

d12 Monthly



**UNDEAD
ISSUE**

Issue 6
November 2021

TRANSVISION VAMP

9 NEW TYPES OF VAMPIRES
TO THROW AT YOUR PLAYERS

NECROMANCER LEVEL UP

MAKING YOUR
NECROMANCER BETTER

CREATE NEW UNDEAD

RANDOM TABLES TO
CREATE MORE UNDEAD

Location: This time we delve into the Spirit World!

d12 Monthly is a helpful resource for fantasy roleplayers.

The Undead Issue

I think undead are almost as much a staple of the game as dragons are.

While not in the title, undead are seemingly everywhere: ancient crypts, tombs, graveyards, your neighbour's basement... almost universal.

They capture our hearts (for eating) and scare us to death... literally in some cases.

With all that in mind, I present the undead issue of d12 Monthly.

I will never forget my first encounter with the undead. It was in the original *Secrets of Saltmarsh*. I was playing a less-than-good cleric and ended up turning a bunch of zombies over to our side.

The debate that ensued was glorious in its entirety, with half the party against us using the zombies to set off traps and scout ahead.

My Neutral Evil cleric saw no issue with this strategy but in the end I think I lost the fight and my little army of zombies were destroyed.

I learned a valuable lesson that day: characters don't like undead.

In this issue you will find a way to create your own undead and I give an example of one as well.

You will also find new vampires, understand more about negative energy, take a trip to the spirit realm, and read some ancient necromantic tomes.

A lot to get through but I hope you enjoy the trip to the netherrealm!

And remember, as always, happy gaming!

- Russ from YUMDM

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About Me

I have been roleplaying for over 30 years and DMing for most of those. I have played over 50 different roleplaying games, but my first love is fantasy - it's like coming home.

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Want to join this team and support the zine? I have a Patreon account:

<https://www.patreon.com/yumdm>

(New tiers are now available to receive a physical copy).

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Unless otherwise mentioned, all articles are written by myself.

Transition Vamps

New Types of Vampires

Not all vampires are created equal. Some are your typical Dracula creations, while others are far more bestial, like the Nosferatu.

Vampires all have varying abilities and weaknesses, but these means may differ depending on the type of vampire.

All vampires, no matter what type, have the following weaknesses: decapitation will result in instant destruction, and all can be turned. All also have the Blood Drain ability.

Types of Vampires

Alps

These are the succubi and incubi who visit sleeping people at night and feed off them slowly over a long time, sometimes keeping their victims alive for months.

Typical Abilities: Alter Self, Charm, Dominate, Energy Drain, Fast Healing, Shadow Hide, Stealth, and Unseen.

Typical Weaknesses: Blood Healing, Garlic, Invitation, No Reflection, No Shadow, Sunlight (Kills), Unconsciousness.

Asiman

These vampires are obsessed with witchcraft and magic. They are often using their spells against their victims.

Typical Abilities: Alter Self, Charm, Commune with Spirits, Curses, Energy Drain, Gaseous Form, Illusions, Quell Emotions, Resistance, Send Message, Shapeshift, Speak with Dead, Spellcasting, and Summon Spirits.

Typical Weaknesses: Blood Healing, Feed on More than Blood, Horrid Appearance, No Reflection, No Shadow, Running Water (Kills), Sunlight (Stone), Stake (Kills).

Brujería

Known as spirit-readers, these vampires commune and summon spirits to help them find and feed on their victims.

Typical Abilities: Alter Self, Charm, Commune with Spirits, Curses, Dominate, Energy Drain, Heightened Appearance, Quell Emotions, Send Message, Speak with Dead, Spellcasting, Summon Spirits

Typical Weaknesses: Garlic, Invitation, No Reflection, Sunlight (Kills).

Draugr

A barrow or cairn dweller, Draugrs surround themselves with the dead. They often reek of death.

Typical Abilities: Damage Reductions, Energy Drain, Fast Healing, Gaseous Form, Resistance, Speak with Dead, Stench of Death.

Typical Weaknesses: Horrid Appearance, Cannot Speak, Feed on More than Blood, No Reflection, No Shadow, Silver, Sunlight (Stone), Stake (Kills).

Malefactor

These are lawbreakers and delinquents. They cause chaos wherever they go.

Typical Abilities: Celerity, Damage Reduction, Fast Healing, Heightened Awareness, Incredibly Strong, Toughness, Combat Abilities, Resistance.

Typical Weaknesses: Invitation, No Reflection, Sunlight (Burns), Stake (Kills).

