of power* or *periapt of health*

Dungeon Level 3–4

Valuables: 24 × 100 gp in gold coins, gilded artworks, or precious metal idols
 Magic (40 percent chance): *bowl of commanding water elementals* or *staff of the python*

Dungeon Level 5–10

Valuables: 1d6 × 1,000 gp in gold coins, rare books worth 1,000 gp each, or gold tableware
 Magic (50 percent chance): *magic mirror* (handheld) or *necklace of prayer beads*

Dungeon Level 11–16

Valuables: 1d4 × 10,000 gp in platinum coins, holy relics, or jewelry
 Magic (60 percent chance): *amulet of health* or *mace of smiting*

Dungeon Level 17–20

Valuables: 1d4 × 100,000 gp in platinum coins, gems, gold idols, or jeweled holy relics
 Magic (70 percent chance): *crystal ball* or *talisman of pure good*

Temple: Passage Scenery

- 1 A fresco, mosaic, or tapestry depicting a god, ritual, myth, holy symbol, or sacrifice
- 2 Lit braziers
- 3 Statues or busts depicting gods or holy champions
- 4 Niches in the wall contain statuettes or candles (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 5 Lectern bearing a holy book (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure)
- 6 Stone slabs set into the floor each bear a name and dates. The slabs are the lids of underground sarcophagi
- 7 Wet, scrubbed floor; nearby are buckets of water
- 8 Wall-mounted shields, each etched or painted with a holy symbol

Temple: Small Room Scenery

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 1-2 | Cabinets stocked with vestments, ritual books, candles, incense, and holy symbols (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |
| 3-4 | Chapel or shrine with an altar and a few benches |
| 5 | Armory. Roll d4: 1 chain mail and martial weapons, 2 light armor and simple weapons, 3 ranged weapons, ammunition, ballistas, and bolts, 4 holy water and <i>potions of healing</i> (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |
| 6 | A comfortable bedroom with beds, chests, and wardrobes for 1d4 + 2 occupants. On the walls are weapon racks, armor stands, and religious paintings (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |
| 7 | Sparsely furnished bedroom or cell for 1d4 occupants |
| 8 | Latrine or bath |
| 9 | A luxurious dining room with fine wine and silver plates |
| 10 | Ritual room containing a scrying pool |
| 11 | Morgue where corpses are ritually prepared for burial. Contains stone slabs, empty sarcophagi, and chests packed with burial shrouds |
| 12 | Crypt with an altar, religious statues, and a sarcophagus topped with a stone angel (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |
| 13 | Guardroom containing weapon racks, a fireplace, and a small shrine |
| 14 | Kitchen with a baker's oven and bread-baking ingredients |
| 15 | Kitchen where dead animals are being butchered and cooked |
| 16 | Pantry stocked with flour and beans and hung with herbs |
| 17 | Pantry stocked with fine wines, sweetmeats, and expensive spices |
| 18 | Library containing forbidden texts (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |
| 19 | Study containing a fireplace, comfortable chairs, bookshelves, and a desk covered with sheafs of notes (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |
| 20 | Store room containing paintings, statues, and furniture draped with dusty drop cloths (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |

Temple: Large Chamber Scenery

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1 | An audience chamber: rows of benches or pews face a dais |
| 2 | A richly decorated throne room: the doors are inlaid with gold, the ceiling is a magnificent religious painting, and the throne is carved to resemble the seat of a god |
| 3 | A dining hall: religious passages warning against gluttony are carved into the walls |
| 4 | A banquet hall with long tables, stacks of clay bowls, and a gruel-filled cauldron in a huge fireplace |
| 5 | Barracks or communal sleeping chamber |
| 6 | Dormitory containing bunk beds, chests of identical uniforms or vestments, and a small shrine |
| 7 | Temple with an altar or pulpit surrounded by benches |
| 8 | Temple containing statues of gods and divine servants. The altar is a stone slab |
| 9 | Temple with a balcony, an altar atop a dais, and braziers of incense (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |
| 10 | Scriptorium containing desks, writing supplies, and shelves of scrolls (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |
| 11 | Training room containing armor, shields, and stacks of prayer books. Against one wall are scorched training dummies |
| 12 | A giant pipe organ (50 percent chance one note doesn't play; a Minor Treasure is hidden in one of the pipes) |
| 13 | Crypt containing sarcophagi (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |
| 14 | A guardroom decorated with war banners and shields. Candles, decks of cards, and empty wine bottles litter several small tables |
| 15 | Kitchen where vast quantities of gruel or soup are being prepared |
| 16 | Library containing religious texts |
| 17 | Store room containing odds and ends of all sorts: religious vestments, barrels of food-stuffs, statues, a ballista (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |
| 18 | Room where holy water is blessed. 2d6 full vials sit on an altar. Fonts, statues, and holy books fill the room |
| 19 | A magical prison with several cells. Each cell is filled with a permanent <i>antimagic zone</i> (DDG) |
| 20 | Library under the effects of a permanent <i>silence</i> spell. The doors to this room bear a sign that reads "Silence in the reading room!" (50 percent chance of a Minor Treasure) |

Tomb

Catacombs, barrows, and graveyards are frequently the realms of the undead—although living necromancers and sinister priests may also frequent them. Unlike most other types of dungeon, a tomb has little need for bedrooms, kitchens, and the other requirements of the living.

Tiers. Tombs are common adventuring locations at any tier. While low-level tombs feature skeletons and ghouls, others are home to mighty vampires, dread knights, and dragon liches.

Tomb Size. Each 50-foot-square node of a tomb contains either a room or passage. A small tomb is about 150 feet square (a 3 × 3 grid of nodes); a medium one is 250 feet square (a 5 × 5 grid); and a large one is 350 feet square (a 7 × 7 grid).

Unholy. The influence of the gods can't reach easily into areas overrun with undead creatures. In some tombs, checks to turn undead are made with disadvantage.

Creating a Tomb

To generate a new map, roll on the Description table for the initial area and follow its instructions, and then do so again to see what's past each exit, and so on. If you're filling a premade map, roll on Inhabitants and Contents for each location.

Tomb: Description

1	Narrow passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d6: 1–2 2 1/2 ft. 3–6 5 ft.
2–7	Passage. 10 feet wide. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits.
8	Wide passage. Roll on Passage Contents and Exits. For passage width, roll 1d4: 1 15 ft. 2–3 20 ft. 4 30 ft.
9–14	Small room. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For room size, roll 1d4: 1 15 × 15 ft. 2 15 × 20 ft. 3 20 × 20 ft. 4 20 × 30 ft.

15–20 Large chamber. Roll on Room and Chamber Contents and Exits. For chamber size, roll 1d6:

1	30 × 30 ft.
2	30 × 40 ft.
3	40 × 40 ft.
4	50 × 50 ft.

Tomb: Passage Contents

1–10	Empty
11–14	Roll on Passage Scenery
15–18	Roll on Escalations
19–20	Roll on Obstacles

Tomb: Room and Chamber Contents

Roll 1d20 in small room, 1d20 + 2 in large chamber

1–3	Empty
4–8	Roll on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
9–11	Roll on Novelties
12–14	Roll on Obstacles
15–16	Roll on Discoveries
17–19	Roll on Escalations and on Small Room Scenery or Large Chamber Scenery
20+	Roll on Set Pieces

Tomb: Exits

If the die roll is odd, a room's exits are blocked by doors. Otherwise, they are open.

1–3	No exits
4–5	One exit left
6–7	One exit straight
8–9	One exit right
10–11	Two exits, left and right
12–13	Two exits, left and straight
14–15	Two exits, straight and right
16–18	Three exits, left, straight, and right
19–20	Stairs. Roll 1d8 to determine stair type. Then roll again on this table for other exits. 1–2 Stone stairs down 3 Stone spiral staircase down 4 Ladder up or down (50 percent chance of each) 5 Stone spiral staircase up 6 Sloping passage up or down (50 percent chance of each)

Tomb: Novelties

- 1 Pitch-black room that can't be lit by any means
- 2 An undead skeletal **elephant** (follows orders but doesn't attack) digging graves with its tusks. It's too big to go through the door. Nearby is a wooden case, 8 feet long, big enough to pack the skeleton's bones. The case is narrow enough to fit through the door
- 3 An empty sarcophagus. The carving on the lid magically transforms to depict the most recent person to enter the room
- 4 Giant hourglasses rise to the ceiling like pillars. Some are nearly full and some have nearly run out. Each is labeled with a well-known name. If an hourglass is broken, that person instantly dies
- 5 An enormous statue of a skeletal reaper, so big its hunched shoulders brush the ceiling. The statue's eyes glow blue. The life energy of any creature that dies on this dungeon level flows visibly into the statue. The creature can't be raised as undead or resurrected by any means short of *true resurrection* until the statue is destroyed
- 6 Blood drips from red stalactites into bloody pools
- 7 The doors in this dungeon are grave steles or featureless slabs of black stone; you can't open them but you can pass through them as if they were illusory
- 8 The dungeon is lit by ghostly, glowing apparitions that can't affect or be affected by living creatures
- 9 Dust gathers in the corners of every room. No amount of sweeping can clear the dust completely
- 10 Living creatures appear skeletal when reflected in a mirror

Tomb: Obstacles

- 1 **Lock:** A door with a keyhole in the eye socket of a skeleton. **Key:** A key made of bone with a skull-shaped handle
- 2 **Lock:** An *arcane locked* door imprinted with the indentation of a skeletal hand. The door can be pushed open easily by any dead or skeletal hand. **Key:** A skeletal arm and hand
- 3 **Lock:** An *arcane locked* door etched with a riddle: "Speak the name of the last door you will open." Speaking the answer (Death) unlocks the door. **Key:** A skull etched in gold with the words "Remember death, the last door"

- 4 **Lock:** An *arcane locked* stone door set with three opals, with an indentation where a fourth is missing. The door unlocks if an opal is placed in the missing slot. **Key:** An opal
- 5 A coffin leans against the wall. Opening the coffin reveals a door to the next area
- 6 Passage or doorway is completely blocked by bones, requiring a DC 14 Strength check or several minutes of work to clear
- 7 Alcoves contain **skeletons** that attack if touched
- 8 Skeletal arms reach from the walls and floor to grab passing creatures (escape DC 14)
- 9 Visions of dead loved ones or rivals appear to the characters. The visions are harmless, but each player must describe who their character sees
- 10-17 Trap based on the dungeon level: level 1-2 **darkness statue** or **hidden pit trap**; 3-4 **gnashing teeth trap** or **scorpion needle trap**; 5-10 **hourglass room** or **poison spiked pit trap**; 11-16 **black tentacles trap** or **symbol of death trap**; 17-20 **balor trap** or **poison dart skulls**
- 18-20 Burial chamber containing a Treasure Hoard and an elite trap: level 1-2 **false hoard trap**; 3-4 **sacred flame gem trap**; 5-10 **ghost trap**; 11-16 **rolling icosahedron**; 17-20 **deepest collapsing dungeon**

Tomb: Discoveries

- 1-4 Roll 1d4 on the Obstacles table. You find the key listed in that entry. Make a note of the matching lock. The next Obstacle encountered is that lock.
- 5 Nonhostile **ghost** or **skeleton** repeating its daily routine, traveling from place to place, possibly opening secret doors, bypassing traps, or revealing other secrets
- 6 Talking skull that is eager to exchange information for conversation
- 7 A vase containing 1d4 *spell scrolls of speak with dead*
- 8 An inanimate corpse holding a magic weapon
- 9 A gold and silver-etched coffin, weighing a ton and worth 50 gp (or 5,000 gp on dungeon level 7 or higher), surrounded by luxury goods and a Treasure Hoard
- 10 A sarcophagus with a map or clue carved into the lid

- 11 A corpse clutches a *wand of secrets* that functions only inside the tomb
- 12 A **skeleton** that obeys the characters' commands. The skeleton collapses into a pile of bones if reduced to 0 hit points or if ordered to leave the tomb

Tomb: Escalations

25 percent of guards possess a Minor Treasure.

- 1 Undead guards: on patrol. If they meet living creatures, they attack while sending messengers to the local overlord (roll or choose from Set Pieces)
- Level 1–2: 1d4 **skeletons** or **zombies**
 Level 3–4: **mummy**
 Level 5–10: 1 or 2 **wraiths**
 Level 11–16: **skeletal warlord (DDG)** with **skeleton horde**; 3 **wraiths**
 Level 17–20: **wraith lord** with 2 **wraiths**; 2 **vampires**
- 2 Intelligent undead: will grant passage or offer information for a price
- Level 1–2: **ghoul**
 Level 3–4: **wight**
 Level 5–10: 1 or 2 **revenants** or **vampire spawn**
 Level 11–16: **vampire**
 Level 17–20: **vampire warrior** with 1 or 2 **vampire spawn**
- 3 Guardians: attack if disturbed
- Level 1–2: 1d4 **skeletons** or **zombies**
 Level 3–4: **ghost** or **walking statue**
 Level 5–10: 1 or 2 **wraiths**
 Level 11–16: **warlord's ghost** with 2 to 4 **zombie knights**; **banshee** with 2 or 3 **wights**
 Level 17–20: 2 **bone devils** or **vengeful ghosts**
- 4 Guardians: attack on sight
- Level 1–2: 1d4 **giant poisonous snakes** or **swarms of bats**
 Level 3–4: 3 or 4 **death dogs** or **ghouls**
 Level 5–10: **zombie knight** with **skeleton horde** or **zombie horde**; 2 or 3 **wights**
 Level 11–16: **vampire assassin** or **vampire**
 Level 17–20: **rakshasa** with 2 **bearded devils**
- 5 Guardians: guarding a location
- Level 1–2: 2d4 **bonespaw** (DDG)
 Level 3–4: 3 or 4 **animated armor** or **skeleton immortals** (DDG)

- Level 5–10: 3 to 5 **ogre zombies**
 Level 11–16: 3 or 4 **shadow demons**
 Level 17–20: **vampire** or **vampire mage** with **vampire spawn**

- 6 Guardians: hungry
- Level 1–2: 1 or 2 **ghouls** or **shadows**
 Level 3–4: 1 or 2 **ghasts**
 Level 5–10: 2 or 3 **ghosts**
 Level 11–16: **forgotten god** with 2d10 **skeletons**; 3 **wights**
 Level 17–20: 2 **vampires**

- 7–10 Roll 1d6 on this table to determine an encounter group. The group is nearby (in the nearest unexplored room) and may be detected by tracks, noises, flickering torchlight, or other signs

Tomb: Set Pieces

Set piece encounters usually feature a Treasure Hoard.

- 1–2 **Undead Prison.** A beam of blue moonlight shines down from a moon painted on the ceiling. The moonbeam engulfs a sarcophagus. Inside the sarcophagus is an imprisoned undead creature. Opening the sarcophagus or blocking the moonbeam frees the creature.
- Level 1–2: **banshee** or **wight**
 Level 3–4: **revenant**, its vengeance focused on the characters (when the revenant is released, 1d4 **specters** also appear)
 Level 5–10: **mummy lord**
 Level 11–16: **demilich**
 Level 17–20: **demilich** or **dread knight champion**

Setting: The beam of moonlight acts as a permanent *moonbeam* spell that damages undead creatures only.

- 3–4 **Army of Darkness.** An undead creature gathers an army to sweep away the living.
- Level 1–2: **wight** with 3 or 4 **zombies**. Reinforcements: 1d6 **bonespaw** (DDG)
 Level 3–4: **wraith** with 1d4 **specters**. Reinforcements: 1d4 **specters**
 Level 5–10: **skeletal warlord (DDG)** with 1d4 **skeleton immortals (DDG)**. Reinforcements: 1d4 **skeleton immortals**
 Level 11–16: **vampire warrior** with 2 **vampire spawn**. Reinforcements: **vampire spawn**
 Level 17–20: **mummy lord** or **wraith lord** with 2 or 3 **wraiths**. Reinforcements: 1 or 2 **wraiths**

Setting: At the end of each round, reinforcements arrive, clawing up from the ground or floating through the walls.

5–6 Death Magic. A spellcaster commands an army, their eyes fixed on conquest.

Level 1–2: **priest** with 1d8 **bonespawn** (DDG)

Level 3–4: **high priest, mage, or necromancer** with 3 or 4 **skeletons** or **zombies**

Level 5–10: **archmage, forgotten god, or vampire mage** with 3 or 4 **ogre zombies**

Level 11–16: **archmage, archpriest, or adult black dragon lich** with 1d4 + 1 **wraiths**

Level 17–20: **lich** with 4 **ghosts** or **shadow demons**

Setting: The area glows with arcane runes. A creature can use an action to make an Arcana check (equal to the spellcaster's DC) to deactivate a rune. When the spellcaster is reduced to half its hit points or less, all destroyed undead creatures return to full health unless all runes have been deactivated.

7–8 The tomb is cleansed only if you complete a powerful spirit's unfinished work. Roll 1d6: 1–2 deliver a message, 3–4 take revenge on a killer, 5–6 recover a piece of stolen burial treasure

Tomb: Minor Treasure

- 1** Burial mask with value appropriate to tier (tier 0 or 1: 50 gp, tier 2: 500 gp, tier 3 or 4: 5,000 gp)
- 2** *Spell scroll* containing a spell appropriate to the area's tier (tier 0: cantrip or level 1 spell, tier 1: level 2–3 spell, tier 2: level 4–5 spell, tier 3: level 6–7, tier 4: level 8–9)
- 3–6** Coins or jewelry worth an amount appropriate to the tier (tier 0: 25 gp, tier 1: 75 gp, tier 2: 750 gp, tier 3: 7,500 gp, tier 4: 75,000 gp). 25 percent chance that the item is an easily identifiable crown, signet ring, or other item associated with a historical figure or family
- 7** 1d6 vials. Roll 1d6: 1–3 *potions of healing*, 5–6 *potions of greater healing*
- 8** Magic weapon or shield appropriate to tier (tier 0 or 1: +1 item, tier 2: +2 item, tier 3 or 4: +3 item)
- 9** Bulky grave goods (gilded furniture, ewers, fine clothes, masterwork weapons, etc.) with value appropriate to tier (tier 0 or 1: 100 gp, tier 2: 1,000 gp, tier 3: 10,000 gp, tier 4: 100,000 gp)
- 10** Prayer scrolls. Studying one grants a cleric or paladin a new rare spell or a spell not on their normal spell list
- 11** A magic potion that changes your type and appearance to undead for 24 hours
- 12** A diamond worth an amount appropriate to tier (tier 0 or 1: 300 gp, tier 2: 500 gp, tier 3: 25,000 gp, tier 4: 25,000 gp)

Tomb: Treasure Hoards

Dungeon Level 1–2

Valuables: 1d4 × 100 gp in jewelry

Magic (30 percent chance): +1 *breastplate*, +1 *scales mail*, or +1 *weapon*

Dungeon Level 3–4

Valuables: 2d4 × 100 gp in silver and gold coins or jewelry

Magic (40 percent chance): *pipes of haunting* or *spirit lantern*

Dungeon Level 5–10

Valuables: 1d6 × 1,000 gp in gilded grave goods, jeweled masterwork weapons or instruments worth 500 gp each, or artworks

Magic (50 percent chance): *dimensional shackles* or *sword of life stealing*

Dungeon Level 11–16

Valuables: 1d4 × 10,000 gp worth of gold and platinum coins, jewelry such as crowns, scepters, and necklaces, or gems

Magic (60 percent chance): *mace of terror* or *Emperor's blade*

Dungeon Level 17–20

Valuables: 1d4 × 100,000 in gold coins, hundreds of pounds of golden statues and furniture, or jeweled weapons and implements worth 10,000 gp each

Magic (70 percent chance): *holy avenger* or *scarab of protection*

Tomb: Passage Scenery

- 1** Dusty floor criss-crossed by skeletal footprints
- 2** Skulls mortared into the walls
- 3** Alcoves contain inanimate skeletons
- 4** Bones or inanimate mummies heaped against the walls
- 5** Necromantic runes carved into the walls and floor
- 6** A bas relief of skeletons, angels, or tormented souls
- 7** Shovels and a dirt-filled wheelbarrow
- 8** Everburning torches in wall brackets
- 9** Bloodstained floors and walls
- 10** An ice-cold draft



Tomb: Small Room Scenery

- 1 Antechamber filled with uncomfortable pews intended for mourners and other visitors
- 2 Dusty, abandoned chapel
- 3 Chapel under the influence of the *hallow* spell
- 4 Unholy chapel with a bloody stone altar, lit by candles in skulls
- 5 Jars containing knucklebones, for use in divination magic
- 6–8 Crypt containing 1d6 sarcophagi
- 9 Crypt containing niches filled with bones
- 10 Crypt containing caskets and a dusty pipe organ
- 11 Dozens of empty graves dug into the earth floor, each with a pile of dirt next to it. Shovels nearby
- 12 A guardroom with musty beds and an altar to the god of death

Tomb: Large Chamber Scenery

- 1 Room contains mirrors, scrying pools, and other ritual divination equipment
- 2 Skulls carved in bas relief; a ritual circle is etched into the floor
- 3 Canopic jars sealed with symbols of death. One jar contains a Minor Treasure
- 4 The room is ringed by a balcony accessible by stone steps. Dozens of inanimate skeletons stand atop the balcony
- 5 A giant-sized statue of a deity or mortal hero stands in the middle of the room. Stone coffins are arranged along the walls
- 6 Square stone slabs set into the walls, each with a name and date. Behind each is a niche containing bones
- 7 A dozen glass-walled tanks of brine, each containing a perfectly preserved corpse
- 8 A dozen open sarcophagi containing inanimate mummies, each wearing a death mask
- 9 A funeral barge too big to fit through the door. On the deck is an inanimate mummy and a Minor Treasure
- 10 A life-sized equestrian statue. The statue can be pushed across the floor, revealing a trapdoor leading to a tomb and a Treasure Hoard
- 11 Hundreds of unlidded pots, each containing the bones of an inanimate skeleton
- 12 Dozens of dusty wooden coffins, some splintered open and empty

3-Page Dungeons

Every dungeon doesn't need to be an epic multi-level adventure. Sometimes you need a quick pre-prepared villain's lair or subterranean side trek. If you don't feel inclined to randomly generate a dungeon on the fly, you can use one of the following eight mini-dungeon adventures.

Using Adventures for Parts

When running these or any other published adventures, you have several options: you can use them as written; make tweaks to make them suitable for your gaming group, such as replacing a monster with one of your campaign villains; or you can disassemble an adventure and use it for parts, repurposing a particular map, encounter, or puzzle in your own adventure.

If you're interested in raiding these adventures for NODES elements, here are some pieces worth taking:

Novelties: In the *Sinister Submarine*, the titular submarine makes a great adventure setting and potential adventurer base. *Obsidian Peak* suspends the entire dungeon above a volcano.

Obstacles: The *Orden Barrow Mound* (Entry Hall) contains a useful darkness puzzle. *Obsidian Peak* (Storage Room) makes its treasure difficult to obtain.

Discoveries: *The Rotten Underbelly* (Refuse Pile) contains minor treasures and nasty surprises. *The Palace of the Amber Prince* (Hall of Heads) provides creepy insights to questioners.

Escalations: In *The Serpent's Maw*, reinforcements arrive on schedule, while *The Old Number Ten Mine* uses a race against cascading cave-ins.

Set Pieces: *The Serpent's Maw* (Lair of Lithunaax) ends with an encounter that could be either an epic battle or a tense negotiation. Both *Palace of the Amber Prince* (Statue Room) and the *Maze of the Mountain King* (Machine Room) end with set-piece traps instead of combat encounters.

The following dungeons contain novelties, traps, puzzles, set pieces, and the other ingredients of an engaging adventure, and each is designed to take about one session to explore.

These dungeons are small in scope—between 5 and 10 locations each—and are set in a variety of environments, from a laboratory suspended over a volcano to a subterranean submarine. They range from level 1 to level 18 so that there's something suitable for parties of any level.

- **The Rotten Underbelly** (page 191) is a level 1 sewer.
- **The Serpent's Maw** (page 194) is a level 2 temple.
- **The Palace of the Amber Prince** (page 197) is a level 3 ruin.
- **The Old Number Ten Mine** (page 200) is a level 5 mine.
- **The Orden Barrow Mound** (page 203) is a level 7 tomb.
- **The Sinister Submarine** (page 206) is a level 10 Underland dungeon.
- **Obsidian Peak** (page 209) is a level 14 laboratory.
- **The Maze of the Mountain King** (page 212) is a level 18 bastion.

The Rotten Underbelly (level 1 sewer)

The sewers beneath large cities often hide terrible secrets, but few are more terrible than the lair of Goratrix Vel, the Fetid Witch. With her mastery over vermin, fungus, and disease, Goratrix is a silent parasite, quietly feeding from the oblivious city above.

Adventure Hooks

- A drunken tavern goer accosts the party before the barkeep throws him out. The next morning, the man's still-clothed skeleton turns up in an alley, picked clean and marred by hundreds of tiny bite marks.
- Only days after arriving in the city, an ambassador falls ill from some unknown, incurable ailment. To avoid politically disastrous accusations, the party is enlisted to find the source of the disease.
- The mayor has put out a bounty on rats: 5 cp for the tail of a normal rat and 2 sp for the tail of a giant one. Several citizens have been bitten while chasing rats, and their injuries worsen as time goes on, as if from a wasting disease.

Features

Unless otherwise noted, chambers in The Rotten Underbelly have 10-foot-high ceilings, while corridors are only 6 feet high.

1. Basin Chamber

This domed, 30-foot-diameter chamber is dominated by a 25-foot-diameter basin of water surrounded by a waist-high, metal guard rail.

Exits. Tunnels to the north and west lead back into the sewers or toward the surface. The south passage (**2. Sloping Corridor**) was once bricked up but appears to have been reopened recently. A sickly odor issues from the passage.

Secret Exit. A flooded tunnel just large enough for a Medium creature to swim through is set in the southeast wall of the basin, 20 feet beneath the waterline. The tunnel is 200 feet long and lets out into **5. Fungal Grotto**. A creature that swims through the tunnel while bloodied is exposed to sewer plague.

2. Sloping Corridor

This damp, slippery passageway slopes 100 feet downward to the south.

Bats. Two swarms of bats hang in a ceiling crevice halfway down the passage. An adventurer with a passive Perception of 12 or higher notices them. Noise in the tunnel causes the bats to fly out of the crevice and attack. They retreat into the crevice if they cumulatively suffer 22 damage or more.

Slippery Floor. A creature who walks more than 15 feet on a turn in this passageway must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone, sliding into **3. Refuse Pile**. A creature within 5 feet of a sliding creature can use a reaction to catch them with a DC 13 Strength saving throw. On a failure, the rescuer falls prone and slides with them. A creature that slides into the refuse takes 3 (1d6) bludgeoning damage for every 30 feet it slid.

Exits. The passage leads to **3. Refuse Pile** to the south and **1. Basin Chamber** to the north.

3. Refuse Pile

The southwest corner of this irregularly-shaped, 30-foot by 20-foot chamber is dominated by a mound of bones, dirty hay, and other refuse.

Refuse Pile. A creature that spends at least 1 minute searching the pile can make a DC 11 Investigation check. A creature that searches the pile while bloodied is exposed to sewer plague. On a success, the creature discovers a notable item, determined randomly by rolling 1d6 on the Loot table. Reroll duplicate results. The first time a creature fails this Investigation check, that creature disturbs a **swarm of insects** (wasps). The wasps surprise the creature as they attack. Combat with the wasps alerts the rats in **4. Storage**.

TABLE: LOOT

1D6	LOOT
1	The femur of an unknown creature. You can wield the femur as a quarterstaff. The first time you roll a natural 1 on an attack roll with the femur, treat the attack as a critical hit instead. The femur breaks after the attack.
2	A purse containing 26 sp clutched in a skeletal hand.
3	A necklace of rat fangs. While you wear the necklace, you are filled with unshakeable confidence. When you start your turn and don't have Inspiration, you can choose to gain Inspiration. Once the necklace has been used, it can never be used this way again.
4	A vial of antitoxin.
5	A <i>potion of healing</i> .
6	A silver dagger engraved with the initials V.R.

Exits. North of the pile is the entrance to **2. Sloping Corridor**. A rotted wooden door leading to **4. Storage** stands in the northeast corner, while an iron portcullis to the southeast leads to **5. Fungal Grotto**. Lifting the portcullis requires a DC 20 Strength check; a creature that fails can take a level of fatigue to try lifting the portcullis again.

4. Storage

Crates and barrels line the walls of this 20-foot-square room. The chewed-up carcass of a pig lies in its center of the chamber.

Giant Rats. Three **giant rats** gnaw on the pig carcass in the middle of the room. If the adventurers make noise in **3. Refuse Pile**, the rats ambush the party from behind the crates instead. A bloodied creature bitten by a giant rat is exposed to sewer plague.

Crates. The crates contain edible fungus, and the barrels hold clean water. A creature that searches the crates also discovers a *potion of healing*.

Exits. A door to the west leads to **3. Refuse Pile**.

5. Fungal Grotto

The stonework of the surrounding passages gives way to an elliptical grotto supported by columns of unworked stone. The grotto is 60 feet long and roughly 30 feet at its widest. The grotto's ceiling is 20 feet high.

Shriekers. Four **shriekers** grow in the western third of the room. If Goratrix hears the shriekers, she and the other creatures in **6. Sanctum** emerge from that area and attack.

Fungus. The ground in the grotto is soft, muddy, and threaded with strands of white fiber. A creature proficient in Nature recognizes the threads as mycelium. Broad shelves of bark-like shelf fungus protrude from the walls, and waist-high toadstools dot the cavern.

Exits. The west end of the grotto narrows to a 5-foot-wide tunnel leading to **6. Sanctum**. A pond in the grotto's northeast corner is dimly lit by hovering fireflies and conceals a secret, underwater tunnel leading to **1. Basin Chamber**. A passage on the north wall connects to **3. Refuse Pile**. A heavy winch near the passage can be turned as an action to lift the portcullis separating the two areas.

6. Sanctum

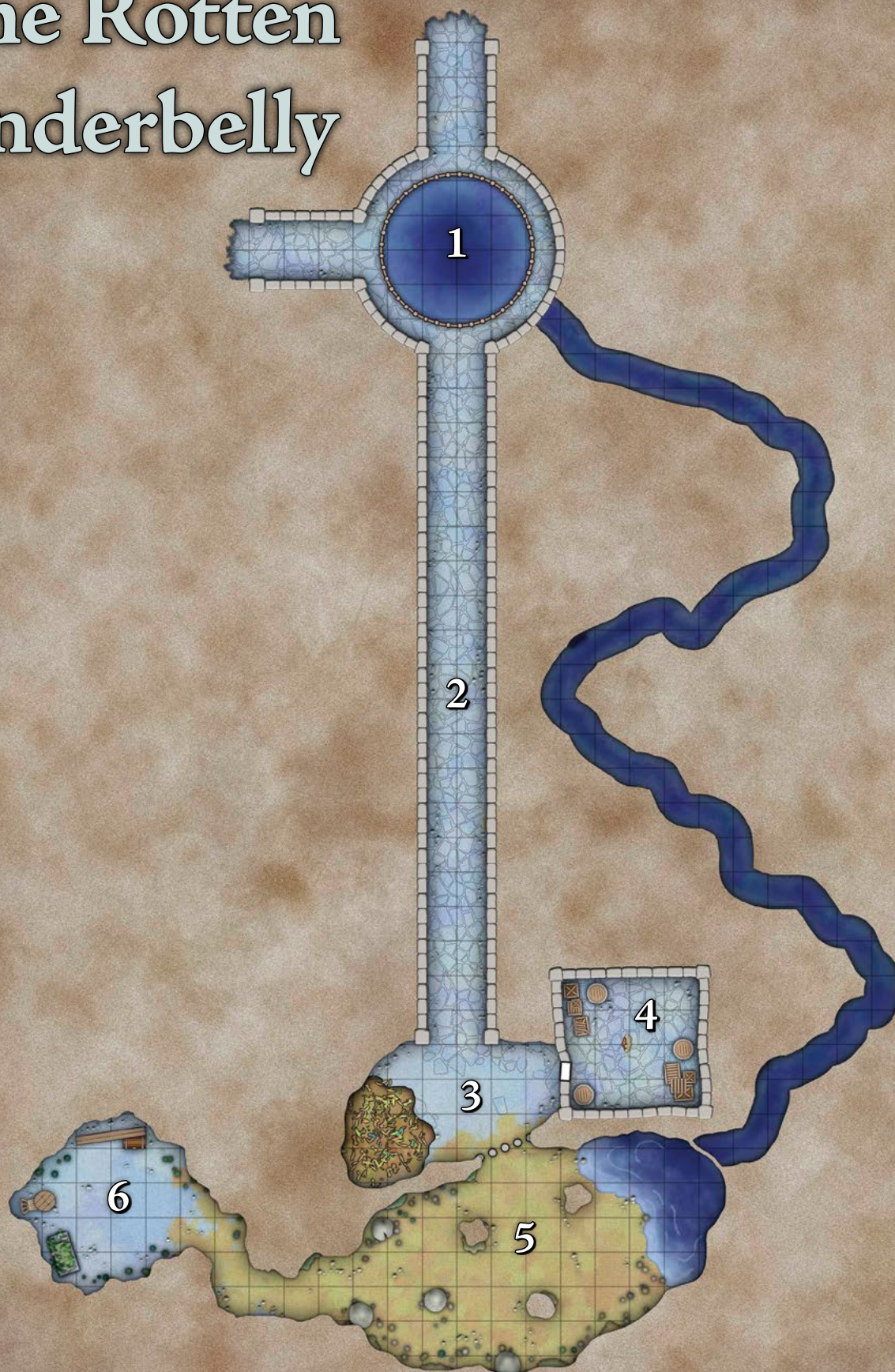
This irregular, 20-foot-diameter room is arranged as a small living space.

Goratrix Vel. Goratrix Vel, a **fetid witch** (DDG), performs alchemical experiments here, unless she has gone to investigate noises in **5. Fungal Grotto**. Two **violet fungi** and a **swarm of rats** accompany her. A bloodied creature bitten by the rats is exposed to sewer plague.

Furnishings. The room is dimly lit by the iridescent fungus that lines the walls. A squat stone slab piled with moss and hides serves as a bed. Beside the bed is a small dining table with a single chair. The northern side of the sanctum is dominated by a table covered with alchemical and herbal supplies. Under the table is a wooden chest that smells like fungus. The chest is unlocked and contains 60 gp, 400 sp, a book of herbal recipes worth 100 gp, one dose of a medicine that cures sewer plague, and a *dreamer's morel*.

Exits. A passage leads to **5. Fungal Grotto**.

The Rotten Underbelly



1 square = 5 feet

The Serpent's Maw (level 2 temple)

Deep in the woods, a band of kobolds has claimed the ancient temple of a forgotten serpent god. They've entrenched themselves in their new home, stealing food from local caravans to feed a wyrm-like dragon hidden within the temple. The temple is a 120-foot-square pyramid of ancient stone, its apex topped with a crumbling statue of the serpent god. The entrance is carved to resemble the maw of a giant snake.

