

# d12 Monthly

THE ARCANISTS ISSUE

Issue 33  
March, 2024

**FREE VERSION**

## SURVIVAL

HOW TO KEEP YOUR  
MAGIC-USER ALIVE!

## NEW MAGIC-USER SPELLS

DESIGNED FOR USE WITH

**OLD-SCHOOL  
ESSENTIALS**

## MAGIC-USER SPECIALISATION

MORE CLASS-BASED ADVENTURE HOOKS

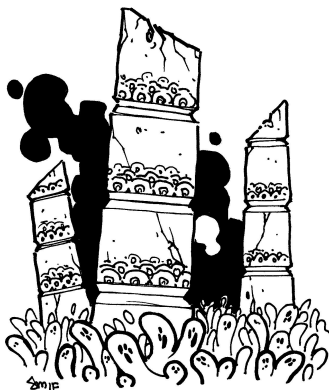


*d12 Monthly* is a helpful resource for fantasy roleplayers.

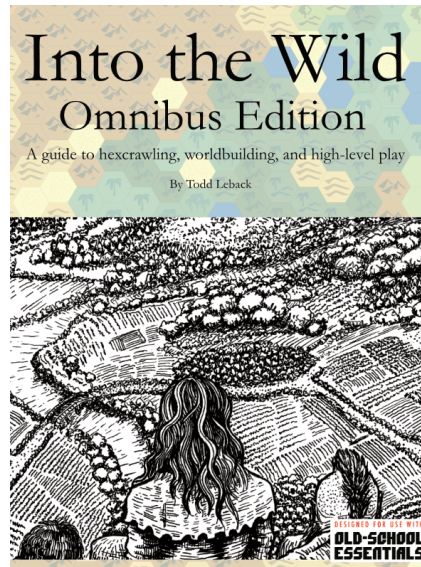
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Unless otherwise mentioned, all articles are written by Russ at YUMDM.

## The Arcanists Issue

This one started as a combo issue with the arcane and divine classes featuring, but it soon became apparent that I wouldn't have enough room for both.

The arcanists won, and so the divine issue will be next month.

I hope you get use out of all the new spells, ideas, and guidance that is contained in this issue.

It will hopefully expand your OSE (or other) campaign and allow players and GMs to add a little more scope and richness to the world.

OSE (and B/X it was based on), are great systems to add and adapt to your liking. Game on!

And, 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.

**Other TTRPGs I like:** WEG D6 Star Wars, Feng Shui RPG, & Warhammer FRP.

## Thanks to my Patrons

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... for making this zine as good as it is.

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# Survival of the Fittest

## How to Play a Magic-User Without Dying



Playing an OSE (or B/X, or any early edition) magic-user has its challenges, to say the least.

Starting with just one spell, D4 HP, and no armour is a recipe for disaster in OSE. However, many magic-users make it past 1st level, and even go on to survive long enough to make their mark.

## How to Survive

This article will hopefully help you get your magic-user (or illusionist) to higher levels.

## First Up, Prepare

Knowledge is power.

Before you go anywhere, make sure you have as much information about the location as possible. Know what danger and enemies to expect.

This may mean researching in libraries, talking to locals, like rangers or druids, or specialists such as sages.

## Stay Informed

Learn about the creatures, traps, and challenges you encounter. Being prepared and having the right spells memorised for the situation can make a significant difference.

## Choose & Use Spells Wisely

Magic Missile is probably not the best spell to take at first level.

There are [better spells to take](#).

Spells can be used in many different ways, so always look for ways to utilise the spells you have in various situations.

## Work With What You Have

If your spells were rolled randomly and you got stuck with some less-than-optimal spells, figure out what your role within the party will be.

Stuck with Read Magic and Detect Magic? The party will be looking to you for guidance on which items are magical after combat is over, and you will be able to see which scrolls you want.

## Play Smart

Sometimes, talking your way out of a fight is the best spell of all. Charm Person and Speak with Animals can be surprisingly effective.

## Know Your Limits

Don't be a hero. If a fight seems unwinnable, retreat and regroup. There's no shame in living to cast another day.

## Stay Out of Combat

This is probably stating the obvious, but as a low-level magic-user with low hit points, you cannot afford to take damage from anyone or anything.