Nosferatu

These disfigured vampires possess abnormal physical characteristics and are grotesque in appearance.

Typical Abilities: Call Forth Friends (Bats only), Damage Reduction, Energy Drain, Fast Healing, Horrid Appearance, Shadow Hide, Stealth, Toughness, Unseen.

Typical Weaknesses: Horrid Appearance, Unconsciousness, Cannot Speak, Feed on More than Blood, No Reflection, Sunlight (Burns), Stake (Paralysis).

Shapeshifters

These blood-suckers have perfected the art of transforming into various forms, including bats, wolves, and more.

Typical Abilities: Alter Self, Call for Friends, Celerity, Damage Reduction, Heighten Awareness, Incredible Strength, Scent, Shapeshifting, Stealth, Toughness.

Typical Weaknesses: Beastial, Feed on More than Blood, Garlic, Invitation, No

Reflection, Silver Damages, Sunlight (Burns).

Siren

These vamps are all about charming and seducing victims before sucking their blood.

Typical Abilities: Alter Self, Charm, Dominate, Energy Drain, Gaseous Form, Illusions, Seduction.

Typical Weaknesses: Garlic, Invitation, No Reflection, Running Water (Kills), Silver Damages, Sunlight (Kills).

Vampiric Abilities



Alter Self

The vampire can change their appearance as per the *Alter Self* spell as cast by a 10th level sorcerer.

Blood Drain

A vampire, once a victim is successfully grappled, drains blood each round, causing the victim to lose D4 Constitution. Any victim who dies this way, becomes a vampire spawn.

Call Forth Friends

Once per day can call upon animals associated with it, namely wolves and bats. It can call forth a bat swarm, 4D6 giant bats, or 3D6 wolves. They will arrive in 2D6 rounds and serve the vampire for one hour.

Celerity

Vampire's movement increases by 10ft. They also receive +4 on initiative checks.

Charm

As per *Charm Person* spell cast by a 10th level sorcerer.

Combat Abilities

The vampire gains +2 on all attack rolls.

Commune with Spirits

The vampire may talk with all manner of spirits and other incorporeal undead.

Curses

As per *Bestow Curse* spell as cast by a 10th level sorcerer.

Damage Reduction

A vampire has damage reduction of 15/+1 - meaning they absorb the first 15 hit points

of damage unless the attacker is using a magical weapon.

Dominate

As per *Dominate Monster* spell cast by a level 10 sorcerer.

Energy Drain

Living creatures hit by the vampire gain two negative levels (or lose two levels).

Fast Healing

A vampire can heal 5 hit points each round as long as they have 1 HP left.

Gaseous Form

As a standard action, a vampire can form into *gaseous form* at will, as per the spell. If reduced to 0 hit points, the vampire automatically assumes gaseous form.

Graverot

The vampire's body is decomposing ever so slowly and they have an appearance as a zombie. Anyone seeing the vampire must make a difficult Wisdom/Will save or flee in fear.

Heightened Awareness

The vampire receives a bonus +4 (or advantage) on all perception and awareness checks.

Horrid Appearance

The vampire is so horrid to look upon that all who do must make a difficult Wisdom/Will check or flee in fear.

Illusions

A vampire develops the ability to cast illusions. The vampire can create illusions

as per the *Major Creation / Major Image* spell.

Incredible Strength

The vampire has a strength of 24, gaining a bonus of +7 to attack and damage rolls.

Quell Emotions

The vampire may force extreme emotions - hate, love, fear, fury - from an opponent. The opponent makes a difficult Wisdom/Will save to resist. This can force an opponent to stop attacking the vampire.

Resistance

The vampire gains a resistance (20) to a certain energy, usually lightning or cold.

Scent

As per creature ability of the same name.

Send Message

The vampire has the ability to send a message to those they know, as per the *Sending* spell.

Shadow Hide

By slipping into a shadow that is large enough to fit them, the vampire disappears from view as per the *Invisibility* spell cast by a 10th level sorcerer.

Shapeshifting

May transform into one (or more) of the following animals: bat or wolf as a druid of 10th level.

Speak with the Dead

As per *Speak with the Dead* spell cast by a 10th level sorcerer.

Spellcasting

Capable of casting spells as a 10th level sorcerer.

Spider Climb

A vampire can climb sheer surfaces as per the *Spider Climb* spell.

Stealth

The vampire receives +4 (or advantage) on all stealth checks.

Stench of Death

Anyone within 30ft of you needs to make a Constitution save or become *sickened*.