Adventure Hooks

- A band of kobolds has been raiding caravans traveling through the woods. Though kobolds are normally a minor nuisance, these have proven especially deadly, and the local baron needs them cleared out.
- As the characters rest, a kobold sneaks into their camp and steals a large amount of food or something else of value, then flees back to the temple.
- Locals claim to have witnessed two dragons fighting in the sky above their village. The clash lasted several minutes, until one of the dragons crashed into the forest. These rumors are exaggerated but not entirely inaccurate.

Features

Unless otherwise noted, chambers in The Serpent's Maw have 10-foot-high ceilings. The corridors are 5 feet wide and only 6 feet high.

Kobolds. All kobolds in the dungeon have resistance to poison damage, and they lose their Sunlight Sensitivity trait while within 60 feet of a dragon. Each kobold carries 1d4 ep and carries either a *poison breath bottle* (DDG or a blowgun. Kobolds with blowguns gain the following action:

Blowgun. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 1 piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failure or half damage on a success.

Reinforcements. When the adventurers arrive, two pairs of **kobold drakeriders** (DDG) are out hunting with their **green kobold drakes** (DDG); if the characters spend more than an hour in the dungeon, one or both of the pairs may return to the temple and ambush them.

Areas

1. Fountain Chamber

This semi-circular room is 40 feet wide and 30 feet long, with a 20-foot-high arched ceiling.

Fountain. A 10-foot-diameter basin fills the northernmost portion of the room. A statue of a coiled serpent rises from the water in the center of the basin. Cranking a pump next to the statue causes 1 gallon of water to spill from the statue's mouth. The water appears clean, but a creature that drinks it must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 7 (2d6) poison damage.

A creature with a passive Perception of 12 or higher notices coins scattered throughout the bottom of the basin. Though tarnished green with age, the coins are electrum; the basin contains 60 coins in total. A creature that takes one or more of the coins becomes cursed with the *Curse of the Two-Faced Serpent* until the coins are returned. A creature that isn't cursed and throws at least one electrum coin into the fountain briefly sees serpentine figures at the corners of their vision, gaining the *Blessing of the Two-Faced Serpent*.

Blessing of the Two-Faced Serpent. While in The Serpent's Maw, you have resistance to poison damage and immunity to ingested poisons. In addition, you can speak and understand Draconic.

Curse of the Two-Faced Serpent. While in The Serpent's Maw, whenever you take poison damage, you are slowed until the end of your next turn.

Exits. Exits on the west and east sides of the room lead to 2. **Drake Pen** and 3. **Mausoleum**, respectively.

2. Drake Pen

This room is 30 feet square with a wood-beamed ceiling.

Drakes and Riders. The west side of this room is lined with four pens constructed from ramshackle wood, two of which hold one **green kobold drake**

(DDG) each. Two **kobold drakeriders** (DDG) feed the drakes, while two **kobolds** scrub the empty pens. The drakeriders mount the drakes to investigate noises in nearby rooms. Otherwise, they use their first turn in combat to open the pens and mount up.

Exits. An exit to the south leads to **1. Fountain Chamber** and one to the north leads to **4. False Sanctum**.

3. Mausoleum

This 30-foot-square chamber was once used to inter the dead.

Guards. Six **kobolds** and one **kobold artilleryist** (DDG) live here. Three of the kobolds play with bone marbles while the others sleep. If the adventurers have made loud noises nearby, all the kobolds are instead awake and armed.

Defenses. A tripwire across the south entranceway suspends a *poison breath bottle* (DDG) overhead. A creature with a passive Perception of 13 or higher notices the tripwire. Triggering the tripwire causes the vial to shatter next to the doorway, alerting all kobolds in the room. Two arrow loops in the west wall allow the kobolds in **5. Lair of Lithunaax** to support their allies with blowgun darts.

Niche Bunks. The east wall is lined with burial niches, which the kobolds have converted to bunks. Most of the niches hide small wood carvings and other useless trinkets, but the artilleryist's niche contains a set of painter's tools and a set of wood-carver's tools, which he used to create the deception in **4. False Sanctum**.

Exits. Two exits lead from this room, one from the south and one to the north. They lead to **1. Fountain Chamber** and **4. False Sanctum**, respectively.

4. False Sanctum

The northern half of this 20-foot-diameter chamber is dominated by a raised stage, on which stands an altar inset with a pair of enormous, ivory fangs. Statues of a two-headed serpent flank the stage, and a stone offering bowl rests atop it.

Glittering Goods. Behind the offering bowl is a massive pile of coins, jewels, and other treasures, topped with what appears to be the skeleton of a Medium dragon. The treasure is actually a **false hoard trap**, which includes 251 real electrum pieces among the false treasures.

Exits. This room has an entrance from the west (**2. Drake Pen**) and one from the east (**3. Mausoleum**).

Secret Door. A DC 13 Investigation check or an examination of the altar reveals that the fangs can be turned in their settings. Doing so opens a secret door on the south wall leading to **5. Lair of Lithunaax**. Just beyond the door is a lever that can be used to open or close the door from the other side.

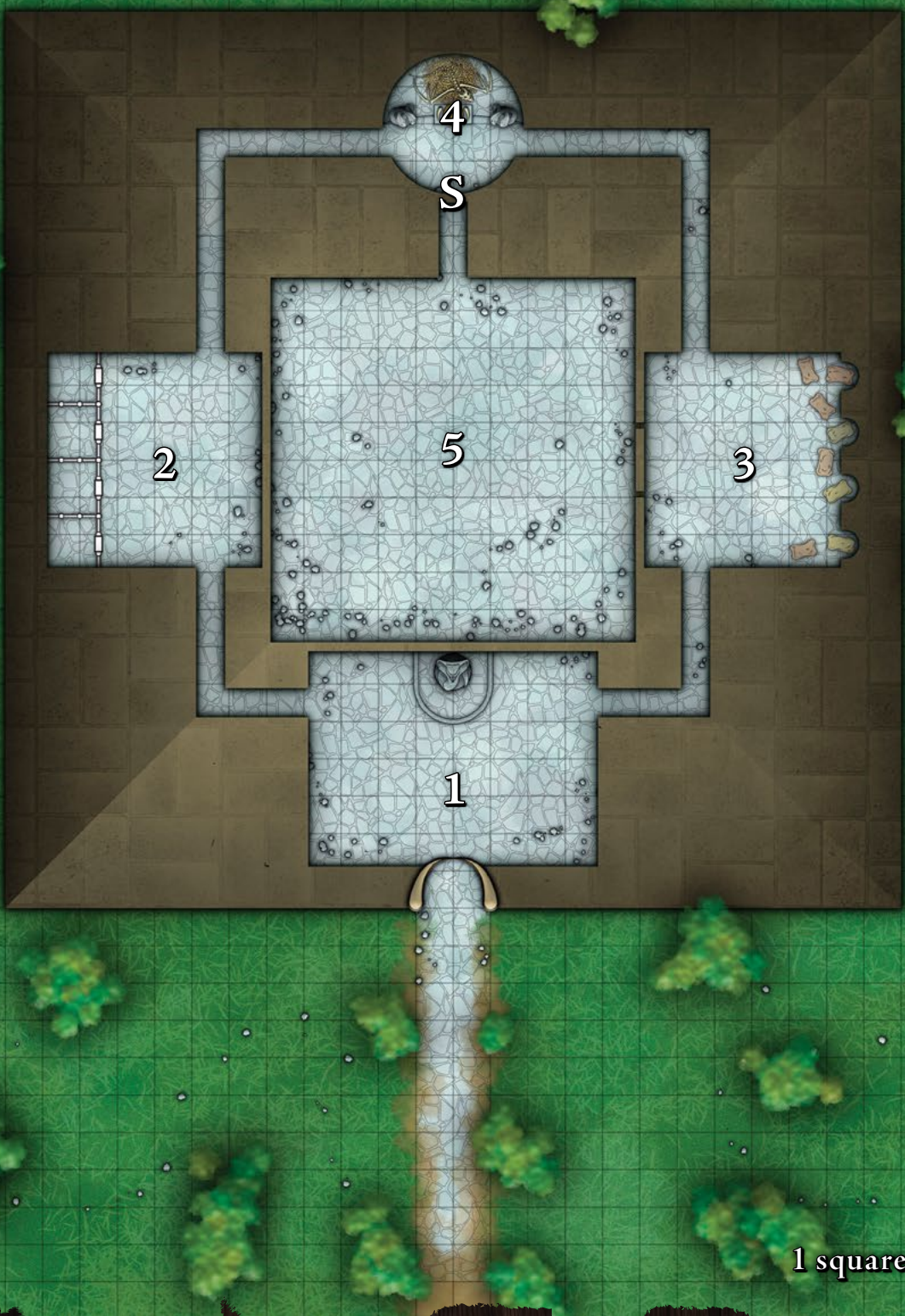
5. Lair of Lithunaax

This pyramidal room has a 50-foot-square base and is 60 feet tall at its apex—giving its inhabitant, a dragon named Lithunaax, enough room to spread her wings.

Lithunaax and Servants. Two **kobolds** and a **kobold bully** (DDG) with a *green scale shield* (DDG) guard Lithunaax, a **green dragon wyrmling**. Lithunaax is recovering from a recent skirmish with her sibling (which reduced her current hit points from 55 to 40). Though she's willing to fight intruders, creatures that can speak and understand Draconic may be able to parley with her. Lithunaax's greatest motivator is hunger, and her kobold minions have been raiding caravans to feed her. Lithunaax refuses any deal that does not include a steady supply of food. She's worried about more adventurers coming after her, so if she believes the characters will inform others of her location, she betrays them at the first opportunity. If the characters win her trust, she grants them a *verdant fang* (DDG).

Dead End. The only passage into this room is through the secret door from **4. False Sanctum**, though tunnels large enough for Small creatures to squeeze through have been dug into the east wall. The kobolds use the tunnels to reach the arrow loops into **3. Mausoleum**.

The Serpent's Maw



1 square = 5 feet

Palace of the Amber Prince (level 3 ruin)

In life, the Amber Prince was beloved by his subjects but feared in equal measure by his enemies. It's said the Prince punished those who opposed him by drowning them in pools of molten amber. After the Prince was overthrown, his palace quickly fell into ruin. Today, all that remains of the once-grand structure are waist-high walls and stairs that descend into the dungeons beneath the ruins.

The adventurers arrive at the palace amidst a raging lightning storm. A group of four **bandits** led by a **thug** named Dorian have also taken refuge among the ruins. Currently, the bandits are in no mood for a fight, but they might ambush the adventurers if they emerge from the dungeon worse for wear. If the party befriends the bandits with a DC 13 Diplomacy check, Dorian relates the history of the Palace. Other than their weapons, armor, and traveling gear, the luckless bandits carry nothing of value.

Adventure Hooks

- On their way to another adventure, the adventurers are caught in a lightning storm and seek refuge among the ruins.
- The adventurers have heard rumors of the Amber Prince's magical scepter and have traveled to the ruins to retrieve it.
- The spirit of one of the Prince's victims asks the party to recover their body so they can receive a proper burial.

Features

Unless otherwise noted, the ceilings of the dungeon are 10 feet high, and all areas are unlit.

Areas

1. Entrance

Dusty steps descend to a short hallway running east to west. A sconce on the southern wall holds an ornate basket torch.

Tracks. Adventurers who search the dusty floor for tracks can attempt a DC 12 Investigation or Survival check. On a success, they discover footprints leading from the steps to the double doors. The prints seem to belong to a pair of barefoot humanoids, roughly human in size. The tracks were left by the ghouls currently in **4. Prison Cells**, who came to the ruins a few days ago in search of food.

Everflame Torch. When a living creature touches the torch, fire springs to life inside its basket. The flames emit heat and continue burning so long as the torch remains held. The torch can be removed from the sconce. Light cast by the torch reveals the trigger of the secret door (see below), and the torch's flames can be used to light the braziers in **5. Amber Pit**.

Exits. Double doors at the end of the hall, leading to **2. Gallery**, stand slightly ajar.

Secret Door. Depressing a brick near the bottom of the steps causes a section of the southern wall to retract into the ceiling. A simple illusion conceals the trigger. The brick glows brightly when illuminated by magical light (including that shed by the *everflame torch*) but otherwise requires a DC 17 Investigation check to discover.

2. Gallery

Arranged along the northern and southern walls are four shallow, floor-to-ceiling niches (eight niches total). A block of translucent amber fills each of the niches. Various humanoids, their features frozen in agony, are encased inside the amber.

Amber Blocks. Though the amber has preserved their bodies, the figures inside the blocks are long dead. The blocks are of low-quality amber and are too bulky to move; breaking one into manageable chunks requires an hour's work and yields 1d4 × 100 gp worth of jewelry-quality amber.

The ghouls from **4. Prison Cells** tried to get at the trapped figures before moving on to find an easier meal. An adventurer who inspects the amber and makes a DC 12 Investigation check notices fresh scratch marks on several of the blocks.

Exits. Double doors to the east lead to **1. Entrance**. To the west is **3. Hall of Heads**.

3. Hall of Heads

Pedestals stand in each of the corners of this oddly shaped room. Seven of the pedestals each support a 2-foot-square amber cube, in which hangs suspended the severed head of one of the Prince's victims. The eighth pedestal is empty; the ghouls took the missing cube to **4. Prison Cells** to break it open there.

Amber Cubes. A living creature that touches a cube discovers they can "speak" psychically with the disembodied head inside. Once a head has answered a question posed to it (as with a *speak with dead* spell), it falls silent forever. Most of the heads know very little of immediate use, but one (the Amber Prince's former advisor) might possess information about the dungeon that can help the party. If the amber is broken, the head falls silent forever and the party finds jewelry-quality amber worth 50 gp.

Exits. An archway leads south out of the room. To the north, a short hallway ends at an iron-bound door. Adventurers who listen at the door and make a DC 12 Perception check can hear the ghouls cursing as they struggle with the amber cube.

4. Prison Cells

Rusting iron bars separate the southern portion of the room from three empty cells to the north.

Ghouls. Two ghouls crouch just outside the cells, scabbling at the missing cube from **3. Hall of Heads**. The ghouls abandon their work and attack as soon as the intruders open the door.

Exits. An iron door leads to **3. Hall of Heads**.

5. Amber Pit

A 10-foot-deep pit filled with bones and surrounded by three ornate braziers occupies the center of the chamber. A shallow channel leads from the pit to an archway in the southern wall. A slab of solid amber blocks the archway. On the east side of the chamber, two winding staircases ascend 20 feet to a viewing platform overlooking the chamber's floor.

Braziers. Placing a magical flame (such as the *everflame torch*) into any of the braziers causes all three braziers to light. As the braziers burn, the ambient temperature in the chamber rises precipitously. After 1 minute, the amber slab blocking the south archway melts, draining into the channel and eventually filling the pit with molten amber. One round later, the bones in the pit animate as five amber-veiled **skeletal immortals** (*DDG*). (The bones don't animate if they are removed from the pit beforehand.) Once animated, the skeletons pursue adventurers but do not leave the dungeon beneath the Palace.

The flame in the braziers fade after 10 minutes. As an action, a creature can make a DC 12 Athletics check to overturn a brazier, spilling flame into a 10-foot-square area adjacent to the brazier. Each creature in that area takes 7 (2d6) fire damage, or half damage with a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw. The braziers lose their magic if removed from the Palace grounds. Each is worth 50 gp.

Exits. On the east side, a passage leads from the viewing platform to **3. Hall of Heads**. A passage in the west leads up stairs to a blank wall, which conceals a secret door opening to **1. Entrance** (see **1. Entrance** for secret door details).

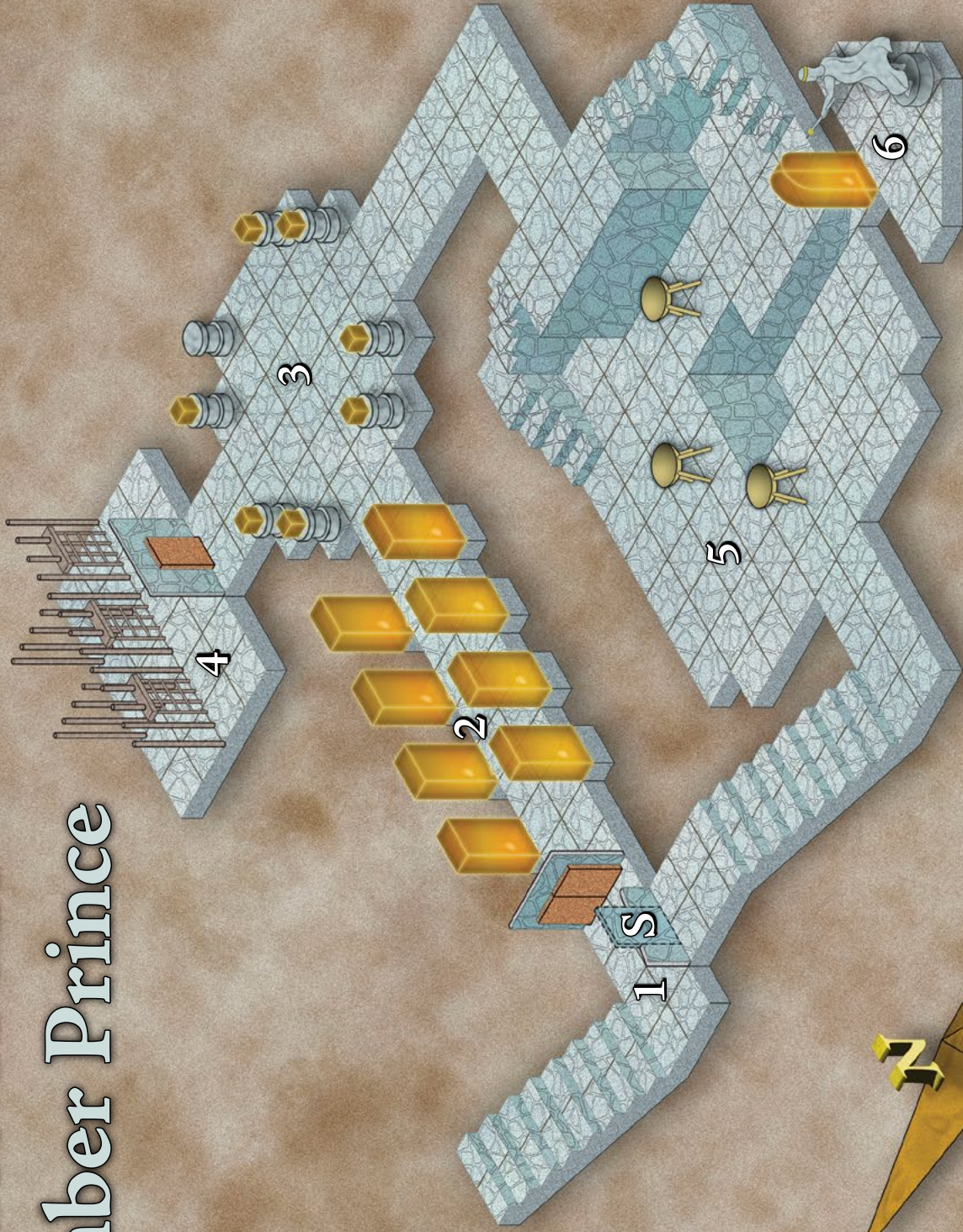
Archway. Through the amber slab to the south, the adventurers can make out the outline of the statue in **6. Statue Room**. Breaking through the amber requires an hour of work; lighting the braziers causes the amber to melt more quickly but might also animate the bones in the pit.

6. Statue Room

A life-sized statue of the Amber Prince stands atop a plinth against the southern wall. In one hand, the Prince holds an amber-tipped scepter, which he levels at the archway to the north.

Statue. The statue of the Prince is a **lightning-blast statue**. The adventurers can replace the Prince's scepter with the *everflame torch* from **1. Entrance** or a similar object.

Palace of the Amber Prince



1 square = 5 feet

The Old Number Ten Mine (level 5 mine)

The Old Number Ten Mine has produced tin for the markets of Parmont for centuries, and miners have long reported hearing strange whispers while alone in the tunnels. When the mine breaks into an area of expert masonry, and strange crystals are discovered among the veins of tin, the miners seek outside assistance, setting off a chain of events that could lead to the mine's destruction.

Adventure Hooks

- The mine's owner, Lorna of Highmeadow (neutral dwarf **noble**) hires the party to investigate the newly discovered chambers. Lorna's greed has led to dangerous conditions in the mine, which she fails to mention during negotiations with the party. She offers the characters 200 gp each for their services, but if pressed may increase her payment to up to 600 gp.
- When the party runs afoul of the authorities in Parmont, a crooked magistrate sentences them to six-weeks' hard labor in the Old Number Ten Mine. When they report for duty, Lorna sends them to investigate the new chambers.

Features

The passages of the mine are 5 feet wide, with 7-foot-high ceilings. They are made of rock, packed dirt, and ancient, creaking support beams. By the time the party arrives, many lanterns are running low on oil, so lighting is unreliable.

Areas

1. Mine Entrance

The miners store their gear in crates and on wall-mounted racks in these wooden storage buildings.

Entrance. A door frame made from timbers marks the entrance to the Old Number Ten Mine. An adventurer with the Stonecunning trait or proficiency with Engineering, mason's tools, or woodcarver's tools notices that the timbers are failing and should have been replaced decades ago.

2. Chasm Chamber

Decaying scaffolding lines the walls of this chamber. The cavern's ceiling rises 30 feet at its highest point.

Chasm. A chasm running north to south divides the chamber in half. A rope bridge spans the chasm. Abandoned tools, wooden stools, and extinguished cookfires on both sides of the cavern suggest that the miners used this chamber as a staging area.

Exits. Tunnels buttressed with wooden beams lead to **1. Mine Entrance** and **4. Elevator**.

3. Worked Chambers

The mine contains five worked chambers, from which the miners have extracted tin for years. Each chamber is 40 feet long and 25 feet wide, with numerous rocky outcroppings that could grant cover or three-quarters cover. Decaying scaffolding rises 15 feet to the cavern's ceiling. One of the veins in each chamber ends abruptly at an outgrowth of strange, blue-green crystals.

Crystal Harvest. An adventurer can use a miner's pick, mason's tools, or a bludgeoning or piercing weapon to break off a crystal growth from a vein of tin. If they do, roll 1d6 on the Crystal Harvest table. If you have previously rolled the result, choose another or treat the roll as a 6 instead. The crystal grows into the creature(s) indicated, returning to its crystal growth form if it is reduced to 0 hit points. Instead of its normal type, each creature's type is elemental, and it appears to be made out of blue-green crystal.

A crystal growth is a jagged, irregular crystal, about four inches in its longest dimension. *Detect magic* reveals a moderate aura of conjuration emanating from the crystal, while *identify* reveals that it seems to have had something to do with a *banishment* spell gone strangely awry. A crystal growth might be worth up to 250 gp to the right buyer.

4. Elevator

This elevator is composed of an upper and lower wheel separated by 200 feet of chain. A crank on the elevator's platform allows passengers to control its movement; as an action, a creature can cause the platform to ascend or descend up to 5 feet. Unless you break the chain, of course—then it goes *very*

TABLE: CRYSTAL HARVEST

1D6	RESULT
1	2 giant toads and an ankheg
2	3 ochre jellies
3	2 phase spiders
4	1 gorgon
5	2 black puddings
6	No creature, but you can gather 1d6 chrysoprase gemstones (worth 50 gp each) and a crystal growth.

fast. The chain is an object with AC 17, 15 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. The elevator's platform is a metal cage with a wood-plank floor, neither of them well maintained.

Exits. The top of the elevator connects to **2. Chasm Chamber**, and the bottom leads to **5. Breakthrough Chamber**. Along the way are boarded up passageways leading to **3. Worked Chambers**. The characters can enter the passageways by breaking through the boards (AC 15, 10 hit points, immunity to poison and psychic damage).

5. Breakthrough Chamber

This irregular chamber is 40 feet long and has a 15-foot-high ceiling.

Exits. A passage leads to **4. Elevator**, and scaffolding leads to a **3. Worked Chamber**. The far wall is a bare granite surface with a 4-foot-wide crack running down the center. A sickly green light shines through the crack. The crack is 10 feet deep and leads to **6. Portal Room**.

6. Portal Room

This room is 60 feet long by 60 feet wide. Its arched ceiling rises 40 feet above the floor.

Teleportation Circle. A circle 20 feet across is etched into the floor in the center of the chamber, with five glass plinths spaced equally around its edge. The top of each plinth is bowl-shaped. One of the plinths sheds dim yellow light for 5 feet and contains a crystal growth (see Portal Activation below). A creature that inspects the circle or the plinths can make a DC 10 Arcana check. On a success, they recognize the circle as some kind of teleportation portal. On a critical success, the

creature understands that someone must expend a spell slot to attempt to activate the portal, and that placing crystal growths or chrysoprases in the plinths improves the portal's chances of activating correctly.

Seismic Event. Once the characters have spent a few minutes exploring the chamber, once they attempt to activate the portal, or if they cast a spell in the chamber, the earth begins to tremble. The passage from **1. Mine Entrance** to **2. Chasm Chamber** collapses, resulting in a cave-in that would take days to clear. Roll $1d4 \times 5$; after that many minutes, **2. Chasm Chamber** collapses. Every $1d4 \times 5$ minutes thereafter, a **3. Worked Chamber** collapses. Areas 4–6 never collapse; when every other chamber has collapsed, the air in **6. Portal Room** begins to grow stale, becoming unbreathable after 24 hours.

A creature in an area when it collapses must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage on a failure. Whether the check succeeds or fails, the creature escapes to the nearest uncollapsed passage or chamber. A creature reduced to 0 hit points becomes buried under rubble instead. Rescuing a buried creature requires a successful DC 13 Strength (Athletics) check.

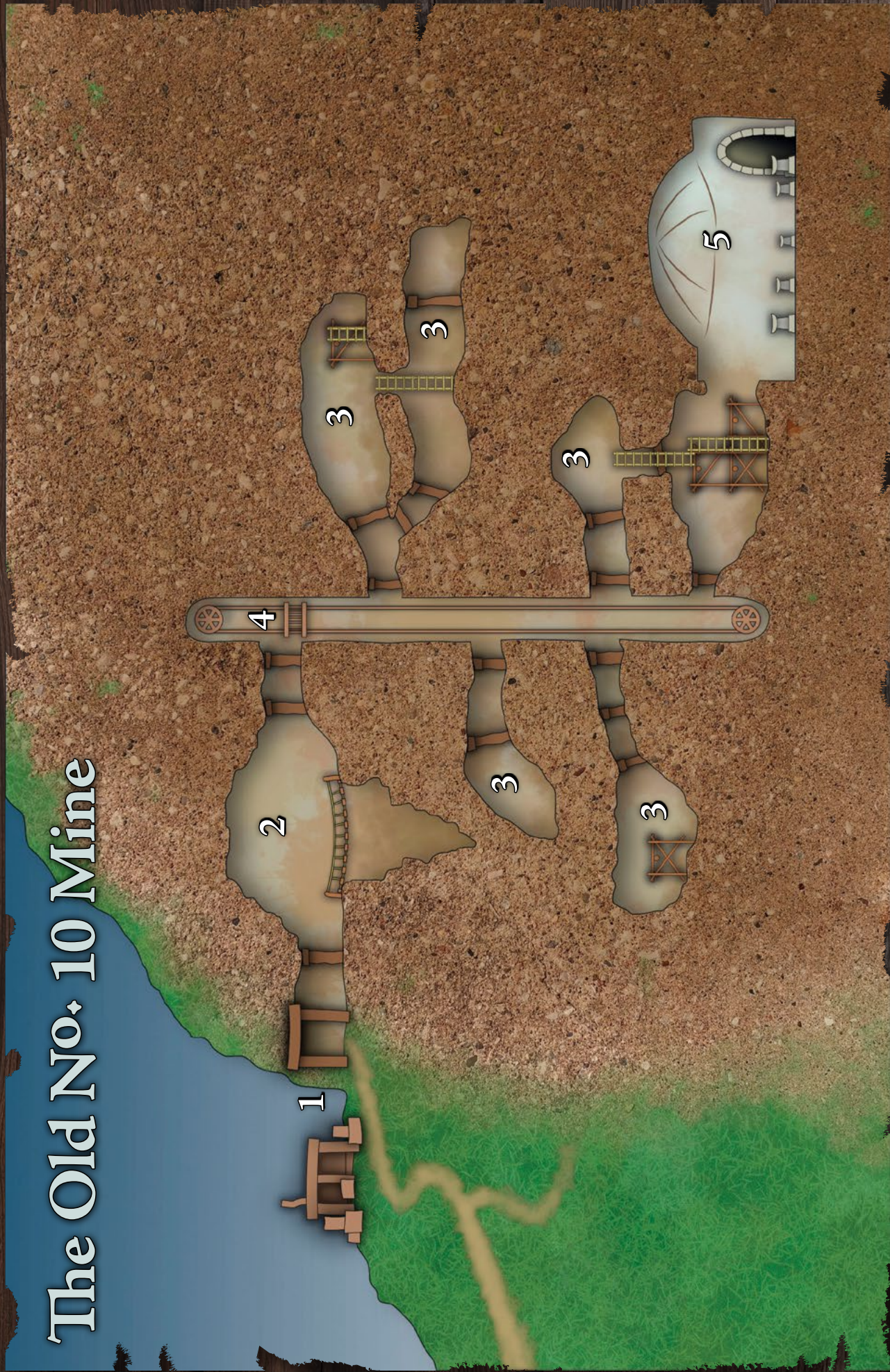
Portal Activation. When a crystal growth or a chrysoprase is placed in a plinth, the plinth sheds dim yellow light for 5 feet until the item is removed.

To activate the magic portal, a creature must expend a spell slot of 1st level or higher or take a level of fatigue and make a DC 35 Arcana check. Each plinth containing a crystal growth or a chrysoprase grants a +5 bonus to this check. If the party fails to open the portal, the character with the highest passive Insight sees a faint, spectral image of crystal growths and chrysoprases being placed in the plinths' bowls.

On a success, the portal activates, remaining open for 1 minute. The characters can step through the portal to teleport to **1. Mine Entrance**. At the Narrator's discretion, the portal might lead to another dungeon complex, an extraplanar city, or other destination instead. Removing the items from the plinths before leaving the chamber does not cause the portal to close.

Exits. The passage from **5. Breakthrough Chamber** is in the room's northwestern corner. A doorway in the middle of the north wall opens to a fully collapsed hallway that would take weeks to clear.

The Old No. 10 Mine



Orden Barrow Mound (level 7 tomb)

The Orden Barrow Mound, once known as the resting place of great heroes from an age-old war, has been defiled by fell magics from the Bleak Gate. At its heart lies a powerful relic of light, but retrieving it requires a trip through the deepest darkness.

Adventure Hooks

- Darribeth, a hunter in the area, left on an expedition over a week ago and hasn't yet returned. The situation takes on a strange twist when a hunter matching her description attacks the adventurers in the woods, then melts into shadow before she can be caught.
- A wounded knight stumbles into town and collapses. Upon his recovery, the knight explains his strange tale: he was traveling to the Orden Barrow Mound to pay respects to a fallen comrade but was nearly killed when claws of pure shadow attempted to rend him limb from limb.
- The party faces a powerful enemy who specializes in necromancy and shadow magic; to defeat their foe, the heroes must recover the *idol of light*, which lies in the Orden Barrow Mound.

Features

Unless otherwise noted, chambers in the Orden Barrow Mound have 10-foot-high ceilings and the arched corridors are 8 feet tall. The entire dungeon is composed of crumbling brickwork woven through with thick, old roots. The Orden Barrow Mound is shrouded in **Darkest Dark**, lessening the effectiveness of light sources and darkvision.

Areas

1. Mound Entrance

Standing stones once supported the 20-foot-long passage into the barrow, but the stones have since collapsed. A Medium or larger creature must crawl through the entrance. As they enter the mound, the party's light sources dim, due to the effects of **Darkest Dark**.

2. Entry Hall

This 50-foot-wide, 20-foot-long hall is pitch black and drowned in shadow.

Ambush. As the characters enter this area through **1. Mound Entrance**, they're attacked by **Darribeth**, who hides in the room. She attacks the first adventurer to enter the area. Once the entire party joins the combat, or if she becomes bloodied, Darribeth retreats by touching the mirror in the north end of the room, melding into it and disappearing.

Darribeth is a **strider** (DDG) with a *hunter's quiver* (DDG) and the following changes:

- Her **shadow symbiote** (DDG) gives her blind-sight out to 60 feet, telepathy with a range of 30 ft., and resistance to necrotic damage.
- She has a climb speed of 30 feet.

Mirror Gate. The mirror to the north is a passage to **6. Bleak Depths**, but it opens only in bright light or when touched by a creature bearing a shadow symbiote. It is immune to all damage and reflects a distorted vision of an ancient, crumbling tower.

Statue. A statue in the middle of the room depicts five knights standing in formation. Once, each of the knights held a different item: a longsword, a battleaxe and a shield, a banner, a halberd, and a spear. However, the longsword, axe, and spear are missing. A plaque near the statue reads "Where the Knights of Orden raise their weapons, light follows." If the missing weapons are returned, the banner glows, filling the room with bright light and opening the Mirror Gate.

Exits. A passage to the northwest smells of fresh-cooked food and leads to **3. Feast Hall**. Another passage to the northeast leads to **4. Mural Room**.

3. Feast Hall

A stone table and a dozen chairs dominate this 30-foot-long, 15-foot-wide banquet hall. Shelves along the walls hold bottles of wine, casks of ale, and jars of honey and preserves. A permanent *minor illusion* creates the scent of fresh-cooked meals throughout the hall.

Elaborate Centerpiece. A stone battleaxe is buried in the middle of the table, surrounded by a wreath of dead flowers. To activate the Mirror Gate, the characters must return the axe to the statue in **2. Entry Hall**. Removing the battleaxe requires a DC 15 Athletics check. The first time a character fails to remove the battleaxe, 1d4 + 1 **shadow claws** (DDG) rise out of the table and attack.

Shelves. A search of the shelves reveals jars of rotten food. A shadow symbiote in one of the jars makes telepathic contact with one of the characters, claiming to be the spirit of Ser Ajax, who was trapped in a magic jar by the powerful mage who plunged this place into darkness. It attempts to Assimilate a creature that frees it.

4. Mural Room

This 30-foot-diameter, dome-shaped room has a ceiling that rises 40 feet at its apex. Murals depicting the life and battles of the Knights of Orden decorate the walls.

Stone Sword. The stone longsword that completes the statue in **1. Entry Hall** hangs from a tendril of shadow near the ceiling. Broken architecture and the roots poking through the walls allow a creature to climb toward the sword with a DC 13 Athletics check. If a creature climbs or flies more than 10 feet off the floor, 1d3 **shadow claws** emerge from the walls to drag them down.

Exits. An exit to the west leads to **2. Entry Hall**. One to the north leads to **5. Tombs**.

5. Tombs

The sarcophagi of the Knights of Orden lie in this irregularly shaped, 25-foot-long room. One of the sarcophagi once contained the remains of Ser Kendra but is now empty.

Knights Attack! If a character approaches the sarcophagi, four of them spring open, and a **wight** climbs out of each of them. One of the wights wields the stone spear missing from the statue in **2. Entry Hall**.