## Avoid Combat Altogether

Old-school fantasy gaming isn't about combat - it's about how to avoid combat (while still getting the treasure). The more you know about your surroundings (via prior research, scouting, or magic), the better.

## Have a Back-Up Weapon

If you do find yourself in combat, think about some sort of weapon you can use. Here are a few examples:

**Daggers:** these can be thrown or used in melee. Carry a few just in case.

**Burning Oil Flasks:** These can be thrown up to 50-ft and can not only be used to do damage to your enemies, but also frighten away monsters who dislike fire, or to block advancing monsters.

**Green Slime Flasks:** I used these once after encountering a green slime. I managed to collect enough to have four of these flasks I could throw at enemies.

## Use Cover

Whenever possible, use terrain and obstacles to your advantage. Seek cover behind walls, rocks, or other barriers to protect yourself from ranged attacks and spells.

## Party Synergies

Choose spells that complement your companions' abilities. A well-placed Slow can set up a fighter for a devastating critical hit.

## Create

Start creating scrolls and potions as soon as possible, as these will allow you to have access to more spells, and some neat abilities like turning invisible.

## Don't Get Cocky

Even high-level magic-users are fragile. Remember, one unlucky roll can be all it takes to turn you into a pile of smouldering robes.

## Get Creative

Use what you find. Creature parts can make great material components for spells (see *Issue 4 of d12 Monthly* for more information on using creature parts this way).



# Wizardly Matters

## Expanding Magic-Users Specialisation



Illusionists have always shared a unique spot in the game - they are simply magic-users who specialise in one particular school of magic.

So, like more modern interpretations of the game, why not add the other magic schools as specialisations into OSE as well?

### Building on What's There

In order to facilitate these rules, I am building on the 'Advanced Spell Book Rules' in the *Advanced Player's Tome*.

## Specialisations

### The Abjurer

Abjuration spells deal with spells that protect, block, or banish.

### The Conjurer

Conjuration spells bring creatures or materials to the caster.

### The Diviner

Divining spells reveal information to the caster.

### The Enchanter

Enchantment spells imbue the recipient with some property, or grant the caster power over another being.

### The Evoker

Evocation spells manipulate energy or create something from nothing.

### The Illusionist

Illusion spells alter perception or create false images.

### The Necromancer

Necromancy spells manipulate, create, or destroy life or life force.

### The Transmuter

Alteration spells transform the recipient physically or change its properties in a more subtle way.

## Specialist Magic-User

### Magical Research

A specialist of any level may spend time and money on magical research. This allows them to add new spells to their spell book and to research other magical effects.

When a specialist reaches 9th level, they are also able to create magical items.

Researched spells and effects must be within the scope of the specialist's class, as judged by the referee.

It takes half the time and is at half the cost when a specialist magic-users is

researching spells or magic items related to their specialist school.

## Spell Casting

Specialists carry spell books containing the formulae for arcane spells. The level progression table shows both the number of spells in the specialist's spell book and the number they may memorise, determined by the character's experience level.

Thus, a 1st level specialist has two spells in their spell book, one from their specialist school and another spell (although this cannot come from their restricted schools. This can be selected by the referee (or chosen by the player). The list of spells available to specialists is found on the following pages.

## Using Magic Items

As spell casters, specialists are able to use magic scrolls of spells on their spell list. They can also use items that may only be used by arcane spell casters (e.g. magic wands). They are, however, not able to use magic items with effects that are based on their restricted schools.

## Restricted Schools

A specialist magic-user must choose two schools from which they cannot learn or cast spells from.

## Bonus Spells

A specialist magic-user receives one additional spell in their beginning spell book, but this spell must be chosen from their specialist school.

Additionally, the magic-user gains an additional spell to cast each new level of spells they achieve. This spell must be from the school they specialise in.

For example, a first-level Abjurer would have one beginning spell (either rolled randomly or chosen by the player), plus one additional spell from the Abjuration list (see spell lists below) in their spellbook.

And, per day, would be able to cast 2 first level spells, one being from the abjuration school.

Once they reached 3rd level, they would be able to cast two 2nd level spells: one general spell, plus one from their specialisation school.



## Spell Lists

The OSE rulebook doesn't give you the school each spell belongs to, but many other old school editions do. I have listed the spells under their spell school for completeness below.

