

# D&D<sup>®</sup> Frequently Asked Questions

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## About the FAQ

If you have a question about the D&D game rules, chances are that you'll find them within this FAQ. There are several sections, as you can tell by the Table of Contents that we've included in this PDF. Any new additions or major corrections in a version are provided in red text for your convenience. Red text changes to black text in the next version. If you have a question that isn't answered here, please contact [custserv@wizards.com](mailto:custserv@wizards.com) and ask away! You can also contact the Sage, Skip Williams, by writing to him at these handy locations:

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We will be updating this FAQ over time, and each version will have a date stamp on it so that you know which version you have.

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# Character Races and Classes

The following questions deal with general character creation, races, and classes and are divided by general character creation (in total), race (in total), and class (by each class). Questions about multiclass characters and prestige classes come at the end of this section.

**Some of my friends and I have been arguing about the character reroll rule from the Character Creation Basics section at the beginning of the *Player's Handbook*. Some of us say you can reroll your character only if your ability modifiers total 0 or less and your highest ability score is 13 or lower. (That is, you must meet both conditions before you can reroll). Others say you can reroll if you meet either condition. For example, which of the following characters would be playable?**

12 (+1)	14 (+2)
10 (+0)	9 (-1)
10 (+0)	9 (-1)
10 (+0)	9 (-1)
10 (+0)	9 (-1)
10 (+0)	9 (-1)
10 (+0)	9 (-1)

Both sets of example abilities meet one condition or the other. The first example has a high ability score of 13 or lower. The second example has ability modifiers that total -3. Both sets of ability scores allow rerolls.

The rule on page 4 of the *Player's Handbook* says you may reroll your character if your total modifiers (before racial adjustments) are 0 or less *or* if your highest score is 13 or lower. That means you reroll if you meet either condition.

## Races

**Why do half-orcs take a net penalty of -2 to their initial ability rolls?**

You refer, I presume, to the half-orc's racial ability adjustments of +2 Strength, -2 Intelligence, and -2 Charisma. (Add up all those numbers and you do indeed get a net -2.) The game's designers decided that a +2 bonus to Strength scores more than outweighs the -2 penalty to Intelligence and Charisma, especially considering the half-orc's 60-foot darkvision and favored class of barbarian. The numbers don't always tell the whole story.

**I've noticed that it is possible for some races to obtain a Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution of 20, yet there are no modifiers for that particular score. What would they be respectively?**

An ability score 20 or 21 has an ability modifier of +5 (see Table 2-1). Note that in the current rules all ability scores use the same chart for bonuses and penalties.

**When using the optional rule in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* for buying character ability scores with points (for example, the 25-point-buy method on page 19 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*), should you apply the character's racial modifiers to the ability scores before or**

**after spending points? The cost could work out differently depending on when those are applied. For example, if you bought an ability score up to 16 and then took a racial adjustment of +2, you would have a score of 18 and save 6 points over purchasing the 18 directly.**

The order is indeed important. Buy ability scores first, then adjust for race.

## General Classes

**Some classes start off with proficiency in an exotic weapon, and some of those weapons can be used as either martial or exotic weapons. For example, the samurai from the *Oriental Adventures* book is proficient with the katana. Does a character using such a weapon start off with the martial or exotic level of proficiency in such a weapon?**

It's exotic, unless the class description specifically notes otherwise. Note that the *Oriental Adventures* samurai is not proficient with the katana specifically, just with simple and martial weapons. A samurai needs Exotic Weapon Proficiency (katana) to wield a katana in one hand.

**Suppose my 1st-level rogue gains enough experience to become a 2nd-level character and decides to add a wizard level. Does my rogue get a spellbook? Does my rogue get all the other equipment in a wizard starting package?**

The initial spellbook a wizard gets at 1st level is free, just as the two spells the wizard can add to the spellbook at each wizard level thereafter are free.

In general, however, you get starting cash or starting equipment only when you're a 1st-level character, so the example character gets no other extra equipment for becoming a 1st-level wizard.

## Barbarian

**The rules say a barbarian must spend 2 skill points to gain the ability to read and write any language he can speak. Is this per language or once for all languages? What happens if a barbarian becomes multiclass?**

When the barbarian spends 2 skill points, he becomes literate in every language he speaks and in any language he learns to speak in the future.