Summon Spirits

The vampire can summon a long-dead spirit to help them cast certain spells. The typical spells the spirit can cast are: *Augury*, *Feign Death*, *Prayer*, *Speak with Dead*, *Find the Path*, *Commune*, *Clairaudience*, *Clairvoyance*, *Summon Undead* (see *The Necromancer* article in this issue), and *Scrying*. It takes one hour to summon a spirit.

Toughness

The vampire has an additional 20 hit points and gains a +2 bonus to all Constitution/Fortitude checks.

Unseen

A vampire can move around freely as if they had a *Sanctuary* spell cast upon them.

Wealth

The vampire has unlimited funds and can purchase anything they need.

Vampiric Weaknesses

All vampires have a number of weaknesses, but these vary from vampire to vampire.

Bestial

The features of this vampire are bestial in form, taking on properties of a wolf or bat.

Blood Healing

This vampire can only heal wounds by ingesting blood. They heal D8 per Con point.

Burnt by Moonlight

Even the reflective light off the moon burns this vampire. He will take D4 damage per round exposed to a full moon.

Turned

Vampires with this weakness can be turned by people of faith as per normal rules.

Cannot Speak

The vampire in question cannot speak any language.

Decapitation

Cutting the head of a vampire will kill it instantly.

Feed on More than Blood

Vampires need to eat the victim's flesh, brains or other organs as well as their blood.

Garlic

The vampire is either repelled or burned by garlic. They cannot approach within 10ft of any garlic and if it touches their skin it will burn them for D4 damage per round.

Horrid Appearance

This vampire's looks are horrid to most. This means it may not pass as human.

Invitation

Vampires need to be asked in by an occupant of a private home.

No Reflection

The vampire cast no reflection in mirrors.

No Shadow

The vampire casts no shadow.

Running Water

Vampires can either be killed when submerged or cannot cross it.

Silver Damages

As well as many other weaknesses, a vampire is also damaged by silver weapons.

Sunlight

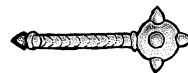
Sunlight has one of three effects on vampires: either it burns a vampire's skin, causing 4D8 damage each round of exposure; kills it instantly upon contact; or turns the vampire to stone permanently.

Stake to the Heart

This causes either the instant death of the vampire or paralysis.

Unconsciousness

Vampires with this weakness will fall into a deep unconscious state during daylight hours.



Enhance Your Undead

Mundane Herbs to Enhance Your Undead

Alchemists working in secret laboratories toil away on substances for their necromancer customers.

The following substances can be inserted, smeared, or ingested by undead creatures to enhance their traits and abilities.

Natural Substances

Some substances found in the wild can have an effect on undead.

Lifebane

This grassy weed is seldom used as it only works when the weed is flowering (which only happens for a short time during autumn), freshly picked, and then only half the time- it has a 50% of working.

It's flowers are small and bone-white in hue.

On its own, applied directly to the undead's fingernails (if any are present), Lifebane will cause an undead to gain a new ability but only for its first claw attacks.

When struck by a "Lifebane Undead" a character must save Vs. Death (or Constitution or Fortitude) or die.

Igwart

By incorporating this root into the creation process (either by adding some to the body or as a material component for spells), the

alchemist can slow decomposition of the undead. This is usually why zombies and other physical undead never completely rot into skeletons.

Vastenroot

Used by alchemists and necromancers to enhance the speed of their physical undead.

Applied to the limbs of an undead being it causes the muscles to reverse the effects of rigor mortis, allowing them to move more freely.

Vastenroot will increase the speed of any physical undead (such as zombies) by 10ft.

It will also off-set any penalties to initiative or number of actions an undead may have.

Brain Tuber

Inserted into the skull before the undead is awakened or animated, this thick, blackened tuber increases the intelligence of the creature by D4.

This can also have the added effects of allowing the creature to learn three additional Commands (see article *Teaching An Old Undead New Tricks* in this issue), and think more strategically.

This means the undead may gain more memories of their former life. This could impact the campaign via social, combat, and roleplaying as they may gain some abilities they had in their past life, such as weapon training and even spellcasting (see the article *Update Your Undead* in this issue).

Library Ratings

How Good is Your Research?

Researching your enemies or locations before the adventure begins, is half the battle. With that in mind here is a way to help your PCs (and NPCs) find the information they are after.

Types of Libraries

Medieval libraries, even fantasy-medieval ones, come in four main forms:

1. Religious libraries (usually attached to a church)
2. Civil libraries
3. Private collection
4. University libraries

While places like Candle Keep in Forgotten Realms is a mecha for knowledge and is supposed to keep vast amounts of knowledge stored within its (well-protected) walls, most libraries of the day were fairly pokey and unorganised.

