Footprints

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Contents

The Staff

% in Lair

Well met, gentlegamers, and welcome to the eighth issue of *Footprints*! Real-life constraints have led this issue to be late in arriving. However, the fact that it arrived at all is a testament to the living, breathing AD&D community. *Footprints*, like all of Dragonsfoot's publications, is a true labor of love, created for no reward greater than the love of the game.

This issue offers up a gamut of useful articles for your game. Len Lakofka provides us with an exploration of variable hit dice for monsters, Joe Maccarone explores the strength values of humanoids in the AD&D game, this Editor attempts to reconcile the damage potential of the illusion/phantasm spells, and a plethora of nasty new monsters hope to make their way to your gaming table.

As always, Footprints wouldn't exist without contributions from dedicated gamers like yourselves. Please, keep them coming! Game well, and let the dice never fail you.

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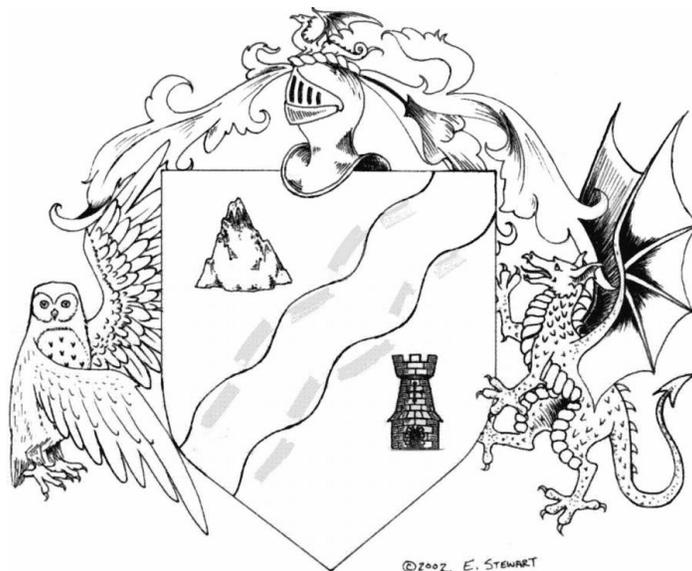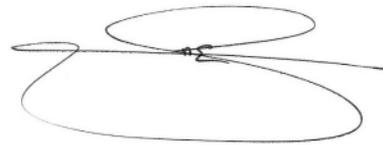
Variable Hit Dice for Monsters and Experience Points for Them

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Every 'monster' has a certain number of hit dice and a number of hit points determined by rolling that number of eight sided dice (and perhaps adding a number if the HD are given in the form x+y). In some few cases, for humanoids mainly, adult males are differentiated from females and from children. However, this concept does not carry over to all monsters.

The door has also been opened to 10 sided, 12 sided and 20 sided dice for the hit dice of demons (see *Eldritch Wizardry* for the earliest example). An especially hardy monster might used 10 sided dice for hit points as well. Further it might be believable if the top leaders in humanoid bands begin using ten sided dice after they go from 1HD or 1+1HD to 3 or more HD or 3+3 or more HD. A DM could most certainly boost HIT POINTS that way but not boost attack potential. That is the monster still attacks at 3+3HD where the size of the die being used is eight or ten sided.

Varying Attacks and Hit Dice: In most cases, where monsters procreate in some way, there must be a point where they change their hit dice and hit points, e.g., a lion cub might start life with one hit die but it rapidly gains a 2nd. At 4-6 months it gains a 3rd, a 4th at one year and full potential of 5+2 HD after two years. In like manner, its attacks must vary as well.

Age	Hit Dice	No. Attacks	Damage
New born	1	1 (bite)	1-4
1-3 months	2	3 (bite/claw/claw)	1/1/1-6
4-6 months	3	3 (bite/claw/claw)	1-2/1-2/1-8
		2 (rear claws)	1-2/1-2
up to l yr	4+1	3 (bite/claw/claw)	1-3/1-3/1-8
		2 (rear claws)	1-4/1-4
over 1 yr	5+2	3 (bite/claw/claw)	1-4/1-4/1-10
		2 (rear claws)	2-7/2-7

Experience must then be awarded based on current hit dice and hit points and not all on the base of 5+2 hit dice.

Grouping Monsters: There is nothing worse than setting up an important monster and watching the party blow it away in one melee round. This occurs for two major common reasons. First, it does not have enough hit points to give it a chance to be a threat. Second, it does not have a companion or allies to help it.

The first problem can be dealt with by guaranteeing a minimum number of hit points per hit die. It is a fact of nature that the weak do not survive. For an adult to mature and have only 1 or 2 hit points per hit dice is very unlikely. When dicing for an adult monster, particularly one that is predatory or magical in nature, it is wise is discount all rolls of 1 or 2 on hit dice for hit points. Further, if it is an important territorial monster who is known to have a history going back years, perhaps even decades, you might want to discount rolls of 1 to 3 or perhaps even 1 to 4!

The second problem requires some design time on your part. Even a solitary monster can have unwilling allies and this does not necessarily mean slaves. It can be warned when a flock of birds take to the air; it can be aided by a pack of wolves nearby, i.e., it is

smart enough to realize that destroying the wolves lessens its chance to survive.

Monsters can have mates as well as children; this makes them considerably tougher. A family is what to place over an especially important hoard. Multiple attackers keep the party from ganging up on a lone monster and killing it quickly. The lesser family members 'soak off' a few party members and give the rest a real challenge!

Of course monsters can have willing allies, slaves, or pets. Most humanoid tribes will have an animal or two to act as guards, thereby greatly increasing the toughness of the group. Men and humanoids, if they are a major enclave in your campaign, should always group monsters together to prevent penetration by a party of adventurers.

Awarding Experience: Experience points are now awarded based upon a basic experience point award, plus possible extra and extraordinary awards and experience points per hit point. You will find that this method has a serious blow for stronger monsters if there is a wide differentiation of hit points. Let's contrast three trolls: 3 trolls (AC 4; MV 12"; HD 6+6, hp 12, 33, 54; #ATT: 3; DM: 5-8/5-8/2-12; SA: Attack up to three opponents per round; SD: regeneration, fearlessness). Following the DMG guidelines, we would award experience as follows: 525+8/hp. Therefore the trolls are worth:

    12 hp   525 + (12 x 8) =   621 xp

    33 hp   525 + (33 x 8) =   789 xp

    54 hp   525 + (54 x 8) =   857 xp

(I might interject that I would award a double for a troll's regeneration and one more for fearlessness but that is a personal preference).

Thus these three opponents would gain a party 621, 789 and 957 experience points, respectively. Is this fair? No, it is not. The 54-point troll has four and half times as many hps as the 12-point troll but the award difference is only one and half times as great.

This can be corrected by merely changing the way in which experience is awarded. Take the sum of the BXPV, SAXPB and EAXPB and divide it by 2. So instead of an award of 525, it becomes 268 points. The remaining 268 points are divided by the maximum potential of the monster in hit points, in this case 54. I would round up, so the result is 5. Now I would award 268 for a troll and then 8+5 points per hit point so that the trolls now are worth:

    12 hp   268 + (12 x 13) =   424 xp

    33 hp   268 + (33 x 13) =   697 xp

    54 hp   268 + (54 x 13) =   970 xp

This arrangement gives more credit for the much tougher 54 hit point troll. The XP/HP awards are just too small for large important monsters to effectively measure their real threat to a party.

The formula above will not work for every monster and you may find it too tough to deal with. Instead you can simply rule that monsters that average 3 or fewer hit points per hit die are worth the normal award. Monsters with 4 to 6 hit points per hit die add another award, while those of 7 to 8 hit points per hit die add two additional awards. These awards are fair and correct because more hit points in a monster make it tougher.

A new calculation of hit points must be based on THREAT TO THE PARTY. If they are loaded with magic items, especially items that negate a monster's major threat, like a **potion of blue dragon control** against a blue dragon or a **scroll of protection from petrifaction** against a gorgon, then do not be generous in awarding experience. In fact if the party has the exact KEY to fit the LOCK of a particular monster's threat then experience might be one half of normal or even one quarter!

Expanded Secondary Skills

By Mike Stewart

Page 12 of the original Advanced Dungeons & Dragons *Dungeon Masters Guide* (DMG) provides a simple system given for granting "Secondary Skills" to player characters. Put simply, these skills denote the character's learned skills while growing up and before they embarked on the training they'd need for the adventuring life. After all, few children train from birth to become freebooting adventurers! Most will be trained in the craft of their parents, be it farming, fishing or other such skills.

The system below expands upon the Secondary Skill table in the DMG, and each character may obtain at least one skill as befits their background. The newly submitted secondary skills will be described briefly at the end of the article.

As for how to resolve the use of Secondary Skills within your campaign, the *Dungeon Masters Guide* is vague on the exact system used to resolve their use. In recent conversations with E. Gary Gygax I've discovered that the intended use would be as a saving throw; with the particular column (such as spell, breath weapon, poison, etc.) being determined as needed by the Dungeon Master (DM). Feel free to use this system, or devise your own!

Secondary Skills

When a player character selects a class, this profession is assumed to be that which the character has been following previously, virtually to the exclusion of all other activities. Thus the particular individual is at 1st level of ability. However, some minor knowledge of certain mundane skills might belong to the player character – information and training from early years or incidentally picked up while the individual was in apprenticeship learning his or her primary professional skills of clericism, fighting, etc. If your particular campaign is aimed at a level of play where secondary skills can be taken into account, then use the table below to assign them to player characters, or even to henchmen if you so desire.

Assign a skill randomly, or select according to the background of your campaign. To determine if a second skill is known, roll on the table, and if the dice indicate a result of TWO SKILLS assign a second, appropriate one. If the Dungeon Master is allowing the character to choose appropriate secondary skills, then characters with an Intelligence of 16+ may choose two.

When secondary skills are used, it is up to the DM to create and/or adjudicate situations in which these skills are used or useful to the player character. As a general rule, having a skill will give the character the ability to determine the general worth and soundness of an item, the ability to find food, make small repairs, or actually construct (crude) items. For example, an individual with Armorer skill could tell the quality of normal armor, repair chain links, or perhaps fashion certain weapons. To determine the extent of knowledge in question, simply assume the role of one of these skills, one that you know a little something about, and determine what could be done with this knowledge. Use this as a scale to weigh the relative ability of characters with secondary skills. Remember that Secondary Skills are a trade or craft that the Player Character invested some small time in before choosing their class, so no advanced knowledge or true professional skill should be considered evident.

Table I: Secondary Skill List

Dice Score	Result
01-03	Alchemy/Brewing*
04-06	Administration*
07-09	Ars Magica*
10-12	Astrology/Scrying*
13-16	Blacksmith/Armorer
17-19	Bowyer/Fletcher
20-22	Courtoise*
23-26	Farmer/Gardener
27-29	Fine Arts *
30-32	Fisher (netting or harpoon)
33-35	Forester
36-38	Gambler
39-41	History/Religions*
42-45	Hunter/Fisher (hook and line)
46-48	Husbandman (animal husbandry)
49-51	Jeweler/Lapidary
52-54	Leatherworker/Tanner
55-57	Limner/Pointer
58-60	Mason/Carpenter
61-63	Miner
64-66	Navigator (fresh or salt water)
67-69	Performing Arts*
70-72	Physical Arts (endurance or acrobatic)*@
73-75	Physicker*
76-78	Sailor (fresh or salt)
79-81	Scribe*
82-84	Shipwright (boats or ships)
85-87	Tailor/Weaver
88-90	Teamster/Freighter
91-93	Trader/Barterer
94-96	Trapper/Furrier
97-98	Woodworker/Cabinetmaker
99-00	Strategos

* = New Secondary Skill (see below)
@=Acrobatics only available to Monk or Thief/Assassin class, with agreement of DM.

Certain secondary skills reflect the inherent abilities of many of the classes available to player characters in the AD&D world. However, any character with the appropriate secondary skill may know a bit about the field in question, but their knowledge is inferior to anyone actually practicing the class. For example, a fighter with Forester as a secondary skill has some woodland knowledge but would still be very inferior to even a first level Ranger or Druid in the same surroundings.

Below is a handy table to reference the various AD&D classes common to Aedenne (See Dragonsfoot Publication DF11, **Guide to the Realms of Aedenne**) and the secondary skills that would vaguely approximate such class knowledge. This table may be extrapolated to any campaign world.