Barbarians who become multiclass automatically become literate in all languages that they currently speak and in any future languages they learn.

**The *Player's Handbook* says barbarians are the only characters that do not automatically know how to read and write. A barbarian must spend 2 skill points to gain the ability to read and write any language he can speak. The rules for multiclass characters say the character gets all class features of all classes, but must also take the consequences of all special restrictions of all classes, except that a character who acquires the barbarian class does not become illiterate. Does this mean that a barbarian who picks up a second class automatically becomes literate? If not, is literacy a class skill or a cross-class skill? If so, what**

**happens if the barbarian has spent the 2 skill points on literacy? In any case, how many languages can a literate barbarian read and write?**

A literate barbarian can read and write any languages he can speak, just as any other literate character can. If a barbarian becomes literate and later learns to speak more languages, the barbarian can read and write those languages. This also is true for any literate character.

If a barbarian adds a nonbarbarian class level, the barbarian becomes literate. If the barbarian already has spent the 2 skill points, there is no extra benefit, and the barbarian does not get those 2 skill points back.

**When a barbarian is fatigued for the rest of the encounter after raging, how long is that exactly?**

In this case, an “encounter” continues until the DM stops tracking the encounter in combat rounds. That usually happens when the last foe is defeated or escapes, or it lasts until the last PC is defeated or forced to escape. A creature has escaped from an encounter when its foes decide not to pursue it or until they have no reasonable chance of catching the fleeing creature.

**If a barbarian became undead (by gaining the vampire template, for example), how would you determine how long his rage lasts? He no longer has a Constitution score. Could an undead barbarian theoretically rage until all opponents were defeated or someone takes him down? Or does his rage simply last 3 rounds (base 3 + 0 for no Constitution score)? Or do you assume that the undead barbarian has a Constitution score of 4 (0 + 4 bonus from rage) and so cannot rage at all, since the modifier for an ability score of 4 is -3? Does this Constitution “boost” have any other effects on the undead barbarian? Does he actually lose hit points?**

An undead creature uses its Charisma modifier wherever its Constitution modifier would normally apply (except Fortitude saving throws, for which the creature must use its +0 Constitution modifier if it needs to make a Fortitude save at all). Thus, the example barbarian rages for a number of rounds equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier (but always for at least 1 round).

An undead creature has no Constitution score at all and cannot gain one by receiving a bonus. Therefore, the +4 Constitution bonus from rage has no effect on this barbarian.

**If a barbarian character is normally capable of using a wand (perhaps because he has a level of cleric or some other ability that allows the use of such items), can he still do so while he is raging?**

A character using the barbarian’s rage ability cannot activate a wand. If a class has a rage ability that does not allow spellcasting (as with barbarian rage), a character of that class also cannot use a magic item activated by spell trigger, spell completion, or command word while using the rage ability. It is possible, of course, that a class could have a rage ability that does allow spellcasting. If so, members of that class could also activate magic items by spell trigger, spell completion, or command word while raging.

**The description of the barbarian’s uncanny dodge class feature says a barbarian retains his Dexterity bonus unless immobilized or held motionless due to magic. I understand this includes avoiding being caught flat-footed and sneak attacked unless the attacker has the barbarian flanked.**

**What about other combat conditions that deny a character his Dexterity bonus, such as climbing, grappling, and the like?**

The uncanny dodge ability is a function of the senses. It allows a character to retain his Dexterity bonus when others cannot because they don’t have sufficient sensory information to do so, such as when one is surprised or facing an unseen foe.

If the character is actually rendered immobile (or nearly immobile) by some physical or magical effect, uncanny dodge doesn’t help. If you’re a barbarian hanging by your fingers and toes on a rock face, your feral senses don’t improve your mobility. You can’t use your Dexterity bonus, and you’re subject to sneak attack. Grappling is a similar situation—if you’re in another creature’s grasp (or if you’re gasping another creature), you lose your Dexterity bonus despite any uncanny dodge ability you might have.

Creatures with the improved grab special attack can retain their Dexterity bonuses while grappling by taking a -20 penalty on any grapple checks they make. There’s no reason why a character couldn’t take that penalty and also retain his Dexterity bonus while grappling.

