

The Fantasy Superhero

**Alternate Rules for DUNGEONS & DRAGONS FIFTH EDITION Useful for
Advanced Fantasy Tactical Combat Simulations and Narrative
Roleplaying Campaigns Playable on a Table-Top with Pens,
Pencils, Paper, Polyhedral Dice, Graph Paper, a Battlemat,
Miniature Figures, and Several Family Members and Friends
with Very Good Imaginations**

E. L. EDWARDS



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***Dedicated to the greatest Dungeon Master and best friend I have
ever known – R.M.S.***

-E.L.E.

The Fantasy Superhero

BY

ERICK LEE EDWARDS

ALTERNATE RULES FOR CHARACTER CREATION AND
ADVANCEMENT, ALIGNMENTS, TASK RESOLUTION MECHANICS, AND
SPELL AND POWER CREATION WITH EXAMPLES.

FOR USE WITH THE DUNGEONS & DRAGONS FIFTH EDITION

INQUIRIES CONCERNING RULES SHOULD BE ANSWERED BY YOUR
LOCAL DUNGEONMASTER.



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CREATING A FIRST LEVEL CHARACTER

The steps to creating a first level character with this system are a bit different from the procedure outlined in the **PLAYER'S HANDBOOK**. The steps and details are listed below.

1. Choose a Race: Follow guidance from the rulebooks and any house rules your DM employs for his or her milieu.

2. Determine Ability Scores: Use any allowed method to generate ability scores. It is recommended that the **Customizing Ability Scores** variant (i.e., "point buy") be used. The DM may give each player more or less than the standard 27 points. The cost to buy each ability score is listed below for reference. Unspent points from this step are not carried over to the next step.

Ability Score	Cost	Ability Score	Cost
7	-1	13	5
8	0	14	7
9	1	15	9
10	2	16	12
11	3	17	15
12	4	18	19

3. Buy Traits: Each player has 24 trait points with which to buy various traits for their character. There are seven categories of traits. These are: hit die/hit points, armor proficiencies, weapon proficiencies, skill and tool proficiencies, saving throw proficiencies, class features and spells, and ability score improvement.

Players must choose one hit die/hit points combination for their character (1d6, 1d8, 1d10, or 1d12). They must also choose one category of armor proficiency and one category of weapon proficiency (but they may choose to have no armor proficiencies and proficiency with only five simple weapons at no cost). A character must also start with either six, seven, or eight skill and/or tool proficiencies. Taking two saving throw proficiencies is highly recommended, but not required. It is also recommended that a character take at least one set of class features (and possibly spells) but this is not required either. Finally, any trait points left over can be added to the character's ability scores on a 1-for-1 basis.

4. Describe Your Character: At this stage, choose your character's alignment (for an alternative system, see **HEROIC ALIGNMENTS** below). Also choose two personality traits, one ideal, one bond, one flaw, and one background feature from those available in the **PLAYER'S HANDBOOK** or the campaign's list of backgrounds. Note that a character created with this system does not gain the skill, tool, or language proficiencies provided by backgrounds (these proficiencies were chosen in **Step 3** above).

5. Choose Equipment: Each character starts with an amount of funds equal to the amounts shown in the **Starting Wealth by Class** table (**PHB**, 143) if the player spent points to buy class features. A character that has no class features starts with 2d4 gold pieces. Consult **Chapter 5: Equipment** in the **PLAYER'S HANDBOOK** and purchase armor, weapons, and other gear for the character.

STARTING CHARACTER BUILD TABLES

A starting character has 24 trait points. Select the character's hit die/hit points, armor and weapon proficiencies, number of skill and tool proficiencies and then any saving throw proficiencies or class features desired. The cost to buy skills and tools already takes into account the character's background (i.e., don't select a background for the character from the Player's Handbook). Leftover trait points can be added to ability scores on a 1-for-1 basis.

Hit Die (Hit Points)	Cost
1d6 (6 + Con modifier)	4
1d8 (8 + Con modifier)	5
1d10 (10 + Con modifier)	6
1d12 (12 + Con modifier)	7

Armor Proficiencies	Cost
None	0
Light	1
Light, Medium, Shields	2
All	3

Class Features & Spells	Cost
Artificer ¹	9
Barbarian	5
Bard ²	8
Cleric	9
Druid ³	10
Fighter	5
Monk ⁴	11
Paladin	5
Ranger	5
Rogue ⁵	7
Sorcerer	14
Warlock	10
Wizard	14

Save Proficiencies	Cost
Strength	1
Dexterity	1
Constitution	1
Intelligence	1
Wisdom	1
Charisma	1

Weapon Proficiencies	Cost
5 Simple Weapons	0
9 Simple & 1 Martial Weapon	1
All Simple & 1 Martial Weapon	2
All Simple & 4 Martial Weapons	3
All Simple & Martial Weapons	4

Skill & Tool Proficiencies	Cost
6 Skill and/or Tool Proficiencies	4
7 Skill and/or Tool Proficiencies	5
8 Skill and/or Tool Proficiencies	6

Ability Score Improvement	Cost
Increase an ability score by one	1

¹ also the three artificer tool proficiencies

² including three instrument proficiencies

³ including herbalism kit proficiency

⁴ including a tool or instrument proficiency

⁵ including proficiency with thieves' tools

Once all 24 trait points have been spent, the character is considered to be 1st level.

ADVANCING A CHARACTER

A starting character built with this system is a 1st level character and will advance in level like other D&D characters. A character advanced under this system continues to earn experience points in the normal fashion. However, as the character progresses towards the next level, they will earn "trait points" that can be used to buy new traits immediately or saved in order to buy traits at a later time. Each level of advancement provides twelve trait points with which to purchase various traits as the character advances. A character gains one trait point when they have earned one-twelfth of the number of experience points needed for the next level. For example, a 1st level character needs to earn 300 XP to reach 2nd level. This means that a 1st level character will gain one trait point to buy traits for every 25 XP they earn (since 300 XP divided by 12 equals 25 XP). Likewise, when 2nd level is reached, the character will gain one trait point for every 50 XP gained (since they need an additional 600 XP to reach 3rd level, which requires a total of 900 XP).

The **ADVANCEMENT TABLE** (opposite) shows character levels; the range of trait points a character has earned, given their level (2nd column); the proficiency bonus; the total experience points required to reach each level (4th column); the number of experience points required to gain the next level (5th column); and the number of experience points needed in order to gain one trait point (6th column). You will note that the number of experience points needed for 11th level has been altered when compared to the equivalent table in the **PLAYER'S HANDBOOK**. This is was done to make the number of experience points required to gain one trait point the same for character levels 10 and 11. Otherwise, a 10th level character would need 1,750 XP to gain one trait point and an 11th level character would need only 1,250 XP per trait point. Now, both 10th and 11th level characters need 1,500 XP per trait point.

A character's level is determined by the number of experience points they have earned, regardless of how they have spent their trait points. The character's proficiency bonus and any traits that depend on character level use this level. A character's class level in any class is determined by the number of levels the character has purchased using the **CLASS FEATURES** trait (see **SPENDING TRAIT POINTS** below).

This table can also be used to build characters of levels higher than 1st. Start by making a 1st level character. After that, simply find the desired character level and then spend a number of trait points shown in the range for that level (minus 24). You'll see that the minimum number of trait points for a 1st level character is 24 (and this is how many trait points a starting character gets). The DM will determine any additional starting wealth and magical items for higher level characters (see **XANATHAR'S GUIDE TO EVERYTHING**, "Awarding Magic Items", page 135).

If the **ADVANCEMENT TABLE** needs to be extended beyond 20th character level, it is recommended that 60,000 XP be required for each additional level with trait points being awarded at 5,000 XP intervals. The proficiency bonus does not increase, no more than 20 hit dice may be purchased (but older, lower hit dice can be "bought up"), and no class levels may exceed 20.

ADVANCEMENT TABLE

Level	Trait Points Earned	Proficiency Bonus	Experience Points (XP)	XP for Next Level	XP per Trait Point
-1	0 - 11	+1	-288	144	12
0	12 - 23	+1	-144	144	12
1	24 - 35	+2	0	300	25
2	36 - 47	+2	300	600	50
3	48 - 59	+2	900	1,800	150
4	60 - 71	+2	2,700	3,800	317
5	72 - 83	+3	6,500	7,500	625
6	84 - 95	+3	14,000	9,000	750
7	96 - 107	+3	23,000	11,000	917
8	108 - 119	+3	34,000	14,000	1,167
9	120 - 131	+4	48,000	16,000	1,333
10	132 - 143	+4	64,000	18,000	1,500
11	144 - 155	+4	82,000	18,000	1,500
12	156 - 167	+4	100,000	20,000	1,667
13	168 - 179	+5	120,000	20,000	1,667
14	180 - 191	+5	140,000	25,000	2,083
15	192 - 203	+5	165,000	30,000	2,500
16	204 - 215	+5	195,000	30,000	2,500
17	216 - 227	+6	225,000	40,000	3,333
18	228 - 239	+6	265,000	40,000	3,333
19	240 - 251	+6	305,000	50,000	4,167
20	252 - 263	+6	355,000	50,000	4,167

SPENDING TRAIT POINTS

Trait points are gained as a character advances towards their next experience level with every character gaining twelve trait points during one full level of advancement. The **TRAIT COSTS** table shows the traits that are available for purchase during character advancement and the cost of each trait. Further description follows.

