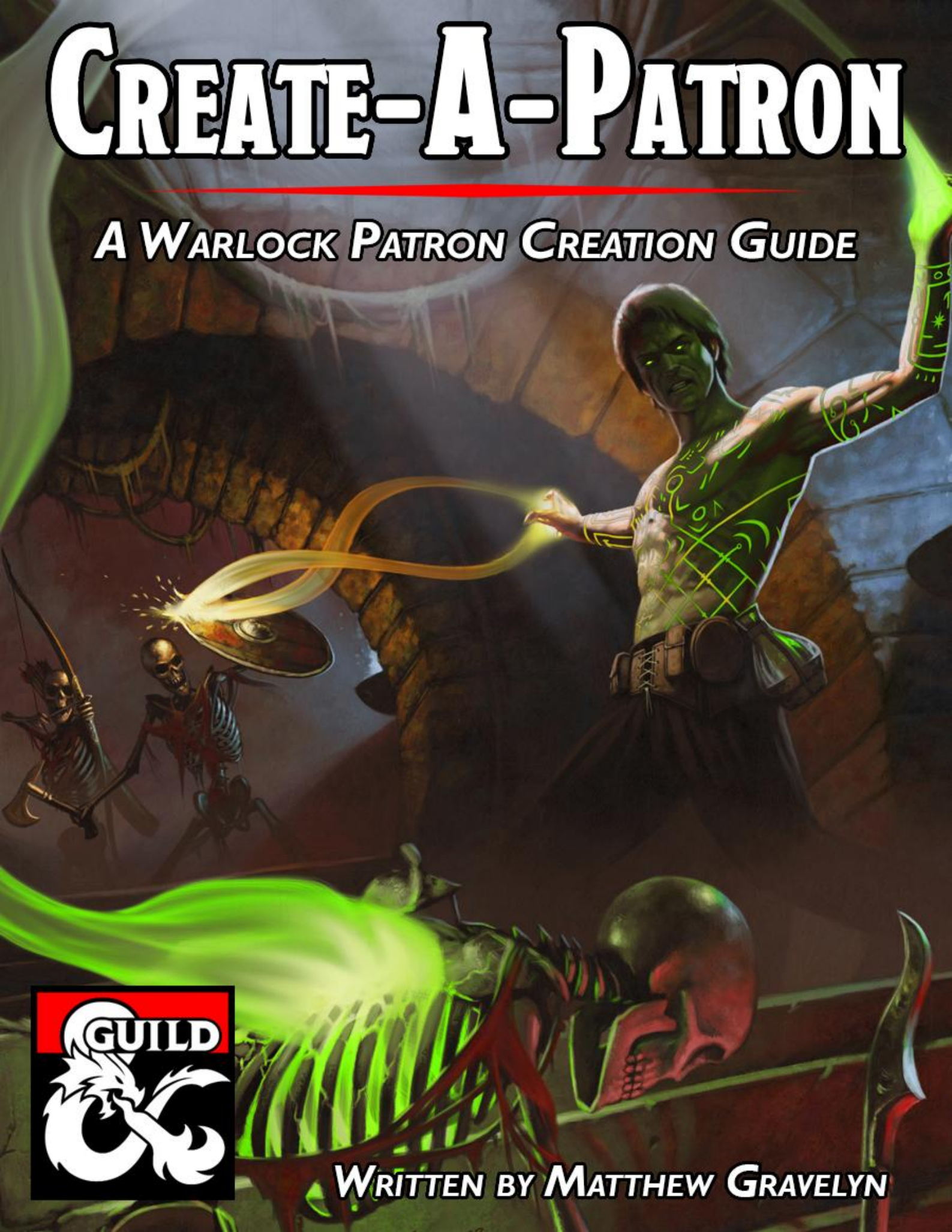


# CREATE-A-PATRON

A WARLOCK PATRON CREATION GUIDE



WRITTEN BY MATTHEW GRAVELYN

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*A how-to guide for creating a warlock Patron in 5e*



Written by MATTHEW GRAVELYN

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Create-A-Patron: A Warlock Patron Creation Guide by Matthew Gravelyn

# INTRODUCTION

## WARLOCKSTORY

### PLEDGING A PATRON

A warlock's entire world revolves around the Patron that they are beholden to. The circumstances by which a warlock enters into a pact with their Patron are as varied as anything in this world. The undeniable fact is that if their Patron calls, a warlock must listen and obey. Some warlocks relish in accomplishing tasks in the name of their Patron while others do so in a more begrudging fashion. The awesome power bestowed by a warlock's Patron is payment enough for doing the odd unsavory favor.

Patrons, just as the warlocks that serve them, are varied and many. Unlike the deities that clerics and paladins pledge loyalty to, a warlock Patron is not a god, per se. Patrons are often ancient creatures of other-worldly power, enough so to twist reality and shape the eons to their will, but creatures nonetheless. This provides a lot of room to create a Patron that suits your playstyle without being bound by a single list of established gods.

### USING THIS SOURCEBOOK

This book is meant to be a template, a guide to help you create your very own warlock Patron that is compatible with virtually any 5e setting or campaign. In this way, you have nearly limitless potential to entertain yourself and find new ways to bring the warlock to life in your game.