Religious Libraries

Most libraries were attached to religious establishments, especially monasteries. Of course, many of these texts and tomes were religious in nature or written or read with a religious tint, but they took it upon themselves to copy other works as well.

Civil Libraries

Civil institutions also collect texts, but these usually were limited to civil-related matters, such as records of sales, taxes,

payments, treasury details, and food storage.

Private Collections

Private collections were also available if you knew the right people. Exclusive to the rich and noble, these libraries tended to be small collections.

University Libraries

Universities, which started up later (in the mid-medieval period in our own world), grew their libraries extensively, and were often used as texts were too expensive to own.

Librarians

Custodians of these libraries had to often take an oath to protect the books and other texts with their lives.

This led to librarians and other custodians keeping a close eye on who they let into their libraries and what texts they were reading. Some books were even chained to desks to prevent theft.

To protect their books medieval librarians commonly added curses and minor magics to books in an attempt to prevent them from being damaged or stolen by readers.

Determining Books in the Libraries

Many libraries were furnished with books from benefactors or generous individuals who donated them to the library.

And many scribes and librarians borrowed and copied texts when they were available.

With this in mind, the collection of some libraries could be quite eclectic.

Examples of Text

Texts can take many forms: books, tomes, personal diaries and journals, scrolls, clay and stone tablets, rubs of wall carvings and art, tapestries, and many more.

Placement of Texts

Monasteries had a habit of not keeping all their books together either. Some would be kept in the sacristy, while others would be kept in the main eating chamber (for mealtime reading), while others would be kept near a shrine, or on shelves in specific library rooms, or even in large chests.

Rating a Library

Given all these diverse libraries and the storage and limitation on text availability, it is easiest to assign a modifier to the library the character is using for their research.

Simply roll 2D6, consulting the Library Modifier table, adding any modifiers you deem appropriate. If the library is only small, then you may add a -2 to the check.

However, if the collection of text concerns the topic the character is interested in, then you could assign a +2 or 3 bonus to the roll.

Add in the character's Charisma modifier here, as this would count towards how affable and honest the librarian finds them.

Table: Library Modifiers (2D6)

2D6 Check	Library Modifier
2 or lower	-4
3	-3
4	-2
5-6	-1
7-9	+0
10	+1
11	+2
12	+3
13+	+4

The final library modifier is then used to make a final research or Intelligence test. Below is a guide on how much information is discovered.

Table: Difficulty Results

Difficult Number	Information Gleaned
Easy	PC learns one small tidbit they didn't already know
Medium	PC learns an additional piece of information
Hard	PC learns one secret or two additional pieces of info
Very Hard	PC learns two secret or three additional pieces of info
Heroic	PC learns all they need to know



Phylacteries

4 New Places to Hide Your Soul



Here are four examples of phylacteries you can use in your own campaign, inspired by four gamers in their own campaigns.

Living Coral

By [Dallas Barnett](#)

I have a 2E Mage character that over the years, gained enough knowledge and levels to become a Lich.

His phylactery is hewn from living coral, was placed on a trading ship and the ship and her crew were sunk in the deepest part of the sea by a “freak” storm.

Now, the phylactery, being made of living coral, will continue to grow on the sea bed, and become pretty unrecognizable in just a few short years.

The Mundane

By [Henry Prince](#)

A phylactery should be a mundane object kept in a vault full of mundane objects. The objects should be resistant or immune to as many damage types as possible and the vault should be almost impossible to access.

Fortress

By [Off on an Adventure](#)

In one of our campaigns, we have an order of peace holders who become liches. They have a main fortress where they keep all their phylacteries under lock and key.

A grand monastery, filled with ancient relics that they had begun hoarding. The stone walls tower over the plains. Think of High Hrothgar in Skyrim, but without the snow, and a surrounding wall and barracks.

Wedding Bands

By [DungeonMaster](#)

For an interesting narrative, the wizard knew what he was sacrificing when he became a lich. Driven to this madness by a terrible longing. His long deceased wife, he needed more time, more knowledge to reform her. He made his phylactery from their wedding bands.

He doesn't hide them, he cherishes them. Kept in a sanctum, an altar before a portrait of his lost beloved.



The Spirit World

A New Look at Spirits

The Spirit World in my home campaign world of Aythia is a plane that sits just adjacent to the regular world.

It mirrors the real world but tends to show areas as they were, not as they are. What time period will depend on any undead still lingering there and how long ago they died.