**Table: Spells & Their School - Level 1**

Spell	School
Charm Person	Enchantment
Detect Magic	Divination
Floating Disc	Evocation
Hold Portal	Alteration
Light (Darkness)	Alteration
Magic Missile	Evocation
Protection from Evil	Abjuration
Read Language	Alteration
Read Magic	Divination
Shield	Evocation
Sleep	Enchantment
Ventriloquism	Illusion

**Table: Spells & Their School - Level 2**

Spell	School
Continual Light (Continual Darkness)	Alteration
Detect Evil	Divination
Detect Invisibility	Divination
ESP	Divination
Invisibility	Illusion
Knock	Alteration
Levitate	Alteration

Locate Object	Divination
Mirror Images	Illusion
Phantasmal Force	Illusion
Web	Evocation
Wizard Lock	Alteration

**Table: Spells & Their School - Level 3**

Spell	School
Clairvoyance	Divination
Dispel Magic	Abjuration
Fireball	Evocation
Fly	Alteration
Haste	Alteration
Hold Person	Enchantment
Infravision	Alteration
Invisibility 10' Radius	Illusion
Lightning Bolt	Evocation
Protection from Evil 10' Radius	Abjuration
Protection from Normal Missiles	Abjuration
Water Breathing	Alteration

**Table: Spells & Their School - Level 4**

Spell	School
Charm Monster	Enchantment
Confusion	Enchantment
Dimension Door	Alteration
Growth of Plants	Alteration



Hallucinatory Terrain	Illusion
Massmorph	Illusion
Polymorph Others	Alteration
Polymorph Self	Alteration
Remove Curse (Curse)	Abjuration
Wall of Fire	Evocation
Wall of Ice	Evocation
Wizard Eye	Evocation



**Table: Spells & Their School - Level 5**

Spell	School
Animate Dead	Necromantic
Cloudkill	Evocation
Conjure Elemental	Conjuration
Contact Higher Plane	Divination
Feeblemind	Enchantment
Hold Monster	Enchantment
Magic Jar	Necromancy
Pass-Wall	Alteration
Telekinesis	Alteration
Teleport	Alteration
Transmute Rock to Mud (Mud to Rock)	Alteration
Wall of Stone	Evocation

**Table: Spells & Their School - Level 6**

Spell	School
Anti-Magic Shell	Abjuration
Control Weather	Alteration
Death Spell	Conjuration
Disintegrate	Alteration
Geas (Remove Geas)	Enchantment
Invisible Stalker	Conjuration
Lower Water	Alteration
Move Earth	Alteration
Part Water	Alteration
Projected Image	Illusion
Reincarnation	Necromantic
Stone to Flesh (Flesh to Stone)	Alteration



**Table: New Spells & Their School**

Spell	School
Alarm	Alteration
Black Tentacles	Conjuration
Burning Hands	Alteration
Dismissal	Abjuration
Enchant an Item	Abjuration
Faithful Hound	Conjuration
Find Familiar	Conjuration
Flame Arrow	Conjuration
Fog Cloud	Conjuration
Glitterdust	Conjuration
Grease	Conjuration
Minor Globe of Invulnerability	Abjuration
Monster Summoning I	Conjuration
Monster Summoning II	Conjuration
Monster Summoning III	Conjuration
Monster Summoning IV	Conjuration
Protection from Normal Missiles	Abjuration
Push	Conjuration
Stoneskin	Abjuration
Unseen Servant	Conjuration

See the following descriptions for these new spells.

## The Missing Grimoire

### New Spells

The OSE player's guides have a decent number of spells to start any campaign with, but after a while those spells can become predictable.

The below spells are taken from other editions of the game so GMs can introduce more variety into the spells magic-users can find in their OSE campaigns.

This is especially important to specialist magic-users as they need to select spells based on their specialist school.

### Alteration

#### Level 1

#### Burning Hands

Range: 0

The caster invokes jets of searing flame from their fingertips.

- The burning hand sends out flame jets of 5-ft length in a horizontal arc of about 120-ft in front of the magic-user.
- Any creature in the area of flames takes 1 hit point of damage for each level of experience of the spellcaster (no save allowed).
- Flammable materials touched by the fire will burn.