Each section covers an area of Patron creation, including an overview of existing options, concepts to consider during creation, and how to balance the features that go into a Patron.

This book is based on research of the official warlock Patron options as well as many other homebrew and self-published options. Using that research as a framework, I created this guide to help you create a Patron as quickly and easily as possible.

I have also included sections for creating new options for existing Patrons. If you want to dabble in class archetype creation, this is a more structured approach that can help teach you the basics of how a warlock Patrons works.

### EXAMPLES

Included at the end of each section are two example Patrons that I have created following this guide. Feel free to use these Patrons in your game, but their true purpose is to illustrate the practical application of the guide.

Examples are found in blue boxes at the end of each section and detail the choices of that section. Complete versions of The Deceiver and The Unburnt can be found at the end of this guide.

### PACT BOONS

While not directly connected to Patron creation, I have included a section at the end of this guide with tips on creating your own Pact Boons to further help you flavor your warlock. There you will also find two example Pact Boons: Pact of the Lantern and Pact of the Realm. You are free to use these Pact Boons in your home game as well.

# PATRON CREATION

Patrons can range from powerful fey beings, terrifying demon lords from the lower planes, celestial beings of light and justice, or alien entities too bizarre and old for mortals to even comprehend. The *who* and *what* of your Patron are less important than the *why*. The desires and ambitions of your Patron will ultimately shape the type of power they bestow upon warlocks who are bound to them.

## PATRON TYPE

If you are creating a Patron to share, you won't specify an entity for the Patron, but rather give an idea of who the Patron might be. There are two main ways to designate who or what a Patron might be.

The first way is to choose a realm, plane, or origin for your Patron. In this way, you allow for any entity from that location to be the Patron. For example, you could design your Patron around the lower planes, allowing for the exact Patron to be a true devil or an aspiring demon lord looking to gain power.

Alternatively, you could write about your Patron in terms of motive and intent. This leaves the choice of an exact Patron more open to interpretation. For example, your Patron could focus on malevolence and torture, which could indicate a demon but could also be a ruthless fey noble or some alien entity of pain.

## PATRON NAME

When you play a warlock, you will want to know the specific name or title of your Patron. A pact must be struck and that is tough to do if the warlock doesn't even know who the Patron is.

You can come up with any name, title, or description you want to for this. Make it flavorful and your DM can help fill in the rest based on the specific campaign or setting they are planning to run.

### Example: The Deceiver

Many warlock patrons aren't concerned with subtlety when it comes to displaying their powers. The Deceiver, though powerful, prefers to keep their machinations subtle, often even putting the blame on innocent bystanders. Warlocks who make a pact with the Deceiver do so with the understanding that it is in the nature of their Patron to lie and deceive but accept this tenuous relationship with the promise of great powers of illusion and manipulation.

The Deceiver can be a wide array of entities, ranging from treacherous fey nobles to lesser demons who must work quietly to not raise suspicion from higher ranking lords. Any powerful and ambitious entity who needs or desires to play the slow game with many pawns and puppets can become the Deceiver.

### Example: The Unburnt

The Unburnt was once a being of pure goodness and radiance but was corrupted by their time imprisoned in the lower planes. Tortured mercilessly at the hands of demons, they endured the fires. Eventually they came to embrace the fire and the hatred that it represented. Learning to harness this power, they escaped. They were now free of the lower planes but were no longer accepted in their home plane for the hatred seething within them. They lurk now in the realms between good and evil, the embodiment of detached neutrality.

The Unburnt can be any celestial or angelic being from the upper planes that was trapped or imprisoned in the lower planes for hundreds or even thousands of years. This Patron could be an angel, archon, eladrin, or possibly even an ancient god.



## EXPANDED SPELL LIST

The first benefit warlocks receive from their Patron is an extra set of spells that they can learn at certain levels. When these spells are learned, they count as warlock spells.

When creating your Patron's spell list, choose 2 spells for each spell levels 1<sup>st</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> that are not already on the warlock spell list.

Choose spells that are thematic to the nature and intent of your Patron. For example, if your patron focuses on subtle manipulation and learning secret information, spells that control the minds and bodies of enemies would fit on this list as would telepathic and mind reading spells.

Keep in mind that this spell list simply expands the pool of spells a warlock can learn. It does not automatically grant these spells to the warlock. Warlocks can only know a limited number of spells at one time, but there is an option to help you realign your spell list if you need to. When you gain a warlock level and learn a new spell, you can also choose one previously chosen warlock spell and replace it with another spell available to you, as long as it is of a level no higher than your spell slots.

### Example: The Deceiver

This expanded spell list is based on manipulating targets, concealing the warlock's presence, or gaining access to private locations, all in the name of subterfuge.

- 1st – *Disguise Self, Sleep*
- 2nd – *Calm Emotions, Detect Thoughts*
- 3rd – *Nondetection, Sending*
- 4th – *Arcane Eye, Greater Invisibility*
- 5th – *Dominate Person, Modify Memory*

### Example: The Unburnt

The Unburnt has spent generations suffering the agony of being burned alive. Now they reclaim this power, using it to punish those it deems deserving.