## Bard

**What, exactly, is a bard’s countersong effective against? Will it work on effects that don’t allow saving throws? Will it work against a thunderstone?**

Countersong works on sonic magical effects—that is any spell, supernatural ability, or spell-like effect that has the sonic or language-dependent designator. But it does not work against extraordinary abilities and nonmagical sound, such as a thunderstone.

Since countersong allows you to use the bard’s Perform check result as your saving throw result, it is not effective against spells or effects that have no saving throw to begin with.

**Do you need to hear a bard’s countersong to benefit from it?**

No, you have to be within 30 feet of the bard (the countersong follows the rules for a spread) and be subjected to an effect that the countersong can counter (see previous question). Note that if you’re deafened, you probably aren’t subject to anything the countersong can counter.

**Under the description for the bard’s inspire courage ability, it says that the bard can affect allies. Does this mean he can’t affect himself with this ability? What about the other bardic music abilities whose descriptions say they affect allies but make no mention of the bard himself? Also, which bardic music abilities are spell-like and which are supernatural? (Some are labeled, but not all of them are.)**

The details are as follows:

**Inspire Courage (Su):** Affects allies and the bard.

**Countersong (Su):** Affects all creatures within 30 feet of the bard, including the bard himself.

**Fascinate (Sp):** Affects a single creature other than the bard.

**Inspire Competence (Su):** Affects an ally but not the bard.

**Suggestion (Sp):** Affects a single creature but not the bard.

**Inspire Greatness (Su):** Affects allies and the bard.

**What is the difference between a Knowledge check and a bardic knowledge check? When a bard uses his bardic**

**knowledge ability, does he use the DCs listed in the Knowledge skill? If not, how do you determine the DC for a bardic knowledge check? When he uses a Knowledge skill, does a bard add his level to the roll as he does for a bardic knowledge check?**

To put it simply, bardic knowledge is a feature of the bard class and as such it is available only to characters with one or more bard levels. The various Knowledge skills are simply skills, and as such they are available to anyone who spends skill points to get ranks in them.

The bardic knowledge class feature and the various Knowledge skills also represent knowledge gained in different ways. The class feature reflects a bard's ability to pick up tidbits of information on almost any topic, just by virtue of being a bard and doing the things that bards do. Knowledge skills reflect the deliberate study of specific topics.

When a bard character uses his bardic knowledge class feature, you determine the DC according to the table on page 29 in the *Player's Handbook*. A quick reading of the table should make it clear that the basic factor in determining the DC for the check is how many other people know the information the bard seeks. The more people who know the information the bard seeks, the more likely the bard has picked up that information serendipitously.

When any character, including a bard, uses a Knowledge skill, the factor that determines the DC is how easy or hard the question is. The more general and simple the question, the lower the DC. The more precise or exacting the question, the higher the DC.

In many cases, the DC for a bardic knowledge check or for a Knowledge check will be very similar, because not many people know the answers to really tough questions. On the other hand, some questions might be very difficult for a bard using bardic knowledge, but absurdly easy for anyone with the correct Knowledge skill. For example, a bard and a cleric with the Knowledge (religion) skill recover an idol from a ruin near a large city. Both characters might have a fairly easy time identifying the deity the statue depicts, but for different reasons. Let's say that idols just like the one the characters have found are fairly commonplace, and that the idol also depicts a deity who was once fairly popular, but was killed in a very famous, heroic fight with the biggest, nastiest evil deity in the land. Because many people have seen idols like the one the bard and cleric have found, and because many people are familiar with the story of the deity's heroic death, the bardic knowledge DC will be pretty low, say DC 10. The cleric likewise would have an easy time (DC 10), not only because the deity is well known but because the deity once played an important role in divine affairs.

Now suppose the idol was found in some remote crypt far from civilization. The deity it depicts died in almost complete obscurity and has now all but passed from living memory and is known only to religious scholars. In this case, the DC for a bardic knowledge check would be fairly high, say DC 25 or even DC 30. On the other hand, the cleric with the Knowledge (religion) skill is a religious scholar and has a much easier time naming the deity, say DC 15 for the Knowledge (religion) check.