# Abjuration Spells

## Level 1

### Alarm

Range: 10 feet/level

Duration: 2 hours/level

Alerts the caster to the presence of creatures entering a designated area.

- When this spell is cast, the caster selects a door, window, or other opening or area within range to be alarmed. If any creature of Tiny or larger size enters the alarmed area while the spell is in effect, the caster is alerted by a mental ping.
- This alert can awaken the caster from sleep if necessary. The spell does not differentiate between friend or foe, nor does it provide any information about the nature or number of creatures entering the area.

## Level 3

### Protection from Normal Missiles

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 turn/level

Grants the target protection from non-magical ranged attacks.

- When this spell is cast, the target gains protection from non-magical ranged attacks, such

as arrows, bolts, sling stones, and other projectiles.

- While under the effect of this spell, the target gains a +4 bonus to their Armour Class against non-magical ranged attacks specifically.
- Additionally, the target gains a +4 bonus to saving throws against damage caused by such attacks.
- This spell does not provide protection against magical projectiles or attacks.

## Level 4

### Minor Globe of Invulnerability

Range: Self

Duration: 1 turn/level

Creates a shimmering, invisible magical sphere around the caster that protects against spells of 3rd level or lower.

- When this spell is cast, a faintly shimmering magical globe surrounds the caster.
- This globe acts as a barrier against incoming magical effects of 3rd level or lower, including spells, spell-like abilities, and magical devices. Such effects cannot penetrate or affect the area inside the globe.
- Higher-level spells and magical effects are unaffected by this barrier.
- The globe moves with the caster.

## Stoneskin

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 turn/level

Renders the target's skin as hard as stone, providing resistance against physical attacks.

- When this spell is cast, the target's skin becomes as hard as stone, granting them resistance against physical attacks.
- The target gains a +4 bonus to their Armour Class against all attacks, including those from weapons and natural attacks.
- Additionally, the target receives a +4 bonus to saving throws against attacks that directly affect their body, such as petrification, poison, or similar effects.

## Level 5

### Dismissal

Range: Touch

Duration: Instantaneous

Forces a summoned creature back to its home plane.

- When this spell is cast, the caster touches a summoned creature, causing it to return to its home plane if it fails a saving throw.
- The spell automatically dismisses the summoned creature if it originated from a plane other than the one the caster currently occupies. If the creature is native

to the caster's plane, the spell has no effect.

- The caster must successfully touch the creature, which may require a successful attack roll if the creature is unwilling.
- The spell cannot be resisted by the creature once it fails its saving throw.



## Conjuration

### Level 1

#### Find Familiar (needs more work)

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent until dismissed

Summons a small, loyal creature to serve as a familiar.

- When this spell is cast, the caster summons a small, loyal creature to serve as their familiar. The type of creature summoned

depends on the caster's alignment and the GM's discretion, but common choices include a bat, cat, frog, hawk, lizard, owl, rat, raven, spider, or toad.

- The familiar remains with the caster until it is dismissed or slain. The familiar has a special bond with the caster, providing benefits such as improved scouting abilities, a bonus to certain skill checks, or the ability to deliver touch spells.
- The familiar is also vulnerable to harm and may be targeted by enemies seeking to weaken the caster.
- If the familiar is slain, the caster loses a portion of their magical power until they can summon a new familiar.

## Push

Range: 30 feet

Duration: Instantaneous

Pushes a target creature or object away from the caster.

- When this spell is cast, the caster selects a target creature or object within range and pushes it away from themselves.
- The target must succeed on a saving throw or be forcibly moved up to 10 feet directly away from the caster.
- If the target is a creature, it may be pushed into obstacles, other creatures, or hazardous terrain,

potentially causing additional effects determined by the GM.

- If the target is an object, it may be pushed with force, potentially causing damage if it collides with other objects or creatures.
- The spell's effectiveness may be influenced by the size and weight of the target and environmental factors such as the terrain or presence of obstacles.

## Unseen Servant

Range: 30 feet

Duration: 1 hour/level

Conjures an invisible, mindless servant to perform simple tasks.

- When this spell is cast, the caster summons an unseen servant to perform simple tasks at their command.
- The unseen servant is invisible, intangible, and has no physical form.
- It follows the caster's verbal commands to the best of its ability, performing tasks such as cleaning, fetching items, opening doors, or carrying objects.
- The unseen servant cannot engage in combat or perform complex tasks that require decision-making or intelligence.
- It has a limited strength and cannot exert force beyond what a typical human servant could manage.

