

DUNGEONS & LAIRS: ARCHMAGE STRONGHOLD

Archmage Stronghold is a Fifth Edition plug-in adventure for **four characters with an average party level (APL) of 11, 14, 17, or 20**. This document offers details for each level and makes adjustments accordingly.

PLUG-IN ADVENTURE

As a plug-in adventure, the adventure content serves as plug-in material for game masters who wish to add a small dungeon to a preexisting campaign or need a side quest. If you need a hook for this adventure or already have a similar hook, the Archmage Stronghold Hooks table below offers details for introducing this adventure to your players.

RUNNING THIS ADVENTURE

To run the adventure, you need the three Fifth Edition core rulebooks. If you don't have a copy, you can access a free basic ruleset from the official source.

Text that appears in a box like this is meant to be read aloud or paraphrased for the players when their characters first arrive at a location or under specific circumstances, as described in the text.

When a creature's name appears in **bold** type, that's a visual cue pointing you to its stat block as a way of saying, "Hey, game master, make sure you get this creature's stat block ready—there's going to be an encounter!" If the stat block appears in the Appendix of this adventure, the text tells you so; otherwise, you can find the stat block in the core rulebook.

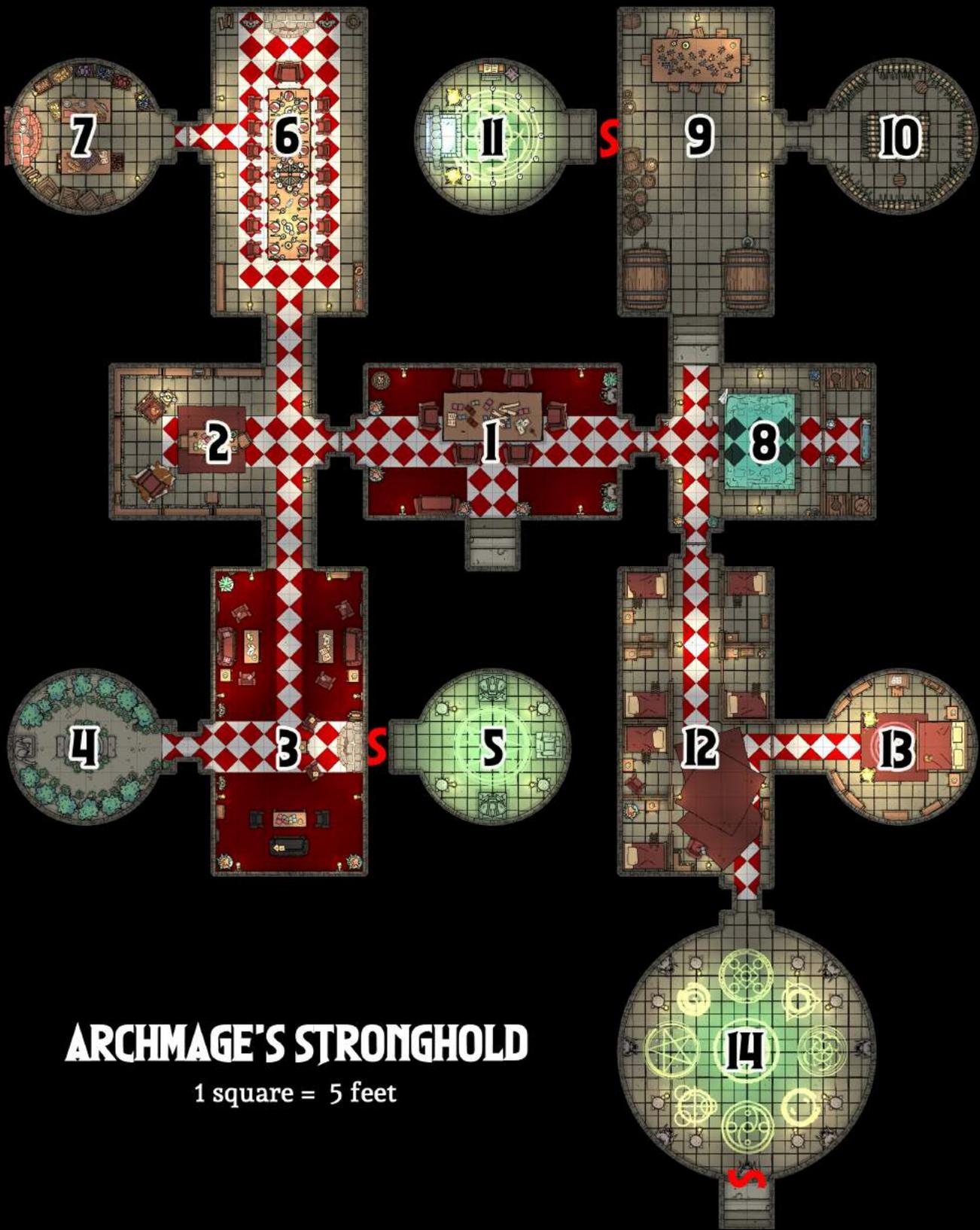
Spells and nonmagical equipment mentioned in the adventure are described in the core manual for players. *Magic items* are described in the core manual for game masters unless the adventure's text directs you to an item's description in the Appendix.

LEVEL SELECTION

Before play, be sure to know the level for which you wish to run the adventure. Overall, the locations and their descriptions in the adventure remain unchanged throughout the levels. However, most of the encounters, hazards, traps, and treasure scale with each level of the adventure. The keyed locations will present the differences between each level.

ARCHMAGE STRONGHOLD HOOKS

| Side Quest d8 Type | Details |
|---------------------------------|---|
| 1 Fetch Quest | The characters must retrieve an ancient tome rumored to be hidden within the archmage's stronghold. The book is kept in area 11. |
| 2 Recover Stolen Item | The archmage stole a <i>staff of the magi</i> from their archnemesis. The staff is hidden in area 13. |
| 3 Receive Information | Supposedly, the archmage keeps a portal to a hard-to-reach plane of existence within their stronghold. This portal is in area 11. |
| 4 Rescue Mission | A few years ago, the archmage used enchantment magic to force its political enemies to act as permanent servants. These four servants—all commoners—work in area 7. They are under the effects of a <i>rod of rulership</i> , which the archmage in area 11 carries with them at all times. |
| 5 Missing Person | Powerful devils ask the characters to discover what happened to a missing lord/lady of hell. This missing lord/lady is the pit fiend sequestered in area 5. |
| 6 Monster Hunt | The archmage has caused too much pain for far too long. The characters must enter the archmage's stronghold and bring the villain to justice. |
| 7 Supernatural Investigation | A strange, shimmering pool of light appears at the center of a major city. Only creatures deemed worthy—such as the characters—may interact with the pool of light. Once the light is touched, the characters teleport away, appearing at the bottom of the stairs in area 1. In this situation, all of the denizens of the stronghold are fully aware of the characters and their capabilities and have had plenty of time to prepare for the fight. |
| 8 Secure Aid | The characters must enter the stronghold to seek the aid of the archmage. Unfortunately, the archmage is stubborn and will only help the characters if they a) find the archmage and b) defeat them and their minions in combat. |



ARCHMAGE STRONGHOLD

The Archmage Stronghold can literally fit into any campaign setting or terrain you like—after all, the setting itself is within a permanent pocket dimension similar to the *magnificent mansion* spell. Its location is relatively well-guarded; it may take another quest just to find the stronghold in the first place. Additionally, parties who hope to lay siege to the stronghold better be ready for a fight—the mages who live in this stronghold are not just a bunch of cantrip tinkering apprentices. They're some of the smartest, toughest, and dangerous spellcasters in the entire cosmos.

GENERAL FEATURES

Unless otherwise stated, all four versions of the stronghold have the following features.