Memorials. Inside the sarcophagi is an assortment of jewelry and gems worth 427 gp.

Exits. A passage to the south leads to **4. Mural Room**.

6. Bleak Depths

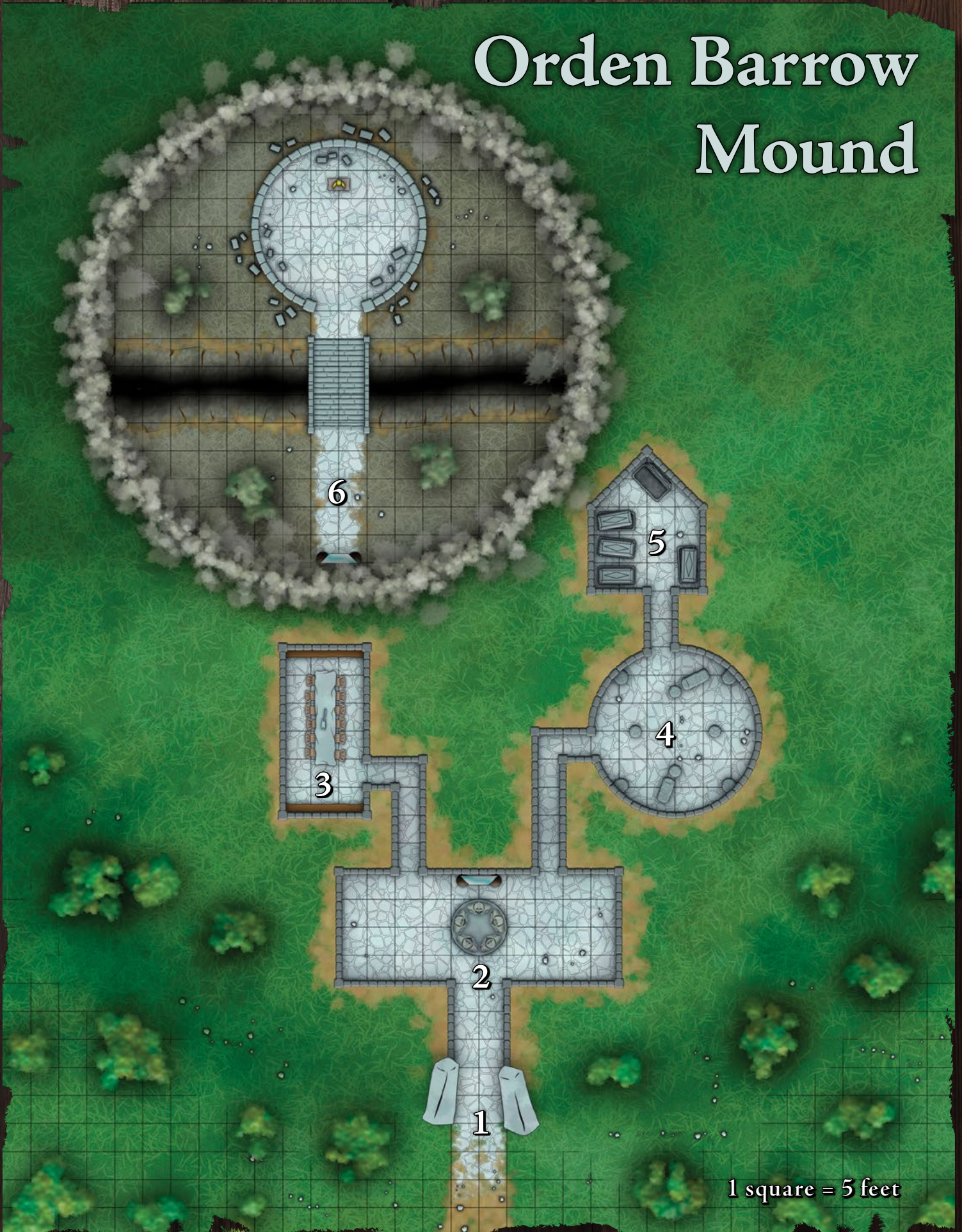
Beyond the Mirror Gate lies a pseudo-real landscape of black trees and gray grass 80 feet in diameter, bordered by dark, undulating fog. A 15-foot-wide, 50-foot-deep chasm spanned by a 10-foot-wide stone bridge splits the landscape in half. The only way in or out of the landscape is through the Mirror Gate, which stands at the southern end of the landscape.

Ambush. Before the party crosses the bridge, **Darribeth** attacks the characters, unless they defeated her previously. If cured of her symbiote, she gains a level of exhaustion but joins the party as an ally, offering her magical quiver as a gift after they escape.

Last Bastion. On the far side of the bridge stands the ruins of a 30-foot-diameter, 20-foot-tall tower. Ser Kendra of Orden, an **elder shadow** (DDG) who plays host to a **shadow symbiote**, and four **specters** await the adventurers at the base of the tower. Kendra and the specters (the spirits of the knights who fought alongside Ser Kendra) are trapped here, eternally reliving the final stand of the Knights of Orden. In her current state, Kendra mistakes the characters for enemies, fighting them to the bitter end. If her shadow symbiote is removed, Kendra returns to her senses. She thanks the party and dissipates into nothingness; at the same time, her remaining knights fade away. Kendra guards the *idol of light* (DDG), which rests atop a lectern inside the tower. Kendra focuses her attacks on any creature that carries the idol, but she can't touch the idol herself.

Total Collapse. Defeating Kendra (or curing her madness) causes the shadow landscape to begin breaking down. Every minute the characters remain in the area, roll a d10. If the result is lower than the number of minutes that have passed, the landscape collapses, hurling any remaining creatures into the Bleak Gate.

Orden Barrow Mound



Sinister Submarine (level 10 Underland)

The lightless seas have tides of their own, and they are less forgiving than those of the surface. Underland mariners caught in the wrong cavern can easily drown if the seas they sail unexpectedly rise, crushing their vessel against the stony ceiling. Because of this, some Underlanders have begun to develop submarines. In this adventure, the characters must capture one of these submarines from the minions of an aboleth.

Adventure Hooks

The characters might need to capture the submarine for several reasons.

- They have been taken prisoner. If this is the case, they are knocked out and reawaken in 5 Engine Room.
- The aboleths have stolen the submarine from another faction. The characters must recover the vessel before it's taken to the aboleth's lair and reverse engineered.
- The characters board the submarine during ship-to-ship combat.
- The submarine carries important cargo the characters must acquire.

Features

In addition to the submarine's main chambers, 3-foot-wide corridors span the sides of the vessel, and an access shaft runs along the ceiling. Medium creatures must squeeze in the corridors and crawl to move along the access shaft.

Close Quarters. Submarines are notoriously tight spaces. A Medium or larger creature that moves more than 15 feet on a turn must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity save or collide with a pipe, conduit, or bulkhead, taking 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage. Inside the submarine, melee attacks made using weapons with the reach, two-handed, or versatile properties have disadvantage.

Hull. Each 5-foot section of the submarine's ironclad hull has AC 19, 150 hit points, a damage threshold of 12, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. If its hull is breached while the submarine is submerged, water begins flooding the appropriate

chamber. Roll initiative. On initiative count 20 and 10, the water level in the chamber rises 1 foot. Each chamber is 8 feet high. Once the water is higher than a creature's height, that creature must swim. The rate at which the submarine floods slows if the water can flow into adjoining chambers, but if three or more chambers flood completely, the submarine begins to sink.

Exits. A heavy, vault-style door separates each of the submarine's chambers (including the corridors and access shafts). The doors can be closed and locked from either side. Each side of the door has its own independent set of locking rods; a door can be unlocked only from the side it was locked on. This allows creatures on the submarine to lockdown flooded chambers and prevent the vessel from sinking. Each door has AC 17, 100 hit points, a damage threshold of 10, and immunity to poison and psychic damage.

Wild Card

An **intellect devourer** runs freely throughout the submarine. It wants to eat the brain of the **aboleth champion** (DDG) in **1. Bridge and Helm** and is willing to ally with the party to do so. The devourer isn't much of a threat, but its diminutive size makes it a useful scout in the tight environs of the submarine. If it succeeds in replacing the aboleth champion, it claims the submarine for itself and attacks the characters if they oppose it. By default, the devourer starts in the access shaft that runs the length of the submarine.

Areas

1. Bridge and Helm

This chamber serves as the submarine's command center. Normally, a dome of magically hardened glass at the nose of the submarine affords a clear exterior view, but the dome is currently obscured by a web of fleshy growths with glowing, eye-like nodules affixed to the inside of the glass.

Command Crew. An **aboleth champion** (DDG), two **aboleth thralls** (DDG), and two **oculites** (DDG) occupy the bridge. The chamber also contains a **maw swarm** (DDG), the source of the fleshy mass that obscures the view dome.

Crew Stations. An elevated captain's station overlooks stations used by the first mate, helm, navigator, and weapons chief.

2. Weapons Room

A dozen torpedoes hang in metal racks along the walls.

Crew. Three **aboleth thralls** (*DDG*) and 3 **slitherwhites** (*DDG*) guard the chamber. When reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, there is a 50 percent chance each aboleth thrall facing defeat tries to detonate a torpedo, setting off a chain reaction that vaporizes everyone in the room and sinks the submarine.

Torpedoes. A creature that makes a DC 5 Engineering check recognizes that using fire magic or ballistic weaponry in this space is a VERY bad idea. Each time a spell that deals fire damage is cast in the chamber, there is a 50 percent chance a torpedo detonates. Each torpedo is an object with AC 17, 50 hit points, and immunity to poison and psychic damage. Reducing a torpedo to 0 hit points causes it to detonate. A ranged attack that misses its target has a 50 percent chance of hitting a torpedo instead, dealing damage to the torpedo as normal.

When a torpedo detonates, each creature and object within 25 feet of it takes 44 (8d10) bludgeoning damage. The submarine's hull is always within range of the blast. The close proximity of the torpedoes makes it very easy to set off a chain reaction in the area.

3. Galley and Quarters

Rows of narrow berths and latrines arrayed around a central galley comprise the living quarters for the crew of the submarine.

Barnacles. The doors and ceilings of this area are encrusted with fractal-shaped clusters of barnacle-like creatures. The barnacles serve as a psionic "relay" that enables the crew to communicate with their aboleth master. A humanoid that touches the barnacles is subjected to a blast of psionic energy, taking 10 (3d6) psychic damage or half damage with a DC 14 Wisdom saving throw. The barnacles cover every inch of the doors (including the handles); the characters must either submit to the psionic blast or find a way to open the doors without touching the barnacles.

4. Freight and Storage

Neatly stacked and strapped-down crates fill the area. Opportunities for cover are abundant.

Supplies. A search of the room reveals a pile of magical debris that can be shoveled into the submarine's magic-burning engine (**5. Engine Room**), as well as a glove that functions as an insulator against the psionic blasts of the barnacles in **3. Galley and Quarters**. Currently, the magical debris includes three cursed items (conveniently labeled as such!), *spell scrolls* of various cantrips, and six expired *potions of healing*. A creature that drinks an expired potion regains 1d4 + 1 hit points and must make a DC 10 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 1 hour.

Exit. A hatch leads to the submarine's exterior, though the hatch is locked while the vessel is submerged. Unless the characters arrived on the submarine as prisoners, they likely entered the vessel through this hatch. Opening the exterior hatch automatically closes and locks the interior doors at the ends of the room, a safety measure against flooding the entire submarine.

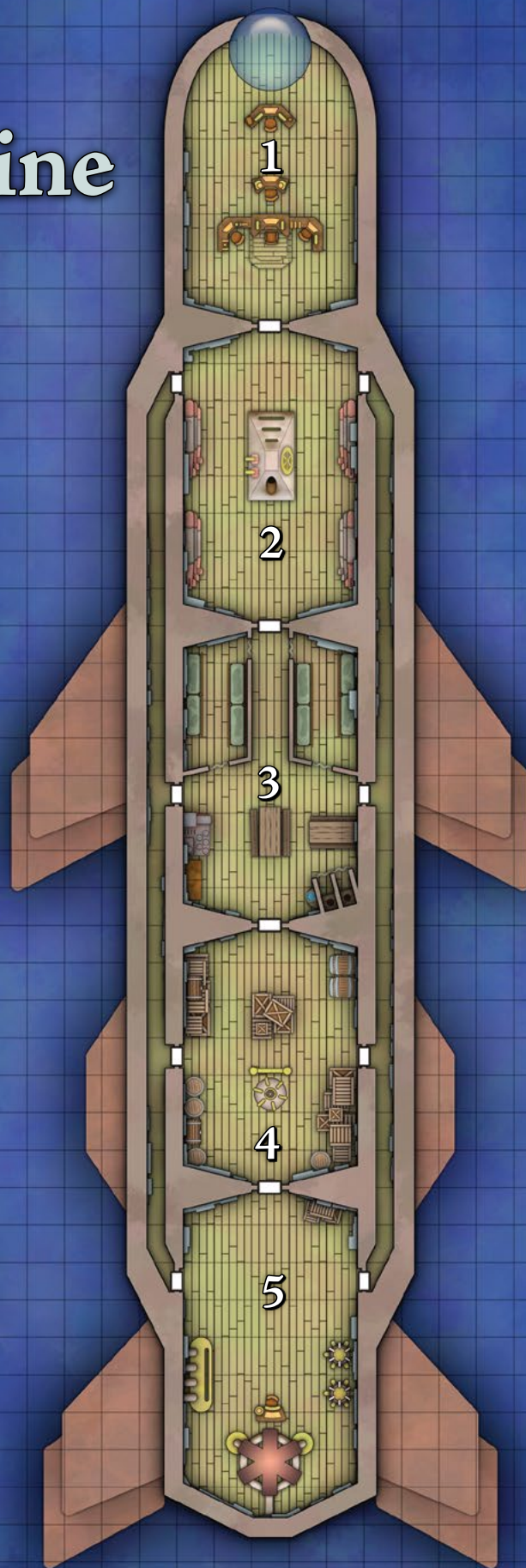
5. Engine Room

The submarine's magic-burning engine is located in this chamber. The engine can run on either magic items or spell slots and is currently being fueled by an exhausted acolyte, who wearily casts cantrips into the engine to keep the submarine moving.

Crew. Depending on the needs of the adventure, the **acolyte** may be a willing member of the crew or a prisoner guarded by two **aboleth thralls** (*DDG*), an **oculite** (*DDG*), and a pair of **cult fanatics**.

Engine. The submarine's engine runs on magical energy. A cantrip cast into the engine powers the submarine for 1 minute. Spell slots power the submarine for a number of hours equal to the spell level. Magic items provide an hour of power for common items, 6 hours for uncommon items, and 24 hours for rare. Consumable magic items (like potions and scrolls) power the submarine for half these times. Very rare and legendary magic items, as well as artifacts, are too powerful for the engine to consume.

Sinister Submarine



1 square = 5 feet

Obsidian Peak (level 14 laboratory)

Obsidian Peak is a disc-shaped structure suspended by sturdy metal cables above the caldera of an active volcano. A well-constructed metal bridge accessible via a road that spirals up the mountainside leads to the entrance of the structure. The dungeon's striking appearance is a result of its unusual purpose; Obsidian Peak is a magical research facility, and its location is a failsafe. In an emergency, it is possible to plunge the entire structure some 200 feet down into the volcanic caldera. Indeed, after seeing what's inside Obsidian Peak, some adventurers may want to do just that.

Adventure Hooks

- The characters need to recover something or someone from inside Obsidian Peak.
- The characters are sent to investigate Obsidian Peak, or notice the facility themselves and decide to investigate.
- The characters are sent to destroy the facility and its sinister research.

Areas

1. Entrance

A security checkpoint protects the entrance to the facility.

Guards. An **archmage** and a pair of **blackguards** (DDG) scrutinize anyone seeking to enter Obsidian Peak. They attack unauthorized visitors.

Exits. Doors lead to **2. Living Quarters** and **3. Storage**. Both doors are locked but can be opened with a key rod (see **5. Main Research Lab**) in the archmage's possession or picked with a DC 17 thieves' tools check.

2. Living Quarters

Private rooms cluster around a central cooking and eating area.

Inhabitants. This area is typically populated by four **mag**s, a **cultist execrator** (DDG), two **veterans**, and a **gladiator**, though at the Narrator's discretion any of these inhabitants might be found in another room instead. Normally, 1d4 inhabitants are in the common area eating or socializing, while the rest relax in their rooms. The inhabitants assume the adventurers are authorized visitors and aren't generally hostile, but sounds of violence in nearby rooms put them on alert.

Treasure. The cultist execrator carries a key rod. One of the mags carries a *deck of illusions*. One of the veterans has *dust of sneezing and choking*. The gladiator wields *Doorbreaker* (DDG). In total, the private rooms contain 2d4 × 1,000 gp, 2d6 × 100 gp worth of minor art objects and furnishings, and 1d4 *potions of greater healing*.

Exits. Doors lead to **1. Entrance** and **5. Main Research Lab**.

3. Storage

This storage room contains shelves, tools hanging from hooks, a work table, and four heavy crates.

Supplies. The crates and shelves hold practical items like cheap dinner plates, boxes of sand shakers for ink blotting, bolts of canvas cloth, inexpensive spell components, and the like. In addition to this mundane bric-a-brac, the crates contain a *gong of alarm* (DDG), four *immovable rods*, and a dozen *potions of superior healing*. Unless they carry a key rod, a creature that attempts to leave the room with any of the magic items takes 1 psychic damage and is teleported next to the crate they took the item from as a magical voice scolds them for stealing.

Exits. Doors lead to **1. Entrance** and **4. Library**.

4. Library

Books cover shelves along the walls and five tables in the center of the room. Halfway across the library, a counter surrounds a complex mechanical orrery.

Librarians. Two suits of **animated armor** assist the librarian, a **lich**. The lich carries a key rod and at the Narrator's discretion may have prepared any of the rare spells described below.

Books. The library is stocked with a staggering array of books on alchemy, magical theory, monster physiology, and forbidden lore, but all of the books are magically anchored to the library. Books can be "checked out" for up to a week by removing them from the library, but if a book hasn't been returned after a week, it teleports back to the library. The books lose this property if Obsidian Peak is destroyed. Individual books are worth 1d10 × 25 gp each, and the entire collection yields 20,000 gp. A character that spends 1d4 hours researching in the library learns the answer to any question that could be answered by a DC 25 Arcana, Engineering, History, Nature, or Religion check. The library contains several rare *spell scrolls*, which unlike the books can be removed permanently. They include *Brother Melex's ecstatic conjure aberration* (DDG), *Sebirus's imprisoning skeletal hands* (DDG), and *Swann's thunderous entrance* (DDG).

Exits. Doors lead to **3. Storage** and **5. Main Research Lab**.

5. Main Research Lab

The disquieting nature of Obsidian Peak's research is on full display in this area.

Research. Each of the two tables in the southwestern portion of the room features built-in restraints and a metal, helmet-like apparatus affixed to the edge. Stains in vibrant hues one would not normally associate with the vital fluids of humanoids cover the tables. An empty cage with two chambers, each sized for two Large creatures, sits in the eastern part of the room. Despite the clutter, the room is spotlessly clean.

Teleporter. A creature who makes a DC 15 Arcana check determines that an inactive magical symbol on the floor serves as some sort of teleportation device. A red console on the western wall features three slots into which key rods can be inserted. Doing so activates the teleportation symbol, which begins to glow. A creature that steps onto the symbol while it is active is teleported to **1. Entrance**. A 5-round countdown then begins. At the end of the countdown, the cables supporting the Obsidian Peak snap and the facility plummets into the lava-filled caldera below.

Treasure. Searching the room reveals five sets of alchemist's supplies, two herbalism kits, a vial containing *oil of slipperiness*, a *periapt of proof against poison*, and *spell scrolls of arcane mirror* (DDG), *awaken portal* (DDG), and *wall of force*.

Exits. Doors lead to **2. Living Quarters**, **4. Library**, and **6. Containment**. All doors in the room can be sealed with a wall of force by placing a key rod in the socket near the door to **6. Containment**. Removing the rod ends the effect.

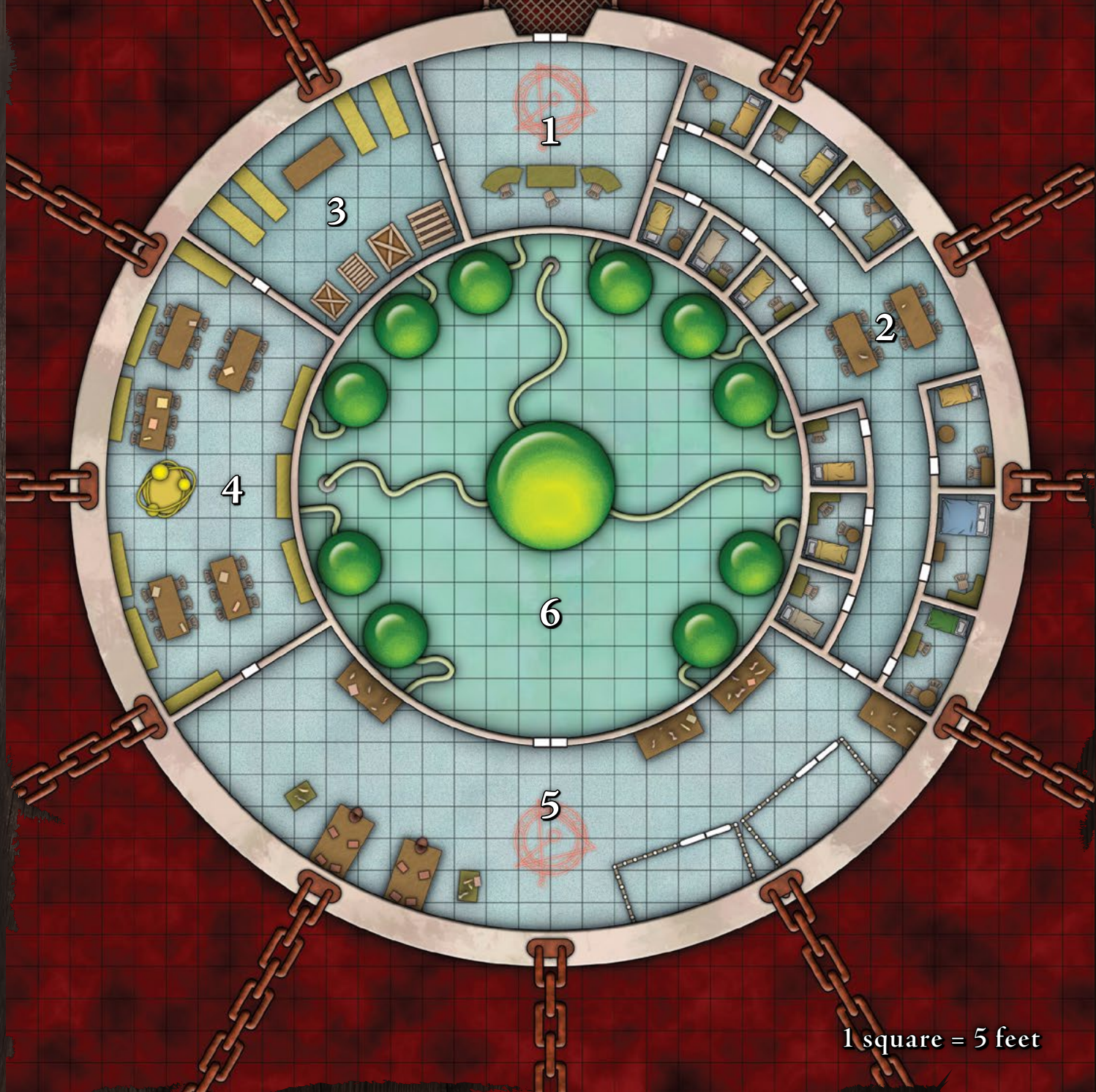
6. Containment

A floor-to-ceiling glass cylinder dominates the center of the room. Swirling orange smoke inside the cylinder conceals a draconic silhouette, its details impossible to discern. Similar but smaller cylinders are scattered throughout the room. Hoses lead from the smaller cylinder to ports in the walls and from the larger cylinder to three ports in the floor.

Test Subjects. The central cylinder contains a **draconic horror** (DDG). The ten smaller tanks contain larval versions of the horror (use the stats for a **gibbering moulder**). Two rounds after the adventurers enter the room, the draconic horror smashes its way out of the containment cylinder. The gibbering moulder escape 1 round later. Monsters in this room are unaffected by difficult terrain created by each other.

Exit. A door leads to **5. Main Research Lab**.

Obsidian Peak



Maze of the Mountain King

(level 17 bastion)

The Mountain King, a powerful genie noble, presides over a vast throne room glistening with gems and sweetened by the strains of his many court musicians. But when visitors incur his wrath, the King boots them into the dark pit in the center of the throne room—the entrance to his Maze.

Adventure Hooks

- The characters anger the Mountain King and are compelled to enter the Maze. A party that loses a battle against the king's minions may be thrown into the Maze instead of being killed.
- The party needs to rescue or speak to a prisoner of the Mountain King (place the prisoner in the empty cage in **8. Prison of Screams**).
- The party pursues a cunning adversary that flees into the Maze.

Features

The rooms in the Maze have 60-foot-high ceilings (climb DC 15) and a north-south width of 60 feet. The walls and ceilings of each room (including **1. Endless Pit** and the airways) are covered with jagged crystals called phase crystals, which illuminate the complex with a dim, purple glow. If a creature tries to move incorporeally through phase crystal, or if a direct line between a teleportation effect's origin and destination passes through a phase crystal, the creature's movement or teleportation ends within 5 feet of the crystal and the creature takes 7 (2d6) force damage (and possibly additional damage, if the creature stops within a solid object). A creature that tries to travel to another plane while within 60 feet of a phase crystal fails to do so and takes 7 (2d6) force damage in the process.

Areas

1. Endless Pit

This 60-foot-diameter, 300-foot-deep pit serves as the main entrance to the Maze. It connects to Mountain King's domain. It functions as a **wind tunnel trap** that carries creatures and objects 90 feet downwards each round and deposits them safely in the middle of **2. Foyer**. It's difficult to travel back up the pit.

2. Foyer

This hall stretches 240 feet from east to west. Bones and other remains litter the floor.

Exits. Two 30-foot-tall archways lead to **3. West Airway** and **4. East Airway**. Whistling wind can be heard in either direction.

3. West Airway

This 60-foot-diameter vertical pit appears to be endless. It is a **howling wind tunnel trap** that carries creatures and objects 90 feet downwards each round. Anything that moves off the bottom of the map (150 feet below **9. Junkyard**) is magically teleported to the top of the map (150 feet above **2. Foyer**), and vice versa.

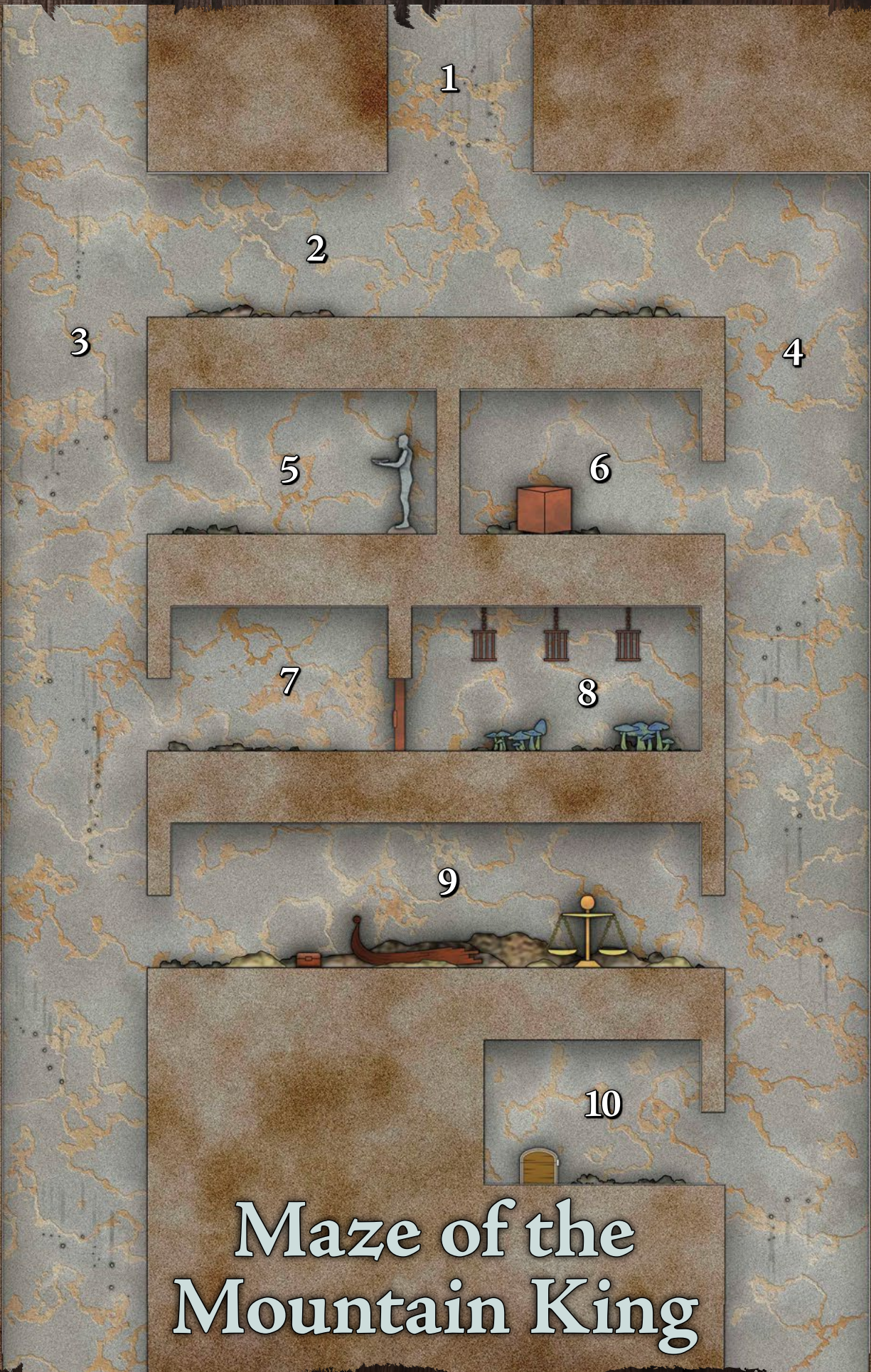
Exits. To the east, a 30-foot-tall gateway leads to **5. Chapel**; 90 feet below that, a 30-foot-tall gateway leads to **7. Guard Room**; 90 feet below that, a 30-foot-tall gateway leads to **9. Junkyard**.

4. East Airway

Looking down, this 60-foot-diameter vertical pit seems to stretch forever, but it features a ceiling on the foyer level. It is a **howling wind tunnel trap** that carries creatures and objects 90 feet upwards each round and leaves them hovering at foyer level. Anything that moves off the bottom of the map (60 feet below **9. Junkyard**), either through teleportation or by reversing the wind direction, escapes the Maze, arriving at an abandoned cloud castle on the Plane of Air or another safe location.

Exits. To the west, a 30-foot-tall gateway leads to **6. Machine Room**; 180 feet below that, a 30-foot-tall gateway leads to **9. Junkyard**; 90 feet below that, a locked 30-foot-tall wooden door leads to **10. Treasury**.

Maze of the Mountain King



5. Chapel

This 120-foot-long chapel contains 10-foot-tall, unlit braziers in each corner and a 40-foot-high magical statue of a god holding forth a begging bowl in the center of the room.

Statue. The first time each day a coin is placed in the statue's bowl, a *heroes' feast* appears in the room.

Exits. A 30-foot-tall gateway leads to **3. West Airway**. To the east, a concealed stone door leads to **6. Machine Room**. If the room contains smoke (such as that created by a brazier when lit), a faint draft is seen drawing it under this concealed door. Characters who discover the door and scrape off the phase crystals can open it.

6. Machine Room

This 120-foot-long room contains a **supercharged metal cube**. Disabling the cube turns off the wind tunnels in **1. Endless Pit**, **3. West Airway**, and **4. East Airway**, allowing the adventurers to climb or fly in either direction. Someone wearing the hide armor gloves found in **9. Junkyard** can touch the supercharged metal without taking damage.

Exits. To the west, a 30-foot-tall stone door leads to **5. Chapel** (it's not concealed on this side of the door); to the east, a 30-foot-tall gateway leads to **4. East Airway**.

7. Guard Room

A keyring hangs from a peg on the north wall of this 90-foot-long room.

Cerberus Guardian. A **cerberus guardian** (DDG) attacks any non-genie creature that enters the room.

Keyring. The keyring has four keys that open the west door in this room and the three cages inside **8. Prison of Screams**.

Exits. To the west, a 30-foot-tall gateway leads to **3. West Airway**. A character who listens at the 30-foot-tall locked metal door to the east hears screaming from **8. Prison of Screams**.

8. Prison of Screams

Screams echo throughout this 150-foot-long room. A stand of 5-foot-tall mushrooms covers the floor. Three locked metal cages dangle from the ceiling.

Shriekers. Twelve **spell shriekers** (DDG) shriek constantly while the room contains spellcasters (including the djinn prisoners), hampering spellcasting and communication.

Djinn Cages. Two of the dangling cages contain unarmed djinn prisoners. The **djinn** assume anyone who enters the room is allied with the Mountain King and attack them using **Lightning Blast**. If the party reasons with the djinn, they may ally with the party.

Exits. To the west, a metal door leads to **7. Guard Room**.

9. Junkyard

This 240-foot-long hall is filled with broken junk.

Troll King. A **troll king** (DDG) stands behind an enormous pulpit among the junk piles. The Mountain King banished him to the Maze, but the troll king is happy here. He demands tribute in exchange for passage through his hall: the tribute must weigh more than the largest member of the party. (The balance scales in the corner can be used to weigh a party member against the tribute.) The troll attacks if insulted or if anyone tries to pass him without paying tribute.

Junk Pile. The junk includes a tuba sized for a Large creature; a deactivated **shield guardian**; a set of orange, inch-thick hide armor with gloves; half of a longship; a 20-foot-tall set of balance scales; a wooden chest containing 3,000 gp worth of silver bowls and plates; a huge pulpit suitable for a giant's temple; a key that unlocks the door to **10. Treasury**; and assorted pieces of scrap metal and wood.

Exits. Two 30-foot-tall gateways lead to **3. West Airway** and **4. East Airway**.

10. Treasury

This hard-to-reach 90-foot-long room contains a treasure chest.

Chest. The treasure includes eight diamonds worth 5,000 gp each; the control amulet for the shield guardian in **9. Junkyard**; a parchment, signed and sealed by the Mountain King, with a blank spot to write any order; two potions of invisibility; and a 6-foot by 9-foot carpet of flying.

Exits. A locked 30-foot-tall locked wooden door leads to **4. East Airway**. The key is in **9. Junkyard**. Without the key, the characters can make a DC 20 Strength or thieves' tools check to bypass the door.