Table II: Secondary Skills/Class Comparison

Class	Class Skill
BARD	Performing Arts
Barbarian	Hunter/Fisher (hook & line)
Cavalier	Courtoise
CLERIC	History/Religion
Druid	Forester
FIGHTER	Physical Arts (Endurance)
MAGIC USER	Ars Magica
MONK	Physical Arts (Acrobatics)
Paladin	History/Religion
Ranger	Forester
THIEF	Trader/Haggler

SKILL DEFINITIONS:

While most of the Secondary Skill list is self-explanatory, some are obscure and are therefore briefly defined below. Please note that the precise definition and when/where the skill can be applied is entirely left up to the DM.

Administration: This skill identifies that the character is proficient with government, bureaucracies, and other such organizations and may be able to infer proper behavior and procedure to interact with such groups.

Ars Magica: This skill is all the various minor disciplines any student of the Arcane are familiar with such as Witchcraft, Occult, Numerology, Demonology, etc. It is also useful in the further study of the Magical Arts.

Courtoise: This skill notes that the character is proficient with manners, social mores on their particular level of social class, and how to act among those superior or inferior to them. Public speaking is also part of this, as is the many methods society uses to segment itself (such as heraldry, regalia, etc.).

Fine Arts: The skill of Fine Arts covers the entire gamut of artistic expression in its physical sense, from design to sculpting to poetry and prose.

Forester: The facets of the Forester skill can cover a wide range of abilities, such as woodland lore, fire starting, setting small snares, identifying trees & ivies, etc.

History/Religions: This skill (chosen either with emphasis on History or Religion) allows the character to have knowledge of either local history or of other locales near the character's residence (DM's choice). The Religion aspect involves a knowledge of one's own worshiped pantheon/deity and their deeds, as well as a passing knowledge of other common pantheons as defined by the DM.

Husbandman (animal husbandry): The skill of Husbandry provides the character with knowledge of domesticated animals common to their culture, and their treatment, upbringing, and breeding. Simple training is capable as well, though more complex training is at the DM's discretion.

Jeweler/lapidary: This skill indicates the character's ability with gem cutting, setting and crafting of fine jewelry and the use and appraisal of precious and semiprecious stones.

Performing Arts: The skills of Performing Arts comprise any method of artistic expression that entertain an audience by physical activity. This can encompass acting, singing, juggling, etc., and the parameters should be specified between the player and DM.

Physical Arts (Endurance or Acrobatic): This ability portrays a character's early life's dedication to physical activity, be it of strength and endurance or acrobatics, one of which must be specified at character creation.

Physicker: The skill of Physicker notes a character's ability with medieval healing theories and some rudimentary knowledge of healing herbs and their application for minor ailments.

Scribe: The Scribe's skill is that of penmanship, writing, and ink and paper preparations. Simple illumination is possible, as well as other writing abilities.

Strategos: This skill indicates that the character is well versed in the strategy & tactics of military formations both small and large.
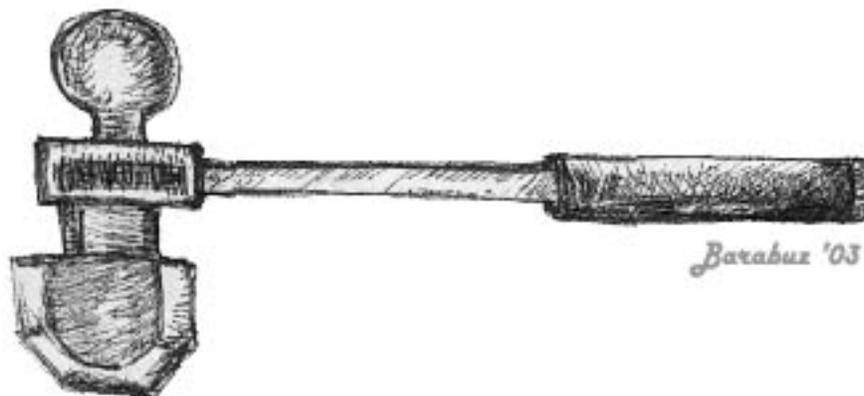
The Chamber of Mull

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"Are you going in or not?" Erret demanded. She was strong and fearless, but sometimes didn't give enough respect to the environment. Kram supposed it was all the armor she wore. There were few opponents in Etchfield who caused her much concern. But the city was days behind them now. They were in the middle of a forest, deep under the earth in the cellar of Mull the Besotted. In days gone by, Mull had been know as a skilled laborer who frequented the green juice of the Skaw root far too often.

"That glow is magic," Kram replied thoughtfully.

"Really," she retorted dryly with a smile. "Thank goodness those years of study are paying off!" He smiled. Some mistook her banter as sarcasm, but he knew her snip masked the sense of mystery he felt also. But there was something more. There was something here. He held his hand out slowly, the fingers forming an unspoken word. 'Stop.' The glow from the torch he carried extended out just far enough for them to make out the front of the statue. It was illuminated from behind by some kind of soft, blue glow. Kram lowered the torch down and to his right, and tried to make his eyes adjust to the low light of area. The statue was a fantastic creature of some kind, and looked poised to spring into life at any moment, its wings slightly open. The old worked stone of the hall gave way here to a chamber of some kind. Kram paused and considered his options. The floor inside was once smooth and polished, but now was strewn with debris in many places. He noticed dirt, fallen stones, and the remnants of an old workroom. It wasn't physical work that was done here though. It was a labor of magic that he understood all too well.

"Why didn't those reptilians come in here?" he wondered, more to himself than Erret. She had loved it when the first few surprised them. They hadn't noticed them right off. The reptilian creatures almost blended in with the walls. They attacked without provocation, coming at them with claws and fangs. Erret laughed as the blows failed to get by her shield. Her reprisal was deadly. She was a master of the long blade her father had bequeathed to her. Kram's fire injured another, and then the two survivors fled back down the old subterranean hallways. Erret wanted to pursue, but harked to Kram as he suggested that they learn about their new foes first. Kram examined the creature that now lay on the stone before him as if he was still dissecting Palops under Om Orneer's keen direction. "Bipedal" he muttered aloud, "and this harness it wears... this is worked leather. They have intelligence, of a sort." The leather showed no great craftsmanship. The creature's scales were greenish-grayish in the torchlight, and reminded him of a cloak he had once seen on one of the elves who sought out Orneer from time to time. The harness held a quiver of three javelins. Each about four feet long. Some type of common bronze, by the look of it; old but very sharp. "Looks like Trogs," he said, "Orneer always claimed they were still around here in the old forests and ruins."

Erret smiled and ran a loving eye down the blade of her sword. "About time we found something to fight."

"Careful," Kram replied, "They can be fierce opponents in battle, if I recall correctly."

Erret just smiled more broadly, sheathed her sword and placed her hand on his shoulder. "Just find me some more!"

"I wish Elub was here," Kram remarked (for the third time today, thought Erret). "You mean StormShadow?" she replied.

"His name is Elub, for Grommels sake. I don't know who started to call him StormShadow or why he wants a moniker like that." Elub was good with locks, spring traps, trip wires, and many other things they were likely to find in Mull's dungeons. Elub would know how to

approach this statue. There had to be a reason those Trogs didn't come in this chamber. Kram wanted a better look at that statue. "Erret, guard the door will you? Without Elub's advice I don't want to find myself stuck behind some miserable sliding wall or one-way door. I think there is some writing on the base of the statue. If I get closer perhaps I can make it out."

"OK, but let's get moving. *Pheew*. It stinks down here."

Kram had cast his spell of physical protection earlier, before they entered the lower hallways. That would last for hours yet. He wished he could fly, or see invisible, but those abilities still eluded him. He had the power, but not the craft. Not yet, anyway. The torch was starting to burn lower. There were only two left, and they were no closer to finding old Mull's diaries now than when they first descended into this series of hallways and caves beneath the old tower ruins. Perhaps those travelers they had fed that night were just making it all up. Still, he was determined to see for himself... if he could.

Kram walked lightly, crouching slightly as he went. The chamber seemed to be about thirty feet in diameter, and the statue was in the center facing the open doorway. Between Kram and the statue were the remains of a broken worktable. The heavy legs had long since been snapped off and the top boards broken into pieces. Some Vale Giant have a bad day down here? In retrospect, Kram supposed that should have been a clue. His interest in the statue pulled him closer though. The ram's head on the lion's body was certainly menacing looking. Could an odd creature like that really fly with those wings? There were legends of the sphinx of old, but no one believed they still existed. No one but Mull, apparently. He probably commissioned this while in a stupor of some kind. An old keg of aged Skaw would be very valuable now. There was writing on the base of the statue. A rhyme of some kind? As he slowly approached he could just start to make it out:

To the west lies the answer
The question is clear
Start from the–

The floor was moving! "Erret! Help!" In an instant, the floor pulled itself up and wrapped around him. He was able to seize a dagger before the creature engulfed him. He felt the smothering closeness of it as it began to squeeze him. The pain was incredible. The torch was trapped with him and was burning his leg! He hoped the creature felt the pain as he did. Smothered, the fire soon went out. Kram was a strong man. Trained for the labor of the mind, but gifted at birth with good health. Years of working at the forge as a young man had helped also. But although he tried to cut free with his dagger it seemed to do little good. Where was Erret? Was she trying to free him? His mind tried to lash out with a desperate spell. He felt the words evaporate from his mind as the crushing pain of the creature threatened to tear the life from his body. Perhaps at death he would finally see astral space? He was losing it. Losing consciousness. Time for one more feeble struggle. He suddenly cried out as a sword blade cut along his leg and the dead creature fell away.

"Sorry Kram. Whatever that thing was, it's dead now."

"I've heard of these creatures," gasped Kram, "they lurk in the dark on the stone and try to trap unwary prey."

"Well, I managed to kill it, but that final thrust caught you also. Sorry, but it was dark! That statue blocks most of the light." She quickly knelt down and applied a warrior's field dressing to the sword cut. The cloth was wrapped tightly, and most of the bleeding soon stopped. "You're in no condition to go on," she said. "We'll have to get out of here. For now..." She smiled and gave him a wink that filled Kram with confidence and joy, even as his pain and injury made him grimace.

They both agreed there was time for a quick check of the chamber before leaving. They

had already paid for it, so there was no sense leaving anything of value behind. Erret had lit another torch. Kram continued to examine the statue. The creature certainly looked like a sphinx of legend. The riddle at the base could be clearly read now, but he didn't know what it might mean.

> To the west lies the answer
> The question is clear
> Start from the beginning
> Face to face brings you near

What nonsense was this? As Kram pondered the writing, Erret searched the area. The dead corpse of the floor-trap-creature was heavy. She sliced into it a few times experimentally, but nothing came out but a sickly ooze of some sort. The blue light was coming from a glass globe, about three inches across, set into a small pedestal behind the statue. It was held in place with metal bands. Copper perhaps? She drew a small dagger and set about trying to free it. Kram limped about the chamber as best he could. He tried to determine which way west was, but didn't really know. He looked for some type of clear surface that might hold a question. He looked out and back from the beginning of the doorway to the room, but found nothing. He heard Erret cursing softly behind the statue. He walked up to the statue and stared into its face. The carved marble visage was menacing. The eyes were carved in a piercing gaze. It seemed to stare slightly down. Kram paused. He looked down also. There was a faint line in the floor. It was slightly more than a foot long, and ran parallel to the base of the statue. Clearly designed to be kept secret, the floor here was perhaps eroded from the years gone by, or perhaps worn away by the creature that had lain here so patiently waiting for prey. "'Air,'" he called.

"I'm trying to get this globe out," she called back. "We could use a magic light source to take with us."

"Come here for a moment and look at this!" She must have caught the wonder in his voice, as she was beside him in an instant.

"A secret hidey-hole" she cried in delight. The two of them set at the crack with their daggers and soon pried an old flagstone up. Beneath it was square hole, perhaps a foot or so square and a bit deeper. Within that was a wooden coffer, bound in iron, and securely locked. She bent down to grab it.

"Wait!" Kram called, "I'm no expert, but let's use some caution. Take the burned out torch and try to move it a bit first. Remember the spring dart that took Harran?" Her face turned angry at the thought. Harran had been a comrade. That was no way for an adventurer to die.

"Okay," she replied. "I'll give it a try." She wedged the wooden torch handle between the side of the coffer and the wall of the pit. Nothing happened. She pushed and the coffer slid the few inches of space to the other side. She gently poked around a few more times with the torch handle. Nothing happened. "Whew," she breathed. "Okay, well, it looks safe to me." She picked up the coffer and lifted it out of the hole.

They both noticed writing on the box, inscribed at the base and going all the way around. "I can't read it," Kram said "Perhaps we can decipher it later." He quickly took out parchment and quill from a case on his belt and copied down the riddle of the sphinx, as they called it. Erret secured the coffer with rope and slung it over her back.