Architecture. All of the stronghold's ceilings, floors, and walls appear to be made from dressed stone. Some of the interior walls—such as those in areas 8 and 12—are made from wood. Regardless of what the material appears to be, it is always enchanted. None of the ceilings, floors, or walls can be destroyed or altered in any way. Spells and effects that would normally allow creatures to pass through ceilings, floors, and walls, such as *passwall* and *etherealness*, do not function within the stronghold. Not even the undead in area 1 can pass through walls.

Doors. All of the doors throughout the complex appear to be made from mundane wood. Of course, like the rest of the stronghold, looks can be deceiving. The doors are just as impervious to damage as the rest of the stronghold's features. When the doors within the stronghold are locked, they are always done so with an *arcane lock* spell. Only the archmage in area 11 holds the key to unlock such doors. An *arcane locked* door requires a successful DC 30 Dexterity check using proficiency in thieves' tools to unlock.

In addition, all *arcane locked* doors are protected with *alarm* and *symbol* spells. The *alarm* spell sends a telepathic message to the archmage in area 11. Anyone who attempts to pick the lock or break the door down—which isn't possible—must make a DC 17 Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the target is driven insane for 1 minute. An insane creature can't take actions, can't understand what other creatures say, can't read, and speaks only in gibberish. The GM controls its movement, which is erratic. Detecting the *symbol* spell requires a character with proficiency in Arcana to succeed on a DC 17 Intelligence (Investigation) check. Characters not proficient in Arcana fail to notice the symbol. The *symbol* can only be removed with a *dispel magic* spell cast against 7th-level spells.

All of the mages in the stronghold can move through non-secret locked and trapped doors without any issue.

Secret Doors. Like regular doors, secret doors cannot be destroyed. Furthermore, all three secret doors in this stronghold are locked, alarmed, and protected with *symbol* spells. Discovering a secret door requires a successful DC 25 Wisdom (Perception) check. Each door has its own unique command word which only the archmage in area 11 knows. Only divination spells like *divination* and *legend lore* will reveal the command words that open these doors.

Illumination. The majority of the stronghold glows with the light of *continual flames* spells cast on its multitude of candelabras, chandeliers, and torches.

Private Sanctum. The entirety of the stronghold is under the effects of the *private sanctum* spell, which grants the location the following features:

- Sound can't pass in or out of the stronghold.
- The exit in area 1 appears dark and foggy, preventing vision (including darkvision) through it—both ways.
- Sensors created by divination spells can't appear inside the stronghold or pass through its walls.
- Creatures in the stronghold can't be targeted by divination spells.
- Nothing can teleport into or out of the stronghold.
- Planar travel is blocked within the stronghold. This includes spells such as *banishment* and *magnificent mansion*. Magic items like *portable hole* and *bag of holding* also do not function within the stronghold. The only exception is the planar portal in area 11.

Forbiddance. The entirety of the stronghold is protected by a series of *forbiddance* spells that protect it from entry against the following creature types: celestials, elementals, fey, fiends, and undead. Any creature within the stronghold that is allied with the archmage knows the password to surpass the *forbiddance* spell. Note that this prevents characters from using nearly any type of summoned creature, including familiars and magical steeds. At your discretion, the character can learn the passwords needed for forbidden creatures to enter the stronghold by learning it from creatures within the stronghold. For example, the undead in area 1 would have to know the password to remain within the stronghold themselves.

Intelligent Foes. With the exception of the constructs, nearly every creature in the stronghold has an Intelligence score of 14 or better. The battle mages all have Intelligence scores of 18, and the eponymous archmage has an Intelligence score of 20. These creatures are prepared for nearly everything that comes their way. As soon as they are aware that the characters are assaulting their stronghold—if they weren't aware before the characters assaulted—they start preparing for the encounter. Unless the characters have somehow lived a rather mundane life without drawing much attention to themselves, the archmage and the mages will be able to learn what they need to best combat the characters beforehand. They will understand the characters' strengths, and more importantly, their weaknesses. The best way to utilize the creatures' abilities is to take advantage of any poor saving throws the characters possess. At 11th level, most characters have two or more saving throws that grant them a +9 to the d20 roll. However, most characters will also have one or more saving throws which aren't optimized; the character lacks proficiency in the saving throw and it's based on an ability score that they have a +0 or -1 modifier.

The Exploiting Character Weaknesses table below offers suggestions for each of the monsters, their abilities, and what types of characters they should target. First, the "Weakness" column lists saving throws in which a character may not be proficient. The Armor Class entry is suggested for targets with AC 12 or lower. Next, the "Monster" column shows which creature should target a character with the respective weakness. Finally, the "Spells/Features" column details the exact spell or effect with which the monster should target that character.

EXPLOITING CHARACTER WEAKNESSES

| Weakness | Monster | Spell/Features |
|--------------|---------------------------------|---|
| Strength | Young imperial dragon | <i>control water, gust of wind</i> |
| Dexterity | Archmage | <i>lightning bolt</i> |
| | Battle mage | <i>burning hands, fireball, flaming sphere, ice storm, lightning bolt</i> |
| | Fey drake | <i>grease</i> |
| | Snake with a hundred mage hands | Disruptive ploy, flying fists |
| Constitution | Young imperial dragon | Lightning breath |
| | Archmage | <i>cone of cold</i> |
| | Battle mage | <i>poison spray, shatter, thunderwave</i> |
| | Fey drake | Bite |
| | Oni | <i>cone of cold</i> |
| Intelligence | Young imperial dragon | <i>stinking cloud</i> |
| | — | — |
| Wisdom | Archmage | <i>detect thoughts, scrying</i> |
| | Fey drake | Bewildering Breath, <i>charm person, dominate person, hypnotic pattern, polymorph, suggestion</i> |
| | Lamia | <i>charm person, geas, scrying, suggestion</i> |
| | Oni | <i>charm person</i> |
| Charisma | Archmage | <i>banishment</i> |
| Armor Class | Archmage | <i>fire bolt, shocking grasp</i> |
| | Battle mage | <i>fire bolt, shocking grasp</i> |
| | Fey drake | Bite |
| | Lamia | Claws, dagger, intoxicating touch |
| | Manastorm golem | Force bolt, slam |
| | Oni | Claw, glaive |
| | Snake with a hundred mage hands | Bite |
| | Young imperial dragon | Bite, claw |

For the most part, the inhabitants of the stronghold know to disable melee combatants and those who can deal damage in favor of taking out spellcasters first. Similarly, creatures who offer blanket saving throw boosts—such as clerics or paladins—are prime targets for the creatures of the stronghold.

Telepathic Bond. All of the mages in the stronghold are connected via the *telepathic bond* spell. So long as at least one detects the presence of the characters, all will be aware of their intrusion and make the necessary preparations.

KEYED LOCATIONS

The following locations are keyed to the map of the Archmage Stronghold on page 2.

1 - ENTRY HALL

The first time the characters enter this hallway, read the following:

You push through the enchanted mist and make your way to the bottom of the stairs. Immediately, you recognize that you're in a place of wealth and wonder. A long conference table dressed with books, scrolls, and important-looking documents stretches before you. Six plush chairs surround the table, and in those chairs sit incorporeal creatures with glowing, blue eyes.

"Welcome!" says one of the apparitions. It grins, barring a mouth full of sharp, black teeth. "Welcome to your *death!*"

Encounter: Undead Conference. The undead at the table attack any creature that enters the hall that isn't accompanied by the archmage or a member of the staff. The undead group's makeup is determined by the level of the adventure, as shown on the Area 1 Encounters table below.

AREA 1 ENCOUNTERS

| Adventure Level | Encounter |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 11th | 1 wraith and 5 specters |
| 14th | 2 wraiths and 4 specters |
| 17th | 4 wraiths |
| 20th | 6 wraiths |

2 - LIBRARY

This comfortable library boasts an impressive collection of books on a variety of topics. Any creature who spends 1 hour or more reading the books, has advantage on any Intelligence ability check made to recall information.