- 1st – *Burning Hands, Detect Evil and Good*
- 2nd – *Flaming Sphere, Scorching Ray*
- 3rd – *Fireball, Protection from Energy (fire)*
- 4th – *Conjure Minor Elementals (fire), Wall of Fire*
- 5th – *Conjure Elemental (fire), Planar Binding*

## FEATURES

A warlock Patron offers features at 1<sup>st</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup> levels. These features will define your playstyle as a warlock and offer a variety of new abilities for your warlock to take advantage of in and out of combat.

Of the official and homebrew Patrons I studied there were a few standards that I noticed in these features. In this guide I will share this insight along with some examples of different types of features geared towards offense, defense, and control.

## PACTS

In addition to a Patron, warlocks each also receive a pact boon at 3<sup>rd</sup> level. This isn't specifically a feature of the Patron, but rather a separate feature you choose and theme to your Patron. A pact boon is written in strictly mechanical terms to allow players to theme it appropriately to their Patron.

There are only a handful of official pact boons, and they are not inherently tied to Patron creation. That said, there is a section at the end of this guide for creating your own pact boon if you'd like to customize your warlock further.



## CORNERSTONE

Warlocks, unlike many classes, choose their archetype at 1<sup>st</sup> level, suggesting that their Patron choice will shape every aspect of their playstyle. Similarly, the 1<sup>st</sup> level feature will serve as the cornerstone of the warlock's playstyle by offering fresh abilities for the warlock to take advantage of.

While some features offer bonuses and new opportunities to use existing abilities, this first feature should grant the warlock completely new abilities that they would not otherwise have. This helps reinforce the impact their Patron has on them by showing the awesome power they are willing to bestow on the warlock in exchange for their service.

This feature should, above all others, be very thematic and in keeping with the Patron's overall sensibilities. Below are some points to consider along with examples of how to put them into practice.

## LONG-TERM BALANCE

As mentioned, warlocks earn their first Patron feature at 1<sup>st</sup> level, which requires a bit more care in crafting this feature. Whatever abilities you grant your warlock make sure they aren't going to unbalance the game early but will still be useful and interesting at higher levels. Here are some easy starting points to consider:

- **Spells:** granting 1<sup>st</sup>-level spells and cantrips as part of your 1<sup>st</sup> level feature is a quick and easy way to ensure it is balanced, as these spells are already intended for low-level play.
- **Growth:** writing a feature that is based on the warlock's level can also help scale the ability over time. For example, an attack can do 1d6 damage and then increase to 2d6, 3d6, etc. at later levels. You can also have abilities based directly on the warlock's level, Charisma modifier, or proficiency bonus to ensure balanced scaling.
- **Non-combat:** you should still ensure some degree of balance, but non-combat abilities aren't as likely to break the game experience for players if they aren't perfectly tuned. This can encompass several abilities such as ritual spells, companions, or proficiencies.

## SPELLS & CANTRIPS

If you found yourself with a couple spare spells after creating your Patron's expanded spell list or noticed a couple cantrips you thought would be particularly fun to use, granting them directly through this feature could be a way to integrate them.

If you are granting cantrips, they usually do not count against the total number of cantrips a warlock knows. You can also grant non-warlock cantrips here, but since they are additional to the number you can usually know, warlock cantrips still offer a benefit here. If the cantrips you choose are more situational or less powerful, consider also granting a resistance or a non-combat ability to fill it out the 1<sup>st</sup> level feature.

If you are going with spells, keep in mind that the warlock has limited spell slots at early levels. There are a couple ways to make sure this feature isn't limited too much. First, you can offer this spell as a ritual. This won't count against your spell slots and could also be thematic for the Patron, encouraging the warlock to perform secret drawn-out rituals. Second, you can simply write that this spell can be cast as an action without using a spell slot. Typically, in this case the feature can only be used once per short or long rest to ensure it doesn't become an overpowered cantrip.

*Ex. Starting at 1<sup>st</sup> level, you learn the Friends and Minor Illusion cantrips. They count as warlock cantrips for you, and they don't count against your number of cantrips known. You also gain advantage on saving throws against being charmed or frightened by magical means.*

## MARTIAL ABILITIES

It is mentioned in the handbook that the warlock is unlike a wizard in several respects, one of the more obvious being that a warlock has some proficiency in combat. They are proficient in light armor as well as simple weapons. If it makes sense for your Patron, expanding on your warlock's combat potential would make for an excellent 1<sup>st</sup> level feature.

A feature focusing on martial combat abilities could be as simple as additional proficiencies to include new types of weapons and armor or they could introduce new options for in-combat abilities. For example, granting bonus actions and reactions to strike opponents or block incoming attacks would greatly improve your warlock's combat prowess and shape how they play their warlock from the ground up.

Keep in mind that these abilities, while focused on physical combat, should still be rooted in the magic and unseen force of your Patron. Add thematic elements to describe how your warlock is better with melee weapons. If you are increasing attack damage, consider giving it a damage type consistent with your patron, like necrotic or psychic.

*Ex. Starting at 1<sup>st</sup> level, when you hit a creature with a melee attack you can use your bonus action to push your attack into their mind in addition to their body. The creature takes additional psychic damage equal to your proficiency bonus.*



## DAMAGE TYPES

A simple example of keeping this feature thematic is to give it a damage type consistent with your Patron, like fire damage for a demon lord or radiant damage for an angel of the upper planes. This can manifest in several ways, like adding an extra spell attack of this type, imbuing physical attacks with elemental damage, or inflicting reactive damage to enemies who deal damage to you.