The Spirit World is one where spirits, ghosts, and other ethereal undead reside before heading into the Astral Plane to be consumed into the collective energy there.

In the Spirit World, the spirits maintain a semblance of themselves and are tied to the Spirit World in some way. This could be by choice or via magic.

The Spirit World and the real world are usually always close but separate, but a connection forms sometimes when spirits are present.

This is how hauntings happen.

The longer the spirit connects their world and ours, the larger and more powerful the connection becomes.

Hauntings

Hauntings happen in particular places due to the connection of the spirits involved.

They connect our world and the Spirit World.

Spirits can be untied from the world via a cleric's turning ability or other magical means, but until that happens, the spirit can grow in power and influence.

In game terms, this can mean the area of the haunting either grows larger or becomes more powerful over time.

There are limits to the spirits power however, and their range of influence is limited - usually they are tied to the place where they met their death or the place where a traumatic event happened.

And they never seem sated until a wrong is righted.

Powers of Spiritual Undead

What follows is a couple of powers ethereal undead and haunted locations can gain over time. The GM is free to use these as they see fit, depending on how long and how powerful the haunting and/or spirits are.

Difficult Turning

Turning any undead in the area of the haunting becomes more difficult for any cleric or paladin. All undead in the area receive a bonus of +1 to +4 levels/HD to any turning attempts. (See the article *Turning up the Heat* in issue 5 of **d12 Monthly** for an alternative turning system).

Fear

The whole area radiates fear continuously. Any who enter the area need to make a Wisdom/Will save or flee the area for 2D6 rounds.

Necromancer Level Up

Making Your Necromancer Better

The necromancer is the pinnacle of the dark arts. Delving into death itself to find immortality or just creating an army of soldiers to do thy bidding.

Below are some feats/traits and a spell that you can use to bolster a necromancer and make them feel like they are truly masters of the undead.

More Control (Feat or Special Ability)

This feat gives the necromancer control over more undead when summoning or creating them using the *Animate Dead* spell.

When you have this feat you can control twice the number of undead when animating them via the *Animate Dead* spell. Casting limits per spell still apply.

Create Undead (Feat or Special Ability)

A necromancer with this feat can create their own zombies or skeletons and have control over any they create without them adding to the total number of undead they can control (see *Animate Dead* spell).

This means physically collecting the bodies or enough bones to find and prepare the specific undead, whether it be a zombie or skeleton. It takes four days to create a basic skeleton or zombie (but you can enhance them - see *Mundane Herbs to Enhance Your Undead* in this issue) during the creation process.

Summon Undead (Spell)

A spellcaster can instantly summon undead to fight for them.

Summon Undead

Necromantic level 1

Components: V, S, M (bone)

Casting Time: 1 full round

Range: Close (30 ft)

Duration: 1 round per level

You summon the undead to fight for you. The number and type of undead you can summon will depend on your level.

You can issue a command each round to the summoned undead as a free action. If not issued commands they will stay in place and defend themselves.

The type of undead summoned depends on your level. You can summon a number of undead of HD equal to your spellcasting level.

Table: Undead Summoning

Caster Level	Undead Type
1-4	Skeleton or zombie
5-6	Ghoul
7-8	Ghast, Allip
9-10	Mummy, Shadow, Vampire Spawn, Wight

These undead don't count towards the maximum number of undead a caster can control when using the *Animate Dead* spell.

The material component of this spell is a bone from a dead body.

The Umbra

Dive Into A New Demi-Plane

Before we look at this new plane, it is important to understand the Negative Energy Plane.

An ever-hungering maw that seeks to quench the fires of life wherever they burn. It gives power to the ranks of undead and other such mockeries of life, but the place is an anathema to all normal creatures.

-Planescape: Inner Planes

Also known as the plane of death, the Negative Material Plane links to all undead, feeding them and keeping them “alive”.

It is a place that sucks your very life (in game terms this means losing HP or even levels!) and is difficult to even move around in.

A place you do not want to visit.

How Does it Work?

In my campaign world, Aythia, the Negative Energy Plane encircles around the main world of Aythia and interweaves with the Positive Energy Plane.

Each undead creature carries a sliver of Negative Energy within them, transferred from the Negative Energy Plane upon creation. It is this negative energy that empowers the undead.

This sliver is usually extinguished upon the creature's destruction.

However, at times, the level of negative energy is so great it can linger and mix with other matter.

This is how **The Umbra** was created.

The Umbra: A Demi-Plane

One of the demi-planes that exist in my campaign world is the Umbra.

(Demi-planes are small planes that exist because someone or some event created them - they float around in the Ethereal Plane.)

