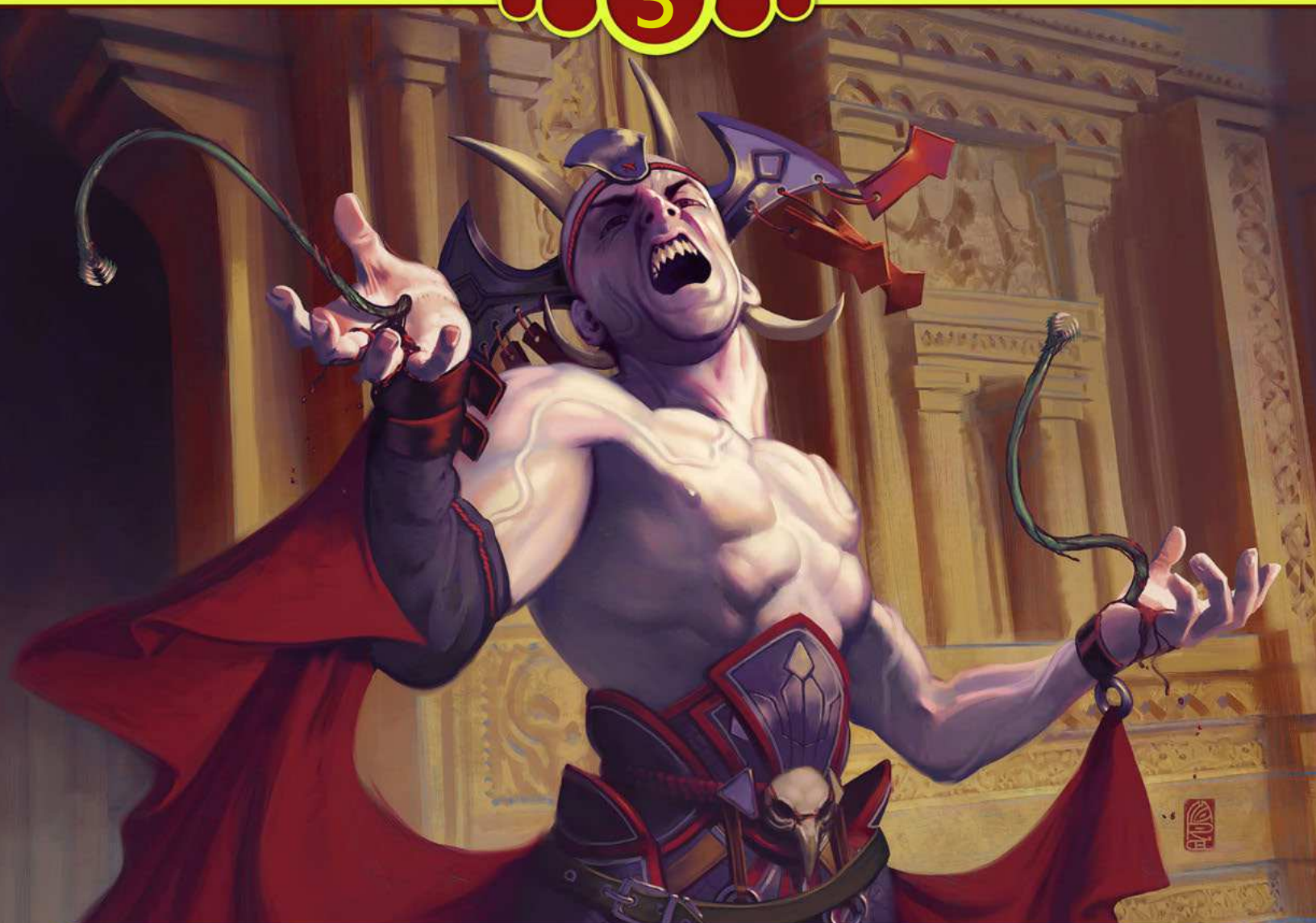


# DEEP MAGIC

3



## VOID MAGIC



DAN DILLON

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# DEEP MAGIC

## Void Magic

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# Void Magic

**A**ncient stories tell of the creation of all existence by means of spoken words that spun reality from the void. The words of creation are powerful, but—as light creates shadow—so too does creation cause destruction. Whispers of the ancient words of creation seeped into the narrow spaces between existence and nonexistence, and those whispers echo to this day. The power-hungry, the desperate, and the mad can find such whispers—with great effort and terrible risk. When spoken aloud or inscribed correctly, these words draw the power of nonexistence into the speaker's magic.