It's probably true that any task with a low bardic knowledge DC also will have a low DC for the appropriate Knowledge skill (because scholars tend to know at least as much as common folk know), but tasks with high bardic knowledge DCs might not be so difficult for people with the right Knowledge skills. In contemporary society, a bard probably

would have no difficulty identifying a photograph of a famous actor or politician (such as Chris Rock or Bill Clinton). A bard might have a much harder time identifying a "famous" game columnist (Skip Williams, for example), which would not be such a tough task for anyone familiar with roleplaying games.

In any case, having the bardic knowledge class feature does not help a character make Knowledge skill checks, and vice versa. A character who has both, however, can make checks against both (which is more useful than it sounds because you can't retry either check if you fail).

## Cleric

**Does death touch, the granted power of the Death domain, have a saving throw?**

No, it does not.

**When using the granted power from the Luck domain, do you have to decide to make the reroll before you find out what the result is, or do you get know if you've failed or not before deciding to reroll? For example if I roll an 18, but I need at least 19, do I get to know that an 18 is a failure, or do I have to decide before then?**

Technically, you have to decide to reroll before you know if you've succeeded or failed; that's why the power description says you've got to keep the reroll even if it's worse than the original roll. It's incumbent on the DM to allow a player at least a moment to decide whether to use the ability. If the DM simply blurts out the result immediately, it's okay to let the player reroll.

**The section on alignment in the cleric class description (pages 29–30 in the *Player's Handbook*) says most clerics of Heironeous, god of valor (who is lawful good), are lawful good themselves, but some are lawful neutral or neutral good. This seems to conflict with the statement that a cleric cannot be neutral unless his deity is neutral. I don't understand what this restriction was intended to be.**

In this case, "neutral" means neutral on both the good-evil axis and on the law-chaos axis or "true neutral" (*Player's Handbook*, page 89). A cleric's alignment must be the same as his deity's alignment or within one step of his deity's alignment; that is, adjacent (but not diagonally adjacent) to the deity's alignment on the alignment chart (see Table 6–1). The true neutral alignment is an exception. You can't have a true neutral cleric of a deity who is not true neutral. Note that St. Cuthbert, a lawful neutral deity, allows only lawful good or lawful neutral clerics, even though the lawful evil alignment is within one step of St. Cuthbert's alignment.

**The *Players Handbook* says ex-clerics lose all class features; presumably clerics don't lose their armor and shield proficiencies, or their weapon proficiencies (except those granted as domain powers), both of which are listed as class features.**

Armor, shield, and weapon proficiencies are indeed class features for clerics and for any other class. Nevertheless, you're correct. Ex-clerics lose spells, domain powers (including domain-based weapons), spontaneous casting, and power over the undead. They retain proficiency in simple weapons and all types of armor and shields.

**Can true neutral clerics of true neutral deities, such as**

**Fharlanghn, cast any Chaos, Evil, Good, or Law spell? Does a true neutral cleric's choice of whether to turn or rebuke undead affect what spells she can cast?**

True neutral clerics can cast any spell with the Chaos, Evil, Good, or Law domain, provided the spell in question is on the cleric spell list (see pages 160–163 in the *Player's Handbook*) or in one of the cleric's chosen domains. The cleric's choice of whether to turn or rebuke undead does not affect what spells he can prepare, but it does affect what spells he can cast spontaneously, as noted on page 32 of the *Player's Handbook*.

**Page 90 in the *Player's Handbook* has a rule that says the various racial deities can have only clerics of the correct races. For example, only dwarves can be clerics of Moradin. Does this rule also apply to other divine spellcasters, such as rangers and paladins?**

No. The rule is only for clerics. Technically, the rule governing cleric alignments on page 30 of the *Player's Handbook* also applies only to clerics. Paladins and rangers, for example, can have alignments considerably different from the deities they serve. (Though paladins by practical necessity serve good deities—usually lawful good deities.)

**Good clerics can lose a prepared spell to spontaneously cast any *cure* spell. Can any good cleric do this even if Healing is not one of his chosen domains? If so, why is there even a Healing domain?**

A cleric's domains have nothing to do with spontaneous casting; only the cleric's alignment matters. (In the case of neutral clerics, it's the deity's alignment that matters.) See page 32 in the *Player's Handbook*.