The Umbra is a mix of the Shadow Realm and the Negative Energy Plane.

Created at the time of a powerful necromancer's death, The Umbra has expanded considerably in a short time.

Beings of the Umbra

It currently houses a new race called the Delorans, or Darkwings, who wish nothing more than the destruction of all deities and their worshippers.

Delorans are shadow-cloaked winged beings, similar in appearance to gargoyles, but much larger, growing to over 7 feet tall in some cases and supporting large wings that can carry them afar.

Their pure existence is based around the destruction of all that is holy, targeting priests above all others.

Necromantic Tomes

Death-Dealing Texts

Below are three tomes created by various mages and priests that showcase their research into death and undeath.



Libram of the Moribund

This book gives a concise history of taking care of those dying and burial practices (see the article *Death Rites* in Issue 2 of **d12 Monthly**).

It also gives information on where spirits go after they die (see the article *Spirited Away* from issue 2 of **d12 Monthly**).

Written by a cleric of Ullarl, High Prelate Darg of the Dim Mantle, in his own dying days, it also gives insights into the clergy of the church at the time and some history of the Ullarlan faith itself.

Its black, obsidian cover supports the symbol of Ullarl (a dark amaranthine circle), and the writings are on the highest quality paper.

(See article *Ullarl: Deity of Death and Loss*, in Issue 2 of **d12 Monthly**, for more information about the deity Ullarl.)

Daaron's Death Scribits

More a series of scrolls than a book, this opus was separated into five parts, of which three have been lost to the ages. These tethered scrolls are the third part.

It is inked on skin rather than paper (the skin of what is unknown) and the individual scrolls are bound together with sinew strips (again, from an unknown source).

It contains writings on how to create and bind the dead to do your bidding. It also contains the herbs and methods in the article *Enhance Your Undead* in this issue to augment your undead.

Scroll of the Deathspark

This orc-skin scroll contains a number of arcane spells, including the *Summon Undead* spell (see article *Necromancer Level Up* in this issue).

It is written in a mixture of elf and human blood and is protected by a very ancient and yet still potent *Explosive Runes* spell. It is believed to have been written by a mage by the name of Vok Hollowbind.

The other spells it contains are as follows: *Animate Dead*, *Chill Touch*, *Enervation*, *Finger of Death*, and *Halt Undead*.



Undead Familiars

Your Best Friend Just Got Better



Many necromancers out-live their regular familiars or the familiars grow uneasy being around their master. To end

this, many necromancers have killed their familiars and then raised them.

This is as simple as adding a template to your base creature.

All of the following familiars have the same immunities and resistances as all undead have. As well as this, all hit dice become D12s.

Familiars for necromancers of level 1-5:

Zombie Familiar

Zombie familiars tend to be slow, but more difficult to kill.

Slow: Zombies familiars can move *or* attack (take a move action *or* an attack action) on their turn.

Tough: However, they can keep functioning even below 0 hit points. Once they reach -10, they expire (they keep losing 1 hit point per round as per normal rules).

Skeletal Familiar

These familiars are more resistant to most physical attacks but not against all.

Resistance: these familiars take no damage from piercing weapons and half damage from slashing weapons.

Shattering Bones: They take double damage from bludgeoning weapons.

Familiars for necromancers of level 6-10:

Ghostly Familiar

These incorporeal undead are hard to kill and can scare opponents.

Frightful Moan: As a standard action, all within 30ft, must make a moderate Wisdom/Will save or flee in fear for 2D4 rounds.

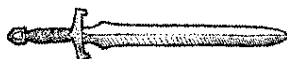
Incorporeal: These familiars cannot fetch or affect items in this world.

Ghoulish Familiar

These familiars reek of death and have a dangerous paralyzing touch.

Paralysing Touch: The familiar, when attacking, may cause the target to become paralysed for D4 rounds unless they make a moderate Constitution/Fortitude save.

Stench: The necromancer suffers a -4 on all charisma-based checks from others when his familiar is nearby.



Create New Undead

Random Tables to Create Undead

Below you will find a series of tables that will allow you to create any number of new undead creatures to throw at your PCs.

Directions: Roll once on Table 1; 1-2 times on Table 2; and 1-2 times on Table 3. Then roll a D8 for the number of Hit Dice.