This thematic use of damage types can also serve as the mechanical basis for the feature, allowing the warlock to deal more damage or add bonus damage to certain attacks.

*Ex. Starting at 1<sup>st</sup> level, when you hit with a melee attack you can choose to also deal necrotic damage equal to your Charisma modifier. Once you have used this feature you cannot use it again until you have finished a short or long rest.*

## PROTECTION

Defensive abilities are less common for the first feature, but not unheard of. There are many ways that a defensive ability can be used to provide opportunity for an offensive playstyle. This can be regaining hit points, gaining temporary hit points, or imposing debilitating conditions.

One consistent aspect of the defensive abilities here is that they don't offer simple resistances or boosts to stats. As mentioned at the beginning of this section, this feature should offer new and exciting options for the warlock, not just build upon existing mechanics.

You can also utilize conditions as a form of protection; a creature that is frightened of you won't attack you after all. This adds extra mechanical power to the warlock's arsenal but can also be thematic. Think about whether your Patron would be the kind of entity that would want to manipulate people through charm or terrify them into submission by frightening them. Maybe they can do both, and it's up to the warlock to decide in the moment which route is most appropriate.

*Ex. Starting at 1<sup>st</sup> level, as an action, you can exude the horrific malice of your patron. Each creature within 15 feet of you must make a Wisdom saving throw against your warlock spell save DC. On a failure, that creature is frightened until the end of your next turn. Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish a short or long rest.*

## NON-COMBAT

There are a variety of other abilities you can grant your warlock at this level. Some of these could be strictly non-combat, like proficiency in skills such as deception or history, but some might have indirect combat potential, like gaining a familiar or navigating the environment in unique ways.

When thinking about non-combat abilities, consider the Patron and what its motives are. If the Patron seeks to uncover knowledge or control key figures, focusing this feature on granting proficiency in deception or the ability to charm a creature could make sense. These could also be used in combat by a creative warlock.

*Ex. Starting at 1<sup>st</sup> level, when a creature dies within 10 feet of you, you can use your reaction to reanimate the corpse for a brief period. It retains its original Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution scores but its Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma are reduced to 4. It has hit points equal to your warlock level + your Charisma modifier. It will follow your basic commands and can take actions on your turn. It remains animated until the end of your next turn at which point it falls dead.*



### Example: The Deceiver

While the simplest act of deceit in the game is using the deception skill, I wanted to provide a way for this to manifest in combat and other scenarios as well. This allows for a feature with a variety of applications that scales as the warlock gains levels.

**Dark Influence:** Starting at 1<sup>st</sup> level, you have a pool of d4s that you can spend to influence the actions of your enemies. The number of dice in the pool is equal to half your warlock level rounded up.

When a creature within 10 feet of you makes an attack, casts a spell, makes a saving throw, or makes a skill check, you can use your reaction to spend one die from your pool and roll it. Reduce their roll by that amount as they hesitate, flinch, or reconsider their actions.

Your pool regains spent dice when you finish a long rest.

### Example: The Unburnt

This feature is on the simple side, but I think it thematically sets up the warlock to adopt a playstyle of ranged, fire-based combat that will be expanded upon in upcoming features.

**Blessing of Flames:** Starting at 1<sup>st</sup> level, you learn the Fire Bolt cantrip. This is a warlock cantrip for you and does not count against the number of cantrips you know.

**Marked by Fire:** Starting at 1<sup>st</sup> level, you can use your action to choose a number of creatures within 30 feet that you can see equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier. Targeted creatures gain vulnerability to fire damage until the end of your next turn. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until after you finish a short or long rest.



## IMPROVEMENT

For the 6<sup>th</sup> level feature, a Patron often grants the warlock an enhancement to one of their existing abilities or playstyle attributes. This feature may not be a net-new ability but can dramatically alter the way warlocks think about their abilities.

There isn't much in the way of standardization across the official Patrons for this feature. Think broadly about what improvement or addition could boost the warlock's playstyle under this Patron and define a feature that empowers them to do so.

Below are different types of features you can work into your Patron but feel encouraged to branch out and experiment with a feature if you feel like it improves upon the tone and theme of your Patron.

## DAMAGE & RESISTANCE

In a world full of danger, damage is the currency of the realm. Being able to dish out more damage quicker or mitigate incoming damage to sustain the fight longer can mean the difference between a successful warlock and a dead warlock.

When increasing damage, make sure to keep in mind the playstyle you defined with the 1<sup>st</sup> level feature. If your Patron favors damaging spells, consider adding bonus damage to certain damage types or just to spell damage in general. Alternatively, you can also add damage to melee and ranged physical attacks and even flavor it with elemental damage if that makes sense for your Patron. This damage can be a growing pool of dice or use scaling numbers like the warlock's level, proficiency bonus, or Charisma modifier. For example, you could offer a bonus action to add fire damage to your warlock's successful melee attacks equal to their proficiency bonus in honor of their demon Patron.