ABILITY SCORE

Cost: 1

Gain: +1 to an ability score of your choice.

Raising an ability score by one costs one trait point. An ability score cannot be raised above 20 plus the character's racial Ability Score Increase.

ARMOR PROFICIENCY

Cost: 1

Gain: One armor proficiency.

You gain one armor proficiency from this list: light armor, medium armor & shields (together), or heavy armor. You must have proficiency in light armor before taking medium armor & shields. You must have proficiency in medium armor & shields before taking proficiency in heavy armor.

CANTRIP

Cost: 1/2

Gain: One cantrip

You gain one cantrip from any spell list you have access to. For one trait point, you may choose two cantrips. For cantrips that have variable effects dependent on level, use your character level to determine these effects. This trait normally applies only to arcane tricksters, artificers, bards, clerics, druids, eldritch knights, sorcerers, warlocks, and wizards.

CLASS FEATURE

Cost: 2

Gain: One class feature

You gain one class feature. A class feature is an entry that is listed under the Features column of a class description found in the **PLAYER'S HANDBOOK** (or elsewhere). The highest level of class feature you may choose is equal to your character level plus one. You do not gain all of the listed class features for that level (see **CLASS FEATURES** below) if there is more than one, you only gain one of them. The DM may require the character to have all class features from previous levels in that class before being allowed to take the feature you choose. For example, the DM may require the character to take Bardic Inspiration (d6) before taking Bardic Inspiration (d8) or Font of Inspiration. Usually, the way a class feature functions will suggest whether the class features of previous levels are required.

CLASS FEATURES

Cost: 5/6/7/8

Gain: One full level of class features.

Unlike **CLASS FEATURE** (above), spending 5, 6, 7, or 8 trait points will grant you the full class features and spells of one level of the chosen class. The trait point cost is based on the class chosen:

Barbarian – 5 trait points

Fighter, Ranger, or Paladin – 6 trait points

Artificer, Bard, Cleric, Druid, Monk, Rogue, or Warlock – 7 trait points

Sorcerer or Wizard – 8 trait points

TRAIT COSTS

Trait	Cost	What Character Gains
Ability Score	1	One point added to an ability score
d4 Hit Die	3	3 Hit Points and one d4 Hit Die
d6 Hit Die	4	4 Hit Points and one d6 Hit Die
d8 Hit Die	5	5 Hit Points and one d8 Hit Die
d10 Hit Die	6	6 Hit Points and one d10 Hit Die
d12 Hit Die	7	7 Hit Points and one d12 Hit Die
Feat	2	One feat
Class Feature	2	One class feature
Language	1/3	One language proficiency
Skill Proficiency	2/3	One skill proficiency
Tool Proficiency	2/3	One tool proficiency
Armor Proficiency	1	One armor proficiency
Weapon Proficiency	1/4	One weapon proficiency
Save Proficiency	1	One saving throw proficiency
Class Features	5	One level of class features (Barbarian)
Class Features	6	One level (Fighter, Paladin, Ranger)
Class Features	7	One level (All Other Classes)
Class Features	8	One level (Sorcerer and Wizard)
Spell (Known)	1	Add one spell to your known spells list
Spell (Scribed)	1/3	Add one spell to your spellbook
Spell (List)	1/3	Add one spell to your spell list
Spell (Prepared)	1	Add one to your number of prepared spells
Cantrip	1/2	Gain one cantrip

SPELLCASTING

Class	Knowledge		Power
Artificer	1st Level: 4	2nd Level+: 3	2
Bard	1st Level: 3	2nd Level+: 2 ½	2
Cleric	1st Level: 3 ½	2nd Level+: 3	2
Druid	1st Level: 5	2nd Level+: 3 ½	2
Paladin	1st Level: 1	2nd Level+: 2	2
Ranger	1st Level: 1	2nd Level+: 1 ½	2
Sorcerer	1st Level: 8	2nd Level+: 4 ½	2
Warlock	1st Level: 5	2nd Level+: 4	2
Wizard	1st Level: 8 ½	2nd Level+: 5	2

CLASS FEATURES (CONT.)

The highest level you may choose is equal to your character level plus one. As with **CLASS FEATURE**, the DM may require the character to have all class features from all previous levels in that class before being allowed to take the level of class features you choose. The advantage of taking **CLASS FEATURES** is that you also add one class level of the chosen class (which you do not with **CLASS FEATURE**). Having class levels in a certain class may affect how other traits function, so it may be advantageous to take this trait even if there is only one class feature for a particular level.

FEAT

Cost: 2

Gain: One feat.

You gain one feat. You must meet the prerequisite(s) to gain the feat.

HIT DICE/HIT POINTS

Cost: 3/4/5/6/7

Gain: One d4/d6/d8/d10/d12 Hit Die and Hit Points equal to Cost.

You gain one hit die of the type indicated. You also increase your hit point maximum by the same amount (plus the character's Constitution modifier). A character can have a maximum number of hit dice equal to their character level plus one. A character can "buy up" hit dice by spending the difference between the current hit die and the new hit die. Hit points increase accordingly.

LANGUAGE

Cost: 1/3

Gain: One language proficiency

You gain proficiency in one language. You can speak the chosen language and understand it when it is spoken. You can read works written in the language, write in the chosen language, and are familiar with its grammar. For one trait point, you may choose three languages.

SAVE PROFICIENCY

Cost: 1

Gain: Proficiency in one saving throw.

You gain proficiency in one saving throw, either Strength, Intelligence, Wisdom, Dexterity, Constitution, or Charisma. You may apply your proficiency bonus to saving throws of the chosen type.

SKILL PROFICIENCY

Cost: 2/3

Gain: Proficiency in one skill.

You gain proficiency in one skill and may apply your proficiency bonus to ability checks made when using that skill. For two trait points, you may choose three skills.

SPELL (LIST)

Cost: 1/3

Gain: One spell, added to your spell list.

You add one spell to your list of spells. You may choose this spell from any spell list. The spell must of a spell level you can cast. For one trait point, you may choose three spells. This trait normally applies only to artificers, clerics, druids, and paladins.

SPELL (KNOWN)

Cost: 1

Gain: One spell, added to your list of known spells.

You add one spell to your list of known spells. The spell must of a spell level you can cast. The spell you choose must be from a spell list you have access to and this spell list must be that of a class that has a Spells Known column in the class description. Thus, this trait normally applies only to arcane tricksters, bards, eldritch knights, rangers, sorcerers, and warlocks.

SPELL (PREPARED)

Cost: 1

Gain: One additional prepared spell.

You may prepare one additional spell per day. This trait normally applies only to artificers, clerics, druids, and wizards.

SPELL (SCRIBED)

Cost: 1/3

Gain: One spell, added to your spell book.

You add one spell to your spellbook. The spell must of a spell level you can cast and you must choose a spell from the wizard spell list. For one trait point, you may add three spells to your spellbook. This trait normally applies only to wizards.

SPELLCASTING (KNOWLEDGE)

Cost: By Class and Level

Gain: One spellcasting class level.

You gain one spellcasting class level in the chosen class and gain the spells known, number of prepared spells, starting spells, spellbook spells, ritual casting, and class spell list as appropriate (but no cantrips). To gain spell slots to cast these spells or to gain uses of Invocations, Mystic Arcana, Infusions, etc., take the **SPELLCASTING (POWER)** trait below.

SPELLCASTING (POWER)

Cost: 2

Gain: One level's worth of spell slots or uses of magical powers.

For bard, cleric, druid, sorcerer, and wizard, you gain one level on the Spell Slots per Spell Level chart. For warlock, you gain a level's increase of spell slots and uses of Invocations and Mystic Arcana. For artificer, you gain a level's increase of spell slots and infused items. For paladin and ranger, you gain one level on paladin or ranger Spell Slots per Spell Level chart.

TOOL PROFICIENCY

Cost: 2/3

Gain: Proficiency in one tool.

You gain proficiency with one set of tools, one kit, one set, one instrument, or one vehicle and may apply your proficiency bonus to ability checks made under appropriate circumstances. For two trait points, you may choose three types of tools.

WEAPON PROFICIENCY

Cost: 1/4

Gain: Proficiency in one type of weapon.

You gain proficiency in one type of weapon. A "type" of weapon is defined as a weapon that has its own entry on a weapon table (such as club, dagger, or maul). For one trait point, you may choose four weapon types.

GUIDELINES FOR ADVANCING TRAITS

Although most of the points below are found in the trait descriptions, some guidelines regarding the advancement of traits bear repeating.

A character's ability scores cannot exceed 20 plus their racial Ability Score Increase (found in each race's description in the **PLAYER'S HANDBOOK** and other sources). This deviates slightly from guidance in the **PHB**. The author believes that races having bonuses in certain ability scores should be allowed to advance those ability scores above 20 in keeping with the idea of "niche protection." Thus, a half-orc character can raise their Strength to 22 and their Constitution to 21.

A character cannot have more hit dice than their character level plus one. This allows for an early increase in the number of hit dice (and maximum hit points) as the character progresses to their next experience level. So, in play, a 1st level character could gain an additional hit die as soon as they are able to pay for it with trait points. In other words, the character does not have to wait until they reach 2nd level to take another hit die.