Table 1: Appearance

D10	Appearance
1	Scarred
2	Flesh falling off
3	Just bones
4	Floating head
5	Apparition
6	Invisible
7	Shadow
8	Blob
9	Mass of bones & flesh
10	Stitched together



Table 2: Traits

D10	Appearance
1	Only magic weapon hit
2	Attack causes target to be stunned: no actions this round
3	Paralyzation touch for D10 rounds
4	Fear aura within 30ft: save or flee
5	Level drain attack: -1 level
6	Stench: all within 30ft nauseated
7	Dispel magic: anyone or thing touched loses 1 magic ability
8	Ethereal
9	Attack causes exhaustion level
10	Difficult to turn: -2 to attempts

Table 3: Vulnerabilities

1	Light causes pain: -2 to all actions
2	Easily turned: +2 to attempts
3	Slow moving: 20ft per round
4	Attack causes only 1 damage
5	Damaged by cold iron or silver weapons
6	Vulnerable to fire or lightning
7	Attacks or moves in one round
8	Double damage from one weapon type (P,B or S)
9	Small in size
10	Stench gives away location

Example of New Undead Creature

Rolling on all three tables, I get the following:

Apparition
Ethereal
Attack causes exhaustion level
Damaged by cold iron or silver weapons
Attacks or moves in one round

I then roll for HD and get 8! This is one tough undead.

Putting all this together I get the following:

Ethereal Eidolon

This creature haunts old mansions and similar places, and it lusts for perfection. It is created out of the frustration and anger over not being able to find their idealised self during life and are trying to find it after death.

This drive is what keeps them in our world and they seek out idealised people to prey on.

In game terms, this means they will attack anyone with high ability scores. Any character with a high Strength, Dexterity, Constitution or Charisma will be targeted before any others.

Traits

The Ethereal Eidolon, like the name suggests, appears as an apparition and is always ethereal. This means it can only be attacked with a weapon that can target ethereal creatures and by magic. It can however be damaged by any weapon that is

either silver and made from cold iron (iron from meteorites).

Attacks

It's attacks cause no hit point damage, but instead cause a level of exhaustion in the target on each successful hit (see exhaustion table).

This will slowly cause any victim to weaken and eventually die, whereupon the Ethereal Eidolon will consume its lifeforce and take on one of the victim's ability scores (assuming it is higher than its own).

This means that each Ethereal Eidolon will have unique ability scores which could vary greatly.

Table: Exhaustion Levels

Level	Effect
1	-4 (or Disadvantage) on ability checks
2	Speed/Movement is halved
3	-4 (or disadvantage) on attack rolls & saving throws
4	Hit points maximum halved
5	Speed is reduced to 0
6	Death

Given it is so consumed by perfection this causes the creature to be slow to act. In game terms, this means it can either move or attack in a round, not both.

Now all that is left is to add in the AC, saves, and any skills (plus anything else you deem appropriate).

Weapon Spotlight

This month we look at the scythe.

Scythe

The scythe is an iconic weapon of death. The Grim Reaper carries one, supposedly to reap the souls of those who are on Death's door.



In our own world, the scythe is primarily a farmer's tool to help bring in the wheat at harvest time. The military version of this weapon is reinforced and designed for battle.

Scythe Table

Weapon	Damage	Critical	Type
Farmer's Scythe	D8	x3	Simple
Battle Scythe	2D4	x4	Martial

Scythes can be either slashing or piercing weapons.

A scythe is an unwieldy weapon and must be used two-handed by someone trained in its use.

When a critical is rolled, the scythe's damage is either tripled or quadrupled (see scythe table above).

Magical Scythes

It is not often you come across a magical scythe, so here are two for you to use in your campaign.

Scindere

This scythe was named **Scindere** (Auld Common for cut or wound) by its second owner, after the first was fireballed by an angry wizard in a fight just after he hefted it for the first time.

Once per day it acts as a sword of lifestealing, causing the regular damage plus the victim gains one negative level (or loses a level) unless they make a difficult Constitution/Fortitude/Death save.

Pathfinder

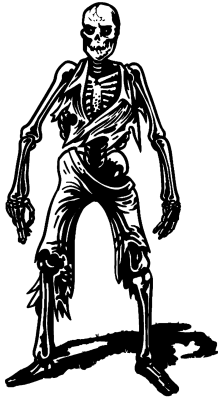
The scythe named **Pathfinder**, was created by a wizard-turned-farmer after the village he was living in at the time was attacked by orcs. He wanted to give the town's hero a weapon to mow down any opposition quickly.

As a scythe it already deals savage wounds, but this one also allows you to cleave several opponents at once. If you manage to drop an opponent to 0 HP you can then attack another opponent within 5ft of you. This continues until you run out of opponents that are within 5ft.



Teaching An Old Undead New Tricks

What can you teach an undead to do?