"It only weighs two blocks. I can handle it easily." Working together they also managed to free the glass sphere. Kram wondered if the light would last. Erret mused about chopping an animated sphinx statue to pieces. In the end, though, they freed the ball and left the chamber without further incident. Kram wrapped the ball in cloth and placed it carefully in a pouch. Now if they could just get out of here...

Erret was practically dragging Kram along. His mind was fine, but he had taken a lot of damage trapped inside that creature, and now his leg was badly cut by her sword. Not to mention burned by their own torch. Stupid

hiding-on-the-floor dungeon critters. That statue had been a sight to see though. She wondered how much it would sell for in the market near Stillwater? "Focus..." she thought to herself as they moved. "Those Trog-things are still around. How many are there. Where did they come from? Did Mull hire them? Breed them?" That last thought was disgusting. Still, it tweaked her sense of humor as she considered what Mull might do after too much Skaw and she giggled aloud."

"Please," whispered Kram "No jokes until we're safe again?

"You know me." She smiled.

"That's what I'm afraid of..."

As they turned the corner she tripped on some kind of cord strung across the hall. It hadn't been there on the way in! She didn't fall, but the noise would have alerted anyone to their presence. The cord was tied to an old iron ring set into the wall on one side, and to a crude wooden bucket on the other. The bucket was filled with small stones and some pieces of old, rusted armor. The bucket was balanced on another rock. When she hit the trip wire, the bucket fell over, and the sound of the stones and metal hitting the worked floor of the hallway echoed in the confined space of the low corridor.

"Okay," said Kram, "They know we're coming."

"So what," countered Erret "They're just a few glorified orcs! Let's cut them down! Can you walk?"

"Yes, if we move a little slower."

Erret adjusted the breastplate of her armor, settled her shield into place, and then drew her sword. She grinned, posing with her blade out, "Let's hunt some... "

"Please! Don't say it! It's just not funny anymore. I'd like to point out that right now those Trogs are hunting us!"

She didn't say a word, just swung her sword a few times, stretching the muscles in her sword arm. But then her attitude changed a little. There was that smell again, and it was getting worse.

They weren't far from the entrance. Erret and Kram moved along slowly, the torchlight marked them for anyone to see. It was their last torch. Kram didn't want to use the ball they had found without checking it more carefully. There were a lot of ways that magic could be imbued in a crystal ball, and not all of them were friendly. The stench was getting worse. "What now, piles of KirdBear dung and bat guano?" quipped Erret. She didn't like the smell either, but she was tolerating it. All of a sudden Kram bent over and wretched violently on the floor. He was trembling. She knew he was a strong man. Perhaps the magic of the ball he carried held a sickness? She didn't have long to ponder that thought. Three of the Trog-things came sprinting down the hall at them from behind the corner ahead. The lead Trog carried some kind of old battle-axe. The second held a much cruder stone axe. The hallway wasn't wide enough for her to see the third. These Trogs were the source of the stench! Grommel, that was bad! The lead Trog was very accurate with that axe. It hit her shield with a force that rocked her a little, and it hurt! The second Trog swung and missed. Erret returned the blow of the first trog with interest, her blade cutting deep into the grey-green scales that covered it. She was deep in battle and never heard Kram murmuring behind her. He conjured a handful of fiery, glowing darts, and proceeded to throw them with great accuracy at the second Trog. The first dart stuck and burned as it did so, causing the creature to scream in an inhuman tongue. A few seconds later a second dart hit it, hurting it more.

Erret called a random battle cry as she fought, relishing the combat. She enjoyed the feel of the sword in her hand, the art of the attack and counter-attack. "Come and have a try if you think you're hard enough! Come and have a try if you think you're hard enough!"

Kram would have laughed if he wasn't so worried about both of them being wiped out a few minutes from now. He was weak from the nausea and the awful stench of the Trogs, but he could still cast darts and his aim wasn't affected. The second wave of combat went against Erret. She was struck by the Lead Trog, as well as by the gimp with the stone axe. Her return swing went wild and she took a step back to recover. Kram managed to hit the same Trog with two more of the fire darts, and it went down! This left the third Trog a clear field of fire, however, and it hurled a javelin into Erret with force. Erret was bleeding freely from the wound as she pulled it out. She went into the melee with renewed vigor and a new battle song, "My kingdom for a healing potion! My kingdom for a healing potion!" She had neither. Finally, she maneuvered the Lead Trog into a bad position. It was off balance, trying to get around its fallen accomplice. Erret cut it down, screeching out a "Whoo-oo-p!" Kram fired another fiery dart at the last Trog. The small darts sped out with the force of a tiny meteor and burned on contact. The final Trog turned and ran back down the corridor and around the bend. Perhaps that was the wounded one from earlier? The intrepid adventurers pursued, but turning the corner could see nothing. There was no time to search. They needed to get out of here. The entrance to the dungeon was just up ahead. They could return here another day.

Epilogue

David the DM called out, "OK, you get 2,150 XP each for tonight's adventure."

"Ping" cried Erret/Terrie, "My fighter is now 6th level!

"Not so fast," replied Dave, "You still need to train. Kram, you take the coffer and have it examined back in town. The blacksmith is able to get the lock open and inside you find a leather pouch filled with what feels like coins. There is also a scroll tube, and a small replica statue of the sphinx from Mull's chamber. Write it on your sheet as 'statue 7.'

Right now you don't know anything more about it."

"How much money is there?" Terrie called out.

"Do you open the pouch?" Dave countered with a grin.

"Yes, yes, I open the pouch. Am I okay?"

"Sure. Just going by the book." He glanced at the papers in front of him. "Inside you find seventy-five silver, twenty-five gold, and a handful of small gems. The value may be enough to pay for your fighter training."

"We need some money for supplies too," added Mark.

"Why didn't you bring back some Trog scales?" said Dave. "You could have sold them."

"Now he tells us."

"Hey Dave," Kram/Mark asked, "I examine the scroll case. Can I open it?"

"Sure. Inside you find two scrolls rolled up together."

"Hold it a minute," said Terrie quickly "It might be cursed. Remember Swamp Castle?"

"Okay, we go back to the inn, have dinner, and get a good night's sleep. In the morning after we're awake and ready to adventure I open the scrolls and look at them. What do I see?"

Dave rolled some dice behind the screen. "You make it through the night OK. Mark, your character is still pretty badly hurt. You need to see a cleric. As you examine the scrolls you notice that one is a map." Dave began to intone in his favorite mysterious DM voice, "There are a lot of cryptic symbols on it, but from some of the terrain features marked; mountains, the river, etc., you can make out that it starts at the Ruined Tower of Mull and heads west into the hills."

"Great. Thanks. What about the other one?"

"You can tell it's a magic-user scroll of three spells; *mirror image*, *detect invisibility*, and *stinking cloud*."

"Finally! *Detect invisibility*. I am so tired of being surprised by your invisible creations. Say, is Dan going to be here next week? We really need a thief for this kind of work."

"Yes, he text messaged me today. StormShadow will be back next week."

"Now if we only had a cleric..."

DON COMPLETELY MISUNDERSTANDS THE CONCEPT OF MAIL ARMOR.

Humanoid Strength Ratings and Expanded Hit Dice Potential

by Joe Maccarrone

In *Dragon* issue number 44, Len Lakofka had an article called "Monsters: How Strong is Strong?" This exhaustive work listed the strength ratings of a great number of AD&D monsters, suggesting in many cases that the DM use bonuses "to hit" and/or damage based on the monster's strength. This made sense to me; why should a giant, with a strength between 19 and 24, have a lower minimum damage per hit than a player character with a high exceptional strength?

In the case of giants, Len suggested using a base weapon damage modified by strength bonus. Under this system, the giant's maximum damage potential increased only slightly, if at all, but his minimum and average damage for a hit increased significantly. I liked this, and have used it in most of my AD&D campaigns since. Giants *should* be frightening to the player characters.

Using damage bonuses also increases the threat posed by the stronger common humanoids, such as bugbears and gnolls. Again, I see this as a good thing, as it increases the sense of danger and excitement when facing a hairy, seven-foot tall humanoid wielding a pole arm.

This basic idea eventually resulted in the accompanying chart, which includes almost all the humanoid races I use in my AD&D games. The chart serves a secondary purpose, however, which is potentially of even greater interest: it quantifies the advancement potential of common humanoid races, far beyond the listed statistics for leader-types in the *Monster Manual*. I was intrigued by the idea of humanoids having the potential to be much tougher than the norm for their race—and by throwing entire squads of higher-HD humanoids against the player characters.

Rather than leave humanoids behind, mere stepping stones along the way to higher-level opponents, the struggle against encroaching humanoids is an ongoing, periodic threat in my campaigns. In conversations with Gary Gygax, he confirmed that he frequently used humanoids of higher than normal hit dice to surprise and challenge his players; that provided the final inspiration I needed to create this chart.

Much of this chart is not original work. A significant portion of it comes from Len's excellent article; much of the rest comes from the three monster hardbacks, and certain particularly tough humanoids listed in classic modules by Gary Gygax. As the chart has evolved over time, to suit my tastes in my own game, it would be difficult to cite where their work leaves off and mine begins, and I haven't tried to do so. (My changes to published "canon" have been quite small, in any event—a few alterations to the height of given monsters, to fit my own vision of them, spring to mind.)

My additions that are original allow for expanded hit dice potential for many common humanoid races, enabling the DM to challenge even high-level characters with humanoids. Lawful humanoids have a greater potential for "advancement" than Chaotic ones; this is no accident—I see the organized humanoid societies as capable of producing more capable "elite" troops and more formidable leaders, than the disorganized ones.

I submit this chart in the hope that it fires your imagination, as it does mine, toward more creative, interesting, and challenging uses for those most traditional of AD&D foes—the humanoids.

Humanoid Strength Ratings and Damage Bonuses

Developed from the DMG, MM, FF, MMII, classic Gygax modules, and Len Lakofka's article in Dragon *44*

Creature	Height	Hit Dice	Strength	Damage Bonus	Weapon Base*
Bugbear	7'+	3+1	17	+1	
Bugbear, leader/guard	7'+	4	18–18/75	+2 to +3	
Bugbear, chief	8'	4–6	18–18/90	+2 to +4	+1
Ettin	11'+	10	19	+7	2–12/2–14
Firbolg	10 1/2'	13+	22	+10	2–16
Giant, Hill	10 1/2'	8+	19	+7	2–12
Giant, Stone	12'	9+	20	+8	2–12
Giant, Frost	15'	10+	21	+9	2–16
Giant, Mountain	14'	12	23	+11	2–24
Giant, Fire	12'	11+	22	+10	2–20
Giant, Fomorian	13 1/2'	13+	22	+10	2–20
Giant, Cloud	18'	12+	23	+11	2–24
Giant, Fog	18'	14	23	+11	2–24
Giant, Storm	21'	15+	24	+12	3–30
Gibberling	4' to 5'	1	10		
Gnoll	7'	2	16	+1	
Gnoll, leader/guard	7'+	3	17–18	+1 to +2	
Gnoll, chief	7'+	4–5	18–18/75	+2 to +3	
Goblin	4'	1–1	10		
Goblin, leader/guard	4'+	1	13		
Goblin, sub-chief/elite guard	4'+	1+1–2	15–17	0 to +1	
Goblin, chief/chief's bodyguard	4'+	2–4	16–18	+1 to +2	
Goblin, king	5'	5–7	18/01–18/75	+3	
Grimlock	5 1/2' to 6'	2	16	+1	
Grimlock, leader	6'	3	17–18	+1 to +2	
Grimlock, champion	6'+	4	18/01–18/75	+3	
Hobgoblin	6'	1+1	15		
Hobgoblin, sergeant/elite warrior	6'+	2–3	16–17	+1	
Hobgoblin, sub-chief/chief's guard	6 1/2'+	3–4	18–18/50	+2 to +3	
Hobgoblin, chief	6 1/2'+	4–6	18/51–18/00	+3 to +6	
Hobgoblin, king	7'	7–9	18/76–19	+4 to +7	
Kobold	3'	1/2	9		
Kobold, leader/guard	3'+	1	11		
Kobold, chief	3 1/2'	2–3	13–16	0 to +1	
Kobold, king	4'	4–5	17–18	+1 to +2	
Lizard Man	7'	2+1	14		
Lizard Man, leader or chief	7'+	3	17–18	+1 to +2	

Humanoid Strength Ratings and Damage Bonuses, continued

Developed from the DMG, MM, FF, MMII, classic Gygax modules, and Len Lakofka's article in Dragon 44