CHAPTER 3

NARRATOR'S TOOLS

“There it is,” breathes Hamza. “The Sword of the Serpent.” Inside the burial chamber, a shimmering sword rests inside a lidless sarcophagus.

“Almost made it!” Varskyle says. “Except for this portcullis in the way. Zidi, can you lift it?”

Zidi eyes the iron grate. “I can try, but it must weigh half a ton. Gwyven might have better luck wriggling through and grabbing the sword.”

“I don’t think I can squeeze through these bars,” says Gwyven. “But those can.” He gestures towards the mass of pallid tentacles wriggling towards the adventurers from inside the burial chamber...

This chapter offers new challenges, threats, and rewards for would-be dungeoneers.

- For advice on how to handle common dungeoneering tasks, such as listening at a door or breaking it down, see **Ability Scores in the Dungeon**.
- For new magical treasures to enrich your dungeon hoards, see **Magic Items**.
- For dozens of new subterranean monsters and adversaries, see **Monsters and NPCs**.
- For a tour of the weird subterranean realm of Underland, see **Underland Gazetteer**.

Ability Scores in the Dungeon

When characters bash down a dungeon's doors, find and disable its traps, or search for patterns in its fiendish puzzles, they're measuring their skills against those of the dungeon's architects. And as they descend to more dangerous levels of the dungeon, they must compete against ever stronger countermeasures.

The *Dungeon Delver's Guide* assigns every dungeon a level from 1 to 20. If you're unsure of the DC of an ability or skill check within the dungeon, you can set it to 10 + half the dungeon's level.

These increasing DCs should be used only to represent the strength of the dungeon's most potent defenses. Performing a routine task like climbing a rope or jumping across a 5-foot gap doesn't become harder on deeper levels of the dungeon! *Level Up* characters are competent adventurers who can complete such tasks without needing to make a check.

Similarly, if failure on an ability or skill check would halt progress through the adventure or otherwise result in a boring outcome, don't call for a check! Checks are required only when success and failure both lead to interesting results.

Retrying Tasks

Some obstacles in a dungeon might require several attempts to overcome: picking a lock, lifting a gate, or toppling a statue are all tasks that can logically be retried.

If a character has any chance of succeeding at a task (i.e. they would succeed on the check if they rolled a 20) and they can make repeated attempts without consequence, then they don't need to make a check. Instead, they succeed automatically. Retrying is only interesting when there are consequences for failure. For instance, a character at the bottom of a slippery slope is sure to climb up, given time, and normally no roll would be required. However, in the midst of combat, the character might need to make an Athletics check to see if they can climb up and join the fray.

Even outside of combat, failure at a task can be dramatic and interesting. Consider increasing the stakes when a character retries a task. Let the players know the potential dangers of making a second attempt and ask if they still want to proceed. Here are some consequences you might impose on characters retrying a task:

- Trying the check again is likely to attract notice from hostile creatures or increase in the dungeon's alert level (see chapter 2).
- Trying again will take ten times longer than last time—and the next time, ten times longer than that. (A character that can't bend prison bars, for example, might be able to file through the bars—eventually.)
- The characters must expend a resource to attempt the check again. They might need to cast a relevant spell (such as *bleed* or *enhance ability*), spend exertion, or gain a level of fatigue.
- A critically failed check made to manipulate an object (like opening a door or using a device) might damage the object so much that further checks become impossible.

Using Abilities and Skills

Dungeons are closed, architectural environments that present specific sets of obstacles. This section provides guidance for setting the DCs of common dungeon challenges.

Strength

Breaking Doors

When stymied by a locked door, iron gate, or even a blank stone wall, adventurers often resort to the most straightforward solution: breaking down the obstacle.

When time is of the essence, a character can make a Strength check to bash open a door, lift a portcullis, or otherwise force their way past a physical obstacle. When a single shoulder bash or a kick can't open a door, but delay is impossible, a character might try to destroy the door with an axe, hammer, or similar weapon. Most doors in the dungeon are designed to



withstand such punishment. They're an inch or more thick and typically have 27 (5d10) hit points or more. The DC to bash down a door, or the AC to damage it, are as follows:

TABLE: DOOR TOUGHNESS

DOOR TYPE	BASH DC	AC	RECOMMENDED DUNGEON LEVEL
Wooden	15	15	1+
Stone	17	17	5+
Iron	19	19	9+
Mithral	21	21	13+
Adamantine	23	23	17+

Some dungeon doors are especially thick, protected by magical wards, or reinforced with iron bars. These fortified doors have damage thresholds equal to their AC values. Thus, an attack that would deal less than 15 damage has no effect on a fortified wooden door. The DC to force open a fortified door is increased by 4 (so a fortified adamantine door can be bashed open with a Strength check of 27).

Given enough time, characters can dismantle most doors—unless even rolling a 20 on a Strength check can't bash it open and even a critical hit can't overcome its damage threshold.

Tunneling

In dire circumstances, characters might try to dig a tunnel or break through a wall.

Without a burrowing speed or magical assistance, a humanoid with the appropriate digging or tunneling tools can dig for up to 8 hours in a day. Over 8 hours, the creature can excavate a number of cubic feet of dirt equal to 10 + their Strength modifier. A creature can dig for additional hours using the Forced March rules, excavating an additional cubic foot per hour. Tunneling speed is halved if the digger needs to shore up walls to prevent collapse.

Soft stone, like the limestone walls of many caverns, can be excavated at one-quarter the speed of earth and doesn't require shoring up.

A wall made of hard stone, like granite, simply can't be broken in a short time frame without specialized equipment, immense strength, or magical assistance.

Lifting and Carrying

While exploring dungeons, adventurers frequently have to pick up, push, and pull objects. The Narrator is responsible for estimating the weight of furniture, portcullises, statues, and other objects in the dungeon.

Often we know an object's approximate size but need to determine its weight. Here are some very rough guidelines to help you approximate the weight of objects made of various materials. (Don't worry about precision. The game won't grind to a halt if you underestimate a statue's weight by 25 percent!)

TABLE: EXAMPLE WEIGHTS

A CUBIC FOOT OF:	WEIGHS:
Wood	45 pounds
Water (creatures, parchment, books)	60 pounds
Dirt	90 pounds
Stone	180 pounds
Most metal	500 pounds
Gold and platinum	1,200 pounds

Thus, a 200-pound human, if turned to stone, would weigh roughly 600 pounds. If turned to gold, they'd weigh 4,000 pounds. An inch-thick, 5-foot-by-10-foot iron gate weighs about 2,000 pounds. An iron portcullis of the same dimensions might weigh half as much, since it's made of crossed bars with gaps in between.

Without requiring a Strength check, most characters can drag or lift a weight in pounds up to 30 times their Strength score. However, a character can push themselves beyond their limits for brief moments of supreme effort. A character can make a Strength check to drag a heavier object 5 feet or lift it above their head for one round. The DC of the check is the object's weight in pounds divided by 40. Thus, lifting a 1,000-pound portcullis would require a DC 25 check.

Once a character has made this check, they must finish a short or long rest before they can do so again or they suffer a level of fatigue.

Dexterity

Contortion

A humanoid or humanoid-shaped creature can use its entire movement to move up to 5 feet through a gap or tunnel into which it's too small to squeeze. While contorting in this way, a creature can't make attacks, attacks against it are made with advantage, and it automatically fails Dexterity saving throws. Even while carrying gear and wearing armor, a creature can enter a space listed on the chart below.

TABLE: CONTORTION

SIZE	MINIMUM SPACE
Tiny	6 inches (or half the creature's height, whichever is smaller)
Small	12 inches
Medium	18 inches
Large	3 feet
Huge	5 feet
Gargantuan and larger	10 feet or larger



A creature that succeeds on a DC 15 Acrobatics check can enter a space half this wide. This check automatically fails if the creature is wearing medium or heavy armor or carrying a bulky object. The Narrator can decide that a certain space is more or less awkward to enter and requires a higher or lower DC.

A non-humanoid creature's shape determines the space it can enter. For example, a Gargantuan snake might be able to contort into a space that a Large humanoid could enter.

Intelligence

Mapping and Navigation in the Dungeon

A creature with writing supplies can make an accurate map of the dungeon as they traverse it. More challenging cartographic feats, such as creating a map that's accurate down to the inch or making a map from memory, requires an Intelligence check. If a creature proficient with cartographers' tools has such tools available, they add their proficiency bonus to the check. The DC to create a map is DC 10, or DC 15 for multi-level or otherwise complex maps. On a success, the creature creates an accurate map. On a failure, the map contains some inaccuracy the creator isn't aware of.

A creature can make an Intelligence check to retrace their steps along a route in the dungeon. The DC for this check is DC 10, or DC 15 for a complex route or one they haven't traveled in the last 24 hours. The check automatically succeeds if the creature has an accurate map, and is made with disadvantage if the creature has an inaccurate map.

Wisdom

Hearing

A creature makes a Perception check to listen for noises, or uses its passive Perception to hear sounds it's not actively listening for. Use the tables below to determine the DC to hear specific noises. An obstacle (such as a door) or competing noise (such as a nearby waterfall) imposes disadvantage on the check.

TABLE: DC OF NOISES

NOISES	DC
Stealthy activity	The creature's Stealth check
Quiet noises (sitting, sleeping, reading)	10
Moderate noises (walking, conversation)	5

Example: A party of adventurers stands before a closed door. If creatures on the other side of the door are engaging in quiet activities like resting or sleeping, the DC to hear them would be 10, and the attempt to hear them would be made with disadvantage due to the interposing door. If the creatures are shouting at each other, no check would be necessary to hear them.

Charisma

Communicating Without Language

Dungeons are often inhabited by creatures who live in close proximity but don't share a language. A creature can use sounds, gestures, and drawings to communicate with another intelligent creature, even if they don't share a language. A creature can communicate a simple idea with a DC 10 Charisma check, and a complex one with a DC 15 check. If a creature makes a particularly clear gesture or drawing, this check may be made with advantage or might automatically succeed.

If the Charisma check fails, the message is misunderstood. Making the check during combat requires an action and might be made with disadvantage.

Example simple ideas:

- We mean you no harm!
- I'm hungry!
- My name is...
- Surrender!

Example complex ideas:

- What creatures live nearby?
- Did someone else pass through this room recently?
- Where can we find the treasure we seek?

Magic Items

The following magic items have long lain hidden in subterranean vaults or monster lairs. Many of these items allow adventurers to better traverse or survive jaunts in underground locations; others appear in the dungeon adventures in this book (chapter 2). The Magic Items table below notes the rarity of each, as well as whether the item requires attunement.

TABLE: MAGIC ITEMS

RARITY	ITEM	ATTUNEMENT
Rare	<i>Clock of Opening</i>	No
Rare	<i>Doorbreaker</i>	Yes
Uncommon	<i>Dark Stone</i>	No
Very Rare	<i>Dungeon Delver's Guide</i>	Yes
Uncommon	<i>Gong of Alarm</i>	No
Uncommon	<i>Green Scale Shield</i>	No
Uncommon	<i>Hunter's Quiver</i>	No
Very Rare	<i>Idol of Light</i>	Yes
Very Rare	<i>Midir's Trident</i>	Yes
Uncommon	<i>Poison Breath Bottle</i>	No
Very Rare	<i>Prospector's Pick</i>	Yes
Very Rare	<i>Rod of Entropy</i>	Yes
Uncommon	<i>Reloader Gremlin</i>	No
Rare	<i>Staff of Squalor</i>	Yes
Very Rare	<i>Sword of the Serpent</i>	Yes
Uncommon	<i>Verdant Fang</i>	Yes

Clock of Opening

Wondrous item, rare (cost 3,000 gp)

Crafting Components: Grandfather clock created by a master engineer

This grandfather clock weighs 250 pounds and tolls loudly every hour. Among its internal mechanisms are 12 keyholes of various sizes. Any key can be inserted into a keyhole.

If you are trained in the Arcana or Engineering skill, you can use an action to cause a lock within 500 miles to magically lock or unlock by inserting the lock's key into the clock and adjusting the clock's mechanisms. Additionally, so long as the key remains in the clock, you can schedule the lock to lock or unlock at certain hours of the day.

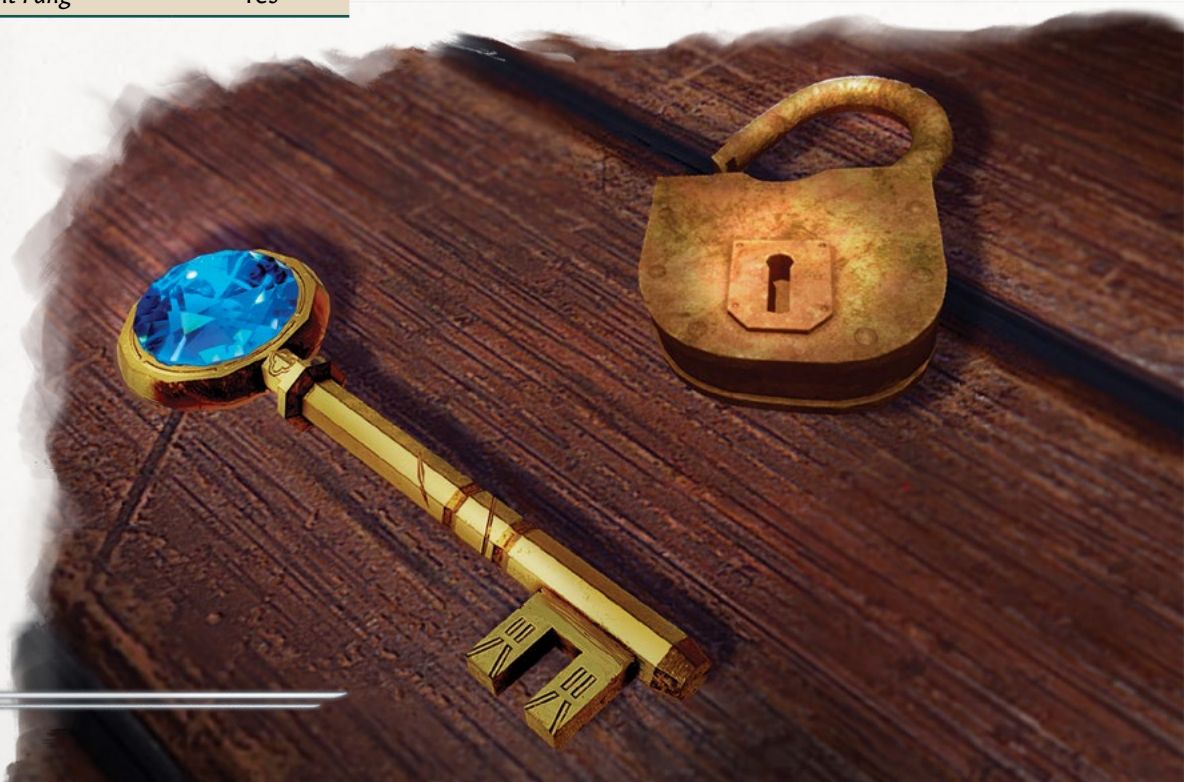
Doorbreaker

Weapon (maul), rare (requires attunement; cost 5,000 gp)

Crafting Components: Adamantine hammer worth at least 2,000 gp

The head of this magic maul is shaped like an adamantine fist. You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this weapon. When you hit an object or construct while wielding *Doorbreaker*, the hit is treated as a critical hit.

Doorbreaker has 3 charges. When you attack or touch a portal sealed with an *arcane lock*, you can expend 1 charge to cast *knock* on the portal. *Doorbreaker* regains 1d3 charges each dawn.



Dark Stone

Weapon (sling ammunition), uncommon (cost 100 gp per stone)

Crafting Components: Stone from a black dragon's lair

Five *dark stones* are usually found together. A *dark stone* is a black, round pebble that is cold to the touch. It can be used as sling ammunition or can be thrown up to 30 feet. If it is used as sling ammunition, a target hit by the stone takes an extra 1d6 cold damage. Whether it is fired or thrown, nonmagical fires within 10 feet of the stone's point of impact are immediately extinguished, as are any magical lights or fires created with a spell slot of 2nd-level or lower.

Dungeon Delver's Guide

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement; cost 50,000 gp)

Crafting component: 10 doors, 10 traps, and 10 monsters

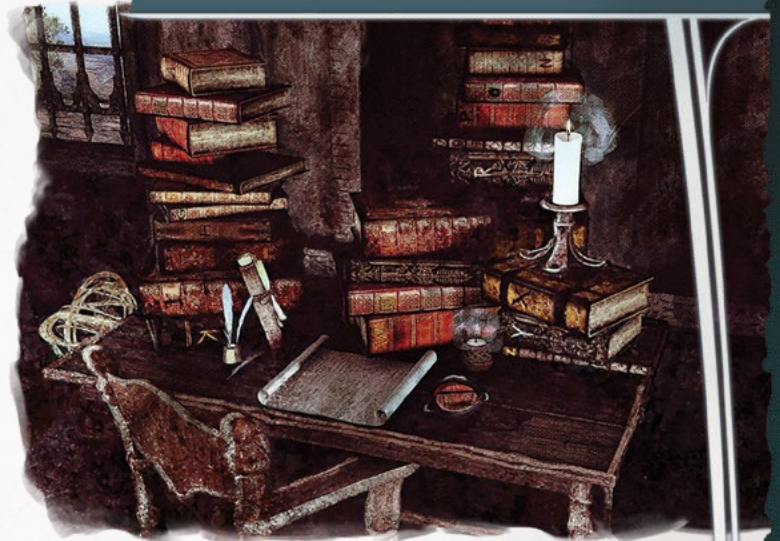
While attuned to this magic tome, you gain an expertise die to skill checks made to recognize and notice underground traps and architectural features. In addition, you gain an expertise die on saving throws against traps.

The book contains 10 illustrations of doors, 10 illustrations of traps, and 10 illustrations of monsters. As an action, you can permanently tear out an illustration and place it on a surface to make a real door, trap, or monster appear. Once an illustration is used, it can't be used again.

If you place a door, a key that you can use to lock and unlock the door magically appears in your hand. Behind the door is a permanent passage through the wall. The passage is 5 feet wide, 8 feet tall, and up to 10 feet deep. The passage creates no instability.

If you place a trap, you can choose between the following traps from this book (chapter 2): **acid pit trap**, **commanding voice trap**, **explosive runes trap**, **false door trap**, **hidden pit trap** (x3), **lock trap** (x3, can be placed only on a lock).

If you place a monster, the monster is not initially hostile to any creature present when it is summoned but is hostile to all other creatures. It otherwise acts according to its nature. The following monsters can be placed: **black pudding**, **gelatinous cube**, **hell hound**, **kobold** (x3), **minotaur**, **skeleton immortal** (x3, DDG).



Gong of Alarm

Wondrous item, uncommon (cost 350 gp)

Crafting Components: Spell scroll of alarm

As an action, you can cast the *alarm* spell through this brass gong. When cast this way, the spell's duration becomes 1 month. The gong can't be used to cast *alarm* again while the spell is active and for 24 hours thereafter.

Green Scale Shield

Armor (shield), uncommon (cost 200 gp)

Crafting Components: Green dragon scale

While you hold this shield, you have resistance to poison damage.

Hunter's Quiver

Wondrous item, uncommon (cost 500 gp)

Crafting Components: Pegasus feather

You can pull an endless number of nonmagical arrows from this quiver. An arrow disappears when it is fired or if it leaves your possession for longer than 1 minute. While you carry the quiver, if no hostile creatures are within 30 feet of you, you can use a bonus action to aim, gaining advantage on ranged weapon attacks until the end of your turn.

Idol of Light

Wondrous item, very rare (requires attunement; cost 40,000 gp)

Crafting Components: Sand from a celestial shore
This glass idol resembles a humanoid woman with a set of iridescent butterfly wings and a crystalline crown. The idol sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet at all times. It has 10 charges and regains 1d6 + 4 charges each day if exposed to the light of dawn. You can expend the idol's charges to produce the following effects:

- When you take radiant or necrotic damage, you can use your reaction to expend 1 charge and gain resistance to that damage type for the next minute or until you use this property again.
- As an action, you can expend 2 charges to make the idol shed light, as if by the *daylight* spell, for 10 minutes.
- As an action, you can expend 3 charges to cast *dispel magic*, targeting an illusion or necromancy spell. You can increase the spell slot level by one for each additional charge you expend.
- As a bonus action, you can expend 4 charges to cause the idol to flare with blinding light. Creatures you choose within 30 feet must succeed on a DC 13 Constitution saving throw or be blinded until the end of your next turn. Undead make the save with disadvantage.

Midir's Trident

Weapon (trident), very rare (requires attunement; cost 20,000 gp)

Crafting Components: Unique (uncraftable)
You gain a +3 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic trident. When you hit with this weapon, you deal an extra 1d6 lightning damage. When you make a ranged attack with this trident, it has a normal range of 40 feet and a maximum range of 120 feet, and it returns to your hand after the attack.

The trident's size changes to match your own. If you are Large or larger, it deals an extra 2d6 lightning damage.

Poison Breath Bottle

Wondrous item, uncommon (cost 75 gp)

Crafting Components: Green dragon breath

You can use an action to throw this green vial at a point within 20 feet. The vial shatters on impact and creates a 5-foot-radius cloud of poison gas. A creature that starts its turn in the cloud must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 2d6 poison damage and become poisoned until the end of its next turn. The area inside the cloud is lightly obscured. The cloud remains for 1 minute or until a strong wind disperses it.

Prospector's Pick

Weapon (war pick), very rare (requires attunement; cost 5,000 gp)

Crafting Components: Iron from Plane of Earth
You gain a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic war pick. Attacks with this weapon deal an extra 3d6 piercing damage to objects and creatures made of earth or stone.

The pick has 8 charges. As an action, you can expend 1 charge to magically disintegrate a 5-foot cube of nonmagical earth or unworked stone within 5 feet of you. Precious gems, metal ores, and objects not made of earth or stone are left behind. The pick regains 1d8 charges at dawn.

Rod of Entropy

Rod, very rare (requires attunement; cost 15,000 gp)

Crafting Components: Demilich's skull

This skull-topped rod can be used as a club that grants a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls and deals an extra 1d6 necrotic damage.

The rod has 3 charges and regains 1d3 expended charges at dawn. As an action, you can expend the rod's charges, increasing entropy in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in the area makes a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the target takes 3d8 necrotic damage per charge expended, or half the damage on a success. A creature killed by this damage decays and becomes an inanimate skeleton. In addition, nonmagical objects in the area that are not being carried or worn experience rapid aging. If you expended 1 charge, soft materials like leather and cloth rot away, and liquid evaporates. If you

expended 2 charges, hard organic materials like wood and bone crumble, and iron and steel rust away. Expending 3 charges causes Medium or smaller stone objects to crumble to dust.

Reloader Gremlin

Wondrous item (gear gremlin), uncommon (cost 250 gp)

Crafting Components: Bear trap broken by a trapped creature

A tiny, ethereal gremlin squats motionless in this silver picture frame, which from a distance appears to contain a painting of the gremlin. The gremlin watches a particular device or mechanism. One minute after the device is triggered, the gremlin emerges from its frame, performs whatever actions are necessary to reset the device, and returns to its frame.

The gremlin is ethereal and unable to interact with objects and creatures on the Material Plane other than its frame and the device it watches.

Staff of Squalor

Staff, rare (requires attunement; cost 2,500 gp)

Crafting Components: Mushrooms or mold with disease-curing properties

Strands of white mycelium cover the head of this gnarled wooden staff. When tapped on the ground, the staff sheds a thin coating of dirt. While attuned to the staff, you suffer no harmful effects from diseases but can still carry diseases and spread them to others. When you hit a creature with this staff, you can force the target to make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, it contracts one disease of your choice that you're currently carrying.

Sword of the Serpent

Weapon (shortsword), very rare (requires attunement; cost 45,000 gp)

Crafting Components: Unique (uncraftable)

You gain a +2 bonus to attack and damage rolls made with this magic sword. When you hit with this weapon, you deal an extra 1d6 poison damage.

The sword has 3 charges and regains all expended charges at dawn.



While wielding the sword, you can use an action to expend 1 charge and cast *polymorph* on yourself, transforming into a **giant poisonous snake**. While in this form, you retain your Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores.

Verdant Fang

Wondrous item, uncommon (requires attunement; cost 400 gp)

Crafting Components: Fang from a green dragon
You can attune to this item only if you're in the good graces of the green dragon who granted it to you. You attune to the fang by pressing it into your mouth, whereupon it replaces one of your canine teeth. While attuned to the fang, you can speak and understand Draconic, and you can use an action to breathe a 15-foot cone of poison gas. Creatures in the area must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 4d6 poison damage on a failed save or half the damage on a success. You can't use this property again until you finish a long rest.

As an action, you can bite down on the fang, destroying it. Doing so sends a mental distress signal to the dragon who granted you the fang; the dragon immediately learns where you are and will come to your aid.

Bestiary

This section contains new monsters that are likely to be encountered in dungeons or deep underground. Some of these monsters are referenced in chapter 2, “Random Dungeon Delves” or “3-Page Dungeons,” while others appear nowhere else in this book. In either case, use these monsters as you see fit in your own dungeon adventures.

If you haven't used a *Level Up* book before, some of the terms used in these stat blocks, such as the bloodied condition and Maneuver DC, may be new to you; these are pieces of shorthand intended to make monsters easier to run. The terms are explained in this introduction to this book.

Aboleths

Inhabitants of the surface world don't usually give much thought to aboleths, but no society in Underland has the luxury of being able to ignore them. The insidious aquatic schemers have their tentacles in everything, but that doesn't mean they present a unified threat. In fact, while aboleths in general wish to rebuild their lost empire, individually each believes that they should be the ruler of that empire, a notion that frequently draws them into conflict with one another.

Sinister Designs. In rare instances, groups of aboleths cooperate with each other, and they can be terrifying adversaries when they do. These more organized pods of aboleths often dwell together in domed underwater cities, pursuing grandiose goals such as flooding the world, opening gates to other realms, or triggering an aboleth apotheosis. Rather than engaging in violence directly, they dispatch humanoid agents like aboleth champions and thralls to recruit expendable forces of mercenaries and adventurers to fight on their behalf.

Enemies and Allies. Aboleths have a special hatred for grimlocks. The grimlocks' geostabilization machines often complicate or outright thwart the aboleths' schemes to sink the continents of the surface world. The two groups are in a perpetual state of war, a conflict that dates back to the time before the grimlocks lost their sight. Aboleths have a much more amicable relationship with the deep dwarves. Neither group trusts anyone much, which makes their transactional dealings reassuringly familiar to both parties. Deep dwarves also tend to be exceptionally tough, which makes them prized as mercenaries.

Aboleth Encounters

Aboleths dwell beneath the Midnight Sea, but their minions explore every part of Underland.

CR 0–2 1 or 2 oculites; 1d4 slitherwhites

CR 3–4 maw swarm; 3 or 4 oculites

CR 5–10 aboleth champion

Treasure 150 iron coins (worth 10 gp each, but only to creatures that trade with aboleths); *vicious longsword*

CR 11–16 aboleth champion with 3 or 4 aboleth thralls, oculites, or slitherwhites; aboleth brute with 1 or 2 aboleth thralls; aboleth fallen ascendant

Treasure a barnacled mithral nameplate, torn from an ancient ship, bearing the name *Red Queen* (worth 5,000 gp), 10 vials of bubbling slime (each acts as a combined *potion of greater healing* and *potion of water breathing*)

Aboleth Brute

In some areas, the aboleth population is dense enough that physical confrontations among their own become commonplace. While aboleth prefer to fight using their more insidious abilities, their fellow aboleths are immune to such tactics. With no other option available, these aboleths turn to their fearsome shark-like teeth and powerful tails to prevail.

ABOLETH BRUTE

CHALLENGE 13

LARGE ABERRATION

10,000 XP

AC 18 (natural armor)**HP** 210 (20d10 + 100; bloodied 105)**Speed** 10 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	20 (+5)	18 (+4)

Proficiency +5; **Maneuver DC** 19**Saving Throws** Dex +7, Con +10, Int +10, Wis +10**Skills** Deception +9, History +10, Intimidation +9, Stealth +7**Damage Resistances** poison, psychic**Senses** blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 15**Languages** Deep Speech, telepathy 120 ft.**Amphibious.** The aboleth can breathe air and water.**ACTIONS****Multiattack.** The aboleth attacks once with its bite and twice with its tentacles.**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 32 (4d12 + 6) piercing damage, and the target is grappled (escape DC 19). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained, and the aboleth can't bite a different creature.**Tentacle.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +11 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 20 (4d6 + 6) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it makes a DC 18 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, it contracts a disease called the Sea Change. On a success, it is immune to this disease for 24 hours. While affected by this disease, the target has disadvantage on Wisdom saving throws. After 1 hour, the target grows gills, it can breathe water, its skin becomes slimy, and it begins to suffocate if it goes 12 hours without being immersed in water for at least 1 hour. This disease can be removed with a disease-removing spell cast with at least a 4th-level spell slot, and it ends 24 hours after the aboleth dies.**BONUS ACTIONS****Ink Jet (Recharge 5–6).** While underwater, the aboleth exudes a cloud of inky slime in a 30-foot-radius sphere. The slime extends around corners, and the area is heavily obscured for 1 minute or until a strong current dissipates the cloud. The aboleth then moves up to its speed without provoking opportunity attacks.**Combat**

The aboleth bites and grapples its strongest enemy. It uses its tentacles on other foes in the area or on a grappled creature if no other enemies are within reach. If bloodied, it uses Ink Jet to escape.

Aboleth Brute Variant: Aboleth Fallen Ascendant

The result of the aboleths' most successful attempts to confront the gods directly, fallen ascendants briefly achieved minor divine status, only to subsequently lose it. Bolstered by some lingering vestige of their short-lived divine power, they are among the most powerful of their kind.

The aboleth is CR 14 (11,500 XP). It has the following traits:

Innate Spellcasting. The aboleth's spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 18, +10 to hit with spell attacks). It can innately cast the following spells as bonus actions, requiring no components:

3/day each: *detect thoughts* (range 120 ft.), *eyebite*, *phantasmal force*, *project image* (range 1 mile)

The aboleth has the following additional bonus actions:

Eyebite (6th-Level; Concentration). The aboleth's eyes become an inky void. One creature within 60 feet that the aboleth can see and that can see it must succeed on a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw or be afflicted by one of the following effects for the duration. Until the spell ends, on each of the aboleth's turns it can use a bonus action to target a creature that has not already succeeded on a saving throw against this casting of *eyebite*. The spell ends after 1 minute.

Asleep: The target falls unconscious, waking if it takes any damage or another creature uses an action to rouse it.

Panicked: The target is frightened. On each of its turns, the frightened creature uses its action to take the Dash action and move away from the aboleth by the safest and shortest available route unless there is nowhere for it to move. If the target moves to a place at least 60 feet away where it can no longer see the aboleth, this effect ends.

Sickened: The target has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks. At the end of each of its turns, it can make another Wisdom saving throw, ending this effect on a successful save.

Aboleth Champion

While certainly not above coercing or dominating creatures into following them—indeed, most aboleths fill out the ranks of their followers this way—aboleths also have genuine leadership ability, and their most loyal lieutenants serve them willingly. Too useful to be subjected to the Sea Change, these fanatical humanoid champions are instead rewarded with fell power, cruel combat techniques, and unearthly resilience.

Aboleth champions travel where aboleths cannot go, acting as emissaries, spies, and ship captains upon the Midnight Sea. They frequently lead groups of dominated thralls, who follow the champion's orders as mindlessly as they do the aboleth's own.

ABOLETH CHAMPION CHALLENGE 7
MEDIUM HUMANOID (ABERRATION) 2,900 XP

AC 14 (chain shirt)

HP 135 (18d8 + 54; bloodied 67)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Proficiency +3; **Maneuver DC** 15

Skills Deception +6, Intimidation +6

Senses darkvision 30 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, Deep Speech, one more

Abolethic Agent. The aboleth champion is treated as an aboleth for the purposes of an aboleth thrall's Self-Sacrifice reaction.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The champion makes two melee attacks.

Serrated Sword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) slashing damage. If the target is a creature other than an undead or construct, it makes a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, it receives a wound. While wounded, it takes 4 (1d8) ongoing slashing damage and is rattled. Further wounds on a wounded creature have no effect. A creature can use an action to make a DC 12 Medicine check, ending the ongoing damage and rattled condition on a success. The effect also ends if the target receives at least 1 hit point of magical healing.

Strangling Grasp. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled



(escape DC 15). While grappled in this way, the target is restrained and can't breathe, and the champion can't use its strangling grasp on a different creature.

Mental Blast. The champion emits a 15-foot cone of psychic energy. Each creature in the area makes a DC 13 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 27 (5d10) psychic damage and is rattled until the end of its next turn. On a success, the target takes half damage and isn't rattled.

BONUS ACTIONS

Vicious Taunt. The champion magically mocks or threatens a rattled creature that can hear and understand it. The target makes a DC 14 Charisma saving throw. On a failure, it takes 14 (4d6) psychic damage and has disadvantage on attack rolls until the end of its next turn.

Combat

The champion attacks with its serrated sword, inflicting wounds on as many foes as possible. It then uses Vicious Taunt and makes strangling grasp attacks against wounded creatures. If it can target two foes (or three foes and an ally), it uses Mental Blast. It retreats only to attack again later.

Maw Swarm

When drowned humanoids sink to the depths of the sea, aboleths and other horrors find them. The transformations that are worked upon these bodies are too numerous to list and too awful to contemplate, but one form of them separates the maw and gullet from the corpse without ending its drive to consume. Aboleths lure maw swarms into areas they want to purge of all living matter, so that they can inhabit the area themselves.

MAW SWARM

CHALLENGE 4

MEDIUM SWARM OF
TINY ABERRATIONS

1,100 XP

AC 13

HP 71 (11d8 + 22; bloodied 35)

Speed 0 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover), swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 13

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, slashing**Condition Immunities** blinded, charmed, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, prone, restrained, stunned, unconscious**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10**Languages** Deep Speech**Aberrant Physiology.** The swarm doesn't require air or sleep.**Swarm.** The swarm can occupy another creature's space and move through any opening large enough for a Tiny creature. It can't gain hit points or temporary hit points.**Whispers of the Weird.** The swarm murmurs and whispers constantly, speaking secrets in languages beyond mortal comprehension. A creature that starts its turn within 5 feet of the maw swarm and can hear it must make a DC 13 Wisdom saving throw or take 10 (3d6) psychic damage.

ACTIONS

Bites. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 0 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (4d6 + 3) piercing damage, or 10 (2d6 + 3) piercing damage if the swarm is bloodied.

Combat

The swarm moves into the space of the closest non-aberration and attacks it. It fights to the death.

Oculite

When a sentient creature suffers complete liquefaction from an aboleth's slime cloud, the aboleths isolate them in crystal shells. There, they undergo a metamorphosis that transforms them into an unblinking eye about two feet in diameter. Oculites are often set to patrol a region or scout out an area. When they return to their controller, the aboleth telepathically scans the oculite's memories for anything of interest.