The ultimate source of the power that drives void magic is unclear. In most respects, a void magic spell is nearly identical to conventional magic and reaches toward the same mystical forces for its energy. The addition of void speech into the spell's verbal component, however, subtly alters the spell at the moment of casting, so that the spell reaches beyond the usual wells of arcane or divine power to siphon energy from strange realms of darkness, madness, and horror.

Several hypotheses exist to explain void magic's origin, from tapping the power of the Great Old Ones to drawing the last energy of a dying multiverse, but the truth is knotted in an enigma that can't be untied without tangling oneself in madness.



## Void Speech

At the heart of the enigmatic and dangerous school of void magic lies void speech. The glyphs and spoken words of the void are the essence of oblivion given form. They exist in a paradoxical state, and as such they corrupt and degrade physical reality around them. Void speech is dangerous under any circumstance, even when not infused into magic. Those who hear correctly enunciated void speech find it impossible to comprehend, but they know in their bones that what they hear is terrible. Splitting headaches, sudden nosebleeds, spoiled food, and cracked glass follow a void speech pronouncement by a particularly powerful speaker.

Inscribed void glyphs are not much safer. Readers often bleed from the eyes or suffer blurred vision. Paper bearing a glyph blackens over time, and even stone carved with the blasphemous glyphs eventually takes on a slimy texture and becomes pitted, corrupt, and foul. Explorers and scholars who stumble across a preserved void glyph have gone mad from the sudden shock to their souls. Despite the corrupting nature of such glyphs, the substance upon which they're inscribed never seems to degenerate completely—it rots and becomes loathsome, but it seemingly lasts forever in that corrupted state.

### NURTURED IN DARKNESS

Void speech and the magic that derives from it thrives in the darkest places of creation. The Great Old Ones murmur it to their followers during the cultists' grimmest nightmares. Creatures that dwell far from mortal worlds in the frigid black expanses between the stars came upon the secrets long ago, catching whispers in the silence. Void dragons, star-spawn, and other hoarders of ancient knowledge and power possess scraps of the speech cultivated into power.

Chief among earthly creatures who gather and study the power of the void are the aboleth. Those

ancient creatures discovered void speech long ago, when the nihileth returned from distant wanderings. Void speech formed the basis of the maddening glyph language that adorns their sunken cities.

Wherever anyone utters void speech, no matter how well-meaning, darkness follows. Things from beyond hear the call and can follow its echo into existence. With sufficient study and preparation, a speaker into the void can protect him or herself from the brunt of the horrors that arise and even turn deadly manifestations against foes. No amount of caution in using void speech and magic, however, can completely shield a practitioner from its corrupting nature. The void will have its due.

## The School of Void Magic

Void magic comprises a dangerous school of wizardry that exists alongside, but in the shadows of, the more well-known practices. This magic is anathema to existence itself, making it difficult to master and dangerous even to study. Dabblers rarely produce effects more profound than minor injury, property damage, and psychological scars to themselves and those around them. More serious investigations into void magic can spell disaster. Only alien creatures whose psychology and physiology defy human understanding seem capable of commanding void magic with relative ease; even beings as anomalous as aboleths respect and fear the power of void magic.

Void magic spells can never be added to a wizard's spellbook as part of the two spells learned automatically for gaining a level (with the exception of void savants; see below). To learn a void magic spell, a wizard must find an NPC void speaker who's willing to impart the knowledge or discover the spell written as a spell scroll, in a captured spellbook, carved on a temple wall, or some other form of recorded lore. Alternatively, if the GM allows it, a character who sees and hears a void magic spell being

## Void Speech in Midgard

Void speech serves specific roles in the Midgard Campaign Setting. In the Western Wastes, massive, alien beings known to the inhabitants as Great Old Ones lumber across the blasted land. Dust goblins, selang, and aberrations scamper in the creatures' shadows and crawl over their twisted bodies in worship. These beings were originally called to Midgard from beyond the stars by void speech incantations. Their coming was a disaster that devastated the once fertile plains. Shamans and sorcerers among the twisted dust goblin tribes have puzzled out bits of void speech

and wield the dark magic against their enemies.

