

# Level Up Playtest #1

## Origins

Welcome to the first *Level Up* playtest document. This playtest contains a candidate for the game's Origins system—the initial building blocks of your character.

### What this is

This is a playtest document. We'd love you to try out the rules presented here, and then answer the follow-up survey in a few days.

### What this is not

This is NOT the final game. It's OK if you don't like elements of these rules; that's the purpose of a playtest document. Be sure to participate in the follow-up survey in a few days. All data, positive or negative is useful.

### What we use this for

Your survey responses help form the direction of the game as it goes through the development process.

### Don't forget!

Sign up for [the mailing list](#) for notifications of playtests, surveys, and news. And make sure you get [notified on Kickstarter](#) when the project launches in 2021.

#### 1. Choose a heritage.

1.1 Note your heritage traits, size, speed, and age.

1.2 Choose one heritage gift.

2. **Choose a culture.** You can choose any culture, even if the culture is not listed under your heritage. Your dwarf can grow up in a wood elf village, or your tiefling can hail from a cosmopolitan city.

2.1 Note your cultural traits.

#### 3. Choose a background.

3.1 Apply ability score increases.

3.2 Note your background proficiencies, languages, and feature.

3.3 Roll or choose your connections and memento.

## Your Origin

What makes your character who they are? What have they experienced? When building your character, their upbringing—and by extension, the culture they were raised in—can have as much of an impact as their heritage. By splitting your character's origin into three parts—Heritage, Culture, and Background—there is ample opportunity to create wildly diverse characters, whose skill set reflects the life they have lived in the most accurate way possible.

## Building Your Origin Story

The prevalence of each heritage and culture can vary from setting-to-setting, and from campaign-to-campaign. Only you know what story you are trying to tell with your character, and as such only you know the best way to build that character's origin. In a magical world, anything is possible, and all of the heritages, cultures, and backgrounds presented in this chapter—as well as those you might build yourself—are viable options for an adventurer of any class. However, to ensure your character fits your specific game and setting, you should always have a discussion with your gamemaster about the character options available to you prior to character creation.

Your heritage solely influences your character's physical appearance and traits, while your culture influences those traits that would be learned or developed over time. Your background reflects the path you have chosen to take, or a path you have been pulled into, independent of your heritage or culture. This grants you things like proficiencies with skills, languages, and tools, and bonuses to certain ability scores to represent the areas of your life that have seen intentional improvement. The following sections are designed to walk you through the three part origin creation process, and to help you build your ideal adventurer.

## Heritage

The first step in the origin creation process is deciding on a heritage. Each heritage listed in this chapter includes unique, biologically inherited traits as well as details about their physical appearances. While this may seem like the most important step, it is important to remember that nurture plays as much of a role in development as nature; while you may be used to seeing lithe, agile elves, the culture and background you choose can provide the stepping stone needed to create a hulking elven barbarian. While it may affect how the world perceives them, an adventurer should never be limited by their heritage.

When building your character's origin, you can choose only one heritage to gain traits from; the sidebar "Mixed Heritages" should be consulted when multiple heritages are needed for a character. Occasionally, a heritage may provide multiple Heritage Gifts to choose from; when this is the case, you may choose only one Heritage Gift.

Additionally, each heritage has a paragon gift that is gained at 10th level. These features will typically grant an improvement to a trait granted by the heritage, or a new way to use a trait. The following sections appear in the descriptions for most heritages.

### Age

This section details the average age at which a character of this heritage is considered to have reached adulthood, as well as their average lifespan. Your character can be of any age, which could also be an opportunity to explain away significantly low or high ability scores.

### Size

All creatures are assigned a size, ranging from Tiny to Gargantuan. Medium and Small are the most common sizes for adventurers,

though some heritages may deviate from that.

## Speed

While other factors may influence your total speed, each heritage has a base movement speed. This determines how far you can move on your turn during combat and while traveling.

## Heritage Gift

In addition to the traits granted to all characters of the same heritage, heritages include multiple heritage gifts for you to choose from to further diversify your character. When multiple options are presented, you may choose only one.

## Paragon Gift

At 10th level, each heritage grants a paragon gift. This could be a completely new feature, or something that improves or offers a new way to use a trait already granted by the heritage.

## Culture

The second step in the origin creation process is choosing your character's culture. This would be the culture they were raised in, and can be different from the heritage you chose. This can be used to represent a character's past as a refugee, being adopted into a new family, or simply being raised outside of their heritage for a number of reasons. The culture you choose will provide your character with a number of proficiencies and traits that they would have learned through living amongst that culture, or that members of that culture are often trained in.

For each heritage option presented, there are multiple cultural options. When building your character's origin, you can choose only one culture to gain traits from.

Each culture listed in this chapter includes a description of what sort of life a character from that culture would experience. This can range from the morals and traditions of a culture, to explaining how one would find themselves a part of that culture to begin with. The following section appears in the description for most cultures.

## Languages

This section details the languages that a character can read, speak, write, and sign, provided there is no disability or condition that prevents them from doing so. When given a choice of language, consider choosing one that further brings your character to life; the decision could be impacted by their family, previous occupations, or even just a special interest.

## Background

The final step in creating your character's origin story is choosing their background. A character's background tells a story about the life they have chosen to lead, separate from the culture they were raised in. This step can be used to tell nearly any story; how your character became an adventurer, why they claim a culture other than the one associated with their heritage, or their journey towards finding their place in the world.

While deciding on a background does not have to complete your character's story, it provides a sturdy base for developing said story. A character's background typically reflects what they have chosen for themselves, setting it apart from the heritage and culture they likely had little control over. One of the most important questions you can ask when choosing your background is how does this relate to your character's current adventuring status? Did they leave a job they loved to adventure out of a sense of duty, or were they forced out of their home? Did they spend their inheritance on adventuring gear

in search of excitement, or did they save their meager wages until they could embark on a journey bigger than themselves? After being dealt their cards in life, how did they make the most of it—or did they set off in search of a new hand?

The backgrounds in this chapter provide both mechanical benefits, such as ability score increases and proficiencies, as well as more roleplay-oriented benefits. As with the other origin sections, you can choose only one background to gain the benefits of. The following sections appear in the descriptions for most backgrounds.

### Ability Score Increase

Each background increases at least one of a character's ability scores by one point, to reflect the abilities utilized or valued the most by that background.

### Proficiencies

Most backgrounds grant proficiency with at least two skills, which are explained more later. Additionally, most backgrounds grant a character proficiency with an appropriate tool set (or multiple sets). These tools and proficiencies are explained more later.

If your character would gain the same proficiency from multiple areas, such as a heritage or cultural trait or class feature, they may instead choose a new proficiency of the same type (skill or tool).

### Languages

Like cultures, your background can also allow you to learn additional languages. Provided there is no disability or condition that prevents them from doing so, characters are considered to be able to read, speak, sign, and write the languages granted by their background.

### Any Culture

You can choose any culture for your character, even if it is not listed alongside your character's heritage. A dwarf can grown up in a wood elf culture, and a tiefling can hail from a cosmopolitan city.

In addition to the cultures generally associated with each heritage, there are also several general cultures you can choose from.

### Connections

Each background provides options for one acquaintance, ally, or enemy that has had an effect on your character's life. This could be a childhood friend, a sparring partner, or even a business competitor. Make sure to include your GM when choosing your connection; you never know when they'll show back up.

### Equipment

Suggested equipment sets are included with each background, along with an associated gold cost.

### Memento

Additionally, each background includes options for a memento. This is a sentimental item reflective of your background and the occurrences that have built you into who you are, typically worth less than 30 gp.

### Background Feature

Every background comes with a feature that helps determine how your character interacts with the world and people around them. While they rarely provide a set mechanical benefit, they can provide you with a reliable way to find information, shelter, or even financial support.

## Heritage & Culture List

### Dragonborn

- Dragonbound
- Draconic National
- Dragon Cultist
- Draconic Exile

### Dwarf

- Deep Dwarf
- Mountain Dwarf
- Ruined Dwarf
- Hill Dwarf

### Elf

- Wood Elf
- High Elf
- Shadow Elf
- Eladrin

### Gnome

- Deep Gnome
- Forest Gnome
- Tinker Gnome
- Forgotten Folx

### Halfing

- Borougher
- Kithbáin
- Mustbairn
- Tunnel Runner

### Human

- Profiteer
- Sheltered Citizen
- Villager
- Pioneer

### Orc

- Orcish Caravanner
- Longstoic
- Orcish Communal
- Warhordling

### Tiefling

- Steam Tiefling
- Imperial Tiefling
- Carnival Tiefling
- Demon Cultist

### General Cultures

- Cosmopolitan
- Feudal Subject
- Guild Member
- Lone Wanderer
- Nomad
- Religious Devotee

# Heritage

Presented in this section are eight heritages for you to choose from when building your character. Your character's physical appearance is determined by their heritage, as well as things like their size and speed. All traits gained from your heritage are considered to be biological in nature.

While these traits are primarily mechanical, your heritage can still play a large part in shaping your adventurer's story. When choosing your heritage, ask first who your character's parents are. Do they still have a relationship with them, or did something happen? If so, what? If your character was adopted and potentially raised in a culture other than your own, you can begin to think about how that has affected them and the ways in which they may have had to adapt. If your character still has a relationship with their parents, think about how that has affected their decision to adventure. Are they doing it out of necessity, to help pay for their parents' retirement? Have they done so to escape overbearing parents, or maybe to escape bad decisions that would affect their family?

While you can choose only one heritage, it is possible to create characters with mixed heritages using the Mixed Heritage rule found earlier in this chapter. Some heritages may present you with multiple heritage gifts, to better distinguish the variations found within each heritage; when presented with multiple options for your heritage gift, you can choose only one heritage and one heritage gift. Additionally, each heritage has a paragon gift that is gained at 10th level. These gifts will typically grant an improvement to a trait granted by the heritage, or a new way to use a trait.

## Mixed Heritage

Your parents might be from different heritages. With your GM's approval, you can choose a heritage gift from a heritage other than the one you originally chose; this allows for the easy creation of half races, or use of bases other than human for races such as tieflings. Half-elves and half-orcs are common choices of mixed heritage.

For more flavor, you and your GM may even decide that this affects things such as physical appearance, lifespan, or size in a way that is unique to your character.



# Dragonborn

The dragonborn were created by ancient dragons as servants, soldiers, and perhaps even as cherished children. Dragonborn are humanoid creatures instilled with the power and adorned with the scales of their draconic progenitors. Countless ancient wyrms have sired dragonborn clans, and no two are alike. The “dragonborn banner” flies over the ferocity of the chromatic dragonborn, the noble cunning of the metallic dragonborn, the mysterious gem dragonborn, and even the ancient wisdom of the essence dragonborn.

Scales, tails, horns, fangs, claws, wings, any feature found within dragon kind may emerge randomly for a generation, only to fall back into remission for the next. Despite this, some draconic features remain constant. Often the color of the scales or the shape of the horns, some trace of their original draconic ancestry always shows through.

## Dragonborn Traits

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

**Age.** Young dragonborn are largely independent within hours of hatching. They develop quickly, reaching the equivalent

## Draconic Ancestry Table

Dragon Type	Damage Type	Breath Weapon	Dragon Category
Amethyst	Psychic	5 by 30 ft. line (Wis. save)	Gem
Black	Acid	5 by 30 ft. line (Dex. save)	Chromatic
Blight	Necrotic	5 by 30 ft. line (Con. save)	Essence
Blue	Lightning	5 by 30 ft. line (Dex. save)	Chromatic
Brass	Fire	5 by 30 ft. line (Dex. save)	Metallic
Bronze	Lightning	5 by 30 ft. line (Dex. save)	Metallic
Celestial	Radiant	15. ft. Cone (Con. save)	Essence
Chaos	Force	15. ft. Cone (Dex. save)	Essence
Copper	Acid	5 by 30 ft. line (Dex. save)	Metallic
Crystal	Force	5 by 30 ft. line (Dex. save)	Gem
Dragon Turtle	Fire (Steam)	15. ft. Cone (Dex. save)	Chromatic
Earth	Poison	5 by 30 ft. line (Con. save)	Essence
Emerald	Thunder	15. ft. Cone (Dex. save)	Gem
Gold	Fire	15. ft. Cone (Dex. save)	Metallic
Green	Poison	15. ft. Cone (Con. save)	Chromatic
Mithril	Radiant	15. ft. Cone (Dex. save)	Metallic
Purple	Psychic	15. ft. Cone (Wis. save)	Chromatic
Red	Fire	15. ft. Cone (Dex. save)	Chromatic
River	Lightning	15. ft. Cone (Con. save)	Essence
Sapphire	Thunder	5 by 30 ft. line (Con. save)	Gem
Sea	Fire (Steam)	5 by 30 ft. line (Dex. save)	Essence
Silver	Cold	15. ft. Cone (Con. save)	Metallic
Spirit	Radiant	5 by 30 ft. line (Dex. save)	Essence
Underworld	Necrotic	15. ft. Cone (Dex. save)	Essence
White	Cold	15. ft. Cone (Con. save)	Chromatic

development of an adolescent human by the age of 3, and then fully mature into adults by the age of 15. Their maximum lifespan is about 80.

**Size.** Dragonborn have imposing statures, as most stand well over 6 feet tall and weigh between 250 and 300 pounds. Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Draconic Ancestry.** You have the dragon creature type in addition to humanoid. Choose one type of dragon from the Draconic Ancestry table. Your dragon breath and abilities found in dragonborn gifts and culture options are determined by the dragon type, as shown in the table.

**Dragon Breath.** Drawing upon great reservoirs of draconic power you can unleash magical destruction upon your foes. Your chosen dragon type determines the size, shape, and damage type of your dragon breath. You can use your dragon breath as an action, when you do so each creature in the breath's area must make a saving throw, the type of which is determined by your dragon type. The DC for this saving throw equals 8 + your Constitution modifier + your proficiency bonus. A creature takes 2d6 damage on a failed save, and half as much damage on a successful one. The damage increases to 3d6 at 6th level, 4d6 at 11th level, and 5d6 at 16th level. After you use your dragon breath, you can't use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

## Dragonborn Gifts

Dragonborn are diverse and are highly varied even within a single draconic progenitor's bloodline. In addition to the traits found in your dragonborn heritage, select one of the following dragonborn gifts.

### Draconian Armor

Some dragonborn grow tougher scales and sharper claws. These dragonborn tend to

have short tails, wide faces, and broad shoulders, all of which are usually ridged with hardened scales or tipped with spikes. You have the following features:

**Resistance.** You have resistance to the damage type associated with your draconic ancestry.

**Scales.** You have tough interlocked draconic scales. While you aren't wearing armor, you can calculate your AC as 13 + your Dexterity modifier. You can use a shield and still gain this benefit.

**Claws.** You grow retractable claws from the tips of your fingers. Extending or retracting the claws requires no action. The claws are natural weapons, which you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with them, you deal slashing damage equal to 1d4 + your Strength modifier, instead of the normal bludgeoning damage for an unarmed strike.

### Draconian Fins

Some dragonborn seem naturally adapted to aquatic environments with sleek hydrodynamic, and often reflective scales. These dragonborn tend to have webbed hands and feet and long serpentine tails. They also tend to grow soft fin-like scales along their legs and forearms. You have the following features:

**Swimmer.** You have a swimming speed of 30 feet and you can hold your breath for up to 15 minutes at a time.

**Hard to hit.** You either have a tough shell or your quick movements and reflective scales make you difficult to strike. While you aren't wearing armor, you can calculate your AC as 12 + your Dexterity modifier. You can use a shield and still gain this benefit.

**Low-light vision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray. In addition, your eyes are perfectly adapted for spotting movement at depth, and



the radius of your darkvision increases to 120 feet while underwater.

## Draconian Wings

Some dragonborn are born with draconian wings. They tend to have slender frames and smooth scale patterns, along with a long rudder-like tail to help them fly with their stocky wings. They're far too heavy and lack the strength to really soar like true dragons, but their wings still allow them to lift off and fly a considerable distance before tiring.

**Flight.** You have a flying speed of 30 feet. To use this speed, you can't be wearing medium or heavy armor. Whenever you spend 3 full consecutive rounds airborne without landing, you gain a level of exhaustion. These levels of exhaustion are removed upon finishing a short or long rest.

## Draconic Paragon

With enough time and training any dragonborn can unlock their draconic potential. When you reach 10th level, you gain a one of the following gifts based on your dragon category.

**Chromatic Paragon.** You radiate draconic power. Any creature that hits you with a melee attack while within 5 feet of you takes 1d6 damage of the type associated with your draconic ancestry.

**Metallic Paragon.** You are blessed with draconic knowledge. Whenever you make an Intelligence check, you may roll an additional 1d6 and add it to the result.

**Gem Paragon.** You embody draconic cunning. Whenever you make a Charisma check, you may roll an additional 1d6 and add it to the result.

**Essence Paragon.** You radiate the dragon's divine lifeforce. Whenever you finish a short rest, you may heal an additional 1d6 for each hit die spent.

## Dragonborn Culture

There are many circumstances in which a great wyrm may choose to sire a clutch of dragonborn, and inevitably the resulting dragonborn clans are as varied as their progenitors. Ultimately though, the life and society of each dragonborn clan is inexorably linked to the dragon that created it.

Chromatic dragons usually see dragonborn as soldiers, cannon fodder to be created and spent for power and territory. Such militarized dragonborn clans tend to see their progenitor as a mighty general, and inspiring leader who will guide them to glorious victory, often against dragonborn created by rival dragons for the very same purpose. Such dragonborn clans are usually brutal, fearless, and blindly obedient towards their progenitor.

Metallic dragons tend to see their dragonborn as children, regardless of their age. Never to achieve the lofty ideals of dragonhood but still precious in their struggles towards it. To the outside observer they often seem like the dragon's servants, and functionally they often are, but they obey like a child would obey their parent, rather than how serf would obey their lord. An almost more egregious standing since their unquestioning service is rewarded with patronizing and infantilization. Despite all this, such dragonborn clans are typically academic, studious, and are often a voice of calm and reason when conflicts arise.

Gem dragons are rarely seen by surface dwellers, and the same is true about their dragonborn. Gem dragons live deep within the earth, sometimes for isolation and escape but often working their own esoteric games and schemes often millenia in the making. They see their dragonborn as agents, spys, and confidants. They're respected in a strange way, as they're often the only creatures the gem dragon trusts enough to include wholly into their schemes. Such

dragonborn clans are tight-knit but widely dispersed, often spending years in isolation only to reconvene when the time is right.

Essence dragons fly wingless over distant shores, their serpentine pennant-like bodies snapping back and forth magically as they soar. Their spirits are intertwined with the magic of the land and are usually tied to a specific sea, river or mountain, or to a separate plane entirely. Essence dragons see their dragonborn as trusted guardians and custodians, charging them with the safety and protection of the place from which they draw their power. Such dragonborn clans are often highly attuned to nature, and guard their progenitor's home at all costs.

## Dragonbound

Dragonbound clans are those still under the direct rule of their progenitor dragon. Whether that dragon is malevolent or benign, the clan exists to serve it. Living under a kind and wise dragon can be a safe and joyful upbringing, though one under watchful control. Living under a cruel or savage dragon can be a life of uncertain survival, scrounging off what your draconic overlord deems you worthy of. Dragonbound living can often be comfortable, or even enjoyable, but it is not living for one's self. Whether living in literal chains or metaphorical ones, dragonbound live at their master's whims. Thankfully, those whims often involve directives and missions that range far and wide. Some may spend years away chasing after their missions, exposing them to countless viewpoints, and quite often the seeds of sedition.

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

**Dragonbound Teachings.** You know one cantrip of your choice from the wizard or cleric spell lists. Intelligence or Wisdom (your choice) is your spellcasting ability for it.

**Draconic Diplomacy.** As you were raised among a dragonborn clan and it's draconic progenitor, you've been well trained in the sometimes difficult draconic etiquette and protocols. You have advantage on all Charisma checks made to influence creatures with the dragon creature type.

**Progenitor's Boon.** Members of dragonborn clans overseen by their progenitors usually enjoy the benefits of their progenitor's boon. Gain one of the following based on your dragon category:

*Chromatic Dragon's Boon:* Chromatic dragons raise their warriors to shock and terrify their enemies. You can cast the *fear* spell once with this trait and regain the ability to do so when you finish a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for this spell.

*Metallic Dragon's Boon:* Metallic dragons are often great teachers who let their pupils study through vast repositories of knowledge. Choose a skill from among Arcana, History, Medicine, Nature, or Religion. You have proficiency with the chosen skill and your proficiency bonus is doubled for any ability check you make that uses that skill.

*Gem Dragon's Boon:* Gem dragons ensure their agent's missions go unaccosted by bestowing upon them subterfuge magic. You know the message cantrip. When you reach 3rd level, you can cast the *illusory script* spell once with this trait and regain the ability to do so when you finish a long rest. When you reach 5th level, you can cast the *knock* spell once with this trait and regain the ability to do so when you finish a long rest.

Intelligence or Charisma (your choice) is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

*Essence Dragon's Boon:* Essence Dragons ensure that their guardians can easily commune with the land and the spirits within. You know the *druidcraft* cantrip. In addition, your diplomatic understanding extends towards the creatures of the land and

the spirits within it. You have advantage on all Charisma checks made to influence creatures with the beast or celestial creature types.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and Draconic.