OCULITE

CHALLENGE 2

SMALL ABERRATION

450 XP

AC 15 (natural armor)

HP 49 (11d6 + 11; bloodied 24)

Speed 5 ft., fly 30 ft. (hover), swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
6 (-2)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 12

Damage Vulnerabilities thunder**Condition Immunities** deafened, prone**Senses** darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 12**Languages** understands Deep Speech but can't speak**Aberrant Physiology.** The oculite doesn't require air, sustenance, or sleep.**Refraction.** When the oculite takes radiant damage, one creature of the oculite's choice within 30 feet takes the same amount of damage.

ACTIONS

Energy Ray. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +4 to hit, range 120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) fire damage.

Combat

The oculite stays at least 100 feet away from enemies. When bloodied, it retreats to its aboleth master.

Slitherwhite

Aboleths can create servitors by amputating several tentacles and grafting them together in a living knot of writhing flesh. The toxins of the aboleth's slime cloud gradually bleaches the tentacles white. While slitherwhites are not appreciably sapient, they can receive simple telepathic commands from the aboleths, who use them for experimentation and waste disposal.

SLITHERWHITE MEDIUM ABERRATION

CHALLENGE 1
200 XP

AC 13 (natural armor)

HP 33 (6d8 + 6; bloodied 16)

Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	6 (-2)

Proficiency +2; **Maneuver DC** 12

Condition Immunities prone

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands Deep Speech but can't speak

Aberrant Physiology. The slitherwhite doesn't require air or sleep.

ACTIONS

Tentacle. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage plus 3 (1d6) poison damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 12). The slitherwhite can grapple only one creature at a time.

Combat

The slitherwhite follows simple orders without exercising judgment.

Bright Orb

Wherever tombs are warded by ancient curses, or vaults are filled with unattended magic items, bright orbs appear to feed. Tangles of bioluminescent thread about the size of an apple, bright orbs are a rare species of fungus that consume decaying magic. Sometimes mistaken for will-o'wisps, many scholars refer to bright orbs as false wisps.

Born of Magic. Bright orbs appear spontaneously in magic-rich environments, growing from spores to consume the enchantments that spawned them. Bright orbs exhibit a number of magical defenses, including the ability to release bursts of blinding light, to create illusory duplicates, and to strike out with magical force when they are wounded.

Mindless Consumption. Bright orbs feed on magic, and thus are a nuisance to those who might otherwise consider cultivating them for their useful properties. A bright orb is as likely to consume the *mage armor* of an "ally" as it is to interrupt a *fireball* spell cast by their enemy.

Limitless Growth. A bright orb in a sufficiently magical environment could continue to grow indefinitely. In wizard schools and bardic colleges, stories of enormous, blazing orbs are told to encourage young practitioners to clean up their magical experiments and store magic objects securely.

Legends and Lore

With an Arcana or Nature check, characters can learn the following:

DC 10 Bright orbs feed on magic and can temporarily suppress permanent magical effects.

DC 15 Spells and magic weapons do less harm to bright orbs, and they are immune to psychic attacks. Mundane weapons are more effective at destroying them.

DC 20 Bright orbs make good eating! A spellcaster that eats a fresh bright orb regains some of their magical reserves.

Bright Orb Encounters

Bright orbs are found most often in ancient ruins rich with magic.

CR 0–2 bright orb

Treasure six identical *potions of healing*, three of which are drained of magic

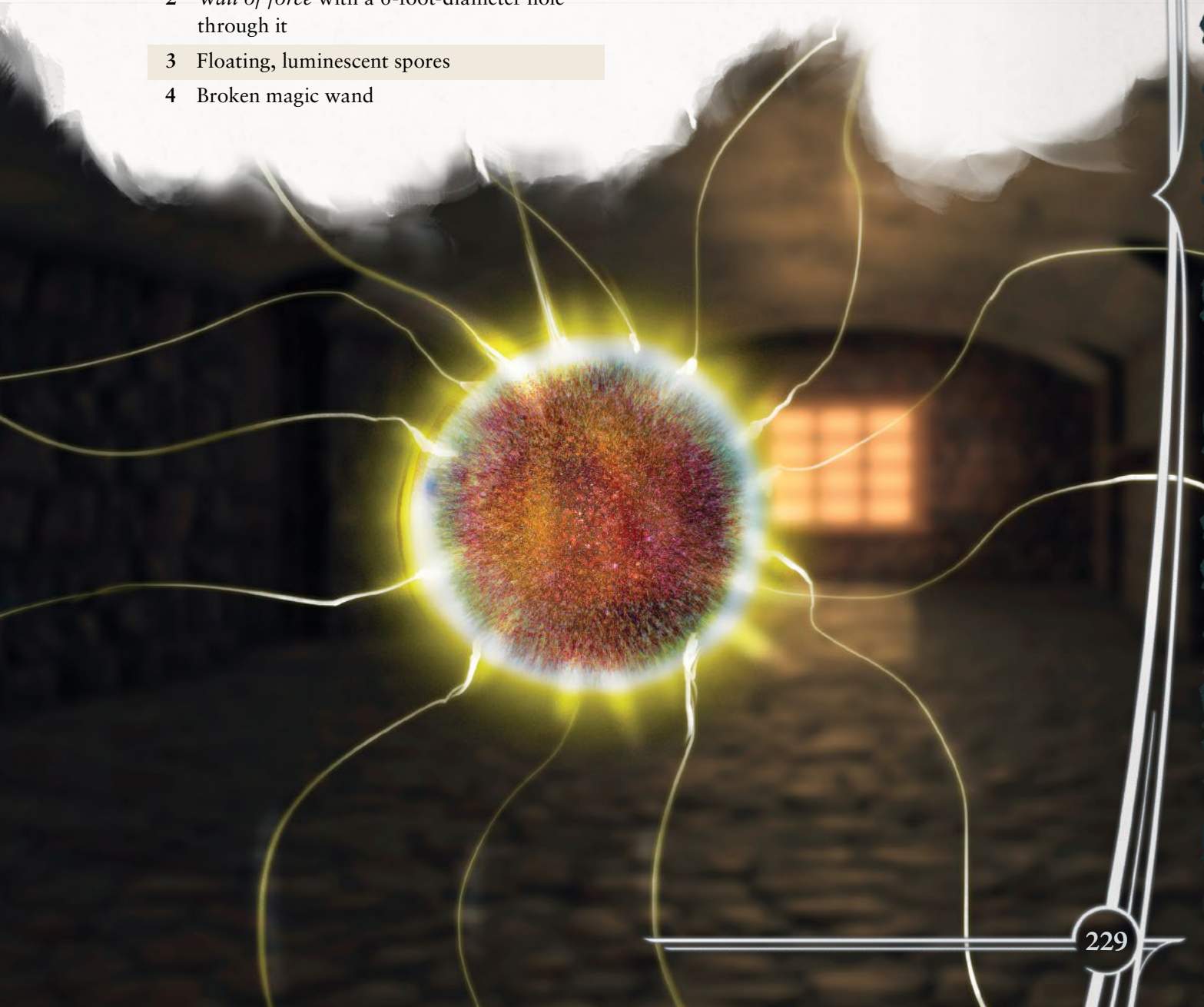
CR 3–4 2 bright orbs

Treasure damaged *wand of wonder* visibly leaking magical energy (this wand has only 4 charges)

Signs

- 1 Glowing and sparking *glyph of warding* that triggers no spell
- 2 *Wall of force* with a 6-foot-diameter hole through it
- 3 Floating, luminescent spores
- 4 Broken magic wand

Delicious. The flesh of a bright orb has a unique citrus flavor and can be dried for extended storage. Eating a bright orb within 24 hours of its death is also magically restorative. A creature that consumes a fresh bright orb regains one expended spell slot. Roll a d4 to determine the maximum spell slot level the creature can regain.



BRIGHT ORB

TINY PLANT

CHALLENGE 2

450 XP

AC 10

HP 30 (12d4; bloodied 15)

Speed 0 ft., fly 25 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
2 (-4)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	3 (-4)

Proficiency +2; **Maneuver DC** 10

Damage Immunities psychic

Damage Resistances damage from spells; damage from magical weapons

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, fatigue, frightened, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages —

Detect Magic. The bright orb senses creatures that bear magic and magic objects within 500 feet.

Illumination. The bright orb sheds bright light in a 10-foot radius and dim light for an additional 10 feet.

ACTIONS
Arcane Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +2 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d8) force damage, and the target is subject to Consume Magic.

Consume Magic. The bright orb targets a creature, an object, or an ongoing magical effect within 30 feet of it and attempts to consume the magic, ending one effect if the magic is temporary (such as a spell with a limited duration) or suppressing one effect for 1 minute if the magic is permanent (such as a magic item). If the magic was created by a spell of 3rd level or higher, the bright orb must make a Wisdom check against a DC equal to 10 + the spell's level or Consume Magic fails. At the Narrator's discretion, a success might cause a magical effect to malfunction instead of end.

Magic Missile Barrage. The bright orb targets up to two creatures within 120 feet, launching a barrage of magical darts of force at each creature. The missiles strike unerringly and simultaneously, dealing 10 (3d4 + 3) force damage to each creature.

BONUS ACTIONS
Illusory Duplicate. An illusory duplicate of the bright orb appears in its space. The duplicate obscures the orb's true location and moves with the bright orb for 1 minute or until it is destroyed. Whenever the real bright orb is targeted by an attack, there is a chance the duplicate is hit instead. Roll the attack as usual; if the result of the d20 roll is odd, the attack hits the duplicate, and the duplicate is destroyed.

REACTIONS
Blinding Rebuke (1/Day). When the bright orb is targeted by a harmful spell or hit by an attack made by a creature within 30 feet of it, it releases an intense flash of blinding light. Each creature within 30 feet of the bright orb makes a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 13 (3d8) radiant damage and is blinded until the end of its next turn. On a success, the target takes half damage and isn't blinded.

Consume Spell (1/Day). When a creature within 60 feet casts a spell, the bright orb uses Consume Magic, targeting the triggering spell.

Combat

Bright orbs are mindless, instinctively consuming magic and reacting to nearby stimuli. A bloodied bright orb retreats, using Magic Missile Barrage to punish the creatures that harmed it.

Draconic Horror

When a dragon's egg is exposed to the eldritch energies of the Far Realms, the creature that hatches is not quite a dragon. Its tail ends in a bulbous stinger, and dozens of extra eyes and mouths sprout along the length of its gangly and misshapen body. While the extra eyes grant the dragon heightened senses, the mouths murmur words of madness that stagger the mind, even as they bite and tear the flesh of creatures foolish enough to wander into their reach.

Non-Euclidean Spaces. Both corrupted and corrupting, a draconic horror warps space around itself, causing objects to elongate strangely and sprout superfluous eyes and mouths. While the spatial distortions disappear when the dragon leaves the area, an extra eye can blink from a surface for months afterward.

Legends and Lore

With an Arcana or History check, characters can learn the following:

DC 10 Draconic horrors are created when a dragon's egg is exposed to energies from the Far Realms.

DC 15 The minds of draconic horrors are too warped to be controlled or harmed by psychic energy.

Draconic Horror Encounters

Draconic horrors are constructed in laboratories or warped in places of eldritch magic.

CR 17–22 draconic horror with 1 or 2 gibbering moushers

Treasure arcane equipment worth 15,000 gp, *wand of the war mage* +3 made from gilded dragon bone

Signs

- 1–2 Eyes and mouths sprouting from surfaces
- 3 Trail of bloody corpses
- 4 1d4 gibbering moushers

Behavior

- 1 Tormenting its creator for the crime of creating it
- 2 Imprisoned in a space it is magically barred from leaving
- 3 Guarding prisoners in which it has implanted larvae
- 4 Speaking to an unseen and undetectable presence



DRACONIC HORROR

CHALLENGE 19

 LEGENDARY HUGE ABERRATION
(DRAGON)

22,000 XP

AC 18 (natural armor)

HP 287 (25d12 + 125; bloodied 143)

Speed 40 ft., fly 100 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
22 (+6)	14 (+2)	20 (+5)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	22 (+6)

Proficiency +6; **Maneuver DC** 20

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con +11, Wis +9

Skills Insight +9, Intimidation +12, Perception +9
(+1d10)

Damage Resistances damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, confused, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 120 ft., truesight 30 ft., passive Perception 24

Languages Common, Draconic

Amphibious. The horror can breathe air and water.

Horrifying Cacophony. A non-aberration that starts its turn within 20 feet of the horror and can hear it makes a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the creature takes 14 (4d6) psychic damage and is confused until the start of its next turn. On a success, the creature takes half damage and isn't confused. A creature that succeeds on its saving throw is immune to the horror's Horrifying Cacophony for 24 hours.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). When the horror fails a saving throw while it is within 60 feet of another aberration, it can choose to succeed instead. When it does so, an aberration of its choice dies.

Warper of Reality. Non-aberrations treat the ground within 20 feet of the horror as difficult terrain. The flying speed of any non-aberration creature within 20 feet of the horror is halved.

ACTIONS
Multiattack. The horror attacks twice with its claws, once with its horrific maws, and once with its stinger.

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d8 + 6) slashing damage.

Horrific Maws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., up to five targets. *Hit:* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage.

Stinger. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 24 (4d8 + 6) piercing damage and the target must make a DC 19 Constitution save. On a failed save, the target is implanted with a larval seed. The target is confused until the end of its next turn and then takes 27 (6d8) necrotic damage and two levels of strife as a newly formed **gibbering moulder** rips from its body.

Horrifying Breath (Recharge 5–6). The draconic horror exhales a blast of psychic energy in a 60-foot cone. Each non-aberration creature in the area must make a DC 19 Wisdom saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 63 (18d6) psychic damage and gains a level of strife. On a success, the target takes half damage and doesn't gain strife.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The horror can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. It regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Absorb Ally. The horror consumes a Large or smaller aberration within 5 feet of it, regaining 27 (6d8) hit points.

Psionic Assault. The horror targets a creature within 120 feet with a blast of psionic energy. The target must succeed on a DC 19 Charisma save or be frightened until the end of its next turn. A creature that fails the save by 5 or more is also paralyzed while frightened in this way.

Whirlwind. The horror flaps its wings, creating a howling wind. Non-aberration creatures within 30 feet of the horror must succeed on a DC 20 Strength saving throw or be pushed 10 feet directly away from the horror or pulled 10 feet closer (horror's choice; same effect on all applicable creatures).

Combat

The draconic horror leads with its Horrifying Breath but otherwise prefers to stay in the midst of its enemies, making maximum use of its horrific maws attack and Horrifying Cacophony and Warper of Reality traits. It reserves its stinger for low-AC, high-damage characters such as rogues or spellcasters, hoping to turn some of their damage output against their allies.

Fungi

Endless varieties of mushrooms proliferate in the sunless environs of Underland. Many are especially hazardous to intelligent intruders.

Fungi Encounters

Dreamer's morels and spell shriekers are most common in caverns, although they also appear in swamps and fey glades.

CR 3–4 2 violet fungi with 1d4 spell shriekers
Treasure incomplete draft of a mushroom guidebook (100 gp)

Dreamer's Morel

When a creature with potent psionic power dies and is decomposed by fungi, a dreamer's morel may grow from its remains. A dreamer's morel uses hallucinatory spores to disable its victims, slowly feeding on the psychic activity of the creature's dreams until the victim's body dies. Through this process, the morel gains some of the creature's memories, granting it a surprising degree of intelligence.

DREAMER'S MOREL CHALLENGE 1/2
SMALL PLANT 100 XP

AC 8 (natural armor)

HP 21 (6d6)

Speed 5 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
3 (-4)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	13 (+1)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 6

Saving Throws Int +4

Skills Arcana +4

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, fatigue, frightened, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 11

Languages understands Common but can't speak

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The morel attacks with its tendrils and uses Eat Dreams if possible.

Tendrils. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) psychic damage. A creature reduced to 0 hit points by this damage is stabilized.

Eat Dreams. One unconscious creature within 10 feet of the morel takes 5 (2d4) psychic damage. If this reduces a creature to 0 hit points, it is stabilized but can't awaken until restored to full hit points.

REACTIONS

Dream Spores (Recharge 6). If the dreamer's morel is in an area of bright light, it expels a cloud of spores in a 10-foot radius. Breathing creatures in the cloud must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or become poisoned for 2d4 hours. A creature poisoned in this way is also unconscious and experiences vivid, hallucinatory dreams. Unless the creature is cured of the poison before the condition ends, it must make a DC 12 Intelligence saving throw when it awakens. On a failure, it takes 5 (2d4) psychic damage.

Combat

The morel uses Dream Spores if it is within an area of bright light and a creature is within 10 feet of it. It then attacks with its tendrils, prioritizing conscious creatures, and uses Eat Dreams on unconscious creatures.



Fungal Zombie

A creature that dies within an area of fungal zombie spores or that is killed by a fungal zombie rises as a fungal zombie themselves. Although it resembles an undead creature, the corpse is in fact animated by an intelligent fungal colony. A fungal zombie shares the abilities of the corpse it inhabits, including spell use, and retains a smattering of memories from the creature's life. Even so, it is ineffective at masquerading as the creature it once was, as its host's body continues to decay.

FUNGAL ZOMBIE

CHALLENGE 1

MEDIUM PLANT

200 XP

AC 9

HP 37 (5d8 + 15; bloodied 18)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	8 (-1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 14

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities fatigue, poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages the languages its host knew in life, telepathy 30 ft.

Fungal Zombie Spores. When the zombie hits a target with a melee attack and reduces it to 0 hit points, the target is infected with fungal zombie spores. If the target dies within 1 minute, it rises 1 hour later, gaining the **fungal zombie** template. It loses its original personality and acts as an ally to other fungal zombies.

ACTIONS

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 8 (1d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

Fungal Zombie Template

Any creature with an organic body can become a fungal zombie. A fungal zombie retains all its statistics except as noted below.

Type. The zombie's type is plant.

Ability Scores. The zombie's ability scores are reduced to the following, unless they're already lower: Dex 8 (-1), Cha 8 (-1).

Immunities. The zombie gains immunity to poison damage, fatigue, and the poisoned condition.

Senses. The zombie gains blindsight with a radius of 30 feet.

Languages. The zombie gains telepathy with a range of 30 ft.

Fungal Zombie Spores. The zombie gains the Fungal Zombie Spores trait.

Spell Shrieker

While a normal shrieker is a nuisance, a spell shrieker is a debilitating threat to spellcasters. Spell shriekers are able to detect magical auras and scream when in the presence of a creature or item with spellcasting abilities.

SPELL SHRIEKER

CHALLENGE 1/2

SMALL PLANT

100 XP

AC 5

HP 35 (10d6; bloodied 17)

Speed 0 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
1 (-5)	1 (-5)	10 (+0)	1 (-5)	2 (-4)	1 (-5)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 5

Damage Vulnerabilities bludgeoning, slashing

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, fatigue, frightened, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6

Languages —

False Appearance. While motionless, the shrieker is indistinguishable from a normal fungus.

Spell Sense. The shrieker can sense the presence of creatures or magic items with the ability to cast spells within 30 feet.

ACTIONS

Shriek. If the shrieker perceives a spellcasting creature or magic item within 30 feet, it shrieks loudly and continuously. The shriek is audible within 300 feet. The shrieker continues to shriek for 1 minute after the creature or item has moved away.

While within 30 feet of the shrieker, a creature can't cast spells with vocalized components and can't concentrate on spells.

Combat

The spell shrieker shrieks in the presence of spellcasters.

Guardian

Cerberus Guardian

Cerberus guardians are among the mightiest constructs mortals have ever built. Only the most powerful lich or archmage can summon the magics required to create such a terrifying guardian. Cerberus guardians are also employed by the lords of Hell and the Abyss to guard secret planar gates.

Mage's Best Friend. Unthinking and obedient, a cerberus guardian almost never runs berserk when damaged, as lesser guardians tend to do. It can operate for thousands of years and often continues its duties long after its creator has died.

Legends and Lore

With an Arcana or History check, characters can learn the following:

DC 15 Cerberus guardians are mighty constructs created by powerful spellcasters to protect their sanctums.

DC 20 A cerberus's three heads deafen, poison, and frighten its foes. A creature frightened by the cerberus guardian might turn to stone.

Cerberus Guardian Encounters

Cerberus guardians usually guard portals and occasionally protect gates to Hell and other planes.

CR 23–30 cerberus guardian; cerberus guardian with 1d6 death dogs or hound guardians

Signs

- 1 Distant clang, like a bell
- 2 An echoing howl, like that of a dog or wolf
- 3 Enormous canine paw prints
- 4 Stone statue (one of the guardian's petrified victims)

Behavior

- 1–3 Guarding an entrance
- 4 Chained to the entrance it guards (the chain allows the guardian to move up to 200 feet from the entrance)
- 5 Patrolling
- 6 Damaged, with one head inactive (choose randomly); barks at nothing and doesn't notice intruders



Names

Agontes, Brieris, Mr. Huggins, Rex

CERBERUS GUARDIAN CHALLENGE 23 LEGENDARY HUGE CONSTRUCT 50,000 XP

AC 20 (natural armor)

HP 310 (20d12 + 180; bloodied 155)

Speed 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
26 (+8)	12 (+1)	28 (+9)	6 (-2)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Proficiency +7; **Maneuver DC** 23

Saving Throws Str +15, Con +16, Int +5, Wis +11, Cha +9

Skills Perception +11

Damage Immunities acid, fire, poison, psychic; damage from nonmagical, non-adamantine weapons

Condition Immunities charmed, fatigue, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses truesight 90 ft., passive Perception 21

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Immutable Form. The guardian is immune to any effect that would alter its form.

Legendary Resistance (3/Day). When the guardian fails a saving throw while it has at least two heads active, it can choose to succeed instead. When it does so, one of its heads becomes inactive until the end of its next turn.

Multiple Heads. While the guardian has more than one head active, it has advantage on Perception checks and on saving throws against being blinded, deafened, stunned, and knocked unconscious, and it can't be flanked.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The guardian makes three bite attacks, minus one for each of its inactive heads. Each bite must be against a different target.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 27 (3d12 + 8) piercing damage.

Poison Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +15 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (3d6 + 8) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The guardian can take 3 legendary actions, minus one for each inactive head, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. It regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Bronze Clangor (1/Round). The guardian's tongue tolls in its bronze mouth like a bell. Each creature within 60 feet that can hear the clangor makes a DC 24 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 21 (6d6) thunder damage and is deafened for 1 minute. On a success, the target takes half damage and isn't deafened. The guardian can't use this legendary action if its bronze head is disabled.

Iron Breath (1/Round). The guardian breathes poison gas in a 60-foot cone. Each creature in the area makes a DC 24 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 24 (7d6) poison damage and is poisoned for 1 minute. On a success, the target takes half damage and isn't poisoned. The guardian can't use this legendary action if its iron head is disabled.

Stone Howl (1/Round). The guardian lets loose a spine-chilling howl. Each creature within 60 feet that can hear the howl must succeed on a DC 21 Wisdom saving throw or be frightened for 1 minute. The target must repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns. On a successful save, the effect on itself ends. On a failure, the creature is petrified. The guardian can't use this legendary action if its stone head is disabled.

Tail. The guardian attacks with its poison tail.

Combat

The guardian obeys its master's instructions to the letter. In combat, it rushes into a group of enemies so that it can make as many bite attacks as possible. It can't use the same head twice in the same round, so it usually starts with Stone Howl, then uses Iron Breath and finally Bronze Clangor. On later turns, it may attack with its tail instead of using Stone Howl if most of its opponents are deafened.

Kobolds

Skulking in caves and the deep places of the earth, kobolds survive best when they are undetected. When they must fight, they are inventive in the methods they use to defend themselves. Alchemical poisons, incendiaries, and trained mounts are just some of the many weapons in a kobold's arsenal.

Kobold Encounters

Kobolds thrive underground and in any area inhabited by dragons.

CR 0–2 kobold artilleryist with 1d4 kobolds
Treasure 3 jasper gemstones (50 gp each), rusty but gold-filigreed helmet (25 gp)

CR 3–4 3 or 4 kobold drakeriders mounted on green kobold drakes; kobold bully with kobold artilleryist and 1d4 + 4 kobolds

Treasure 220 gp, Small set of half plate (worn by the kobold leader), *gong of alarm* (chapter 3)



Green Kobold Drake

Kobold drakes resemble dragons with stunted, vestigial wings. Bred for their small size and relatively calm disposition, kobold drakes are used by kobolds as mounts and guards.

GREEN KOBOLD DRAKE CHALLENGE 1/2
 MEDIUM DRAGON 100 XP

AC 12 (natural armor)

HP 27 (5d8 + 5; bloodied 13)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	12 (+1)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)

Proficiency +2; **Maneuver DC** 12

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages understands Draconic but can't speak

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage plus 3 (1d6) poison damage.

Poison Breath (1/Day). The drake exhales a cloud of poison in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area makes a DC 11 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save or half damage on a success.

Combat

The drake uses its poison breath when it can include two or more enemies in its area and then attacks with its bite. If alone, it flees when bloodied; if it's being ridden, it obeys its rider's orders.

Kobold Artillerist

Kobold artillerists are snipers and bombardiers who prefer to attack from above, from behind cover, or while screened by their own allies (who occasionally bear the brunt of friendly fire).

KOBOLD ARTILLERIST CHALLENGE 1 SMALL HUMANOID (KOBOLD) 200 XP

AC 12

HP 21 (6d6; bloodied 10)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 12

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Perception checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) slashing damage. On a hit, until the end of the turn the kobold can use the Disengage action as a bonus action.

Blowgun. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 2 (1d4) piercing damage, and the target must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw, taking 7 (2d6) poison damage on a failed save or half damage on a success.

Poison Breath Bottle (1/Day). The kobold throws a vial at a point within 20 feet, where it shatters and creates a 5-foot-radius cloud of poison gas. A creature that starts its turn in the cloud must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or take 7 (2d6) poison damage and become poisoned until the end of its next turn. The area of the cloud is lightly obscured. The cloud remains for 1 minute or until a strong wind disperses it.

Combat

The kobold artillerist throws its poison breath bottle and then uses its blowgun. When possible, it hides, uses cover, or lies prone. In melee, it hits with its sword and then disengages.

Kobold Artillerist Variant: Kobold Firebomber

Kobold firebombers carry highly volatile chemical compounds in oily jars. A kobold firebomber has the following trait:

Flammable. If the kobold firebomber takes fire damage or is critically hit while in possession of its Firebomb Bottle, the bottle explodes as if it had been thrown at the kobold's space.

Instead of Poison Breath Bottle, the kobold firebomber has the following action:

Firebomb Bottle. The kobold throws a jar at a point within 20 feet, where it shatters and creates a 5-foot-radius burst of flame. Each creature in the area makes a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 10 (3d6) fire damage on a failed save or half damage on a success.

Kobold Bully

Though stronger than their compatriots, kobold bullies are quick to send their allies ahead of them in combat. When kobold bullies do engage, they are formidable opponents.

KOBOLD BULLY CHALLENGE 2 SMALL HUMANOID (KOBOLD) 450 XP

AC 12

HP 44 (8d6 + 16; bloodied 22)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 13

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic

Pack Tactics. The kobold has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one of the kobold's allies is within 5 feet of the creature and not incapacitated.

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Perception checks that rely on sight.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The kobold makes two spear attacks.

Spear. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) piercing damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Make a Distraction. A kobold within 10 feet of the bully can use its reaction to make an attack. If the attack hits, the target of the attack has disadvantage on attack rolls against the bully until the start of the bully's next turn.

Combat

The bully orders an ally to attack and then makes an attack itself. It retreats only if it is bloodied and all its allies are dead.

Kobold Drakerider

Kobold drakeriders act as mounted combatants and scouts. Each drakerider bonds with a specific drake, who will accept no other rider.

KOBOLD DRAKERIDER CHALLENGE 1/4
SMALL HUMANOID (KOBOLD) 50 XP

AC 12

HP 14 (4d6; bloodied 7)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	8 (-1)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 12

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages Common, Draconic

Sunlight Sensitivity. While in sunlight, the kobold has disadvantage on attack rolls, as well as on Perception checks that rely on sight.

Mounted Combatant. While mounted, the kobold can use a bonus action to command its mount. The mount can use its reaction to move up to its Speed or make a melee attack.

ACTIONS

Bill Hook. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage. If the target is a Medium or smaller creature, it must succeed on a DC 11 Strength saving throw or fall prone.

Sling. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Defensive Reins. The kobold adds 2 to the mount's AC against one attack that would hit the mount. To do so, the kobold must be mounted and able to see the attacker.

Combat

The drakerider uses its bill hook against mounted opponents. Otherwise it keeps its distance and uses its sling. It flees if dismounted.



Oozes

As oozes flow through sewers and dungeons, they consume all manner of organic, inorganic, and magical material. Over time, they develop adaptations to their environment and diet. These bizarre oozes are highly prized by the strange wizards who call themselves oozemancers.

Ooze Nature. Oozes do not need to breathe or sleep.

Ooze Encounters

Strange, uncatalogued oozes proliferate in the sewers beneath wizards' towers and arcane academies.

CR 3–4 blazing black pudding; euphoria cube; flash jelly

Black Pudding Variant: Blazing Black Pudding

Identifiable by its foul, gassy odor, a blazing black pudding constantly emits a flammable vapor that catches fire at the slightest hint of flame.

A blazing black pudding has resistance to fire damage and gains the following trait:

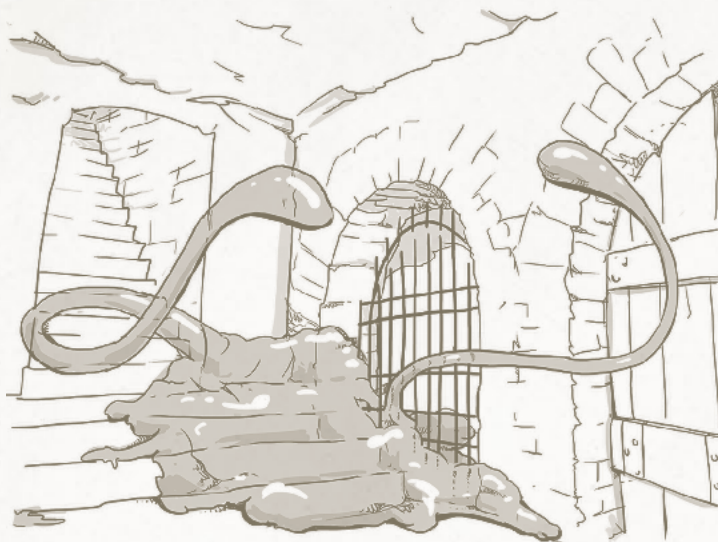
Blazing Form. When the pudding takes fire damage, it ignites until the end of its next turn. While ablaze, the pudding is immune to fire damage, and it sheds bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet. In addition, its Speed is doubled, and it can make a pseudopod attack as a bonus action. Finally, when an adjacent creature touches the pudding or hits it with a melee attack, that creature takes 2 (1d4) fire damage.

Gelatinous Cube Variant: Euphoria Cube

A particularly deadly variant of the gelatinous cube, the euphoria cube is visually indistinguishable from its gelatinous cousin. Its mass is laced with psychotropic toxins that cause the cube's victims to experience ecstatic joy even as they are consumed.

A euphoria cube is CR 3 (700 XP). It gains the following trait:

Euphoric Gelatin. A creature that starts its turn engulfed by the cube must make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 minute. While poisoned in this way, the creature is charmed while it is engulfed by the cube.



Ochre Jelly Variant: Flash Jelly

The flash jelly's oozing form constantly ripples with dim light in a mesmerizing display. When hit with a weapon attack, it produces a sudden flash of light to blind its attackers.

A flash jelly is CR 3 (700 XP). It gains the following action:

Hypnotic Display (Recharge 5–6). Each creature within 10 feet of the jelly that can see it must succeed on a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed for 1 minute. While charmed in this way, a creature is incapacitated and has a speed of 0. The creature can repeat the save at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success. The effect also ends if another creature uses its action to shake the creature out of its trance, or if the creature takes any damage.

The flash jelly gains the following reaction:

Sudden Flash. When the jelly is hit with a weapon attack, it produces a sudden flash of light. Each creature within 10 feet that can see the jelly must succeed on a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw or be blinded until the end of its next turn.

Slime Mold

Slime molds coat the walls and floors of caves, dungeons, and other moist, subterranean environments. They come in a variety of colors and textures, including a fuzzy pink, a mucus-like yellow, and a stony gray. A slime mold often hunts by spreading itself over the floor of a passageway and waiting for a creature to walk across it and get stuck. The slime mold then slowly engulfs and digests the creature, leaving behind only magic items.

While a slime mold can split itself up into smaller versions of itself, the resulting molds continue to act in concert with one another, as if sharing a single consciousness.

SLIME MOLD

LARGE OOZE

CHALLENGE 6

2,300 XP

AC 9

HP 104 (11d10 + 44; bloodied 52)

Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	8 (-1)	18 (+4)	3 (-4)	10 (+0)	4 (-4)

Proficiency +3; Maneuver DC 14

Damage Resistances damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities acid

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, fatigue, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 120 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 10

Languages —

Amorphous. The slime mold can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch without squeezing, and it can occupy the same space as a creature its size or smaller.

Corrosive. A nonmagical weapon made of metal or wood that hits the slime mold corrodes or rots. After dealing damage, the weapon takes a permanent and cumulative -1 penalty to damage rolls. If its penalty drops to -5, the weapon is destroyed. Nonmagical ammunition made of metal or wood that hits the slime mold is destroyed after dealing damage.

The slime mold can eat through 2-inch-thick, nonmagical wood or metal in 1 round.

Damage Transfer. While a creature is engulfed within it, the slime mold takes only half the damage dealt to it. The remaining damage is split evenly amongst the engulfed creatures.

False Appearance. While motionless, the slime mold is indistinguishable from normal mold or lichen.

Spider Climb. The slime mold can climb even on difficult surfaces and upside down on ceilings.

Sticky. A creature that touches the slime mold immediately becomes stuck. While stuck, the creature's speed is reduced to 0, and it takes 9 (2d8) acid damage at the start of each of its turns. A creature can free itself by using its action to make a DC 13 Strength check.

A creature that hits the slime mold with a melee attack must succeed on a DC 13 Strength saving throw or its weapon becomes stuck. A creature can use its action to make a DC 13 Strength check, removing the stuck weapon on a success. At the start of each of the slime mold's turns, the stuck weapon is subjected to the mold's Corrosive trait.

ACTIONS

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (2d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 21 (6d6) acid damage, and the target is subject to the slime mold's Sticky trait.

Engulf. The slime mold attempts to engulf creatures that are stuck to it. Each creature stuck to the slime mold makes a DC 15 Strength saving throw. On a failed save, the creature is engulfed as well as stuck.

An engulfed creature is restrained, can't breathe, and takes 21 (6d6) acid damage at the start of each of the slime mold's turns. When the slime mold moves, the engulfed creature moves with it. If a creature is no longer stuck, it is no longer engulfed either.

The slime mold can engulf one creature of its size or two smaller creatures.

BONUS ACTIONS

Merge. The slime mold merges with another slime mold of the same size. The new slime mold has hit points equal to the combination of the two and is one size larger.