As addressed in the **CLASS FEATURE** and **CLASS FEATURES** traits, lower-level class features should be purchased before gaining higher level class features (subject to DM approval and oversight). "Natural progressions" should be observed. As an example, if a 1st level character purchases the rogue class feature Sneak Attack, then they will receive the 1d6 damage bonus. However, to advance their Sneak Attack dice, they must also purchase the **CLASS FEATURES** trait for the rogue class at every level in order to see a steady progression. In this example, the character would have their Sneak Attack damage increased to 2d6 upon purchasing the 3rd level of class features for the rogue class. Buying the 2nd and 3rd level class features with the **CLASS FEATURE** trait would not count as having raised the character's rogue class level. This is important to understand.

When gaining spellcasting from the purchase of **CLASS FEATURES**, the character's class level is equal to the number of times **CLASS FEATURES** was purchased for the class in question. A character's known spells, number of prepared spells, cantrips known, etc. are based on this class level. A character can have class levels in more than one class (e.g., four levels of wizard and four levels of cleric).

For spellcasters, the number of spell slots per spell level cannot exceed those shown for your overall character level or the spell slots you would gain by summing your class levels in spellcasting classes. Use the lower of these two "spellcasting levels" to determine your spell slots per spell level. For example, if a 5th level character has four class levels of wizard and four class levels of cleric, their spell slots would be 4/3/2 (as for a 5th level spellcaster). However, if this same character had only one class level of wizard and two class levels of cleric, spell slots would be 4/2 (as a 3rd level caster). Note that arcane tricksters, eldritch knights, paladins, and rangers should round up when determining how many class levels to add to their overall spellcasting level (cf., **PLAYER'S HANDBOOK**, pages 164-165).

The last guideline for advancing traits is this: the DM is the final authority on whether a trait can be purchased or if there are any additional prerequisites required for purchase.

ADVANCING TRAITS THROUGH DOWNTIME ACTIVITIES

If the DM allows, traits may be added and advanced between adventures. This system provides a way for non-adventuring player characters and non-player characters to advance realistically (and slowly) without eliminating the ability for adventurers to rapidly reach great heights of power.

The basic idea is that a character who is dedicating themselves to increasing their professional abilities will earn 250 XP per season (i.e., three months). If a character spends a whole year improving themselves and their capabilities, they will receive 1,000 XP. By dividing the values shown in the **XP for Next Level** column in the **ADVANCEMENT TABLE** by 1,000 the number of years required to reach each successive level can be determined. By dividing the overall experience points needed to reach a certain level by 1,000 the number of years required to advance from 1st level to the level in question is quickly determined. Thus, a newly-minted 1st level wizard can reach 9th level in 48 years but must live 120 years if she is to see 13th level. However, this rough estimate assumes that the character is spending all of their time advancing in their chosen profession. An elf might be 100 years old upon reaching 1st level and can expect to live another 650 years but what elf would spend every day for the next 650 years working on becoming a better rogue? If they spent half of that time, they would still attain 19th character level before their 750th birthday. Spending only one-third of that time (four months a year) would allow them to reach 16th level; three months a year, 14th level; two months a year, 12th level; and one month a year, 9th level.

From the previous example, it can be seen that advancement naturally slows down over time, providing a check on advancement into the higher levels. As a character gains 250 XP per season (or 1,000 XP per year), trait points are awarded based on the character's current level and the value found in the **XP per Trait Point** column of the **ADVANCEMENT TABLE**. To find the number of trait points to award, take the amount of XP that was earned during the downtime and divide this by the **XP per Trait Point** value. For example, a 6th level character spends six seasons (18 months) researching, studying, practicing, and otherwise developing themselves. At the end of this period, they earn 1,500 XP (250 XP per season times six seasons). Looking at the last column of the **ADVANCEMENT TABLE** for a 6th level character, we see a value of 750 XP/Trait Point. Therefore, this character earns two trait points (1,500 XP divided by 750 XP/Trait Point) during this time. Fractional trait points are kept (not rounded) since some traits only require one-fourth, one-third, one-half, or two-thirds of a trait point.

The DM may impose additional requirements before allowing downtime advancement in this way. One recommended suggestion is that a character must spend 1 gp per day over and above their own normal lifestyle expenses during the entire downtime period in order to work on advancing their traits. A DM may also require the character to spend that time with tutors at a location conducive to the type of advancement they are interested in and with the expectation that the character will undertake one or more perilous quests as suitable repayment upon completion of studies (and as a test of their newly-acquired abilities). These sorts of details are dependent upon the nature of the campaign itself, the willingness of the DM to employ these downtime rules, and the patience of the players themselves.

BUILDING THE D&D CLASSES

For the curious, each D&D class is built with 24 trait points as shown below.

D&D Classes (1st Level)

Class	HP/HD	Saves	Skills	Weapons	Armor	Features
Artificer	5	2	4	2	2	9
Barbarian	7	2	4	4	2	5
Bard	5	2	5	3	1	8
Cleric	5	2	4	2	2	9
Druid	5	2	4	1	2	10
Fighter	6	2	4	4	3	5
Monk	5	2	4	2	0	11
Paladin	6	2	4	4	3	5
Ranger	6	2	5	4	2	5
Rogue	5	2	6	3	1	7
Sorcerer	4	2	4	0	0	14
Warlock	5	2	4	2	1	10
Wizard	4	2	4	0	0	14

Each class balances out for advancement as well. The cost to gain a level of class features along with the next hit die and hit points is equal to 12 trait points.

D&D Classes (per Level)

Class	HP/HD	Class Features
Artificer	5	7
Barbarian	7	5
Bard	5	7
Cleric	5	7
Druid	5	7
Fighter	6	6
Monk	5	7
Paladin	6	6
Ranger	6	6
Rogue	5	7
Sorcerer	4	8
Warlock	5	7
Wizard	4	8

HEROIC ALIGNMENTS

An alternate alignment system is presented here, one based on real-world values, but designed for use in a fantasy campaign. Unlike the normal D&D alignment system, all nine alignments can be used, since these alignments represent the "heroic" version of the normal nine alignments.

These heroic alignments are described in terms of the value system adhered to by characters professing that philosophy. Ten values are used and each of the ten basic values can be characterized by describing its central motivational goal and its associated single values. These values are:

Achievement - Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards. Associated single values are: being ambitious, influential, capable, successful, intelligent, and having self-respect.

Benevolence - Preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact (the "in-group"). Associated single values are: being helpful, responsible, forgiving, honest, loyal, and having mature love for others and true friendships.

Conformity - Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms. Associated single values are: being obedient, having self-discipline, being polite, honoring parents and elders.

Hedonism - Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself. Associated single values are: experiencing pleasure and enjoying life.

Power - Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources. Associated single values are: having social power, wealth, and authority, preserving one's own public image, and having social recognition.

Security - Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self. Associated single values are: ensuring national security, reciprocation of favors, ensuring family security, having a sense of belonging, preserving the social order, being healthy and clean.

Self-Direction - Independent thought and action; choosing, creating, exploring. Associated single values are: freedom, creativity, independence, choosing one's own goals, being curious, having self-respect.

Stimulation - Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life. Associated single values are: having an exciting and varied life, being daring.

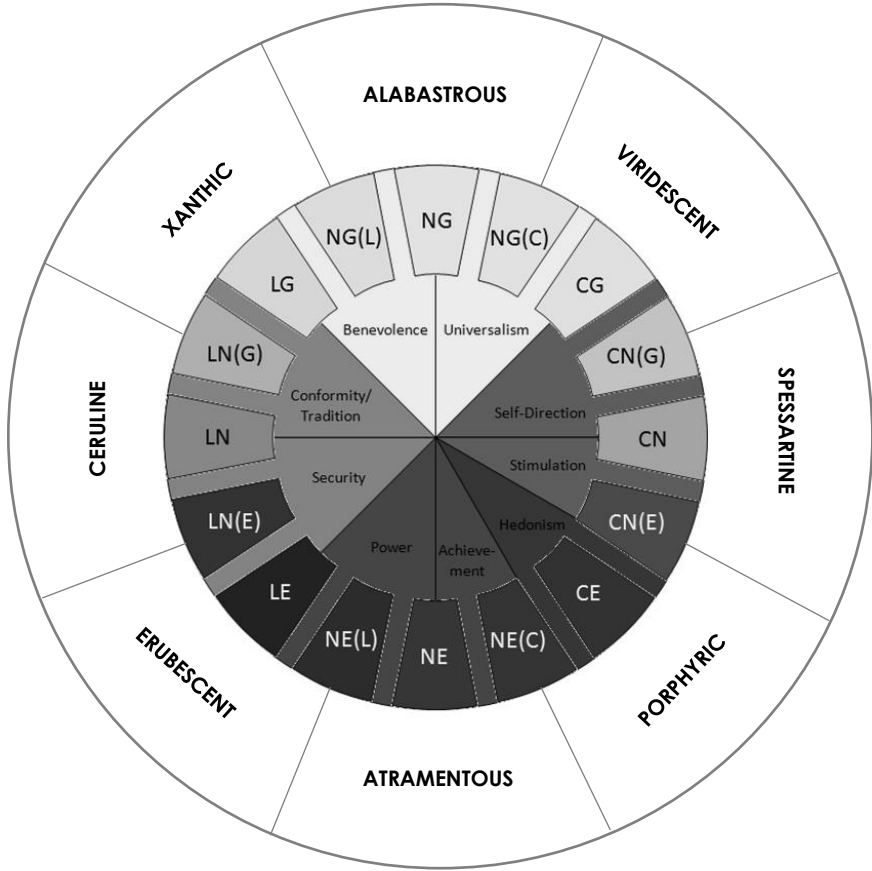
Tradition - Respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self. Associated single values are: respecting tradition, being devout, accepting one's own portion in life, being humble, and taking life in moderation.