Creature	Height	Hit Dice	Strength	Damage Bonus	Weapon Base*
Norker	4'	1+2	13		
Norker, sergeant/guard	4'+	2	16–17	+1	
Norker, sub-chief/chief's guard	4'+	3	18	+2	
Norker, chief	4 1/2'+	4	18/01–18/50	+3	
Ogre	8'+	4+1	18–18/99	+2 to +5	+1
Ogre, leader	9'	5–7	18/00	+6	2–10
Ogre, chief	10'	8	19	+7	2–12
Orc	5'	1	12		
Orc, leader/sergeant/elite warrior	5 1/2'	1+1	16–17	+1	
Orc, sub-chief/elite guard	5 1/2'+	2–3	18	+2	
Orc, chief/chief's bodyguard	5 1/2'+	3–5	18/01–18/90	+3 to +4	
Orc, king	6'+	6–8	18/76–18/00	+4 to +6	
Sahuagin	6'+	2+2	14		
Sahuagin, lieutenant/guard	6'+	3+3	16–18	+1 to +2	
Sahuagin, chieftain	7'+	4+4–5+5	18/01–18/90	+3 to +4	
Sahuagin, baron	9'	6+6	18/91–19	+5 to +7	+1
Troglodyte	5 1/2'+	2	13		
Troglodyte, leader/guard	6'	3	16	+1	
Troglodyte, sub-chief	6'+	4	17 to 18	+1 to +2	
Troglodyte, chief	6–1/2'+	6	18/01–18/75	+3	
Troll	9'+	6+6	18/01–18/00	+3 to +6**	
Troll, Giant	10'+	8	19	+7	2–12
Troll, Giant Two-Headed	10'+	10	19	+7**	
Troll, Marine, fresh water	7'+	5+5	18	+2**	
Troll, Marine, salt water	10'+	6+12	18/76–18/00	+4 to +6**	
Verbeeg	8' to 10'	5+5	18/51–18/00	+3 to +6	+1

* Very large humanoids use weapons with a higher base damage than human-sized weapons, or (in some cases) a simple +1 bonus for larger versions of normal weapons.

** Trolls inflict claw damage at 1–4 + STR bonus; bite damage as listed in the books.

A few additional notes:

• I do not use "to hit" bonuses for humanoids, only damage bonuses. Monsters—being generally strong and aggressive—already have a more advantageous attack matrix than characters.

• I have not listed advancement potential for giants, but I handle this as it was done in the classic modules: tough individuals have the hit dice (and strength bonuses) of a stronger race of giant.

• I have not listed humanoids (e.g. kuo-toa) that have character class levels and benefits rather than hit dice.

• The chart, being of dual purpose, is limited to various humanoid races that are generally encountered in groups. However, I extend the basic principle of using strength bonuses atop a weapon base (including natural weapons, such as claws) whenever I see fit to do so. Many large monsters, as Gary has noted, are in need of a boost to base damage.

Crafting Items in 2ⁿᵈ Edition Advanced Dungeons & Dragons

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There are many reasons player characters and commoners may desire to craft an item. The most basic would be the day to day work of the trade-skill classes: the need for a steady income. Even the most prestigious of heroes may find themselves in need until their next quest. In all simplicity, the general makeup of a city's trade-skilled classes is up to the DM to decide, but having a basic fleshing out of the abilities of an NPC hireling or retainer can come in quite handy. The making of mundane items by PCs doesn't have to be boring: many times characters wish to make special items to show of their personal nature, family crests, or class type, perhaps players just role-play the proficiencies of their character in a way simulates the life of a medieval person (farming, hunting, fishing, cooking, dancing, etc.) These role play efforts should always be recognized and rewarded by the DM.

Heroes are likely interested in item craft because it allows them to take a crack at forming their own custom equipment and weapons, or even a item to be the vessel of magical energy. While all of the following charts and tables are optional to any item creation process, they offer a tool for the DM to use when making some of his decisions. For future reference on item creation, the player can keep track of his skill level at the time of item creation and the natural roll. DMs can build their own notes and records of the item creation process and how it develops for PCs in their game world.

Magic Item Potential

The chart shows the extent to which the created item can be enchanted; rolling this number confers no magic. This means that, according in the DMG, the item created, if enchanted, can be of no more than this XP value. For example, *boots of speed* are worth 2,500 XP, so to cobble boots that could made into boots of speed it would take at least a natural roll of 14 enabling an item of up to 4,000 XP in nature.

Should the item's skill roll not reach the potential the maker desires on the first roll the DM has the option to allow a second roll, the creator spending another ¼ of the time (and cost if applicable) it took to make the item. The results of the second roll are invariably kept, and should it fail the character has blundered or "over-done something" which in fact has cut the item's value and potential in half

Natural Successful Skill Roll	Greatest Potential for Magical Item Creation
1-3	100 xp
4-5	300 xp
6-7	400 xp
8-9	500 xp
10-11	800 xp
12	1,000 xp
13	2,000 xp
14	4,000 xp
15	8,000 xp
16+	limitless

Armor Manufacture:

Consider the following:

Armorer is for metallic armors.

Leatherworker is for leather and hide armors

Carpenter is for wood or bone armors

Seamstress/Tailor is for heavy cloth or padded armors and the linings and fasteners of other types of armors.

The basic time required to manufacture a "suit" of armor is 2 weeks per point of AC adjustment, or 1 week per 7.5 gp of final value of trappings like helms and gauntlets. Any armor crafter of Apprentice skill must be supervised by an armorer of Expert or greater rank.

To determine the final time it takes to make an armor piece divide the basic creation time by the total "manpower" on the job. For

example if a chain mail hauberk (10 weeks of 8-10 hour work days) is worked on by an Apprentice (a factor of 1), this would take the full 10 weeks = 10 / factor of 1. Should an Expert not just supervise the Apprentice, but directly work himself with the Apprentice assisting him, the final time is 5 weeks = 10 / 2 (factor of 1+1) and the Expert makes the check at +1 for the help of the Apprentice.

This assumes that the creator of the armor is at least an Apprentice ("Trained") and that he has supervision from an Expert. A single Expert can effectively supervise up to two Apprentices, while simultaneously working on an armor of his own. The time it takes to make a given suit of armor can be reduced by putting additional manpower on the job, including manpower of greater skill levels. Up to three individuals can directly work on one suit of armor at once. The check is made by the crafter of greater skill, and each assistant grants him a +1 bonus.

Armor-Relevant Skill Title	Manpower Factor	Employment Cost per Point of Skill
Apprentice ("Trained")	**1**	2 sp / week
Expert (1 extra slot)	**1**	5 gp / week
Specialist (2 extra slots)	**2**	10 gp / week
Master (3 extra slots)	**2**	12 gp / week

The initial gold piece investment for making an armor is roughly ½ the armor's selling price. If labor is hired, the chart above can likewise be consulted, and added into the final price. For these workers multiply the given costs by their skill check. If an apprentice has a 14 skill check, then he's worth 28 sp per week. As you can see, the true Specialists and above can be quite expensive although their skill and speed can make them well worth it.

"Apprentice" is where PCs will begin if they choose to learn armor making. The character can seek apprenticeship in an armor creation shop of their choosing. As they gain more skill (i.e. "Slots") they are promoted to Expert and can use their new skill level to open a shop of their own.

Weapon Manufacture:

Weaponsmith is for metal weapons, namely swords, but can include any metallic weapon.

Blacksmith is for other, smaller, metallic weapons such as morning stars, maces, spearheads or arrowheads.

Carpenter is for wooden weapons such as quarterstaffs and lances.

Bowyer/Fletcher is for all types of bows, crossbows, arrow shafts, and bolts, requiring extra attention to detail that the Woodworker is not trained specifically for.

At the end of the construction time a NWP check is made, depending on weapon type.

Consult PHB Table 41 for basic reference on weapon creation times and costs.

Assume that those timeframes are for an Apprentice ("Trained") weapon maker and that he is supervised by a character of an Expert skill title. A single Expert can effectively supervise up to two Apprentices, while simultaneously working on a weapon of his own. The time it takes to make a given weapon can be reduced by putting additional manpower on the job, including manpower of greater skill levels. Up to three individuals can directly work on one weapon at once. The check is made by the crafter of greater skill, and each assistant grants him a +1 bonus.

To determine the final time it takes to make a weapon divide the basic creation time by the total Manpower on the job. For example if a long sword (30 days) is worked on by an Apprentice (factor of 1), this would take the full 30 days = 30 / 1. Should the Expert not just supervise the Apprentice, but directly work himself with the Apprentice assisting him, the final time is 15 days = 30 / (factor of 1+1) and the Expert makes the check at +1 for the help of the Apprentice.

Weapon-Relevant Skill Title	Manpower Factor	Employment Cost per Point of Skill
Apprentice ("Trained")	1	2 sp / week
Expert (1 extra slot)	1	5 gp / week
Specialist (2 extra slots)	2	10 gp / week
Master (3 extra slots)	2	12 gp / week

If labor is hired, the chart above can likewise be consulted, and added into the final price. For these workers multiply the given costs by their skill check. If an apprentice has a 14 skill check, then he's worth 28 sp per week.

"Apprentice" is where PCs will begin if they choose to learn weapon making. The character can seek apprenticeship in an weapon creation shop of their choosing. As they gain more skill (i.e. "Slots") they are promoted to Expert and can use their new skill level to open a shop of their own.

Banes and Boons (Optional Rule)

Sometimes an item will be made with exceptional quality (or poorness, but heroes don't have to admit to mistakes.) At any rate the chance of a skill roll resulting in a Bane or a Boon, will depend on the Skill Title of the character and the natural die roll of the player. As the DM it would be a good idea to inform the player if you are using critical successes and failures.

It should be mentioned that a natural 20 always fails on a NWP check, though if the chances of success were 20 in 20 (or more) this NWP check is not a Bane, it merely fails by default.

Skill Title	Chance of a Boon (Die Roll)
Trained	Max Roll
Expert (1 extra slot)	Max Roll or 1 under
Specialist (2 extra slots)	Max Roll or 2 under
Master (3 extra slots)	Max Roll or 3 under

Skill Title	Chance of a Bane (Die Roll)
Trained	Natural 19-20
Expert (1 extra slot)	Natural 20
Specialist (2 extra slots)	Natural 20
Master (3 extra slots)	Natural 20

Rolling the Results: The player will always know if they did something exceptionally bad or good because of the die roll. Likewise the character making the item can usually sense that something is amiss or just knows when things are going very well. None the less it's a good idea for the DM to roll the Bane or Boon result in secret as to keep the suspense alive.

To make this determination the DM rolls 1d100+the characters skill level with that skill. For example if an armorer had a 15 or less on a d20, the DM would roll 1d100+15 for the armorer's Bane or Boon Roll. This way the higher the original skill the better for the character.

Typically this chart is used for item making but can apply to any skill roll involving a final product, the results applied as needed by the DM.

1d100 + Skill Level	Banes	Boons (all boons can be made a Work of Art)
1-15	**Character injured**	10% process time reduction*
16-20	**Disaster**	10% process time reduction*
21-30	**Destructive failure**	10% process time reduction*
31-40	**Total failure**	20% process time reduction *
41-50	**Partial failure**	20% process time reduction *
51-60	**2 Defects**	30% process time reduction *
61-70	**Flawed**	**Work of Art Created**
71-80	**Flawed**	**Work of Art Created**
81-90	**1 Defect**	**Masterwork Item** (50% base chance)
91-99	**Delay**	**Masterwork Item** (70% base chance)
100+	**No bane in particular**	**Grand Masterwork Item** (NWP check on a d30)

Character injured: Skills involving heavy equipment or items or dangerous heat, or large animals require a system shock check; failure could result in the loss of digits, or some other physical impairment, including death. For the sake of the game, players should in fairness be made aware of such risks, else the DM seem too harsh. Physical damage is dependant on the skill being used but could easily be upwards to 3d10 for a crushing piece of stone or random mishap with flame. A character could be imprisoned or even executed for a transgression on the authorities, intentional or otherwise.

Disaster: Tools, workshop and work piece damaged, set fire to, and/or destroyed unless character can prevent spread of damage. Minimum 1d100 x 10 gp damage/fines/loss. Other processes like animal training, incur damage from a wild or loose creature, or a lamed creature. If in a political or legal sphere, fines or penalties for wrongdoing are a like amount.

Destructive failure: Tools / workshop damaged by up to 1d100 x 10 gp (or similar losses in other skills, see above.) Project is also destroyed and no value remains to raw materials.