## Draconic National

Dragons die. They may claim immortality and endless strength but time and circumstance can wear down even the mightiest creatures. Many are killed by rivals or the efforts of heroes and armies, and some simply retreat to parts unknown, leaving behind their dragonborn clan leaderless. Dragonbound call these dragonborn “orphan clans” with a mixture of derision and pity. Many of these clans simply disperse with no progenitor to lead them, scattered to the wind only to be greeted like draconic exiles. Some rally around their progenitor’s goals and make them their own. Such rallied clans rarely hold true to those ideals though, and their interpretation of “their progenitor’s wishes” often grows more distorted as generations pass.

A few rare orphaned clans rally to build a future for themselves as a new nation. These dragonborn learn concepts like independence and pride, and they dream of prosperity and happiness for future generations. These humble nations begin as city-states, but some grow into world-class empires. Usually based around the mountains or caverns that their dragon originally roosted in, trap filled caverns are slowly replaced with storerooms and housing, mountaintop lairs grow to jostle with draconic spires and battlements.

Life within draconic nations is quite similar to life in most populous cities, albeit with more fire breathing and scales. Commerce, agriculture, and especially metalwork flourish, aided by their natural resistances and internal bellows. Once a draconic nation is founded, it is often deluged with draconic

exiles and entire orphaned clans seeking refuge. It only takes a few generations for the old customs of their progenitors to fade, as well as their ideals.

The resulting melting pot contains dozens if not hundreds of draconic bloodlines, though their devotion to their progenitors is not quite erased, rather it is shifted. Draconic nationals tend to regard their nation with just as much zeal and respect as they once held for their progenitor. No longer an orphaned clan, but a nation with a cause and a clear direction! Draconic nations are often filled with patriots and martyrs, loyal soldiers and earnest politicians. And often they’ll need this zeal, well placed or not, to defend themselves from other great dragons seeking to “retake these lost clans” back into draconic authority.

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

**Pack Tactics.** The orphaned clans that survived had to learn to depend on each other. Now that trust in their allies gives them confidence. You have advantage on attack rolls against a creature if at least one allied dragonborn is within 5 feet of the creature and the ally isn't incapacitated.

**The Business of Dragons.** Nations require countless craftsmen and merchants, it was the adaptable dragonborn clans that were willing to fill these roles that flourished. You have proficiency in the Persuasion skill and proficiency with one tool of your choice.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common, Draconic, and one additional language of your choice.

## Dragon Cultist

For better or worse ancient good and evil dragon gods do exist and while following them blatantly is rarely tolerated their influence is rarely stopped. Dragon cults exist in most major cities deep within forgotten

cellars or ancient crumbling ruins, plotting their draconic overlord's return to power. The life of a dragon cultist is often filled with hushed conversations in darkened rooms, acquisitions of "sacrifices", and the ever-present tantalizing promise of even a taste of their dragon god's power. Dragon cultists often live entirely mundane lives by day, only to shuffle down some darkened stair to their "true lives" down below.

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

***Draconic Umbra.*** Dragon cultists are often blessed with power from the object of their devotion, so that they may spread their dragon's word or further their plans. As a bonus action, you can cause draconic power to course around you in a draconic umbra. This draconic umbra lasts for 1 minute or until you end it as a bonus action. The effects of this umbra are determined by your dragon's category:

***Chromatic Dragon Umbra.*** Once on each of your turns while this umbra is active, you can deal extra damage of the type associated with your selected draconic ancestry to one target when you deal damage to it with an attack or a spell. The extra damage equals your level.

***Metallic Dragon Umbra:*** While this umbra is active you gain resistance to the damage type associated with your draconic ancestry, if you already had resistance to that damage type, you gain immunity instead. In addition, you have advantage on any Wisdom or Intelligence checks you make while this umbra is active.

***Gem Dragon Umbra:*** While this umbra is active you have advantage on all Dexterity (Stealth) checks. In addition, once on each of your turns while this umbra is active you may cast the spell *detect thoughts* at will. When your umbra ends, so do any active spells cast with it.

***Essence Dragon Umbra:*** While this umbra is active you can move through non-magical solid objects, and occupied spaces as if they were difficult terrain. Any attacks of opportunity made against you while this umbra is active are made at disadvantage. You cannot move further than 5 feet into walls or other solid objects in this way. If for whatever reason you would end your turn in an occupied space, you are shunted into the nearest unoccupied space (randomly selected if multiple unoccupied spaces are equidistant) and take 1d6 force damage.

Once you use this trait, you can't use it again until you finish a long rest.

***Secrets of the Wyrms.*** Draconic cults require diverse skill sets and the utmost secrecy. Choose two skills from among Arcana, Deception, Persuasion, Religion, or Stealth. You have proficiency with the chosen skills.

***Languages.*** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and Draconic, and your choice of either Celestial or Undercommon.

## Draconic Exile

To the dragonbound, exile seems like a death sentence. The very concept of living away from their progenitor can be impossible to grasp, and the threat of exile can strike more terror than even the threat of execution. To some, especially those dragonborn unfortunately shackled to tyrannical progenitors, the idea can slowly become appealing.

The term "draconic exile" refers to those literally punished with exile, and also those who've merely run away or escaped. There's no distinction in the eyes of the dragonbound, and anyone who was forced or chose to live outside of their progenitor's protection are to be shunned. It can also apply to non-dragonborn, usually escaped slaves or similarly "resistant adoptees" who've been taken into a clan only to flee.

Dragons rarely roost and raise their clan in hospitable places. Frigid mountaintops and desolate caverns may be hospitable within, deep in the clan warrens, but an exile's first journey alone is usually a hard one. Draconic exiles often have to survive and wander for months or even years before finding civilization, and when they do they're often not met with open arms.

Dragons often don't take kindly to those who take in their runaways or provide comfort to those meant to be punished. This is widely known even among non-dragonborn, and when taking in a bedraggled dragonborn could mean risking draconic annihilation, many draconic exiles are met with slammed doors and shuttered windows. Some dragons even offer rewards for finding their "lost little ones" or even send out "retrieval teams" made up of their own clan members to track them down.

Life as a draconic exile is a harsh and difficult one, constantly looking over one's shoulder for threats both draconic and mundane. Despite all this, many draconic exiles find themselves unaccountably happy, and savor every last drop of what their life can offer. Draconic exiles live lives of freedom, and they value every scrap offered in their free lives over the bounty they had before in chains.

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

***Chased by Dragons.*** Whether they ran away, or were cut off, draconic exiles never lose the paranoid thought that their progenitor's agents could come to claim them at any moment. You gain a +5 bonus to Initiative and can't be surprised while conscious.

***Hidden Scales.*** Draconic exiles are not always welcomed with open arms and hiding in plain sight is often key to surviving another day. You are proficient in the Deception skill and with Disguise Kits.

***Survivor.*** For some time you survived on your own, and had to train yourself to live leaner and conserve your strength. You are proficient in the Survival skill. In addition, you can survive on far less food than would normally be required for a creature your size, and can subsist on as little as ¼ of a pound of food a day.

***Languages.*** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and Draconic.



# Dwarf

Dwarves were not born, they were forged. The Forge god created them from earth and iron, hammering their spirit into mortal flesh and set them forth onto the world. Unto each of his creations he set a mark, a divine gift, making them creators in turn. Dwarves can fit almost anywhere—they can see in almost every condition and they can work very long hours, thus they can create and thrive where others dare not tread. Caves become halls, mountains become castles. As their hammer falls, as their kettles boil, unspeakable beauties are unleashed upon their world.

Born from the forge, built for the forge. Dwarves are strong and muscular, even if they are not tall. Their broad, compact frame makes dwarves hardy and stout. They can be twice as heavy as a human a few feet taller. Their skin ranges from fair and pale to dark and brown, with a healthy bronze color being especially common. Under the correct light, dwarven eyes seem like polished black, brown, blue or green gemstones. Dwarven hair is most often black, but red, brown and blonde are not uncommon colors. Their beards grow full and long; sometimes it's hard to say where hair ends and beard begins.

## Dwarf Traits

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

**Age.** Dwarves age as fast as humans, but most cultures only consider them adults at 50. They have extremely long lives; some dwarves live to be over 400 years old and their average lifespan is 350 years.

**Size.** Dwarves are short and stout. They stand around 4 or 5 feet tall and average 150 pounds of weight. Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 feet. Your speed is not reduced by wearing heavy armor.

**Creator's Blessing.** You were born with the gift of creation. You gain proficiency with the set of artisan's tools of your choice: smith's tools, brewer's supplies, or mason's tools. During a long rest, you can use these tools for crafting and still receive full benefits of resting.

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

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

## Dwarf Gifts

The Forge god bestows all kinds of divine gifts upon his children. In addition to the traits found in your dwarven heritage, select one of the following dwarven gifts.

### Dwarven Stability

You have advantage on saving throws against effects that would knock you prone and on Strength (Athletics) checks to resist the shove special attack.

### Dwarven Stubbornness

You never give up. As a bonus action, you gain a number of temporary hit points equal to 1d10 plus your level. These temporary hit points last for one minute. You can't use this feature again until after you finish a long rest.

### Gifted Artisan

Whenever you make an ability check related to the artisan's tool you gained proficiency with through Creator's Blessing, you add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.



## Iron Guts

You have advantage on saving throws against poison, and you have resistance against poison damage.

## Stone Fist

Your fists are as hard as stone. Unarmed strikes you make with them deal 1d4 + your Strength modifier bludgeoning damage, instead of the normal damage for an unarmed strike.

## Dwarven Paragon

As a dwarf accumulates deeds and glory, the Forge god bestows upon them even greater gifts. When you reach 10th level, you gain one of the following paragon gifts.

### Fury of the Earth

As an action, you can strike the ground with a melee weapon you're proficient with. The ground in a 30 ft burst centered on you becomes difficult terrain. Each creature on the ground in the area must make a Dexterity saving throw or be knocked prone. If any of these creatures is concentrating, they must make a Constitution saving throw. On a failed save, the creature's concentration is broken. You can't use this feature again until after you finish a long rest.

### Unbreakable

When you succeed on a death saving throw, you can expend one hit die to recover one hit point as if your check result was a natural 20. You can't use this feature again until after you finish a short or long rest.

## Dwarf Culture

No other people can craft as well as dwarves do; or at least that's what most dwarves believe. Considering how often envious invaders attack their communities, there

must be some truth to that. This causes some dwarves to make their homes in inhospitable places, where others would not be able to follow. Learning how to survive in such environments shapes dwarven culture to this day. Some hide deep in the mountains, avoiding contact with the outside world. Others travel from place to place, never setting roots. Most, however, fight. Dwarven warriors are as feared as their weapons are admired.

Another important factor in dwarven culture is their relationship with the Forge god. For some cultures, the creator god is all-important and the priesthood attains immense power. However, dwarves do not reflect their love for the creator by building innumerable cathedrals and churches. For dwarves, labor itself is holy and crafting is a kind of prayer. There is no better offer to the Forge god than a sharp sword, a sturdy shield, or a foaming cup of beer. More cosmopolitan communities might embrace different gods, but it's very rare that a dwarven community doesn't at least pay lip service to the god who created them.

Frequently, dwarven communities establish trading relations and friendly rivalries with each other. It is not uncommon for a clan of mountain dwarves to send their young to spend a few decades with hill dwarves or for devoted dwarves to visit any other dwarven community to spread the Forge god's gospel. Sometimes this cultural exchange causes loosely-connected communities to become full-fledged empires, bursting with creativity, commerce, and innovation. Just as commonly, however, these empires fall victim to monsters and natural disasters. There are as many dwarven songs about lost kingdoms as there are human songs about broken hearts.

Dwarves can be found in the most unexpected places in the world. If there is enough room to swing a hammer, you can bet some dwarf has already considered living

there. These environments influence the behaviour of their residents and even some visitors. Though dwarves are slow to trust, they respect talent and innovation. It is not rare for dwarves to offer training for particularly skilled smiths or brewers they meet in their travels, regardless of their heritage. However your character was raised, they were moulded and influenced by the dwarven culture around them.

## Deep Dwarf

Deep dwarves make their homes underground, far from most other creatures and from the sun. Their communities are the most isolated of all dwarven cultures. Some of them refuse trade even with other dwarves. Those that do trade, however, quickly realize that some goods they grow underground can not live on the surface, and vice-versa. Deep dwarf beer is unique, prized across all other dwarven cultures and many other peoples.

Living so isolated and surrounded by dangerous monsters makes these people extremely cautious and calls for specialized training. While hammers and axes are similar to tools dwarves use, they are not much use in the cramped environments deep dwarves navigate.

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

***Superior Darkvision.*** You grew so used to being underground that you can see in the dark farther than other dwarves. Your darkvision has a radius of 120 feet.

***Deep Magic.*** You know the resistance cantrip. When you reach 3rd level, you can cast the jump spell once with this trait. When you reach 5th level, you can cast the enlarge/reduce spell with this trait. You don't need material components for either spell, and you can't cast them while you're in direct sunlight, although sunlight has no effect on

them once cast. You regain the ability to cast these spells with this trait when you finish a long rest. Intelligence is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

***Deep Suspicion.*** Your lack of trust protects you from some magic. You have advantage on saving throws against illusions and being charmed or paralyzed.

***Underground Combat Training.*** You are proficient with hand crossbows, short swords, and war picks.

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

## Devoted Dwarf

Devoted dwarves are extremely religious. They follow the Forge god even more closely than other dwarves. These communities are usually led by synods of priests and clerics. Faith is a driving force in these communities, and the influence of the Forge god religion makes devoted dwarf communities surprisingly pleasant places to live. Devoted dwarves are welcoming and friendly. They see the act of crafting as communion with their god and take their job extremely seriously. As a community, they are open to feedback and work well together.

Devoted dwarves often receive visions from beyond—or so they claim. Local lore might be that an artisan crafted a masterpiece and was visited by the god, or that the settlers of the community were led by a pioneer's revelation. All dwarves are blessed creations of the Forge god, but these stories and more lead devoted dwarves to believe that they are the most favored.

In their zealotry, it is not uncommon for devoted dwarves to declare crusades. Usually this happens when they identify a creature responsible for the destruction of an ancient dwarven outpost or kingdom of old. They try to rally any neighboring dwarf communities to their cause. For better or for

worse, these ventures are rarely successful. Even so, the average devoted dwarf would gladly risk their life for a chance to die in battle under the Forge god's banner.

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

**Divine Magic.** You know the *guidance* cantrip. When you reach 3rd level, you can cast the *bless* spell once with this trait. When you reach 5th level, you can cast the *aid* spell with this trait. You don't need material components for these spells. You regain the ability to cast these spells with this trait when you finish a long rest. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

**Religious Education.** You are proficient in Religion.

**Strong Faith.** You have advantage on Wisdom and Charisma saving throws against spells.

**Dwarven Teamwork.** Whenever the target of a guidance spell you cast makes an ability check to use a tool you are proficient with, you can Help them as a bonus action.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common, Celestial and Dwarven.

## Mountain Dwarf

When most people think of dwarves, they think of mountain dwarves. Living in tall mountains or vast hills allows them easier access to useful minerals, proximity to other communities, and superior defenses. The abundance of ore leads many mountain dwarves to become smiths, especially weaponsmiths and armorsmiths. Exporting these goods is frequently the cornerstone of the mountain dwarf economy. These communities are usually very rich, which makes many mountain dwarves arrogant or greedy. This a stereotype that sometimes is misapplied to other dwarven cultures, which is doubly sad because some mountain dwarves consider themselves to be “more

dwarf” than all others. This vocal minority usually traces their lineage to fallen dwarven kingdoms of old, dreaming of restoring lost glory even if the present is already affluent enough. Mountain dwarves are very traditional and follow rigid marriage rituals—with some marriages arranged two generations in advance.

Mountain dwarves keep detailed records of their history. They have powerful memories. There is a saying: “The sky will drop before a mountain dwarf forgets a slight.” While these grudges can be kept for generations, the same is true for favors. If you help a mountain dwarf, you might not live to see the debt repaid—but your descendants surely will.

Having good weapons and armor is no use if you cannot use them. Mountain dwarves are all trained in combat, which allows them to see their work put to use—and to personally understand the importance of quality weapons and sturdy armor. You can trust an armorsmith who took an arrow to their armor to put forth their best effort.

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

**Dwarven Weapon Training.** The constant attacks against your home made you combat ready. You have proficiency with the battleaxe, handaxe, light hammer, and warhammer.

**Dwarven Armor Training.** You have proficiency with light and medium armor.

**Stonecunning.** Whenever you make an Intelligence (History) check related to the origin of stonework, you are considered proficient in the History skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

**Heart of the Forge.** You have resistance to fire damage.

**Mountain Born.** You're acclimated to high altitude, including elevations above 20,000

feet. You're also naturally adapted to cold climates.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common, Dwarven, and an additional language of your choice.

## Ruined Dwarf

Many dwarven communities have thrived over the centuries, spawning empires whose legends are sung about to this day. Others are not so fortunate. A dwarven city built on a slumbering volcano which then reawakens. A dwarven clan overwhelmed by dark forces from the depths. Whatever the case, many dwarves come from communities living in ruin. Whether they try to rebuild or move to a new place, these dwarves can hardly escape the tinge of loss.

Despite having lost most everything—sometimes more than once—these dwarves remain optimistic. They are not so bound by tradition and, among all dwarven cultures, are the least likely to be obsessed with the glory of past dwarven kingdoms. Ruined dwarves are forced to grow up quickly; unlike other dwarves, they are considered adults at 20. They tend to get married quickly and form big families—most of them are non-monogamous. However, they are still relatively suspicious of non-dwarf outsiders. After all, no matter how bright the future might be, the bitter sting of grief lasts a lifetime.

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

**Improvised Tools.** You are used to losing your tools. During a long rest, if you have access to raw materials, you can jury-rig an improvised tool kit. If you roll a 1 using the improvised tools, they break.

**Roll With the Punches.** After you fail an ability check, you have advantage on your next ability check. You can't use this feature

again until after you finish a short or long rest.

**Eat Like a Bird.** You grew used to eating very little. You can go without food for a number of days equal to 6 + your Constitution modifier (minimum 1). You still suffer one level of exhaustion at the end of each day beyond this limit.

**Pack Rat.** You can carry your whole house on your back. You count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity.

**Fleet of Foot.** Your base walking speed increases by 5 feet.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common, Dwarven and an additional language of your choice.

## Hill Dwarf

Some dwarves just never settle. They ride in caravans from community to community, trading, learning, and creating. Known as hill dwarves, they are gregarious, friendly, and worldly. While they don't share a very strong connection with the Forge god, hill dwarves still have faith; it's just that their faith is more in their own abilities than in a distant elder being.

No dwarves are more social and artistic than hill dwarves; after all, it's easier to sell your goods if people like you. While they don't consider art to be creation in the same sense as crafting, hill dwarves share a deep love for music, poetry, theater and literature. Many a song or play about the rise and fall of mountain dwarf empires was actually written by troupes of hill dwarves. Their live-and-let-live attitude makes their caravans loud, flashy, and fun. Hill dwarves frequently engage in fist fights to solve minor issues. They would much rather end the day with a black eye than risk making an enemy out of a friend. Hill dwarves don't harbor grudges and don't expect that others do so against them; curiously, other dwarves sometimes have trouble trusting them because of this.

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

***Friendly.*** You are proficient in either Persuasion or Deception.

***Caravanner.*** You are either proficient in the Animal Handling skill or proficient with land vehicles.

***Ways of the Land.*** You are proficient in Survival. Whenever you make a Wisdom (Survival) check, you add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

***Community Magic.*** You know the *friends* cantrip. When you reach 3rd level, you can cast the *charm person* spell once with this trait. When you reach 5th level, you can cast the *suggestion* spell with this trait. You don't need material components for these spells. You regain the ability to cast these spells with this trait when you finish a long rest. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

***Languages.*** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common, Dwarven, and two additional languages of your choice.



# Elf

Elves are a people with supernatural grace and beauty. They have a slight build, and stand at a height somewhere between humans and dwarves. Their skin tones include all the browns and pinks of human skin tones, and some elves exhibit skin with bright colors like blue, green, and purple. Most elves have long faces and sharp features, including high cheekbones. Elves are famous for their pointed, leaf shaped ears, which can grow in a variety of lengths—some up to 6 inches. Elf eyes are somewhat more angular, often opening at a line parallel to their ears. They often have almond-shaped eyes and smooth eyelids. Elvish eyes can be of almost any color, and their pupils can be round, vertical, or not visible at all.

The origin of elves is highly debated, but one thing is for certain: they are not entirely of this world. Elves are sometimes called the “firstborn” of the gods, with some reckoning them to be the lowest order of angels. Others say elves were once faerie spirits who saw the mortal world and wanted to take part. Others still insist that humans and elves share a common ancestor, and that the elvish ancestor traveled to the Feywild (also called Alfheim, the Plane of Faerie, or the Dreaming) and became suffused with its magic. In some worlds, elves arrive from a distant land; in other worlds, they arrive from a distant star. In all these cases, what is undisputed is the profound legacy of these long-lived people.

Elves do not merely “survive” in this world; they are among the world’s ancient masters. Elvish culture predates that of other cultures, except perhaps the cultures of dragons and giants. How elves respond to their near immortality is one of the most defining aspects of an elf’s personality.

## Elf Traits

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

**Age.** Elf children mature at the same rate as human children, but elvish cultures do not consider them to be fully mentally developed (nor age of majority) until they acquire a century of life experience. Elves today can live to be 700 or older, and legends speak of elves who simply never die.

**Size.** Elves have a slender and graceful build. Some stand as tall as average humans, although most are a head or so shorter. Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Darkvision.** Having your ancestral origins in the twilight realms, you have superior vision in dark and dim conditions. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can’t discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

**Fey Ancestry.** You have advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can’t put you to sleep.

**Trance.** Elves don’t need to sleep. Instead, they meditate deeply, remaining conscious. (The Common word for such meditation is “trance.”) While meditating, you can dream after a fashion; such dreams are actually mental exercises that became reflexive through years of practice.