Hazard: Arcane Dust. Many of the books in this collection contain arcane dust. The first time a creature opens a book, the arcane dust is released, consuming the one who opened the book. The target must make a DC 15 Constitution saving throw. Creatures that can't cast spells automatically pass their saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the target is affected by the arcane dust for 24 hours. Each time the target casts a spell, roll a d20 and reference the table below to determine what happens, if anything. A *remove curse* spell ends the condition early.

ARCANE DUST

d20 Effect

| | |
|-------|---|
| 1–12 | Nothing unusual happens |
| 13–17 | The spell fails, and it has no effect. |
| 18 | The target permanently polymorphs into a toad, as per the <i>true polymorph</i> spell. |
| 19 | The target is teleported to a random location in the astral plane. |
| 20 | The target explodes, dying instantly. Each creature within 15 feet of the target must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw, taking 21 (6d6) fire damage on a failed saving throw or half as much damage on a successful one. |

3 - LOUNGE

This massive room offers plenty of plush couches and chairs. A wide fireplace burns at the center of the eastern wall, casting the room in a comfortable glow.

Encounter: Battle Mages. The archmage's disciples—effectively known as battle mages—use this room to lounge, chat, and study. The nature of the encounter in this room is determined by the adventure's level, as shown on the Area 3 Encounters table below. Both of the monsters featured are detailed in the Appendix.

There is a chance that a fight in this room draws the attention of the creatures in the conservatory (see area 4).

AREA 3 ENCOUNTERS

| Adventure Level | Encounter |
|-----------------|--|
| 11th | 2 battle mages |
| 14th | 3 battle mages |
| 17th | 4 battle mages |
| 20th | 3 battle mages and 1 young imperial dragon |

Secret Door. The secret door to area 5 is hidden within the fireplace. The fire itself isn't a normal fire created by *continual flame*, but a permanent *wall of fire* spell cast within. So long as the sentinels in darkness remain (see area 5), the DC to detect this door increases by 5 as per their Scourge of the Seekers feature.

4 - CONSERVATORY

The sound of running water fills your ears; a fountain trickles clear water into a stone basin at the center of this rotunda. Dozens of well-manicured trees, bushes, and flowers surround the area. Above the fountain, a globe of natural light illuminates the room. Judging by the warmth radiating from the globe, it also provides nourishment for the plants here. A statue depicting a bearded wizard wielding a magic wand stands against the western wall.

Encounter: Drakes. Not only is this the stronghold's garden, but it's also the home to its fey drake(s). The nature of this encounter is determined by the adventure's level, as shown on the Area 4 Encounters table below. Fey drakes are detailed in the Appendix.

AREA 4 ENCOUNTERS

| Adventure Level | Encounter |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| 11th | 1 fey drake |
| 14th | 1 fey drake and 1 lamia |
| 17th | 2 fey drakes and 1 lamia |
| 20th | 2 fey drakes and 1 lamia |

Regardless of their makeup, the creatures here are chaotic and self-serving but might get involved in combat in area 3 if they see that it might fit their interests. For laughs, they might target weak-willed intruders (such as barbarians and fighters) with their spells or effects that require Wisdom saving throws.

5 - SECRET THRONE ROOM

When the characters first enter this room, it's bathed in darkness, courtesy of the shadow ooze hidden under the massive, stone throne that clings to the easternmost part of the area.

This rotunda features a massive throne made of solid stone against the easternmost wall. An arcane symbol painted onto the floor radiates green light throughout. Two 8-foot-tall, four-armed statues stand facing each other on the northern and southern sides of the room.

Encounter: Sentinels in Darkness. One or both of the statues in this area are animated constructs called sentinels in darkness. The nature of the encounter is determined by the level of this adventure, as shown on the Area 5 Encounters table below. All of the featured monsters are detailed in the Appendix.

AREA 5 ENCOUNTERS

Adventure

Level Encounter

| | |
|------|--|
| 11th | 1 sentinel in darkness and 1 shadow ooze |
| 14th | 1 sentinel in darkness and 1 shadow ooze |
| 17th | 2 sentinels in darkness and 1 shadow ooze |
| 20th | 1 sentinel in darkness , 2 walled horrors , and 1 shadow ooze |

Regardless of the encounter makeup, the shadow ooze hides under the throne. The sentinel(s) use the shadow ooze's natural darkness feature to attack creatures in the dark. It first opens with its Curse of the Wanderer ability. From there, they specifically target characters with darkvision, blindsight, or truesight.

'Show Me a King' Prank. Years ago, the archmage in area 11 summoned a **pit fiend**, charmed it, and *sequestered* it onto the throne at the eastern end of the room. Only the phrase "Show Me a King!" ends the *sequester* effect. Once the spell ends, the pit fiend reappears in the throne. No longer charmed—and quite angry that it was duped so easily—the pit fiend tries to kill anyone and everything it can find in this area.

6 - DINING ROOM

An elegant dining table set for fifteen dominates the majority of this large room. A huge fireplace illuminates everything.

Encounter: Constructs. Constructs guard this entire room. The nature of the encounter is determined by the adventure's level, as shown on the Area 6 Encounters table below. All of the monsters are detailed in the Appendix.

AREA 6 ENCOUNTERS

Adventure

Level Encounter

| | |
|------|--|
| 11th | 1 altar flame golem |
| 14th | 1 altar flame golem |
| 17th | 1 altar flame golem and 1 bearing golem |
| 20th | 1 altar flame golem , 1 bearing golem , and 1 clockwork tiger |

In each circumstance, the altar flame golem is disguised as the fireplace at the north end of the room. Meanwhile, the bearing golem hides in a barrel in the northeastern corner.

7 - KITCHEN

This huge kitchen serves the entirety of the stronghold. Unless the adventure hook dictates otherwise, it's operated by four permanent *unseen servants*. The servants focus on cleaning and preparing meals and do not engage in combat.

8 - BATHS AND PRIVIES

A huge, warm-water pool commands the majority of this room. Judging by the towels and perfumes surrounding the pool, this area functions as the stronghold's bath. Beyond the pool, a door offers access to the stronghold's privies.

Treasure. A small box next to the bath includes a *decanter of endless water* and three packets of *dust of dryness* (10 pinches/packet).

9 - KEG STORAGE

A short flight of steps leads down to this spacious keg cellar. Two massive tuns flank either side of the entrance while multiple barrels crowd the western wall. At the far north end of the room, the mages have set up a game table where they reenact their favorite historical battles using figurines.

Encounter: Gamer Nerds. The nature of this encounter depends on the level of the adventure as shown on the Area 9 Encounters table below. Creatures marked with an asterisk are detailed in the Appendix. In the encounters involving toy soldiers, the mages have full control over the toy soldiers as the *animate objects* spell. If the mages are defeated, the toy soldiers immediately become inanimate.

AREA 9 ENCOUNTERS

Adventure Level Encounter

| | |
|------|--|
| 11th | 2 battle mages* and 1 flesh golem |
| 14th | 1 battle mage* and 10 toy soldiers* |
| 17th | 2 battle mages* and 10 toy soldiers* |
| 20th | 2 battle mages* and 20 toy soldiers* |

Secret Door. There is a secret door hidden in the western wall. It leads to area 11.

10 - WINE CELLAR

Thousands of wine bottles of all different shapes, sizes, and vintages crowd the shelves encompassing the walls of this round room.

This is the archmage's private wine collection, and more or less the adventure's "treasure hoard." Naturally, it's magically protected to prevent theft.

Hazard: Cheers! Spellcasters who cast *detect magic* in this area detect auras of conjuration and transmutation magic coming off all of the bottles in the entire collection. Any creature who touches one of the bottles in the area without first speaking the proper command word (which only the archmage in area 11 knows, of course) comes under attack. The corks from the collection's cheapest wines pop off and the wine inside flows freely, not unlike the water created by a *decanter of endless water*. As it flows, the wine itself defies gravity, targeting the eyes, nose, and throat of would-be burglars like a crimson snake. On initiative count 20 of each

round that the target remains in this area, the target must make a DC 17 Constitution saving throw. On a failed saving throw, the target takes 9 (2d8) bludgeoning damage plus 5 (2d4) poison damage and becomes poisoned for 1 hour. While a target is poisoned in this way, they make the Constitution saving throw to avoid taking additional damage with disadvantage. On a successful saving throw, the target takes half as much damage and isn't poisoned.