Undead tend to just blindly attack, but what if you could teach them tricks?

Called *Commands*, these tricks are able to be taught to “mindless” undead. A mindless undead can be taught one command per HD they have.

List of Commands

Assist Attack

The undead assists you by attacking the same opponent. This either gives you a +2 assistance bonus or a flanking bonus (assuming the undead can get into the correct position).

Attack

The undead will attack your enemies to the best of their abilities. If you are present,

you can even stipulate which opponent they should attack. Otherwise they will attack the closest opponent.

Defend

This allows you to command undead to defend you, another person present at the time of the command, or an object. This means they will try to stop attackers getting to you and putting themselves in harm's way to protect you.

Follow

The undead will follow closely behind you.

Guard

The undead will attempt to stop anyone from approaching what it is guarding.

Hold

The undead attempts to grapple and hold an opponent you designate.

Stay

An undead given this order will stop any attacks and stay where there are.

Return

The undead returns to where you are.

Seek

Allows the undead to search for any opponents.

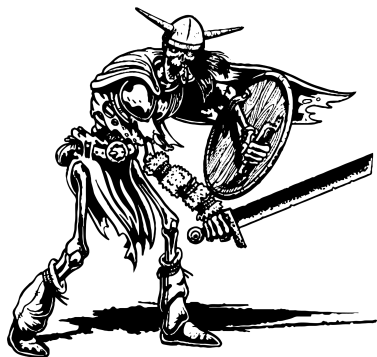
Steal

The undead will attempt to take some item from an opponent. They will initiate a grapple and try to wrest it away from the opponent.



Update Your Undead

Undead Weren't Always That Way



Skeletons and zombies come in all shapes and sizes and with all sorts of baggage from their previous life.

Below are some random tables you can use to equip your undead and make them a little more unique.

Feel free to combine these results with both the *Teaching Old Undead New Tricks* and *Create New Undead* articles in this issue.

Undead Type

The first thing to check is the type of undead.

Table: Type of Undead

D6	Result
1-2	Animal
3-5	Humanoid
6	Other - Get creative

Armour & Weapons

If a humanoid undead was indicated, the next step is to check what armour and weapon the undead has.

Table: Armour

D10	Result
1-2	Leather armour (AC +1)
3-4	Mail Armour (AC +3)
5-6	Plate Armour (AC +6)
7-8	Small Shield (AC +1)
9-10	Large Shield (AC +2)

If a shield is indicated, you can roll a D6 to find armour as well, if needed.

Table: Weapons

D12	Result
1-2	Shortsword
3-4	Longsword
5-6	Spear
7-8	Warhammer
9-10	Two-handed sword
11-12	Long or short bow



Size of Undead

Now you can check the size of the undead, if needed.

Table: Size of Undead

D10	Result
1	Tiny (+4 AC; -4 Str)
2	Small (+1 AC; -2 Str)
3-7	Medium (No changes)
8	Large (-1 AC, +4 Str)
9	Huge (-2 AC, +8 Str)
10	Gargantuan (-4 AC, +12 Str)

Enhanced Abilities

These can have various effects as decided by the GM. Strength is obvious as it will affect hit and damage, while Dexterity will affect the undead's AC.

Intelligence can affect the creature's ability to learn new Commands (see *Teaching an Undead New Tricks* in this issue). Meanwhile Wisdom can give the undead a boost to spotting those pesky adventures.

Lastly, Charisma can also increase an undead's resistance to turn attempts.

Table: Enhanced Abilities

D6	Result
1-2	Strength +4
3	Dexterity +4
4	Intelligence +4
5	Wisdom +4
6	Charisma +4

Special Traits

Some undead retain some of the memories, skills, and traits from their previous lives.

Roll on the following table to see what the undead have retained from their former lives.

Table: Special Traits

D12	Result
1	Pickpocket: will try and steal item instead of attacking
2	Skilled fighter: Gain +1 to hit
3	Stunning Attack: stuns as per the monk
4	Cause Wounds: touch attack causes D6+HD in damage
5	Unstoppable: Gain two HD
6	Uncanny Dodge: Take half damage on failed save or none with a successful save
7	Undead Familiar*
8	Negative Energy Link: +4 difficulty to turn attempts
9	Enters Rage: Gain rage benefits of a barbarian
10	Woodland Stride: Move through any non-magical difficult terrain normally
11	Divine Influence: Gain one D4 divine spell to cast once per encounter
12	Spellcasting: Gains one D4 level arcane spell to cast once per encounter

* See the article *Undead Familiars* in this issue.

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