Universalism - Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature. Associated single values are: advancing equality, being one with nature, having wisdom, filling the world with beauty,

advancing social justice, being broad-minded, protecting the environment, and see the world at peace.

Below, each alignment is described in terms of these values. Acts that call for an Inspiration award for characters adhering to a particular philosophy are listed. These acts are deliberately left vague so that the DM can determine the frequency of Inspiration awards during the game. It should be noted that DMs are under no obligation to allow all nine of the alignments listed below. DMs can certainly use all of them or restrict the number to three or four to encourage party unity.

Each of the heroic alignments is related to a normal D&D alignment for the purpose of game effects. The equivalencies are shown in the chart below and listed in each alignment's description.



ALABASTROUS

You're hero the people want on their side. You don't necessarily play by the rules, but you'll save the day because that's what heroes do. You're not motivated by money or power or pleasure. You just want to right the wrongs, defend the weak, and kick evil's butt. A sincere "thank you" or a home-cooked meal is all you need for a reward. But if they insist on giving you money, well, you'll just give that to the poor or the local church. You're always ready to make the ultimate sacrifice, but not before you take as many of those evil bastards with you as possible.

Choose two core values from each list. These core values will be used by the DM to award Inspiration.

Meaning	Benevolence	Universalism
	Preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact (the "in-group").	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.
Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• being helpful• being responsible• being forgiving• being honest• being loyal• having mature love for others and true friendships	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• advancing equality• being one with nature• having wisdom• filling the world with beauty• advancing social justice• being broad-minded• protecting the environment• seeing the world at peace

For the purposes of interacting with game elements based on the character's alignment, treat the Alabastrous character as being Neutral Good. For example, an Alabastrous character can use a Talisman of Pure Good, gets the full effect from a neutral good Candle of Invocation, and the Balance card in the Deck of Many Things would make them Atramentous.

ATRAMENTOUS

You're the hero they call on to get the job done, no matter what. As long as they don't criticize your methods or delve too deeply into your affairs, they'll be alright. You'll defend civilization, rescue the king's daughter from the dragon, or do just about anything else, if the price is right. You're the mercenary of the adventurer world. You won't side with evil, because there's no end to the number of good people who will pay dearly for your services. Fight fire with fire is what you say. At the end of the day, when the Dark Lord has been defeated, honors will be heaped upon you by a grateful populace. And you get to keep all of the Dark Lord's cool stuff. It's a win-win.

Choose two core values from each list. These core values will be used by the DM to award Inspiration.

	Achievement	Power
Meaning	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.
Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• being ambitious• being influential• being capable• being successful• having intelligence• having self-respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• having social power• having wealth• having authority• preserving one's own public image• having social recognition

For the purposes of interacting with game elements based on the character's alignment, treat the Atramentous character as being Neutral Evil. For example, an Atramentous character can use a Talisman of Pure Evil, gets the full effect from a neutral evil Candle of Invocation, and the Balance card in the Deck of Many Things would make them Alabastrous.

CERULINE

Some people do what's right because they believe in the system. All that stands between civilization and chaos is a fragile social order. Society needs its heroes, people who are willing to do what it takes to defend the nation, protect its citizens, enforce its laws, and maintain its traditions. That's you. You've got the talent and it's your duty to use your gifts to ensure that your nation, your people, and your way of life will last forever. You've got the law on your side, but you're never above the law. Sometimes it's a messy business, because no system is perfect. But it's the best one we've got and it's worth fighting for.

Choose two core values from each list. These core values will be used by the DM to award Inspiration.

	Security	Conformity/Tradition
Meaning	Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms. Also respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self.
Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensuring national security• reciprocation of favors• ensuring family security• having a sense of belonging• preserving the social order• being healthy and clean	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• being obedient• having self-discipline• being polite• honoring parents and elders• respecting tradition• being devout• accepting one's own portion in life• being humble• taking life in moderation

For the purposes of interacting with game elements based on the character's alignment, treat the Ceruline character as being Lawful Neutral. For example, a Ceruline character can use the sword Concluder, gets the full effect from a lawful neutral Candle of Invocation, and the Balance card in the Deck of Many Things would make them Spessartine.

CINEREAL

You're not the hero they expected, but you're the hero they need. You're not quite sure what keeps you going but if you don't do something, who will? You don't put your trust in high ideals, the authorities of your society, a certain philosophy, or really anything else for that matter. You trust yourself, those close to you, and anyone else who's proven they're on your side. You fight evil to protect yourself and those you care about. And because you're one of the few who can. The enemy had better watch out, because unlike these other heroes, you're flexible enough in your morals and ethics to take advantage of just about any situation. They'll never see it coming.

Choose two core values from the two lists you chose for your primary values. For example, if you chose security and self-direction for your character, choose two core values from the security list (which can be found in the Erubescens and Ceruline descriptions) and two core values from the self-direction list (found in the Spessartine and Viridescens descriptions).

For the purposes of interacting with game elements based on the character's alignment, treat the Cinereal character as being Neutral. For example, a Cinereal character can use the sword Replier, gets the full effect from a (true) neutral Candle of Invocation, and the Balance card in the Deck of Many Things, although it would keep them Cinereal, would switch their two core values to their "polar opposites" unless their original core values are already polar opposites, in which case you take the two core values that are halfway between both.

For information, the core value "opposites" are:

- Tradition/Conformity - Stimulation and Hedonism
- Universalism - Power
- Benevolence - Achievement and Hedonism
- Self-Direction - Security
- Hedonism - Tradition/Conformity and Benevolence

For example, if a Cinereal character has Self-Direction and Benevolence as their core values, the opposites would be Security and Achievement (or Hedonism). However, if a Cinereal character had Security and Self-Direction as their core values (these two are polar opposites), their opposites are considered to be Benevolence and either Achievement or Hedonism. Thus, even "true neutral" characters have opposite alignments (which are other forms of "true neutral").

ERUBESCENT

You defend your nation, protect the weak, and smite evil, not because it's the right thing to do, but because it's what keeps you on top of the heap yourself. You're a hero, so you've earned the right to be above the common rabble. Who else hurls themselves into danger like you do? Your high station in society is predicated upon the continuance of the social order, so it's also self-interest that motivates you to defeat your nation's enemies. The wicked must be punished for daring to disrupt the society that provides you with power and prestige. And it does feel good bringing wrong-doers to justice and wiping out enemies in war. Everyone knows you don't mess around.

Choose two core values from each list. These core values will be used by the DM to award Inspiration.

	Power	Security
Meaning	Social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources.	Safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self.
Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• having social power• having wealth• having authority• preserving one's own public image• having social recognition	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensuring national security• reciprocation of favors• ensuring family security• having a sense of belonging• preserving the social order• being healthy and clean

For the purposes of interacting with game elements based on the character's alignment, treat the Erubescant character as being Lawful Evil. For example, an Erubescant character can use a Talisman of Pure Evil. The Balance card in the Deck of Many Things would make them Viridescent.

PORPHYRIC

It feels good when they call you a "hero" and that's what it's all about for you. Being a hero is the best way of getting what you want. And what is it that you want? Excitement, pleasure, success, adoration, just to name a few of the many things that you desire in your insatiable quest for enjoyment in life. As long as you act like a hero, you get to operate outside of convention and they'll happily overlook your indiscretions, your eccentricities, and your pursuit of darker desires. You understand the enemy better than anyone else, but you'll never join them. These innocents, they look up to you and are so ready and willing to reward you for putting your life on the line for them. You've got a good thing going and you don't want to ruin that, now do you?

Choose four core values from among those offered on the three lists. These core values will be used by the DM to award Inspiration.

	Stimulation	Achievement	Hedonism
Meaning	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.	Personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards.	Pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself.
Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • having an exciting and varied life • being daring 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • being ambitious • being influential • being capable • being successful • having intelligence • having self-respect 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • experiencing pleasure • enjoying life

For the purposes of interacting with game elements based on the character's alignment, treat the Porphyric character as being Chaotic Evil. For example, a Porphyric character can use a Talisman of Pure Evil. The Balance card in the Deck of Many Things would make them Xanthic.

SPESSARTINE

You have no grand plan, no unwavering ideals, no lifelong goals when it comes to being a hero. You really don't care about saving people, smiting evil, or any of that stuff all of the other heroes seem to care so much about. As far as rewards go, you don't want the titles they might give you, the lands they might bequeath you, the gold they might heap upon you (okay, maybe you want the gold). You do it for the thrills, for the freedom, and for the simple pleasure of seeing what you can get away with. You're a hero for your own reasons, which might change with the wind. With you, the enemy never knows what they're getting or what to expect. You're that hero that's the life of the party, the instigator, hell, maybe the whole reason there's an adventure in the first place!

Choose two core values from each list. These core values will be used by the DM to award Inspiration.

	Self-Direction	Stimulation
Meaning	Independent thought and action; choosing, creating, exploring.	Excitement, novelty, and challenge in life.
Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• freedom• creativity• independence• choosing one's own goals• being curious• having self-respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• having an exciting and varied life• being daring

For the purposes of interacting with game elements based on the character's alignment, treat the Spessartine character as being Chaotic Neutral. For example, a Spessartine character can use the sword Last Quip, gets the full effect from a chaotic neutral Candle of Invocation, and the Balance card in the Deck of Many Things would make them Ceruline.