Split. If the slime mold is Medium or larger and has at least 10 hit points, it splits into two new slime molds. Each new slime mold has hit points equal to half of the original slime mold, rounded down. New slime molds are one size smaller than the original slime mold. Creatures engulfed by the slime mold are no longer engulfed, but they remain stuck to one of the slime molds.

Rust Monsters

Veteran dungeon delvers often regard rust monsters as pests but rarely as threats in their own right. Some rust monsters, though, have been transformed into fearsome predators by magic run amok. With coiled antennae that extend to astonishing distances, these rust monsters seek not only to consume an adventurer's weapons, but also the iron in their blood.

Rust Monster Encounters

Rust monsters gravitate to strongholds and other places where worked iron is plentiful, but they can also be found in mines.

CR 5–10 mutant rust monster

CR 11–16 2 mutant rust monsters; supermutant rust monster

Treasure golden sword pommel decorated with gems but missing its blade (2,500 gp)

MUTANT RUST MONSTER CHALLENGE 8 LARGE MONSTROSITY 3,900 XP

AC 16 (natural armor)

HP 126 (12d10 + 60; bloodied 63)

Speed 45 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	12 (+1)	20 (+5)	4 (–3)	12 (+1)	6 (–2)

Proficiency +3; Maneuver DC 16

Saving Throws Dex +4, Wis +4

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, poison, psychic, thunder

Condition Immunities charmed, frightened

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages —

Draining Aura. When a living creature starts its turn within 20 feet of the rust monster or enters the area for the first time on a turn, it must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or take 3 (1d6) force damage as its blood is sucked from its pores by the rust monster's feathery antennae. The creature's hit point maximum is reduced by an amount equal to the force damage taken, and it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the start of its next turn. The reduction lasts until the creature finishes a long rest or is targeted by a *greater restoration* spell. The target dies if its hit point maximum is reduced to 0.

Metal Detection. The rust monster can smell metal within 60 feet.



Rust Metal. A

weapon made of metal that hits the rust monster corrodes after dealing damage, taking a permanent –1 penalty to damage rolls per hit. If this penalty reaches –5, the weapon is destroyed. A creature can spend 1 minute polishing or repairing a magic weapon, removing this penalty. Metal ammunition is destroyed after dealing damage.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The rust monster attacks once with its antennae and twice with its bite.

Antennae. The rust monster uses its antennae to corrode a metal object within 20 feet. It can destroy up to a 1-foot-square portion of an unattended object. If the object is worn or carried, the object's owner makes a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, avoiding the rust monster's antennae on a success.

Metal shields or armor the rust monster touches with its antennae corrode, taking a permanent –1 penalty to its AC protection per hit. If the penalty reduces the armor's AC protection to 10, the armor is destroyed. A creature can spend 1 minute polishing or repairing magic armor, removing this penalty. If the rust monster touches a metal weapon, the weapon is subject to Rust Metal.

Bite. Melee Weapon Attack: +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. **Hit:** 18 (3d8 + 5) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 16). Until this grapple ends, the target is restrained and the rust monster can't bite another target.

Combat

The rust monster attacks the creature carrying the most metal; once all metal is gone, it targets the closest creature. It flees if it is bloodied and it detects no iron or steel items within 60 feet.

Mutant Rust Monster Variant: Supermutant Rust Monster

The supermutant rust monster has grown even larger and greedier, preferring enchanted metal items to any other kind.

The supermutant rust monster is Huge and is CR 12 (8,400 XP). It has 195 (17d12 + 85; bloodied 97) hit points. The rust monster's Draining Aura deals 14 (4d6) force damage.

Shadow Symbiote

A shadow symbiote is a translucent, intelligent ooze the color of smoke. Although it can survive alone in darkness, it prefers to lurk within its favorite hiding place: an intelligent humanoid.

Coaxing Charm. A shadow symbiote can't speak aloud but it can communicate telepathically. It uses this ability to deceive creatures into letting it form a symbiotic bond with them. To do so, it extols the benefits it grants: telepathy, the ability to see in the dark, supernatural control of shadows, and all the information it has gathered in its previous life. Shadow symbiotes frequently lie, claiming to be friendly ghosts or magic items that require attunement. If they are unable to convince a victim to enter a symbiotic relationship, they do so by force.

Strange Symbiosis. A shadow symbiote's strange, insubstantial form can be absorbed through a creature's skin. Once inside a creature, the symbiote is virtually immune from harm, although it can still be burned by radiant energy that harms its host. While it doesn't control its host's actions, it exerts a constant telepathic pressure, urging the host to do its bidding. A humanoid that has been a host for a significant length of time usually acts as one with the symbiote.

Dead Shell. If it needs to, a shadow symbiote can possess a dead humanoid. It controls the corpse's body directly instead of telepathically offering advice and instructions. A symbiote controlling a corpse looks for the first opportunity to leave that body in exchange for a living one.

Legends and Lore

With an Arcana or Religion check, characters can learn the following:

DC 10 A shadow symbiote is an intelligence ooze that hates light. Any humanoid can host a shadow symbiote.

DC 15 Shadow symbiotes can assimilate with humanoid corpses, but they prefer living hosts.

DC 20 While a shadow symbiote is inside a host, the only way to harm it is by burning its host body with radiant energy.

Shadow Symbiote Encounters

Shadow symbiotes lurk in tombs. They often bond with corpses and graverobbers, using these bodies to roam the world.

CR 0–2 shadow symbiote

Treasure 2 rare books (100 gp each)

CR 5–10 shadow symbiote with shadow symbiote knight

Treasure 300 gp, +1 *greatsword*

Signs

- 1–2 Torches and other light sources dim
- 3 A long-dead corpse beside a sarcophagus that has been opened from the inside
- 4 DC 12 Perception check: gray slime around a small hole or crack
- 5 Creatures' shadows seem to act independently of their owners, making mocking and threatening gestures
- 6 Areas of darkness chill the body with life-sapping cold. While in darkness, each creature that isn't resistant or immune to cold damage gains a level of fatigue, which is removed only when the creature enters an area of dim or bright light

Behavior

- 1–2 Possessing a humanoid
- 3 Lurking, planning to attack a creature
- 4 Telepathically communicates with any humanoids that pass, offering symbiosis
- 5 Acts friendly; telepathically provides useful information. If adventurers ask it for significant help, it claims it can offer more aid by forming a mutually beneficial symbiosis to impart memories and skills
- 6 Hiding within a container, ambushing any who open it

SHADOW SYMBIOTE

CHALLENGE 2

SMALL OOZE

450 XP

AC 12

HP 36 (8d6 + 8)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (-1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)

Proficiency +2; **Maneuver DC** 12

Skills Deception +5, Stealth +4

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, fatigue, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages understands Common but can't speak, telepathy 30 ft.

Amorphous. The symbiote can pass through an opening as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Sunlight Weakness. While in sunlight, the symbiote has disadvantage on attack rolls, ability checks, and saving throws.

ACTIONS
Multiattack. The symbiote attacks with its shadow tendril and uses Assimilate.

Shadow Tendril. *Melee Spell Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) necrotic damage, and the symbiote attaches to the target. A creature can use an action to make a DC 9 Strength check, detaching the symbiote on a success. The symbiote can detach itself as a bonus action.

Assimilate. The symbiote targets a humanoid it's attached to, a willing humanoid within 5 feet, or a humanoid corpse within 5 feet. The symbiote attempts to assimilate the target. An unwilling creature can make a DC 13 Charisma saving throw to resist. A creature warded by *protection from evil and good* automatically succeeds on this save. If the target is a corpse, it becomes an undead creature under the symbiote's control, regaining all its hit points. The undead creature is destroyed when the symbiote leaves it.


While assimilated, the symbiote has full cover from all effects and is immune to all damage, except that it takes any radiant damage taken by its host. It can't make shadow tendril attacks or use Assimilate or Snuff Light. The target gains the **shadow symbiote thrall** template and is charmed by the symbiote.

The symbiote can use an action to leave the host. It is forced out if the host is reduced to 0 hit points or if the host is the target of a *protection from evil and good* spell. When the symbiote leaves, it appears within 5 feet of the host.

BONUS ACTIONS
Snuff Light. The symbiote magically extinguishes nonmagical light sources within 30 feet.

Combat

While the shadow symbiote has a creature assimilated, it encourages the creature to fight in the symbiote's defense until the creature dies. It then continues to battle, trying to assimilate a new target, until it is bloodied. It then flees using its climb speed.

Shadow Symbiote Thrall Template

Any living or dead humanoid can become a shadow symbiote thrall. Its challenge rating increases by 2. A creature retains all its statistics except as noted below.

Type. If the thrall is a dead humanoid, its type becomes undead.

Damage Resistances. The thrall gains resistance to acid, cold, fire, lightning, and thunder damage and damage from nonmagical weapons.

Damage Immunities. The thrall gains immunity to necrotic and poison damage.

Blindsight. The thrall gains blindsight out to a range of 120 feet.

Heart of Darkness. Creatures within 30 feet of the thrall have the range of their darkvision reduced by 60 feet, to a minimum of 0.

Telepathy. The thrall gains telepathy out to a range of 30 feet.

If the thrall's character level or challenge rating is 2 or higher, it can take the following additional bonus actions:

Shadow Tendril. *Melee Spell Attack:* proficiency bonus + Charisma modifier to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) necrotic damage, and any light source the target wears or carries is suppressed until the end of the thrall's next turn.

Snuff Light. The thrall magically extinguishes nonmagical light sources within 30 feet.

Shadow Symbiote Knight

While it lived, the shadow symbiote knight was a powerful martial champion. In death, it is a puppet of a shadow symbiote.

SHADOW SYMBIOTE KNIGHT

CHALLENGE 7

MEDIUM UNDEAD

2,900 XP

AC 17 (half plate)

HP 110 (13d8 + 52; bloodied 55)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Proficiency +3; Maneuver DC 15

Saving Throws Str +7, Con +7, Wis +5

Skills Perception +5, Stealth +5

Damage Resistances acid, cold, fire, lightning, thunder; damage from nonmagical weapons

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison

Senses blindsight 120 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages Common, telepathy 30 ft.

Heart of Darkness. Creatures within 30 feet of the knight have the range of their darkvision reduced by 60 feet, to a minimum of 0.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The knight attacks twice with its greatsword.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Shadow Tendril. *Melee Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (4d6) necrotic damage, and any light source the target wears or carries is suppressed until the end of the knight's next turn.

Snuff Light. The knight magically extinguishes nonmagical light sources within 30 feet.

Combat

The shadow symbiote knight defends its shadow symbiote, targeting creatures that deal radiant damage.

Skeletons

In their grim and blood-spattered lairs, necromancers experiment with skeletal remains the way chefs tinker with recipes. Many wizards produce variations on the animated skeleton, and undead legions boast their own skeletal officers, specialists, and fearsome elite soldiers.

Undead Nature. A skeleton doesn't require air, sustenance, or sleep.

Skeleton Encounters

Skeletons guard tombs and temples.

CR 0–2 1d8 bonespaw; 1 or 2 skeletal immortals; four-armed skeletal immortal
Treasure 100 gp, masterwork scimitar

CR 3–4 1 or 2 skeletal immortals with 1d4 skeletons or 1d8 bonespaw; 3 or 4 burning bonespaw; skeletal immortal with 2 burning bonespaw

Treasure 500 gp, +1 *shortsword* (named *Necropolis*; glows when within 30 feet of corporeal undead)

CR 5–10 skeletal warlord with 1d4 + 4 bonespaw; 3 to 5 burning skeletal immortals; four-armed skeletal champion

Treasure 1,200 gp, ancient signet ring (500 gp), *circlet of blasting*

Bonespaw

While most skeletons are the undead remains of a single corpse, mismatched and jumbled bones can be raised as bonespaw. Bonespaw lack the half-remembered battle instincts and the durability of true skeletons, but they are deadly in large numbers.

BONESPAWN

CHALLENGE 1/8
25 XP

AC 11

HP 1 (1d8 – 3)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	12 (+1)	4 (-3)	4 (-3)	6 (-2)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 11

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities fatigue, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 8

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

ACTIONS

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) slashing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +3 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d6 + 1) piercing damage.

Combat

The bonespaw follows its orders without imagination or deviation. When ordered to fight, it moves towards the closest enemy by the shortest available route, making no effort to avoid hazards.

Skeletal Immortal

Once skilled warriors and mercenaries, death has robbed skeletal immortals of none of the martial skills they possessed in life. Furthermore, necromancy has granted them a kind of immortality: until they are pulverized or burned with holy fire, they leap to their feet unharmed moments after being defeated. A skeletal immortal can outlast and overwhelm even the most hardened battle veteran.

SKELETAL IMMORTAL

CHALLENGE 1

MEDIUM UNDEAD

200 XP

AC 15 (medium shield)**HP** 19 (3d8 + 6; bloodied 9)**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	8 (-1)	8 (-1)	5 (-3)

Proficiency +2; **Maneuver DC** 13**Damage Vulnerabilities** bludgeoning**Damage Immunities** poison**Condition Immunities** fatigue, poisoned**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 9**Languages** understands the languages it knew in life but can't speak

Reanimation. When the immortal is reduced to 0 hit points, it is not destroyed but falls prone and is paralyzed until the end of its next turn. While paralyzed, it is indistinguishable from an inanimate skeleton. When this paralysis ends, the immortal regains all its hit points. If the immortal is reduced to 0 hit points by an attack that deals bludgeoning or radiant damage, or if it is dealt bludgeoning or radiant damage while at 0 hit points, it is permanently destroyed.

ACTIONS**Multiattack.** The immortal makes two scimitar attacks.**Scimitar.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d6 + 3) slashing damage.**REACTIONS**

Disarm. When an adjacent creature the immortal can see misses the immortal with an attack made with a melee weapon, the immortal makes a Dexterity check. If this check is higher than the triggering attack roll, the attacker drops the weapon they used to make the attack. The weapon lands in a space of the skeleton's choice within 5 feet of the attacker.

Combat

The immortal fights with more intelligence than most skeletons. It attacks the creatures it perceives as most dangerous first, such as those that deal bludgeoning or radiant damage. It takes cover against ranged attacks if it can. If it fights multiple creatures, it saves its reaction to disarm a creature wielding a bludgeoning weapon. If one of its enemies is disarmed, the immortal picks up the weapon.

After it is restored by its Reanimation trait, the immortal leaps to its feet and attacks at the start of its next turn.

Skeletal Warlord

With the ability to raise and command armies of skeletons, some skeletal warlords serve dread knights or mighty necromancers, while others rule in their own right.

SKELETAL WARLORD

CHALLENGE 9

MEDIUM UNDEAD

5,000 XP

AC 17 (half plate)**HP** 144 (17d8 + 68; bloodied 72)**Speed** 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	16 (+3)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)

Proficiency +4; **Maneuver DC** 16**Skills** Intimidation +7**Damage Immunities** poison**Condition Immunities** fatigue, poisoned**Senses** darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12**Languages** the languages it knew in life

Magic Resistance. The warlord has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The warlord makes two greatsword attacks or two black lightning attacks.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 5 (1d10) necrotic damage. On a critical hit, the warlord can use Sound the Attack.

Black Lighting. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (3d8) necrotic damage.

Sound the Attack. Each skeleton or skeletal horde of CR 7 or less within 30 feet can use its reaction to make an attack.

Raise Bonespawn. The warlord touches up to three inanimate skeletons or piles of bones, animating them as bonespawn under the warlord's control.

REACTIONS

Arcane Punishment. When the warlord succeeds on a saving throw against a spell cast by a creature within 60 feet that the warlord can see, the warlord attacks the caster with black lightning.

Riposte. When a creature the warlord can see misses the warlord with a melee attack, the warlord makes a greatsword attack against that creature.

The following variants can be applied to any skeleton, including ones from this monster entry or the *Monstrous Menagerie*. If multiple variants are applied to the same skeleton, apply them in alphabetical order.

Variant: Burning Skeleton

Burning skeletons are formed from the charred remains of those burned alive on funeral pyres. Wreathed in magical flames, burning skeletons set their enemies ablaze with their flaming weapons and with fiery blasts from their eye sockets.

If a skeleton's CR is less than 1, it increases to 1. If a skeleton's CR is already 1 or higher, it increases by 1.

A burning skeleton is immune to fire damage and has the following additional traits:

Burning Weapons. A creature hit by the skeleton's melee or ranged attacks takes ongoing fire damage equal to the skeleton's proficiency bonus. The creature can use an action to extinguish the flames, ending the ongoing damage.

Death Burst. When the skeleton is destroyed, it explodes. Each creature within 5 feet makes a DC 10 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4 (1d8) fire damage on a failed save or half damage on a success.

Variant: Four-Armed Skeleton

With the ability to rearrange limbs as they like, it's no surprise that necromancers hit upon a simple way to increase their skeletons' deadliness: add more arms. Four-armed skeletons weave their weapons in glittering offensive and defensive displays that can overwhelm lone opponents.

A four-armed skeleton is an elite monster, equivalent to two skeletons of the base type. For instance, a four-armed skeletal immortal is equivalent to two CR 1 monsters (400 XP). Its hit points are doubled. It has the following additional traits, which it can use only while bloodied:

Elite Recovery. At the end of each of its turns while bloodied, the skeleton ends one negative effect currently affecting it. It can do so as long as it has at least 1 hit point, even while unconscious or incapacitated.



Four Arms. As a bonus action on each of its turns, the skeleton can make an attack or take the Multiattack action.

Reactive Arms. The skeleton can take two reactions each round, but not more than one per turn.

Variant: Winged Skeleton

With giant bat wings grafted to their shoulder blades, winged skeletons look like nightmare soldiers in hellish armies. While they are not fiends, they often serve as scouts for evil masters.

If a skeleton's CR is less than 1, it is doubled. If a skeleton's CR is already 1 or higher, its challenge rating does not change.

A winged skeleton has a fly speed of 60.

Stone Shark

A dorsal fin slices through stone, leaving no trail behind. Suddenly, a shark bursts out of the cobblestone floor, seizes an adventurer in its jaws, and sinks back into the rock.

Glide Through Stone. Stone sharks are eyeless monsters that resemble white hammerhead sharks. They glide through stone and air as effortlessly as water. Able to sense the vibrations of their prey from within stone walls and floors, they are virtually impossible to detect except when they burst forth to attack.

Subterranean Terror. Stone sharks are native to the Plane of Earth. Even creatures that can pass through stone, like xorn, fear them. In a dungeon or Underland cavern, a stone shark is a true terror, since it can attack at will and retreat to safety within a solid surface. The sight of a fin surfacing along a cobbled floor can send even the most experienced adventurers running for the exit. Thankfully, stone sharks can't glide through earth, and so few stone sharks have been sighted on the surface.

Bloodflower Fields. Stone shark hunting grounds are often covered with fields of bloodflowers, tiny crimson flowers that sprout from stone and don't require light to bloom. The connection between the flowers and the shark isn't fully understood, but bloodflowers are thought to be native to the Plane of Earth.

Legends and Lore

With an Arcana or Nature check, characters can learn the following:

DC 10 Though often encountered in dungeons and caverns on the Material Plane, stone sharks are native to the Plane of Earth.

DC 15 Stone sharks can “swim” through stone as if it were water.

DC 20 As if they weren't bad enough already, stone sharks can also fly. Only water, earth, and metal seems to stop them.

Stone Shark Encounters

Stone sharks are native to the Plane of Earth but some have migrated to the depths of Underland.

CR 3–4 stone shark

CR 11–16 3 or 4 stone sharks

Signs

- 1 In a stone hall, a set of footprints ends in a pool of blood
- 2 A dorsal fin slides along a distant surface
- 3 Terrified humanoids with confused descriptions of a shark attack
- 4 Bloodflower blossoms

Behavior

- 1–2 On the hunt, passing through stone walls and flying through rooms and passages
- 3–4 Hiding in a stone floor, stalking an unsuspecting group—perhaps the adventurers

STONE SHARK

CHALLENGE 4

LARGE MONSTROSITY

1,100 XP

AC 13 (natural armor)

HP 85 (9d10 + 36; bloodied 42)

Speed 0 ft., burrow 40 ft., fly 40 ft. (hover)

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	2 (-4)	10 (+0)	4 (-3)

Proficiency +2; **Maneuver DC** 14

Senses tremorsense 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages —

Stone Glide. The shark can burrow through nonmagical stone. While doing so, it doesn't disturb the material it moves through. The shark can't be harmed by stone weapons or projectiles, as such weapons pass right through them.

ACTIONS

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 15 (2d10 + 4) piercing damage. If the target is a Large or smaller creature, it is grappled (escape DC 14). While grappled in this way, the target gains the stone shark's Stone Glide trait, and the stone shark can't bite a different creature. If the target escapes the grapple while it is inside stone, it takes 27 (5d10) force damage and is shunted to the nearest unoccupied space outside the stone.

Tail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage.

REACTIONS

Tail Swat. When a creature the stone shark can see hits it with a melee attack, the shark attacks that creature with its tail.

Combat

The shark begins its turn hiding inside stone. It flies from its hiding place, tries to grapple a creature with its bite, and if successful retreats into stone. It replies to opportunity attacks with its tail swat. It retreats when it can swim away with a fresh kill. It may also retreat if it is bloodied, but not if any of its enemies are also bloodied. A bloodied stone shark may follow potential prey for some time and launch a surprise attack when they are distracted.



Titans

Midir

The handsome son of a god, Midir once ruled an earthly empire. Midir's love affairs were legendary and culminated in a romance with another titan's spouse. This seduction led to a war that racked the earth and nearly brought down the heavens.

Prisoner of Mirrors. In his unbounded vanity, Midir once thoughtlessly vowed that he would never break any mirror that had reflected his face. When Midir was captured at the end of the divine war he caused, he was given reason to regret that vow. The gods imprisoned him at the bottom of a deep dungeon—in a lavish palace of mirrors. Midir resides there still, unable to break its mirrored walls but comforted somewhat by the sight of his face reflected in every surface. Today, myths of Midir's imprisonment are all but forgotten, lingering on only in the superstition that it is bad luck to break a mirror.

Mirror Magic. Although imprisoned, Midir is not helpless, and he constantly schemes for freedom. His knowledge of magic allows him to peer through mirrors as if they were windows and speak to people through their reflected images. He can even summon aleas and send them into the world to seek out heroes who might defeat his jailors and shatter the mirrors that imprison him.

Legends and Lore

With an Arcana or History check, characters can learn the following:

DC 10 Midir was a titan whose vanity sparked a war that nearly destroyed the world.

DC 15 As punishment for his folly, Midir was sealed inside a prison filled with mirrors.

DC 20 Midir can use his magic to change his size at will, create duplicates of himself, and open portals across vast distances.

Midir Encounters

Midir lives in a mirror-lined palace at the bottom of a sprawling dungeon.

CR 23–30 Midir; Midir with pet phase monster
Treasure throne set with 26 opals (1,000 gp each), 20 mirrors in golden frames (1,000 gp each), scrolls of *arcane mirror* and *glibness*, *Midir's trident* (chapter 3)

CR 31+ Midir the Reborn; Midir the Reborn with 1d4 crystal statues
Treasure 100,000 gp, trade goods worth 50,000 gp, gold crown sized for a Gargantuan creature (25,000 gp), *manual of gainful exercise*, *Midir's trident*, *mirror of life trapping*

Signs

- 1 Statue of a golden-haired king holding a trident
- 2 An adventurer's reflection speaks an invitation through a wall-mounted mirror
- 3 An alea in the form of an adventurer offers guidance or battle
- 4 A locked door made from mirrored glass: anyone but Midir can easily break through it
- 5 Tapestry depicting two swans. DC 15 Religion check: the tapestry illustrates a myth in which a titan named Midir flew away with another titan's wife
- 6 Broken mirror

Behavior

- 1 Fixing his hair in a mirror
- 2 Scrying on another titan, using a mirror as a focus
- 3 Giving orders to an unfamiliar-looking aleas, which then departs through a mirror
- 4 In Medium form, eating a *heroes' feast* at a table with place settings for the adventurers
- 5 Split into three: two are wrestling and the third is the judge
- 6 In Medium form, split in three: one sits atop a throne while the others act as servants

MIDIR

CHALLENGE 24

 LEGENDARY GARGANTUAN
 CELESTIAL (TITAN)

62,000 XP

AC 21 (breastplate)

HP 369 (18d20 + 180; bloodied 184)

Speed 60 ft., fly 60 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
30 (+10)	24 (+7)	30 (+10)	24 (+7)	20 (+5)	30 (+10)

Proficiency +7; **Maneuver DC** 25

Saving Throws Str +17, Con +17, Int +14, Wis +12, Cha +17

Skills Perception +12, Persuasion +17

Damage Immunities radiant; damage from nonmagical weapons

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 22

Languages Celestial, Common, telepathy 60 ft.

Divine Grace. If Midir makes a saving throw against an effect that deals half damage on a success, he takes no damage on a success and half damage on a failure. Furthermore, while wearing medium armor, Midir adds his full Dexterity bonus to his Armor Class (already included).

Innate Spellcasting. Midir's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 25). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *arcane mirror* (chapter 1), *charm monster*, *command*, *creation*

3/day: *heroes' feast*, *hold monster*, *teleportation circle* (both sides are the surface of a mirror known to Midir instead of a magic circle; Midir can't pass through), *shatter* (6th level)

Magic Resistance. Midir has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Mirror Prohibition. Midir can't willingly break a mirror.

Regeneration. Midir regains 20 hit points at the start of his turn as long as he has at least 1 hit point.

ACTIONS

Midir's Trident. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +20 to hit, reach 10 ft. or range 40/120, one target. *Hit:* 27 (4d6 + 13) piercing damage plus 17 (5d6) lightning damage. If used to make a ranged attack, the trident then reappears in Midir's hand.

Hold Monster (5th-Level; V, S, Concentration). One creature Midir can see within 60 feet makes a DC 25 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the target is paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

Shatter (6th-Level; V, S). An ear-splitting ringing sound fills a 10-foot-radius sphere emanating from a point Midir can see within 60 feet. Creatures in the area make a DC 25 Constitution saving throw, taking 31 (7d8) thunder damage on a failed save or half damage on a success. A creature made of stone, metal, or other inorganic material has disadvantage on its saving throw. Unattended objects in the area also take the damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Immortal Form. Midir magically changes his size between Gargantuan and Medium. While Medium, he has disadvantage on Strength checks. His statistics are otherwise unchanged.

Teleport. Midir magically teleports to an unoccupied space within 120 feet that he can see (either directly or reflected in a mirror).

REACTIONS

Split Self (1/Round). When Midir takes damage, he splits himself into two identical bodies in the same space. Each body has half the hit points of the original, rounded down, and they share their daily spells in common. On Midir's turn, each body can take a full turn, in any order Midir chooses. Each body has its own reaction, and each can take 1 legendary each round. The bodies can share a space. Midir can't have more than three bodies at a time.

As a bonus action, two Midirs in the same space can merge their bodies. The new body has the total hit points of both and is only affected by conditions or effects that affected both.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Midir can take 1 legendary action, choosing from the options below. He regains the spent legendary action at the start of his turn.

Attack. Midir makes a weapon attack.

Cast Spell. Midir casts a spell. He can't use this option if he has cast a spell since the start of his last turn.

Teleport. Midir uses Teleport.

Combat

Midir uses Split Self whenever possible; on Midir's turn, each duplicate moves to make it more difficult to include multiple duplicates in an area spell. Each Midir uses their trident for most attacks, reserving Shatter for groups of two or more foes. If Midir is bloodied and has no duplicates, he offers to make a deal. If his offer is rejected, Midir fights to the death.



Variant: Midir the Reborn

If Midir is released from his dungeon prison and reclaims his throne, he draws upon the divine power he enjoyed in ancient times and becomes Midir the Reborn.

Midir the Reborn is an elite monster, equivalent to two CR 24 monsters (124,000 XP). He has 738 (36d20 + 360; bloodied 369) hit points and the following additional bonus action, which he can use only while bloodied.

Summon Aleas. Midir summons an aleas from an unbroken mirror within 60 feet. The aleas appears in an unoccupied space within 5 feet of the mirror. Midir chooses the creature that the aleas doubles, which must be a creature Midir can see and which can't be a creature that currently has an aleas double. Midir can't summon more than one aleas per round, even if there are multiple Midirs.

Aleas

An aleas is a celestial that is summoned from a mirror in order to search for a specific creature. The aleas perfectly duplicates the chosen creature, including its skills and equipment, and pursues the original creature with unerring aim. An aleas's mission may be to deliver a message to, aid, or even kill its double; the aleas disappears once it has fulfilled its mission. The aleas never lies or purposely deceives.

An aleas has a challenge rating equal to one-half the character level or challenge rating of the creature it imitates (rounding up). Consult Statistics for Monsters by Challenge Rating (*Monstrous Menagerie*) to determine its XP.

ALEAS

SMALL OR MEDIUM
CELESTIAL (TITAN)

CHALLENGE VARIABLE
VARIABLE XP

AC as its double

HP as its double

Speed as its double

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
— AS ITS DOUBLE —					

Proficiency as its double; **Maneuver DC** as its double

Saving Throws as its double

Skills as its double

Damage Resistances as its double

Damage Immunities as its double

Condition Immunities as its double

Senses as its double

Languages as its double

Double. When the aleas is summoned, it takes on the current appearance of an individual humanoid creature of the summoner's choice. Except for its type, the aleas shares all statistics of the creature it duplicates, including traits, actions, abilities, known spells, and any resources spent (for instance, it gains the known spells and currently available spell slots of the original creature, but not expended spell slots). When summoned, it is not subject to any non-permanent effects or conditions affecting the doubled creature at the time. After it is summoned, changes to the doubled creature's statistics have no effect on the aleas. The aleas acts immediately after the doubled creature in the initiative order.

When summoned, the aleas gains an exact copy of every object the double creature carries, except for powerful unique items such as artifacts. The doubled equipment disappears when the aleas is dispelled or when it has been out of the aleas's possession for 1 minute.

The aleas is destroyed if it travels to a different plane, when it is reduced to 0 hit points, or when the doubled creature is reduced to 0 hit points.

Double Sense. The aleas knows the distance and direction to the doubled creature at all times.

Double Vulnerability. The aleas is vulnerable to damage dealt by its doubled creature.

Double Weakness. When the aleas makes an attack or casts a spell that deals damage, creatures other than the doubled creature take only half the damage dealt.

ACTIONS

Doubled Action. The aleas gains all the actions, reactions, and bonus actions available to its double.

Combat

The aleas focuses on fighting its double. It ignores other combatants unless they're in the way, although it makes no effort to avoid damaging its double's allies. If its double makes an attack or casts a damaging spell, the aleas does the same, if doing so allows them to target their double.

Troll Hulk

A troll hulk is a massively muscled troll that has out-consumed and outgrown its fellows. Its hide is dotted with the blinking and leering visages of humanoids, trolls, and giants: the faces of rivals it has eaten and absorbed.

Sated Behemoths. A troll's appetite is so tremendous that most trolls are thin and wasted even in areas of plenty. Only rarely does a troll find enough sustenance that it realizes its full size and strength. Such a troll can quickly turn a lush forest or a thriving settlement into a barren, uninhabited waste. While a troll hulk's favorite meal is another troll (since every troll is also a voracious rival), troll hulks eat anything they get their claws on, including carrion.

You Are What You Eat. A troll hulk's meals are incorporated half-digested into its body. Every troll hulk has several sets of working organs and networks of spare bones. This makes it difficult to kill a troll hulk simply by smashing it or stabbing its organs.

Just as a troll hulk incorporates its prey's organs into its body, it absorbs facial features as well. The faces of the creatures it has consumed bud from its skin, making antic expressions in a parody of independent life.

Troll Hulk Encounters

Troll hulks stalk mountain caves and Underland caverns, depopulating their hunting grounds in order to sate their enormous hunger.

CR 11–16 troll hulk

Treasure 6 pieces of bloody gold jewelry, including rings, bracelets, and a necklace (750 gp each)

CR 17–22 troll hulk with 2 or 3 bugbears, ettercaps, harpies, or ogres

Treasure 11,000 gp, 8 gnawed silver busts of famous philosophers (500 gp each), *staff of the woodlands* (named *Staff of Prey*; the owner can also expend 4 charges to cast *conjure woodland beings*)

CR 23–30 troll king; troll hulk with 2 or 3 ettins, hill giants, or trolls

Treasure giant mithral frying pan (2,500 gp), 3 silver dragon eggs (20,000 gp each), *portable hole* completely filled with bones (including dragon bones)

CR 31+ troll king with 2 or 3 ettins, frost giants, hill giants, or trolls

Treasure 10,000 pp, gold and emerald crown for a Huge creature (25,000 gp), sheaf of maps showing secret entrances to nearby settlements and fortifications (25,000 gp), *ring of spell turning* worn by a humanoid hand protruding from the troll's side (the troll is attuned to the ring)

Signs

- 1 Thousands of cracked bones with the marrow sucked out
- 2 The stench of carrion
- 3 A cowering goblin, human, or pixie
- 4 A mysteriously uninhabited settlement

Behavior

- 1 Feasting on troll or giant corpses
- 2 Awaiting tribute from its servants
- 3 Mad with hunger; smashing through a wall beyond which it smells prey
- 4 Sleeping atop a reeking pile of bones and treasure
- 5 Being regaled with stories by a creature trying to delay its consumption
- 6 Willing to work with anyone planning to fight a large, meaty monster

Names

Arreck the Thin, Dovregubbens, Vilith



TROLL HULK

CHALLENGE 15

LEGENDARY HUGE GIANT

13,000 XP

AC 16 (natural armor)

HP 250 (20d12 + 120; bloodied 125)

Speed 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
24 (+7)	12 (+1)	22 (+6)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)

Proficiency +5; **Maneuver DC** 20

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +6, Survival +8

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 18

Languages Common, Giant

Keen Smell. The troll has advantage on Perception checks that rely on smell.

Legendary Resistance (4). The troll has four extra troll, humanoid, or giant faces budding from its hide. When the troll fails a saving throw, it can choose to succeed instead. If it does, one of its extra faces dies. When the troll succeeds on a saving throw in this way, it takes no damage from an effect that would deal half damage on a success. Once the troll has used this trait four times, it can't do so again until it consumes another creature that has a face.

Regeneration. The troll regains 20 hit points at the start of its turn. If the troll takes acid or fire damage, this trait doesn't function on its next turn. The troll dies only if it starts its turn with 0 hit points and doesn't regenerate.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The troll attacks once with its bite and twice with its claw.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (3d12 + 7) piercing damage. If the target is a creature, it is grappled (escape DC 20). Until the grapple ends, the target is restrained and the troll can't bite a different creature. If this attack reduces a creature to 0 hit points, the creature dies and the troll swallows the creature. If a swallowed creature isn't retrieved from the troll's stomach within 1 hour, its body is destroyed, its face appears on the troll's hide, and the troll gains another use of Legendary Resistance.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d4 + 7) slashing damage.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 26 (3d12 + 7) bludgeoning damage. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 20 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

The troll can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. It regains spent legendary actions at the start of its turn.

Clumsy Leap. The troll leaps up to 50 feet horizontally or 20 feet vertically, with or without a running start. The troll lands prone.