When you take a long rest, you spend 4 hours in your trance state (instead of sleeping for 6 hours). During the trance you suffer no penalty to Passive Perception. A long rest remains 8 hours for you as normal, and the remainder of the time must be filled only with light activity.

## Elf Gifts

Elves are known for their uncanny perceptiveness, which according to some can even extend to the power to read minds and



see the future—although such powers, if they truly exist, are very rare. In addition to the traits found in your elf heritage, select one of the following gifts.

## Preternatural Awareness

The conventional senses of elves are thought to be more finely tuned than that of other mortals. Some scholars debate whether it is merely a matter of sensitivity, or if the elvish trance meditation grows their awareness in a way other mortals simply don't bother to attempt.

Elves with the gift of Preternatural Awareness have the following features:

**Keen Senses.** You have proficiency in the Perception skill.

**Prophetic Instincts.** Your ability to detect danger is nearly supernatural. You gain a bonus to Initiative rolls equal to your Wisdom modifier, and you can't be surprised while conscious (including during your Trance).

## Mystic Rapport

Some elves are so attuned to the arcane that they can see magical energy with their eyes, sense the presence of nearby elves, and communicate mentally.

Elves with the gift of Mystic Rapport have the following features:

**Arcane Sensitivity.** You have proficiency in the Arcana skill.

**Arcane Empathy.** Your sensitivity to the flow of magic lets you speak to the hearts of others. You have a limited ability to communicate telepathically with those within 30 feet of you. Though this grants the target no ability to respond telepathically, they can understand you as long as you share a language with them.

## Prescient Vision

Some elves don't live in the present moment—their spirits shift back and forth in the currents of time. This mystical experience, besides being contemplative, is also useful for predicting the future... But the future always churns like sand in the waves.

Elves with the gift of Prescient Vision have the following feature:

**Glance the Future.** Your very eyes can see a few moments into the future, and your mind apprehends the divergent possibilities. As a bonus action, roll a d20 and record the result. Before the end of your next turn, when a creature you can see within 60 feet makes an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, you can use your reaction to replace their roll with your recorded result.

Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you take a short or long rest.

## Variant: Blessing of the Firstborn

Some elves—and their descendants—have the miraculous ability to manifest the gender mutability possessed by the elvish gods. At the GM's choice, a character can also have the gift Blessing of the Firstborn in addition to their other heritage gift.

**Blessing of the Firstborn.** Whenever you complete a long rest, you can change your sex. If you are pregnant when you change your sex, you can keep your pregnancy while changing your sex outwardly. This allows you to detect whether or not you have conceived, even if the pregnancy is too early to detect through other means.

## Elven Paragon

When you reach 10th level, you are an exemplar of elfkind, and you gain one paragon gift from the following list.

**Elfsight.** Nature cannot block the legendary accuracy of your people. Your attack rolls ignore half cover, and an area being lightly obscured does not impose disadvantage on

your ability checks. You do not take disadvantage for making ranged attacks at long range.

***Inexorable Darkvision.*** There is no range limit for your Darkvision.

***Spiritual Awareness.*** You are under a constant *detect thoughts* effect. You do not need to concentrate on this effect. This effect can be dispelled with *dispel magic* but it returns once you complete a short or long rest.

## Elf Culture

Humans are likely to make superficial claims about elves: “Everything they do is beautiful and magical.” Although the claim is simplistic, it is true that elves value beauty and mystery. Elvish goods are renowned for their ingenious design and painstaking craftsmanship. Besides their elegant beauty, elvish specialty crafts are lightweight, easy to use, and often subtly enchanted. Being people who live multiple centuries, elves often seek comfort in the reliability of nature’s cycle, finding nostalgia and hope in the emergence and reemergence of familiar plants and beasts. The one constant in the world is change, and yet it moves ever onward in the shape of a wheel—this and many other mysteries captivate the hearts of elves, provoking a distinctive artistic genius. Even elvish despots and cynics find it difficult to remove themselves from these entrenched values.

Whatever an elf does, they commit decades to mastering that art. Whereas a human mage must learn what they can about the arcane and roll with it, elves have the luxury and cultural mandate to interrogate every detail of their discipline. For elvish priests, no doctrine or ritual goes unquestioned; an elvish soldier learns multiple theories of warfare and can recount their historical evolution in detail.

Although centuries of wisdom often produces kindness, an unending experience of suffering can likewise produce bitter cruelty. Since ancient times, human myths about elves often portray them as magically inflicting disease, and lurking in the dark to commit mischief against an unsuspecting victim. These accounts are often merely tall tales, but the notions are nonetheless plausible. Some of the most vicious tyrants in the multiverse are elves who believe they are better than other beings, or those whose hatred is blood-red enough to stain history forever. Even so, elves contemplate the “long view” when planning their perfect victory. Human generals might authorize poisoning wells, salting the earth, or ravaging the land with an arcane menace—but only most ruthless and crazed elves would deploy tactics whose harm would curse future generations.

Elves make their homes all across the world and the multiverse. Living in the shadow of their ancient empires, elves can’t help but reflect on their culture as living through its twilight years. Although it is hard to call a culture “flourishing” when it is slowly withdrawing from existence, elves nonetheless enjoy many stable communities built on millenia of intricate traditions.

## Wood Elf

In vast, foreboding forests and jungles filled with monsters and magic, the villages of the wood elves are a rare and welcome sight. Wood elf settlements are known for their extreme harmony with nature: settlement locations must meet exacting criteria to ensure the village will be safe, sustainable, and low-impact for generations to come. The most typical architecture are tree houses, built using only a minimal amount of wood, and through their arts coaxing the branches of the mightiest trees into living walkways, walls, and alcoves. The most grand wood elf

settlements have many houses in a single tree, and elegant walkways connecting the entire village.

Of all elvish cultures, wood elves adore plants and animals the most. Wood elves choose which trees to fell like a gardener might prune a bush—for the health of the forest. In lieu of gardening, they monitor plant populations through the years, planting new trees and bushes to rejuvenate nature's bounty. With centuries of experience they cull, protect, introduce, and re-introduce particular animals as the forest needs (even wolves can be good for the trees). The wood elf controlled fire rituals clear underbrush and prevent forest fires—all while honoring that death is a part of life.

Wood elves live a fairly rustic lifestyle. Whatever the village needs, the people supply that for themselves—they raise their own food, train their own warriors, and make their own crafts. Independent and self-sustaining wood elf villages have little need for activities like industry, politics, and "social progress." Plenty of wood elf villages are insular and xenophobic, but many more are hospitable and generous to travelers—with some guests even invited to join the village. Their social orientation is communalistic and egalitarian. Although wood elf laws and hierarchy technically do exist, they prefer to resolve conflicts through consensus. For complex conflicts, they use large circle meetings where anyone can witness silently or say their piece.

Other important cultural values for wood elves are curiosity and exploration—they keep you young! At least, they keep lives measured in centuries entertaining. When villagers express interest in a new topic, craft, or locale, they receive an outpour of encouragement. Isolated though wood elf villages may be, it is not uncommon to see a wood elf troubadour, craftmaker, or sightseer on a quest to learn something new.

**Wood Elf Weapon Training.** You are proficient with longbows and shortswords.

**Nimble.** Mad dashes through the woods and underbrush instruct you on how to maintain your speed without sacrificing maneuverability. Your walking speed increases by 5 feet.

**Treeborne Scout.** Survival in the forest requires you to move in any and all directions. You gain a climbing speed equal to your walking speed.

**Nature's Touch.** You are proficient with your choice of either: the Animal Handling skill and land vehicles; or, the Nature skill and herbalism kits.

**Nature's Ally.** Choose either *animal friendship* or *goodberry*. You know that spell, and you can use this trait to cast it once between long rests. Your spellcasting ability for this spell is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign in Common and Elvish.

## High Elf

With imposing seamless marble towers, brightly lit castles carved into mountain sides, and modest structures made grand with intricate style—high elf culture takes credit (sometimes incorrectly) for the magnificent architecture for which elves are known. Elvish architectural masterworks are remnants of a once vast high elf empire. While many such structures are maintained and treasured by high elves and those under their charge, many more lay abandoned, ruined, or annexed to invading forces. In a word, high elves live in the final twilight of their golden age. The accomplishments of their people bring them great pride, and they find the new era... troubling, at best.

High elf culture encourages radical self-esteem. This ethos manifests in different ways. Most people, valuing themselves highly in a healthy way, learn to value other

people highly as well. They tend to be gentle, gracious, and cooperative. Others don't agree, and place high esteem only on themselves and people like them. (High elf supremacists through the ages produce endless propaganda claiming theirs represents the best, oldest, and most true elvish culture.) Although such prideful people are less common, they nonetheless create the impression of high elves being arrogant, narcissistic, and self-righteous. Strangely, that stereotype is not lost on people of other heritages who live in high elf communities, and many also project an air of superiority or self-importance.

The sense of high elvish pride, both benign and noxious, drives such people towards intellectual leadership. Some high elves (and many of their followers) would love nothing other than to see themselves restored as world rulers. Others realize the new era calls for more subtle forms of influence, and they entrench themselves in non-elf institutions to train them in the ways of wisdom. For the sake of preserving ancient knowledge and guiding civilization, high elves (and those trained in their ways) often serve other groups as librarians, advisors, teachers, and military officers. Individual elf adventurers often seek to recover or preserve some ancient treasure. Tyrannical high elves might usurp foreign institutions, or consolidate power for a war of unification.

**Magical Versatility.** You know one extra cantrip. Select this cantrip either from the wizard spell list, or from a spell list of a class in which you have class levels. Your spellcasting ability for it is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

**Cunning Diplomat.** When you make a Deception, Insight, Intimidation, or Persuasion check, you can always opt to make that skill check using Intelligence.

**High Elf Weapon Training.** You have proficiency with rapiers and longswords.

**High Elf Education.** High elf rulers ensure that people in their realm meet a certain standard of living, including education. You are proficient with one additional skill of your choice.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign in Common, Elvish, and one additional language of your choice.

## Shadow Elf

Whereas most elf cultures focus on light and the imminence of life, the shadow elves—also known as dark elves or drow—contemplate the nature of death and destruction, and they draw inspiration and comfort from the darkness. Although other elf cultures often consider dark elves heretical, elves are creatures of twilight and it is only natural that some turn towards the day and others towards the night. The classic shadow elf religion is to worship the elvish moon god, although there are also animistic traditions which venerate creatures favored by assassins (such as scorpions, snakes, spiders—and even the undead). Shadow elves do not view the darkness as being inherently evil—although they recognize that the most vile monsters do prefer the darkness; for shadow elves, darkness provides freedom and wisdom which are simply unavailable in the oppressive light.

Shadow elves tend to live in places which normally strike fear into the hearts of other mortals—such as deserts, scorched lands near a volcano, haunted territories, notorious slums, and deep underground. This is partially intentional, because these places are ideal for contemplating destruction; the “choice” is also often the result of ostracization and banishment by would-be neighbors. The injustice of being misunderstood is enough to make some shadow elves zealous and antagonistic; many more contemplate the experience of injustice versus justice alongside their meditations on



the nature of dark-and-light, death-and-life, and destruction-and-creation.

Of all elvish cultures, shadow elves are the most likely to offer their services to other peoples. Shadow elves, and people trained in their ways, make some of the most cunning mercenaries, advisors, spies, and assassins—and having such a person in their entourage is often a mark of pride among the rich and famous.

**Shadow Lore.** You know a cantrip: either *minor illusion* or *dancing lights*.

Additionally, at 3rd level, you learn the *faerie fire* spell; at 5th level you learn the *darkness* spell. With this trait, you can cast each such spell once at their lowest level between long rests.

Your spellcasting ability for these spells is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

**Shadow Elf Weapon Training.** You have proficiency with rapiers and hand crossbows.

**Umbral Acclimation.** Special training, drinking a special decoction, and prolonged exposure to the sheer darkness have improved your ability to see in the dark. If you do not already have darkvision, you gain darkvision out to 60 feet. If you already have darkvision, the distance improves by 60 ft.

**Languages.** You can read, speak, and write Common, Elvish, and Undercommon.

## Eladrin

Eladrin are the elvish people most accustomed to life in the Feywild—what they call “the Dreaming.” Some people say they are the most ancient lineage of elves with the closest blood link to other faeries, while others claim that the elves expanded into the Dreaming and were there transformed. Due to the pride in their overtly fey culture, they prefer to describe themselves with just “eladrin” instead of “elf.” Settlements of eladrin empires (and the ruins thereof) can be found scattered all across the Faerie Realm,

and some appear in the Material Plane where the boundary between worlds is thin. The eladrin capitals are ruled by members of the Faerie Court. Through pact magic the Court deputizes their elf knights and paramours to govern lesser cities and villages. These pact-bound viscounts often hold magnificent titles and enhanced power over nature.

Life in eladrin cities and villages is lively, even spectacular. Fey creatures of all stripes can find a place in the eladrin capitals, from quickling couriers to fortune-telling hags lurking in dark alleys. Even non-fey mortals can be found in eladrin settlements, such as foundlings, wanderers, and those stolen from their cribs as babies and replaced by changelings. In keeping with the kaleidoscopic politics of the Faerie Courts, eladrin settlements have feasts and celebrations many times a week, such as for ancient holidays, obscure political observances, and seemingly random birthdays of innumerable villagers and enchanted creatures. Even laborers in the most boring and strenuous professions can expect excitement in avoiding the inevitable complications of the day’s festivities.

Eladrin, and other folk in their midst, learn a handful of ways to traverse the gap between the visible world and the invisible world. First, there are certain “fey gates” in nature sites and ancient ruins which function as doors between the worlds. They learn, after decades of exposure, the unlikely geometry of the Faerie Realm and the boundaries between planes. After years of passing through the fey gates, eladrin folk learn to sense planar ripples—even the most subtle ones caused by their own heartbeat. From there, hopping between worlds becomes as easy as skipping rope.

Whereas most elves are reserved (even aloof), eladrin are capricious and temperamental. They define social status in terms of their proximity to the sovereigns of the Faerie Court, so they learn to anticipate

the big moves in fae politics and whims of the plane’s masters. Eladrin value unpredictability in themselves and others because it helps them adapt to surviving in an ever-changing world. Even if an eladrin got lost in the Feywild, their acclimation to surprise and confusion would help them resist getting further lost in the dimension-warping wilderness. However, the wilderness is no place to live, and even eladrin of the lowest status would rather live poor in an eladrin city than face the Dreaming’s nocturnal horrors.

Eladrin have a bad reputation for being arrogant and inhumane. Part of that is true: even kindly eladrin usually take pride in their high status. However, the best eladrin don’t let Faerie Court politics interfere with their perception of other beings, and they can be just as benevolent and noble as the most pure-hearted fairy. Still, vindictive faeries and their eladrin envoys are known to repay slights with cruel and unusual curses. Few eladrin would qualify as “pure evil,” but morals would be wise to stay on their guard until the eladrin’s motive is clear.

**Twilight Step.** You have learned how to skip out of the Material Plane, fly through the Plane of Faerie, and land back in the Material. You can forego your movement on your turn to teleport 30 feet to an unoccupied space you can see. You can use this trait once between rests.

**Knowledge of the Faerie Courts.** The masters of Alfheim are capricious, and you are trained to avoid the worst of their wrath. You are proficient in one skill of your choice from Arcana, History, Deception, Survival, Persuasion, or Insight.

**Eladrin Weapon Training.** You have proficiency with longswords and rapiers.

**Fey Sublimation.** Your time in the Faerie Realm has suffused your being with its very energy. In addition to being humanoid, you also have the fey creature type.

**Invocation of the Eladrin Lords.** Hierarchies among the fey often deploy pact magic, and a ripple of that power is available to all eladrin subjects. You know one cantrip from the following list, based on the aspect of nature you wish to manifest or that of your liege lord.

Aspect	Cantrip
Autumn	<i>resistance</i>
Hiding	<i>minor illusion</i>
Respite	<i>mending</i>
Rot	<i>chill touch</i>
Spring	<i>druidcraft</i>
Stars	<i>dancing lights</i>
Storm	<i>shocking grasp</i>
Summer	<i>produce flame</i>
Toxicity	<i>poison spray</i>
Winter	<i>ray of frost</i>

Your selected aspect also imparts minor changes of your choice to your appearance, such as to your eye and hair color, skin tone, or even the color of your clothing.

As part of a long rest, you can change your choice by meditating on the rulers of Alfheim and their influence on the world. Your spellcasting ability for this cantrip is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign in Common, Elvish, and Sylvan.



# Gnome

While gnomes might be small, their skill with illusion magic is unrivaled. Each and every gnome, no matter how small, has some sort of innate magic. As such, it is not uncommon for gnomes to grow into skilled mages or tinkers, regardless of their connection to gnomish culture.

In appearance gnomes are nearly as varied as humans, though they all share a few identifying traits: pointed ears, eyes that seem to glitter regardless of color, and unruly hair. Their skin is most commonly an earthy brown or reddish tan, though it can be any color which falls in the range of the human skin tone spectrum. Unusual hair and eye colors are not uncommon in gnomes, with any color being a possibility; whether this is what nature intended, or a result of their affinity for illusion magic, one may never know.

Gnomes have impressive lifespans, rivaling that of elves, but they mature at a much faster pace. Gnomes typically reach adulthood after 40 years, and begin graying and touting wrinkles by 100. However, they typically live multiple centuries, so you can never judge a gnome by their appearance; even the oldest gnomes maintain a level of spryness and vitality that is unheard of among the other heritages.

## Gnome Traits

Characters with gnome heritage share the following traits:

**Age.** Gnomes mature at about the same rate as humans, and are expected to settle down into adult life by the age of 40. They can live anywhere from 350 to nearly 500 years.

**Size.** Gnomes range from 3 to 4 feet tall, and weigh around 40 pounds on average. Your size is Small.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 feet.

**Darkvision.** Since they live primarily underground, gnomes have adapted to see easily in darkened conditions. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You cannot discern color in darkness, only shades of grey.

**Gnome Cunning.** You have advantage on all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma saving throws against magic.)

## Gnome Gifts

Gnomes are often overlooked, due in part to living under the veil of their illusion magic. Surprisingly, diverse gnome populations live in almost any territory imaginable—even in cities! Choose one of the following heritage gifts.

### Gnomish Agility

Adept at avoiding the attacks of the 'Big Folk', you gain +1 to your Armor Class against creatures of Medium-size and larger. If your size is not already Small, your size becomes Small.

### Into Mist

As a bonus action, or as a reaction immediately after taking damage, you can turn invisible and magically teleport up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space you can see. The invisibility lasts until the end of your next turn, and it ends early if you attack, deal damage, cast a spell, or force a creature to make a saving throw. Once you use this ability, you must finish a short or long rest before doing so again.

## Gnomish Paragon

When you reach 10th level, you are an exemplar of gnomekind, and you gain the following paragon gift

**Cunning Reflexes.** Choose one of the following saving throws: Strength, Dexterity,

or Constitution. You have advantage on the saving throw of your choice against magic.

## Gnome Culture

Gnomish culture is often accompanied by a constant hum of activity and merriment. They are known for having eccentric senses of humor, an inquisitive streak, and a knack for creative and technological ventures. While they are often overlooked, their cultures can have major impacts on the areas they inhabit—signs advertising a bright, exciting party may lead you to find the Children of Decadence, or a town crier might spread word of the annual Artisan’s Fair. Over the course of centuries, gnomish cultures enrich the communities around them.

Gnomes can thrive in bustling cities, or in isolated locations—though their location will likely influence the culture exhibited. Rarely will you find an isolated community of gnomes that rejects outside influence, as they are often eager to learn about and experience other cultures. While illusion magic is something most all gnomes are gifted with, it isn’t because they wish to hide themselves away from the rest of the world; they simply only want to present themselves to the world when they are good and ready to do so. In gnomish culture it is expected that “getting ready” can entail multiple hours of preening and preparation, with the end result often looking as disheveled as the beginning.

## Deep Gnome

Sometimes referred to as “darkborne” or “dark gnomes,” deep gnomes thrive in the darkest, most remote depths. Because of this, their skin is usually gray—though it can take on a variety of hues—and they excel when working in darkened or stealth conditions. You gain the following traits.

**Subterranean Camouflage.** You have advantage on Dexterity (stealth) checks made to hide in rocky terrain.

**Superior Darkvision.** The range at which your darkvision functions increases to 120 feet.

**Dark Gnome Magic.** At 1st level, you know the *disguise self* spell. At 3rd level, you learn the *blindness/deafness* spell. At 5th level, you learn the *nondetection* spell. With this trait, you can cast any of these spells you know once, and once you do you cannot do so again until you finish a long rest. When casting blindness/deafness with this trait, you can use only the blinding effect.

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

## Forest Gnome

Forest gnomes live close to nature. They are not often seen, for they dwell in small, hidden villages in deep woodland. Most forest gnomes are shy, and feel more comfortable around animals than they do humans, dwarves, and other peoples.

Forest gnome villages are comfortable, and usually house around a hundred members. These gnomes gather nuts and berries, tend to the forest, and care for the wildlife with which they live in harmony.

**Natural Illusionist.** You know the *minor illusion* cantrip. At 3rd level, you learn the *entangle* spell and can cast it once per day. At 5th level, you learn the *barkskin* spell and can cast it once per day. Intelligence is your spellcasting modifier for these spells, and casting them with this trait doesn’t require a spell slot or any material components.