The only way to stop the flow of wine is to cast *dispel magic* (as if against a 9th-level spell) on the bottles, destroy all of the bottles, speak the command word, or exit the area. The wine bottles attack again if the target returns to the cellar within 24 hours.

Treasure: Wine Collection. The archmage's wine collection consists of 2,000 bottles. The average bottle is worth 10 gp in 11th- and 14th-level adventures, the average bottle is worth 10 gp, and 20 gp in 17th- and 20th-level adventures. Each bottle weighs 3 lbs.

11 - PLANAR GATE

The most striking feature in this round room is the ten-foot-tall arch gateway at its western side through which one can see another world (whichever foreign plane of existence makes the most sense in your campaign). On the floor, a pentangle glows with eldritch magic. Meanwhile, a small altar hugs the northern wall. A desiccated book bearing dark red script rests atop the altar.

Encounter: The Archmage. Unless encountered elsewhere, this is where the characters find the archmage. The archmage isn't alone. The Area 11 Encounter table below lists the participants of this encounter as determined by the adventure's level. Creatures marked with an asterisk are detailed later in the Appendix.

AREA 11 ENCOUNTERS

| Adventure Level | Encounter |
|-----------------|---|
| 11th | 1 archmage and 1 snake with a hundred mage hands* |
| 14th | 1 archmage and 1 oni |
| 17th | 1 archmage, 1 oni, and 1 snake with a hundred mage hands* |
| 20th | 1 archmage, 1 manastorm golem*, 1 oni, and 1 snake with a hundred mage hands* |

Treasure: Ancient Tome of Power. The mysterious book on the altar can be any type of book that you like. If you aren't sure what type of book to make it or you don't have an adventure hook that ties it in, roll a d20 and refer to the Ancient Tome table below to determine its function.

ANCIENT TOME

d20 Book Description

| | |
|-------|--|
| 1-15 | The book is the archmage's personal spellbook. It contains all the spells the archmage has prepared plus the following spells: <i>demiplane</i> , <i>gate</i> , <i>guards and wards</i> , and <i>forcecage</i> . |
| 16-17 | <i>Manual of golems</i> |
| 18 | <i>Tome of clear thought</i> |
| 19 | <i>Tome of leadership and influence</i> |
| 20 | The book is an ancient artifact of overarching good or vile evil (your discretion). Reference the Fifth Edition guide for game masters for ideas or create your own. |

Development: Planar Gate. The archway in this area is a permanent planar gate. Where it goes is up to you. If you don't already have an adventure hook or use for the gate, you can have it act as an escape method for the archmage and its cronies. Roll a d20 and consult the Planar Gate table below to determine where it goes. The gate could also serve as a hook for additional adventures. For example, the archmage might have been evil, but the denizens that could come through that gate are much worse.

PLANAR GATE

d20 Destination

| | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Somewhere on the material plane |
| 2 | Realm of shadow and darkness |
| 3 | Realm of fey and magic |
| 4 | Elemental plane of air |
| 5 | Elemental plane of earth |
| 6 | Elemental plane of fire |
| 7 | Elemental plane of water |
| 8 | Lawful good plane |
| 9 | Lawful neutral plane |
| 10 | Lawful evil plane |
| 11 | Neutral good plane |
| 12 | True neutral plane |
| 13 | Neutral evil plane |
| 14 | Chaotic good plane |
| 15 | Chaotic neutral plane |
| 16 | Chaotic evil plane |
| 17 | Astral plane |
| 18 | Ethereal plane |
| 19 | Demiplane of the archmage's creation |
| 20 | Exotic realm (realm of dreams, center of the universe, realm of aberrations, etc.) |

12 - DORMITORY

This large area is divided into six dormitory rooms for the archmage's disciples. Each dormitory consists of a bunk bed under which the mages store their personal belongings in a small chest, box, or some other container (two such containers per dorm room). There is a 20 percent chance that there is a spellbook in the container that contains all the spells a battle mage knows (see the Appendix). Beyond the spellbooks, the containers hold the contents of a scholar's pack minus the rations and water.

Locked Door. The door to area 13 is locked.

13 - THE ARCHMAGE'S BED CHAMBER

This bed chamber offers comfortable, high-quality appointments and furnishings.

Hazard: Time Bending. The passage of time moves faster in this area than it does in any other part of the dungeon at a rate of 10 to 1. One minute inside the room seems like only 6 seconds (or 1 round) outside of the room. The Time Bending Bedroom table below shows the game's most common units of time as it relates to the length of time that passes outside the room.

TIME BENDING BEDROOM

| Time Inside the Room | Time Outside the Room |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 round | Instantaneous |
| 1 minute | 1 round (6 seconds) |
| 1 hour | 6 minutes |
| 8 hours | 46 minutes |
| 1 day | 2 hours and 24 minutes |
| 1 week | 16 hours and 48 minutes |
| 1 month (30 days) | 3 days |
| 1 year (365 days) | 36 days and 12 hours |

This strange effect has a wide variety of benefits. Here are just a few to consider.

- Creatures inside the room are immune to the attacks and effects of creatures outside the room.
- A creature hit by a condition or effect outside of the room can slip into the room to wait out the condition or effect's duration.
- A creature can accomplish a short rest in the room in 6 minutes and a long rest in 46 minutes.
- Downtime that could take weeks to complete can be accomplished in a much shorter time frame while inside the room. For example, creating an object that takes 5 days to create only takes 12 hours inside the room.

However, there are side effects. All divination spells fail in the room. Additionally, a creature must make an Intelligence saving throw at the end of each hour they spend in the room or age 1d4 x 10 years. The DC is 5 for the first hour and increases by 1 for each additional hour. A creature that's actively touching, using, or resting on any of the objects in this room makes this check with disadvantage—that's what you get for sleeping in an archmage's bed! The aging effect can be reversed with a *greater restoration* spell, but only within 24 hours of it occurring.

Only the archmage in area 11 is immune to this effect.

Treasure. The archmage hides some of their most valuable treasures inside this room. However, the treasures are extremely well-hidden.

First, the archmage places their treasures into a *bag of holding*. This is done outside of the stronghold to circumvent its magical protections. Once back within the stronghold, the bag appears to be an empty, mundane bag. The archmage then casts *arcanist's magic aura* on the bag to further drive home the idea that it's nothing more than a mundane bag.

From there, the archmage places a map of the stronghold into the bag. The map is the same as the player's map of the dungeon, except it shows the location of area 5. The phrase "Show Me a King" is written on the map with an arrow pointing to area 5. This message serves as a red herring to the bag's true purpose. See area 5 to understand why.

Then, the archmage folds the seemingly mundane bag and places it into a permanent 3-inch-diameter sphere made of pure magical force. Nothing can physically pass through the sphere. It is immune to all damage and can't be dispelled by *dispel magic*. A *disintegrate* spell destroys the sphere instantly, however. The sphere also extends into the Ethereal Plane, blocking ethereal travel inside. Only the archmage knows the proper command word to dispel the sphere.

The sphere is then placed into a hidden compartment on the ceiling. Finding the compartment requires a successful DC 20 Wisdom (Perception) check. The compartment is locked similar to the way doors throughout the stronghold are locked, including the abjuration spells.

The contents of the bag depend on the level of the adventure.

For 11th- and 14th-level versions of the adventure, the *bag of holding* contains 15,000 gp, 1,500 pp, two *rods of security*, *elven chain*, and a *+3 quarterstaff*.

For the 17th- and 20th-level versions of the adventure, the *bag of holding* contains 125,000 gp, 125,000 pp, a *talisman of the sphere*, a *holy avenger*, *plate armor of etherealness*, and a *staff of the magi*.