Lunging Claw. The troll moves up to half its speed straight towards a target without provoking opportunity attacks and makes a claw attack against that target.

Backhand Swipe (Costs 2 Actions). The troll makes a claw attack against one or two targets.

Rock (Costs 2 Actions). The troll makes a rock attack.

Combat

The troll bites and claws the closest creature. If it takes over 40 damage from a single attack, it uses its Clumsy Leap or Lunging Claw legendary actions to reach that attacker. Otherwise, it chomps a grappled creature or uses Backhand Swipe. It flees only if it takes fire or acid damage while it has no uses of Legendary Resistance.

Variant: Troll King

A troll king holds court among lesser trolls, giants, and other fearsome hunters. Each of a troll king's subjects is allowed to live only in exchange for a daily tribute of flesh.

The troll king is an elite monster, equivalent to two CR 15 monsters (26,000 XP). It has 500 (40d12 + 240) hit points. The troll has the following reaction:

Budding Slash. When the troll takes slashing damage, it can expend one use of its Legendary Resistance. If it does so, one of the extra faces on its skin is severed and becomes a troll within 5 feet of the troll king. This troll acts on the troll king's initiative, and bears an uncanny resemblance to the severed face. The troll king can use a bonus action to deal 3 (1d6) slashing damage to itself, triggering this reaction.

The troll has the following additional legendary action, which it can use only while bloodied:

Elite Recovery. The troll ends one negative effect currently affecting it. It can use this action as long as it has at least 1 hit point, even while unconscious or incapacitated.

NPCs

The following stat blocks represent nonplayer characters (NPCs) that can be found in dungeons and Underland. Many of them appear in the adventures and dungeon generators within this book. Three NPCs—the aboleth thrall, the blackguard, and the strider—first appeared in *Monstrous Menagerie* and are reprinted here for convenience.

As is the case with any NPC, you can modify them as you see fit by altering their heritage, weapons, spells, and so on. More details on modifying NPCs can be found in appendix B of *Monstrous Menagerie*.

ABOLETH THRALL

CHALLENGE 2
MEDIUM HUMANOID
450 XP

AC 12

HP 45 (7d8 + 14; bloodied 22)

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 12

Skills Any one skill

Senses passive Perception 10

Languages Common, unlimited-range telepathy with aboleth

Sea Changed. The aboleth thrall can breathe water and air, but must bathe in water for 1 hour for every 12 hours it spends dry or it begins to suffocate. It is magically charmed by the aboleth.

ACTIONS

Poison Ink Knife. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) slashing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

REACTIONS

Self-Sacrifice. When a creature within 5 feet of the thrall that the thrall can see hits an aboleth with an attack, the thrall can make itself the target of the attack instead.

BLACKGUARD

CHALLENGE 5
MEDIUM HUMANOID
1,800 XP

AC 18 (full plate)

HP 82 (11d8 + 33; bloodied 41)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	12 (+1)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

Proficiency +3; Maneuver DC 14

Saving Throws Str +6, Con +6, Wis +5

Skills Athletics +6, Intimidation +5, Perception +5

Senses passive Perception 15

Languages any two

Aura of Anger. While the knight is conscious, allies within 10 feet gain a +2 bonus to melee weapon damage. A creature can benefit from only one Aura of Anger at a time.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The knight attacks three times with their greatsword.

Greatsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) slashing damage.

Lance (Mounted Only). *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d12 + 3) piercing damage. If the knight moves at least 20 feet straight towards the target before the attack, they deal an extra 13 (2d12) piercing damage, and the target makes a DC 14 Strength saving throw, falling prone on a failure. This attack is made at disadvantage against targets within 5 feet.

Heavy Crossbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 100/400 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d10 + 1) piercing damage plus 10 (3d6) poison damage.

Vile Curse (1/Day). The knight utters hellish words that scald the soul. Living creatures of the knight's choice within 30 feet that can hear and understand them are magically cursed for 1 minute. A d4 is subtracted from attack rolls and saving throws made by a cursed creature. A creature immune to the frightened condition is immune to this curse.

CULTIST EXECRATOR

CHALLENGE 6

MEDIUM HUMANOID

2,300 XP

AC 14 (medium shield)

 HP 102 (12d8 + 48; bloodied 51), 107 with *aid*

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	18 (+4)	10 (+0)	18 (+4)	14 (+2)

Proficiency +3; Maneuver DC 14

Saving Throws Wis +7, Cha +5

Skills Intimidation +5, Religion +3 (+1d4)

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages any two

Spellcasting. The execrator is a 9th level spellcaster.

Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 15, +7 to hit with spell attacks). They have the following cleric spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *sacred flame, thaumaturgy*
1st-level (4 slots): *bane, command*
2nd-level (3 slots): *aid, silence*
3rd-level (3 slots): *bestow curse, dispel magic*
4th-level (3 slots): *blight, locate creature*
5th-level (1 slot): *insect plague*
ACTIONS
Multiattack. The execrator makes two flail attacks.

Flail. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 10 (3d6) necrotic damage.

Sacred Flame (Cantrip; V, S). One creature the execrator can see within 60 feet makes a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 9 (2d8) radiant damage on a failure. This spell ignores cover.

Aid (2nd-Level; V, S, M). Up to three creatures within 60 feet have their maximum and total hit points increased by 5 for 8 hours.

Blight (4th-Level; V, Concentration). The execrator targets a living creature or plant within 30 feet, draining moisture and vitality from it. The target makes a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) necrotic damage on a failure or half damage on a success. Plant creatures have disadvantage on their saving throw and take maximum damage. A nonmagical plant dies.


Insect Plague (5th-Level; V, S, M, Concentration).

A 20-foot-radius sphere of biting and stinging insects appears centered on a point the executor can see within 300 feet and remains for 10 minutes. The cloud spreads around corners, and the area is lightly obscured and difficult terrain. Each creature in the area when the cloud appears, and each creature that enters it for the first time on a turn or ends its turn there, makes a DC 15 Constitution saving throw, taking 22 (4d10) piercing damage on a failed save or half damage on a success. The executor is immune to this damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Mark of the Pariah (Recharge 6). One creature within 60 feet that the executor can see makes a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, it is marked with a visible brand for 1 minute. While marked in this way, the creature makes saving throws with disadvantage, and whenever it takes damage it takes 2 (1d4) extra psychic damage.

FETID WITCH

MEDIUM HUMANOID

CHALLENGE 2

450 XP

AC 12

HP 39 (6d8 + 12; bloodied 19)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)	6 (-2)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 12

Saving Throws Con +4, Wis +4

Skills Animal Handling +4, Medicine +4, Nature +4, Perception +4

Senses passive Perception 14

Languages Common, Druidic

Carrier. The witch can contract and spread diseases, but never suffers any of their ill effects.

Spellcasting. The witch is a 4th level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Wisdom (spell save DC 12, +4 to hit with spell attacks). They have the following druid spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *druidcraft, mending*

1st-level (4 slots): *animal friendship, entangle*

2nd-level (3 slots): *hold person, spider climb*

Vermin Master. When the witch casts a spell that targets only a rat, bat, or insect, she can cast it at its lowest level without expending a spell slot. She can communicate telepathically with any such creature within 10 miles.

ACTIONS

Staff of Squalor. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) bludgeoning damage, or 7 (1d10 + 2) bludgeoning damage if used with two hands. If the target is a creature, it must succeed on a DC 12 Constitution saving throw or contract sewer plague.

Rupture. The witch targets the corpse of a rat within 60 feet, causing it to explode. Creatures within 10 feet of the explosion make a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the target takes 7 (2d6) thunder damage and is poisoned for 1 minute. On a success, the creature takes half damage and isn't poisoned. A poisoned creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Entangle (1st-Level; V, S, Concentration). Vines erupt in a 20-foot square centered on a spot on the ground within 120 feet. The area is difficult terrain for 1 minute. Each creature in the area when the spell is cast makes a DC 12 Strength saving throw. On a failure, it is restrained by vines. A creature restrained in this way can use its action to make a DC 12 Strength check, freeing itself on a success.

Hold Person (2nd-Level; V, S, M, Concentration). One humanoid within 60 feet that the witch can see makes a DC 12 Wisdom saving throw. On a failure, the target is paralyzed for 1 minute. The target can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the effect on a success.

BONUS ACTIONS

Poison Cloud (Recharge 4-6). Poison gas appears in a 5-foot radius around a point the witch can see within 30 feet. Each creature that enters the cloud for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there makes a DC 12 Constitution saving throw. On a failure, it takes 4 (1d8) poison damage and its speed is halved until the end of its next turn. On a success, it takes half damage and its speed isn't reduced.

MOTLEY WARRIOR CHALLENGE 1/2
MEDIUM HUMANOID (MOTLEY) 100 XP

AC 12

HP 27 (5d8 + 5; bloodied 13)

Speed 40 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
16 (+3)	14 (+2)	14 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 13

Skills Athletics +5, Perception +3 (+1d4)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 15

Languages any two

Strange Gifts. The warrior has a bestial feature. Roll 1d6.

- 1–2: **Long Arms.** The reach of the warrior's melee attacks increases by 5.
- 3–4: **Tail.** The warrior gains an expertise die on checks made to balance or climb or make Sleight of Hand checks. Its tail can carry objects weighing up to 5 pounds.
- 5–6: **Pincers.** When the warrior hits with a claw attack, the target is grappled (escape DC 13).

ACTIONS

Claws. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.

MYCELIAL TRAVELER CHALLENGE 1/4
SMALL HUMANOID (MYCELIAL, PLANT) 50 XP

AC 12

HP 13 (3d6 + 3; bloodied 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
8 (–1)	14 (+2)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 12

Skills Stealth +4, Survival +3

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages any two

ACTIONS

Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) piercing damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Spores (Recharge 6). The traveler releases a puff of poisonous spores in a 5-foot-radius area centered on the traveler. The spores lightly obscure the area and linger in air or water for 1 minute or until dispersed by a strong wind or current. Non-plant creatures that enter the area for the first time on a turn or start their turn there must make a DC 11 Constitution

saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 3 (1d6) poison damage and is poisoned until the end of its next turn. Once a creature has been affected by the spores, it is immune to this effect for 24 hours.

OOZEFOLK OOZEMANCER CHALLENGE 3
SMALL HUMANOID (OOZEFOLK) 700 XP

AC 12

HP 52 (8d6 + 24; bloodied 26)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	10 (+0)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 12

Saving Throws Int +5, Wis +3

Skills Arcana +5, Deception +2 (+1d4)

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 11

Languages any two

Amorphous Form. While unarmored and not carrying any items, the oozemancer can pass through an opening as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Hasty Pudding. Each ooze of the oozemancer's choice that starts its turn within 30 feet of the oozemancer can use the Dash action as a bonus action.

Spellcasting. The oozemancer is a 4th level spellcaster. Their spellcasting ability is Intelligence (spell save DC 13, +5 to hit with spell attacks). They have the following wizard spells prepared:

- Cantrips (at will):** *acid splash, prestidigitation*
- 1st-level (4 slots):** *animal friendship* (oozes only), *find familiar* (gray ooze only)
- 2nd-level (3 slots):** *acid arrow, spider climb*

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The oozemancer attacks with its ooze touch and casts a spell.

Ooze Touch. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) acid damage.

Acid Splash (Cantrip; V, S). The oozemancer targets one creature, or two creatures within 5 feet of each other, within 30 feet. Each target must succeed on a DC 13 Dexterity saving throw or take 7 (2d6) acid damage.

Acid Arrow (2nd-Level; V, S, M). A jet of acid streaks toward a target within 90 feet of the oozemancer. The oozemancer makes a ranged spell attack with a +5 bonus. On a hit, the target takes 10 (4d4) acid damage immediately and 5 (2d4) acid damage at the end of its next turn. On a miss, the target takes 5 (2d4) acid damage.

RATLING SCAVENGER CHALLENGE 1/2
 SMALL HUMANOID (RATLING) 100 XP

AC 12

HP 19 (3d6 + 9; bloodied 9)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
10 (+0)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	10 (+0)	8 (-1)	10 (+0)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 12

Skills Perception +1 (+1d4), Stealth +4 (+1d4)

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 13

Languages any two

Rat Swarm. The scavenger has advantage on attack rolls against a creature if another creature has made a melee attack against the same target since the end of the scavenger's last turn.

ACTIONS

Crossbow-Sword. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 80/320, one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage, plus 3 (1d6) piercing damage if the attack roll is made with advantage.

ROCKBORN GUARD CHALLENGE 1/4
 MEDIUM HUMANOID (ROCKBORN) 50 XP

AC 13 (natural armor)

HP 13 (2d8 + 4; bloodied 6)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
14 (+2)	10 (+0)	14 (+2)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)	10 (+0)

Proficiency +2; Maneuver DC 12

Skills Perception +2

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages any two

ACTIONS

War Pick. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d8 + 2) piercing damage.

Roll. The guard rolls up to its Speed in a straight line. While rolling, it can attempt to move into the space of Large or smaller creatures. A creature can make a DC 12 Dexterity saving throw, taking 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage on a failure and ending the guard's movement on a success.

Rock. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, range 40/80 ft., one target. *Hit:* 4 (1d4 + 2) bludgeoning damage.

STRIDER CHALLENGE 5
 MEDIUM HUMANOID 1,800 XP

AC 16 (leather)

HP 90 (12d8 + 36; bloodied 45)

Speed 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
12 (+1)	18 (+4)	16 (+3)	12 (+1)	18 (+4)	12 (+1)

Proficiency +3; Maneuver DC 15

Saving Throws Dex +7, Wis +7

Skills Nature +4 (+1d6), Perception +7 (+1d6), Stealth +7 (+1d4), Survival +7 (+1d6)

Senses passive Perception 20

Languages any two

Keen Hearing and Sight. The strider has advantage on Perception checks that rely on hearing or sight.

Trackless Travel. The strider can't be tracked by non-magical means.

Trained Accuracy. The strider's weapon attacks deal an extra 7 (2d6) damage (included below).

ACTIONS

Multiattack. The strider attacks twice.

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) piercing damage.

Shortbow. *Ranged Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, range 80/320 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (3d6 + 4) piercing damage.

BONUS ACTIONS

Aimed Strike. The strider gains advantage on their next attack made before the end of their turn.

Skirmish Step. The strider moves up to half their Speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Underland Gazetteer

Some explorers follow caverns deeper and deeper into the earth until they find an ancient road leading to the gates of a silent city. Others rappel down mile-deep chasms, lured by the lights twinkling at the bottom. Still others drift down measureless subterranean rivers that descend to a sunless sea. All these explorers have found their way to Underland—and few return.

Underland is a cave network miles beneath the surface of the earth. Although many of Underland's vast caverns are natural, other galleries and chambers were carved long ago using means beyond any living civilization. In these winding caves and long-abandoned ruins dwell monsters and wonders undreamed of by people who live beneath the sun.

The Ecology of Underland

Compared to the sunlit world, Underland is a dark and barren desert. Life, however, is tenacious. The flora and fauna native to Underland is resilient—and usually dangerous to the unwary.

The Color of Darkness

Despite being a realm of sunless stone, Underland is not drab. Mushrooms bloom with unhealthy brightness. Walls glow red and green with phosphorescent algae. Colored lights that blink from the darkness may be creatures such as flash jellies, flumphs, and deadly bright orbs.

In some places in Underland, even the stones glow. Twinkling from walls and ceilings are mysterious crystals that harbor psychic energy. Small veins of psychic crystals provide no benefit beyond faint blue illumination. Intelligent creatures dwelling near larger deposits can become sensitive to psionic energy.



Flourishing Fungus

Fungus proliferates in riotous colors and alien shapes throughout Underland. While some fungi are edible and form the basis of Underland's ecosystem, other mushrooms are poisonous. Still others infect passers-by with spores or even catch and devour them in fanged maws. Denizens of Underland tread carefully among mushrooms of unknown types.

In large caverns, mushrooms often tower to tree height. Cave birds nest on high mushroom caps, and mycelial threads wend along the ground like underbrush. But these fungal forests don't offer the same benefits as trees. Fungus decays too quickly to be useful as a building material, and many mushrooms emit poisonous spores when burned as fuel.

Deep Denizens

Nearly every Underland dweller is an omnivore. With food so scarce, no creature can afford to pass up any source of nutrients. Many Underlanders can derive sustenance from mushrooms that would be deadly to most creatures, or even from rocks and minerals. Some scavengers, like rust monsters and oozes, can eat metal.

Architecture and even furnishings in Underland are typically stone. No one wants a wooden door painstakingly carried from the surface, only to have it devoured by the first passing black pudding! Firewood is in even shorter supply: when the denizens of Underland want heat or light, they burn oil or coal.

Ancient Mysteries

Scattered throughout Underland are vast and inscrutable feats of engineering—huge basalt dams devoid of water, miles-long pillared hallways, clockwork bridges that raise and lower over empty canals, arched chambers containing abandoned cities, and aqueducts threading vast chasms. Some travel still takes place on ancient but well-preserved roads that run throughout Underland. These highways are bracketed for torches and pierced by side tunnels that lead to notoriously deadly mazes filled with cave-ins, death traps, and monster lairs.

These ancient monuments seem to hint at a time when Underland was more populous. One can't help but wonder who built such marvels—and whether they will ever return.

The Perils of Underland

Underland lies far beneath most ordinary caves and dungeons. It is inhabited by ferocious monsters, and only the hardiest communities of deep dwarves, deep gnomes, and shadow elves dare to delve so deep. It is a place of nightmare where ancient evils lurk and where life has evolved into unfamiliar forms.

Underland is intended primarily as a destination for high-level characters. The following locales are designed for characters of at least 8th level.

Psychic Crystal Effects

At the Narrator's discretion, an intelligent monster or NPC that dwells near psychic crystals can become transformed by the energy, gaining unique powers or vulnerabilities. If many creatures live together, they are often transformed in the same way.

TABLE:
LONG-TERM EFFECTS OF PSYCHIC CRYSTAL EXPOSURE

1. The creature gains vulnerability to psychic damage
2. The creature's emotions are palpable. Insight checks against the creature are made with advantage
3. The creature knows the *mage hand* cantrip, and the hand is invisible when cast in this way
4. The creature can speak telepathically to any creature or creatures within 30 feet that it can see and that shares a language with it
5. The creature gains resistance to psychic damage
6. The creature is immune to being charmed or frightened
7. The creature can detect when another creature uses telepathy or takes psychic damage within 120 feet, and knows the distance and direction to the source of the effect
8. Whenever the creature takes damage while it is bloodied, each creature within 5 feet takes psychic damage equal to one-half the damage dealt

Underland Locations

The Court of Spores

Fungus is not only a source of sustenance. Many fungi have medicinal properties that serve as the foundation for the healing traditions of Underland cultures. The sheer variety of fungal species in the world below the surface leaves room for many mysteries.

One such mystery can be found in a dense forest of towering mushrooms where the fungal zombie kingdom known as the Court of Spores makes its home. Overlapping voices echoing from the heart of the forest seem to indicate some sort of settlement there. Travelers who move closer find that the fungi appear to grow with an increasing sense of symmetry. Those who make their way to the center of the Court are assaulted by clouds of spores suffused with confounding, illusory magic. The rare few who resist these spores are eventually confronted by living fungal guards that are eager to take prisoners as offerings for their Queen.

Friends & Foes

1. **Giant dreamer's morel** (DDG) with 1d4 violet fungi
2. 1d8 **fungal zombies** (DDG)
3. 4 **veterans** with the **fungal zombie template** (DDG)
4. Queen Narui (an **assassin** with the **fungal zombie template**) with 1d6 **fungal zombies** and 1d6 **spell shriekers** (DDG)

Adventures

- Fungal zombies steal the corpses of intelligent creatures throughout Underland. The Court of Spores can access the memories of these corpses, and as a result the Court has one of the most complete collections of forgotten lore in Underland.
- Adventurers with an interest in alchemy might seek out the Court of Spores for rare potion and enchantment ingredients.
- "My brother died fighting a monster yesterday. I wanted to give him a proper burial, but one of those fungal parasites got him and he headed for the forest. I'd love nothing more than to recover his body and give him his last rites."

Fault Regulator 7

In this high-security underground facility, a crew of dedicated grimlocks monitor massive underground machines that stabilize a nearby fault line. Fault Regulator 7 (or FR-7) is powered by a combination of geothermal energy and the friction of the fault line itself. Its staff of several dozen grimlocks have maintained the facility for as long as anyone—even the grimlocks themselves—can remember.

FR-7 is lightless and surprisingly quiet, its machinery generating a low, steady hum that the grimlocks use for echolocation. Control panels and instrument readouts use either audible signals (some in frequencies too exotic for most creatures to detect) or a series of raised bumps that extend and retract, spelling out messages in grimlock texture writing (similar to real-world braille).

Security is tight, with trained basilisks, shield guardians, and flying swords supplementing the grimlock security personnel. The security is warranted. In addition to thieves looking to steal grimlock tech, the facility must fend off conquerors who would weaponize the disasters FR-7's machinery holds at bay. The most consistent threat, however, comes from cloakers, who loathe the grimlocks and their geostabilization technology in equal measure.

Friends & Foes

1. **Revilock** or **mage** with **shield guardian**
2. 1d6 **grimlocks** with 2 **basilisks**
3. **Grimlock** with **medusa** and 1d6 **flying swords**
4. 2d6 **grimlock technicals** or **grimlocks**

Adventures

- A series of earthquakes has devastated a city on the surface. A sage suggests that grimlocks might hold the key to stopping the tremors (the sage might believe that the grimlocks cause rather than prevent the earthquakes).
- An underground foe is suddenly armed with sophisticated weapons stamped with the legend "FR-7."
- The adventurers rescue a grimlock who claims their home has been overrun by monsters. If the installation's machinery isn't serviced soon, disaster will befall the region.

The Grave Exchange

The Grave Exchange is a city inhabited nearly exclusively by criminals. Black market auctions, fugitive safe houses, and gambling dens where betting your life—or even your soul—are commonplace. It isn't difficult to find a wealthy benefactor willing to hire mercenaries with questionable morals for one illicit purpose or another.

The only rule the city's inhabitants refuse to break is this: *do not speak above a whisper*.

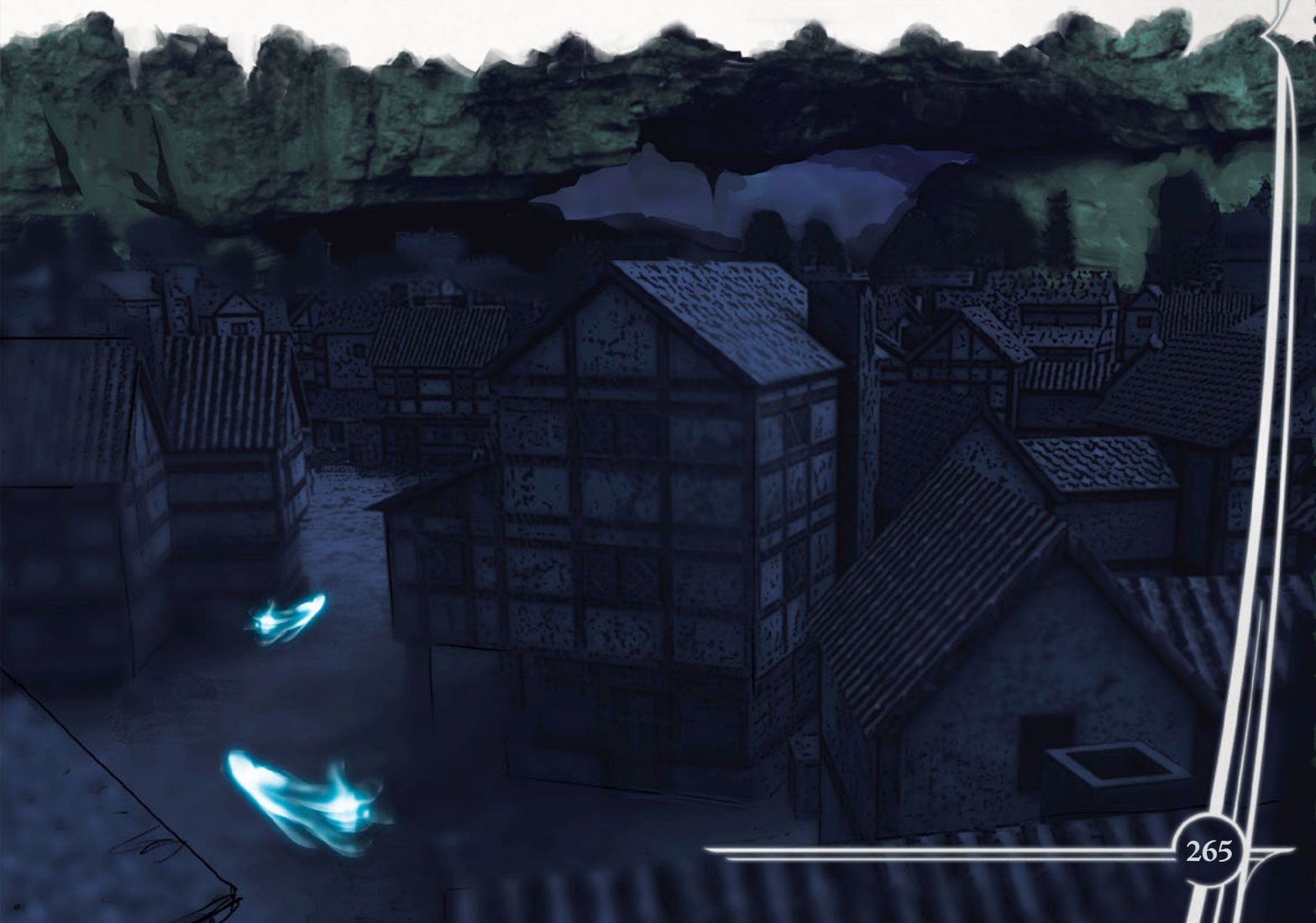
The Grave Exchange is haunted by silent ghosts that do no harm to anyone who stays quiet. These same tortured souls fly into a rage in response to shouting or even loud conversations. Little is known about the cataclysm that created the ghosts, but many are convinced aboleths were somehow involved: besides loud noises, the presence of aboleths also triggers the ghosts' hostility.

Friends & Foes

1. Renata Kneebreaker, a **gladiator** and current leader of the Grave Exchange
2. 2d4 deep gnome **thugs**
3. Jepson Tavil, a non-binary half-shadow elf **assassin** who runs the Grievous Wound, a tavern known for its mercenary job board
4. 3 or 4 **ghosts** that attack loud creatures

Adventures

- Adventurers with flexible morals might seek to make some coin or buy stolen goods in the Grave Exchange.
- "I've been on the trail of an infamous art thief, and I believe she's taken refuge in the Grave Exchange. I need you to lure her out under the pretense of organizing a lucrative heist. Once you bring her to the surface, deliver her to me, ALIVE."
- "A book containing rituals to summon creatures from beyond our plane is going up for auction at the Grave Exchange. Steal the book before it falls into the hands of someone dangerous."



Grizailura, the Geode City

Grizailura is a city built inside a geode of **psychic crystals**. Over the centuries, the crystalline structure has formed a protective barrier around the city. A council of mysterious Elders rule Grizailura, making decisions in conjunction with the geode's sentient core. Rumor has it that one of the Elders has imposed their will on the geode and is using its psychic abilities to hoodwink the other Elders for personal gain.

Friends & Foes

- 1d4 crystal constructs (transparent, crystalline **clay guardians** or **walking statues**)
- Rodrigo Clearstone, an insincere **spy** working for the Elders
- Omar Kell, a conspiracy theorist and doom-sayer **commoner** whose "prophecies" are equal parts fact and fiction
- Crystal-bound Elder **mage** with 1d8 **thugs**

Adventures

- If the characters have encountered psychic crystals before, they might visit Grizailura in order to understand them better.
- "I saw my father murdered by one of the crystal soldiers, but the only one who believes me is that mad preacher, Omar. I hope to spark a proper resistance against the Elders. Find evidence of the darker side of Grizailura so I can convince my neighbors that our crystal paradise might be a prison."
- "The Elders have taken note of your abilities and are impressed. A thief absconded with the crystals we use to make our service constructs. You will be rewarded if you bring him back alive so he can face proper Grizailuran justice."

The Hive

A colony of **khalkoi**—a species of wasp-like aberrations that feed on cosmic energy—have settled in a complex of caverns lined with **psychic crystals**. While the origins of most psychic crystal deposits are unknown, the **khalkoi** chose these caverns knowing them to be the site of a celestial entity's birth.

The Hive now acts as a base of operations for an impending **khalkoi** invasion. Using the enhanced power of the psionic crystals, the wasps are able to project their minds across the entire Material Plane in search of religious communities to infiltrate. The **khalkoi** are currently in the process of implanting their eggs into the leaders of these communities, infecting them with a powerful urge to visit a "cavern filled with crystals."

Friends & Foes

- 1d4 **khalkoi** (*Monstrous Menagerie*) guarding the internal hive
- 1 **swarm of khalkos spawn**
- A colony of 2d12 **flumphs** who live at the edge of the Hive, absorbing its residual psychic energy and eavesdropping on telepathic conversations
- 1 **cult fanatic** infected with **khalkos brain larvae**, leading 2d4 **cultists**

Adventures

- A character infected with the brain larvae disease might experience visions of a city of crystalline towers ruled by divine priests.
- "The local priest was spouting some nonsense about an underground utopia built by the gods. We found his headless body near the mines. We thought that was the end, but some of the more devout townsfolk entered the mines to find the city from the priest's visions. Can you follow them and get to the bottom of this madness?"
- "There's a colony of flumphs I check in on from time to time. Their numbers seem to be dwindling. When I asked about it, they turned a deep purple that I can only assume means fear. Can you explore the area and find out what might be lurking nearby?"

The Obsidian Institute

Hidden in the lowest depths of Underland is a complex of buildings known as the Obsidian Institute, an elite academy of assassins operated by shadow elves. The existence of the school is something of a legend on the surface world, with rumors of a secret underground training facility proliferating in times of political unrest. Denizens of Underland acknowledge the school's existence

as a fact, though few know its name, much less its location. Spies working for the Obsidian Institute secretly operate in criminal organizations the world over, negotiating lucrative contracts and scouting for promising talent.

Powerful illusion magic conceals the Obsidian Institute, such that it is nearly impossible for those seeking the academy to find it. However, this does not prevent the occasional wanderer from stumbling across it by accident. The Institute maintains a strict zero-tolerance policy for such intruders and directs its faculty and students to kill on sight, though typically only mid-to-high ranking officials (and particularly ambitious students) follow this directive to the letter. While the Institute's culture is cutthroat, few of its members are outright sadistic. Torture is explicitly forbidden on the campus, though electives on the subject are offered occasionally, in case a future client makes such a grisly request.

Friends & Foes

1. 1d4 novice shadow elf assassins (**spies**)
2. Zurza, deep gnome groundskeeper (**commoner**)
3. 1d4 deadly professors (**assassins** or **master assassins**)
4. Dean Imogen Thaja (**archmage** or **master assassin**)

Adventures

- Many members of the Institute's faculty cultivated notorious reputations before returning to their alma mater. Adventurers might seek to bring justice to one such assassin for deeds committed before their retirement from the deadly profession.
- "I have reason to believe that the man who killed my father works for the Obsidian Institute. Go there and locate an assassin known as the Whisper Knight. When you do, find out who hired him to kill my father."
- "Your arrival at the Institute is auspicious, as we have a problem that could use an outside approach. It appears someone on our campus is targeting faculty members. Everyone at the school is a suspect, faculty and students alike. Root out the traitor and you will be rewarded handsomely."

Frossnor, the Ice Prison

Beneath the arctic wastes lies a seemingly endless complex of caverns containing lost civilizations, frost giant graveyards, and—according to one legend—a prison for the most notorious villains in the multiverse. If this legend is to be believed, Frossnor the Ice Prison boasts an unparalleled collection of necromancers, cult leaders, and tyrants, all held literally frozen in time.

Frossnor is operated by an ancient fey creature named Klaus. Granted the position of warden as punishment for crimes of his own, Klaus is forbidden from leaving Frossnor and must ensure that none of its residents break free from their cells of enchanted ice. After untold centuries patrolling the prison's frozen halls, Klaus has been driven mad by loneliness. When he receives visitors—whether they escort a new prisoner or are simply unassuming travelers who stumble upon Frossnor's gate—Klaus employs mischievous schemes to delay the departure of his new friends.

Friends & Foes

1. Klaus, warden of Frossnor (**frost giant** or **winter hag**) with 1d4 shadow elf **berserkers**
2. 2d4 snowmen guards (**scarecrows** or **snowmen**) with 2 chained **yetis**
3. Reina Song, a **vampire** or **elder vampire** queen imprisoned for attempting to destroy the sun
4. Isaak Mortav, a **lich** imprisoned for a failed coup against the god of death

Adventures

- A prisoner of Frossnor might have a history with a villain the adventuring party now faces. If the party can convince Klaus to unfreeze the prisoner, however temporarily, they could provide information otherwise unavailable.
- After defeating a major villain, the party visits Frossnor to ensure that evil of that kind never rises again.
- The adventurers' adversaries might invade Frossnor to free a villainous overlord.

The Sanctuary

A secret druidic community of deep gnomes created the Sanctuary as a safe haven for the flora and fauna that call Underland home. For many of its inhabitants, the Sanctuary is one of few places where they can avoid the eye of greedy hunters looking for an exotic trophy. The caretakers of the Sanctuary utilize their affinity for illusion magic to hide the location from such hunters and are highly distrustful of visitors who stumble upon the Sanctuary by chance.

Those who do find the Sanctuary are brought before its leader, Teyrla Bovher. If Teyrla believes an intruder's presence poses a threat to the druids or the creatures in their care, she demands they leave immediately, resorting to violence if necessary. Should Teyrla determine that the intentions of the visitors are just, however, she welcomes them as honored guests.

Friends & Foes

1. Teyrla Bovher (**guardian naga** in deep gnome form) with 1d4 deep gnome **druids**
2. 1d4 deep gnome **druids** riding **purple worm**
3. **werebear** with 1d6 **cave bears**
4. 1 or 2 **mutant rust monsters** (DDG)

Adventures

- An adventurer needs the tooth, claw, or poison sac of a creature native to Underland for some magical or alchemical purpose.
- "A sapphire mine has uncovered a deposit of psionic crystals, but a colony of flumphs has overrun the site. Use this psychic perfume to lure the flumphs to the Sanctuary."
- "A group of rust monsters escaped from the Sanctuary and are tearing up the infrastructure of a nearby village of deep dwarves. Be wary of the dwarves: they've been hostile in the past, and I think they might be cultists of some kind."

Midnight Sea

Not every river flows into a sunlit ocean. Some pour into caverns, carve out endless tunnels, and finally drain into a dark and silent sea.

Like other bodies of water, the Midnight Sea is dotted with settlements along its shores. Galleys carry ore from deep dwarf holdings to the cities of shadow elves. Mycelial merchants ply the shipping lanes selling magic and secrets to kingdoms of subterranean merrow. And beneath the waves lurk aboleths and their thralls, preying on all who pass above them.