## Grease

Range: 30 feet

Duration: 1 round/level

Creates a slippery surface in an area, causing creatures to potentially fall.

- When this spell is cast, the caster creates a slippery coating of grease on a surface within range. The affected area can be up to 10 feet square.
- Any creature entering or starting its turn in the area must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.
- Additionally, the slippery surface makes it difficult to move through the area. Creatures moving through the greased area must succeed on a Dexterity saving throw or fall prone.

## Level 2

### Fog Cloud

Range: 60 feet

Duration: 1 turn/level

Creates a bank of fog that obscures vision.

- When this spell is cast, a billowing cloud of fog spreads out from the point of origin within range, covering a 20-foot radius area.
- The fog obscures all sight, including darkvision, beyond 5 feet.

- The fog obscures any light sources, including magical light, causing illumination to be reduced to dim light within the area.
- The fog persists for the duration of the spell or until dispersed by a strong wind or similar effect.

### Glitterdust

Range: 30 feet

Duration: 1 round/level

Creates a cloud of glittering particles that reveal invisible creatures and outlines visible creatures.

- When this spell is cast, a cloud of fine, golden particles fills the air in a 10-foot radius centred on a point within range.
- Any creature within the area of effect must make a saving throw or be outlined by the glittering particles for the duration of the spell.
- Outlined creatures cannot benefit from invisibility or similar effects, making them visible to all observers.



## Level 3

### Flame Arrow

Range: Touch

Duration: 1 round/level

Enchants arrows to burst into flames upon striking a target.

- When this spell is cast, the caster enchants up to four non-magical arrows. These arrows become Flame Arrows, glowing with a fiery aura.
- When fired and successfully hitting a target, the Flame Arrows burst into flames upon impact, dealing additional fire damage. Each Flame Arrow deals an additional 1 point of fire damage per level of magic-user on top of the normal damage dealt by the arrow. The flames from the arrows can ignite flammable materials and potentially cause secondary damage to the target.
- The enchantment lasts until the arrows are fired or the duration of the spell expires.

### Monster Summoning I

Range: 60 feet

Duration: 1 round/level

Summons 2D4 one hit die creatures to aid the caster in combat.

- The magic-user will cause the appearance of 2-8 one hit die

monsters (selected at random by the referee).

- These monsters will appear in the spot, within spell range, desired by the magic-user, and they will attack the spell user's opponents to the best of their ability until he or she commands that attack cease, or the spell duration expires, or the monsters are slain.
- The creatures summoned by this spell are typically animals or minor monsters native to the area, such as wolves, giant rats, or similar creatures.

## Level 4

### Monster Summoning II

Range: 60 feet

Duration: 1 round/level

Summons D6 2 hit die creatures to aid the caster in combat.

- The type of creatures summoned is determined by the GM and should be appropriate to the environment and the caster's alignment.
- These creatures appear within range and immediately obey the caster's verbal commands to the best of their ability. They fight alongside the caster for the duration of the spell or until they are slain, at which point they vanish.

## Black Tentacles

Range: 60 feet

Duration: 1 round/level

Summons writhing black tentacles in a 20-foot square area.

- The tentacles grasp and entangle any creatures within the area, restraining them and potentially causing damage. Any creature in the area of effect, or entering the area on its turn, will be restrained by the tentacles unless a saving throw versus petrification is successful.
- Restrained creatures suffer ongoing bludgeoning damage (D4) each round they remain restrained.
- A creature can attempt to escape the tentacles by making a successful petrification saving throw.

## Level 5

### Monster Summoning III

Range: 60 feet

Duration: 1 round/level

Summons D4 third level creatures to aid the caster in combat.

- The type of creatures summoned is determined by the GM and should be appropriate to the environment and the caster's alignment.

- These creatures appear within range and immediately obey the caster's verbal commands to the best of their ability. They fight alongside the caster for the duration of the spell or until they are slain, at which point they vanish.



### Faithful Hound

Range: 30 feet

Duration: 1 hour/level

Summons a magical watchdog to guard an area.

