

# MAGIC ITEM FEATURES



**T**he special features tables for magic items are among 5th Edition's most flavorful additions. These details grant even the plainest of such items a unique feel. Still, any given list of options only remains fresh for so long.

**Writing**  
**Editing**

Ari Marmell  
Mike Myler

# HISTORY

Roll 1d8 to find a detail from a magic item's history.

- 1. Champion's Prize.** The item was once presented as a reward to the winner of a famous competition: a series of games and sporting events with competitors from multiple kingdoms, the first successful completion of an arduous religious rite, a scavenger hunt put on by multiple guilds, or the like. Depending on the significance of the competition and how long ago it occurred, this could simply be an interesting piece of trivia, or it could have major repercussions for the wielder, who might be seen as unworthy or a pretender to unearned glory.
- 2. Conflict.** This item was the spark that ignited some sort of conflict, as different sides or factions vied to acquire it. This might have been as minor as a social struggle between two politicians or local guilds, or as large as a full-scale war. People often expect strife and struggle to follow the item and its wielder, especially if the item doesn't seem potent or important enough to have been worth such effort and violence.
- 3. Hero's Victory.** Whether used to slay an infamous monster or taken from that monster's hoard, this item represents a great victory over a destructive or evil force. It is, in the minds of those who recognize it, associated with that specific event, rather than the identity of the adventurer who won that victory. People may expect the current wielder to perform feats of equal valor, and those with a tie to the original hero—or the monster or villain—may become hostile.
- 4. Incomplete.** Although still fully functional, the item is incomplete. A sword might be missing its pommel; a shield might be short a strap; a bag might lack a clasp or a tie. Was the item created this way, or has the absent bit been deliberately removed? Why? Is anything unusual destined to occur if the item is ever fully restored?
- 5. Monstrous Materials.** This item is crafted, in whole or in part, from the remains of monsters. A cloak might be made from the leathery wings of a chimera, for instance, or a blade from the shell of an iron golem. Other creatures of that type, if intelligent enough to recognize it, likely don't take kindly to anyone wielding such a thing, while common folk assume the wielder, as an obvious hunter of vile creatures, will be eager to aid them with their own monster problems.
- 6. Part of a Set.** This was crafted as part of a set of matching items. A magical weapon might have been forged along with a specific shield and suit of armor. Magical boots or a haversack might have been part of a complete outfit. The items all have similar design, and likely bear specific marks. Matching up items of the same set, assuming they all still exist, likely has no benefit other than aesthetics—but then again, they just might boast some additional power when combined that they lack when separated.
- 7. Remnant.** This item is one of the last surviving relics of a community, a culture, or even an entire region that has since been lost, either through natural disaster, war, or similar catastrophe. It carries an almost palpable sense of woe. Historians and any survivors of the disaster might seek to obtain the item for themselves, even if only to ensure this last trace of a dead people is never lost.
- 8. Resemblance.** For whatever reason—be it artistic inspiration, simple coincidence, or deliberate deception—this item looks almost exactly like another, much more important or powerful magic item, such as a historical treasure or even an artifact. Those who seek this item's "twin" are unlikely to believe the wielder's claims that this isn't the genuine article.

# ORBS

Roll 1d20 to determine who created a magic item or what it was once intended to do.

**1-2. Accidental.** This item was never deliberately enchanted, but acquired its magic by chance. Perhaps it sat for ages amidst other magics, absorbing their energy, or was used to strike a death blow against a fiend performing some great ritual. It likely appears old and used, but still in good condition.

**3. Ancestral Bloodline.** Crafted for a particular family, this item gained its magic from multiple generations of their belief and veneration. It bears a family crest, though it may not be immediately obvious. Members of the bloodline want it returned if they learn of it, and others might assume the bearer is related to the original family.

**4-5. Aquatic.** Crafted by merfolk, tritons, or similar aquatic (but non-elemental) races, this item is made of coral, sea plants, and scales. Using this item underwater does not impose disadvantage even if it normally would (such as attacking with certain weapons), nor does it count toward encumbrance for determining penalties to swimming.

**6. Dawncraft.** This ancient item comes from the dawn of the humanoid age, before humans, elves, and dwarves became—culturally, physically, even mentally—what they are today. It is crude, crafted of bone, stone, or poorly tanned animal pelt, and may be adorned with feathers, small bones, or other fetishes.

**7. Divine Gift.** No mortal hands crafted this item. It was placed by the gods themselves, or agents thereof, for mortals to find—perhaps intended for a great hero on a legendary quest, or maybe simply to see what they'll do with it. The item is impossibly perfect in all respects. It doubles as a (non-magical) holy symbol.

**8. Futurecraft.** This item is from the future, or from a civilization far beyond the world on which it was found. Its magics might be activated by small buttons or switches. Its lines are sleek, its metals and fabrics unidentifiable, and may even consist of substances completely unknown to the campaign setting.