VIRIDESCENT

There's no need for heroes in a just world and you work tirelessly for the day when you can lay down your sword. But there's no end to the cruelty, the misery, and the injustices that are visited upon good folk by the depredations of evil people, so respite will never come. You're a hero of the people, fighting for equality, for freedom, and for independence. Tyrants are wise to fear you, as you work to free everyone from all forms of oppression: slavery, burdensome duties, unfair taxation, and perhaps even societal expectations. The world you're building will be one of beauty, equality, and peace that allows everyone to live their own lives as they see fit without the interference of authoritarian influences.

Choose two core values from each list. These core values will be used by the DM to award Inspiration.

	Universalism	Self-Direction
Meaning	Understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature.	Independent thought and action; choosing, creating, exploring.
Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• advancing equality• being one with nature• having wisdom• filling the world with beauty• advancing social justice• being broad-minded• protecting the environment• seeing the world at peace	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• freedom• creativity• independence• choosing one's own goals• being curious• having self-respect

For the purposes of interacting with game elements based on the character's alignment, treat the Viridescent character as being Chaotic Good. For example, a Viridescent character can use a Talisman of Pure Good, gets the full effect from a chaotic good Candle of Invocation, and the Balance card in the Deck of Many Things would make them Erubescant.

XANTHIC

You're a true hero, the figurative knight-in-shining-armor, fighting for truth, justice, and the chivalric way. You're a paragon of virtue, fair to both friend and foe. You balance the needs of your own altruistic goals with those of the social order. You follow the rules, respect the laws, and adhere to the social mores of your nation and this endears you to all in polite society. You also defend the innocent, humble yourself before the lowly, and cheerfully render aid to the needy and this makes you loved by the commoners. You show mercy to your foes, engage in fair play, and use only that force which is necessary in battle and this makes you respected by the enemy. You are willing to sacrifice your life before behaving dishonorably and your heart is always ready to forgive the truly repentant.

Choose two core values from each list. These core values will be used by the DM to award inspiration.

	Conformity/Tradition	Benevolence
Meaning	Restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms. Also respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide the self.	Preserving and enhancing the welfare of those with whom one is in frequent personal contact (the "in-group").
Core Values	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• being obedient• having self-discipline• being polite• honoring parents and elders• respecting tradition• being devout• accepting one's own portion in life• being humble• taking life in moderation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• being helpful• being responsible• being forgiving• being honest• being loyal• having mature love for others and true friendships

For the purposes of interacting with game elements based on the character's alignment, treat the Xanthic character as being Lawful Good. For example, a Xanthic character can use a Talisman of Pure Good, gets the full effect from a lawful good Candle of Invocation, and the Balance card in the Deck of Many Things would make them Porphyric.

CHANGING YOUR ALIGNMENT

You can change your character's core values between gaming sessions. Just inform your DM at the start of a new session that you are changing your character's core values. You must choose your character's new core values from the lists presented in your alignment description (or the lists you chose, if your character is Cinereal). You must follow the instructions in your alignment description (such as "Choose two core values from each list.").

Changing your character's alignment requires a bit more work. You can begin to change your character's alignment to one that shares at least one primary value (such as Xanthic to Alabastrous, because they share benevolence as a primary value) by announcing your intention to do so at the start of a gaming session and choosing one core value from a list that is not common to your old alignment. For example, for a Xanthic to Alabastrous change, the player will choose one core value from the universalism core values list (since benevolence is common to both Xanthic and Alabastrous, but universalism is not). This means the character should have one core value from the conformity/tradition list, two core values from the benevolence list, and the new core value from the universalism list. Once the character has received three Inspiration awards based on the new core value, the player may choose another core value from that list at the beginning of the next session. Once the character has been awarded Inspiration three times based on this second new core value, the character has successfully switched alignment.

However, if the player does not wish to switch to a new alignment that shares a primary value, the character must be switched to Cinereal. In other words, it is the intention of the player to switch two or more primary values to different primary values. In this case, choose the first primary value and follow the instructions above for slowly switching core values. Once that primary value has been successfully switched (by being awarded Inspiration for both new core values three times each), then pick another primary value to switch to and follow the same procedure. For example, the player of a Xanthic character is tired of having conformity/tradition and benevolence as primary values and would rather play a thrillseeker. First, he loses one conformity/tradition core value and he chooses stimulation as his new primary value and takes "having an exciting and varied life" as his first new core value. After three Inspiration awards for that core value, he chooses "being daring." Three more Inspiration awards for "being daring" later, he is now considered a Cinereal character (having the primary values of benevolence and stimulation). He then chooses the self-direction primary value and the core value of "choosing one's own goals." He gets three Inspiration awards and then picks "being curious" as his last new core value. After three Inspiration awards for this one, he's a Spessartine character.

THE DICELESS DUNGEONMASTER

This section could have also been called "Players Make All Rolls" because this is essentially the kind of system that will be detailed. The basic idea is to transfer responsibility for the various rolls in combat to the players, thus leaving the DM free to adjudicate results rather than spend large portions of the action furiously rolling dice behind a gamemaster's screen. In this way, the players become more involved in the combat results. For example, instead of having the DM make attack rolls for the various monsters, the player whose character is being attacked will make a defense roll against the monster's attack score. So, instead of being a passive bystander, the player is actually involved in the action directed towards their character.

First, it is necessary to detail how the various bonuses of monsters will be converted to scores. This isn't as simple as adding ten to a bonus (as will be shown below) if we are to preserve the **exact same** percentage chances for various results. Next, it must be detailed how rolls that are normally made for monsters will be transferred to the players. Finally, some additional guidance and implications of this system need to be considered.

Creature scores are generated in the manner shown below. You will note that some scores already exist in D&D, such as Armor Class and the saving throw Difficulty Class for creature powers (which is called the Power Score below).

Initiative Score	=	10 + Initiative Bonus
Attack Score	=	10 + Attack Bonus
Defense Score	=	Armor Class
Save Score	=	14 + Save Bonus
Power Score	=	Difficulty Class
Skill Score	=	10 + Skill Bonus
Damage Score	=	Fixed Damage

It is these scores that the players will roll against. Characters have modifiers that will be added to rolls. These modifiers are:

Initiative Modifier	=	Normal Initiative Modifier
Attack Modifier	=	Normal Attack Modifier
Defense Modifier	=	Armor Class minus 12
Save Modifier	=	Normal Save Modifier
Power Modifier	=	Spell Attack Modifier
Skill Modifier	=	Skill Modifier
Damage Modifier	=	Normal Damage Modifier

A modifier can also be referred to as a "bonus" (even if negative), if desired. For the characters, two things change. First, the normal Armor Class is not used. Twelve is subtracted from the character's Armor Class and becomes the Defense Modifier. Secondly, spellcasters no longer have a Spell Save DC (since the DM won't be making rolls for the monsters). Only the Spell Attack Modifier is used, both for conventional spell attacks (as seen with the **firebolt** cantrip) and for spells offering a saving throw (like the **fireball** spell). In the first case, the player rolls against the monster's Armor Class, applying the Spell Attack Modifier to the roll (as normal). In the second case, the player rolls against the monster's save score, with success indicating the monster failed the save (the player rolled high and got a good result).

The table below lists the various rolls that players make in the game. Many of them remain the same.

Type of Roll	The player rolls:	Versus a DC equal to:
Initiative	d20 + Initiative Modifier	Creature's Initiative Score
Attack	d20 + Attack Modifier	Creature's Armor Class
Defend	d20 + Defense Modifier	Creature's Attack Score
Saving Throw	d20 + Save Modifier	Creature's Power Score
Skill Check	d20 + Skill Modifier	Creature's Skill Score
Spell Attack	d20 + Power Modifier	Creature's Armor Class
Spell with Save	d20 + Power Modifier	Creature's Save Score

The Player:	The damage is equal to:	And is subtracted from:
Deals Damage	Dice + Damage Modifier	Creature's Hit Points
Takes Damage	Creature's Fixed Damage	Character's Hit Points

A player's initiative, attack, saving throw, skill check, spell attack, and damage rolls all work normally (as presented in the D&D rules). The player's defend roll is successful (meaning the character was not hit) if the roll equals or exceeds the creature's attack score. The character is hit if the roll is less than the creature's attack score. If the player rolls a natural '1' on a defend roll, this has the same effect as if the creature had rolled a '20' (i.e., the hit is a critical hit). If the player rolls a natural '20' this means that the defense was successful, regardless of the creature's attack score.

To determine if a creature makes or fails its saving throw against a character's spell, the player makes a d20 roll and adds the power modifier (i.e., Spell Attack Modifier). This is compared to the creature's save score. If the result equals or exceeds the save score, the creature failed the save. If the result is less than the save score, the creature made the save. As with the defend roll, if the player rolls a natural '20' this has the same effect (if any) as if the creature had rolled a '1'. If a natural '1' is rolled, this is the same as if the creature rolled a natural '20' (if there is any effect).

In all cases, with all rolls, higher is better for the player and worse for the creature and vice versa. Also, any trait that can affect a d20 roll (such as the Lucky trait for halflings) can be extended to influence the other rolls in this system.

When applying advantage and disadvantage for creatures, it is recommended that the opposite be applied to the appropriate player rolls (rather than adding or subtracting five to the score as detailed in the **PLAYER'S HANDBOOK**). Thus, a creature having advantage on initiative rolls would force players to roll at disadvantage when determining initiative order. A creature having magic resistance (advantage on saving throws against spells) would cause players to have disadvantage on spell rolls versus a save score (but not spell attack rolls versus Armor Class).