- When this spell is cast, the caster conjures a phantom watchdog that appears in an unoccupied space within range. The faithful



hound faithfully obeys the caster's verbal commands and guards the designated area for the duration of the spell.

- The hound is invisible to all creatures except the caster and cannot be harmed or interacted with by physical attacks or spells.
- However, the hound can sense the presence of creatures within 30 feet of it and will bark loudly to alert the caster. The hound has darkvision and can see invisible creatures within its range.

## Level 6

### Enchant An Item (Need more work)

Range: Touch

Duration: Permanent

Bestows a magical enchantment upon a non-magical object.

- The nature of the enchantment and its effects are determined by the caster's knowledge, skill, and the GM's discretion.
- This spell can be used to imbue objects with a variety of magical properties, such as enhancing their effectiveness, granting them protective qualities, or imbuing them with special abilities.
- The exact effects of the enchantment should be discussed and agreed upon by the GM and the player casting the spell.

- Once enchanted, the object retains its magical properties permanently unless dispelled or otherwise removed by magical means.

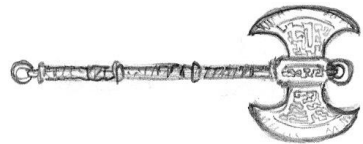
### Monster Summoning IV

Range: 60 feet

Duration: 1 round/level

Summons D3 fourth-level creatures to aid the caster in combat.

- The type of creatures summoned is determined by the GM and should be appropriate to the environment and the caster's alignment.
- These creatures appear within range and immediately obey the caster's verbal commands to the best of their ability. They fight alongside the caster for the duration of the spell or until they are slain, at which point they vanish.
- The creatures summoned by this spell are typically stronger and more diverse than those summoned by lower-level versions of this spell, such as displacer beasts, wyverns, or similar creatures.



# By Hook or By Crook

## Class Adventure Hooks

*This will be an on-going series in the OSE class books I will be releasing over the next few months. See Issue 32 for more information.*



## Magic-Users

- Seek out fabled magic items, relics, or even powerful artefacts.
- Preparing to make, or save to pay a specialist, to make non-magical items that will help in spellcasting and/or combat.
- Source scrolls and the spell books of other magic-users from which to learn spells: sometimes this occurs through consensus and negotiation; sometimes not.
- Pester sages with information about the locations of famed wizards and sorcerers of lore: sometimes their abandoned lairs, workshops or tombs hold magical secrets the world has not seen for aeons.
- Building a tower or other structure of their own. This can take a long time, a lot of resources, and a lot of gold.
- Set themselves up as a sage in a local settlement, or in a remote location.

## Illusionists

- Seek out magic items, relics, or artefacts made specifically for illusionists.
- Find other illusionists who are willing to swap spells or to collaborate on a particular task. This could be difficult as illusionists tend not to publicise their specialisation.
- Seek out dangerous animals and monsters so they can learn how to create a more realistic illusion of them
- Create new illusion spells and share with other illusionists, sages, or large centres of magical learning.
- Source a regular and cheap supply of the gems necessary for the casting of Chromatic Orb, a rare spell in OSE to require a material component.
- Seek sources, through trade or plunder, of all kinds of magical items - even those not usable by the illusionists that they may trade or sell them for information or much-needed gold.



## Need More?

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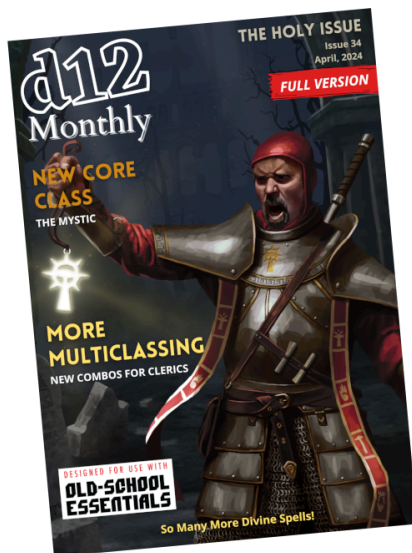
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## Next Month

For April, we dive into the holy classes of *Old School Essentials* - the cleric and paladin, expanding on these and introducing a new class.



There will also be new spells, class-based adventure hooks, more spells, kits, and multiclassing options.

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**THE ARCANISTS**

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