Total failure: Raw materials/items destroyed; no value remaining.

Partial failure: 50-100% of raw materials value lost. Character can start over with these remains.

Defect: An error or problem has arisen with the creation process. If the character is able to take the needed steps to fix it, the item turns out OK and to full value/usefulness, if not it becomes Flawed, but at least the character will know this fact. Normally countering defects depends on the nature of the defect and the available skills the character has (the use of a further NWP check is usually needed.) Or the creator, if he has time, can bring in the assistance of another craftsman, though such repairs can become costly very fast. Hirelings knowing the ball-park value of the item will typically charge up to 20% of its value for such vital repairs. Just another reason keeping a talented workman on the payroll is a good idea. There is no simple way to classify the possible defects and solutions,

so the DM's imagination is the best place to start, as always.

Example Defects: Weapon blade not hardened properly or is brittle, Armor not bound correctly a weak point occurs, a bow has a hidden weakness or knothole, clothing begins to ravel. Trained creatures may have a rebellious streak. Food may have become over cooked or spoiled.

Example Solutions: Not all defects can be fixed by the original NWP. For example if a weapon or armor piece becomes brittle, only a blacksmith can anneal it to the right ductility. If the metal is not hard enough, an carbon powder may be required for sprinkling onto the blade prior to a case-hardening process. Wooden items can be reinforced with metal braces like copper and steel if done skillfully.

Flawed: the item has an *unseen* defect until use or until it breaks unexpectedly. It functions at –1 to its relevant rolls (attacking for weapons, AC for armors, NWP checks for any other item, and so on). Should the user roll a natural 20 on a NWP check, a natural 1 on an attack roll (both critical failures), if the item is struck in combat by a natural roll of 19 or 20, or should the item be required to make a saving throw, the item breaks automatically. Typically this defect will be kept secret from the creator until the flaw manifests itself.

Delay: there is a stall in the process either by technical difficulties, workers not showing up, or supply depletion and new ones not arriving. The delay is 10% of the creation time.

Creating a Work of Art

Work of Art Created (see table above): You can intentionally attempt to make a work of art, or roll into this category by using the optional Bane/Boon rules. In any case the character (fortunate or skilled) can make an additional check. He adds 5% to the item's sale value for each point on the second roll's natural die (This secondary roll has no other effect than this potential bonus).

Setting out to intentionally create a Work of Art applies a –4 to the NWP check unless the creator is at least an Expert, and a –2 to the NWP check unless the creator is at least a Specialist or greater. Some examples of how skills can make works of art:

Blacksmith, Weaponsmith, Armorer: you have learned to make many beautiful and intricate features on work like knurling, decorative twists, artwork, embossment, etching, etc.

Carpentry: you are able to create intricately carved designs and borders in wood. You can stain and lacquer wooden furniture to a beautiful luster.

Masterwork & Grandmasterwork Items

Masterwork Items: The base chance given on the Banes/Boons chart (50% or 75% depending on luck) is rolled by the character. This chance increases by 1% per 100 gp in components, materials, jewels, expendable tools, and other items consumed in the process. If the percentile check succeeds, then the item is a masterwork. They are just normal items made with better balance, ergonomics, aesthetics, and so on. Examples are shown on the table below.

Grand Masterwork Items (DM's Option): these items are even beyond the attributes of Masterwork. The DM decides how and why they are so. The DM can double the masterwork properties, but perhaps the item has picked up a bit of enchantment from the forging process be it the ingredients or even the sung song of the Grandmaster as he made the item (its up to you!). The item is at least a masterwork but if a second bonus NWP check succeeds, it has become something more. This way skills past 20 have still another function!

Item	Masterwork Effects
Backpack	20% weight reduction
Weapon	+1 non magical bonus to hit or damage
Armor	+1 non magical bonus to AC or 1d4x10% lbs lighter or 1d4 points less on Armor Penalty to skills, if that rule is used.
Boots/Shoes	+2 to daily overland travel speed
Cloak/Robe/Coat	+1 to save vs. cold, added concealment in shadows +5%
Clothing	The stunning quality of this evening dress gives a +1 to persuasive checks.
Tools	+1 to NWP checks using the masterwork tool
Lock	-10% to pick locks chances
Quiver/Boltcase	increases speed of bow by 3 initiative points
Tent	keeps 10 degrees warmer and/or weighs 40% less
Bow/Crossbow	has a +1 to accuracy or can shoot 10 yards further

Repairing Weapons, Items and Armor (Optional Rule)

It is up to the DM if items become damaged or worn in game terms. Normally the easiest way to include items wearing, dulling, or breaking is the use of critical rolls. For example if an enemy makes a critical hit against a character, his or her AC might worsen by 1 point. If the same PC makes a critical miss, their weapon could break or dull causing a -1 penalty. The penalties taken can later be removed through repair, as would be expected. This concept can be used with equipment and NWP checks as well, it does not have to be limited to combat rolls. Note that as a rule of thumb for a magical item to be damaged or destroyed, it takes an item or hazardous scenario of equal or greater magic. This does not mean that wearing magical armor grants a character invincibility against mundane weapons, it just means that the armor doesn't suffer from a critical hit from a non-magical sword.

Repairing an item (if possible at all) depends on what the item is and how it is to be repaired (see individual skill descriptions for more details). Swords are sharpened, even re-forged, armors patched and mended, and so on. Time-wise, it takes 10% of what the repairing character would need to create the item from scratch to repair each "penalty" it took due to damage or wear. The labor cost

is the same as it would be for creation: a combination of time spent and the repairing character's skill level. The raw materials cost is 2% of the items normal sale value per "penalty" that must be removed to fix it.

At the end of this time the repairman makes a NWP check, if successful the item has been repaired, if not he must try again. An example for armor: if a suit of chain mail were hit twice by critical hits, it would be at -2 to its AC value (2 penalties). It would take an Apprentice (supervised by an Expert) 2 weeks (10 weeks x 2 x 0.1) to repair this armor to its regularly functioning AC.

Repairing Magical Items: Obviously there are some cases when mundane skill, no matter how great, simply cannot repair magical items, the enchantment is depleted or destroyed and only a spellcaster could have a chance. However in the case that a skilled character could fix, mend, sharpen, or otherwise repair a magical item, the situation differs from depending on the greatest skill level of the workers (the one making the NWP check):

Trained ("Apprentice"): Cannot repair magical items.

Expert: Can repair magical items but it takes twice as long.

Specialist: Can repair magical items as quickly as he would normal ones.

Wandering Monsters

DRAGON SNAKE (Minor demon)
By Len Lakofka

Frequency:	Very rare
No. Appearing:	1–4
Armor Class:	−3
Movement:	9"
Hit Dice:	5+5
% In Lair:	15%
Treasure Type:	40% for d% pp, d% gp, d% ep; 20% for d6 gems; 10% for magic item
No. of Attacks:	3
Damage/Attack:	1–4/1–4/2–12
Special Attacks:	Poison bite, spell-like powers, breath weapon
Special Defenses:	Hit only by magic weapons; immune to poison
Magic Resistance:	25%
Intelligence:	Very
Alignment:	Chaotic Evil
Size:	M
Psionic Ability:	Nil
Attack/Defense Modes:	n/a
Level/X.P. Value:	VII/1,200 + 8/hp
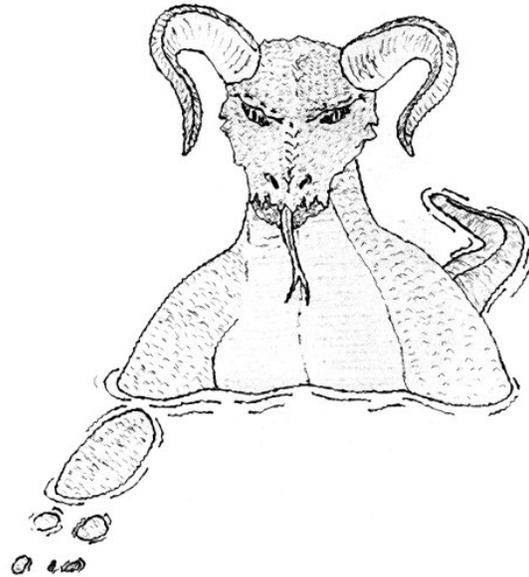
Dragon snakes are found as servitors to the ancient white, black, and red dragons of the Abyss. Further, they serve the Type V demons, especially Kevolulli, who is said to have an army of over 300 of them answerable directly to her.

A dragon snake fights with its claws and bite. The bite of the dragon snake is venomous, with a saving throw versus poison allowed. If the victim fails the save, then it will take 2d8+8 points of damage and lose one point of dexterity for 2 full turns. Successive bites can reduce dexterity to zero, at which point the victim will fall over in a heap. *Neutralize poison* will not cure any damage already taken, but it will restore lost dexterity at once. *Slow poison* will give back 1–4 points of dexterity lost to the poison. A successful save will result in only 1d6+2 points of damage, and there is no effect on dexterity.

The dragon snake can cast *darkness 10' r.* at will, centered upon itself or at a range of up to 400 feet. This special darkness has a duration of only 5 rounds. The dragon snake's senses give it no subtraction on to-hit rolls in magical or total darkness, while most monsters fight at −4, as if blind, in this *darkness*.

GNARLY TREE

By Len Lakofka

Frequency:	Uncommon
No. Appearing:	1–100
Armor Class:	−3
Movement:	0 (but see below)
Hit Dice:	1+2 to 16+32
% In Lair:	100%
Treasure Type:	Incidental: 5% per hit die for d% of each coin type; 2% per hit die for d6 gems of base 100 gp; 1% per hit die for d4 magic items
No. of Attacks:	1 + 1–4
Damage/Attack:	1 point per hit die from constriction
Special Attacks:	Poison
Special Defenses:	Immune to holds, charm, illusion, poison; ethereal access
Magic Resistance:	5% per hit die
Intelligence:	Animal to Genius (1 to 16)
Alignment:	Neutral Evil
Size:	1–3 HD: Small
	4–7 HD: Medium
	8+ HD: Large
Psionic Ability:	Special, see below
Attack/Defense Modes:	Special, see below
Level/X.P. Value:	VIII/2 XP per hit die per hit point plus a base of:

HD	XP	HD	XP
1 HD	50	9 HD	1,600
2 HD	125	10 HD	1,900
3 HD	225	11 HD	2,200
4 HD	375	12 HD	3,000
5 HD	525	13 HD	3,500
6 HD	675	14 HD	4,000
7 HD	925	15 HD	4,500
8 HD	1,300	16 HD	5,000

The gnarly tree grows outward from its short, squat central trunk and incidentally upward. A small gnarly tree (1HD) will have a height of only 2 to 5 feet but be spread out over 14 feet in all directions. As it grows outward, somewhat like a vine, its thick rubbery limbs become overloaded with weight and touch the ground. A new rootlet is immediately sent down at this point to further anchor the tree. From its central root the gnarly begins to spread out, sending 4 plus 1–6 limbs out in each direction. When a rootlet is created, 1–4 new limbs spread out, always away from the central root. The leaves of the gnarly are spear-shaped and broad.

The growth rate of a gnarly is astonishing. It can add 1/2 of one real inch to each of its limbs *every* hour and thus 1HD to its total every two weeks (i.e., about 14 feet per week per hit die). It grows upward (mainly by thickening of its central limbs at the rate of *1* foot per hit die.

The gnarly gains nourishment from rain and the soil but also from other plants and even animals, for it can be carnivorous. As it grows outward it can "sense" objects in its path of growth at a distance of 2 feet per hit die or via *empathy* at a range of 30 feet per level of mastery (see below for psionics). It then can accelerate the growth of a limb at the expense of two to four others. The new growth rate becomes 1 foot per minute. It can sustain th*is* growth rate for 1 turn (10 minutes) per hit die. It seeks to grow near to the object and then *around* it.

Obviously a small gnarly cannot grow around a very big object via this accelerated growth. If the burst of growth can cause the limb to grow around the sensed object (so that the limb can touch itself), the limb will begin to *contract*. This contraction has a physical strength of 2 points per hit die and inflicts 1 point of damage per round on victims too weak to break free from its grasp.

If the burst of growth does not cause the limb to loop back to touch itself growth will stop for one full day on all nearby limbs while the gnarly recovers. If the object is still in range after recovery, another burst of growth will occur.