In the Southlands, void speech is most prevalent in the Abandoned Lands. The ramag are well aware of void speech and the horrors void magic can unleash. Their gatekeepers ruthlessly hunt down any rumors of void glyphs or speakers to cleanse that taint from the world. They struggle with unstable gateways and unpredictable magic, due in no small part to void magic.

It's no coincidence that in both locations, void speech exists in lands poisoned by magic gone awry and hostile to life.



cast can add it to his or her spell book, using the same rules as transcribing a spell from a scroll.

Despite void magic's strange origins, it still functions similarly to other arcane magic on a fundamental level. Void magic follows all the normal rules for spellcasting and is susceptible to dispelling, countermagic, and antimagic as normal. Void magic spells always have a verbal component and can't, under any circumstance, be cast without it.

## Void Magic Feats

Under normal circumstances (or what passes for normal where void speech is concerned), only wizards can learn void magic. The following two feats make it possible for any character to channel the power of void speech in a limited way. At the GM's discretion, a wizard with a void magic feat may be able to learn void magic spells without finding them in written form, as if he or she was a void savant (see below).

### VOID CHANNELER

As an action, you can speak aloud a word or short phrase in void speech. One creature of your choice within 10 feet that can hear you must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw against this magic (DC 8 + your proficiency bonus + your Charisma modifier) or be frightened of you for 1 minute. A frightened creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of its turn, ending the effect on itself on a success.

Other creatures who can hear you suffer minor reactions to the void speech such as spontaneous nosebleeds, headaches, bits of hair falling out, and other unsettling effects. The first time you use this ability, you suffer no adverse effect. If you use it again before completing a short or long rest, you take 1d4 necrotic damage. Each additional time you use it before finishing a rest, the necrotic damage increases by 1d4.

### VOID SCRIBE

As an action, you can use a writing medium to inscribe a magical void glyph on an unattended object within reach. As long as the glyph remains intact, the object is vulnerable to necrotic damage and it takes 1d6 necrotic damage at the end of your turn.

For the glyph to remain intact, you must concentrate on it as if concentrating on a spell. In addition to the normal demands of concentration, you must also make a successful DC 10 Constitution saving throw at the start of your turn or the glyph crumbles away and ceases to function.

## Arcane Tradition: Void Speaker

Given the nature of void magic, it comes as no surprise that a tradition of wizards sprang up from the study of void speech. Void speakers are a standoffish and secretive lot, prone to delving into crumbling, monster-prowled ruins and the dark corners of moldering libraries with equal caution; carelessly reading a text that may be sprinkled with void glyphs can be just as deadly as stumbling into a den of trolls. As you focus your study on void speech, you learn to properly invoke the words and glyphs to empower your magic and to tap the vast potential of the void.





Some void speakers risk the darkness for the sake of knowledge or defense against that which lies beyond. Others succumb to the madness and corruption that void magic touches and become living conduits for the horror seeking entry into the mortal world.

### Void Savant

Beginning when you select this tradition at 2nd level, the gold and time you must spend to copy a void spell into your spellbook is halved.

When you gain a level, one of the two spells you learn for gaining a level can be a void magic spell, even if you've never encountered the spell before. Similarly, when you learn a new cantrip, it can be a void magic cantrip, even if you've never previously encountered it.

### Whispers of the Void

Starting at 2nd level, as a bonus action immediately before you cast a spell of 1st level or higher, you can utter a few words of void speech and weave its dark magic into your spell. The tainted spell disorients one creature you can see that the spell affects when you cast it. The creature has disadvantage on the next attack roll or ability check it makes before the start of your next turn. You can't use this feature if you are unable to speak.