On the other end of the equation, your warlock is sure to take harm at some point in their journey. Patrons are not generally protective of their warlocks in a sentimental way but losing a loyal servant or a valuable tool is annoying, even to ancient all-powerful entities. Protecting their warlocks in battle is just good business and can take the form of resistances, damage reduction to certain damage types, or bonuses to saving throw rolls to avoid damage altogether.

*Ex. Starting at 6<sup>th</sup> level, when you are the sole target of a damaging spell, you can use your reaction to redirect that spell to a creature of your choice within range of the original spell. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until you finish a long rest.*

## MOVEMENT

Several of the Patrons I studied offer a sort of movement ability. While this can certainly be a boost to base walk speed or possibly introducing a new movement speed altogether, these features generally look more like teleportation or travel to other planes.

Usually the trip to another plane is brief and either grants the warlock time to prepare spells, allows them to travel a short distance before returning, or both. For example, a warlock could spend a few minutes in the astral plane to complete a powerful ritual before returning as if no time had passed at all.

Thematically you can achieve the same mechanical results by changing the mode of travel or the plane your warlock will pass through. For example, a demon lord may offer brief passage through one of the lower planes, filled with fire and sulfur, to a warlock in their service whereas a celestial Patron would certainly offer a different route. Functionally these work the same but offer a different feel.

Alternatively, the warlock could make use of invisibility or teleportation granted by their Patron, allowing them to maneuver a tough situation with ease for a short period of time. Teleportation would usually be instantaneous, while invisibility effects usually last for a turn or even up to one minute if there are other conditions enforced, like not being able to attack or cast spells.

*Ex. Starting at 6<sup>th</sup> level, as an action you can step through the fiery realm of your Patron and exit into a space up to 60 feet that you can see. You are unharmed by this journey. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until you have finished a short or long rest.*

## DEATH

Dying is a core theme in many warlock Patrons who desire chaos, death, or the offering of souls. For warlocks who assist in this dark work, the Patron often rewards them with increased power or abilities after taking a life, if temporarily. This could be anything from increasing damage potential to gaining a temporary defense to gaining control of the slain creature's body or spirit.

There is also a potential to utilize the warlock's own demise as a trigger for this feature. If a warlock's Patron feels there is more work to be done, they wouldn't let a perfectly good servant go to waste. You can create a feature that helps warlocks perform death saving throws better, gain temporary hit points when they are reduced to 0 hit points, or even avoid death entirely. These are powerful effects and probably should be limited to once per long rest for balancing.

*Ex. Starting at 6<sup>th</sup> level, when you reduce a creature to 0 hit points you can use your reaction to harness its life essence to shield you from harm. You gain a ward that takes damage before it is dealt to you. It can take damage equal to half the maximum hit points of the creature that was slain, and any additional damage is dealt to you. The ward lasts until you finish a long rest, or it is used up. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until you finish a long rest.*

### Example: The Deceiver

I want to encourage the usage of the Deception and Persuasion skills with an extra bonus as well as giving an in-combat defensive ability as well.

**Beguiling:** Starting at 6<sup>th</sup> level, when you make a Charisma (Deception) or Charisma (Persuasion) check, you are considered proficient in this skill check and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

If you successfully deceive or persuade a target who means to harm you, you can choose to impose disadvantage on the next attack they make against you.

### Example: The Unburnt

Slinging spells is great, but not that original. The Unburnt grants their warlocks the ability to generate a massive amount of fiery energy but requires time to recover.

**Font of Fire:** Starting at 6<sup>th</sup> level, when you use your action to cast a spell that does fire damage you can use your bonus action to cast the same spell at the same target without using an additional spell slot. Damage and saving throw rolls are made for each spell separately. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until after a short or long rest.

## DEFENSIVE



The 10<sup>th</sup> level feature is a rarity in that virtually every official Patron has the same core principle: defense. Despite this standardization, there are many forms that defense can take, and the existing Patrons make use of many of them, ranging from immunity to conditions to regaining hit points.

Another common element with features at this level is that they tend to be a collection of two to three abilities instead of a single large ability. This might include a resistance or condition immunity along with another defensive or offensive ability.

Below is an overview of the different ways you can create a defense-based feature.

## CONDITION IMMUNITY

Many Patrons deal in charming, frightening, or otherwise impairing their victims. Just as an assassin might build up a tolerance for their poison of choice, so too might a warlock be gifted with extraordinary immunity to being manipulated or impaired.

Most often a condition immunity will be combined with other resistances or thematic abilities.

*Ex. Starting at 10<sup>th</sup> level, you are immune to being charmed and gain resistance to psychic damage.*

## REBOUNDED

A couple of the official Patrons have a feature at this level that utilizes a concept I call rebounding, such that the warlock can use a reaction to turn the tables on an attacker, sending the attack back at them. This can also manifest as a simple trigger, without a reaction.

As a reaction, this might look like reversing a charm back on the caster or diverting a harmful spell to a new target. These are powerful effects as they not only protect the warlock but also harm another target. Consider balancing these types of abilities with a limited number of uses or by giving the new target an opportunity to make a saving throw.

This feature might be a trigger that simply performs the ability when a condition is met. This could look like dealing damage when you are dealt damage or creating a new effect entirely.