14 - MAGICAL TRAINING ROOM

This large, round room features 25-foot-high ceilings held aloft by eight thick columns. There are various magical symbols drawn into the floor—they all glow green with eldritch might. Gruesome stone heads carved to look like demons are set into the walls at regular intervals.

The archmage's disciples use this room for magical training.

Hazard: Face the Master. Whenever a creature stands on the centermost arcane symbol for at least two rounds, the seven stone heads ask, via the *magic mouth* spell, "Challenger—are you prepared?"

If the challenger answers yes, a *sequestered simulacrum* of the archmage from area 11 appears within the room. The simulacrum bows, and then initiates combat. The simulacrum fights until destroyed; determined to destroy the challenger. If the simulacrum destroys the challenger, it stops its assault and stands at the center of the room, awaiting further instructions from its master—the archmage. There is only one such simulacrum sequestered in this area.

If the challenger answers no, the heads respond, "There is no place within this stronghold for the weak and unprepared—die!" All seven of the stone heads cast *magic missile* as a 2nd-level spell, targeting the challenger.

Secret Door. There is a locked secret door at the south end of the room. Where this door leads is up your discretion. It might lead to another layer or level of this stronghold. Or it might lead to another plane of existence. Ω

APPENDIX: NEW CREATURES

ALTAR FLAME GOLEM

The large creature's rough, humanoid form is made of durable brick or stone, and its demonic face is shaped from flame.

Guardian of Fire. Certain fire cultists protect their sanctums in a surprising way. Those who seek to defile the holy altar of such cults find that it's capable of defending itself. The altar quickly takes a humanoid shape and destroys or drives out all who fail to show proper obeisance to the sacred flame, searing them with a holy inferno or crushing them with scorching fists of brick. These golems are found in larger, more important fire temples and seldom appear anywhere else.

Construct Nature. A golem doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

CREDITS

The following creators made this adventure possible.

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ALTAR FLAME GOLEM

Large construct, neutral

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 152 (16d10 + 64)

Speed 20 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 19 (+4) | 9 (-1) | 18 (+4) | 3 (-4) | 10 (+0) | 1 (-5) |

Damage Immunities fire, poison, psychic; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 10 (5,900 XP)

Aversion to Water. If the altar flame golem takes cold damage or is doused with at least three gallons of water, it has disadvantage on attack rolls and ability checks until the end of its next turn.

Death Burst. When the altar flame golem is reduced to 0 hp, it explodes into shards of hot stone and fire. Each creature within 15 feet of it must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 28 (8d6) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful

one. An altar flame golem is not immune to the fire damage of another altar flame golem's death burst and doesn't absorb it.

False Appearance. While the golem remains motionless, it is indistinguishable from an altar bearing an eternal flame.

Fire Absorption. Whenever the golem is subjected to fire damage, it takes no damage and instead regains a number of hp equal to the fire damage dealt.

Immutable Form. The altar flame golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The altar flame golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The altar flame golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Actions

Multiattack. The altar flame golem makes two slam attacks.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage plus 11 (2d10) fire damage.

Flame Breath (Recharge 5-6). The altar flame golem breathes fire in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in that area must make a DC 16 Dexterity saving throw, taking 36 (8d8) fire damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

BATTLE MAGE

Battle mages are open vessels through which arcane energy pours raw, unfettered, and without regard for self-preservation. The art of the battle mage takes as much practice as any other type of spellcasting—perhaps more so. Many nations count battle mages among their ranks, with most establishing and maintaining an elite college or academy to properly train these living weapons. Just as much time goes into indoctrinating the battle mages into the patriotic beliefs as in the magic itself, for no group wants a powerful weapon turned against its creator.



BATTLE MAGE

Medium humanoid (any race), any alignment

Armor Class 12 (15 with *mage armor*)

Hit Points 66 (12d8 + 12)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 11 (+0) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) | 18 (+4) | 14 (+2) | 12 (+1) |

Saving Throws Con +3, Int +6

Skills Arcana +6, History +6

Senses passive Perception 12

Languages Common plus any three languages

Challenge 4 (1,100 XP)

Overchannel. As a bonus action, a battle mage can overchannel its spells until the start of its next turn. A creature has disadvantage on its saving throws against an overchanneled spell. Attack rolls against the battle mage have advantage until the start of its next turn.

Tactical Casting. When a battle mage casts a spell that causes damage or that forces a creature to make a saving throw, it can choose itself and any number of allies to be immune to the damage caused by the spell and to automatically succeed on the required saving throw.

Spellcasting. The battle mage is a 7th-level spellcaster. Its spellcasting ability is Intelligence (DC 14, +6). The battle mage has the following wizard spells prepared:

Cantrips (at will): *fire bolt*, *mage hand*, *poison spray*, *shocking grasp*

1st level (4 slots): *burning hands*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *thunderwave*

2nd level (3 slots): *flaming sphere*, *misty step*, *shatter*

3rd level (3 slots): *counterspell*, *fireball*, *lightning bolt*

4th level (1 slot): *ice storm*

Actions

Shortsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 5 (1d6 + 2) piercing damage.

Reactions

Self-Defense Casting. When the battle mage is hit by a weapon attack, it can cast a cantrip against the attacker.

BEARING GOLEM

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)

Hit Points 75 (10d8 + 30)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 9 (-1) | 18 (+4) | 16 (+3) | 8 (-1) | 12 (+1) | 3 (-4) |

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +7

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks not made with adamantite weapons

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone

Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft., passive Perception 14

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Ambusher. In the first round of combat, the golem has advantage on attack rolls against any creature it has surprised.

False Appearance. While the bearing golem is scattered, it is indistinguishable from a normal pile of ball bearings.

Immutable Form. The golem is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Reform. If the golem is scattered and has at least 1 hit point, it can reform as a bonus action in any space containing at least one of its ball bearings without provoking an opportunity attack. If it reforms within 5 feet of a prone creature, it can make one slam attack against that creature as part of this bonus action.

Scatter. As a bonus action, the bearing golem can disperse, scattering its ball bearings in a 15-foot square, centered on the space it previously occupied. A creature moving through a space containing any of the golem's ball bearings must succeed on a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw or fall prone. A creature moving through the area at half speed doesn't need to make the save. While scattered, the bearing golem can't attack or move, except to reform, and it can't be targeted by attacks or spells. It can still take damage from spells that deal damage in an area.

Actions

Multiattack. The golem makes two slam attacks. Alternatively, it uses its Steel Shot twice.

Slam. Melee Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) bludgeoning damage

Steel Shot. Ranged Weapon Attack: +7 to hit, range 30/120 ft., one target. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) bludgeoning damage

Scattershot (Recharge 5-6). The golem's body explodes. Each creature within 15 feet of the golem must make a DC 15 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 36 (8d8) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a success, a creature takes half the damage and isn't knocked prone. The golem immediately scatters.

BEARING GOLEM

A scattering of metal ball bearings coalesces into a constantly shifting humanoid shape.

Made up of thousands of ball bearings, a bearing golem can assume nearly any shape it chooses, though it always remains an amalgamation of metal pellets.

Thievish Inspiration. The first bearing golem was created when a wizard saw a thief foiling the traps in its tower with ball bearings. After disposing of the thief, the wizard collected the metal balls and realized their purpose could be improved if the bearings spread themselves.

Natural Ambushers. Bearing golems regularly lie in wait for hours, days, even weeks, hiding as an innocuous, scattered pile of bearings. When travelers move through the bearings, the golem springs back together and attacks.

Construct Nature. The bearing golem doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

CLOCKWORK TIGER

The ticking of metal gears is all that hints at the presence of a pair of feline-shaped metal creatures. They are bronze and steel, with sharp metal teeth and razor claws.