There's a Healing domain because many deities concern themselves with healing. Extra *cure* spells aren't the only benefit clerics with the Healing domain get. They get a caster level boost when casting their Healing spells, which makes them slightly better healers than other clerics. Also, their domain spells of 5th level and higher are not *cure* spells, so other clerics cannot spontaneously cast them.

**The other players in my group insist that my lawful good cleric cannot cast the 1st-level *doom* spell. Is that correct? I know my character can't cast *inflict light wounds*, but where is the rule that says I can't cast *doom*?**

There is no such rule. Perhaps your other players are thinking about the general one that bars clerics from casting certain spells that have an alignment designator. (See Chaotic, Evil, Good, and Lawful Spells on page 32 in the *Player's Handbook*.) *Doom*, however, has no alignment designator, and a cleric of any alignment can cast it.

The *inflict light wounds* spell doesn't have an alignment designator, either, so any cleric can cast that as well. What your lawful good cleric cannot do is use the spontaneous casting rule to cast *inflict light wounds*. As a good cleric, you can spontaneously cast only *cure* spells.

**The granted powers for some of the cleric domains (such as Travel and Magic) specifically say effectiveness is linked to your cleric level. Other granted powers (such as Protection and Strength) do not; they just say "your level." In the case of a multiclass cleric, would domain granted powers that don't specify "cleric" level be based on character level instead?**

A cleric's domain abilities are class abilities and as such are based on cleric level only.

**I was wondering if a cleric can turn an outsider. (For example, can a lawful good cleric attempt to turn a demon?) Under the old rules, you could do that (with difficulty), but I can't find any rules for it in the core books.**

Turning affects only undead. Some cleric domains allow you to turn, rebuke, or command creatures other than undead. See pages 162–166 in the *Player's Handbook*. No domain grants that power over good, evil, chaotic, or lawful outsiders.

You could reintroduce this power into your campaign by creating a new feat or by creating a prestige class.

**When you have a domain power that lets you turn or rebuke something other than undead, does using that power count against your daily uses of power to turn undead as a cleric? Can you trade a use of undead turning for a use of another turning, or vice versa?**

No on all counts. A domain turning ability is separate from the cleric's undead turning ability. You track the daily use of each separately and you can't trade uses between abilities.

**Say you have a cleric with access to the domains of both Sun and Water. If the cleric used a turning attempt to try to turn a fire-based creature, could he use a greater turning (the Sun domain power) to destroy the creature? The greater turning description says it destroys undead creatures instead of turning them. Can this be used for other things a cleric can turn, such as the power granted by the Fire or Water domain?**

The greater turning affects only undead, not other creatures the cleric might be able to turn.

**What happens when undead are destroyed in a turning attempt? Is there a difference between undead destroyed in regular turning attempts and undead destroyed by greater turning?**

In either case, the creatures' bodies are destroyed and reduced to dust or ashes. Dungeon Masters can describe the process any way they like. I suggest an effect just like the *destruction* spell: The creature is slain and its remains are consumed by holy fire.

**I have a query about how ubiquitous the Hit Dice modifier for turn resistance is. The description of the ability says a creature with turn resistance has effectively more Hit Dice to resist turning attempts. Exactly where in the process of making a turn attempt does this apply?**

It applies at every point where the subject creature's Hit Dice are relevant. The subject creature's Hit Dice are relevant when a character makes the initial turning check. The check has to be high enough to affect the subject creature's modified Hit Dice. For example, a wraith has 5 Hit Dice and a +2 turn resistance. Any turning check made against the wraith fails unless it is high enough to affect a creature with 7 Hit Dice.

The subject creature's Hit Dice are relevant when assessing turning damage. For example, it takes 7 points of turning damage to turn a wraith.

The subject creature's Hit Dice are relevant when determining what undead a cleric can destroy. For example, it takes a 14th-level cleric to destroy a wraith.

The subject creature's Hit Dice are relevant when determining how many undead creatures a cleric can control. For example, a wraith counts as 7 Hit Dice worth of undead controlled by the cleric.