*Ex. Starting at 10<sup>th</sup> level, when you are dealt damage you can use your reaction to let out a psychic pulse against the attacker. That creature must make a Wisdom saving throw against your warlock spell save DC. On a failure, the creature is frightened of you until the end of your next turn.*

## ADDITIONAL RESISTANCES

Resistances may seem simple, but they're one of the best defenses available. These may not be the entirety of the 10<sup>th</sup> level feature, but nearly all Patrons offer a damage resistance in addition to other abilities here.

You can provide a thematic resistance for your Patron. For example, if your Patron is a demon lord, resistance to fire damage makes sense. You might also provide resistance to your Patron's preferred method of harm. If your Patron's gifts include dealing psychic damage, it would make sense that they also imbue their warlocks with a resistance to the same type.

## BIOLOGICAL NEEDS

Some Patrons are so alien and inhuman that their bizarre physiology begins to permeate their servants. These warlocks are exempt from their base biological urges, no longer requiring food, water, or even sleep.

This might also pair well with certain condition immunities or resistances that would come from not having usual body function, like poison or fear.

*Ex. Starting at 10<sup>th</sup> level, you no longer need to eat or drink and gain the benefits of a long rest after taking a short rest. You also have resistance to poison damage and immunity to being poisoned.*

### Example: The Deceiver

Being immersed in deceptions and trickery leave you always on guard against mental attacks. This feature is simple but is a constant ward against manipulation.

**Mental Fortitude:** Starting at 10<sup>th</sup> level, you are immune to being charmed, have resistance against psychic damage, and have advantage on saving throws against being deceived or persuaded.

### Example: The Unburnt

The obvious choice here is to give the warlock resistance to fire damage, but I also wanted to boost that with an ability to help shield their allies as well.

**Fiendish Protection:** Starting at 10<sup>th</sup> level, you gain resistance to fire damage. When you are dealt fire damage you can use your reaction to release a blast of heat that shields from fire damage. Any number of creatures you can see within 10 feet of you gain resistance to fire damage until the end of your next turn.

## CAPSTONE

The final feature of a Patron is granted at 14<sup>th</sup> level and is a big, impressive ability that the warlock will want to take advantage of as often as possible. These should

still be in line with the theme and playstyle you've outlined up to this point, but don't strictly have to be an improvement or continuation of an existing feature.

Of the published Patrons, I was able to compile the 14<sup>th</sup> level features into three main buckets: damage, defense, and control. I'll use these to provide some examples below and hopefully also inspire you to think about other big, flashy features you can add.

## BIG FEATURE, BIG REST

Many of the official Patrons offered an ability at this level that is so powerful that it is limited to one use per long rest. If you're on the fence about an ability's power and balance, go big! Just make sure to put in the necessary limitations so it's not breaking the game.

## DAMAGE

We've covered a lot of ways your warlock can dish out damage, so use that info and turn it up to eleven. You are encouraged to use large numbers of large dice, up to and including 10d10 worth of damage for a once-per-rest type of effect. If you want this feature to be used more often, consider something like 4d6 or 2d8.

You also don't have to make this feature mechanically complicated, but you should make it thematic. Don't just deal psychic damage. Instead, banish them to purgatory for 1,000 years, returned as if no time had passed at all, but ravaged by madness.

You can also consider arming your warlock with powerful new spells that might otherwise be out of their reach. Consider spells from other lists and at much higher levels. Again, if you think the spell might be too powerful, give it a trigger or limit its usage.

*Ex. Starting at 14<sup>th</sup> level, when you use your action to cast a spell that deals fire damage, you can use your reaction to deal half the spell's damage to any creature within 10 feet of the original target. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until you have finished a short or long rest.*

## DEFENSE

Simple resistances aren't going to cut it at this level. Think big about how you can make your warlock even sturdier in combat, such as regaining large amounts of hit points or even averting death altogether.

If your defensive feature isn't quite powerful enough, consider adding extra damaging or controlling effects along with it. For example, your regained hit points may come from consuming the life force of other targets, dealing necrotic damage.

*Ex. Starting at 14<sup>th</sup> level, when you reduce a target to 0 hit points with necrotic damage, you can use your reaction to regain hit points equal to half of that creature's hit point maximum. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until you complete a long rest.*

## CONTROL

If your Patron is focused on manipulation of mortals, you can create a control-based feature to allow your warlock to influence combat and allow opportunities for their companions to strike. You can utilize conditions for this feature, but make sure to dial it up with either an increased number of targets, an increased duration, or additional effects.

You can also add control to the battlefield by extending the effect of other Patron features. For example, if one of your features allows you to dominate a target and have them fight for you, this feature might allow you to transfer that curse to any creature that kills your servant. In this way, you don't have to stop to use the previous feature again and gains even more benefit if that previous feature was balanced with a once-per-rest condition.

*Ex. Starting at 14<sup>th</sup> level, as an action, you can choose a number of creatures equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier that you can see within 30 feet. Targets must make a Wisdom saving throw against your warlock spell save DC. A creature that fails is frightened of you and your allies for 1 minute. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until you finish a long rest.*

### Example: The Deceiver

This feature is the ultimate in manipulation, as it bends the will of the warlock's enemy to do the bidding of their Patron.