Magical Origin. Clockwork tigers were invented as guardians in times now long forgotten. In spite of their age, they continue to serve their original purpose as guardians, protecting ancient ruins and new masters alike. The number of clockwork tigers in existence is slowly rising, leading many scholars to speculate on the reason. Some suspect the instructions for creating them were finally found, while others surmise a natural phenomenon unearthed a lost vault of clockwork tigers.

Found in Pairs. Clockwork tigers are almost always found in pairs and almost always guarding a spellcaster or magical object, which they consider their "ward." The tigers work in tandem to defeat threats and protect their wards, leaping in and out of combat. Their clockwork brains are capable of thought, but they are less interested in communication and wholly devoted to protecting their wards.

Construct Nature. A clockwork tiger doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

CLOCKWORK TIGER

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 16 (natural armor)
Hit Points 112 (15d10 + 30)
Speed 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 18 (+4) | 16 (+3) | 15 (+2) | 7 (-2) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

Damage Immunities poison, psychic
Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned
Senses darkvision 60 ft., passive Perception 10
Languages understands Common but can't speak
Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Immutable Form. The tiger is immune to any spell or effect that would alter its form.

Magic Resistance. The tiger has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Pounce. If the tiger moves at least 20 feet straight toward a creature and then hits it with a claw attack on the same turn, that target must succeed on a DC 15 Strength saving throw or be knocked prone. If the target is prone, the tiger can make one bite attack against it as a bonus action.

Reactive Guardian. The clockwork tiger has two reactions that can be used only for Deflecting Leap.

Actions

Multiattack. The clockwork tiger makes one bite and two claw attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 13 (2d8 + 4) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage.

Reactions

Deflecting Leap. When the clockwork tiger's ward is the target of an attack the tiger can see, the tiger can move up to 10 feet toward its ward without provoking opportunity attacks. If it ends this movement within 5 feet of its ward, the tiger becomes the target of the attack instead.



FEY DRAKE

Small dragon, chaotic neutral

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)
Hit Points 82 (15d6 + 30)
Speed 20 ft., fly 80 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 6 (-2) | 20 (+5) | 15 (+2) | 15 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 18 (+4) |

Saving Throws Dex +8, Con +5, Wis +6

Skills Arcana +5, Deception +7, Perception +6, Stealth +8

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Draconic, Sylvan, telepathy 120 ft.

Challenge 6 (2,300 XP)

Magic Resistance. The fey drake has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Innate Spellcasting. The fey drake's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (DC 15, +7). The fey drake can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

Superior Invisibility. As a bonus action, the fey drake can magically turn invisible until its concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell). Any equipment the drake wears or carries is invisible with it.

At will: *charm person*, *color spray*, *grease*
3/day each: *hypnotic pattern*, *locate creature*, *suggestion*

1/day each: *dominate person*, *polymorph*

Actions

Multiattack. The fey drake makes three bite attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 10 (2d4 + 5) piercing damage. The target must succeed on a DC 16 Constitution saving throw or be poisoned for 1 hour.

Bewildering Breath (Recharge 5-6). The drake breathes a plume of purple gas in a 15-foot cone. Each creature in that area must succeed on a DC 16 Wisdom saving throw or be charmed for 1 minute.

While charmed, the creature can't take bonus actions or reactions, and it makes all Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma skill checks and saving throws with disadvantage.

FEY DRAKE

The small dragon flicks its tongue, light glinting off its purple-black scales. The gleam in its eye hovers somewhere between mischief and malice.

Divine Servant. The oldest and most capricious drakes catch the eye of the god of dragons who imbues them with its power. That lucky drake then becomes a fey drake, a

mostly) faithful servant. The fey drake's main duties to its master generally involve finding people, spying on them, and, when appropriate, convincing them to perform tasks for the god of dragons. In the best cases, the task is something the person wants to do, and harmony prevails. In cases where the person is less agreeable, the fey drake uses its magic to force the person to comply.

MANASTORM GOLEM

Medium construct, unaligned

Armor Class 14 (natural armor)
Hit Points 90 (12d10 + 24)
Speed 60 ft., fly 60 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|--------|--------|
| 6 (-2) | 14 (+2) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) | 8 (-1) | 1 (-5) |

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from magical weapons

Damage Immunities acid, cold, fire, lightning, necrotic, poison, psychic, radiant, thunder

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses truesight 120 ft., passive Perception 9

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 8 (3,900 XP)

Amorphous. The manastorm golem can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Limited Mutability. Any spell or effect that would alter the golem's form only alters it for 1 round. Afterwards,

But Still Capricious. Fey drakes, however, have a streak of unpredictability. Something that seems like a good idea at the time, or something that might be a bad idea but be fun, is exactly what a fey drake is likely to do without regard for the long-term consequences. The fey drake is more prone to mischief than even its most mischievous draconic cousins.

the manastorm golem returns to its humanoid-shaped cloud form.

Magic Resistance. The golem has advantage on saving throws against spells and other magical effects.

Magic Weapons. The golem's weapon attacks are magical.

Mystic Messages. The manastorm golem can communicate with its maker via magical whispers at a distance up to 120 feet. Only its master hears these messages and can reply. Its messages go through solid objects but are halted by stone, magical silence, a sheet of lead, and similar obstacles. Its voice can travel through keyholes and around corners.

Actions

Multiaction. The golem makes two slam attacks. If both attacks hit a single living creature, the creature is stunned until the end of its next turn.

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 14 (2d10 + 3) force damage.

Force Bolt. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +6 to hit, range 120/480 ft., one target. *Hit:* 25 (4d10 + 3) force damage.

MANASTORM GOLEM

All the colors of the rainbow shimmer in a cloud. It coalesces into a vaguely humanoid form that smells of ozone and ash.

A Golem Without Form. The manastorm golem is the creation of a master wizard who harnesses the magic around it to create a construct without the need for materials; it makes the creature from magic itself. The golem is malleable and amorphous, expanding and contracting as needed, but it always reforms into a vaguely humanoid-shaped cloud of energy.

Intelligent and Communicative. The manastorm golem is unique among its cousins because it is given an inherent intelligence from its creator. This, and its ability to fly, makes it a perfect scout. The golem can fly somewhere, investigate the area, and return with information, conveying it to the golem's master via magical whispers.

Construct Nature. A golem doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

SENTINEL IN DARKNESS

A blindfolded, stone face leers down from beneath a hooded cloak stitched from thousands of desiccated treasure maps. With each step the four-armed, stone figure takes, torches sputter, compasses spin, and ink fades.

Protector of Secrets. Sentinels in darkness are magical constructs tasked with guarding secret vaults and reliquaries. These creatures ward off plunderers with their imposing form, brute strength, and magical nature that obscures secrets. It is said when a sentinel is slain, its cloak of maps burns away, leaving behind one map to a great, secret treasure.

Magical Theft. Sentinels in darkness can magic away a coveted item, while cursing explorers with an unquenchable desire to find secrets—even at the cost of the explorer's own health.

Awakening the Sentinel. To animate a sentinel in darkness, the creator must imbue an inert stone golem with the spirit of a mortal that died having taken at least one terrible secret to the grave.

Construct Nature. A sentinel in darkness doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.

SENTINEL IN DARKNESS

Large construct, unaligned

Armor Class 13 (natural armor)

Hit Points 127 (15d10 + 45)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|
| 20 (+5) | 9 (-1) | 16 (+3) | 6 (-2) | 18 (+4) | 1 (-5) |

Skills Perception +7

Damage Resistances bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities poison

Condition Immunities charmed, exhaustion, frightened, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned

Senses truesight 60 ft., passive Perception 17

Languages understands the languages of its creator but can't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Scourge of the Seekers. The sentinel has advantage on attack rolls against creatures with darkvision, blindsight, or truesight.

Vault Keeper. Secret doors and illusory walls within 1,500 feet of the sentinel have the DC to detect their presence increased by 5.

Actions

Multiattack. The sentinel makes two stone fist attacks. If both attacks hit a Large or smaller creature, the target must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or lose one non-weapon, non-armor object that is small enough to fit in one hand. The object is teleported to a random unoccupied space within 200 feet of the sentinel. The target feels a mental tug in the general direction of the item until it is recovered.