**Small Beast Speech.** You have an innate ability to communicate simple thoughts and ideas with beasts of size Small or smaller.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and Gnomish.

## Tinker Gnome

Gnomes are known for their unique brand of creativity, which often leads to the advancement of both magic and technology. Non-gnomes that immerse themselves in this culture often struggle to reach the level of craftsmanship achieved by their gnomish counterparts, but can learn to match it with enough dedication and hard work. While they are usually locked into a rivalry with artisan gnomes, there is rarely rivalry inside of tinker gnome communities; it's not uncommon for tinkers to help even a direct competitor perfect a new product—though there are no promises that they won't steal the plans for themselves afterwards.

**Cunning Creative.** You are proficient with artisans tools (tinker's tools). You can spend one hour and 10 gp worth of materials to build a variety of useful tools, all detailed below. Each device has an AC of 5 and 1 hit point, and ceases to function after 24 hours or whenever you choose to dismantle it. An hour can be spent repairing a device that has ceased to function. You can have up to three of the following devices active at one time:

**Clockwork Figure.** This figure can be a tiny animal, monster, or even a humanoid. When placed on the ground, you can direct the figure to march up to 10 feet in a direction of your choice using your bonus action on each of your turns. You can choose to have the figure make a noise that is appropriate to the creature it represents, or to have it be silent. If you choose for the figure to be silent, you can instead equip it with a small light that shines 5 feet in front of the figure. This light creates bright light in dim conditions, and dim light in total darkness.

**Fire Starter.** This device creates a small flame that can be used to light a candle, torch, or campfire. To activate the device, you must use your bonus action. Additionally, as a bonust action, the device can shoot a small ball of fire up to 30 feet, dealing 1d4+1 fire damage. Using the device this way damages

it, and it must be repaired before using it again.

**Audiophone.** When started this device plays a pre-recorded sound at a moderate volume. The device stops playing when it reaches the end of the recording, or when shut off. You can use your action to record any 1 minute of audio, and can start and shut off the device as a bonus action.

**Sensor.** This device can be attached to a wall or any smooth, sturdy surface. When placed, it begins monitoring the area around it. Choose one sort of activity to monitor: noise or movement. The device detects these things up to 30 feet around it, including through openings, but cannot sense these through solid walls. The device relays the information back to you telepathically, and can share either clips of sound (limited to 30 seconds at a time, with a minimum of 10 minutes in between relays) or information on the size and number of creatures moving in the area.

**Lore of Creation.** You are proficient in your choice of the History or Arcana skills. Whenever you make a check using the skill of your choice related to magical, alchemical, or technological items, your proficiency bonus is doubled.

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

## Forgotten Folx

The Forgotten Folk are communities of gnomes even more secretive than the notoriously reclusive forest gnomes. These communities almost always share a strong, familial bond with each other, even those they aren't related to. Entire communities raise children communally, provide for each other, and survive primarily by bartering crafted goods. These communities have a lot of love to give, and are more than happy to take in wanderers or adventurers who stumble across their homes. Because of their

open and caring nature, it is not uncommon for relationships among forgotten folk to include multiple partners--of all genders and heritages.

Most who leave this culture do so to become merchants and provide their crafts and talents to more people, or out of a desire to see the "real" world. It is common for young adults to be encouraged by their communities to go on a sort of sabbatical to experience life outside of the community and to bring back new technologies and goods on their return.

*Eyes Everywhere.* Thanks to supervising children, you have a knack for keeping track of your party members. As long as a party member is within 60 feet of you, you always know their general location even if you cannot see or otherwise sense them. 1 foot of lead or iron, or a spell such as nondetection, prevent the effect from working.

*It Takes a Village.* You can use the help action as a bonus action. Additionally, when you do so, the range at which you can help an ally increases to 15 feet. One per long rest when you help an ally, you can choose to let them add double their proficiency bonus to their roll as well as rolling with advantage.

*Languages.* You can speak, read, write, and sign Common, Gnomish, and one other language of your choice.

# Halfling

All the exuberance and joy of life, in a package half the size. While the term “halfling” may seem somewhat well, belittling, the term is still apt. For almost all respects a halfling resembles a human at half scale, measuring only about 3 feet tall. Underfoot and out of mind, to halflings the world is filled with giants, and it’s often best not to draw undue attention.

With respect to their stature, halflings tend to be on the stout and full-bodied side, weighing around a comparatively hefty 40 pounds or so. They usually have tan or pale ruddy skin but can run anywhere from pale tones to dark browns, and they have a propensity for long and curly brown or auburn hair. Male halflings often grow thick bushy sideburns but other facial hair is usually relegated to the occasional scruffy whiskers.

Their non threatening stature and generally pleasant demeanor has served them well throughout the generations, and while an individual may have a grudge with one halfling or another, the halflings as a people have stayed well away from most wars and conflicts. Halflings are lucky that way, and it often feels like luck is integral to who they are. Somehow when the chips are down and everything has gone wrong, it’s always the little halfling that walks away without a scratch.

## Halfling Traits

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

**Age.** Halflings mature into adults around the age of 20 and usually live for about 150 years, with some venerable halflings living up into their 180’s or 190’s.

**Size.** Halflings earn their shorthand title and average about 3 feet tall and weigh only around 40 pounds. Your size is Small

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 25 feet.

**Lucky.** When you roll a 1 on the d20 for an attack roll, ability check, or saving throw, you can reroll the die and must use the new roll. When you reach 10th level, you may reroll results of 2 and 3 in the same way.

**Halfling Nimbleness.** You can move through the space of any creature that is of a size larger than yours.

## Halfling Gifts

Halflings are widespread and the halflings from one borough may bear little resemblance to those from the other end of the world. There are a few prominent trends in halflings though. In addition to the traits found in your halfling heritage, select one of the following halfling gifts.

### Burrowing Claws

If their creation myth is to be believed, halflings have a primordial form, still represented by a trait sometimes seen today. You are significantly more hirsute than most halflings, and prone to patches of scruffy hair along your forearms and back. Your irises are often quite wide and deeply black, and your rocklike fingernails tend to grow with flattened edges. In halfling communities, these traits often come with insulting nicknames like “shovel-claws” or “scruffs”. You have the following features:

**Burrow.** You have a burrowing speed of 20 feet. You can use your burrowing speed to move through non-magical sand, loose earth, loamy soil, mud, or snow, but not solid rock. You do not naturally leave any sort of tunnel behind but you can attempt to create a 5-foot by 5-foot wide tunnel in earth, soil, or snow by spending extra time and effort shoring it up and adding support. For each 15 minutes



you spend shoring up a tunnel, you can increase that tunnel's depth by 5 feet.

**Claws.** Your nails grow into strong shovel-like claws. The claws are natural weapons, which you can use to make unarmed strikes. If you hit with them, you deal slashing damage equal to 1d4 + your Strength modifier, instead of the normal bludgeoning damage for an unarmed strike.

### Tuft Feet

You have thick patches of bushy hair that grow atop your proportionally large feet. You don't need to wear shoes, or any sort of foot covering, as your big hairy feet are usually calloused and tough enough to tread on most anything. You have the following features:

**Thick Soles.** You are immune to sharp terrain hazards (such as caltrops, broken glass, or the spike growth spell), you do not treat such areas as difficult terrain and if you would take damage from such hazards you take no damage instead.

Additionally, difficult terrain reduces your movement speed by 5 feet rather than by half as normal.

**Big Feet.** You make all checks to resist being knocked prone at advantage.

### Twilight Touched

You are blanched of both emotion and color with wide, alarmingly pure white eyes. Your skin is either starkly pallid or disquietingly sallow. You're completely bald or have only a few bedraggled locks of hair. The twilight is responsible for these traits, but it's influence lasts for generations. While somewhat unsettling, you form stronger communal bonds than other halflings, and can speak without the need for words. You have the following features:

**Telepathy.** You can speak telepathically to any creature within 30 feet of you that you can see. The creature understands you only if the two of you share a language. You can

speak telepathically in this way to one creature at a time.

**Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 30 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can't discern color in darkness, only shades of gray.

## Halfling Culture

The "Proem of Kin" is the oldest document recounting the halfling's creation myth, and the origins for many other peoples for that matter. Though strangely most halflings are rarely a religious sort, and most considerations for their "Shaper" are relegated to a small hearth totem, if anything at all. Even from the text's own accounts the "Shaper" is deceased, which may partly explain the strong sense of community and well-meaning present in almost all halflings. A communal sense that no-one is watching over them, so they must look out for each other, and that a great gift was imparted on them, a gift that must be passed forward.

Wherever halflings live they form communities, neighborhoods, and to a halfling a neighbor is practically a family member. Even families squabble sometimes, but there's something deeply ingrained in halfling culture that bolsters a sense of camaraderie and takes on the problems of a sibling as if they were their own.

Halfling communities tend to be insulated, and are often cut off from the rest of the world. And while they're quick to help someone on their doorstep, they can often be deaf to "far-off" plights, unaware or unconcerned with danger or injustice just a few townships over. However, halflings historically have little tolerance for bullies of any size.

Halflings built no empires, but their safe and hospitable communities dot landscapes across the world, and the world is better for them. Still, most halflings are cheerful,

friendly, and genuinely caring and kind in a rare fashion in a tumultuous world.

There are halflings in countless places throughout the world, and even neighboring boroughs can be worlds unto themselves. Halflings are renowned for their hospitality as well, and many non-halflings find themselves welcomed into halfling communities with open arms. However your character was raised, they were moulded and influenced by the halfling culture around them.

## Borougher

With warm hearths, verdant greenery, and low ceilings, boroughs—consisting of many individual burrows—are the hearts of halfling communities across the world. Halflings prefer to carve their homes out from low hills, shoring up the earth as natural protection against the elements. They're hardly simple holes in the ground either, and most boroughers take pride in their subterranean homes and buy or craft fine halfling-sized furniture and furnishings. But boroughs are more than a single halfling's home, they're communities built from dozens, sometimes hundreds of halflings whose homes dot entire hillsides or rolling hilly plains.

Living in a borough means living close to the soil and it's rare for any borougher to go through a day without planting, weeding, tilling, or harvesting something. Not all boroughs start out amongst lush grasses or good loamy soil, but they all become this way before long. Boroughs usually create such an abundance of food that they often grow paunchy, earning the term "stout halflings" from their peers. Boroughers are such great stewards of the land that most conquering armies simply let halfling boroughs go about their business in exchange for crop taxes. History often marches on around them and the only change in the

borough's day-to-day is what soldiers collect their extra turnips.

While world events rarely bother a borougher, local events like who won the last preserves contest often do. A borough community is a constant buzz of holidays, fairs, birthdays, and any other excuse to live life to the fullest and then gossip about it the following morning. Gleeful whispers about who said and did what at yesterday's fair can provide even more fun than the fair itself. Sadly this sort of thing can lead to unspoken grudges and long standing rivalries, but there's a sense of camaraderie that usually surplants them when real trouble starts up.

It's not only halflings that enjoy this way of life either, often when outsiders are shown the warm halfling hospitality, they don't want to leave. These so-called "tall fellows" dig out homes of their own, albeit with higher ceilings, and are welcomed into the borough community with open arms.

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

***Borough Cooking.*** Halflings eat well and often—and while you can quickly empty your stock, eating like a borougher has its benefits. Whenever you begin a short rest, you and up to 6 allies can each partake in your borough cooking by consuming an amount of food equal to the normal amount of food it would take to sustain themselves (usually 1 pound of food for a medium sized creature). Any creature that partakes of borough cooking in this way gains 1d6 temporary hit points.

***Home Gardening.*** Each borougher worth their salt keeps a side vegetable garden or a chicken hutch to supplement their larder. You are proficient in your choice of either the Animal Handling or Nature skills.

***Memoirist.*** Boroughers often make a habit of jotting down the events of their lives in memoirs and journals. You are proficient with calligrapher's supplies. In addition, you

can make any Wisdom check to recall details about past events you took part in at advantage by first checking your journals.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, sign, and write Common, Halfling, and one additional language of your choice.

### Kithbáin (Clachan-Locked)

In a forgotten corner of the Feywild lay a territory called “the Twilight,” a silent world perpetually cast in the dim light of the setting sun. The Twilight is home to the kithbáin, or the “Twilight touched,” halflings who’ve lived for generations in the twilight, and who’ve felt the silence fill up with the voices of ken. There is no sound in the Twilight, nothing but the sound of one’s own thoughts, and if one stays long enough, the thoughts of others.

Kithbáin clachan communities aren’t built as separate homes like the boroughs—there’s no point. There’s no notion of secrets or privacy in the Twilight, not when the entire community’s inner thoughts are broadcast for all to hear. The kithbáin live in a single communal structure, mentally connected and in constant conversation all in utter silence. Life in a clachan can be eerie, but it’s also open and honest. Lies, theft, crimes of passion—they’re all pointless.

Clachan gates are unassuming things, a pair of trees twisted to an arch, the wicker door in an old forgotten stone wall, a gap in the unworked natural stone. Stepping through a clachan gate takes you to another world, and locks you out of the world you left behind. Each gate leads to a different isolated pocket of the twilight ringed by a border of terrible dead woods. Clachan gates are always open from the material plane, but only open back towards it at celestial convergences. So when an outsider stumbles through they must choose between braving the woods and the Feywild beyond, or staying for months or even years and

becoming twilight touched themselves. Those that finally leave their clachan often find the material world harshly bright and unfeeling, severed from the thoughts of their fellows.

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

**Sunlight Sensitivity.** You have disadvantage on attack rolls and on Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on sight when you, the target of your attack, or whatever you are trying to perceive is in direct sunlight.

**Superior Darkvision.** You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You can’t discern color in darkness, only shades of gray. If you already have darkvision from another trait or feature, instead increase its range by 60 feet.

**The Ken.** Once the voices of the ken fill your eyes they never truly leave you. You can cast the detect thoughts spell once with this trait, you regain the ability to do so when you finish a short or long rest.

**Without Secrets.** Living with the ken amongst a clachan means living exposed and without secrets, intimately aware of the true meaning of every spoken word and privy to those unsaid. You are proficient in the Insight skill, and you may add double your proficiency bonus to checks made with it.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, sign, and write Common, Halfling, and Sylvan.

### Mustbairn

Every borougher has the odd impulse to drop their trowels and dig into the soil with their bare hands, a rarified urge to rip off their stuffy clothes and shout at the sky, such impulses are usually rejected out of hand but the mustbairns know better.

Halflings in mustbairn clans have rejected any notion of control and embraced their

roles as children of the soil, wardens of the earth but not its masters. Oddly, most mustbairn clans were founded more recently than their “civilized” borough counterparts. Many are former boroughers themselves, with tattered scraps of their suits or overalls still worked into their clan coverings.

Each mustbairn clan begins with “the whisper,” a moment in which one or more halflings claim they can hear the earth speaking to them. That the earth whispers in pain and weeps for the shackles laid upon it. It whispers that life was not meant to grow in orderly rows, why not let it grow as it will? It whispers that life could be simple again, why not live as you will? Whether it’s a madness or a divine call, many boroughs have collapsed in the last few centuries, abandoned and overgrown, lost to the whisper.

While mustbairns may lose the trappings of law and order, they never lose their sense of community. A tribe of mustbairns is as tightly united as any borough, but instead of gossiping they share what wisdoms the earth has taught them. Other than simply surviving off the land, most mustbairn tribes feel led to dismantle establishment and derail “progress”. It’s common for mustbairn tribes to storm sites of industry and devastate them before disappearing back into the wilderness. They particularly seek out and destroy mining operations that cut deeply into the earth. It’s not uncommon to see environmentally minded non-halflings alongside them either, trying their best to listen to the earth’s will.

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

**Child of the Soil.** You can feel the heartbeat of the soil through the soles of your feet and it does not intend you harm. You ignore difficult terrain caused by any form of earth or soil, such as mud, quicksand, or

mountainous terrain. In addition, you know the *druidcraft* cantrip.

**Earthspeak.** You can attempt to divine the earth’s wisdom as per the spell *augury* by submerging at least your feet or hands into mud or soil. Once you divine the earth’s wisdom in this way you cannot do so again until you finish a long rest.

**Wild and Unshackled.** Mustbairns have embraced everything that law and order works against, and have learned to live freely amongst nature. You have the Chaotic alignment for the purposes of any spell or ability that would detect or effect Chaotic creatures. In addition, you gain proficiency with two of the following skills of your choice: Acrobatics, Animal Handling, Nature, Religion, or Survival.

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

## Tunnel Runner

Not all conquerors and empires tolerate halfling boroughs within their borders and when their armies come marching the wise boroughers have already gone underground. Halflings rarely give up their land, they’ll simply live under it instead. Dwarves may dig deep, but halflings are content to dig wide, and stay up where the earth is still alive. Once forced underground a halfling warren can stretch for miles.

Halflings build warrens almost always as an act of rebellion. Halflings don’t usually prefer to live underground and while they like the sun and the greenery, they make warren living look easy and undercut the very tyrants that forced them underground. Warrens run on two main commodities: root vegetables, and everything that isn’t nailed down.

The root vegetables come naturally, and are just grown the other way around. Many farmers tell legends of “spirit farms”, ghosts that grow potatoes or turnips out in random

pastures and harvest them in the middle of the night. Such legends are surefire tells that halfling warrens are about, with halflings industriously tending the crops from below.

Everything else comes filched, by the tunnel runners (often called lightfoot halflings) both as vital supplies and recompense. Filching from the conquerors above is seen as a civic duty to those forced to live in warrens, and they've turned it into an art form. The surface and all its many goods represent danger, so they build as many secret bolt tunnels and passages as possible. It's said that once a city is fully undercut, a tunnel runner is never more than 20 feet from a bolt hole.

Those on the surface are rarely pleased with all this filching, and to evade capture, tunnel runners build false chambers, traps, entire complexes that lead to nowhere. Not to mention that all these tunnels are usually sized for halflings, and should be a wee bit cramped for the surface tall fellows. The warrens are so insulated from the laws above that warrens often become a safe haven for unfortunate souls who'll take a low ceiling over a cold alley or a prison cell.

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

***Fleet of Foot.*** Your base walking speed increases to 35 feet.

***Rebellious Tactics.*** To survive, tunnel runners need to be quick, quiet, crafty, or back in the warrens picking roots. You gain proficiency with one of the following skills of your choice: Acrobatics, Deception, Nature, or Stealth.

***Slippery.*** A few years of tunnel running will see you either behind bars or train you well in evading capture. When you are grappled you can automatically escape that grapple as a reaction. Once you escape a grapple in this way you cannot do so again until you finish a long rest.

***Trained Filcher.*** The warrens need vital supplies, and tunnel runners have learned to do so without causing a fuss. You are proficient in the Sleight of Hand skill, in addition whenever you would make a Sleight of Hand check to pick a pocket or otherwise take an item without notice, you make that check with advantage 5.

***Languages.*** You can speak, read, and write Common and Halfling.



# Human

Human beings are remarkable creatures who, despite their short lifespan and limited supernatural abilities, produce the most noble heroes and the most vile villains. Compared to other heritages, humans appear remarkably average in almost every way. Humans have skeletal structure like that of elves and dwarves. Their build (and body hair) is somewhere between that of elves and dwarves, yet humans stand taller than either. Human skin and hair color can be dark as jet or light as alabaster. Human hair can also be bright red and pale yellow—other hair colors may be the result of dye, magic, or a distant non-human ancestor like an elf, dragon, or giant.

The origin of human beings is contentious. Many human cultures offer that their god created humanity, or more often that their god created their people. The question of which story and which god is the most true is a source of endless strife. Some scholars believe humans, like any ancestry, is one that appears randomly after sufficient time, although the profound magics in the world make such a claim difficult to prove through the often-disrupted fossil record—and the same magic even makes the hypothesis unlikely.

When looking at how short-lived, non-magical, and vulnerable humans are, one may be hard-pressed to say what exactly makes humans so magnificent. Some creatures even look down on humans like vermin. The human instinct to survive by the most expedient means available does not help this stereotype—although it helps one to see how such unremarkable creatures are viable in mysterious and unforgiving worlds.

## Human Traits

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

**Age.** Humans reach basic maturity around age 18, although many continue to grow in body and mind through their twenties. Only the most exceptional human elders live past 100 years.

**Size.** Humans come in a wide variety of heights, weight, and body types. Most adult humans are in the 5 to 6 foot range, although taller and shorter statures do occur. Your size is Medium. (With your GM's permission, your size can instead be Small.)

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Intrepid.** Deep inside, your survival instinct is remarkably strong, which allows even humble humans to perform remarkable feats. When you make an attack roll, an ability check, or a saving throw, you can declare that you have advantage on that roll. If you already have disadvantage on that roll, the advantage and disadvantage cancel out. Once you use this trait, you cannot use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

**Fast Learner.** Humans acquire knowledge at a higher rate than more long-lived heritages (although not all acquire the wisdom to use it). You gain proficiency with one additional skill of your choice.

## Human Gifts

Humanity's most overlooked trait is their physical and spiritual endurance. How a human exhibits this hereditary resilience varies on their personal disposition. In addition to the traits found in your human heritage, select one of the following gifts.

### Die-hard Survivor

Foes of humanity may see them as ants, but humans are equally difficult to eliminate. The ancestors of human beings learned to survive through the harshest conditions, including drought, winter, and famine. Humans, in their stubbornness, can even pull themselves back from the brink of death to fulfill their dreams. In the present day, the ability to

survive at a near-starvation level allows some humans to cruelly ignore the risks of letting people fall through the cracks of society. Humans with the gift of Die-hard Survivor have the following features:

**Feast & Famine.** You are adapted to tightening your belt during hard times. You double your Constitution score for the sake of determining how long you can go without eating.