**9. Incarnated Magic.** The item sprang forth whole, its physical and mystical properties already intact, from more powerful magic, such as a Wish or a lucky draw from a Deck of Many Things. Most such items are remarkably plain, lacking any artistic flourish or individual touch.

**10. Legendary Crafter.** Spoken of in history, legend, and song, a nigh-mythical smith or crafter created this item. So skilled was this artisan that items they created were innately magical, requiring no ritual or enchantment to gain their power. This item is expertly made, and bears the personal sigil of its creator.

**11. Offering.** One race or culture made this item as a gift to another, perhaps to commemorate a treaty, as a sign of friendship, or under duress. Choose two appropriate origins from these tables, one as the giver and one as the receiver; the item has some traits of both.



**Open Game Content** | The game rule information in this article is designated Open Game Content. All other material in this article, including maps and illustrations (including illustrations in the public domain), in-character and out-of-character narrative and descriptive text, character and place names, trade dress, “EN Publishing,” “EN World,” “ENsider,” EN Publishing product and article titles, and EN World and EN Publishing logos, are designated Product Identity.



**12-13. Orc.** This item is crude, with ragged edges and dangling strips of material, but brutally functional. If a weapon, it grows warm whenever it delivers a critical hit. Orcs react with hostility to an non-orc displaying the item.

**14. Planar Battlefield.** The afterlives of several gods or pantheons are everlasting battlefields, where souls are reborn every morning to fight again. This item—most appropriately a weapon, shield, or armor, but any item is justifiable with the right story—is a creation of one of those planes, intended to equip its eternal warriors. It bears the symbols of that plane or its gods.

**15. Planar Echo.** This is a “copy” of a mundane item from the material plane, native to the Plane of Shadow, the Plane of the Fey, or other echoes of the real world. Due to planar vagaries, this copy is magical even though the original is not. Items native to Shadow are dim, lighter than expected, and cold to the touch. Those native to the world of the Fey resemble fey-made items (see the DMG), but occasionally change shape or color.

**16. Servant of Chaos.** This item is made of strange, unidentifiable materials. Its design is uneven, imbalanced, with excessive parts or flourishes that serve no obvious purpose. Extraplanar creatures of Law find its presence repulsive.

**17. Servant of Order.** Minimalist and straightforward, symmetrical and technically perfect, this item strikes a precise balance between form and function. Extraplanar creatures of Chaos find its presence repulsive.

**18. Shapeshifter.** This item appears to be an average example of its type. When wielded by a shapeshifter, such as a doppelganger, it changes appearance to match whatever guise the wielder assumes, even if items are normally excluded from that change. The item’s basic nature is not affected, only the specifics of its appearance.

**19. Titan.** Made either by the creations of the gods themselves, for use by their servants, or by mortals who venerate them, this item bears icons of religious significance, forgotten history, and possibly of widespread destruction. It weighs 20% more than normal items of its type. If this item deals damage, it does one additional point of damage per attack or per spell against inanimate objects.

**20. Vestige.** Created by the fading remnants of a forgotten god, or by one of its few surviving adherents, this item feels almost insubstantial. It weighs half as much as a normal item of its type, and often seems on the verge of fading away entirely. When in the area of detect magic or similar effects, there is a 10% chance that the item fails to register as magical.



# MINOR PROPERTIES

Roll 1d20 to randomly choose a minor property to bestow onto a magic item.

- 1. Artful.** You are proficient in one tool or set of tools, of the GM's choice, while the item is on your person.
- 2. Beckoner.** If the item is separated from you, you instinctively knows the item's direction and rough distance. This knowledge lasts for 24 hours or until the item is attuned to someone else, whichever comes first.
- 3. Brave.** When you contemplate or undertake a cowardly act—or even a neutral act, when a more daring option is available—the item enhances feelings of shame and guilt.
- 4. Bulwark.** If the item is in your possession for the duration of a long rest, at the end of that long rest you gain 5 temporary hit points. These temporary hit points last for 24 hours.
- 5. Cowardly.** When you are presented with an opportunity to act in a cowardly or self-preserving manner, the item heightens your urge to make the attack.
- 6. Devoted.** The item fights to remain attuned to you. The item must be separated from you for 48 hours, rather than the standard 24, to break attunement. When a creature attempts to attune to the item while a prior attunement is still in effect, it must succeed on a DC 14 Charisma check at the end of a short rest. On a failure, the item fails to attune to the creature, remaining attuned to you.
- 7. Enigmatic.** Neither examination over the course of a short rest, nor *identify* or similar magics, reveal this item's properties. You can learn those properties only through attunement or trial and error.
- 8. Fastidious.** Once per day, as an action, you can magically clean yourself, your outfit, and the item itself of dirt, grime, sweat, and so forth. This power resets every day at dawn.
- 9. Focused.** You gain a +1 bonus to Constitution saving throws made to avoid losing concentration on an ongoing spell.
- 10. Gloom-Sight.** If you have darkvision, its range increases by 20 feet while the item is on your person. If you do not have darkvision, this minor property does nothing (and the GM may reroll at their discretion).
- 11. Hardy.** If the item is in your possession for the duration of a long rest, at the end of that long rest the item grants you one extra hit die, which can be spent as normal to regain hit points during a short rest. If not used, this extra hit die disappears after 24 hours.
- 12. Lodestar.** This item is linked to a specific location or object determined by the GM. You can use an action to determine the distance and direction to that place or object. The item does not grant you any specific knowledge of what that item or place might be.
- 13. Restful.** If the item is in your possession at the beginning of a long rest, you require only 6 hours to gain the benefit of that rest instead of 8. You can still gain the benefits of a long rest only once per day.
- 14. Resuscitator.** If the item is in your possession, you gain a +2 bonus to the first death save you make that day. This power resets every day at dawn.
- 15. Schemer.** As an action while the item is on your person, you may choose one individual within both sight and earshot. Until you end the effect (no action required) or after 1 minute, anything the you say is heard only by that individual, not by anyone else. (this is a one-way effect only.) This power can be used once a day and resets each day at dawn.