Hard objects like a tree trunk or a stone will not be affected at all by a small gnarly. However, as the gnarly grows in hit dice, and thus the power of its contraction, it will affect hard objects as well. Consider armor class (without dexterity, of course) as a number being subtracted from 12. For example, armor class 10 becomes 2 while armor class 1 becomes 11. Negative armor classes are subtracted algebraically so that -3 becomes 15, etc. The gnarly can harm the object by constriction if its hit dice are greater than this resulting number. Note that a person in armor cannot use a shield to protect himself in this case. The overall protection of the body is what is considered. Note furthermore that the strength of the grasp might still hold a person solidly while being unable to harm that person due to a good armor class.

The gnarly has further weapons. Every six to nine feet, the gnarly produces 1–4 sharp thorns that have hollow points. Through these thorns, if one or more penetrates an object, poison is injected. This poison slows growth and metabolism. In another plant, this poison would stop the plant from growing and produce paralysis. An animal, monster, or person thus injected who fails its saving throw will *sleep* until removed from the hold of the tree. Once removed the victim will recover in one day per hit die of the gnarly or immediately if *neutralize poison* is cast.

The thorn of a gnarly will penetrate armor using the same rule of thumb at above for holding; i.e., if a victim is held but is not harmed due to contraction because of a good armor class, the thorn will not penetrate either.

It is important to note an exception. Armor that does not cover the entire body might allow a thorn to inject its poison, e.g., a person in chain whose arms, legs, and head are bare. The chance of a thorn piercing exposed flesh in such a case is 10% per limb (or head) that is exposed measured every full turn during a new burst of growth. Recall that initial growth is *not* in contact with the victim until contraction caused by looping around the victim occurs.

An example of an attack: A man lies down near a 6 HD gnarly, not realizing the danger, and falls asleep. The gnarly senses him (up to 12 feet away) and begins a burst of growth to envelop him. It can grow 1 foot per minute for 6 turns for a total burst of 60 feet. If the man is only 8 feet away, the limbs will reach him during the second turn of growth and begin to grow around him. Only one gnarly limb is involved, and it will *not* touch him until it has grown totally around him. Once it has, the tree begins its contraction at once with a strength of 12. If the man has a strength of 12 or better he can free himself at once. If he does not, then look at his armor class. If it is five (chain armor) his effective armor rating is 12 − 5 = 7. The gnarly cannot crush him because it has only 6 hit dice. However, the chance of penetration by a thorn now exists on the man's exposed flesh (probably his legs and arms). This chance is 40% (assuming his head is covered).

Once a gnarly has killed a victim, it uses its thorns to drink in the victim's fluids. The body and equipment (if any) of the victim are released to fall. If the gnarly has 12 or more HD, it will send down a limb to stay in contact with the body of the victim. This learned response is due to the fact that "monsters" that carry items (i.e., incidental treasure) will act as a lure to other

creatures that want that treasure. Thus the gnarly will accumulate treasure and even take it to the ethereal plane with it. The gnarly has no use for treasure itself.

Of course the gnarly can be attacked. To kill the tree the central trunk must be destroyed since that is the tree's heart. Hacking off any limb does not harm the tree at all. Every limb has the tree's hit points for the purpose of severing or destruction. However, if that limb was "bursting" in an attack, the nearby limbs are dormant and will not then take up the attack. A person who moves forward to hack at the central trunk must move through the dense limbs and overcome possible new bursts of growth in response. Note that pushing through the growth might also cause a thorn to strike the figure (40% chance).

Gnarlies reproduce once in life upon reaching 12 HD. At this point every thorn on the tree becomes inactive for one week and no new growth occurs. This dormancy period is when the gnarly is producing seeds and the time when the tree is most vulnerable. At the end of the week a seed is "loaded" at the base of each thorn and then a gas is built up at the base of the thorn. The gas buildup eventually "fires" the seed away from the tree up to 500 feet away. Those seeds fired nearby that produce new trees are doomed by the parent. The parent will sense them and kill them. However, other gnarlies that do reach 4 HD and thus have *empathy* (see below) will be immune to attack from another gnarly who is also at least 4 HD in size. In this way, forests of gnarlies can be produced.

Forests of gnarlies are especially dangerous and virtually impenetrable. The trees destroy other plant growth either by strangulation or by taking away light from ground-growing plants.

Gnarlies have a growing intelligence rating of one point per hit die. Gnarlies are psionic in nature but they only have one attack (psionic blast) and no defense since they are immune to psionic attack.

The gnarly uses its psionic blast *only* in response to magic used against it. The gnarly will fire a psionic blast at its magical attacker with range *not* being a factor. This is almost always a *long*-range attack for the purpose of the victim's saving throw. Even if killed by the attack form (e.g., *fireball*, *lightning bolt*), the gnarly will send out a psionic blast in its death agony against its attacker. Note: this attack applies to figures using devices like a **wand of fireballs** as well.

Psionics are gained at 4 HD with a beginning attack strength of 40 points. They add 10 more points per hit die thereafter. More important, the tree has three psionic disciplines available that are gained at 4 HD, 8 HD, and 12HD, respectively.

At 4 HD, the gnarly can use *empathy* to locate a thinking being. The range is 30 feet per level of mastery (i.e., level 1at 4 HD, level 2 at 5 HD, etc.) The gnarly's path of search is 360 degrees in all directions. *Empathy* gives no control, of course, it only senses a thinking mind. The gnarly can "burst" a limb toward the mind if the mind is in range. It uses *empathy* at least once a day to seek out intelligence nearby.

JACK JUMPER ANT, GIANT
By Barry W. Smith

Frequency:	Uncommon
No. Appearing:	10-100
Armor Class:	5
Movement:	12"
Hit Dice:	1
% In Lair:	
Treasure Type:	Incidental
No. of Attacks:	2
Damage/Attack:	1-4/1-10
Special Attacks:	Poison, Jump
Special Defenses:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	S (4" high and 1' long)
Psionic Ability:	Nil/Nil
Attack/Defense Modes: n/a	

Giant jack jumper ants are about 1 foot long, black and red, with yellowish-orange extremities and pincers. Their characteristic jumpy movement gave them their name. Jack jumpers possess a smaller than normal rear abdomen, and they can sense the approach of danger with their keen eyesight and swivel heads typically up to 50 feet away, turning to see prey approaching often before the prey spots them.

Jack jumpers are very aggressive. They generally sting rather than bite, though their bite is painful and usually used only to hold already-stung prey in their jaws. Their sting can be deadly, as the poison has a 5% chance per sting of causing an anaphylactic shock reaction in victims, forcing them to save vs. poison at -2 or die. Jack jumpers, with their superior eyesight and highly defensive natures, will often pursue fleeing prey to unusual distances from the nest. They also swarm over a victim, biting and stinging, until the victim is dead. They then drag the dead creature back to the nest for dissection to carry it below ground to the larvae.

Jack jumpers are particularly vulnerable to cold spells, suffering double damage from cold magic. They have, however, developed a powerful resistance to *cloudkill*, the typical vermin-eradication spell. Jack jumpers, despite their low HD, receive a save vs. poison at +1 when attacked by *cloudkill*.

Jack jumper nests are typically piles of finely granular gravel 5-12 feet in diameter and are located around rocks or ruined structure or in more inconspicuous locations, such as under boulder fields.

SIAFU, GIANT
By Barry W. Smith

Frequency:	Uncommon
No. Appearing:	1-10 (5-50)
Armor Class:	4
Movement:	12"
Hit Dice:	3+3
% In Lair:	10%
Treasure Type:	Incidental
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	1-6
Special Attacks:	Nil
Special Defenses:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	S to M (2' high and 3' long (workers); M 3' high and 7' long (soldiers))
Psionic Ability:	Nil/Nil
Attack/Defense Modes:	n/a

Giant siafu are a special of giant ant who exhibit a hive mind. Within the colony, there are two castes of ant: the workers measure about 3 feet in length, and soldiers are almost three times that size. The queen resembles a large ant with an enormous abdomen. She can be up to 12 feet long. Males are winged and are about 2 feet long.

Siafu attack via swarming their prey and literally tearing it apart. The bite from siafu mandibles is very painful and inflicts 1-6 points of damage per round. Once a siafu finds prey (typically a scout), it emits a chemical pheromone that calls to other siafu, triggering their deadly swarming attack. Very few creatures are capable of withstanding even a scouting party's swarming attack once a target has been acquired, much less a hunting party.

Colonies of siafu can number up to 10,000 strong. Almost daily, hunting parties of siafu, led by scouts, embark on raids for food to be brought back to the nest. Although totally blind, siafu rely on touch, smell and chemical signals from the abdomen of the leading ants. Siafu also detect prey through the release of carbon dioxide. The swarms can travel at up to 5 miles in an hour, stripping all life in their path. They are also known to raid the nests of other social insects, although never those of other siafu. They do not rely on stings to attack; rather they use their large and powerful mandibles to create puncture wounds and tear off flesh. During their nomadic existence, they form temporary nests or "bivouacs" made from the living members of the colony, in which they house the developing grubs. Whenever the ants swarm or migrate, they form large highways of workers, bordered by the soldiers, which hang over the action, their mandibles waving to sense any dangers that might approach, to protect the colony as it moves.

TATZELWORM

By John A. Turcotte

Frequency:	Very Rare
No. Appearing:	1-4
Armor Class:	6
Movement:	12"
Hit Dice:	1-6 hit points
% In Lair:	40%
Treasure Type:	Incidental
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	1-3
Special Attacks:	Poison
Special Defenses:	Nil
Magic Resistance:	Standard
Intelligence:	Animal
Alignment:	Neutral
Size:	S (3' long)
Psionic Ability:	Nil/Nil
Attack/Defense Modes:	n/a
X.P. Value:	57+1 per hit point

These curious creatures inhabit cold alpine peaks. In appearance, they look like silvery, fat-bodied lizards without hind legs. They can move surprisingly fast, slithering on their stomachs, and can leap up to 10'. They are notoriously aggressive and will not hesitate to attack larger creatures that intrude upon their territory. When leaping to the attack, they gain a +1 bonus to hit.

The bite of a tatzelworm is deadly, and a victim must successfully save versus poison or die.

These cold-loving reptiles save at +1 against cold-based attacked, and such damage against them is reduced by 1 hit point per die. They save versus fire normally.

VALUSIAN
By John A. Turcotte

Frequency:	Very Rare (at best)
No. Appearing:	1
Armor Class:	5 or better
Movement:	15"
Hit Dice:	6
% In Lair:	80%
Treasure Type:	C, Z
No. of Attacks:	1
Damage/Attack:	1-4
Special Attack:	Spells
Special Defenses:	See below
Magic Resistance:	50%
Intelligence:	Genius to Supra-Genius
Alignment:	Lawful Evil
Size:	M (8' long but thin)
Psionic Ability:	Nil/Nil
Attack/Defense Modes: n/a	
X.P. Value:	1550 + 10/hp

Rare and dangerous ancient texts whisper of a secret history. They record the legends of an ancient wicked race that ruled the world long before mankind existed. These tyrants enslaved the forebears of the demihumans and delved into forbidden arcane knowledge; they mastered the secrets of wizardry at the dawn of time and raised obscene cities of which there is now no trace. For untold millennia, these forgotten masters controlled the world and shaped it according to their depraved whims. It is whispered that at the height of their wicked decadence, a cataclysm wracked the empire, and the despots fell from power and were forced to scatter to dark places in the world. Whether this crisis was caused by a slave revolt or by the unleashing of some awful magic gone awry is unknown. It is said that some of the tyrants hid themselves away, protected by powerful spells, to be awakened when the time was right for them to exert their draconian rule again. After long eons, there is no trace of their cyclopean capitals, nor any sign that they ever existed.

The valusians are a decadent race of powerful magic-using creatures. They may be the forebears of the yuan-ti and ophidians. Those few who survived the cataclysms of an unknown Age are hidden in secret places in *temporal stasis*, awaiting their reawakening. It is highly doubtful that there are more than a handful in the world, which is fortunate, for they are dangerous indeed. If they were to unite, there would be little defense against these fiends.

If one of these creatures is encountered, it has already been roused from its stasis, and has begun to seek out its comrades. Each member of the race is an accomplished illusionist, with spell casting ability of 9th-14th level (1d6+8). They are rumored to make use of many spells that have been long forgotten. Valusians are exceedingly intelligent and avoid personal combat if they can avoid it. They are more concerned with subjugating those who can assist them, and keeping their existence secret while they work to reestablish their empire.

A valusian may cast *suggestion* at will, as long as the victim is not engaged in active combat against it and vice versa. They speak their own language and have a natural gift for learning

others. An encountered valusian is 90% likely to have learned the most common language in their area.