**Radical Perseverance.** Through your sheer stubbornness and will to live, you sometimes manage to wriggle out of death's grasp. You get a bonus to death saving throws equal to your proficiency bonus. A d20 result of natural 1 or a 20 still yields the normal results, and a result of 21 or higher is treated as a 20.

## Spirited Traveler

The power of movement is one of humanity's evolutionary advantages. An ancient human hunting strategy for killing fast game is persistence hunting—following the beast relentlessly, shifting between walking and running... until the beast is too exhausted to defend itself. Many humans maintain their health through running, and foot races are a universal favorite game. In a word, humans gifted at running *will go far*.

Humans with the gift of Spirited Traveler have the following features:

**Marathon Runner.** While you carry no more than half your carrying capacity, and you are not wearing medium or heavy armor, your individual overland travel speed is 10 miles per hour, but only for 2 hours. After this point, you can only travel at a slow pace (2 miles per hour) until you complete a long rest.

**Sojourner's Fortitude.** You have advantage on saving throws made to resist exhaustion for marching longer than 8 hours.

**Mad Dash.** When you take the Dash action, your movement this turn does not provoke

opportunity attacks. During this movement, you have advantage Athletics checks made to jump, Acrobatics checks made to avoid hazards, and Dexterity saving throws.

This trait does not protect you from other reactions, including readied actions. Once you use this trait, you cannot use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

## Ingenious Focus

Not all human minds work the same—some have a nearly miraculous level of focus. People with this intellectual mode often bring a surprising level of insight and passion to almost any topic they engage. In spite of their brilliance, they often have difficulty with more general awareness.

Humans with the gift of Ingenious Focus have the following features:

**Resident Expert.** You have a reputation for painstaking detail on certain tasks and subjects. Choose two tools with which you are proficient, or a skill with which you are proficient from Animal Handling, Arcana, History, Investigation, Medicine, Nature, or Religion. When you make a check with that tool or skill and the d20 shows a natural result of 2 through 7, you can count the d20 result as being 8.

**Inexorable Concentration.** When you fail a Constitution saving throw to maintain concentration, you can immediately reroll it, taking the new result. You may use this ability a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of one), and regain all expended uses after a long rest.

## Human Paragons

When you reach 10th level, you are an exemplar of humankind, and you gain one paragon gift from the following list.

## Determined

When you are at half your hit points or fewer, you can use a bonus action to gain a +5 bonus to the next attack roll, skill check, or saving throw you make before the end of your turn. Once you use this feature, you cannot use it again until you complete a short or long rest.

## Evasive Action

Your walking speed increases by 10 feet. You ignore difficult terrain when you Dash. You do not provoke opportunity attacks from creatures you attack with a melee weapon; this effect occurs whether you hit or miss, and it lasts until the end of the turn.

## Voracious Learner

Choose 3 options from the list to learn: a language, a skill proficiency, or a tool proficiency. You can choose each option multiple times.

## Human Culture

Humans are often thought of as uniformly ambitious and power hungry. In reality, that is simply not the case. Although the human will to live is remarkably strong, many human cultures happily live in balance with nature and other nearby communities. For them, bravery is more important than ambition; but even in human cultures that do not center bravery, the drive for survival is honored nonetheless.

With lifespans considerably shorter than elves and dwarves, the pace of human culture is much more rapid. Even in cultures which value stability, one hundred years is long enough for human politics to change radically, and a millennium enough to lose entire human cultures to the ravages of time. Some human cultures are more innovative or fast-paced than others, but the hunger for

progress and power are not values shared by all human beings.

Colonization is one of the unfortunate legacies of human culture. Due to the high birth-rate of humans compared to other heritages, human migration frequency and density are exponentially higher. This means that humans often find themselves exploring and settling new lands. The habit becomes a problem when there are already people living in that land. Land feuds caused by human migration are a significant cause of strife, both with other heritages and with fellow humans. Although humans are not the only colonizers, their efforts are particularly harsh because human cultures are frequently short-sighted and do not take efforts to ensure that the wisdom of the previous people is not lost to the ages. They are equally likely to debase and abuse their natural resources, which in turn leads to further strife when they must acquire new resources.

But for each human era of expansion and conquered lands, there's another human era of peace and prosperity. The most noble of heroes and the most vile of villains can be found among them. Humanity constantly battles their selfish impulses, and paradoxically their generous hearts are not found wanting when those in need come knocking on their door. Countless people rely on the fruits of human expansion and shield of human armies.

So humanity must live with the question: can kindness truly prevail over cruelty?

Humans are adaptable, and can grow into almost every living situation imaginable. And while humans tend to populate the land rapidly, they're rarely alone. Human cultures can span entire continents, and their cities house countless people of every shape, size, and heritage. However your character was raised, they were moulded and influenced by the human culture around them.

## Profiteer

Profiteers are people who seek to grow their riches, often trading, negotiating, and discovering new markets on behalf of their trading company. There are dozens of competing mammoths of industry and thousands of minor houses vying for their chance at the big time. Many of the leading companies rival nations in terms of size and power, answerable only to their stockholders and reaching across the world to fill in the corners of the map in search of profits.

Trading companies typically have chains of command comparable to a military, with everything from trustees, core strategists, middle managers, and day laborers. Some companies treat their people well, while others are notorious for exploiting cheap labor and swindling their employees. The poorest employees, drowning in debt, sometimes feel forced to consolidate their loans through a newer, larger loan from the company—a path that frequently leads to indentured servitude for themselves and their family. Children of employees continue working against their loans, creating “company families.” Whole communities, even generations grow up to swear their allegiance not towards a nation or god, but to the company.

Life at the bottom of a trading company is one of hard and seemingly endless work, but at least it offers the status of the company’s brand, a symbol of protection and privilege just as powerful as any curse or charm. And there’s always the distant promise of promotion. The company doesn’t care what size, shape, or color people come in, or where they came from, only whether or not they can enrich the company’s interests.

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

**Fine Print.** Trading companies wouldn’t get nearly as far without wheeling, dealing, and hiding things in fine print. Whenever you

draft up a written agreement you can attempt to obfuscate the meaning using confusing and dense terminology by making an Intelligence (Deception) check or a Charisma (Deception) check (your choice). Creatures that thoroughly read your agreement can determine the true meaning of your agreement only by succeeding on an Intelligence (Investigation) check with a DC equal to the result of your Deception check.

**Mantle of Authority.** Whether imagined or justified, your time with the company has left you feeling confident that you have the right to be wherever you are, and it’s often hard to definitively tell you otherwise. You have advantage on Charisma (Persuasion) checks when dealing with guards, soldiers, and other figures of authority.

**Merchandise Familiarity.** Growing up within a trade company inevitably fosters knowhow with goods and the qualities and legitimacy thereof. Any Intelligence checks you make to appraise the worth of an item or determine its authenticity are made at advantage.

**Trade Route Experience.** Even if you’ve never sailed a company ship or led a company expedition you’ve been trained with their knowledge of the world’s geography. You are proficient with cartographer’s tools and navigator’s tools, and you may add double your proficiency to checks made with them.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, sign, and write Common and one additional language of your choice.

## Sheltered Citizen

As human empires expand and the corners of the map are filled in, the dangers and threats beyond the ever expanding borders can seem more distant and irrelevant. Safety is assured, the next meal is never found wanting, and many living in these sheltered existences can live confidently knowing that things will go



on as normal, and that the days, weeks, and months will pass uneventfully, blurring together into a humdrum life.

Many in the heart of a nation live quite comfortably, and though there are always discrepancies in wealth and power even the near-destitute enjoy comforts and luxuries unheard of in distant colonies. Medicine and schooling, relatively safe streets at night, a law and order that generally works for them rather than against them, all taken for granted as a base living standard.

Often horrible things are done to create these safe havens, old ugly facts hidden away from the new generations with notions of “birthright” and done in the name of safety. Sometimes these acts of conquest are buried so far or reframed so favorably that the current generation has not even a hint or inkling of their nation’s true histories.

In the largest empires where one can travel for weeks without seeing a border, much of what goes on in the outside world fades into myth. Great winged fire-breathing lizards? Such things would surely be too heavy to fly. Undead horrors? Simple fairy tales told to scare children into behaving.

And while humans are some of the most prolific empire builders, countless others hold the titles. There are dwarven holds so deep and vast that generations can pass without seeing the sun, and elvish kingdoms so isolated from the outside world that even the multitudes of humanity have faded into myth. These pockets of safety and shelter can crop up anywhere there’s strong forces and the determination to push danger outward. Though those raised within are often woefully underprepared for what lies just outside their walls.

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

**Central Schooling.** Those at the safe center of empires often have the privileged access to fine teachers and the opportunity to follow

their interests. You gain proficiency in two skills of your choice.

**Medical Retinue.** Citizens at the heart of a nation often see more doctors and specialists in a year than a colonist sees in a lifetime and your medical upkeep throughout the years has made you resilient. Whenever your hit point maximum or one of your ability scores would be reduced, it is reduced by half that much instead (minimum one).

**Misplaced Optimism.** Your upbringing in almost guaranteed safety has left you convinced that even dire situations can’t be that bad until proven otherwise. You are immune to the frightened condition from sources that haven’t dealt damage to you.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, sign, and write Common and one additional language of your choice.

## Villager

Far away from the protection of armies and uncomfortably close to the borders beyond which anything might roam, day-to-day life as a villager is routine but a future is far from guaranteed. Average village life is simple and mundane, filled with the humdrum but insistent needs of farm animals and crops but there can be far worse than wolves stalking the woods—at any moment a villager’s life can be punctuated by upheaval.

More so than larger towns and cities, a village is a community. With rarely more than a few hundred citizens, everybody knows everybody in a village, for better or worse. Rumors and gossip flow about what so-and-so said to him, and what she did to so-and-so. There can be spiteful rivalries and old grudges, but at the heart of it all a village community is a unifier and most regard their entire village as their homestead, to be cared for and protected together.

Occasionally a village will spring up far off the beaten path, but most arise at crossroads. A house and inn settle where one road meets



another, suddenly it makes sense for a stable and livery, which of course requires a blacksmith. Isolated farmhouses are suddenly linked together, and a channel of trade goods, exciting news, and less than reputable tall tales opens up to people who otherwise might not have seen a friendly face more than once a fortnight. As distant neighbors become close friends, a nameless patch of dirt gains an identity, and once founded most villagers fight for their homegrown identity far harder than they would for any distant national banner.

Villages are not a uniquely human way of life either. A warm hearth, lifelong friends, and homegrown food are a universal way of life, enjoyed by countless peoples of all shapes and sizes.

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

**Farm Life.** Whether or not you actually worked with the animals, livestock are an ever-present part of rural village living. You are proficient in the Animal Handling skill.

**Sharpened Tools.** When danger approaches the village and there's no adventurers around, it's often left to the villagers to defend themselves with whatever they have on hand. You are proficient with improvised weapons.

**Tall Tales.** Life along the crossroads rarely offers an opportunity for proper schooling, but the roads carry with them legends and stories from far and wide. You may use your Wisdom modifier when making History, Nature, or Religion checks, instead of your Intelligence modifier as normal. However, at your GM's discretion the results of checks made in this way may be distorted or exaggerated forms of the truth.

**Village Watch.** You know how to keep your eyes open because in a small village an inattentive watch could spell doom for your neighbor's home or your own. You have

advantage on Wisdom (Perception) checks made while keeping watch during a rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, sign, and write Common and one additional language of your choice.

## Pioneer

Pioneers live at the farthest reaches of their empire, upon shores their nation's tendrils have not quite fully grasped. Pioneers live in settlements on the edge, the frontier, land that not long ago was merely empty space on the map. Though those already living there rarely see it that way.

Pioneers may take hold of uninhabited land but it's rare for any region even remotely livable goes without a claim upon it. Armies or disasters may have swept those previous inhabitants away, or they might be right across the hastily crafted walls, wondering what these strange newcomers are up to. It's a life of conflict, either fighting against the elements or rival claims on the same patch of land. But they shoulder their burdens and fight their fights anyway, always working towards a promise of a brighter future. A pioneer has the chance to carve out a piece of the world to call their own. Often the opportunities are slim back home, and the chance to forge one's own destiny is all it takes.

Human ambition often drives them towards colonization, but it's hardly a unique phenomenon. Settlers of all shapes and sizes can leave their homeland in search of claimed fortunes and independence, to varying degrees of success. Some pioneers thrive while some whole colonies go quiet and disappear. Colony life is uncertain, fraught with danger, and is often morally gray, but the drive to make a future for yourself keeps sending more people off into the unknown.

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

**Claim Staker.** A tall fence and the grit to defend it is often all it takes to stake a claim out on the frontier. Whenever you begin a long rest, you can choose to spend the first hour of that rest by fortifying your position. While resting in a fortified position, the ground in a 60-foot radius area around you is considered difficult terrain for any creatures other than those you consider allies. In addition, whenever a hidden creature enters the fortified area for the first time on a turn or starts its turn there, it must make a Dexterity saving throw with a DC equal to 8 + your Wisdom modifier + your proficiency bonus. On a failed save the creature inadvertently makes loud noises and is no longer hidden.

**Frontier Survival.** Your life on the frontier has taught you how to stay alive and how to tell when things are going south in the latest negotiations with the neighboring tribes. You are proficient in the Insight and Survival skills.

**Strange Forager.** Whether by training or by sheer survival of the luckiest, you've gotten quite skilled at determining what wild growing things are food or a death sentence. You have advantage on any check made to determine if something is poisonous.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, sign, and write Common, two additional languages of your choice.

# Orc

Unfairly depicted as evil savages by many of the peoples of the world, Orcs are passionate and fearless, above all else. Their passion has long seen them painted in a poor light—being called monsters by those who do not know them—but it is also responsible for the ever growing half-orc population. Though all orcs are usually lumped under the same banner in the eyes of most common people, there are several different heritages—usually differing based on the region which they are from. All orcs share similar physical features, however, such as skin that comes in shades of grey or green, large boarish tusks, dark hair, large muscular figures, and pointed ears.

Due to the frequent conflicts of some tribes, orcs are considered to have particularly short lifespans, though this isn't entirely true. Outside of combat-oriented tribes, an orc can live to see 75; though still slightly shorter than humans, this is a far cry from their assumed lifespan of 40 years. When their passion is allowed to flourish, an orc or half-orc can easily become widely renowned for their skills in the arts or whatever area catches their interest.

## Orc Traits

Characters with orc heritage share the following traits:

**Age.** Orcs mature faster than humans, reaching adulthood around age 14. They age noticeably faster, usually only living to be 60-75 years old.

**Size.** Orcs are rarely under 6 feet tall, and weight somewhere over 200 pounds. Your size is Medium.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Darkvision.** Your orcish blood grants you superior vision in dark or dim conditions. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if

it were dim light. You cannot discern color in darkness, only shades of grey.

**Heavy Lifter.** When determining your carrying capacity and the weight that you can push, drag, or lift, your size is considered to be Large.

**Mighty Attacks.** When you score a critical hit with a melee weapon attack, you can roll one of the weapon's damage dice an additional time and add it to the extra damage of the critical hit.

## Orcish Gifts

While most orcs are all lumped into the same category, there are actually multiple orcish heritages—largely determined by the region a tribe is from. Those whose ancestors hailed from barren deserts have adapted in different ways from those who historically dwelled in the forests or plains. Additionally, those few tribes that revel in battle have grown to have different traits than those that value family or their ancestors above all else. In addition to the traits granted by your orcish heritage, choose one of the following heritage gifts.

### Tough-blooded

You come from a family or clan of fighters and have inherited their heartiness.

Regardless of whether or not you choose to fight yourself, your heritage puts you a cut above the rest. Orcs with this gift gain the following traits:

**Relentless Endurance.** When you are reduced to 0 hit points but not killed outright, you can drop to 1 hit point instead. You can't use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

**Unarmored Resilience.** The many battles of your ancestors has given you a thick skin, and the ability to shrug off less powerful blows. When not wearing armor, your AC equals 13 + your Dexterity modifier.

## Ancestral Blessing

Orcs with this gift are believed to have been blessed by their ancestors. Every family has their own beliefs for why this occurs; it could be to honor the good deeds of their parents, the success of their clan in battle or the arts, or even to take pity on a child in a desperate situation. Orcs with this heritage often seem to have a sort of divine aura that sets them apart, and share the following traits:

**Divine Intervention.** You learn the *resistance* cantrip. Additionally, you learn the *shield* spell and can cast it once per day without expending a spell slot or any material components.

**Divine Protection.** You have resistance to Radiant damage.

## Biome Native

Your family hails from an area known for its extreme conditions, such as the arctic, desert, or even a particularly treacherous swamp. Even if you have not spent much time there, the ability of your family to adapt to their living conditions has been passed down to you. Orcs with this gift can vary wildly in appearance, due to the area which they are from; those from the desert may have taken on a paler, dusky skin tone in order to survive the heat, while those from the arctic may have a coating of fine hairs and darker skin tones in order to hold in the heat. Orcs with this gift gain the following traits:

**Just Like Home.** Choose one type of terrain, reflecting the area from which your family hails: arctic, desert, mountain, or swamp. You ignore all naturally created difficult terrain of that type. Additionally, you gain advantage on all Wisdom (Survival) checks made within this terrain type, and gain one damage resistance related to your chosen terrain:

Terrain Type	Damage Resistance
Arctic	Cold
Desert	Fire
Mountain	Lightning
Swamp	Necrotic

## Magic Adept

The true origin of the magic adepts, or the *odanti*, has been lost to time, but the elders tell tales of fey touched ancestors and the tribes proclivity for magic. Their mysterious connection to the fey often manifests a subtle shift towards more gentle facial features.

Orcs with this gift share the following trait:

**Magic Adept.** You are born with magic coursing through your veins, and are able to utilize it in a number of ways. You learn one cantrip of your choice from the Wizard spell list. At 3rd level, you learn one 1st or 2nd-level spell of your choice from the Wizard spell list and can cast it once per day without expending a spell slot or any material components. A 1st-level spell chosen this way can be cast at 2nd level using this trait, if the spell allows. Your spellcasting ability for this trait is the same as the spellcasting class in which you have the highest level, or Charisma if you have no levels in a spellcasting class.

## Orc Paragons

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

**Thick skinned.** Your heritage allows you to shrug off blows more easily. You have advantage on saving throws made to resist being frightened and, when not wielding a shield, you gain a +1 bonus to your AC.

## Orc Culture

The simple name “orc” often has the prejudice of thousands of years of conflict bearing down upon it. Many orcs are shackled to a simplistic portrayal of war and

blood, and in many places the title of “orc” is spat with the same venom as the titles of “demon” or “invader.” Orcs often either live with these accusations, or distance themselves from anyone that would spout them.

Orcs are not inherently evil, yet they tend to follow their impulses and instincts which often gets them into trouble. Orcs are passionate, and tend to pity the comparatively demure and tame emotions of their neighbors. An orc in love burns with unbridled passion, a terrified orc experiences the primordial horror of the end of days, and an enraged orc can see a minor slight as an insult and challenge to their very being. Any and all of these emotions can get them into trouble, but it’s the rage that’s most remembered.

Orcs easily rally to a cause, and many tyrants over the millenia have roused them into fearsome warhordes. Once a rallying cry goes out it can keep building momentum and growing in number until dozens of orcish tribes work themselves into a frenzy. A warhorde is less of an army and more of a solid wall of passionate orcish anger. Once the object of their rage has been obliterated and their instigator reaps the rewards, most simply lay their weapons down and return home.

Sadly, warhordes are the first and last impression in many minds of what encompasses an orc tribe. Those who venture to orcish homelands are often shocked at the artistic havens they find instead of war camps. Orcs hunt and farm just enough to sustain their number, and most orcs spend the majority of their time pursuing their passions. Orc territory is often filled with countless friendly brawls, gorgeous tapestries and carvings, and orcish chants and throat songs that recount the history of generations.

Life within an orc tribe can be carefree or filled with violence, depending on what

passion has won the day. While orcish tribe members are usually orc or half-orcs themselves, most tribes welcome all comers. Whether the tribe spends its time singing chants or demolishing armies, it’s not uncommon to see other humanoids covered in orcish brands right alongside them. However your character was raised, they were moulded and influenced by the orcish tribe around them.

## Orcish Caravanner

Orc societies are often overturned by war and conflict, and sometimes there isn’t a homeland to return to once the war is over. The remnants of warhordes and orcish refugees with nowhere to go often go nowhere together, forming the great roaming orcish caravans. They travel either along the migratory routes of wild animal herds, or from city to city as travelling merchants, or at least to cities unafraid of a few hundred or a few thousand orcs suddenly arriving on their doorsteps.

With no land to call their own the caravans make the roads their home. Orc waggons and carts are loaded up with everything that made their homeland thiers, orcish songs herald their arrival and colorful pennants wave behind them as they go. It can be an appealing lifestyle, and quite often non-orc runways escape on orcish caravans. The reality of caravan life is more harsh than the orcs make it appear when opening up shop in the city markets, but it is still a life of adventure on the open road.

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

*Caravanner.* Long hauls require steady handling of a wagon and a good repertoire with the pack animals. You are proficient with the Animal Handling skill and with land vehicles.



**Long Hauler.** Sometimes riding in the orcish caravan means enduring harsh hours or getting left behind. You have proficiency in the Survival skill. In addition, you make all checks for avoiding exhaustion due to travel pace at advantage.