Stone Fist. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 18 (2d12 + 5) bludgeoning damage.

Curse of the Wanderer (Recharge 6). One creature the sentinel can see within 30 feet of it must succeed on a DC 15 Wisdom saving throw or suffer the Curse of the Wanderer. While cursed, the creature's speed is halved and it can't regain hp. For every 24 hours it goes without discovering or learning new information, it takes 10 (3d6) psychic damage. The curse lasts until it is lifted by a remove curse spell or similar magic.

SHADOW OOZE

A globe of impenetrable darkness slithers along the floor, rippling as deep a black as can be seen by the naked eye.

Shadow oozes are pitch-black gelatinous blobs that swallow all nearby light. They yearn to destroy any place that is not the shadow realm.

Liquid Shadow. When some of the shadow realm leaks into another world, it animates into one or more shadow oozes. These creatures despise living in a place that is not the shadow realm and seek to consume almost any other creature they come across. This need to consume drives the oozes. Instinct tells them that if they grow large enough, they can cover the world in darkness and transform it into a second Plane of Shadow. If the ooze is sent back to the shadow realm, it rejoins with the essence of that plane and no longer exists as an ooze.

Guards of Shadow Fey. Shadow oozes show no interest in devouring shadow fey. As a result, shadow fey use shadow oozes to serve as guardians of their greatest treasures and most hidden fortresses. The shadow fey feed prisoners to the oozes and release the gelatinous monsters when intruders are afoot or when non-ooze guards are resting.

Ooze Nature. A shadow ooze doesn't require sleep.

SHADOW OOZE

Medium ooze, unaligned

Armor Class 8

Hit Points 76 (9d8 + 36)

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 16 (+3) | 6 (-2) | 18 (+4) | 2 (-4) | 6 (-2) | 2 (-4) |

Skills Stealth +2

Damage Immunities acid, necrotic

Condition Immunities blinded, charmed, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, prone

Senses blindsight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 8

Languages —

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Amorphous. The ooze can move through a space as narrow as 1 inch wide without squeezing.

Aura of Darkness. The ooze devours all natural and magical light within 30 feet of it. This area is heavily obscured by darkness for all creatures except shadow fey.

Spider Climb. The ooze can climb difficult surfaces, including upside down on ceilings, without needing to make an ability check.

Actions

Multiattack. The ooze makes one pseudopod attack and then uses Snuff Out.

Pseudopod. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +5 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 10 (2d6 + 3) bludgeoning damage plus 7 (2d6) necrotic and 3 (1d6) acid damage.

Snuff Out. The ooze extinguishes one natural or magical light source within 60 feet of it. If the light source is created by a spell, it is dispelled.

Snake With A Hundred Mage Hands

Small monstrosity, neutral

Armor Class 14

Hit Points 67 (15d6 + 15)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|
| 8 (-1) | 18 (+4) | 12 (+1) | 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 6 (-2) |

Skills Perception +2, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +8

Senses blindsight 10 ft., passive Perception 12

Languages Common, telepathy 60 ft.

Challenge 3 (700 XP)

Disruptive Ploy. As a bonus action, the snake performs a minor ploy with its mage hands against a target it can see within 30 feet of it. The target must succeed on a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw or have disadvantage on its next ability check, attack roll, or saving throw (the snake's choice) as the snake magically removes the target's helmet, unspools the target's quiver, or performs some other form of distraction.

One Hundred Mage Hands. The snake is surrounded by one hundred, magical, spectral hands. The hands

can't be targeted by spells or attacks and are immune to damage. The hands float within 30 feet of the snake and move with their serpent commander. The snake can decide if the hands are visible. Each hand can carry an object weighing up to 10 pounds and no more than three hands can work in tandem to carry one larger object. The snake's Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) checks have a range of 30 feet. Whenever the snake makes a Dexterity (Sleight of Hand) check, it can make up to four such checks as part of the same action, but each check must be against a different target. The snake can perform actions normally restricted to creatures with hands, such as opening a door, stirring a bowl of soup, or carrying a lantern. The hands can't wield weapons or shields or make attacks, except as part of the snake's Flying Fists action.

Actions

Multiattack. The snake with a hundred mage hands makes two bite attacks.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +6 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (2d4 + 4) piercing damage.

Flying Fists (Recharge 5-6). The snake unleashes a flurry of spectral punches in a 30-foot cone. Each creature in the area must make a DC 14 Dexterity saving throw. On a failure, a creature takes 10 (3d6) bludgeoning damage and is knocked prone. On a success, a creature takes half the damage and isn't knocked prone.

Snake With A Hundred Mage Hands

The small snake slithers forward. As it nears a door, spectral hands appear all around it, opening and pushing the door to allow the snake entry.

Pet Project. Thieves' guilds with magically inclined members often imbue particularly crafty snakes with keen intelligence, telepathy, and the ability to summon dozens of mage hands to aid the guild. The small, stealthy creatures are capable of carrying out heists that are logistically impractical for humanoids due to their bulk. Predictably, the clever reptiles often escape their creators and carve out small territories for themselves in the more disreputable parts of cities where their true identities won't easily be discovered.

Mischievous Thieves. Snakes with a hundred mage hands are known for their mischievous nature. Many are kleptomaniacs and swindlers, using their talents to deceive humanoids and steal objects they find pleasing.



Toy Soldier

Tiny construct, unaligned

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)

Hit Points 20 (8d4)

Speed 30 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|--------|---------|---------|--------|--------|--------|
| 4 (-3) | 18 (+4) | 10 (+0) | 3 (-4) | 3 (-4) | 1 (-5) |

Damage Immunities poison, psychic

Condition Immunities poisoned

Senses blindsight 30 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 6

Languages —

Challenge 1 (200 XP)

Actions

Slam. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 6 (1d4 + 4) piercing damage.

WALLED HORROR

Large undead, chaotic evil

Armor Class 17 (natural armor)

Hit Points 114 (12d8 + 60)

Speed 0 ft. (immobile)

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|--------|---------|--------|--------|---------|
| 18 (+4) | 1 (-5) | 20 (+5) | 5 (-3) | 8 (-1) | 18 (+4) |

Damage Resistances cold, fire, lightning; bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical attacks

Damage Immunities necrotic, poison, psychic

Condition Immunities blinded, deafened, exhaustion, frightened, grappled, paralyzed, petrified, poisoned, prone, restrained, stunned

Senses truesight 60 ft. (blind beyond this radius), passive Perception 9

Languages understands all languages it knew in life but can't speak

Challenge 7 (2,900 XP)

Spirit-Infused Structure. The walled horror is immobile except for its Wall Hop trait. It uses its Charisma instead of its Dexterity to determine its place in the initiative order.

Wall-Bound Spirits. The spirits that make up the walled horror are bound to a 10-foot-by-10-foot panel of wall, behind which their original bodies are trapped. The walled horror can move to nearby walls with its Wall Hop trait, but it can never be more than 120 feet away from its bound wall. If its bound wall is damaged while the walled horror is elsewhere, the walled horror takes half the damage dealt to the bound wall. When the walled horror finishes a long rest while inhabiting its bound wall, any damage to the bound wall is repaired.

Wall Hop. As a bonus action, the walled horror can disappear into the wall and reappear on a 10-foot-by-10-foot stone wall or panel of wood that it can see within 30 feet of it. Claw marks briefly appear on the surface of the origin and destination walls when it uses this trait.

Actions

Multiaction. The walled horror makes two spectral claw attacks.

Spectral Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +7 to hit, reach 10 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 11 (2d6 + 4) slashing damage plus 4 (1d8) psychic damage and the target is grappled (escape DC 15)

Spectral Scream. *Ranged Spell Attack:* +7 to hit, range 60 ft., one creature. *Hit:* 18 (4d8) psychic damage, and the target must succeed on a DC 15 Charisma saving throw or be frightened until the end of its next turn as it is assaulted by images of being buried alive or entombed. While frightened, the creature's speed is reduced to 0.