**16. Skillful.** You gain a +1 bonus to ability checks using one specific skill, of the GM's choice, while the item is on your person.

**17. Speedy.** As an action while the item is on your person, your walking speed increases by 5 feet. This bonus lasts until you deactivate it (no action required). You can use this minor property for up to 10 rounds, all at once or in several shorter bursts, each one using a minimum of 1 round from the duration. The minor property's duration recharges each day at dawn.

**18. Suppressible.** As an action, you may suppress the item's magic, in its entirety, for a preset amount of time (up to 24 hours). During that time, the item behaves as a non-magical item, can't be attuned by anyone (though existing attunement does not end), and does not register as magical to *detect magic*, *identify*, or any other spells or abilities that detect magic. The effect cannot be ended prematurely and lasts for the duration specified when activated.

**19. Unwavering.** The item grants you an extra sliver of luck to slightly mitigate unfavorable conditions. When the item is created, the GM chooses one of the following: ability checks, attack rolls, or saving throws. When you make a roll of the chosen type with disadvantage, you gain a +1 bonus.

**20. Dual-Featured.** Roll twice, rerolling any additional 20s.



# QUIRKS

Roll 1d20 to pick out a quirk for the magic item to have.

- 1. Aesthetic.** While in possession of this item, you become exceptionally fascinated by sights of beauty—artwork, scenic vistas, lush growth—and feel the urge to take every opportunity to stop and appreciate them.
- 2. Affectionate.** The GM selects one of your companions at random. While in possession of the item, you feel intense affection for this individual, above and beyond that felt for other members of the party, and you make every effort to perform little favors and services for, and to protect, that individual.
- 3. Bearer's Mark.** The item physically marks you for as long as it remains in your possession. This might take the form of a tattoo or brand, an unnatural change in eye or hair color, a slight alteration in the shape of a facial feature (such as the ears becoming pointed if the item is elven-made), or the like. This change is always minor, but noticeable.
- 4. Devout.** You must recite a prayer to one or more of the gods (of your choice) before a long rest or else you do not gain any benefits from that rest. You must discard the item at least 24 hours prior before this requirement fades.
- 5. Dreamer.** The item imposes unnatural dreams. You might dream in a different language, or in unidentifiable colors, or even use senses you don't actually possess. This has no effect on the quality of your rest.
- 6. Empathic.** This item changes appearance to match your mood. Sadness might cause the item to appear worn and to turn blue, happiness might cause it to gleam brightly, anger might make it turn red and radiate heat, and so forth. These alterations are purely cosmetic and do not alter the item's function in any way.
- 7. Leech.** The item feeds off curative magics that target you, reducing the hit points you regain from healing spells or magical effects by 1. For example, a *cure wounds* spell that heals 14 points of damage would instead heal only 13.
- 8. Mirrored.** While the item is in your possession, your dominant hand changes—if you are right-handed you become left-handed, and vice-versa.
- 9. Odorous.** The item emits a constant odor, determined by the GM when the item is created. This might be a pleasant floral scent, an animal musk, a miasma of rot, or the like. Depending on the scent, insects or small animals might be attracted to or repelled by the item.
- 10. Prim.** The item imposes a harmless but intense flash of pain whenever you tell a lie, utter a profanity, fail to show proper respect to an important individual, or generally behave in a rude or indecorous manner.
- 11. Ravenous.** The item imposes a constant hunger and while it is in your possession, each day you must consume 50% more food and water than normal.
- 12. Restless.** The item desperately wants to be used. If the item has charges it urges you to activate it, or if an armament it compels you to wear or wield it. When you go 24 hours without using the item, you gain a level of exhaustion that disappears the moment the item is used. This exhaustion cannot be removed in any other way.