**Mobile Living.** Orcish caravanners need to keep moving and make due without the best supplies. You can create a ramshackle version of a cart or wagon with 30 minutes of work if you have access to simple materials such as common household items, the rusted scraps found among battlefields, or forest materials. Ramshackle vehicles created in this way function identically to their normal counterparts, except their gp value is always 0, they have half as many hit points as their normal counterparts, and they break and become useless if they are hit by any attack roll with a result of natural 20.

**Trampling Charge.** Orcish caravaners have learned to bowl down obstacles in their way. When you, a mount you're riding, or a vehicle you're driving uses the Dash action, you can perform a trampling charge by moving through spaces occupied by creatures with a size category smaller than you or your mount or vehicle. Creatures moved through in this way must make a Dexterity saving throw with a DC equal to 8 + your Dexterity modifier + your proficiency bonus. On a failed save creatures are knocked prone and take an amount of bludgeoning damage equal to your level. Creatures cannot be damaged twice from the same trampling charge. Once you perform a trampling charge you cannot do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, sign, and write Common and Orc.

## Longstoic

There are some responsibilities even among orcs that require a cool head and even disposition. The most sacred places in orcish

lore are called "stoic landings", places where heroes rose or fell, places where gods wept or laughed. These stoic landings demand reverence, rite, tradition, rituals to be observed and carried out faithfully. As most orcs lack the patience needed, the ancient orcish shamans found a solution: a rite called "the quelling."

Adolescent orcs take up the quelling rite by tattooing sacred symbols at strategic points of their body to block energy, and then imbibing of a secret herbal concoction known only as "quell." Once the rite is complete the young orc is reborn a "longstoic", bereft of passion, and utterly focused on the tasks at hand. Longstoics are regarded as highly as any priest or shaman, honored for sacrificing the passions and joys of orcish existence to better serve the people.

The quelling ritual is not without risk either, as a rare few who undergo the ritual have the opposite reaction. The already powerful orcish emotions are increased tenfold, converting them into little more than beasts, bereft of thought and enslaved by their feelings. These unfortunate souls tend to run off screaming into the wilderness to live savage and dire lives, and boogeyman stories of the "dire orcs" are told around campfires far and wide.

It is not only orcs who take up the longstoic mantle. For the traumatised, the broken hearted, those beaten and battered by wars and hardships, years of emotionlessness can seem like a lifeline. Grey robed humans, dwarves, elves, and any number of non-orc longstoics stride along the stoic landings keeping the fires lit, untroubled with the lives they had before.

The quelling rite is not perfect though, and all longstoics eventually go through what they call "the reawakening". It can take decades, but the old emotions and passions will re-emerge slowly and often painfully. Reawoken longstoics are blessed reverently but are ultimately sent away. The quelling

cannot be repeated, and even if it could, they've done their service and will be welcomed back into their tribes like wounded warriors, left to nurse emotional scars untreated for most of their lives.

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

**Clarity of Mind.** You have advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened.

**Ritualistic Focus.** Many of the longstoic rituals you learned have broader arcane applications. You know two 1st-level spells of your choice. These spells must have the ritual tag and you may only cast them as rituals. Wisdom is your spellcasting ability for these spells. In addition, you may cast other spells you learn as rituals if those spells have the ritual tag.

**Longstoic Traditions.** The stoic landings have much to teach and you had the patience to learn. You gain proficiency with one of the following skills of your choice: Arcana, History, Insight, Medicine, Nature, or Religion.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, sign, and write Common and Orc.

## Orcish Communal

When left to their own, away from warfare and bloodshed, orc tribes often settle into communes. Fights still break out certainly, passions run hot, but without a central target heinous enough to form a warhorde, each orc simply fills their day-to-day life with their own often quite creative pursuits. Orcs rarely have any major wants beyond the next meal—power is tiresome and unappealing for most. Instead each has their own personal passions, and orc commune society revolves around allowing those passions to be pursued.

Orc communes often appear lawless and mad. A brutal fight may break out and only

moments later the combatants are shoulder to shoulder sharing drinks. Dozens of orcish throat songs can often be heard from across the territory, rarely concordant and clashing in tune. Artistic sculptures may be erected only to be dismantled and repurposed the next day. Orc communes are chaos, but they are not complete anarchy. Orcish chiefs oversee the hysteria with a loose grip and an open hand. Intervening only when absolutely necessary, usually only when a life would be lost otherwise.

Some orc communes even rally around a shared creative impulse and create massive artistic works. Many explorers have mistaken the massive sculptures they find out in the wilderness for remnants of some ancient forgotten civilization, but they're often the fruits of orcish labors, made for the enjoyment of the creative act and left out for all to see.

It would be easy to expect that orc communes could only exist in the untouched wilderness, but many socialites are surprised to find thriving orcish communes nestled into the artistic districts of their cities. Orcish artworks are bold, always new, and infinitely varied. Some prominent orcish artists have used their success to buy out entire city quarters for their people that would otherwise be housing for posh socialites. A trend that has led many non-orcs to join them, especially aspiring artists wanting to connect with their feelings and develop their crafts.

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

**Dabbling Interests.** It can be easy to get distracted in an orc commune, and such distractions are often enriching. You are proficient with one musical instrument and one artisan's tool of your choice.

**Free Spirited.** Orcish commune life makes one intimately in touch with one's own feelings and notoriously difficult to control.

You have the Chaotic alignment for the purposes of any spell or ability that would detect or effect Chaotic creatures. In addition, you make all saving throws against spells or effects that would control your mind (such as the Command spell or the charmed condition) at advantage.

**Passionate Pursuit.** Living in an orcish commune is living encouraged to delve into whatever interests you. Choose any one skill: you are proficient with that skill and you may add double your proficiency bonus to checks made with it.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, sign, and write Common, Orc and one additional language of your choice.

## Warhordling

Some warhordes rally against a single target of orcish wrath, the offenders are obliterated within the day and life simply returns to normal—but others can last a lifetime. When the offender is an entire nation or a powerful figure like a king or tyrant, the wrathful march can seem to go on forever. Orcish life is filtered down into one simple goal and one burning emotion: the object of their wrath must die.

When warhordes last for years, decades, or even centuries, generations of orcs are raised only knowing war. The elders will recount memories of happier days, but the throat songs and ballads that recount orcish history slowly become warchants. Their idyllic lives before become a prize to be won, only once their hated foe is finally ripped asunder.

Warhordling wrath is reinforced by regular hateful speeches by their warchiefs but still their passions can leak out, even when fueled by anger. Many orcs tinker with warmachines, forge inventive new weapons, and craft new battle strategies throughout a warpath, anything to gain an edge against their hated enemies.

While hatred is often a poor leader, it is not always in the wrong. Warhordes that rally against hated tyrants often find themselves accumulating banners from disparate forces, from small ragtag bands to entire armies of non-orcs. It's easy to be caught up in the frenzy of it all, brothers of a cause with warchants ringing in their ears reminding them what they're fighting for.

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

**Aggressive.** As a bonus action, you can move up to your speed toward an enemy of your choice that you can see or hear. You must end this move closer to the enemy than you started.

**Menacing.** You are proficient in the Intimidation skill.

**Warhorde Weapon Training.** Your time spent in the warhorde trained you in the ways of warfare, particularly when you're ill-equipped. You are proficient with two martial weapons of your choice and with light armor. You are also able to cobble together functional if somewhat ramshackle weapons from whatever you have on hand. You can create a ramshackle version of any simple weapon (except crossbows) with 10 minutes of work if you have access to simple materials such as common household items, the rusted scraps found among battlefields, or forest materials. Ramshackle weapons created in this way function identically to their normal counterparts, except their gp value is always 0 and they break and become useless on an attack roll result of natural 1.

**Wartime Scrounger.** The warhorde marches on their stomachs and any warhordling knows how to gather grub or bully someone out of theirs. You can forage for food and water while traveling through urban environments, warzones, and battlefields. In addition, you may use your Charisma modifier when determining the quantities of

food and water you acquire instead of your Wisdom modifier as normal.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, sign, and write Common and Orc.

# Tiefling

While tieflings can come from two tiefling parents, it is almost more common that they are born to non-tiefling parents. This can be the direct result of those with mortal heritage mating with fiends, or it can be the result of a long buried family secret—some families have archdevils lurking in their family trees, while others have been cursed by those they have wronged. Regardless of their cause, however, most tieflings share a few physical traits; features like horns of all shapes and sizes, tails, pointed teeth, and skin tones that cover most of the color spectrum are what set tieflings apart.

While their infernal traits and appearance tends to make people uneasy or suspicious, there is little to no real reason for this; tieflings are no more predisposed towards destructive or chaotic behaviors than those they live amongst. Due to not having their own homeland, and struggling to fit in to those of other heritages, tieflings can often be found living in small communities with other marginalized heritages and cultures. Even though the tiefling heritage contains some of the strongest and strangest variations, tieflings rarely distrust each other upon first meeting. Tieflings know the value in finding someone who shares their experiences, and will often try to help each other out regardless of whether or not they share the same values.

## Tiefling Traits

Characters with tiefling heritage share the following traits.

**Age.** Tieflings typically mature at the same rate as humans, but have slightly longer lifespans. Tieflings born to non-tiefling parents' lifespans typically mirror that of their parents' heritage.

**Size.** Tieflings are usually of similar build and size to humans, though those born to non-human parents more closely resemble

the heritage of their parents. Your size is Medium, but can be Small with approval from your gamemaster.

**Speed.** Your base walking speed is 30 feet.

**Darkvision.** Thanks to your infernal ancestors, your vision is not impeded by darkened conditions. You can see in dim light within 60 feet of you as if it were bright light, and in darkness as if it were dim light. You cannot discern color in darkness, only shades of grey.

**Hellish Resistance.** You have resistance to fire damage.

## Tiefling Gifts

Because of the nature of their creation, tieflings can vary wildly from each other—even from other tieflings within their own family. In addition to the traits granted by your tiefling heritage, select one of the following heritage gifts to determine the nature of your infernal ancestor.

### Archdevil-blooded

The most common reason for tieflings born to non-magical parents is having an archdevil somewhere in the family tree. Tieflings with this gift gain the following feature:

**Infernal Legacy.** You know the *produce flame* cantrip. Once you reach 3rd level, you learn the *hellish rebuke* spell and can cast it once per day. At 5th level, you also learn the *heat metal* spell and can cast it once per day. Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

### Cursed

Your tiefling heritage is a direct result of one or both of your parents being cursed—or potentially even their parents. Tieflings with this gift often have more pronounced “devilish” features, such as cloven hooves or multiple sets of horns. Tieflings with this heritage gain the following features:



**Limited Telepathy.** You have a limited ability to communicate telepathically with those within 30 feet of you. Though this grants the target no ability to respond telepathically, they can understand you as long as you share a language with them.

**Language.** You have an innate ability to recognize Infernal, and as such are able to speak, read, write, and sign it.

## Cambion-blooded

Tieflings with this heritage are the direct offspring of succubi or incubi and a person of mortal heritage, like humans and elves. While they are considered the most beautiful of the tieflings, it is an unsettling version of beauty to most. Tieflings with this heritage gain the following feature:

**Vestigial Wings.** A reminder of your infernal parentage, you possess a small set of wings that are capable of limited flight. As an action, you can activate these wings to gain a flying speed of 30 feet for 1 minute. If you are still in the air at the end of the minute, you abruptly fall to the ground. If you are wearing heavy armor you gain no flight speed, and if you are wearing medium armor you instead gain a flight speed of 15 feet. Once you have used this feature, you can't do so again until you finish a short or long rest.

## Celestial-blooded

Tieflings with this heritage are created through some sort of divine intervention, or when a bloodline contains both divine and infernal blood competing to emerge. These tieflings often have a color scheme that is brighter than tieflings of other heritages, with lots of golds and vibrant purples being found among them. The divine blood within them also twists the tieflings' usually devilish features into something frighteningly angelic, resulting in horns that resemble halos or headdresses, and occasionally even extra sets

of eyes. Tieflings with this gift gain the following features:

**Celestial Legacy.** You know the *guidance* cantrip. Additionally, as an action, you can touch a willing creature and cause it to regain a number of hit points equal to your level. Once you use this trait, you must finish a long rest before doing so again.

**Divine Protection.** You have resistance to Radiant damage.

**Language.** You have an innate ability to recognize Celestial, and as such are able to speak, read, write, and sign it.

## Paragon Gift

When you reach 10th level, you are an exemplar of tiefling-kind, and you gain the following feature.

**Hellish Assault.** All fire damage you deal ignores resistances. If a creature is immune to fire damage, it instead takes fire damage as if it were only resistant.

## Tiefling Culture

Tieflings are a rare heritage, and most tieflings find themselves in a culture not their own—this is particularly the case for tieflings mysteriously born to non-tiefling parents. Still, tieflings have organized to form cultures of their own; in fact, certain human cultures who became tieflings en masse transitioned into what we might today call a tiefling culture.

Even in a culture which one might call “tiefling-derived,” tieflings still represent a minority population. When humans turn into tieflings en masse—such as from a curse or a conjunction of the Planes—it only affects a fraction of the population. At times, that fraction skews towards leadership, particularly in cases where the leadership was responsible for the transformation incident.

The origins of tieflings are diverse, so too are their lifestyles. Tieflings are much more

likely than any other heritage to adopt another culture, due to the fact that tieflings are often diaspora communities (and because some tieflings are spontaneously born to non-tiefling parents). Integration and assimilation into another culture is not always easy for tieflings... The massive stigmatization of tieflings means that it is hard to make a lifestyle that doesn't address the stigmatization directly—but in recognizing the stigma, somehow it is strangely reinforced. In these cases, tieflings often opt to form ethnic enclaves—such as insular neighborhoods and separatist city-states—so they can define themselves on their own terms.

## Steam Tiefling

In a world where magic abounds and the need for logic is minimal, there are still some brave minds who believe in reason, knowledge, and truth. One such people are the so-called steam tieflings—talented engineers who value science and social progress.

Steam tiefling societies can today be found all over the world, but their culture originates in the lands of dead magic. There is scholarly debate on the relationship between tieflings and dead magic zones. Some say the arcane atrocity which severed the land from magic also transmogrified the people there into tieflings. Others believe that the tieflings needed a homeland, so they claimed territory nobody else wanted. One way or another, with no access to magic, the people instead focused on science and technology, for which they are now renowned.

As a people of science, steam tieflings reject superstition, and they do not feel much personal need for religion or faith. In fact, there is considerable resentment against magic and religion, which they believe provoke prejudice and stymie the love of learning. Thus, steam tieflings prefer to move

on from old institutions, and look towards the leaders of scholarship and industry for guidance. They value education as the right of all people, regardless of any social rank, and in steam tiefling cities the government-funded schools are open to everyone—even foreigners. Public education is essential for advancing science, commerce, and democratic governance—all of which steam tieflings value.

Steam tiefling folk can expect a polarized response as they travel through other countries. When steam tieflings abjure belief in the gods, it raises suspicion in people unfamiliar with that philosophy. (Such a person might be confused, thinking: “Aren't the gods the origin of all goodness? I thought when people don't love the gods' laws, that's what causes wickedness.”) Pious folk worry the nonbeliever anger the gods and spirits. Magic-users worry they may catch some anti-magic disease from people raised in a dead magic zone. But in all communities, there's at least *someone* who finds steam tiefling folk fascinating for their novelty and forward-thinkingness—including children. Even the most unenlightened folk have influential members who value common decency and basic tolerance.

***Tech Savvy.*** You have proficiency with tinker's tools, plus one other artisan's tool of your choice.

***Mind Like a Steel Trap.*** You have proficiency in one skill of your choice from Arcana, History, Investigation, Nature, or Religion, and you have expertise with that skill (you double your proficiency bonus with it). Additionally, you can apply your proficiency bonus to Intelligence checks for which there is no associated skill.

***Student of Martial Science.*** For your people, even combat is a scholarly discipline. When you perform a maneuver in battle, such as grappling or shoving a creature, you gain an additional bonus to this check equal to your proficiency modifier.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign in Common, plus one other language of your choice.

## Imperial Tiefling

According to legend, several centuries ago, a great human empire dominated the land with its arcane might. The ruling class were tyrants who, in their hubris, trafficked with fiends for even more power to subdue the land. For their sins they met a humiliating end: the kingdom fell and the people became tieflings. Their descendants scattered to the winds, but even now they lurk in the shadows until it is time again to strike.

There is some truth to the myth... at least as far as there once being a tiefling society—although one might be hard-pressed to call it a real empire—and some of their descendants still live today. So-called “imperial” tieflings are collectives, villages, and fiefdoms who recall and celebrate their “infernal” heritage. (Some such communities are even rumored to live in the Shadowfell and in the first layer of Hell.) They use their traditional names publicly, and they even have the resources (such as books, oral traditions, and divination magic) to discern or obtain a family name.

A popular hypothesis (by imperial tieflings and detractors alike) is that all tieflings can trace their lineage back to the ancient families of the tiefling empire. (Like so many other claims about tieflings, this hypothesis is also dubious.) Family lines, real or imagined, are frequently named after a mythical fiend overlord who serves as family patron. The family name version of the overlord’s name usually comes with some alteration, such as a changed letter, a prefix, or a suffix. Other family names use the nicknames and epithets of a given fiend, as rendered in the Infernal tongue. The family patron also adorns the family’s crest. Only the rarest few imperial tieflings managed to pass down their family

name and crest through the generations; most became lost as tieflings took refuge in other lands. Tieflings who return to imperial communities must either rediscover their lost family name and crest, or make a new one themselves.

**Imperial Education.** You are proficient in your choice of either Arcana or History.

**Infernal Lore.** You know a cantrip: either *fire bolt* or *thaumaturgy*.

Additionally, at 3rd level, you learn the *hellish rebuke* spell; at 5th level you learn the *darkness* spell. With this trait, you can cast each such spell once at their lowest level between long rests.

Your spellcasting ability for these spells is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

If your heritage already grants you such spells, you may choose a different one of the same level from the warlock spell list.

**Wrath of the Ancestors.** When you are at half your hit point total or less, you can use your bonus action to invoke diabolic revenge against your enemies. The next weapon or spell attack roll you make this turn gets a bonus to its attack roll equal to your Infernal Lore spellcasting ability modifier (minimum 1). If the attack hits, it deals extra fire damage equal to the same bonus.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign in Common and Infernal.

## Carnival Tiefling

Not all tieflings embrace the narrative that their heritage originates with the lords of hell. Some tieflings claim to be born of the Trickster god, and they tell tall tales about innumerable trickster folk heroes. As evidence of their unique heritage, they point to the fact that they speak Primordial and not Infernal. Onlookers may protest that the tiefling visage is the very face of the devil, but the tieflings say their face is divine

trickery, a sign of mystery the Trickster god left on the people as a blessing.

Carnival tieflings value wit, surprise, and daring, which they display both in their lifestyle and folktales. While some communities are found in villages and insular neighborhoods, they are most famous for their traveling carnivals. These troupes often begin as just a handful of entrepreneuring entertainers, but soon enough blossom into big top circuses, with caravans complete with support staff, spouses, and new family members. Orphans, runaways, and rejects of all heritages who join tiefling circuses become just like family. A voice inside all their hearts yearns to find “people like me.”

The carnival tiefling oral tradition is exceedingly rich, and is most well known for their trickster stories. The tiefling trickster-heroes are numerous and diverse: some trickster-heroes never fail, others undermine their hijinks through their own folly. They all turn the world upside down. Storytellers by the campfire recount the epic cycles and amusing episodes, and caregivers quote them to educate the next generation. The value of a storyteller is determined not through doing a “perfect retelling,” but through their cadence and engagement with the audience. All this reveals the unspoken message of tiefling folk stories: anything can change.

Outsiders might look at carnival tieflings and ask: “Just who is the Trickster god (or gods)?” People whose lives resemble their trickster-heroes constantly ruminate on future mischief: who to prank, what gag to pull, and what rule to break.

**Nimble Escape.** You can use the Disengage or Hide actions as a bonus action.

**Slapstick.** You are proficient with improvised weapons, and improvised weapons you use can deal 1d6 damage rather than the damage they normally deal. You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the

attack and damage rolls of your improvised weapons.

**Trickster’s Veil.** You know the *disguise self* spell. Using this trait, you can cast it once between long rests. Your spellcasting ability for these spells is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign in Common and Primordial.

## Demon Cultist

Some tieflings obsess over their ancestry, and they form or join a dark cult. Cults insidiously crop up in any location imaginable, from remote caves and abandoned castles to city sewers and mansion basements. Cult leaders carefully groom their flock of recruits and victims, and claim exclusive authority and revelations: they alone are the path to their master’s salvation.

During daylight hours, cultists feign having an ordinary life. At night, the priests offer all manner of gruesome rites and nightmarish sacraments, the likes of which make human sacrifice sound polite. All this is to curry favor with their fiendish overlord and attain its foul blessings. Neophytes are typically not allowed to the most profane ceremonies—not until their handlers crush every trace of dissent.

It is exceedingly difficult to flee such a malicious cult. Those who escape their abusers do so at great personal cost. Active cult members rarely become adventurers, although cult agents and evangelists are noteworthy exceptions.

**Cultist Lore.** You know a cantrip: either *chill touch* or *vicious mockery*.

Additionally, at 3rd level, you learn the *command* spell; at 5th level you learn the *hold person* spell. With this trait, you can cast each such spell once between long rests.

Your spellcasting ability for these spells is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

***Gift of Corruption.*** The blood sacraments of the demon cult leave a permanent stain on your body and spirit. You gain one benefit from the following options:

***Bleeding Brand.*** The cult's sigil seared into your flesh and spirit constantly weeps blood, consecrating you to your demon lord. You gain resistance to one damage type of your choice other than bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing. You can change your damage type choice whenever you complete a long rest.