Entomb. The walled horror makes one spectral claw attack against a Medium or smaller creature it is grappling. If the attack hits, the creature is partially entombed in the wall, and the grapple ends. The entombed target is blinded and restrained, and it takes 9 (2d8) psychic damage at the start of each of the walled horror's turns. A walled horror can have only one creature entombed at a time.

A creature, including the entombed target, can take its action to free the entombed target by succeeding on a DC 15 Strength check.

A creature slain while entombed is pulled fully into the wall and can be restored to life only by means of a *true resurrection* or a *wish* spell.

WALLED HORROR

An unnatural, cloying chill fills the air, and multiple ghostly hands burst from a wall to pummel and grab all within reach.

Unassuming Horror. The walled horror is an undead that appears to be a normal stretch of wall until it lashes out at passersby.

Tragic Origins. A walled horror is created when a group of humanoids is bound together and entombed behind a wall in an area with a high concentration of necrotic energy. The humanoids experience profound terror before dying of thirst or suffocation, and their spirits remain trapped within the wall, becoming an undead that seeks to add others to its collection.

Entombed Treasures. While the spirits of the entombed victims join with the stone and mortar of the wall, their bodies and belongings are left to rot in the cavity behind the wall. When the walled horror is destroyed, it collapses into a pile of rubble, revealing the remains and belongings.

Undead Nature. A walled horror doesn't require air, food, drink, or sleep.



YOUNG IMPERIAL DRAGON

Large dragon, neutral

Armor Class 18 (natural armor)
Hit Points 210 (20d10 + 100)
Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft., swim 40 ft.

| STR | DEX | CON | INT | WIS | CHA |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| 23 (+6) | 12 (+1) | 21 (+5) | 16 (+3) | 14 (+2) | 16 (+3) |

Saving Throws Dex +5, Con +9, Wis +6, Cha +7
Skills Insight +6, Perception +10, Stealth +5
Damage Immunities lightning, thunder
Senses blindsight 30 ft., darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 20
Languages Common, Draconic
Challenge 11 (7,200 XP)

Amphibious. The dragon can breathe air and water.

Innate Spellcasting. The imperial dragon's innate spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). It can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components.

3/day: *fog cloud*
1/day each: *control weather*, *gust of wind*, *stinking cloud*

Actions

Multiattack. The dragon makes three attacks: one with its bite and two with its claws.

Bite. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit* 17 (2d10 + 6) piercing damage.

Claw. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +10 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit* 13 (2d6 + 6) slashing damage.

Lightning Breath (Recharge 5-6). The dragon exhales lightning in a 60-foot line that is 5 feet wide. Each creature in that line must make a DC 17 Dexterity saving throw, taking 44 (8d10) lightning damage on a failed save, or half as much damage on a successful one.

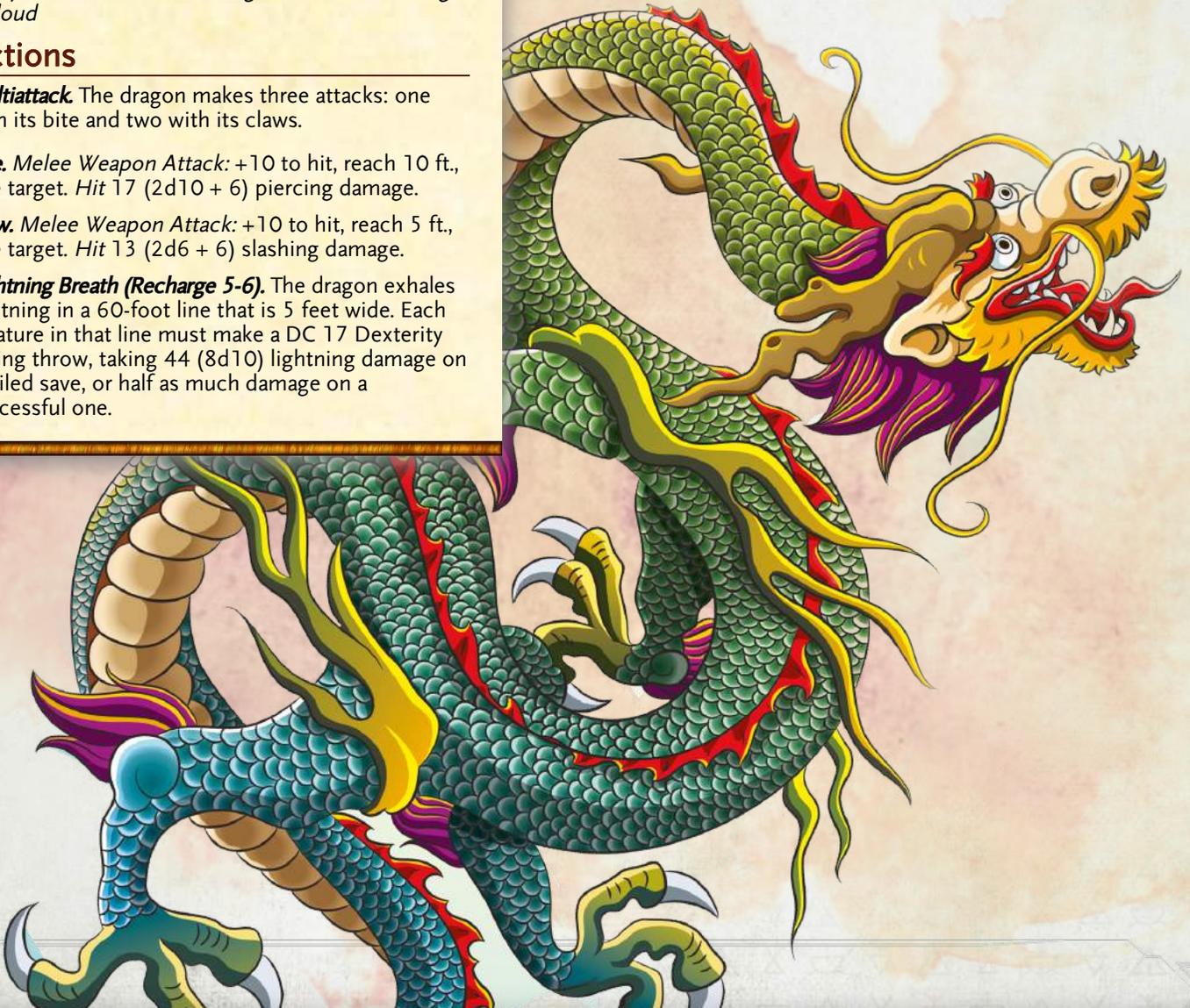
IMPERIAL DRAGON

The long, serpentine dragon is wingless and possesses shimmering, opalescent scales. Its appearance is at once both serene and majestic.

Dragons of the Spirit World Imperial dragons are tied to the world of celestials, fiends, and spirits. They freely parley with such creatures for knowledge about the outer planes or the fundamental mysteries of the universe. Some of the most powerful imperial dragons even become the servants of the gods in exchange for wisdom, acting as intermediaries between the divine and mortal realms.

Colorful and Magical. Imperial dragons are capable of changing their colors and forms. They are typically a rich, golden-yellow, but azure-, jade-, and vermilion-colored dragons are not unheard of, and even white and black imperial dragons have been reported. A magical organ in their skulls gives them the ability to fly without the aid of wings, and they are often hunted for this organ, which is rumored to grant eternal life if consumed.

Masters of Wind and Rain. Imperial dragons are creatures of wind and water, and the eldest of their kind exhibit mastery of these elements. They love the seas where they make their homes and sometimes act as guardians for sacred sites or temples near or beneath the waves. This often puts them in conflict with militant aquatic races like the sahuagin and evil water-dwelling monsters like krakens and sea dragons.



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