With no stars visible overhead, sailors navigate by the constellations of lights that twinkle beneath the black water and give the Midnight Sea its name. These "stars" are shining aboleth cities: domes of breathable water that contain the remnants of the aboleths' prehistoric empire. When an aboleth captures a ship, it examines the sailors one by one to see if any are worthy to serve in its underwater city.

Friends & Foes

1. 1d4 **merrow** with 2d10 **merfolk**
2. 4d6 **thugs** aboard a galley armed with 2 ballistas
3. **aboleth fallen ascendant** (DDG)
4. **aboleth champion** (DDG) with 6 **aboleth thralls** aboard a **submarine** (chapter 1)

Adventures

- An ally must be rescued from an aboleth city.
- A pirate is making a name for themselves on the Midnight Sea. The pirate's description matches that of one of the adventurers.
- "I'm looking for a crew. The azer treasure fleet is due to sail across the Midnight Sea in a month's time. Everyone will be out looking to capture the fleet and make their fortune—but only I know its planned route."

Travelers' Tales

While traversing the strange world of Underland, explorers may hear stories of even more mysterious destinations. Details and directions to these far-flung Underland locations are scarce, and in fact they may exist only in rumor.

The Jagged Maw

The Jagged Maw is a lattice of webs, cables, and rope bridges suspended from the stalactites of a miles-wide cavern. Always a haven for raiders and predators, the syndicate that now controls the Maw has grown increasingly violent, hanging victims from the rafters or dropping them onto the stalagmites below, where the fins of stone sharks circle lazily through the rocky floor.

Shadowfeather's Land of Destiny

Strains of discordant music echo through caverns miles away from this sinister amusement park. The Land of Destiny offers variations of the rides and

games common to such places, but many of its attractions also deal with tempting fate or reversing one's destiny. Few who pay the hefty entrance fee leave the park unchanged.

Lydia Shadowfeather, a retired bounty-hunter and self-proclaimed witch, operates the park. Some of the park's employees are monsters Lydia was once hired to hunt down and kill. Whether these employees are grateful friends or disgruntled prisoners, few can say for certain.

Lake of Lost Time

Many travelers spend their lives searching for this underground lake, which is widely mischaracterized as a fountain of youth. While the lake's waters do possess strange time-distorting properties, they are just as likely to prematurely age visitors as to restore youth. The lake is populated by immortal, mischievous naiads who seek to lure visitors to their deaths in the lake.



Appendix A: 5E Races

This appendix presents Fifth Edition races corresponding to the six *Advanced 5E* heritages in chapter 1 of this book (doppelgangers, motleys, mycelials, oozefolk, ratlings, and rockborn). To make a 5E character, instead of choosing an A5E heritage and culture from chapter 1, choose a race from this appendix and gain an ability score increase as noted below. You may also choose a background from the ones in chapter 1 or any other 5E source.

Full descriptions of each race, including appearance and heritage, can be found in chapter 1.

Ability Score Increases

When using a 5E race from this appendix, increase one ability score by 2 and a different ability score by 1, or increase three ability scores by 1 each. You can't raise an ability score above 20.

Languages

Your character can speak, read, write, and sign two languages of your choice: Common and one other.

Creature Type

Unless otherwise specified, your creature type is humanoid.

Gifts

Each race offers a gift. This gift is a choice between two or more racial traits. Each gift is described in the race's entry.

Doppelganger

With no facial features except pupil-less white eyes and a slash of a mouth, doppelgangers strike onlookers as uncanny in their blankness. However, doppelgangers are rarely seen in their true form. Doppelgangers are shapechangers who can adopt the appearance of other humanoids.

Doppelganger Traits

Characters with the doppelganger race share the following traits:

Age. Doppelgangers age much as humans do, typically living a century or less. Their apparent age is a matter of choice.

Size. In their true form, doppelgangers can stand anywhere from 3 to 6 feet tall, but they can adopt the size and build of any Small or Medium humanoid. Your true size is Small or Medium.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Shapeshifter. As an action, you can change your form and your voice to that of any Small or Medium humanoid creature you have seen before, or back into your true form. Your clothing and equipment are not transformed. You revert to your true form if you die.

Telepathy. You can speak telepathically to any creature within 30 feet of you that you can see. The creature understands you only if the two of you share a language. You can speak telepathically in this way to one creature at a time.

Doppelganger Gifts

Doppelgangers are keen observers, with eyes that are able to see into the minds of others. In addition to the traits found in your doppelganger race, select one of the following gifts.

Mindsight

Your deceptions and manipulations are aided by your eerie ability to understand what people are thinking. Choose either Deception or Insight. You are proficient in this skill, and your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses the chosen proficiency.

Telepathy

You can speak telepathically to any creature within 30 feet of you that you can see. The creature understands you only if the two of you share a language. You can speak telepathically in this way to one creature at a time.

Motley

While every motley has a head, two legs, and a pair of arms, that is where their similarities end. At least one of a motley's arms always ends in a humanoid hand, but their other limbs are those of different creatures—a gazelle's leg, a bear's forearm, and the like. Likewise, their faces are a patchwork of flesh taken from various beasts. Given a motley's startling appearance, other people are usually shocked when a motley utters words instead of chittering or growling.

Motley Traits

Characters with the motley race share the following traits:

Age. Natural-born motleys mature quickly. After 7 to 10 years, they reach adulthood and choose a name unique to them. Some are said to live for centuries before dying of old age, but on average a motley's lifespan is around 200 years.

Size. You are between 5 and 7 feet tall and weigh anywhere from 150 to 250 pounds. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Motley Senses. You are proficient in Perception, and your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses Perception.

Natural Weapon. You gain a natural weapon, such as claws, horns, or teeth. Choose slashing, piercing, or bludgeoning damage. Your unarmed strikes deal 1d6 + Strength modifier damage of that type.

Motley Gifts

Despite your ungainly appearance, one of your animal features gives you a beast's grace. Select one of the options below.

Long Arms

During your turn, your reach with melee weapons is 5 feet greater than normal.

Long Legs

Your walking speed increases to 40 feet. In addition, you gain advantage on saving throws made to resist being knocked prone.

Prehensile Tail

You have a tail that grants you an expertise die on checks made to balance, climb, or make Sleight of Hand checks. Your tail can carry objects weighing up to 5 pounds, but it can't wield a weapon or use a shield. In addition, you gain advantage on saving throws to avoid falling.

Mycelial

Mycelials are a small, curious fungus-folk, resembling capped mushrooms with thick legs and dark, pupiless eyes. They eat rock and ore, breaking minerals down with powerful natural acids and collecting hard, inedible crystals and gemstones for trade. They speak in reedy whispers by pushing air through their gills, allowing them to sing beautiful, quiet songs.

Mycelial Traits

Characters with the mycelial race share the following traits:

Age. Mycelials grow from spores and mature quickly. In mycelial communities, a sporeling is considered an adult by the age of 3. They usually live about 30 years, although mycelials who form bonds with longer-lived creatures have been known to live as long as the creatures they're bonded with.

Size. Mycelial bodies are diverse, ranging from squat to slender. They stand between 2 and 5 feet tall and are dense for their size, weighing 60 pounds on average. Your size is Small.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Plant. You are a plant in addition to a humanoid. So long as rocks and soil are available, you can sustain yourself without other sources of food, although you still require water.

Soft Bodied. You can squeeze or contort through spaces as if you were one size category smaller than you are.

Spore Cloud. Mycelials naturally produce poisonous spores, which they can use to attack or defend themselves.

You can use a bonus action to release a puff of poisonous spores in a 5-foot-radius area centered on you. The spores lightly obscure the area and linger in air or water for 1 minute or until dispersed by a strong wind or current. Non-plant creatures that enter the area for the first time on a turn or start their turn there must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failure, the creature takes 1d6 poison damage and is poisoned until the end of its next turn. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Constitution modifier. The poison damage increases to 2d6 at 4th level, 3d6 at 9th level, 4d6 at 14th level, and 5d6 at 19th level.

Once a creature has been affected by the spores, it is immune to this effect for 24 hours. You can use this trait a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Mycelial Gifts

Mycelials' fungus biology and underground adaptations offer a diversity of talents. Choose one of the following gifts.

Adaptability

You can change your body to survive various environments. You gain resistance to poison damage. In addition, whenever you finish a long rest, you can choose one of the following forms:

- **Amphibious.** You can breathe underwater and gain a swim speed equal to your walking speed.
- **Arboreal.** You gain a climb speed equal to your walking speed. When you fall, you can use your reaction to float gently to the ground, taking no damage from the fall.
- **Cold Adapted.** You gain resistance to cold damage.
- **Heat Adapted.** You gain resistance to fire damage.

You remain in your new form until you use this ability again. You can benefit from only one form at a time.

Overactive Enzymes

You can release a splash of digestive enzymes to harm your foes. You know the *acid splash* cantrip, which you can cast without components. Your spellcasting ability for this cantrip is your choice of Charisma, Constitution, Intelligence, or Wisdom.

You can also use your digestive enzymes to dig. You have a burrowing speed of 10 feet and can move through nonmagical earth and stone, but not solid rock. You don't leave a tunnel behind unless you spend time and effort to shore up the tunnel, reducing your burrow speed to 5 feet every 15 minutes.

Oozefolk

When natural processes or bizarre, arcane energies grant a puddle of blood and ichor the spark of life, the puddle evolves into an ooze. Sometimes, the resulting ooze even awakens into sentience, becoming something stranger still: an oozefolk.

Oozefolk Traits

Characters with the oozefolk race share the following traits:

Age. An oozefolk's alien mind develops rapidly, soaking up knowledge like a sponge and reaching maturity in only half a year. However, the consciousness that holds together their slimy body can sustain the effort only so long. The oldest known oozefolk lived for 50 years, but most die after only a few decades.

Size. Your height and weight are determined by your first Hit Die. If your first Hit Die is a d6 or a d8, you stand between 2 and 3 feet tall, weigh anywhere from 70 to 130 pounds, and are Small. Otherwise, you are between 4 and 7 feet tall, weigh 200 to 500 pounds, and are Medium.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Immutable Form. You have advantage on saving throws against effects that would alter your form.

Telepathy. You can speak telepathically to any creature within 30 feet of you that you can see. The creature understands you only if the two of you share a language. You can speak telepathically in this way to one creature at a time.



Oozefolk Gifts

The nature of their creation gives oozefolk a variety of strange qualities that differ from one oozefolk to another. Choose two of the following:

Amorphous Body

While you are unarmored and not carrying any items, you can pass through an opening as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Jelly-Faced

You gain advantage on Deception checks.

Psychic Resistance

You have resistance to psychic damage. Additionally, you gain proficiency with Intelligence saving throws.

Ratling

Ratlings are intelligent, rodent-like humanoids with gray, black, brown, or white fur and naked pink tails. They walk upright and from a distance could even be mistaken for halflings—if one overlooks their narrow snouts, long whiskers, and sharp, protruding teeth.

Ratling Traits

Characters with the ratling race share the following traits:

Age. Descended relatively recently from a short-lived species, ratlings live quickly and with gusto. They mature to adulthood around age 14 and can live as long as 60 years.

Size. Ratlings average around 3 feet tall and weigh between 40 and 60 pounds. Your size is Small.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You cannot discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Keen Smell. You have advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on smell.

Poison Tolerance. You are immune to ingested poison.

Ratling Gifts

Ratlings are known for traveling in hungry packs. In addition to the traits found in your ratling race, select one of the following gifts.

Bottomless Appetite

Your appetite is insatiable. Although you enjoy fine cuisine as much as anyone else, you can also eat foods that others can't stomach. Even when you're at death's door, food restores your strength and vitality. If you have sufficient food for one day, you can eat it as an action. When you do so, you gain temporary hit points equal to twice your proficiency bonus. You can use this trait a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Strength in Numbers

Once on your turn, you can reroll an attack roll you make against a target within 30 feet if another creature has made a melee attack against the same target since the end of your last turn. You can use this trait a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus. You regain any expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Rockborn

Those unfamiliar with rockborn believe they are nothing more than quirky earth elementals. While motionless, they are sometimes mistaken for statues, or perhaps the remains of an adventurer petrified long ago. Some believe that rockborn formed at the center of the earth at the dawn of time; at the very least, they have been around long enough to witness the rise and fall of untold empires.

Rockborn Traits

Characters with the rockborn race share the following traits:

Age. Physically, rockborn are fully formed from their first moment of consciousness. However, rockborn children may take a century or more to fully mature. Some say that rockborn are immortal, but in truth most live only 1,000 years before they crumble and return to the earth from which they sprang.

Size. Rockborn are between 4 and 6 feet tall and weigh anywhere from 200 to 800 pounds. Your size is Medium.

Speed. Your walking speed is 30 feet.

Darkvision. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

Rock. As a being made from stone, you are immune to the petrified condition.

Roll. You can use a bonus action to curl into a boulder, or an action to uncurl. While in boulder form your walking speed is reduced to 0, and you cannot use a shield, make attacks, use your arms, or cast spells with somatic components.

While in boulder form you can use an action to roll yourself in a straight line up to 30 feet, or 60 feet down a decline. While rolling you can attempt to enter the spaces of creatures up to one size larger than you, forcing each to make a Dexterity saving throw. The DC for this save is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your choice of your Strength or Dexterity modifier. On a failure, a creature or object takes bludgeoning damage equal to 1d4 + your Strength modifier. If a creature succeeds on its saving throw, you do not enter its space and your movement stops.

Rockborn Gifts

Every rockborn's connection to the rock is different, granting them a particular talent or defense that sets them apart from less earthly mortals. Choose one of the following.

Rockcamouflage

You are proficient in Stealth. You gain advantage on Stealth checks made to hide in rocky environments. Your companions also gain this advantage, provided you can see them and they are within 30 feet of you.

Stone Armaments

Stone speaks to you in a way that's hard to describe. If you have advantage on an attack roll made using a stone weapon, you deal extra damage equal to your proficiency bonus.

Appendix B: Conditions

Blinded

- A blinded creature can't see and it automatically fails ability checks that require sight.
- Attack rolls against a blinded creature are made with advantage, and the creature's attack rolls are made with disadvantage.

Bloodied

- A creature is bloodied when reduced to half its hit points or less.

Charmed

- A charmed creature can't take any hostile action against the charmer.
- Ability checks the charmer makes to socially interact with the charmed creature have advantage.

Confused

- A confused creature can't take reactions.
- On its turn a confused creature rolls a d8 to determine what it does.
 - ♦ On a 1 to 4, a confused creature does nothing.
 - ♦ On a 5 or 6, a confused creature takes no action or bonus action and uses all its movement to move in a randomly determined direction.
 - ♦ On a 7 or 8, a confused creature makes a melee attack against a randomly determined creature within its reach or does nothing if it can't make such an attack.

Deafened

- A deafened creature can't hear and automatically fails ability checks that require hearing.

Doomed

- A doomed creature dies at a time determined by the Narrator, or within 13 (2d12) hours.
- A doomed creature continues to be doomed even after it dies. Magic equivalent to a 7th-level or higher spell can remove the doomed condition (such as *regenerate* cast on a living creature, *resurrection*, *true resurrection*, or *wish*).

Encumbered

- An encumbered creature's Speed is reduced to 5 feet.

Frightened

- A frightened creature has disadvantage on ability checks and attack rolls while it is able to see the source of its fear.
- A frightened creature can't willingly move closer to the source of its fear.



Grappled

- A grappled creature's Speed becomes 0, and it can't benefit from bonuses to movement speeds.
- If the grappler becomes incapacitated the condition ends.
- If an effect removes the grappled creature from the reach of the grappler or grappling effect (such as when a creature is shoved away by the Doubleteam combat maneuver) the condition ends.

Incapacitated

- An incapacitated creature can't take actions, bonus actions, or reactions.

Invisible

- An invisible creature is impossible to see without the aid of magic or a special sense (it gains no benefits from this condition against creatures still able to see it).
- An invisible creature is heavily obscured for the purpose of hiding.
- An invisible creature's location can be detected by noises it makes or tracks it leaves.
- Attack rolls against an invisible creature are made with disadvantage.
- An invisible creature makes attack rolls with advantage.

Paralyzed

- A paralyzed creature is incapacitated and can't move or speak.
- A paralyzed creature automatically fails Strength and Dexterity saving throws.
- Attack rolls against a paralyzed creature have advantage.
- Any attack that hits a paralyzed creature is a critical hit if the attacker is within 5 feet.

Petrified

- A petrified creature (and all of its mundane possessions) is transformed into a solid inanimate substance (usually stone).
- A petrified creature's weight is increased by a factor of ten and it ceases aging.
- A petrified creature is incapacitated, can't move or speak, and is unaware of its surroundings.
- A petrified creature automatically fails Strength and Dexterity saving throws.
- A petrified creature has resistance to all damage.
- A petrified creature is immune to poison and disease (time spent petrified does not affect the duration of a poison or disease already in its system).

Poisoned

- A poisoned creature has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks.

Prone

- A prone creature's only movement option is to crawl (every 1 foot of movement while crawling costs 1 extra foot) until it stands up.
- Standing up requires half a creature's movement.
- A prone creature makes melee attack rolls with disadvantage.
- An attack roll against a prone creature is made with advantage if the attacker is within 5 feet. Otherwise, the attack roll is made with disadvantage.

Rattled

- A rattled creature cannot benefit from expertise dice.
- A rattled creature cannot take reactions.
- A creature that is immune to being stunned is immune to being rattled.

Restrained

- A restrained creature's speed becomes 0, and it can't benefit from bonuses to Speed.
- Attack rolls against a restrained creature are made with advantage.
- A restrained creature makes attacks rolls with disadvantage.
- The restrained creature has disadvantage on Dexterity saving throws.

Slowed

- A slowed creature's Speed is halved.
- A slowed creature takes a -2 penalty to AC and Dexterity saving throws.
- A slowed creature cannot take reactions.
- On its turn, a slowed creature can take either an action or a bonus action, not both. In addition, it can't make more than one melee or ranged attack during its turn.

Stunned

- A stunned creature is incapacitated (see the condition), can't move, and can speak only falteringly.
- The creature automatically fails Strength and Dexterity saving throws.
- Attack rolls against the creature have advantage.
- A creature that is immune to being stunned is immune to being rattled.

Unconscious

- An unconscious creature is incapacitated, can't move or speak, and is unaware of its surroundings.
- An unconscious creature drops whatever it's holding and falls prone.
- An unconscious creature automatically fails Strength and Dexterity saving throws.
- Attack rolls against an unconscious creature are made with advantage.
- Any attack that hits an unconscious creature is a critical hit if the attacker is within 5 feet.

Tracked Conditions

Various challenges, obstacles, and magics can lead to either fatigue or strife. An effect can give a creature one or more levels of fatigue or strife (detailed in the effect's description).

If a creature suffering from fatigue or strife fails to resist another effect that causes a level of the tracked condition, its current level increases by the amount specified in the effect's description.

A creature suffers the effect of its current level in a tracked condition as well as all lower levels. For example, a creature suffering level 3 fatigue has its speed halved, it cannot Sprint, and it makes Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution checks with disadvantage.

An effect that removes a tracked condition reduces its level as specified in the effect's description, with all tracked condition effects ending when a creature's condition level is reduced below 1.

Finishing a long rest at a safe haven reduces a creature's fatigue and strife levels by 1, provided that the creature has also had Supply to get the most from its rest. A creature does not require a haven to recover from the first level of fatigue or strife, but does still require a long rest. Also, being raised from the dead reduces all of a creature's tracked conditions by 1.

Fatigue

The ranger finally reached the walled town, and staggered through the gates. The villagers gasped at the sight, for she was clearly starving, covered in dozens of minor wounds, and on the edge of collapse. Friendly hands reached out to offer her food and rest.

Keeping a breakneck pace while journeying, feats of great athleticism, and fell magics that sap away life force can wear down upon the body and cause fatigue. Fatigue represents exhaustion, exposure, hunger, injuries, and other physical factors which gradually wear a creature down. A creature which reaches the 7th level of the fatigue track becomes doomed and dies.

Strife and Mental Stress Effects

When a creature suffers its fifth level of strife it gains a short-term mental stress effect, and when it suffers its seventh level of strife it gains a long-term mental stress effect.

Strife

The halflings pushed on, the archlich Azkaroth's presence diminishing their spirits as they trudged across the desolate landscape towards the dark lord's lair. Each of them could feel the lich's will tugging at their minds, and it took every ounce of courage they had to put one foot in front of the other.

Intense study of potent arcana, truly rigorous intellectual challenges, and psychically demanding magics can increase one's strife. Strife represents corruption, despair, fear, loss of resolve, and other mental factors which gradually undo a creature's very soul. A creature which reaches the 7th level of the strife track suffers a special, permanent effect, which is either randomly selected or decided by the Narrator. This might involve the creature shutting down completely, or being impacted in such a way that it is forever changed.

Mental Stress Effects

Adventurers encounter and even seek out experiences beyond the ken of most mortals. Whether it's harrowing encounters with interdimensional beings, the sudden, violent loss of a beloved NPC, or simply the trauma of constantly being surrounded by death and terror, their lows can be as dramatic and potentially impactful as their highs.

The rigors of adventuring are not always physical, and players may decide that their experiences have had a lasting effect on their character's psyche. It's important to consider mental stress effects in

TABLE: FATIGUE

LEVEL	EFFECTS
1	Cannot Sprint
2	Disadvantage on Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution checks
3	Speed halved and unable to maintain a fast travel pace
4	Disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws using Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution, and unable to maintain a normal travel pace
5	Hit Dice halved
6	Speed reduced to 5 ft. and unable to maintain a slow travel pace
7	Doomed

conjunction with safety rules (see Chapter 1: Gamemastery Troubleshooting, in *Trials & Treasures*) and their potential impact on the game. When a group or the Narrator decides that gamifying mental stress and morale isn't right for the campaign, respectful roleplay is a viable alternative to these mechanics.

Mental Stress Effects

The Narrator may decide that a particular encounter that goes badly can leave a lasting impact on adventurers. Alternatively, if these options are discussed during character creation a player may decide that an event in their past provides sufficient mental stress to bring about a change in their character. These effects provide options for short- and long-term repercussions. A creature may only have one mental stress effect at a time. A long-term effect overrides a short-term effect, and if two effects are of equal strength, the most recent effect replaces the older effect.

A mental stress effect is usually best chosen based on the encounter that causes it and an adventurer's personality, but may be randomly determined using the mental stress effect tables.

TABLE: STRIFE

LEVEL	EFFECTS
1	Disadvantage on Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma checks
2	Disadvantage on concentration checks
3	Can only take a bonus action or action each turn (not both)
4	Disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws using Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma
5	Suffer the effects of a randomly determined short-term mental stress effect.
6	Cannot cast spells (but can cast cantrips)
7	Suffer the effects of a randomly determined long-term mental stress effect.

Short-Term Mental Stress Effects

These conditions are the immediate effects of mental stress after an event or encounter. They last for 1d6 days, but could remain longer based on discussions between the Narrator and player.

Bewildered

A bewildered creature is overwhelmed by trying to process a particular event. Its mind begins to play tricks, altering its perceptions. A bewildered creature has disadvantage on social-based ability checks as it struggles to engage with what's happening. When a bewildered creature would succeed on an ability check, roll another d20. On a result of 15 or less the creature succeeds, but otherwise it fails the ability check instead. This could be caused by a temporary forgetfulness that leads the creature to forget what it was trying to achieve, or in some cases a brief hallucination that alters the circumstances in such a way that it is unable to succeed.

Cowed

A cowed creature cannot shake the idea that they are certain to face defeat, and so flinch and surrender at the first sign of danger. After taking any damage in combat, on its next turn a cowed

creature takes the Dash action and uses all of its movement to escape danger (or if it is unable to move towards safety, the Dodge action). A cowed creature has disadvantage on Intimidation checks and when given any alternative to combat will happily take it, and it has advantage on Persuasion checks made to try and avoid combat.

Distraught

A distraught creature is visibly and deeply shaken by a recent experience, and its apparent distress moves people to do what they can to help. Once per long rest, a distraught creature can choose to gain advantage on a check made to persuade neutral or friendly creatures to aid it, but it has disadvantage on Deception, Performance, and initiative checks.

Enraged

An enraged creature is unable to shake its frustration with an enemy or its own perceived failings after an encounter. An enraged creature has advantage on Strength checks, but has disadvantage on all other ability checks. Whenever an enraged creature fails an ability check, it throws or attempts to break any tools or objects involved in the check.

Flippant

A flippant creature refuses to face the enormity of whatever event befell it. Not only does a flippant creature superficially shrug off the experience, it goes to reckless ends to prove it is 'unaffected' with little regard for itself or allies. A flippant creature has advantage on Dexterity checks, but has disadvantage on Wisdom checks and saving throws.

Musical

A musical creature has temporarily taken leave of social norms after a deep shock or strange encounter. Instead of talking, it now sporadically sings its thoughts and during conversation, giving it disadvantage on Deception, Intimidation, and Stealth checks but advantage on Performance checks.

Obsessed

An obsessed creature cannot stop talking about the ordeal that troubles it. It has disadvantage on Stealth checks as it constantly tells allies that it is reminded of “that time when...” Whenever initiative is rolled, an obsessed creature makes a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or loses 1 round of actions as it wrestles with and exclaims about the similarities to the traumatic encounter in its past.

On Edge

A creature that is on edge is hyperaware of its surroundings and unable to fully relax. An on edge creature has advantage on Perception and initiative checks, but disadvantage on all other ability checks as it is distracted, unable to take its mind off the dangers that could potentially lurk around every corner.

Sleepless

A sleepless creature is unsettled by its encounter and struggles to relax in order to sufficiently rest. Whenever a sleepless creature takes a long rest, it makes a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw to quiet its mind or only gains the benefits of a short rest. During rests where a sleepless creature has failed its Wisdom save, it has advantage on Perception checks made to detect danger.

Terrorized

A terrorized creature is not just fearful of danger but convinced it is already here. A terrorized creature is unable to shake its fear response from its unsettling encounter, unwilling to go within 30 feet of strangers or participate in melee combat without succeeding on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw first (instead taking the Dash action to escape to safety or retreat from a sudden noise). A terrorized creature has advantage on Perception checks and any Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution checks made to escape combat or danger, but it will sleep only in places with reasonable security precautions.

Long-Term Mental Stress Effects

These effects denote a more permanent impact made by the mental stress of traumatic encounters.

Covetous

A covetous creature is gripped by a fear of losing in any sense and it begins to desire what is owned by others, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, feeling deprived by that which they do not have. A covetous creature has advantage on Sleight of Hand checks, but disadvantage on Wisdom saving throws and Deception checks related to things it has taken.

Distorted Perceptions

A creature with distorted perceptions has been shaken to its core, and perhaps had its mind jolted by interdimensional travel. Whenever a creature with distorted perceptions rolls a Perception check with a result equal to or less than its passive Perception, small details of the world begin to warp—a swaying tree becomes a dancing shadowy figure, a coil of rope becomes a deadly snake coiled to attack, and its allies may temporarily wear the face of an enemy. These distorted perceptions are brief but absolutely real to the creature.

Discussion between the Narrator and the player of an adventurer with distorted perceptions can determine what kind of hallucinations they're most likely to have and how far they'd like to take it.

Hopeless

A hopeless creature has completely lost faith in its purpose and finds it difficult to be motivated. A hopeless creature has advantage on Persuasion checks that involve convincing someone not to take a certain course of action, arguing the pointlessness of it all, but it has disadvantage on initiative checks.

Inimical

When an inimical creature is bloodied, on its next turn it takes the Attack action against the nearest creature to it. The inimical creature has disadvantage on these attacks as it flails without control. In addition, an inimical creature has disadvantage on checks and saving throws made against being grappled or restrained.

Memory Wipe

A creature with a memory wipe becomes forgetful in the extreme after its encounter, perhaps not remembering the event at all. A memory wiped creature has disadvantage on Arcana, Culture, History, Nature, and Religion checks, and any other knowledge-based check as its capacity to easily recall information is profoundly affected.

Murderous

A murderous creature no longer sees shades of gray when it comes to even the gentlest disagreement or conflict. At the first sign of conflict, whether that be disagreement within the party or a suspicious looking stranger, a murderous creature sees red, attacking first and asking questions later. Dazed by their recklessness, a murderous creature has disadvantage on initiative checks, but advantage on its first attack roll on each of its turns while in such a state. This state lasts for a maximum of 5 rounds, but can be ended earlier by a *calm emotions* spell or DC 18 Persuasion check.

Peacekeeping

A peacekeeping creature wants no more violence and on each of its turns uses all of its actions to prevent or subdue combat by every nonviolent method at its disposal, continuing this course of action until it or an ally are bloodied. A peacekeeping creature has disadvantage on initiative checks but advantage on its first ability check made to try and end a combat.

Phobia

A traumatic encounter leads a creature to have a long-term, debilitating fear of some element of the encounter. For example, narrowly escaping a burning building may leave a creature with a phobia of fire. When encountering the subject of its phobia, a creature makes a DC 18 Wisdom saving throw. On a success the creature can act normally, but on a failure it is frightened for 1 minute (at the Narrator's discretion, depending on the situation it may be incapacitated instead). At the end of each of its turns, the creature repeats the saving throw, able to act normally on a success.

Superstitious

A creature comes to believe it has survived its traumatic encounter thanks only to the presence of a lucky charm. This charm can be anything it had on its person at the time of the event. The superstitious creature has disadvantage on attack rolls and saving throws whenever it is more than 30 feet away from its charm, except for Investigation or Perception checks to find the charm again (which are made with advantage).

Suspicious

A suspicious creature has lost faith in the goodness of the people and circumstances around it. A suspicious creature has advantage on Sleight of Hand checks, and Perception checks to detect hidden foes, but it has disadvantage on Insight checks as it is unable to objectively interpret intentions.

Indefinite Mental Stress

It may be that a creature encounters a situation that inflicts indefinite effects on its psyche. In this case it may have one or more of any of the above mental stress effects, with no time limits imposed. The Narrator should decide which effects and how many. A creature can only suffer from multiple mental stress effects if one or more are indefinite mental stress effects.

Saving Throws

Saving throws can be used to determine how a creature handles the mental stress of a particular encounter. When a creature fails a saving throw by 10 or more or rolls a critical failure on a saving throw, it may acquire a short-term mental stress effect determined by what the save was made for. In a tougher encounter, at the Narrator's discretion a success may mean that a creature is left with a short-term mental stress effect, and on a failure it instead acquires a long-term mental stress effect.

Wisdom or Charisma saving throws are most likely to relate to a creature's mental fortitude, however Intelligence or Constitution may be more applicable based on the encounter.

Spell Effects

Some spells such as *contact other plane* and *symbol* involve potential impacts on the mind of a creature. Rather than using the described spell effects, the Narrator may substitute a short- or long-term mental stress effect.

Relieving Mental Stress Effects

Like physical injuries, the mental impacts of adventuring are not permanent. In a world where even death is not necessarily the end, there are also options to recover from the mental impacts of overwhelming events.

Roleplay

In the same way that danger sometimes passes without combat, conditions that impact an adventurer's psyche (rather than their physical self) can be resolved through effective roleplay. Roleplaying an important resolution for a PC (or even an important NPC) may bring an end to their condition—this might be reuniting with a significant person from their past, finally defeating a sworn enemy, or simply being soothed by the companionship and protection of their allies.

Healing Magic

Short- and long-term mental stress effects can usually be removed with a *greater restoration* spell (although the Narrator may set other conditions) and temporarily relieved by the *calm emotions* spell (until the spell ends).

Other Magic. The obvious restorative properties of healing magic are effective, but powerful illusions or even spells that alter reality have the potential to end mental stress effects.

Personality Changes

A failed saving throw may not lead to a mental stress effect. In some cases after discussion with the group, the Narrator may decide that a particular event leads to a far more fundamental change. The nature of this change and the status of an adventurer's mental stress effect afterward (it may become a long-term mental stress effect, indefinite, change to a short-term mental stress effect, or be removed entirely) are at the Narrator's discretion.



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Appendix E: Compatibility

Level Up: Advanced 5th Edition (A5E) is designed to be fully compatible with the original version of the game. You can use any of your existing (or future) original 5th Edition (O5E) adventures, monsters, spells, characters, and more in *Level Up* right out of the box. This book—as well as the *Adventurer's Guide*, the *Monstrous Menagerie*, and *Trials & Treasures*—replace the O5E core book with

revamped classes and expanded rules, the O5E Narrator's book with new magic items and rewarding exploration rules, and the O5E monster book with more in-depth versions of the same creatures (plus variants and a whole lot more).

However, in some rare cases, you will find some terminology changes. For convenience, these have been listed below.

TABLE: COMPATIBILITY

O5E NAME	A5E NAME
Aasimar	Planetouched
Barbarian	Berserker
Drow	Shadow elf
Duergar	Deep dwarf
Exhaustion	Fatigue
Game Master	Narrator
Golem	Guardian
Half-orc, half-elf	Mixed heritage
Madness	Mental stress effect
Monk	Adept
Oni	Ogre mage
Phylactery	Soulvessel
Paladin	Herald
Race	Heritage
Tiefling	Planetouched

Some spells have also been renamed. O5E spells which contain proper named individuals in the title no longer contain the proper name (sometimes substituting the word “arcane”). The spell name is the same otherwise. This includes the following spells: *acid arrow*, *arcane hand*, *arcane sword*, *black tentacles*, *faithful hound*, *floating disk*, *freezing sphere*, *hideous laughter*, *instant summons*, *irresistible dance*, *magic aura*, *magnificent mansion*, *private sanctum*, *resilient sphere*, *secret chest*, *tiny hut*, *telepathic bond*.

Maneuver DC

Before using an O5E creature in an A5E game, the Narrator should calculate and jot down its Maneuver Defense (8 + proficiency bonus + Dexterity or Strength modifier).

Supply & Magic

In A5E, magic is limited in the amount of useful food and water it can create. Only the following spells in this book create Supply: *create food and water*, *create or destroy water*, *heroes' feast*. Also, *magnificent mansion* can support a number of occupants for its duration. If a spell does not specify that it creates Supply, then any foodstuffs that it creates do not constitute Supply.

Additionally, Supply cannot be stored in extradimensional spaces.

If you are using O5E spells, or spells from additional sources, the Narrator will need to determine whether the spell creates Supply. Generally, a spell is able to create a maximum amount of Supply equal to its spell level up to 3rd-level spells, or up to twice its spell level for spells of 4th level or higher. Spells of 8th or 9th level can generally circumvent Supply requirements.

What Isn't Compatible?

While characters in O5E and A5E can be used alongside each other, and are fully compatible as complete entities, their building blocks are slightly different in each game because A5E was designed from the ground up to provide a wide degree of flexibility and customization.

This means that A5E's heritages, cultures, and backgrounds are not individually directly compatible with O5E's races and backgrounds. However, your A5E character can be used in an O5E adventure and vice versa, and you can safely mix and match characters and NPCs from both games.

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Some terms are marked with the following descriptors:

^{ca} class archetype	^f feature	^l location	^t table
^b background	^h heritage	^m material	^{tr} trait
^c culture	ⁱ item	^{mn} monster	^{tp} trap
^{dn} dungeon			

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