***Devil's Pet.*** You learn the *find familiar* spell. Using this trait, you can cast this spell once between long rests without using any material components; when you do so, you must opt for the conjured spirit to be a fiend. Its spellcasting ability is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

***Undead Graft.*** Your dark master blessed you with a transplant arm from a zombified warrior. You feel no pain from your transplant arm, allowing you to surpass normal physical limits. You are proficient in Athletics, and you double your proficiency modifier on Athletics checks made to grapple, shove, or perform other combat maneuvers.

***Unnatural Weapon.*** You gain proficiency with Intimidation. In addition, dark powers enhance your body and you grow claws, fangs, spines, horns, or a different natural weapon of your choice. You are proficient with this natural weapon, and it deals 1d6 bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing damage, as appropriate to the natural weapon you chose. You can use Dexterity instead of Strength for the attack and damage rolls of your unarmed strikes. (Natural weapons are not unarmed strikes unless otherwise stated.)

***Occult Vocabulary.*** During your cult training you learned its secret vocabulary, a mix of obscure references and code that allows you to hide messages in seemingly

normal conversation. Only another creature that knows occult vocabulary understands such messages. It takes four times longer to convey such a message than it does to speak the same idea plainly.

In addition, you understand a set of secret signs and symbols used to convey short, simple messages, such as whether an individual at an establishment is a cult agent or sympathizer, whether enemies are nearby, or whether the people in an area are easy marks or will provide a safe house for cult evangelists.

***Languages.*** You can speak, read, write, and sign in Common, plus your choice of either Abyssal or Infernal.



# General Cultures

Every heritage has its own distinctive ways of life, and most willingly share that lifestyle with neighbors and newcomers. Still, some life situations are so common that they can only be described as “general.” General cultures are not unique to any one culture because they can manifest for anyone. The following general cultures are highly adaptable, leaving room to explore the specifics.

In addition to the various cultures associated with each heritage, characters may choose from any of the following general cultures.

## Cosmopolitan

You grew up in one of the world’s largest, most diverse cities. People of every heritage and way of life walk the streets at general liberty, speaking any tongue you can imagine. Any faith can find a place of worship—even if it is in a home and not a proper temple. The main roads are active all through the night, and there are shadowy alleys where any good might be procured no matter the hour.

Folks tend to have polarized opinions on the city—you love it or hate it. For some people, the cosmopolitan lifestyle represents what could be: a peaceful global society. For others, the big city is a cesspool of corruption, debauchery, and crimes against nature. The ideal of creating a culture where everyone can fit in fills some folks with hope—other people find such a premise insulting, as though “other cultures” are incapable of peace in our time.

**A Little Pazzaz.** Even the tiniest bit of magic goes a long way. You know the *prestidigitation* cantrip. Your spellcasting

ability for this spell is your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma.

**Discreetly Armed.** Even while armed, you know how to keep the fact discreet and non-threatening. You have advantage on checks made to persuade others to let you remain armed.

You can also hide armaments on your person, such as under your clothes or inside your coat. The DC of which to notice is your Passive Stealth score. Such armaments include:

- Armor with which you are proficient, if it does not impose disadvantage on your Stealth
- One-handed weapons
- Other items which take one hand to use, such as a wand, flask of alchemist’s fire, or a handful of sand

**Fashion Sense.** You have how to read people through their clothes and bearing. After you observe a creature within 60 feet for at least 1 minute, you can use an Action to make either an Insight or History check versus their Deception check. If you succeed, you learn the following information about that creature:

- Whether the creature has a lower Charisma score than yourself.
- The creature’s culture and /or national origin.
- Whether the creature’s social standing in the local majority culture is higher, lower, or approximately equal to your own

**Well-Connected.** You gain an extra contact, selected from a background of your choice. This person is of a different heritage or national origin than yourself.

**Skill Versatility.** In the big city, you never know what skills you’ll need to get by. You gain proficiency with two skills of your choice.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign in Common, plus two others of your choice.

## Feudal Subject

Throughout the world are innumerable kingdoms and feudal territories run by nobles and their appointees. You and your family are subjects of such a kingdom, brought up to pledge absolute loyalty to the crown. Your sovereign commands your loyalty, but do they have your respect and love? Some sovereigns are kind and wise—others are tyrants and despots. Their morality has little to do with their popularity—and a sovereign well-loved by some may terrorize others.

Some feudal subjects are only fair-weather friends to their flag, sycophants who boast about their patriotism but are inwardly cowards. Some patriots wish to see the country succeed—under another ruler. Former loyalists range from those merely disenchanted with the country to those who plot its downfall. (Minority populations in the kingdom often live in ethnic enclaves and maintain most of their old culture.) Last but not least are true believers—loyalists who would undergo any trial for the sake of king and country.

Although this culture is written with kingdoms in mind, this culture is suitable for a wide variety of governments which demand similar loyalty. Perhaps your family pledges fealty to a local feudal lord, and your loyalty to the sovereign is only by extension. Maybe your sovereign is a mere figurehead, and the country's real ruler is the military or the top spy agency. A theocracy is a country ruled by the leaders of religion, and a magocracy is where magical talent equals social status. No matter the country, you can replace the word "Feudal" in the title of this culture to that of your nationality.

**Salute.** A moment's notice is all you need to charge yourself with patriotic vigor. As a bonus action, you gain a number of temporary hit points equal to your 1d8 + your Constitution modifier. Once you use this trait, you must complete a short or long rest before you can use it again.

**Conscript.** All subjects of the crown must register for the draft, but many go ahead and serve in the guard. You are proficient with light armor, spears, and light crossbows.

**Patriot's Education.** You know about the past, at least as told by your people. You are proficient in the History skill.

**Productive Citizen.** You are proficient with your choice of either land vehicles or one artisan's tool.

**In the Name of the King.** Service to the realm means a willingness to sacrifice for the sake of others. As a bonus action, you issue a challenge to a creature you see within 30 feet. That creature must make a Wisdom saving throw to resist your taunt. On a failed save, the creature is taunted for 1 minute: it has disadvantage on attack rolls against creatures other than you, and it must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw to move farther than 30 feet from you (once per turn only). The taunt ends early if you attack or cast a spell against another creature, or if you end your turn more than 30 feet away from the taunted creature.

The DC for the above is 8 + your proficiency bonus + your choice of Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier. Once you use this trait, you cannot use it again until you complete a long rest.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign in Common, plus one other language of your choice.

## Guild Member

There are a number of guilds around the world, each with their own code of conduct and goals. Fighters Guilds, for example,

pride themselves on their skill and honor in combat—those that show little interest in swordplay, or that are caught playing dirty, are often excommunicated from the guild and sent off on their own. Thieves Guilds prioritize stealth, information, and underground connections above all else, and someone that is unable to deliver on these fronts will rarely last long.

Aside from their individual areas of interest, guild life is the same for most. More often than not a guild will provide lodging, meals, and even equipment to those committed few willing to do odd jobs and take on dangerous quests. Regardless of the guild, a guild member turned adventurer will almost always still receive jobs and requests via mail or magical means. Characters raised in guild culture share the following traits:

**Choosing Your Guild.** Choose one guild from adventurers, artisans, fighters, laborers, mages, merchants, or thieves. When a trait offers multiple versions, your choice will determine which version you gain.

**Specialized Skills.** Each guild values different traits, and as such each guild grants different skill and tool proficiencies. The list below shows you which proficiencies are granted by each guild.

**Adventurers.** Athletics, Acrobatics, History, Investigation, or Survival (choice of two).

**Artisans.** Any one set of artisans tools, Insight, and Persuasion.

**Fighters.** Athletics and any two weapons of your choice.

**Laborers.** Athletics, Animal Handling, Medicine, Nature, or Survival (choice of two).

**Mages.** Arcana and any one Wizard Cantrip. Your spellcasting ability is Intelligence.

**Merchants.** Any one set of Artisans Tools, land vehicles, and your choice of Deception, Insight, Intimidation, Persuasion, or Performance.

**Thieves.** Thieves Tools, Sleight of Hand, and your choice of Acrobatics, Deception, or Stealth.

**Connected.** Thanks to your guild connections, you can find someone to lend you a hand almost anywhere you look. Whenever you enter an area with some sort of civilization (village, town, city, etc) you can make a Wisdom (Insight) check to locate an ally. This ally could have a job for you, help you financially, or offer you and your party lodging depending on the circumstances. Any Charisma based checks such as Deception or Persuasion are made at advantage against an ally. Different areas have different DCs, as shown on the table below.

Area	DC
Large civilizations, such as a city	10
Moderate civilizations, such as a decently sized town.	15
Small civilizations, such as villages or hamlets.	20

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and two other languages of your choice.

## Lone Wanderer

Even with the myriad of cultures present to choose from, there will always be those who prefer to march to the beat of their own drum. A lone wanderer shirks all connection to the cultures and communities around them, in favor of making their path. No two lone wanderers are alike, even those that might share a heritage—they all have their own personal goals, superstitions, and traditions. Because of this, lone wanderer culture is the most diverse as well as the most disjointed. You will almost never find communities that share this culture, save for the rare occasions when they are forced into small groups for survival. Occasionally, when

forced together, lone wanderers who can manage to get along will band together to form nomadic groups.

Choosing this culture does not mean you forego having any personal connections, however. Lone wanderers can have families, former mentors, or old friends which may have influenced their decision to stake it out on their own, or that may make them regret it. Characters raised in this culture share the following traits.

***Culture of My Own.*** You have rejected other cultures in favor of building your own. Because of this, you gain one feat of your choice.

***Languages.*** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and two other languages of your choice.

## Nomad

There is no one, official nomadic culture. Groups which follow this culture vary as much in their reasons for doing so as they do in heritage. Nomadic groups may be so out of necessity, after finding them unwelcome amongst other communities and cultures; or they may do so out of a desire for freedom, as an escape from the strict rules some other cultures might follow. Regardless of the reason, there is one thing they have in common—nomads are among the most skilled drivers in the land. Just like some cultures or heritages may be sought after to be employed as bodyguards, whenever a nomad can be swayed away from their group they are almost always hired as professional drivers for nobility or merchants.

Nomadic groups are often close-knit, behaving much like a large family even when they aren't actually related. It is not uncommon for a group to consist of multiple families traveling together, or for a group to consist of one unusually large family. Occasionally, nomads are former lone wanderers who found the lifestyle of solitude

too much, and instead sought out others to travel with. Most nomadic groups have a reverence for the land which they live off of, and often the only sign of their camp is a few embers left behind in a fire pit. This is not true for all nomads, however, and less considerate groups have been known to leave nearly entire camps behind—usually leaving them in rather poor conditions. Characters raised in this culture share the following traits:

***On the Road Again.*** You are proficient with land vehicles, and Tinker's Tools. You can use Tinker's Tools to repair a land vehicle you own, and add double your proficiency bonus to any checks made to do so. Additionally, your time working with vehicles has taught you a number of lessons, and you can add double your proficiency bonus to any checks made to control or navigate a land vehicle.

***Nature Minded.*** You are proficient in the Survival skill, and your choice of either Animal Handling, Medicine, Nature, or Perception.

***Languages.*** You can speak, read, write, and sign Common and two other languages of your choice.

## Religious Devotee

You were raised in a community of the faithful. Such communities vary from temple housing, monasteries, separatist communes in the wilderness, and pious villages where worship is the only accepted pastime. The nature of your faith community can also vary by theology, structure, and good will. People of any faith tradition can be a religious devotee. The environment might be egalitarian or hierarchical. Most faith communities are founded on good will, but even they pose the risk of abuse. And at the heart of certain communities lay a dark secret or conspiracy, the likes of which might shatter the faith of any follower.

Your “religion of birth” need not be your religious identity now. People leave their religious communities for reasons both good and ill—some faith communities send trusted envoys on missions... Some communities are destroyed by stronger forces. Some communities exile members who commit “sins.” On the other hand, abusive faith communities—particularly cults—are difficult to escape.

**Devotion.** You have advantage on saving throws against becoming frightened or charmed.

**Religious Education.** Your community is steeped in scripture, song, and storytelling. You are proficient in the Religion skill.

**Psalmody.** You are proficient with your choice of either Performance, or two musical instruments.

**Siblings in Faith.** You have advantage on checks made to socially interact with members of your own faith, such as when requesting services or gathering information. If you are no longer religious, then this applies to the religion of your upbringing *and* to folks disenchanting with the local majority religion.

**Detect Faith.** You are trained to detect even the most subtle implications about a person’s religious perspective. After you speak with a creature for at least 1 minute, you can use an Action to make either an Insight or Religion check versus their Deception check. If you succeed, you learn the following information about that creature:

- Whether the creature has a lower Wisdom score than yourself.
- Whether the creature is religious; if so, you also learn their faith.
- Whether the creature has class levels in a divine spellcasting class.

**Bonus Contact.** You have one additional contact, selected from the Acolyte background.

**Languages.** You can speak, read, write, and sign in Common, plus one other of your choice related to your religious tradition.



# Backgrounds

What did you do before you took up your adventuring career? Were you a mercenary? A weaver? A circus performer?

Although you no longer follow your old trade, your background provides you with attribute bonuses, skills, and other benefits that will serve you in your coming adventures.

If your background provides a skill or tool proficiency you already have from another source, you can instead gain a different proficiency of the same type.

Be sure to inform your GM of your Connection (the person from your backstory provided by your background). Your past may not be done with you yet.

## Making your own background

If you want to design your own background, take the following:

- +1 to two attributes of your choice
- proficiency in two skills
- proficiency in two tools, two languages, or one of each
- one connection: an acquaintance, ally, or enemy from your past
- one memento: an item of sentimental value worth less than 30 GP
- a background feature describing your relationship with the world. Your background feature typically provides a source of information, shelter, or financial support in a certain lifestyle.

## Acolyte

You were trained as a servant of a particular god or gods. Whether or not you have access to divine magic, you are authorized to perform the rites of your faith, and you are recognized and respected by its faithful.

What gods do you worship? Why did you leave the confines of your temple and take up a life of adventure? Have you turned your back on your faith, or do you seek to advance it?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Wisdom and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Religion, and either Insight or Persuasion

**Languages:** Two of your choice

**Suggested equipment:** Holy symbol, common clothes, robe, prayer book / wheel / beads. Cost: 31 GP

**Feature: Ordination:** You are expected to perform the religious ceremonies of your faith, including weddings and funerals. In exchange, members of your faith will provide you and your companions food, lodging, and a modest lifestyle.

**Adventures and advancement:** In small settlements without other resources, your authority may extend to such matters as settling disputes and punishing criminals. You might also be expected to deal with local outbreaks of supernatural dangers such as fiendish possessions, cults, and the unquiet dead.

If you solve several problems brought to you by members of your faith, you may be promoted (or reinstated) within the hierarchy of your order. You gain the free service of up to 3 acolytes, and direct access to your order's leaders.

### Acolyte memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. The timeworn holy symbol bequeathed to you by your beloved mentor on their deathbed
2. A precious holy relic, passed to you secretly in a moment of great danger
3. A prayer book which contains strange and sinister deviations from the accepted liturgy
4. A half-complete book of prophecies which seems to hint at danger for your faith: if only the

other half could be found!

5. A gift from a mentor: a book of complex theology which you don't yet understand
6. A signet ring bearing a coat of arms; your only possession when you entered the temple as a child
7. A strange candle which never burns down
8. The true name of a devil, glimpsed while tidying up papers for a sinister visitor
9. A weapon which seems to exhibit no magical properties, given to you with great solemnity by your mentor
10. A much-thumbed and heavily underlined prayer book, given to you by the fellow acolyte you admire most

**Acolyte connection (roll D10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. A beloved high priest or priestess, awaiting your return to the temple once you resolve your crisis of faith
2. A former priest, exposed by you as a heretic, who swore revenge before fleeing
3. The wandering paladin who rescued you as an orphan and sponsored your entry into your temple
4. The inquisitor who rooted out your heresy (or framed you) and had you banished from your temple
5. The fugitive charlatan or cult leader whom you once revered as a holy person
6. Your scandalous friend, a fellow acolyte who fled the temple in search of worldly pleasures
7. The high priest who discredited your temple and punished the others of your order
8. The wandering adventurer whose tales of glory enticed you from your temple
9. The leader of your order, a former adventurer who sends you on quests to battle your god's enemies
10. The former leader of your order who inexplicably retired to a life of isolation and penance

## Charlatan

People call you a con artist, but you're really an entertainer. You make people happy: your separation of fools and villains from their money is purely a happy side effect.

What is your most common con? Selling fake magic items? Speaking to ghosts? Posing as a long-lost relative? Or do you let dishonest people think they're cheating you?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Charisma and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Deception, and either Sleight of Hand or Insight

**Tool proficiencies:** Disguise kit, forgery kit

**Suggested equipment:** Common clothes, disguise kit, forgery kit. Cost: 41 GP

**Feature: Many identities.** You have a bundle of forged papers of all kinds: property deeds, identification papers, love letters, arrest warrants, and letters of recommendation – all needing only a few signatures and flourishes to meet the current need. When you encounter a new document or letter, you can add a forged and modified copy to your bundle. If your bundle is lost, you can recreate it with a forgery kit and a day's work.

**Adventures and advancement:** If you pull off a long-standing impersonation or false identity with exceptional success, you may eventually become that person, legally speaking. If you're impersonating a real person, they might be considered the imposter. You gain any property and servants associated with your identity.

**Charlatan memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. A die that always comes up 6
2. A dozen brightly-colored "potions"
3. A magical staff that emits a harmless shower of sparks when thumped vigorously
4. A set of fine clothes suitable for nobility

5. A genuine document allowing its holder one free release from prison for a non-capital crime
6. A genuine deed to a valuable property that is, unfortunately, quite haunted
7. An ornate harlequin mask
8. Counterfeit gold coins or costume jewelry apparently worth 100 GP: DC 15 Wisdom (Perception) check to notice they're fake
9. A nonmagical sword: its blade is enchanted with *continual flame*
10. A nonmagical crystal ball

**Charlatan connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. A relentless pursuer: an inspector who you once made a fool of
2. A relentless pursuer: a mark you once cheated
3. A relentless pursuer: a former partner, just out of jail, who blames you for everything
4. A former partner, now gone straight, who couldn't possibly be coaxed out of retirement
5. A respected priest or tavernkeeper who tips you off about rich potential marks
6. The elusive former partner who ratted you out and sent you to jail
7. A famous noble or politician who, through lucky happenstance, happens to bear a striking resemblance to you
8. The crook who taught you everything and who just can't stay out of trouble
9. A gullible noble who knows you by one of your former aliases, and who always seems to pop up at inconvenient times
10. A prominent noble who knows you only under your assumed name and who trusts you as their spiritual advisor, tutor, long-lost relative, or the like

**Criminal**

As a career criminal, you were acquainted with murderers, thieves, and those who hunt them.

Your new career as an adventurer is, relatively speaking, an honest trade. Were you a pickpocket? An assassin? A highway robber? Are you still?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Dexterity and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Stealth, and either Deception or Intimidation

**Tool proficiencies:** Gaming set, thieves' tools

**Suggested equipment:** Common clothes, dark cloak, thieves' tools. Cost: 26 GP

**Feature: I know someone.** In any city, you can find a shady entrepreneur who will buy anything from you, even something obviously stolen. Additionally, when in a city or town, you can find a safe place to lay low for yourself and your companions. You will be maintained at a modest lifestyle.

**Adventures and advancement:** If you pull off several successful jobs or heists, you may be promoted (or reinstated) as a leader in your guild or gang. You may gain the free service of up to 8 bandit henchmen at any time. Alternatively, you might rise in the ranks of law enforcement as a thief catcher, and gain the service of up to 8 guards.

**Criminal memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. A golden key to which you haven't discovered the lock
2. A brand, burned into your shoulder as punishment for a crime
3. A scar for which you have sworn revenge
4. The distinctive mask that gives you your nickname (the Black Mask, the Red Fox, etc)
5. A gold coin which reappears in your possession a week after you've gotten rid of it
6. The stolen symbol of a sinister organization; not even your fence will take it off your hands
7. Documents that incriminate a dangerous noble or politician
8. The floor plan of a palace

9. The calling cards you leave after (or before) you strike
10. A manuscript written by your mentor: Secret Exits of the World's most Secure Prisons

**Criminal connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. The master criminal who inducted you into your first gang or guild
2. The paladin or cleric who convinced you to use your skills for good (and who may be legally responsible for your continued good behavior)
3. Your sibling or other relative, who also happens to be a representative of the law
4. The gang of rascals and pickpockets who once called you their leader
5. The bounty hunter who has sworn to bring you to justice
6. Your former partner, who made off with all the loot after a big score
7. The masked courier who occasionally gives you jobs
8. The crime boss to whom you have sworn loyalty (or to whom you owe an enormous debt)
9. The master thief who once stole something precious from you
10. The corrupt noble who ruined your once-wealthy family

**Entertainer**

You're a performer who knows how to dazzle a crowd. You're an artist, but also a professional: after any show, you never forget to pass the hat.

Are you a lute-strumming singer? An actor? A poet or author? A tumbler or juggler? Are you a rising talent, or a star with an established following?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Charisma and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Performance, and one of Acrobatics or Persuasion

**Tool proficiencies:** one musical instrument, one gaming set

**Suggested equipment:** Lute or other musical instrument, costume. Cost: 40 GP

**Feature: Pay the piper.** In any settlement in which you haven't made yourself unpopular, your performances can earn enough money to support yourself and your companions: the bigger the settlement, the higher your standard of living, up to a comfortable lifestyle in a city.