The DM will have to determine how to handle creature versus creature combat (in other words, combat where no player is involved). It is recommended that a player be designated to roll for any creature that is part of the party (as if the creature were a player character). If no combatant is part of the party (this should be a rare case) then perhaps each player can be given one or more creatures to run and the DM can simply adjudicate results and step in to determine creature actions in accordance with the adventure plot.

Finally, some discussion regarding the choice of the base numbers for scores would be appropriate at this point. A creature's initiative score, skill scores, and attack scores have a base of 10 and its save scores a base of 14. How were these numbers determined? The differences in base numbers depends on two things. First, whether the normal method of determining the result is roll versus roll or roll versus number. If the normal method is a roll versus a roll, like with initiative rolls or rolls involving two skills (like a creature's Perception versus a character's Stealth) then the base is 10. Considering an infinite number of d20 rolls, the average result would be 10.5. Dropping the fraction (i.e., going slightly in favor of the players) makes the base number 10.

If the normal method of resolution is a roll versus a target number, convention typically dictates that success is achieved if the roll result equals or exceeds the target number (in other words, ties go the roller). This is the case with attack rolls versus Armor Class, saving throws versus spell Difficulty Class, and other rolls. In this case, the normal "base" number has to be determined and from that a new "base" number is generated for a reversal of the roll (while also keeping in mind that ties normally go to the roller).

For the defend roll, we must analyze the attack roll. Consider this example. An orc has a +5 to hit with his great axe attack (**MONSTER MANUAL**, 246). Let's say that a PC rogue has an Armor Class of 14 (leather armor and 16 Dexterity). The DM would have to roll a 9 or better on a d20 to have the orc hit the rogue (AC 14 minus the +5 attack modifier). When the orc attacks the rogue, he has a 60% chance of hitting (roll of 1 to 8, 40% chance; roll of 9 to 20, 60% chance). From this example, we can calculate what a monster's attack score should be. Reversing the roll, requiring the player of the rogue to defend, would mean that the player rolls a d20 and adds the rogue's defense modifier. If we arbitrarily make the defense modifier equal to Armor Class minus twelve, we can then calculate the base attack score for monsters. We know that the orc should hit 60% of the time and we know the rogue's defense modifier is +2. What possible die results would grant the orc a 60% chance to hit (given the rogue's +2 modifier)? The range for the orc to hit the rogue would be 1 to 12 (lower is worse for the player). Misses would occur when the player rolls a number from 13 to 20. The minimum roll for a miss is 13. Adding +2 to this yields 15 (this is the orc's attack score). Subtracting the orc's attack modifier (15 - 5) gives us 10. This is the base number for a creature's attack score. Thus, a creature's attack score is 10 plus its attack modifier in every case (and this makes it very easy to calculate in play).

Likewise, the save score is calculated by considering a spellcaster's Spell Save DC (which is 8 + proficiency bonus + spellcasting ability score modifier). Since the Spell Attack Modifier is this same number, minus eight, we will use this as the power modifier for player characters. Consider a wizard casting a **charm person** spell on an orc. In this example, the wizard's Spell Save DC is 13 (due to 16 Intelligence). The orc has a Wisdom save modifier of +0. The DM must roll a 13 or higher for the orc to be unaffected, therefore the wizard's spell as a 60% chance of success (a roll of 1 to 12 means the orc failed its saving throw). Reversing this, and giving the orc a save score, means that the player of the wizard would need to roll any number from 9 through 20 for the spell to be successful (a 60% chance). The minimum roll for success is 9. Adding the proficiency bonus (+2) and Intelligence modifier (+3) to this yields 14. Since the orc's Wisdom save modifier is +0, we do not need to modify this base number any further. Therefore the base number for a creature's save score is 14. All save scores are calculated by adding 14 to the creature's save modifier.

CREATING NEW SPELLS

The basic idea is to take an existing D&D spell and use that as a starting point to create a new spell. Changing features of the spell will alter the spell's level. Once the spell is constructed, the DM can determine if the spell is to be introduced into the campaign.

The table below lists various changes that can be applied to an existing spell to make an entirely new spell. One hard rule is this: any change to an existing spell cannot (ever) reduce the spell level below the spell level of the original spell. Also, no spell can have a level higher than 9th. Cantrips count as zero level spells for the purposes of this spell construction system. Obviously, with a system like this, DM oversight is extremely necessary.

Change Tags	Level Change
Change the school of the spell (must follow guidelines on schools of magic)	+0
Add the <i>ritual</i> tag to a spell (must follow conventions on ritual spells)	+0

Change Casting Time	Level Change
Increase casting time from 1 bonus action to 1 action	-2
Increase casting time from 1 action to 1 minute	-1
Increase casting time from 1 minute to 10 minutes	-1
Increase casting time from 10 minutes to 1 hour	-1
Increase casting time from 1 hour to 8 hours	-1
Increase casting time from 8 hours to 24 hours	-1
Reduce casting time from 24 hours to 8 hours	+1
Reduce casting time from 8 hours to 1 hour	+1
Reduce casting time from 1 hour to 10 minutes	+1
Reduce casting time from 10 minutes to 1 minute	+1
Reduce casting time from 1 minute to 1 action	+1
Reduce casting time from 1 action to 1 bonus action	+2

Change Saving Throw	Level Change
Change the saving throw from one ability to another (must follow conventions on saving throws)	+0

Change Range	Level Change
Halve a range that is given in "feet" in the original spell description	-1
Change range from "30 feet" (or less) to "Touch"	-1
Change range from "Touch" to "Self"	-1
Change range from "Self" to "Touch"	+1
Change range from "Touch" to "30 feet"	+1
Double a range that is given in "feet" in the original spell description	+1
Change from a range given in "feet" to any line-of-sight point the spellcaster can sense	+2
Change from a range given in "feet" to any point the spellcaster can sense	+4

Change Components	Level Change
Eliminate the vocal component	+1
Eliminate the somatic component	+1
Eliminate a material component that has no cost	+1
Change a material component with cost to one with no cost	+1
Eliminate a material component with cost	+2
Adding a vocal, somatic, and/or material component (with or without a cost)	+0

Change Number of Targets	Level Change
Increase from an individual target to a group of valid targets	+2
Increase from a group of targets to all valid targets in a room	+2
Increase from a roomful of targets to all valid targets in a structure (add a "Lesser" component)	+2
Increase from a structure to all valid targets within a boundary (add a "Greater" component)	+1

Change Damage or Healing	Level Change
Change the damage type (such as "fire" to "cold")	+0
Decrease the damage or healing by one die (original spell must be 1st level or higher)	-1
Increase the damage or healing by one die (original spell must be 1st level or higher)	+1

Change Duration	Level Change
Decrease duration from one year to three months	-1
Decrease duration from three months to one month	-1
Decrease duration from one month to one week	-1
Decrease duration from one week to 24 hours	-1
Decrease duration from 24 hours to 8 hours	-1
Decrease duration from 8 hours to 1 hour	-1
Decrease duration from 1 hour to 10 minutes	-1
Decrease duration from 10 minutes to 1 minute	-1
Decrease duration from 1 minute to 1 round	-1
Increase duration from 1 round to 1 minute	+1
Increase duration from 1 minute to 10 minutes	+1
Increase duration from 10 minutes to 1 hour	+1
Increase duration from 1 hour to 8 hours	+1
Increase duration from 8 hours to 24 hours	+1
Increase duration from 24 hours to one week (add a "Least" material component from the table below)	+1
Increase duration from one week to one month (add a "Lesser" material component from the table below)	+1
Increase duration from one month to three months (add a "Greater" material component from the table below)	+1
Increase duration from three months to one year (add a "Greatest" material component from the table below)	+1
Change duration from one year to "Until dispelled"	+1
Change duration from "Until dispelled" to "Instantaneous"	+1
Add "Concentration" to the duration	-2
Eliminate "Concentration" from the duration	+2

Changes to Subjects and Effectiveness	Level Change
Trivial change in target, spell remains just as effective (e.g., Charm Person to Animal Friendship)	+0
Trivial change in target, spell becomes more effective (e.g., Prot. from Poison to Prot. from Energy)	+1
Significant change in target, spell remains just as effective (e.g., Locate Object to Locate Creature)	+2
Significant change in target, spell becomes more effective (e.g., Hold Person to Hold Monster)	+3

Tags

Changing a spell's school does not increase or reduce the spell's level. However, the change must make sense for the spell in question. For example, when making a spell similar to **burning hands** that does psychic damage instead of fire damage, it might make sense to change the school from evocation to enchantment.

Adding the **ritual** tag to a spell does not alter the spell's level. However, use established conventions on rituals spells to determine if adding this tag is appropriate. For example, if **plant growth** were used to model a spell that causes a cow to give twice as much milk than normal, then it might be appropriate to allow this spell to have the **ritual** tag. It may not be appropriate for a necrotic version of a **fireball**, though.

Saving Throws

Usually, a change in the saving throw for a spell results from a logical change in the spell itself. For example, if a spell called **psychic bolt** is developed from **lightning bolt**, then the spell may now require a Wisdom save.

