

On the Magic Resistance of Creatures

Any creature with a Might Score in *Ars Magica* has magic resistance. This magic resistance operates much like the magic resistance granted by the Hermetic *Parma Magica*. **Adventures in Mythic Europe** only details the Realms that creature types most likely belong to and how much raw *vis* can be acquired from creatures. This tractatus expands a little on the nature of creatures in Mythic Europe and is primarily focused on simulating magic resistance in the D&D game.

THE PARMA MAGICA

A quick review of the D&D rules for the *Parma Magica* is a good lead-in for what we'll discuss after. What follows is taken verbatim from **Adventures in Mythic Europe**.

The *Parma Magica* grants you powerful protection against magic. First, you have advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects and spell attacks have disadvantage against you (cf., *Spellguard Shield*, **DMG**, page 201). Secondly, you have proficiency in saving throws against spells and other magical effects and you add your proficiency bonus to your AC when you are the target of a magical attack. Third, you are protected against the effects of *The Gift* in others. Fourth, if you are the target of a spell that causes half damage on a successful save, you suffer no damage if you are successful on the save. Lastly, you may extend this protection to a number of other beings equal to your proficiency bonus minus two. If you extend your *Parma Magica*, you and other protected beings do not gain the benefit of proficiency in saving throws against spells or the AC bonus against magical attacks granted by this ritual.

THE NATURE OF CREATURES ALIGNED TO THE REALMS

Strictly speaking, every creature in D&D that is not a human or a real-world beast should be aligned to one of the four Realms. In keeping with this alignment, each creature that is part of a Realm should have magic resistance (since it would have a Might Score in *Ars Magica* terminology). This would, of course, mean that just about every single monster detailed in the **Monster Manual** should have *Ars Magica*-style magic resistance.

However, the DM may not want every single monster to have a very powerful defense against magic and other supernatural powers. This sort of ability is typically reserved only for the most powerful and most magical of creatures in D&D. So the DM must choose whether to keep D&D monsters the same or “be true to the setting” and grant every creature that isn't a normal human or a mundane beast some form of magic resistance. If no additional ruling on this is desired, then the DM can simply disregard the remainder of this tractatus. However, if the DM wants to keep the spirit of *Ars Magica* and grant supernatural creatures some form of magic resistance, then the next sections offer some guidance.

CREATURE MAGIC RESISTANCE

All creatures that are aligned to one of the four Realms (either Divine, Magic, Faerie, or Infernal) has magic resistance based on having Might in their Realm. In standard D&D “magic resistance” means that a creature has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects. This corresponds to the first effect of the *Parma Magica*. Since there

are a number of monsters in D&D that already have the “magic resistance” trait, we need to come up with a different game rule to represent Might-based magic resistance (otherwise monster such as the deva, the balor, and the dryad will not remain special in this regard).

It is recommended that the Might-based portion of magic resistance for a Realm-aligned creature correspond to the second and fourth effects of the Parma Magica. This means that in the Mythic Europe setting, all creatures that are aligned to a Realm (i.e., are not normal humans or mundane beasts) will have proficiency in saving throws against spells and other magical effects and add their proficiency bonus to their AC when they are the target of a magical attack. Furthermore, if they are the target of a spell that causes half damage on a successful save, they suffer no damage if they are successful on the save. If a D&D monster also has the “magic resistance” trait, they will have advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects, as normal, and spell attacks against them should have disadvantage (in keeping with the rules for Parma Magica).

A DM may apply this rule as they see fit. They may rule that all creatures enjoy this additional protection from magic, that some creatures have this additional magic resistance, or that almost no creatures have this special ability. Normal humans and mundane beasts should never have this general magic resistance, only “fantastic” creatures.

COLLECTING RAW VIS FROM CREATURES

If the additional magic resistance from the previous section is used in your campaign, there is a change that must be instituted regarding the collection of vis from Realm-aligned creatures, especially if the DM rules that some creatures have additional Might-based magic resistance and some do not. Use the rule from **Adventures in Mythic Europe** for acquiring vis from creatures with this caveat: vis can only be collected from creatures that have Might-based magic resistance. In other words, if the DM rules that gelatinous cubes, for instance, do not have the Might-based magic resistance detailed in the previous section, they no vis can be collected from them. This additional rule should be employed because in Mythic Europe, creatures that have vis that can be harvested always have a Might Score.

EFFECT ON THE GAME

If this new rule is used, every creature will get to use its proficiency bonus on every saving throw against magic and will have a higher AC against magical attacks. Also, many damage-causing spells will be less effective, because spellcasters will not be able to count on half damage in the event of a successful saving throw.

In the **DMG** (page 279), the section on creating a monster suggests that a monster that has five or more proficiencies in saving throws would have its effective AC increased by 4 for the purposes of its challenge rating. DM’s should keep this in mind.