They are immune to "person"-affecting spells (*hold person*, etc) and *charms*. In addition, they do not possess eardrums, and so are immune to attacks that require hearing (such as a *command* spell). They save against all spells (those that penetrate their magic resistance) as 12th level illusionists (regardless of their spell-casting ability) and make all other saves as 6th level illusionists. Valusians are, however, vulnerable to cold, and in addition to saving at -1 against these attacks, they suffer +1 hit point of damage per die. Although they have no sense of hearing, their senses of smell and sight are acute. They also possess a form of infravision up to 30'. Moreover, they can sense body heat at a range of 60'. Therefore, *invisibility* (at least when cast on warm-blooded creatures) is of little use against them.

If forced into combat, the valusians are lightning fast, with a +3 bonus to initiative. They can bite, fighting as 6 hit die monsters, and their venom is deadly (save or die). These fiends will nearly always possess protective magical items, **bracers of defense**, **rings** and **cloaks of protection**, etc., above and beyond that treasure indicated by their treasure type. These items are usually of the most powerful type. They do require spellbooks and must rest and study to recover spells as other illusionists do.

The oldest surviving scrolls that hint at the empire of the valusians also whisper that even among the tyrants, there were more fearsome emperors, overlords among their own kind. Whether or not there are more powerful members of this race, and whether such creatures escaped the doom of the empire, is unknown.

Description: The valusians are quite beautiful in a deadly way. They look much like great cobras, but with arms and legs. Their scales are a dazzling emerald with bands of gold. Their eyes are gold-flecked and serpentine. They often lull those around them with slow and deliberate movements, when in fact they are capable of moving with blinding speed. The valusians have extended their lives with powerful dweomers; they cannot age, nor will they ever die naturally. Not surprisingly, they are cruel and arrogant and view all other races as their slaves.

Barabuz '03

The Ballad of the Phantasmal Vorpal Sword

Unifying Damage from Illusion/Phantasm Spells in AD&D

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"My illusionist casts phantasmal force and creates a bottomless pit beneath the orc shaman!"

"My spectral owlbear rushes at the kobolds!"

"Using my wand of illusions, I create a phantasmal knight armed with a vorpal sword!"

Perhaps no other aspect of AD&D has so vexed players and Dungeon Masters alike as *phantasmal force* and its ilk. The spell first appeared in the OD&D supplement *Men & Magic*, wherein it allowed the magic-user to create an illusion "of nearly anything the user envisions." Any harm caused by the illusion was real if the illusion was believed. When the illusionist class was introduced in the *Strategic Review,* no. 7, the more powerful illusion spells simply referred back to *Men and Magic*'s nebulous vagaries. With the advent of AD&D's *Players Handbook*, the spell explanation was expanded. The damage

created by a *phantasmal force*, for example, is real if the illusion was believed, and, more important, a save is only permitted if the creature immediately disbelieves the spell.

This "expansion" provided little relief. Indeed, there seemed to be a genuine reluctance to place parameters on illusionary magic. Although AD&D was created, in part, to standardize the game to ensure consistency between gaming groups, illusions slipped entirely through the cracks of the process. The game effects of illusions were left squarely in the lap of the presiding Dungeon Master with no real guidance. As a result, the power of illusions has come to vary widely between groups. All too often, the illusion/phantasm school spells, especially *phantasmal force* and *spectral force*, are used like comic-book hero Green Lantern's ring: they have no limits aside from the caster's imagination. Illusionists become all-powerful; these spells effectively permit the caster to cast any spell ("I create a spectral *meteor swarm*!") or to create any desired effect. Under this interpretation, illusionists are able to create bottomless chasms beneath the feet of their adversaries and hurl spectral fireballs to incinerate ranks of opponents. Indeed, the story has even been related in one gaming forum of a spectral warrior armed with an illusionary vorpal sword! The sop that this is not grossly overpowered because a successful save negates the entire illusion is disingenuous, at best. Unless the illusion is supremely over the top, there would be no reason for PCs in a dungeon to disbelieve pits, *fireballs*, and enemy knights. It becomes a crass excuse for metagaming: no save is permitted unless the *player* states that his PC is attempting to disbelieve. The obvious consequence of this, of course, is that each event and encounter begins with all the players stating that their PCs attempt to disbelieve. More important, the problem with this interpretation is that illusionists become
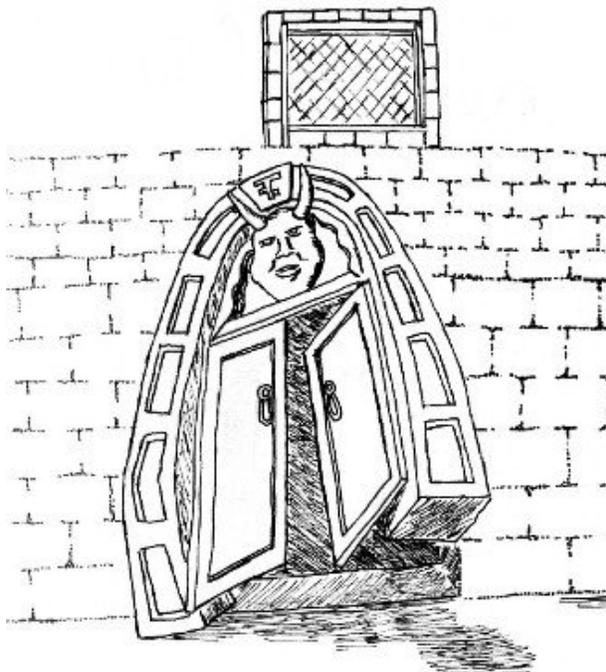
grossly overpowered and the classes unbalanced. Since *phantasmal force* is also available to magic-users, the unbalancing becomes even greater. What is to stop the 5th level illusionist from unleashing spectral *meteor swarms*, 101 *,magic missiles*, or ancient red dragons? What is to stop the 1st level illusionist from creating a phantasmal pit 120' deep (and inflicting 20d6 damage)?

By the same token, there are some illusion-loathing DMs who, frustrated with the lack of guidance and appalled at the abuses described by other gamers, have allowed the pendulum to swing the other way. These DMs have decreed that illusions cause no harm at all, apart from "illusionary damage," which varies from gaming group to group, but which is usually temporary in nature. Under this interpretation, character death by illusionary damage results only in unconsciousness.

However, neither of these viewpoints can be accurate. The latter is directly contradicted both by the plain language of the spell descriptions in the *Players Handbook*, and the former by the game's carefully created spell system. The purpose of this article is to attempt to create some consistency in this regard by crafting a system for assigning rates of damage to be applied to illusions depending upon their source.

Internal Consistency

The most obvious flaw of the "Green Lantern" philosophy is that the AD&D spell system is, for the most part, beautifully balanced. Spells that inflict damage seldom, if ever, cause more damage than spells of higher level. Spells may be roughly categorized according to their level. The 1st level spell *magic missile* is less powerful, in terms of damage, than the 3rd level spell *fireball*, and so on. The AD&D spell system is internally consistent.

Therefore, a spell of the illusion/phantasm type must be read in the context of the others and not interpreted in isolation. While *phantasmal force* is a 3rd level magic-user spell, it is 1st level for illusionists, and all the

other spells for that class are more powerful. Therefore, *phantasmal force* (be it 1st or 3rd level) cannot achieve a result as powerful as the 4th level illusionist spell *phantasmal killers*. If it could, the spell system would be inconsistent and there would be no need for this higher-level spell. It would follow, then, that the use of *phantasmal force* cannot cause instant death in a foe nor create an illusionary adversary capable of dealing instant death if a save is failed. This makes sense, since a mere *phantasmal force* lacks some sensory effects. Similarly, the 3rd level spell *spectral force* cannot create a game effect as powerful as the 5th level spell *shadow magic*. Following that internal logic, a spectral *fireball* cannot inflict as much damage as a shadow *fireball*.

The Hierarchy of Illusions

Where does this analysis leave us? Since we know that even a lowly *phantasmal force* can inflict some damage, the issue becomes the amount of damage that can be dealt. There must be a system that preserves the wonderfully amorphous nature of illusions while enabling the DM to make a determination of the exact parameters of the illusion's effects.

The hierarchy of illusion/phantasm spells, at least in terms of spell level, is as follows:

First Level:	Phantasmal force
Second Level:	Improved phantasmal force
Third Level:	Spectral force
Fourth Level:	Phantasmal killer, shadow monsters
Fifth Level:	Demi-shadow monsters, shadow magic
Sixth Level:	Permanent illusion, programmed illusion, shades

Looking at the hierarchy of illusionist spells, one can see the range of spell potency. *Shadow magic* is four levels more powerful than *phantasmal force* and one greater than *spectral force*. Because *shadow magic* provides a range of damage, it is instructive when reviewing lower orders of illusions.

Shadow magic allows an illusionist to mimic an offensive magic-user spell (*magic missile*,

fireball, lightning bolt, or *cone of cold*). The victim is permitted a saving throw. If the save is failed, the spells have their normal effects (therefore, presumably, permitting the victim to save again in the instance of all variations except *magic missile*). If the save is made, the victim suffers only 1 hit point of damage per level of the caster.

Compare this, then, to the apparently all too common example of *spectral force* being used to create a *fireball* and the player clamoring for it to have full effect (i.e., 1d6 hit points of damage per level of the caster; save for one-half damage) unless the victim disbelieves—which is highly unlikely. Meta-gaming aside, why would a robed spell-caster hurling a *fireball* trigger any suspicion at all? But that ruling, very simply, cannot be the case. The purely illusionary spectral *fireball* cannot be more powerful than the "quasi-real" shadow *fireball*. To hold so would be to tip the AD&D spell-level system on its ear. Note that *shadow magic* is not attainable until the illusionist is at least 10th level, as opposed to 6th for *spectral force*. If the spells are to be consistent with one another, *spectral force* should not be capable of inflicting more damage than *shadow magic* (and note that *shadow*

magic, as originally presented in *The Strategic Review* was even less powerful).

Using the hierarchy and the parameters of *shadow magic*, let's take an example that seems pretty common: the 1st level illusionist creating a *phantasmal force* of a fireball. It won't work, of course; *phantasmal force* has no sound, smell, or heat effects. It would be, in effect, a "magical hologram" of a bright ball of flickering light. It might scare someone but could not cause actual harm; there is no sense of heat. Moving up the hierarchy, we come to *improved phantasmal force*. Some sound is included, but the illusion still carries no heat or smell. It is still not very convincing. How about *spectral force*? OK, now we're getting somewhere. This type of illusion specifically includes sound, smell, and thermal sensations. A spectral *fireball* is therefore possible. And since we know how much damage a shadow *fireball* can inflict, we can begin to assess a range of damage. More important, by determining a range of damage for a spectral *fireball*, we are also setting a logical range to any and all damage created by the spell, whether it is used to mimic a *fireball* or a swarm of arrows or a ravenous owlbear. Continuing the analysis downward, we can assign a range of damage to *phantasmal force* as well.

The following chart uses *shadow magic* as its basis and assigns suggested parameters for damage inflicted by illusion/phantasm spells:

Spell	Level	Made Save Damage	Failed Save Damage
Phantasmal Force	1	0	1 hp/level of the caster
Improved Phantasmal Force	2	0	1d2 hp/level of the caster
Spectral Force	3	0	1d3 hp/level of the caster
Shadow Magic	4	1 hp/level of caster	1d6/level of the caster (maximum)

The above chart provides a DM with some basis for resolving illusions in combat. Whether faced with a phantasmal spiked pit trap or a spectral knight, damage can be assigned (1 hp/level and 1d3 hp/level, respectively). Note that the damages for *phantasmal force, improved phantasmal force,* and *spectral force,* while probably less than the range advocated by players, are no

niggling amounts. Generally speaking, unless the illusionist overreaches, these spells have no effective saving throw.

There are those, no doubt, who would (and will) decry such a system. If one favors the Green Lantern interpretation, such a process effectively guts the use of *phantasmal force*. Likewise, the stingy, illusion-loathing camp

may find the idea of a spectral owlbear inflicting 1d3/level of actual damage horrifying. However, this analysis is aimed at reaching a middle ground. Quite frankly, it will encourage players with illusionist PCs to become more creative, not less. Although the phantasmal pit trap may not be immediately deadly, it will certainly keep its victims occupied and other opponents will stop short of the seeming crevice, giving the illusionist time to flee or perhaps ready another spell. Likewise, why waste a *spectral force* on a flash-in-the-pan *fireball*? Why not create a *wall of fire* or a lumbering mass of burning tar? The real objective of this article is to provide the DM with a fast and consistent method for dealing with these spells, which, by their very nature, are difficult to quantify.

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New Spells

A selection of new spells submitted by the Dragonsfoot forum members.