Range

Reducing a spell's range lowers the spell's level. Ensure that any decrease in range makes sense. Making a new spell modeled on **inflict wounds** and changing the range to "Self" may not be very useful. Increasing a spell's range raises the spell's level. If a spell's range is given in feet, then that range can be increased to "line-of-sight" by adding two spell levels. By adding four spell levels, a spell's range can be increased from some range measured in feet to any range that the caster can sense (such as through **scrying** spell).

Components

Eliminating components increases a spell's level. Adding components has no effect on a spell's level (but a DM can use common sense to apply level reductions, if desired).

Some changes in spell parameters call for the introduction of a new costly material component. The table above shows that increasing the duration of a spell to one week or higher as well as increasing the target area to a structure or boundary requires the inclusion of a costly material component. Regardless of the number of new material components called for, use only the most costly. The DM always has the right to increase or decrease the cost of the material components to suit the individual campaign setting.

Spell Level	Least Cost	Lesser Cost	Greater Cost	Greatest Cost
1st	50 gp	80 gp	200 gp	800 gp
2nd	80 gp	120 gp	300 gp	1,200 gp
3rd	120 gp	200 gp	500 gp	2,000 gp
4th	200 gp	300 gp	800 gp	3,000 gp
5th	300 gp	500 gp	1,200 gp	5,000 gp
6th	500 gp	800 gp	2,000 gp	8,000 gp
7th	800 gp	1,200 gp	3,000 gp	12,000 gp
8th	1,200 gp	2,000 gp	5,000 gp	20,000 gp
9th	2,000 gp	3,000 gp	8,000 gp	30,000 gp

Targets

Changing from an individual target to a group (which could consist of three to, perhaps, a dozen targets) raises the spell level by two. Affecting all valid targets in a room (of reasonable size) increases spell level by two once more. Further increases affect all targets in a structure and then a boundary (defined by a wall or other feature). Increasing the target area to "structure" or "boundary" requires the inclusion of a costly material component.

Damage and Healing

Changing the damage type doesn't change the level of a spell. However, the DM may decide that certain damage types are more effective than others (imagine changing a fire spell to a force spell). Individual DMs can adjudicate spell level changes based on damage type changes as desired.

Increasing a spell's damage by one die raises the spell level by one. Reducing a spell's damage by one die lowers the spell level by one. Note that this modifier only applies to spells that are 1st level and above. Cantrips apply their own damage increases. Typically, cantrips increase in damage based on the caster level (at 5th, 11th, and 17th level).

Duration

Decreasing the duration of a spell reduces its level. Increasing the duration of a spell increases its spell level. Eliminating "Concentration" from the duration increases the spell's level (and the DM should make absolutely sure that this spell will not disrupt the campaign). Adding "Concentration" to the duration will lower the spell's level. Changing a duration from "Until dispelled" to "Instantaneous" means that the spell is essentially permanent. Some changes in duration add a material component to the spell. Use the highest-valued material component for multiple steps. For example, if a new spell is constructed based on **mage armor** and the duration is increased from 8 hours all of the way up to "Instantaneous" then the target's base AC would become 13 + its Dexterity modifier permanently. This would be an 8th level spell if nothing else were changed and require a material component worth 20,000 gp (perhaps an ornate and gem-encrusted suit of full plate armor to act as a focus).

Changes

This section deals with miscellaneous changes to spells. Trivial changes to valid targets changes the spell level by zero or one (if there is also a significant change in effectiveness of the spell). Significant changes to what is considered a valid target results in a spell level increase of two or three (if the corresponding spell also becomes more effective).

SPELLS CREATED WITH THIS SYSTEM

Archmage Armor

4th-level abjuration

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: Self

Components: V, S, M (an ornate and gem-encrusted suit of full armor worth at least 3,000 gp, which the spell consumes)

Duration: Instantaneous

As the **mage armor** spell (PHB, page 256) with the changes noted above and below. Although the duration is instantaneous, the spell effect will end if the caster ever dons armor or if they dismiss the spell as an action.

(**Base:** **mage armor**, 1st-level spell; Casting Time: 1 action to 1 hour, -3; Range: Touch to Self, -1; Duration: from 8 hours to Instantaneous, +7)

Charm People

3rd-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 hour

As the **charm person** spell (PHB, page 221) but can charm up to six humanoid that you can see within range.

(**Base:** **charm person**, 1st-level spell; Targets: single target to a group of valid targets, +2)

Detect Shapechanger

1st-level divination

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self

Components: V, S

Duration: Concentration, up to 10 minutes

As the **detect evil and good** spell (PHB, page 231) but limited to shapechangers.

(**Base:** **detect evil and good**, 1st-level spell; Change: trivial change in target, spell remains just as effective, +0)

Detect Weather

1st-level divination

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 round

As the first effect listed for the **druidcraft** cantrip (PHB, page 236) but allows the caster to predict what the weather will be at that location for the next week.

(**Base:** **druidcraft**, cantrip; Change: increase the forecast time from 24 hours to one week, *ad hoc* +1)

Greater Sending

5th-level evocation

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Unlimited

Components: V, S, M (a long piece of fine copper wire)

Duration: 1 hour

As the **sending** spell (PHB, page 274) but free communication occurs as long as the spell is active.

(**Base:** **sending**, 3rd-level spell; Casting Time: 1 action to 1 minute, -1; Duration: from 1 round to 1 hour, +3)

Lasting Guidance

4th-level divination

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 hour

As the **guidance** cantrip (PHB, page 248) but does not require concentration and lasts for one hour instead of one minute. A character can only be under the effect of one spell of this type at a time (either **guidance** or **lasting guidance**).

(**Base:** **guidance**, cantrip; Duration: eliminated concentration and increased from 1 minute to 1 hour, +4)

Protection from Weapons

3rd-level abjuration

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Components: V, S

Duration: Concentration, up to 1 hour

As the spell **protection from energy** (PHB, page 270) but gain resistance to one damage type of your choice: bludgeoning, piercing, or slashing. The damage must be from a nonmagical source.

(**Base:** **protection from energy**, 3rd-level spell; Change: trivial change, spell remains just as effective, +0)

Psychic Blast

3rd-level enchantment

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Self (100-foot line)

Components: V, S, M (a bit of brain matter and a rod of crystal)

Duration: Instantaneous

As the spell **lightning bolt** (PHB, page 255). The school has been changed from evocation to enchantment, the damage type is now psychic, and the spell grants a Wisdom (rather than Dexterity) saving throw.

(**Base:** **lightning bolt**, 3rd-level spell; School: change school from evocation to enchantment, +0; Damage: change damage type from lightning to psychic, +0; Saving Throws: change from a Dexterity saving throw to a Wisdom saving throw, +0)

Subtle Fireball

5th-level evocation

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 150 feet

Components: M (a tiny ball of bat guano and sulfur)

Duration: Instantaneous

As the spell **fireball** with the changes noted (PHB, page 241). Note that the damage is still 8d6 and the caster must use a spell slot of 6th level or higher to get increased damage.

(**Base:** **fireball**, 3rd-level spell; Components: eliminate the vocal and somatic components, +2)

Udder Enhancement

3rd-level transmutation

Casting Time: 10 minutes

Range: 150 feet

Components: V, S

Duration: 1 year

One cow or other milk-producing beast yields twice the normal amount of milk for one year without harm to the animal. The milk produced is not magical.

(**Base:** **plant growth**, 3rd-level spell; Casting Time: 8 hours to 10 minutes, +2; Duration: remains at one year, no costly material component required because the base spell duration is one year; Target: one mile radius of food-producing plants that grants yield a single time at harvest to one animal that yields daily for the entire year, *ad hoc* -2)

Water Breathing for Seven Days

3rd-level transmutation (ritual)

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: 30 feet

Components: V, S, M (a bejeweled hollow tube worth 120 gp)

Duration: 1 week

This spell is the same as **water breathing** (PHB, page 287) except the casting time is one hour and the duration is one week.

(**Base:** **water breathing**, 3rd-level spell; Casting Time: 1 action to 1 hour, -3; Duration: 1 hour to 1 week, +3)

THE FANTASY SUPERHERO

This section appears last because it is really the culmination of all previous sections in this book. The concept of the fantasy superhero is not a new one. In fact, the term "superhero" in **DUNGEONS & DRAGONS** at one time simply meant an 8th level Fighting-Man. For this section, however, we'll consider the term in relation to other types of games that are typically generic in nature and attempt to model comic book universes. Common to many of these games is a "classless" system, i.e., a character creation and advancement system that does not require the use of character classes. Many modern superhero game systems feature rules for building individualized powers for the characters from a basic set of commonly-encountered powers and super abilities found in the source literature. Most systems also have rules to detail a number of heroic principles, allegiances, and codes available to be followed by the superhero characters. Finally, many of these games provide guidance for building non-traditional settings for campaigns, such as futuristic settings, historical settings, and fantasy settings.

This book provides a free-form character creation and advancement system based on the earning of trait points. It also details a re-invented alignment system that allows heroes to fully exploit the D&D alignment system (without having to allow "evil" player characters). If one thinks of the D&D spell list as a large list of powers then the previous section **CREATING NEW SPELLS** simply furnishes the ability to systematically create new powers with more individualized parameters. D&D, for the most part, is played in campaigns using a fantasy setting. Therefore, this publication gives enterprising gaming groups everything they need to step outside of normal D&D gaming and enter the world of the **FANTASY SUPERHERO**.