### Rebuke from Beyond

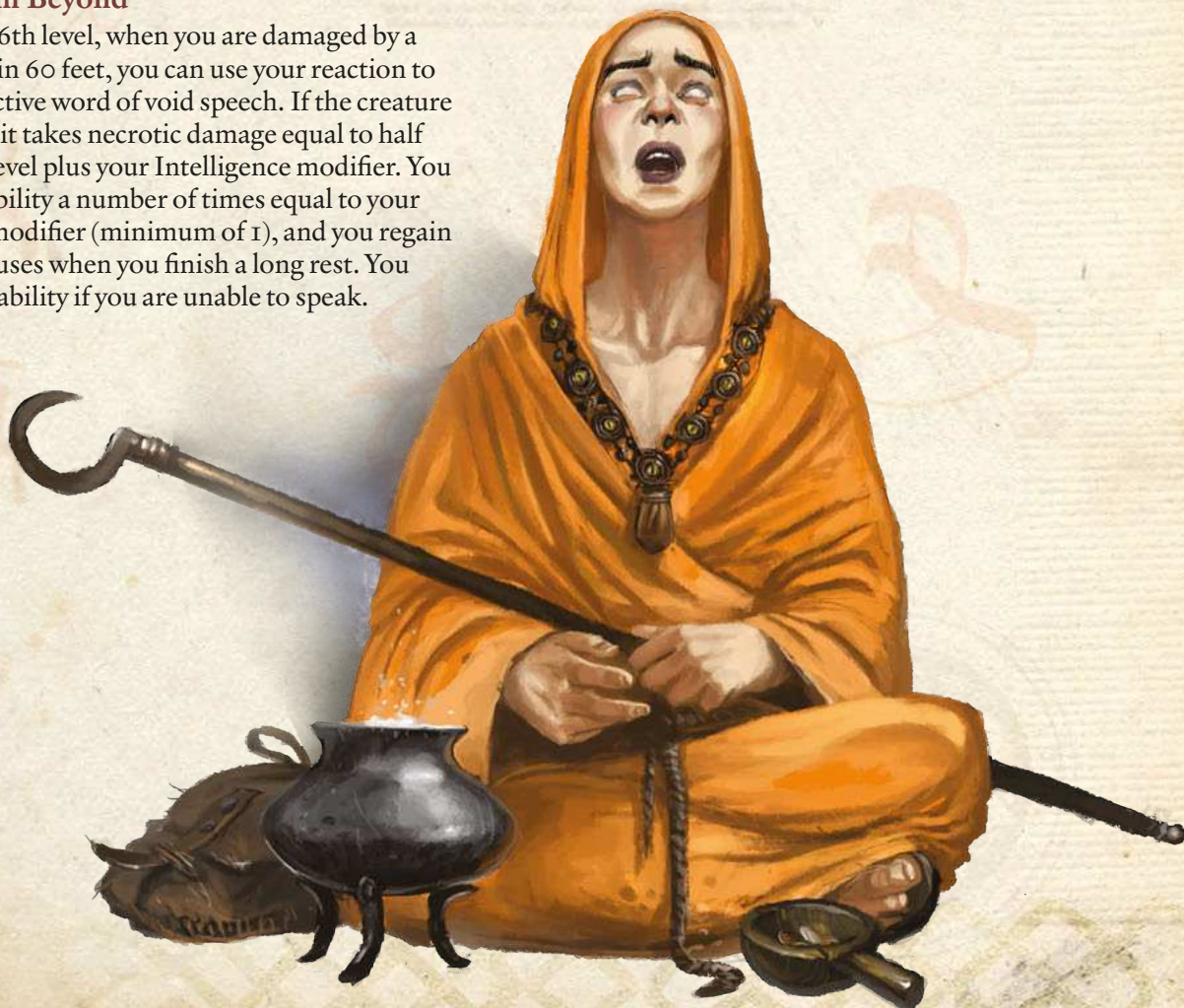
Beginning at 6th level, when you are damaged by a creature within 60 feet, you can use your reaction to bark a destructive word of void speech. If the creature can hear you, it takes necrotic damage equal to half your wizard level plus your Intelligence modifier. You can use this ability a number of times equal to your Intelligence modifier (minimum of 1), and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest. You can't use this ability if you are unable to speak.

### Powerful Echo

Starting at 10th level, when you cast a void magic spell that targets only one creature, you can have it target a second creature. Additionally, you have advantage on Constitution saving throws made to maintain concentration on void spells.

### Manifestation

At 14th level, you can use your action to pronounce a complicated phrase in void speech. Choose a point you can see within 60 feet. The area within 20 feet of that point is shrouded in dim light for one minute. Any creature hostile to you within the area is vulnerable to necrotic damage and has disadvantage on Wisdom checks. An affected creature that starts its turn in the area or that enters the area for the first time on its turn takes 3d6 necrotic damage, or half damage with a successful Constitution saving throw (using your spell save DC). Once you use this ability, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest. You can't use this feature if you're unable to speak.