**Enthrall:** Starting at 14<sup>th</sup> level, when you succeed a Charisma (Deception) or Charisma (Persuasion) check against a creature you can choose to enthrall them. You can communicate telepathically with them as long as they know at least one language, even if it is not one you know. They can communicate telepathically back to you. This effect lasts until you attack or target the creature with a harmful spell, the creature dies, or you choose to end the effect.

For the duration you can command the creature to do your bidding. They will follow any command you give them to the best of their ability even if it means putting themselves in danger, however they will not cause themselves direct harm.

Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until you finish a long rest.

### Example: The Unburnt

I wanted to create a spectacular, fiery effect if the warlock lands the killing blow with fire damage. This is a large attack gated only by being able to strategically land the last hit on a target, but otherwise usable as many times as possible.

**From the Ashes:** Starting at 14<sup>th</sup> level, when you reduce a creature to 0 hit points with fire damage, you can use your bonus action to explode the corpse in a ball of fire. All creatures other than yourself within 30 feet of the slain creature must make a Dexterity saving throw against your warlock spell save DC. A creature that fails takes 8d6 fire damage and half as much on a success.



# THE DECEIVER

Many warlock patrons aren't concerned with subtlety when it comes to displaying their powers. The Deceiver, though powerful, prefers to keep their machinations subtle, often even putting the blame on innocent bystanders. Warlocks who make a pact with the Deceiver do so with the understanding that it is in the nature of their Patron to lie and deceive but accept this tenuous relationship with the promise of great powers of illusion and manipulation.

The Deceiver can be a wide array of entities, ranging from treacherous fey nobles to lesser demons who must work quietly to not raise suspicion from higher ranking lords. Any powerful and ambitious entity who needs or desires to play the slow game with many pawns and puppets can become the Deceiver.

## DECEIVER FEATURES

### Warlock

#### Level Features

1 <sup>st</sup>	Expanded Spell List, Dark Influence
6 <sup>th</sup>	Beguiling
10 <sup>th</sup>	Mental Fortitude
14 <sup>th</sup>	Enthrall

## EXPANDED SPELL LIST

The Deceiver lets you choose from an expanded list of spells when you learn a warlock spell. The following spells are added to the warlock spell list for you.

## DECEIVER EXPANDED SPELLS

### Spell Level Spells

1 <sup>st</sup>	<i>disguise self, sleep</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	<i>calm emotions, detect thoughts</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>nondetection, sending</i>
4 <sup>th</sup>	<i>arcane eye, greater invisibility</i>
5 <sup>th</sup>	<i>dominate person, modify memory</i>

## DARK INFLUENCE

Starting at 1st level, you have a pool of d4s that you can spend to influence the actions of your enemies. The number of dice in the pool is equal to half your warlock level rounded up.

When a creature within 10 feet of you makes an attack, casts a spell, makes a saving throw, or makes a skill check, you can use your reaction to spend one die from your pool and roll it. Reduce their roll by that amount as they hesitate, flinch, or reconsider their actions.

Your pool regains spent dice when you finish a long rest.

## BEGUILING

Starting at 6th level, when you make a Charisma (Deception) or Charisma (Persuasion) check, you are considered proficient in this skill check and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

If you successfully deceive or persuade a target who means to harm you, you can choose to impose disadvantage on the next attack they make against you.

## MENTAL FORTITUDE

Starting at 10th level, you are immune to being charmed, have resistance against psychic damage, and have advantage on saving throws against being deceived or persuaded.

## ENTHRALL

Starting at 14th level, when you succeed a Charisma (Deception) or Charisma (Persuasion) check against a creature you can choose to enthrall them. You can communicate telepathically with them as long as they know at least one language, even if it is not one you know. They can communicate telepathically back to you. This effect lasts until you attack or target the creature with a harmful spell, the creature dies, or you choose to end the effect.

For the duration you can command the creature to do your bidding. They will follow any command you give them to the best of their ability even if it means putting themselves in danger, however they will not cause themselves direct harm.

Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until you finish a long rest.

# THE UNBURNT

The Unburnt was once a being of pure goodness and radiance but was corrupted by their time imprisoned in the lower planes. Tortured mercilessly at the hands of demons, they endured the fires. Eventually they came to embrace the fire and the hatred that it represented. Learning to harness this power, they escaped. They were now free of the lower planes but were no longer accepted in their home plane for the hatred seething within them. They lurk now in the realms between good and evil, the embodiment of detached neutrality.

The Unburnt can be any celestial or angelic being from the upper planes that was trapped or imprisoned in the lower planes for hundreds or even thousands of years. This Patron could be an angel, archon, eladrin, or possibly even an ancient god.

## UNBURNT FEATURES

### Warlock

Level	Features
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1 <sup>st</sup>	Expanded Spell List, Blessing of Flames, Marked by Fire
6 <sup>th</sup>	Font of Fire
10 <sup>th</sup>	Fiendish Protection
14 <sup>th</sup>	From the Ashes

## EXPANDED SPELL LIST

The Unburnt lets you choose from an expanded list of spells when you learn a warlock spell. The following spells are added to the warlock spell list for you.

As a thematic element, you are encouraged to only utilize fire and fire-related choices for the following spells: *protection from energy*, *conjure minor elementals*, *conjure elemental*, *planar binding*.