SETTING THE POWER LEVEL

The DM should first set the power level for the campaign. Setting the power level simply means determining the character level for starting player characters. In normal D&D, the default power level is 1 (since characters start at 1st level). However, any power level from 1 to 20 (or more) can be used in **FANTASY SUPERHERO**.

CREATING THE SUPERHEROES

Once the power level is determined, characters are created using the method described in this book. Begin by making a 1st level character. The DM can grant 27 points with which to purchase base ability scores or use a higher number if desired. If the power level is greater than 1, any unspent trait points carry over to the next step (if the power level is 1, you're finished after you make a 1st level character). For this next step spend a number of trait points equal to the lowest number in the range for the character level found in the **ADVANCEMENT TABLE** subtracting the amount you spent making the character at 1st level. For example, if the campaign power level is 10, then player characters will have 108 trait points to spend after each 1st level character is made (assuming the player spent all 24 trait points available for a 1st level character). Appropriate heroic alignments, personality traits, ideals, bonds, flaws, equipment, and other characteristics should be chosen.

For this system, one additional category is used for traits: powers. Powers are created by using the method in **CREATING NEW SPELLS** and applying special rules to assign a trait point cost to each unique power created. These powers can then be purchased for the player characters if they meet the minimum power level and other requirements. As with everything, the final say regarding any power comes from the DM.

CREATING POWERS

As stated previously, creating a power is much like creating a spell with the new system found earlier in this book. First, you take a base spell and from there alter the spell's parameters until the spell fits your conception of the power. There are a few changes in the spell construction system which are detailed below. Following this, a frequency of use is chosen which will determine the final trait point cost of the power.

1. Determine the Nature of the Power: Come up with an idea for the power. What do you want the character to be able to do?

2. Choose the Base Spell: Find a spell that is the closest to what you conceive the power to be, in game terms. Each power is rated by the minimum character level required to purchase the power. This minimum character level is equal to the effective spell level, times two, minus one. There is no limit on the effective spell level.

3. Modify the Base Spell: Most spells will have to be modified to fit your idea of how the power operates. Use the **CREATING NEW SPELLS** section to modify your base spell while keeping in mind some additional guidelines. First, you must adjust the spell's parameters to make it suitable to be a superpower (based on your idea of how the power operates). Spells that have costly material components should have those material components eliminated (at a +2 to spell level) unless you want the power to be "fueled" somehow (requiring the material component, or equivalent, for each use of the power). If you want to be able to use the power while using other powers, you may want to remove the Concentration parameter (once again, adding two to the adjusted spell level), otherwise you will only be able to use one power that has Concentration at a time. If you want the spell to always be "on" you may want to increase the duration to 24 hours (if you want the frequency of the power use to be once per long rest or once per day, but see below concerning frequency). At this stage, one "freebie" is that all verbal, somatic, and material components (that do not have a cost) can be eliminated from the spell for free (i.e., you don't have to increase the effective spell level by one for each removal of one of these components). You may also want to reduce the casting time to '1 action' if you envision your fantasy superhero being able to use the power once per round.

4. Determine Power Frequency: Once you have completed modifying the base spell and determined the new effective level of the spell, you must choose how often you want your fantasy superhero to be able to activate the power. The available frequencies are shown in the table below for 1st through 9th level spells.

Frequency of Use	Trait Cost Multiplier
Once per long rest -or- Once per day	× 2
Once per short rest -or- Three times a day	× 3
Once per encounter -or- Once per hour	× 4
At Will	× 5

The final trait point cost for the power is equal to the effective spell level times the trait cost multiplier from the table above. The final trait point cost for cantrips equals 1 trait point, unless you want the cantrip to be used at higher effective level. In this case, cantrips cost 3, 6, or 9 trait points for effective casting levels of 5th, 11th, and 17th (which also serves as the minimum character level required).

SAMPLE POWERS

FIRE BOLT

Base Spell: Fire Bolt

Base Power Level: Cantrip

Activation Time: 1 action (+0)

Range: 120 feet (+0)

Duration: Instantaneous (+0)

Final Power Level: Cantrip

Minimum Heroic Level: 1st

Frequency: At will (× 5)

Final Cost: 1 Point

The hero gains the cantrip **fire bolt**. Cost is 3/6/9 for 2d10/3d10/4d10 damage and 5th/11th/17th minimum heroic level.

POLYMORPH

Base Spell: Polymorph

Base Power Level: 4th

Activation Time: 1 action (+0)

Range: 60 feet (+0)

Duration: 1 hr., eliminate Conc. (+2)

Final Power Level: 6th

Minimum Heroic Level: 11th

Frequency: At Will (× 5)

Final Cost: 30 Points

The hero can initiate a **polymorph** effect as often as desired.

INVISIBILITY

Base Spell: Invisibility

Base Power Level: 2nd

Activation Time: 1 action (+0)

Range: Touch to Self (-1)

Duration: 1 hr., eliminate Conc. (+2)

Final Power Level: 3rd

Minimum Heroic Level: 5th

Frequency: At Will (× 5)

Final Cost: 15 Points

The hero can activate **invisibility** (as the spell) at will

TELEKINESIS

Base Spell: Telekinesis

Base Power Level: 5th

Activation Time: 1 action (+0)

Range: 60 feet (+0)

Duration: Conc., up to 10 minutes (+0)

Final Power Level: 5th

Minimum Heroic Level: 9th

Frequency: At Will (× 5)

Final Cost: 25 Points

The hero can use **telekinesis** at will but must concentrate.

LIGHTNING BOLT

Base Spell: Lightning Bolt

Base Power Level: 3rd

Activation Time: 1 action (+0)

Range: Self (100-foot line) (+0)

Duration: Instantaneous (+0)

Final Power Level: 3rd

Minimum Heroic Level: 5th

Frequency: At Will (× 5)

Final Cost: 15 Points

The hero can launch an 8d6 **lightning bolt** at will. Each 1d6 increase in damage raises effective level by one.

TRUE FLIGHT

Base Spell: Fly

Base Power Level: 3rd

Activation Time: 1 action (+0)

Range: Touch to Self (-1)

Duration: 10 min., eliminate Conc. (+2)

Final Level: 4th

Minimum Heroic Level: 7th

Frequency: At Will (× 5)

Final Cost: 20 Points

The hero can fly at a speed of 60 feet (about 4 mph). Each doubling of speed adds one to the effective level (*ad hoc* adjustment).

RUNNING THE FANTASY SUPERHERO CAMPAIGN

There are a few changes that should be implemented for a campaign of this type.

AWARDING EXPERIENCE POINTS

The DM should not adhere to a strict regimen when awarding experience points to the players. Superheroes can be very powerful, able to dispatch many foes in a short period of time. If a DM strictly follows the normal D&D rules regarding XP awards, players will receive too much XP in too short a time. Superheroes do not normally develop like the "zero-to-hero" characters in most fantasy roleplaying games.

GAINING POWER LEVELS

Likewise, superheroes should not regularly nor steadily gain power levels. Once the campaign's power level is set, feel free to ignore the second column in the **ADVANCEMENT TABLE**. In other words, players can spend trait points to broaden their characters' abilities without actually making the character more "powerful" (in the normal sense). The DM should decide when it is appropriate for the characters to increase their power level (see "Level Advancement without XP" in the **DUNGEONMASTER'S GUIDE**, page 261). At that time, traits appropriate to the new power level can be purchased (like an additional hit die).

ALTERNATE SETTINGS

The campaign setting need not be limited to fantasy worlds. The **DUNGEONMASTER'S GUIDE** gives rules for modern, futuristic, and alien equipment ("Adventuring Options", page 226). Normal D&D magic items can become "high-tech" equipment, magic can become "psionics" and just about anything else in the game can be given new life in a different setting.

INNATE SUPERPOWERS

It's worth mentioning that some powers shouldn't operate like at-will spells but would be more like the inherent qualities of the superhero. For instance, if **mind blank** is converted to a power and the player envisions it operating all of the time, there are a number of ways to accomplish this. It's an 8th level spell with a normal duration of 24 hours. The player could take it as-is and take the "once per day" frequency (trait point cost = 16). However, if this power were nullified somehow, perhaps by a power based on **dispel magic**, the character would not regain use of it until the following day. If the player pays the at-will frequency cost of ×5 (40 trait points total), then the character would be able to resume **mind blank** the very next round after it was nullified.

PROBLEM POWERS

The power creation system presented in this book can be abused, no question. The DM never has to allow any power that would disrupt the campaign. Players should understand this. The idea isn't to "win" by making a character unopposable. The idea is to use D&D to explore a type of campaign that is normally reserved for comic or superhero roleplaying games.

FINAL WORD

The Dungeonmaster is the sole authority on any implementation of these guidelines and may deviate from these guidelines in any fashion desired. This book is meant to be used with "rulings" and not provide hard-and-fast "rules" which must be adhered to. Through experimentation and experience, each gaming group can find whatever enjoyment is to be had from what has been presented in this volume.

OTHER ICOSAHDRON PRODUCTS

CUSTOM CHARACTERS – A Guide to Free-Form Character Creation and Advancement for DUNGEONS & DRAGONS Third Edition.

D&D 3.5 HOUSE RULES – A Set of House Rules for Edition 3.5 of D&D.

BASIC D20 – A simplified version of the Third Edition d20 system that can be applied across all d20 rulebooks from various genres.

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RULES CYCLOPEDIA ADDENDUM – House Rules for the D&D RULES CYCLOPEDIA.

ADVENTURES IN MYTHIC EUROPE – A D&D 5e Campaign Setting.

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