## Void Spell List

### CANTRIPS

*Crushing Curse*  
*Word of Misfortune*

### 1ST LEVEL

*Protection from the Void*

### 2ND LEVEL

*Destructive Resonance*  
*Maddening Whispers*

### 3RD LEVEL

*Void Strike*

### 4TH LEVEL

*Nether Weapon*

### 5TH LEVEL

*Conjure Minor Voidborn*  
*Living Shadows*

### 6TH LEVEL

*Life Drain*

### 7TH LEVEL

*Conjure Voidborn*

### 8TH LEVEL

*Glimpse of the Void*

### 9TH LEVEL

*Void Rift*

have a chance to win the fight or to inflict meaningful harm, but they won't fight if they fear it would mean their own death. The creatures can't be dismissed by you, but they disappear 1 hour after being summoned.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a 7th- or 9th-level spell slot, you choose one of the summoning options above, and more creatures appear: twice as many with a 7th-level spell slot and three times as many with a 9th-level spell slot.

### CONJURE VOIDBORN

*7th-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 90 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 hour

You summon a fiend or aberration of challenge rating 6 or lower, which appears in an unoccupied space that you can see within range. The creature disappears when it drops to 0 hit points or when the spell ends.

Roll initiative for the creature, which takes its own turns. It attacks the nearest creature on its turn. At the start of the fiend's turn, you can use your reaction to command the creature by speaking in void speech. It obeys your verbal command, and you take 2d6 psychic damage at the end of the creature's turn.

If your concentration is broken, the creature doesn't disappear. Instead you can no longer issue commands to the fiend, and it becomes hostile to you and your companions. It will attack you and your allies if it believes it has a chance to win the fight or to inflict meaningful harm, but it won't fight if it fears it would mean its own death. The creature can't be dismissed by you, but it disappears 1 hour after you summoned it.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 8th level or higher, the challenge rating increases by 1 for each slot level above 7th.

### CRUSHING CURSE

*Void magic cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You speak a word of void speech. Choose a creature you can see within range. If the target can hear you, it must succeed on a Wisdom saving throw or take 1d6 psychic damage and be deafened for 1 minute. A deafened creature can repeat the saving throw at the end of each of its turns, ending the deafness on a success. A creature deafened in this way can still hear void speech.

This spell's damage increases by 1d6 when you reach 5th level (2d6), 11th level (3d6), and 17th level (4d6).

## New Spells

### CONJURE MINOR VOIDBORN

*5th-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 minute

**Range:** 90 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 hour

You summon fiends or aberrations that appear in unoccupied spaces you can see within range. You choose one of the following options for what appears:

- One creature of challenge rating 2 or lower
- Two creatures of challenge rating 1 or lower
- Four creatures of challenge rating 1/2 or lower
- Eight creatures of challenge rating 1/4 or lower

Summoned creatures disappear when they drop to 0 hit points or when the spell ends.

The summoned creatures do not directly attack you or your companions. Roll initiative for the summoned creatures as a group; they take their own turns on their initiative result. They attack your enemies and try to stay within 90 feet of you, but they control their own actions. The summoned creatures despise being bound, so they might harm or impede you and your companions with secondary effects (but not direct attacks) if the opportunity arises. At the beginning of the creatures' turn, you can use your reaction to verbally command them. They obey your commands for that turn, and you take 1d6 psychic damage at the end of the turn.

If your concentration is broken, the creatures don't disappear. Instead, you can no longer command them and they become hostile to you and your companions. They will attack you and your allies if they believe they



## DESTRUCTIVE RESONANCE

*2nd-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Self (15-foot cone)

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

You shout a scathing string of void speech that assaults the minds of any creatures who hear it. Each creature in a 15-foot cone who can hear you takes 4d6 psychic damage, or half damage with a successful Wisdom saving throw. Creatures damaged by this spell can't take reactions until the start of their next turn.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 3rd level or higher, the damage increases by 1d6 for each slot level above 2nd.

## GLIMPSE OF THE VOID

*8th-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 120 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (a scrap of parchment with void glyph scrawlings)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

Muttering void speech, you force images of terror and nonexistence upon your foes. Each creature in a 30-foot cube within range must make an Intelligence saving throw. On a failed save, the creature goes insane for the duration. While insane, a creature takes no actions other than to shriek, wail, gibber, and babble unintelligibly. The GM controls the creature's movement, which is erratic.