## UNBURNT EXPANDED SPELLS

Spell Level	Spells
-------------	--------

1 <sup>st</sup>	<i>burning hands</i> , <i>detect evil and good</i>
2 <sup>nd</sup>	<i>flaming sphere</i> , <i>scorching ray</i>
3 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>fireball</i> , <i>protection from energy</i>
4 <sup>th</sup>	<i>conjure minor elementals</i> , <i>wall of fire</i>
5 <sup>th</sup>	<i>conjure elemental</i> , <i>planar binding</i>

## BLESSING OF FLAMES

Starting at 1st level, you learn the Fire Bolt cantrip. This is a warlock cantrip for you and does not count against the number of cantrips you know.

## MARKED BY FIRE

Starting at 1st level, you can use your action to choose a number of creatures within 30 feet that you can see equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier. Targeted creatures gain vulnerability to fire damage until the end of your next turn. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until after you finish a short or long rest.

## FONT OF FIRE

Starting at 6th level, when you use your action to cast a spell that does fire damage you can use your bonus action to cast the same spell at the same target without using an additional spell slot. Damage and saving throw rolls are made for each spell separately. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until after a short or long rest.

## FIENDISH PROTECTION

Starting at 10th level, you gain resistance to fire damage. When you are dealt fire damage you can use your reaction to release a blast of heat that shields from fire damage. Any number of creatures you can see within 10 feet of you gain resistance to fire damage until the end of your next turn.

## FROM THE ASHES

Starting at 14th level, when you reduce a creature to 0 hit points with fire damage, you can use your bonus action to explode the corpse in a ball of fire. All creatures other than yourself within 30 feet of the slain creature must make a Dexterity saving throw against your warlock spell save DC. A creature that fails takes 8d6 fire damage and half as much on a success.

# PACT BOONS

Starting at 3<sup>rd</sup> level, a warlock is gifted a Pact Boon by their Patron as a reward for their service. This is a large feature that, combined with the 1<sup>st</sup> level Patron feature, set the groundwork for the warlock's entire playstyle.

What's most interesting and unique about this feature is that it is independent of your Patron choice. You can effectively mix and match your Patron and your Pact Boon choices, creating many permutations of warlocks to try out.

## PACT NAME

There are only a handful of official Pacts, but they all have a name in the structure "Pact of the \_\_\_\_\_" where you fill in a thematic or descriptive word or two. This can be virtually anything you want it to be, but I recommend keeping it short and sweet.

When creating the theme and description of your Pact Boon, write it in mechanical terms. The overall theme and look of this feature will be determined by the warlock's Patron choice. For example, if your Pact Boon allows the warlock to create illusions in the minds of their victims, those illusions might take a different shape depending on which Patron you follow.

## PLAYSTYLE FIRST

There is no wrong way to create a Pact Boon, but my preferred method is to consider what you want the resulting playstyle to look like and work backwards from there. For instance, if you want to create a warlock who is more focused on melee combat, you'll know you should create a Pact Boon that offers new weapon options, bonus proficiencies, or increased melee damage.

Also consider the circumstances in which the warlock can effectively use this feature. If your Pact Boon is very situational, or provides inconsistent benefit, consider broadening your feature's benefits or allowing for it to be used more often.

### Example: Pact of the Lantern

I wanted to create a Pact Boon that served both an exploration-based function as well as something that can be used in combat.

**Pact of the Lantern:** As an action, you can create a small globe of light that hovers in place. You can, as a bonus action, command the globe to move to a spot you can see within 60 feet or command it to follow you. If the orb is more than 60 feet away from you or you cannot see it, it disappears. While active, the globe casts bright light in a 30-foot radius and dim light for an additional 30 feet. The appearance of the globe as well as the light it gives off is determined by your Patron.

Additionally, you can, as an action, cause the globe to explode. Creatures within 10 feet of the globe when it explodes must make a Dexterity saving throw against your warlock spell save DC. A creature that fails takes 1d8 radiant damage and half as much on a success. The damage increases by 1d8 at certain levels, to 2d8 at 7<sup>th</sup> level, 3d8 at 11<sup>th</sup> level, 4d8 at 15<sup>th</sup> level, and 5d8 at 19<sup>th</sup> level. Once you use this feature you cannot use it again until you finish a long rest.

### Example: Pact of the Realm

This Pact Boon offers fun options for dipping in and out of the pocket dimension, as well as creating some additional movement options in combat.

**Pact of the Realm:** You are gifted with a key that allows you access to your own pocket dimension that you can enter or exit at any time as an action. There is room for two medium creatures in addition to storage for up to 50 pounds of gear. The storage can take any form you want, such as shelves, trunks, or cupboards.

You can take a willing creature into your pocket dimension as long as you are touching them when you enter or exit. Creatures left in the pocket dimension can leave on their own as an action. They reappear next to you when they exit.

Time moves at the same rate inside the pocket dimension as it does on the plane you entered it from. When you leave your pocket dimension you can choose to reappear in an unoccupied space within 30 feet of the location you were in when you entered the pocket dimension.

If you lose the key, you can receive a replacement by performing a 1-hour ritual. When you create a new key, the original key disappears.

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