Bend Metal (Alteration)
by Jason Cone

Level:	Magic-user, 3
Range:	1"/level
Duration:	Permanent
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	4 segments
Saving Throw:	Special
Area of Effect:	Special

When this spell is cast the magic-user causes a span of metal to bend, permanently altering its straightness and form. It affects a span of metal approximately fifteen inches long per level of caster. The span of metal may not be greater than approximately one inch in diameter. The span must be a long, relatively thin, rod-like object (e.g. an iron bar, a sword, a metal shaft). The nature of the alteration is such that it will fail to function on metal objects that deviate from this general form (e.g. armor, shields, etc).

The spell can bend normal metals, up to and including the finest steel. Stronger metals and alloys that are superior to steel might grant the item a saving throw, at the DM's option. All magic items (even those constructed of softer metals) receive a saving throw vs. crushing blow. Non-magic items receive no saving throw, except as noted, above. Artifacts are completely unaffected by the spell.
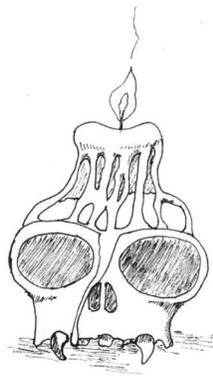
Curse of Xen (Abjuration)
by Stuart Marshall

Level:	Magic-user, 2
Range:	6"
Duration:	4 rounds + 1 round/level
Components:	V, S
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	Neg.
Area of Effect:	One creature

This spell resembles the third level magic-user spell *slow* except as noted above (i.e. one target only and permits a saving throw).

Curse of Yarthos (Abjuration)
by Stuart Marshall

Level:	Magic-user, 1
Range:	6"
Duration:	3 rounds/level
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	1 segment
Saving Throw:	Special
Area of Effect:	1d6 creatures

The targets of this spell become severely intoxicated (as per the *DMG*), with all appropriate penalties. If the saving throw is passed they become mildly intoxicated. The material component is a small quantity of wine, ale, mead, or some other form of liquor.

Golems, elementals, the undead, insubstantial creatures, and creatures from the outer planes are generally not subject to intoxication and hence immune to this spell.

Creatures of size "L" get a bonus of +2 on their saving throw owing to their increased body mass. Exceptionally large creatures such as giants (basically anything bigger than an ogre) save at +5, are unaffected if their saving throw passes, and are only mildly intoxicated if the throw fails. Huge creatures massing more than a ton (such as dragons, rocs, and purple worms) save at +10.

Ice Shards (Evocation)
by Stuart Marshall

Level:	Magic-user, 1
Range:	12"
Duration:	Instantaneous
Components:	V, S
Casting Time:	1 segment
Saving Throw:	None
Area of Effect:	One creature

This spell creates a shard of ice which inflicts 1d6 points of damage on the target. One additional ice shard is gained every three levels, so a first level caster gets 1 shard, a fourth level gets 2, a seventh level gets 3, etc.

Rexok's Punishing Blade
(Conjuration/Summoning)
by Stuart Marshall

Level:	Magic-user, 2
Range:	6"
Duration:	1 round + 1 round/level
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	None
Area of Effect:	One creature

This spell creates a mystical, self-animated dagger which will attempt to stab its target repeatedly for the duration of the spell. The dagger makes one attack per round as if wielded by a fighter of the same level as the caster. It inflicts 1d4 damage if it hits. At the spell's expiration the dagger will disappear. The material component of the spell is a dagger.

Protection from normal missiles will render the subject immune to this spell.

Three special notes apply to this spell: First, the mystical blade (although created by magic) is not in itself magical. It cannot hit a target which is immune to non-magical weapons—but it will also not be dispelled by a target's magic resistance. Second, if cast by a magic-user/thief, the caster can cause the dagger to appear behind the target and get his or her normal chances for full backstab bonus on the first attack. Third, once the spell has

been cast, the caster need no longer concentrate on it and can perform other actions as normal during the spell's duration, including making melee attacks or casting other spells.

Valdemar's Voltaic Digits (Evocation)
by Joel K. Bishop

Level:	Magic-user, 2
Range:	special
Duration:	1 round/5 lvls of caster
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	2 segments
Saving Throw:	special
Area of Effect:	special

By means of this spell the magic-user is able to send forth an arc of snaking current from one or more fingertips to his opponent or his gear but not both, up to 10 feet away plus an additional 1 foot per level thereafter to a maximum of 30 feet. If multiple opponents are chosen, all attacks must go against gear or persons; mixing and matching targets is impossible.

For every 2 levels the caster has attained, he or she is able to discharge another stream of electricity from an extra digit, so that upon reaching 20th level, all ten fingers could shoot forth arcs of current. Each "bolt" of electricity causes 1 point of temporary damage for every round the spell is in effect. Resting for 6 full turns will restore all damage caused by the electrical effects.

For each round after the first an additional point in damage will be received by the target from heat build-up due to the resistance of the opponent. This damage is cumulative so that at round 2, it inflicts 2 points of damage, 3 points on the third round, etc. The heating effects are similar to the druid spell "heat metal" in that after 3 or more rounds of heat damage, a victim of the spell wearing metal will suffer the adverse effects of that spell.

Furthermore, the streams of electricity can be targeted to more than one opponent so that up to 10 targets may be so attacked (1
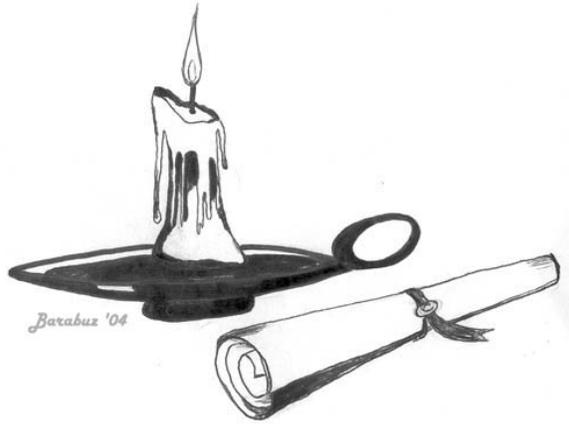
opponent per digit). Each opponent so targeted must make a saving throw vs. spells. Successful saves result in no effect at all; the stream is assumed to have missed. If, however, only one target is chosen for attack by multiple bolts, that target must save at -1 per each additional bolt. Upon failing a save, the opponent must make a second save vs. spells or be incapacitated by the discharges until the spell ends or the magic-user wishes to cease the attack.

Each round, the recipient of the attack is allowed a new saving throw, with success meaning the opponent is no longer incapacitated and may struggle forward to attack his aggressor or anyone else in his vicinity at one-half speed. The magic-user must actively concentrate during the entire time the spell is in effect thus preventing any further action. Should the attacked close to melee range with the spellcaster it will be able to attack at a bonus of +2 to hit.

Note that his spell may be used against creatures who are impervious to electricity due to the heat generated by the spell. Likewise, creatures impervious or otherwise protected from heat attacks will be immune to the effects of the spell.

The material component for this spell is an bone ring carved from an animal struck by lightning. On top of the ring must be affixed a miniature copper claw-shaped hand with the word "Palpatine" etched on the band. Cost is 500 gp. The ring is reusable and does not count against the two magic rings maximum dictum.

Warp Metal (Alteration)
by Jason Cone

Level:	Magic-user, 5
Range:	1/2" /level
Duration:	Permanent
Components:	V, S, M
Casting Time:	5 segments
Saving Throw:	Special
Area of Effect:	Special

When this spell is cast the magic-user causes a volume of metal to bend and warp, permanently altering straightness and form. It affects twelve cubic inches of metal for each level of experience of the magic-user casting it. This spell can affect metal objects of any form or shape, including weapons, armor, shields, metal doors, etc. Multiple objects may be affected, so long as the total volume affected is not exceeded.

If cast on metal armor, this spell can be used to reduce that armor's effectiveness, lowering its protection by 5 (possibly rendering the armor useless). Alternatively, it can be used to harm the wearer of metal armor, doing 5-20 hp of damage from crushing, pinching, and cutting.

The spell can warp normal metals, up to and including the finest steel. Stronger metals and alloys that are superior to steel might grant the item a saving throw, at the DM's option. All magic items (even those constructed of softer metals) receive a saving throw vs. crushing blow. Non-magic items receive no saving throw, except as noted above. Artifacts are completely unaffected by the spell.

Prism of the Shades
An Artifact for AD&D
by Michael Haskell

An evil illusionist of the highest level created this forearm-sized, deep purple prism millennia ago with aid from the gods of deception. He used it to conquer an entire kingdom but was eventually killed by an order of paladins that invaded his stronghold. They took the prism for safekeeping, but it vanished from their temple-keep and was presumed to have been stolen by one of the mad mages of the South.

The prism is thoroughly evil and chaotic and seeks to spread its influence and wreak its evil as much as possible, this agenda exceeded only by a dedication to its own preservation. Used by a powerful illusionist or an extraplanar creature with illusion abilities, the prism can amplify the power of a *shades* spell (q.v.). Creatures created this way are both real and permanent. The spell's hit-dice limits still apply, but the shades are always full-strength monsters (dice for hit points normally). The only difference in appearance between the created shades and the real creatures of the type desired by the prism's possessor is that the created beings are slightly darker and more drab in coloration, as if some of their brightness had been leeched out of them. Additionally, when one of these creatures is killed, its body dissolves into a *color spray* spell as if cast by an illusionist of the same level as the creature's hit dice. Any opponent who has encountered this effect can attempt to disbelieve the shades when in combat. A successful saving throw versus spells to disbelieve automatically entitles the opponent to a saving throw versus the *color spray* and, further, makes the effects (if any) of the *color spray* to be one category better than the levels/hit dice ratio would normally dictate (though a failed save against the color spray will still always at least result in *stunning*).

The prism also alters the casting of the *shades* spell; in addition to any requirements dictated by the prism's effects (see *DMG*, "Artifacts and Relics"), the casting time is one hour per base hit die of the desired creature (i.e., a thirteenth-level illusionist creating 4 ogres would spend 4 hours casting; to create 1 cloud giant would take 12 or 13 hours). Each +4 on hit dice counts as a full die for these purposes. For creating dragons, each age level over young adult (q.v.) adds another hit die/hour. Note that the illusionist need never have encountered a creature to form its shade with the prism; merely knowing the name is enough, as the prism itself supplies the details. Undead and extraplanar creatures cannot be created as shades in this manner.
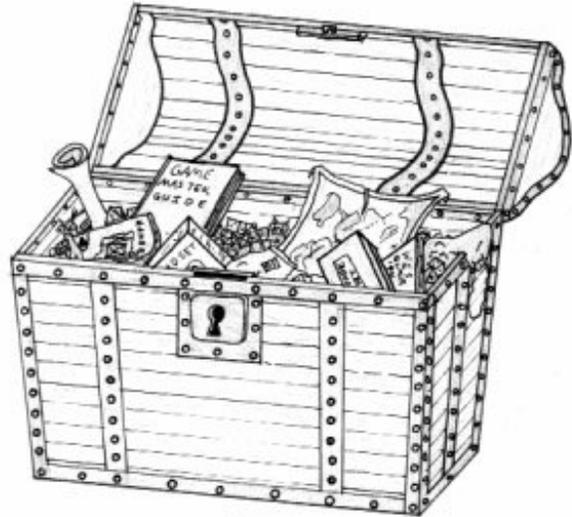
Created shades will be loyal to the possessor of the prism to a point. Intelligent creatures will still have their own agendas, and some, such as dragons or some giants, might seek to gain possession of the prism for themselves! The possessor will guard it jealously against its own creations. Less powerful/intelligent monsters will be more easily controllable. Note also that humans and demihumans created will be of a basic type, as detailed in

the *Monster Manual*, not exceptional, character-type beings.

In addition to these powers, the prism has the following additional powers and effects. The powers possessed by the original campaign version are listed in parentheses:

1 X I (minor benign): (N. *Detect invisibility* when held and ordered)

1 X II (major benign): (WW. *Wizard eye* 2 times/day)

2 X III (minor malevolent): (F. Holy water within 10' of item becomes polluted); (W. Yearning for item forces possessor to never be away from it for more than 1 day if possible)

2 X IV (major malevolent): (E. Item has power to affect its possessor when a primary power is used if possessor has not followed the alignment/purposes of the artifact/relic); (S. Sacrifice a certain animal [2 HD or more] to activate item for 1 day)

1 X V (prime powers): (BB. The item enables the possessor to *legend lore*, *commune*, or *contact higher plane* (7th–10th) 1 time/week)