## LIFE DRAIN

*6th-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 90 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Instantaneous

With a snarled word of void speech, you create a swirling vortex of purple energy. Choose a point you can see within range. Creatures within 15 feet of the point take 10d6 necrotic damage, or half damage with a successful Constitution saving throw. For each creature damaged by the spell, you can choose one other creature within range, including yourself, that is not a construct or undead. The secondary targets regain hit points equal to half the necrotic damage you rolled.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 7th level or higher, the vortex's damage increases by 1d6 for each slot level above 6th.

## LIVING SHADOWS

*5th-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 120 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** 1 minute

You whisper sibilant words of void speech that cause shadows to writhe with unholy life. Choose a point you can see within range. Writhing shadows spread out in a 15-foot-radius sphere centered on that point, grasping at creatures in the area. A creature that starts its turn in the area or that enters the area for the first time on its turn must make a successful Strength saving throw or be restrained by the shadows. A creature that starts its turn restrained by the shadows must make a successful Constitution saving throw or gain one level of exhaustion.

A restrained creature can use its action to make a Strength or Dexterity check (its choice) against your spell save DC. On a success, it frees itself.

## MADDENING WHISPERS

*2nd-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 30 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** 1 minute

You whisper a string of void speech toward a target that can hear you. The target must succeed on a Charisma saving throw or be incapacitated. While incapacitated by this spell, the target's speed is 0 and it can't benefit from increases to its speed. To maintain the effect, you must use your action on subsequent turns to continue whispering; otherwise, the spell ends. The spell also ends if the target takes damage.

## NETHER WEAPON

*4th-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S, M (ink, chalk, or some other writing medium)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 hour

You whisper in void speech and touch a weapon. Until the spell ends, the weapon turns pitch black, becomes magical if it wasn't before, and it does 2d6 necrotic damage in addition to its normal damage on a successful hit. A creature that takes necrotic damage from the enchanted weapon can't regain hit points until the start of your next turn.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast this spell using a spell slot of 5th level or higher, the damage increases by 1d6 for each slot level above 4th.



### PROTECTION FROM THE VOID

*1st-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** Touch

**Components:** V, S, M (a small bar of silver worth 15 sp, which the spell consumes)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 10 minutes

Until the spell ends, one willing creature you touch has resistance to necrotic and psychic damage, and has advantage on saving throws against void spells.

### VOID RIFT

*9th-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 300 feet

**Components:** V, S, M (a black opal carved with a void glyph worth 500 gp)

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

You speak a hideous string of void speech that leaves your mouth bloodied, causing a rift into absolute nothingness to tear open. The rift takes the form of a 10-foot-radius sphere, and it forms around a point you can see within range. The area within 40 feet of the sphere's outer edge becomes difficult terrain as the void tries to draw everything into itself. All creatures that start their turns within 40 feet of the sphere or that enter that area for the first time on their turn must succeed on a Strength saving throw or be pulled 15 feet toward the rift. Creatures that start their turn in contact with the rift or that come into contact with it for the first time on their turn take 8d10 necrotic damage. Creatures inside the rift are blinded and deafened. Unattended objects within 40 feet of the rift are drawn 15 feet toward it at the start of your turn, and take damage as creatures.

While concentrating on the spell, you take 2d6 necrotic damage at the end of your turn.

### VOID STRIKE

*3rd-level void magic*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 90 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute

With a short phrase of void speech, you gather writhing darkness around your hand. When you cast the spell, and as an action on subsequent turns, you can unleash a bolt of darkness at a target within range. Make a ranged spell attack. If your target is in dim light or darkness, you have advantage on the roll. On a hit, the target takes 5d8 necrotic damage and is

frightened of you until the start of your next turn.

**At Higher Levels.** When you cast the spell using a spell slot of 4th level or higher, the damage increases by 1d8 for each slot level above 3rd.

### WORD OF MISFORTUNE

*Void magic cantrip*

**Casting Time:** 1 action

**Range:** 60 feet

**Components:** V, S

**Duration:** Concentration, up to 1 minute.

You hiss a word of void speech. Choose one creature you can see within range. The next time the creature makes a saving throw during the spell's duration, it must roll a d4 and subtract the result from the total of the saving throw. The spell then ends.





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