**Adventures and advancement:** Some of your admirers will pay you to plead a cause or smear an enemy. If you succeed at several such quests, your fame will grow. You will be welcome at royal courts, which will support you at a lavish lifestyle.

**Entertainer memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. Your unfinished masterpiece – if you can find inspiration to overcome your writer's block
2. Fine clothing suitable for a noble and some reasonably convincing costume jewelry
3. A love letter from a rich admirer
4. A broken instrument of masterwork quality – if repaired, what music you could make on it
5. A stack of slim poetry volumes you just can't sell
6. Jingling jester's motley
7. A disguise kit
8. Water-squirting wands, knotted scarves, trick handcuffs, and other tools of a bizarre new entertainment trend: a nonmagical magic show
9. A stage dagger
10. A letter of recommendation from your mentor to a noble or royal court

**Entertainer connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. Your rival, an equally talented performer
2. The cruel ringleader of the sinister circus where you learned your trade

3. A noble who wants vengeance for the song you wrote about him
4. The actor who says that there's always room in their troupe for you and your companions
5. The noble who owes you a favor for penning the love poems that won their spouse
6. Your former partner, a slumming noble with a good ear and bad judgment
7. The rival who became successful and famous by taking credit for your best work
8. The highly-placed courtier who is always trying to further your career
9. A jilted lover who wants revenge
10. The many tavern keepers and tailors to whom I owe surprisingly large sums

## Folk Hero

You were born to a farmer's or laborer's family, but some event earned you fame. You're admired locally, and tales of your deeds have reached the far corners of the world.

Did you win your fame by battling an oppressive tyrant? Saving your village from a monster? Or by something more prosaic, like winning a wrestling bout or a pie-eating contest?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Constitution and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Survival, and one of Animal Handling or Nature

**Tool proficiencies:** one type of artisan's tools, one vehicle

**Suggested equipment:** Any artisan's tools except alchemist's tools, common clothes.  
Cost: 2 to 31 GP

**Feature: Local fame.** You're universally recognized and admired near the site of your exploits (unless you conceal your identity). You and your companions are treated to a comfortable lifestyle in any settlement within 100 miles of your home.

**Adventures and advancement:** Common folk come to you with all sorts of problems. If you fought an oppressive regime, they come to you with tales of injustice. If you fought a monster, they seek you out to solve their monster problems. If you solve many such problems, you become universally famous, gaining the benefits of your Local Fame feature in every civilized land.

### Folk hero memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. The mask you used to conceal your identity while fighting oppression (you will only be recognized as a folk hero while wearing the mask)
2. A necklace bearing a horn, tooth, or claw from the monster you defeated
3. A ring given you by the dead relative whose death you avenged
4. The weapon you wrestled from the leader of the raid on your village
5. The shovel, pickaxe, pitchfork, or other tool you used for labor. For you it's a one-handed simple melee weapon that does d8 piercing, slashing, or bludgeoning damage
6. The famous scar you earned in your struggle against your foe
7. A mule
8. A dried flower from your family garden
9. Half of a locket, given to you by a missing sweetheart
10. A family weapon said to have magic powers, though it exhibits none at the moment

### Folk hero connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. The bard whose song made you legendary and who wants a sequel
2. Your friend the traveling merchant whose caravan spreads your fame
3. A deadly enemy: the heir of the oppressive noble you killed



4. A deadly enemy: the mother of the monster you killed
5. A deadly enemy: the leader of the bandits you defeated
6. A deadly enemy: the tyrant you robbed
7. A kid who wants to follow your footsteps into danger
8. The jealous rival who wants to best your monster-slaying prowess, daring deeds, prize pie recipe, or whatever else made your famous
9. A secret admirer: the heir or heiress of the oppressive noble you defeated
10. The retired adventurer who trained you, who is now in a bit of trouble

## Guild artisan

You are skilled in a trade: skilled enough to make a comfortable living and to aspire to mastery of your art. And yet here you are, ready to slog through mud and blood and danger.

Why did you become an adventurer? Did you flee a cruel guild master? Were you bored? Or are you a member in good standing, looking for new materials and new markets?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Intelligence and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Persuasion, and one of Insight or History

**Tool proficiencies:** one type of artisan's tools

**Languages:** one of your choice

**Suggested equipment:** One set of artisan's tools, traveler's clothes, a document of guild affiliation. Cost: 2 to 52 GP

**Feature: Guild mark.** The guild symbol is trusted. When in a city or town, you are allowed free access to a fully-stocked workshop with everything you need to ply your trade. Furthermore, you can expect to earn full price when you sell your handicrafts (though there is no guarantee of a buyer).

**Adventures and advancement:** If you participate in the creation of a magic item (a "master work"), you will be made a guild master and will gain the services of up to 8 commoner apprentices with the appropriate tool proficiency.

## Guild artisan memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. A 10,000 GP commission for a ruby ring (now all you need is a 5,000 GP ruby)
2. Your blacksmith's hammer (treat as a light hammer)
3. A well-seasoned skillet (treat as a mace if used as a weapon)
4. A formula with exotic ingredients that will produce... something
5. An exotic monster hide which could be turned into striking-looking leather armor
6. Your trusty sledgehammer (treat as a warhammer)
7. Your secret technique for vivid colors which is sure to disrupt Big Pottery
8. A set of fine clothes (your own work)
9. A longbow, shortbow, or crossbow (your own work)
10. Strange notes you copied from a rambling manifesto. Do they mean something?

## Guild artisan connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. The cruel master who worked you nearly to death, and now does the same to other apprentices
2. The kind master who taught you your trade
3. The master who, recognizing your talent, risked all to teach you dangerous guild secrets
4. The jealous rival who made a fortune after stealing your secret technique
5. The corrupt guild master who framed and imprisoned your mentor
6. The bandit leader who destroyed your master's shop and livelihood

7. The crime boss who bankrupted your mentor
8. The shady alchemist who always needs dangerous ingredients to advance the state of your art
9. The agent of a rival guild who is trying to steal secrets
10. The jealous teacher who took credit for your work and got you expelled from the guild

## Hermit

You lived for years alone, in a remote shrine, cave, monastery, or elsewhere away from the world. Among your daily tasks, you had lots of time for introspection.

Why were you alone? Were you performing penance? In exile or hiding? Tending a shrine or holy spot? Grieving?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Wisdom and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Religion, and one of Survival or Medicine

**Tool proficiencies:** Healer's kit

**Language:** One of your choice

**Suggested equipment:** Healer's kit, common clothes, prayer book/wheel/beads, 7 days rations. Cost: 34 GP

**Feature: Inner voice.** You occasionally hear a voice – perhaps your conscience, perhaps a higher power – which you have come to trust. It told you to go into seclusion, and then it advised you when to rejoin the world. You think it is leading you to your destiny. (Consult with your GM about this feature.)

**Adventures and advancement:** Your inner voice may occasionally prompt you to accept certain adventure opportunities or to avoid certain actions. You are free to obey or disobey this voice. Eventually, it may lead you to a special revelation, adventure, or treasure.

## Hermit memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. The (possibly unhinged) manifesto, encyclopedia, or theoretical work that you spent so much time on
2. The faded set of fine clothes you preserved for so many years
3. The signet ring bearing the family crest that you were ashamed of for so long
4. The book of forbidden secrets that led you to your isolated refuge
5. The beetle, mouse, or other small creature which was your only companion for so long
6. The seemingly nonmagical item that your inner voice says is important
7. The *comprehend languages*-defeating clay tablets you spent years translating
8. The holy relic you were duty-bound to protect
9. The meteor metal you found in a crater the day you first heard your inner voice
10. Your ridiculous-looking sun hat

## Hermit connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. The high priest who banished you to the wilderness until you repented your heresy
2. The inquisitor who hunts you even through the most solitary wildlands
3. The supernatural patron whose temptations and gifts you seek to reject
4. The inner voice you only hear in solitude
5. The mentor who trained you in silent contemplation, until they mysteriously turned their back on their own teachings
6. The villain who destroyed the shreds of your original, worldly life
7. The noble relatives who seek to return you to the life you rejected
8. The religious superior whose blasphemies scandalized you into fleeing your religious order
9. The angel who delivered you a prophecy
10. The mysterious person you glimpsed several times from a distance (unless it was a hallucination?)

## Noble

You come from a family with hereditary power. Since you're taking up a life of adventuring, it's quite likely that you're a second child or more distant heir, with no vast inheritance to look forward to. You've got to make your own way in the world, with no advantages but your years of training from armsmasters and private tutors, your many rich relatives and friends, and your not inconsiderable personal wealth.

How rich and powerful is your noble family? Will the titled head of the family help you out of trouble? What is your family's coat of arms or heraldic symbol?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Strength and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** History, and one of Animal Handling or Persuasion

**Tool proficiencies:** One gaming set

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Suggested equipment:** Fine clothes, a signet ring, a family tree. Cost: 20 GP

**Feature: High society.** You know of, or know, most of the noble families for hundreds of miles. In most civilized areas, you (and possibly your companions, if well-behaved) can find a noble host who will feed you, shelter you, and offer you a lavish lifestyle.

**Adventures and advancement:** Your family may ask you for one or two little favors: convince this relative to marry a family-approved spouse, slay that family foe in a duel, serve under a liege lord in a battle. If you advance your family's fortunes, you may earn a knighthood, along with the free service of a retinue of servants and up to 8 guards.

### Noble memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. A shield or tabard bearing your coat of arms
2. A keepsake or love letter from a high-born sweetheart

3. An heirloom weapon: though it's not magical, it has a name and was used for mighty deeds
4. A letter of recommendation to a royal court
5. Perfumed handkerchiefs, suitable for blocking the smell of commoners
6. An extremely fashionable and excessively large hat
7. A visible scar earned in battle or in a duel
8. A set of common clothes and a secret commoner identity
9. I.O.U.s of dubious value, earned in games of chance against other nobles
10. A letter from a friend, begging for help

### Noble connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. Your perfect elder sibling to whom you never seem to measure up
2. The treacherous noble who slaughtered or scattered your family and is now living in your ancestral home
3. Your family servant, a retired adventurer who taught you more about battle than any fancy dueling master
4. The foppish friend you carouse with
5. The common-born sweetheart your family forbid you from seeing again
6. The fugitive head of your family whose rebellion caused your family's lands to be seized and titles to be redistributed
7. Your foe, the heir of a rival house, with whom you have dueled twice
8. The crime boss to whom your family is in massive debt
9. The scion of an allied family to whom you were betrothed from birth
10. The eccentric knight for whom you trained as a squire or page

## Outlander

You lived far from the farms and fields of civilization. You know the beauties and the dangers of the wilderness.

Were you part of a nomadic tribe? A hunter or guide? A lone wanderer or explorer? A guardian of civilization against monsters, or of the old ways against civilization?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Constitution and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Survival, and one of Athletics or Intimidation

**Tool proficiencies:** Healer's kit

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Suggested equipment:** Traveler's clothes, waterskin, healer's kit, 7 days rations. Cost: 12 GP

**Feature: Wilderness trader.** If you're in or near the wilderness and have a trading relationship with a tribe, settlement, or other nearby group, you can maintain a modest lifestyle for yourself and your companions by trading the products of your hunting and gathering.

**Adventures and advancement:** During your travels, wilderness dwellers may come to you for help battling monsters and other dangers. If you succeed in several such adventures, you may earn the freely given aid of up to 8 tribal warriors.

#### **Outlander memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. A trophy from the hunt of a mighty beast, such as an aurochs-horn helmet
2. A trophy from a battle against a fierce monster, such as a still-wriggling troll finger
3. A stone from a holy druidic shrine
4. Tools appropriate to your home terrain, such as pitons or snowshoes
5. Hand-crafted leather or hide armor or clothing
6. The hand axe you made yourself
7. A gift from a dryad or faun
8. Trading goods worth 30 GP, such as furs or rare herbs
9. A tiny whistle given to you by a sprite
10. An incomplete map

#### **Outlander connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. A tribal chief who owes a favor
2. The chief of a band of marauders who has a grudge against you
3. A hag to whom you owe a favor
4. An alchemist or wizard who frequently gives you requests for rare herbs or trophies
5. A unicorn you've glimpsed but never been able to approach
6. Another outlander, your former best friend, now a bitter rival
7. A wise oracle who knows most of what happens in the wilderness, and will reveal it for a price
8. A zany prospector who knows the wild lands almost as well as you
9. A circus or arena owner who will pay for live animals not yet in their menagerie
10. A highly civilized poet or painter who has paid you to guide them to wild and inspiring spots

## Sage

You are a seeker of knowledge. You're an expert in your chosen field, with esoteric knowledge at your fingertips, or, at the farthest, in a book you vaguely remember.

Why have you left the confines of the library to explore the wider world? Do you seek ancient wisdom? Power? The answer to a specific question? Reinstatement in your former institution?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Intelligence and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** History, and one of Arcana or Religion

**Languages:** Two of your choice

**Suggested equipment:** Bottle of ink, pen, 50 sheets of parchment, common clothes. Cost: 16 GP

**Feature: Library privileges.** As a fellow or friend of several universities, you have visiting access to the great libraries, most of which are off-limits to the general public. With enough time spent

in a library, you can uncover most of the answers you seek (say, any question answerable with a DC 20 knowledge check).

**Adventures and advancement:** When you visit libraries and universities, you tend to be asked for help in your role as a comparatively rough-and-tumble adventurer. After fetching a few bits of esoteric knowledge and settling a few academic disputes, you may be granted access to the restricted areas of the library, which contain darker secrets and deeper mysteries (such as those answerable with a DC 25 knowledge check).

#### **Sage memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. A letter from a colleague asking for research help
2. Your incomplete manuscript
3. An ancient scroll in a language that even Comprehend Languages can't decipher
4. A copy of your highly unorthodox theoretical work that got you in so much trouble
5. A list of the forbidden books that may answer your equally forbidden question
6. A formula for a legendary magic item, for which you have no ingredients
7. An ancient manuscript of a famous literary work believed to have been lost; only you believe that it is genuine
8. Your mentor's incomplete encyclopedia, bestiary, or other work, which you vowed to complete
9. Your prize possession, a magic quill pen that takes dictation
10. The name of a book you need for your research: it seems to have been stolen from every library you've visited

#### **Sage connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. Your rival who always seems to be one step ahead of you in the research race

2. The college dean who banished you for conduct unbecoming a research fellow
3. A former student of yours who has become a dangerous wizard
4. The professor who took credit for your research
5. The rival sage whose cruel nickname for you has made you a laughingstock
6. The alchemist who will pay for bizarre monster trophies and other ingredients, no questions asked
7. The friend whose competing cosmological theory causes endless friendly bickering
8. The noble who, having recognized your intelligence at a young age, sponsored your way into academia
9. A talented apprentice who ran away after mastering magical power but not the theoretical foundation to control it
10. The invading general who burned the library that was once your home

## Sailor

You're an experienced mariner with a keen weather eye and a favorite tavern in every port.

Hard voyages have toughened you and the sea's power has made you humble.

Were you a deckhand, an officer, or the captain of your vessel? Did you crew a naval ship, a fishing boat, a merchant ship, a privateer, or a pirate?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Constitution and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Athletics, and one of Acrobatics or Perception

**Tool proficiencies:** Navigator's tools, vehicles (water)

**Suggested equipment:** common clothes, navigator's tools, 50 feet of rope. Cost: 27 GP

**Feature: Sea salt.** Your nautical jargon and rolling gait mark you unmistakably as a mariner. You can easily enter into shop talk with any non-hostile sailors, learning nautical gossip and ships' comings and



goings. You also recognize most large ships by sight and by name, and can make a History check to recall their most recent captain and allegiance.

**Adventures and advancement:** You and your companions will be able to take passage for free on nearly any commercial ship, in exchange for occasional ship duties when all hands are called.

After you have a few naval exploits under your belt, your fame makes sailors eager to sail under you. You can hire a ship's crew at half the usual price.

### Sailor memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. A dagger with a handle carved from a dragon turtle's tooth
2. A scroll tube filled with nautical charts
3. A harpoon (treat as a javelin with its butt end fastened to a rope)
4. A scar with a famous tale behind it
5. A treasure map
6. A codebook which lets you decipher a certain faction's signal flags
7. A necklace bearing a scale, shell, tooth, or other nautical trinket
8. Several bottles of alcohol
9. A tale of an eerie encounter with a strange monster, a ghost ship, or other mystery
10. A half-finished manuscript outlining an untested theory about how to re-rig a ship to maximize speed

### Sailor connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)

1. Your first captain, a cheerful merchant ship master and opportunistic pirate
2. The cruel naval captain who flogged you out of the service
3. The scoundrelly shipmate who ran off with the other half of your pirate map
4. The naval captain who won't rest until you are caught
5. The mutineers who left you on a deserted island

6. The fisherman with whom you tried to reel in *The King of the Sea*

7. A friendly shipmate who is eager to tell everyone the tale of how you saved their life

8. Your former shipmate, a bent and aged mariner with an eerie gift for foretelling bad weather and other calamities

9. Your retired mentor who first taught you the difference between a mainbrace and a marlinspike

10. The pirate who sunk your ship, leaving you the sole survivor

## Soldier

You're a hard-bitten veteran. You're accustomed to long marches, short supplies, and the sight of blood. A career as an adventurer seems like the logical next step.

Were you a battlefield soldier in a war between nations? A mercenary or town guard? Were you a front-line grunt, an officer, or a specialist such as a medic or a war mage? Did you retire with honor or in disgrace, or do you still serve?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Strength and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Athletics, and one of Animal Handling or Intimidation

**Tool proficiencies:** one type of gaming set

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Suggested equipment:** Uniform, common clothes, 7 days rations. Cost: 5 GP

**Feature: Military bearing.** Soldiers recognize their own. Off-duty soldiers are usually willing to trade tales and gossip with you. On-duty soldiers, while not obeying your orders, are likely to answer your questions and treat you respectfully, on the off chance that you're an unfamiliar officer who can get them in trouble.

**Adventures and advancement:** You will occasionally run into old comrades, some of whom may need favors. If you perform a few celebrated martial deeds, your old military outfit (or a new one) is likely to offer you an

officer's rank. You gain the free service of up to 8 guards. Your new commanders will occasionally give you objectives: you will be expected to act independently in order to achieve these objectives.

**Soldier memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. A trophy won from a monster (a broken horn, a tooth, etc)
2. A trophy won in a battle (a tattered banner, a ceremonial sword, etc)
3. A gaming set
4. A letter from your sweetheart
5. An old wound that twinges in bad weather
6. A letter you're supposed to deliver to a dead comrade's family
7. A horrifying memory you can't escape
8. A horned or plumed helmet
9. The sword you broke over your knee rather than fight for those bastards another day
10. A medal for valor

**Soldier connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. Your old commanding officer who still wants you to rejoin
2. The commander who callously sent your unit into a slaughter
3. Your shady war buddy who can get their hands on anything, no questions asked
4. Your best friend who went missing on the battlefield
5. The comrade who saved your life at the risk of their own
6. The ghost who haunts you
7. The superior officer you punched (for abusing civilians? For insulting your honor? For preventing you from looting?)
8. The scary experimental war construct you accompanied on a dangerous mission
9. The golden-armored knight with ridiculously good teeth who was always giving inspiring speeches
10. The enemy officer who captured you

## Urchin

You grew up on the streets. You know where to hide, and when your puppy dog eyes will earn you a hot meal.

Why were you on the streets? Were you a runaway? An orphan? Or just an adventurous kid who stayed out late?

**Ability score increases:** +1 to Dexterity and one other ability

**Skill Proficiencies:** Sleight of Hand, and one of Deception or Stealth

**Tool proficiencies:** Disguise kit, thieves' tools

**Suggested equipment:** Common clothes, disguise kit

**Feature: Guttersnipe.** When you're in a town or city, you can entertain yourself and your friends to a squalid lifestyle. Also, you know how to get anywhere in town without being spotted by gangs, gossips, or guard patrols.

**Adventures and advancement:** Street kids are among a settlement's most vulnerable people, especially in cities with lycanthropes, vampires, and other supernatural threats. If you help out a few urchins in trouble, word will get out. You'll be able to consult the street network to gather information. If you roll lower than a 15 on an Investigation check to gather information in a city or town, your roll is treated as a 15.

**Urchin memento (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. A locket containing pictures of your parents
2. A set of (stolen?) fine clothes
3. A small trained animal, such as a mouse, parrot, or monkey
4. A map of the sewers
5. The key or signet ring that was around your neck when you were discovered as a foundling
6. A battered one-eyed doll
7. A portfolio of papers given to you by a fleeing, wounded courier

8. A gold tooth (not yours, and not in your mouth)
9. The flowers or trinkets that you sell
10. A dangerous secret overheard while at play

**Urchin connection (roll d10, choose, or make up your own)**

1. The disreputable thief who taught you thieving skills
2. The saintly orphanage matron who's so proud of how you've grown
3. The miserly and cruel orphanage administrator who rounds up urchins and runaways
4. The drunken thief who shared with you what little they could steal
5. The fellow urchin who has some power to make "bad stuff" happen to their enemies
6. The thieves guild contact who will pay well for small folk to wriggle through a window or chimney and unlock a front door
7. The philanthropist (or charlatan?) who took you in, dressed you properly, and tried to teach you upper-class manners
8. The spymaster or detective who sent you on investigation missions
9. The noble whose horse trampled you or a friend
10. The rich family you ran away from

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