# Druid

**How much information does the druid's nature sense ability give you about a creature? Does it apply to monsters with the plant type? Would the nature sense ability apply to fungi, molds, slime, and the like?**

The ability works on animals (that is, any creature of the animal type), and normal plants (but not creatures of the plant type). You get basic encyclopedia type information on the subject such as the subject's common name (for example: oak tree, poison ivy, or dog). You discover what the subject eats (if it's an animal) and what its notable abilities are, such as its temperament, special attacks or defenses, and you know if the subject is safe to eat.

You can use this ability to identify things that are neither plants in the botanical sense of the term, nor creatures of the plant type, such as fungi and green slime.

**Does a druid who can use the wild shape power need to preselect a shape like a wizard prepares spells?**

No, pick a shape each time the power is used.

# Monk

**When can a monk add his Wisdom modifier to Armor Class? I can understand that it's added to the Armor Class (normal), Armor Class (flat-footed), and Armor Class (touch attack). Is this also taken into account when the monk is carrying either a moderate or heavy load? What if the monk is surprised or caught flat-footed?**

The monk's Wisdom modifier to Armor Class applies all the time, except when the monk is helpless.

**Table 3-11 in the *Player's Handbook* shows speed and damage for Small monk characters. The table seems to assume a base speed of 20 feet for Small characters. How do you determine a monk character's speed if her racial speed is not 20 feet or 30 feet? How do you determine a monk's damage if he is not Small or Medium-size?**

Use the table below. It is an expanded version of a similar table from *Sword and Fist*.

**Can a monk get an extra unarmed attack each round by making an off-hand attack? The monk class description says making an off-hand strike makes no sense for a monk fighting unarmed. Presumably, this means that monks are always considered to be using their primary hand when striking unarmed, regardless of which arm (or leg) is used. The wording that appears in the book suggests that off-hand strikes are possible for an unarmed monk, just unwise. How would making an off-hand unarmed attack affect the monk's flurry of blows ability?**

There's no such thing as a monk making an off-hand unarmed attack, because monks are already using pretty much their whole bodies for unarmed combat. For unarmed monks, the flurry of blows ability replaces off-hand unarmed attacks.

**Can monks deal subdual damage with unarmed strikes without grappling? If so, do they take a -4 attack penalty, as with any other normal-damage attack?**

Usually, a monk's unarmed strikes deal normal damage, but a monk can choose to deal subdual damage instead with no

penalty on her attack roll. A monk has the same choice to deal normal or subdual damage while grappling (see Grapple on page 137 of the *Player's Handbook*).

**Does a monk or other character with the Improved Unarmed Strike feat provoke an attack of opportunity when starting a grapple?**

Yes. Grabbing and holding on to a foe is a tad more risky than just hitting the foe.

**Does the monk's Wisdom-based bonus to Armor Class prevent a rogue from using the sneak attack ability against her (like the uncanny dodge ability)?**

No. If monks received uncanny dodge or the equivalent of that ability, the class description would say so.

**A monk doesn't get to add her base attack bonus to her unarmed attack bonus, does she? I was a little confused when reading the section in the monk class description about flurry of blows. It talks about a 6th-level monk with two unarmed attacks at +7 and +4. The chart shows a monk at 6th level getting two attacks at +4 and +1.**

No, you don't add a monk's base attack bonus to the monk's unarmed attack bonus. Use the Base Attack column on Table 3-10 when a monk uses a weapon, and use the Unarmed Attack column when the monk attacks without a weapon.

The flurry of blows example in early printings of the *Player's Handbook* is erroneous; actually it's based on an unpublished version of Ember, our iconic monk, who has some extra bonuses figured into her attack values. (This has been corrected in more recent printings.) A 6th-level monk with no extra bonuses normally gets two unarmed attacks at +4/+1, and not +5/+2 as shown in the example. If she uses flurry of blows, she gets an extra unarmed attack at her highest attack bonus, but all her unarmed attacks take a -2 penalty, which gives her three unarmed attacks at +2/+2/-1.

**Does a monk always have to use her unarmed attack bonus when making unarmed attacks? What happens when a 10th-level fighter picks up one level of monk? Does the character now have an attack bonus of +0 when making unarmed attacks?**

No, a monk doesn't always have to use her unarmed attack bonus when making unarmed attacks. The monk can use her best attack bonus (and number of attacks) along with her unarmed damage or use her unarmed attack bonus and unarmed damage. For example, a 10th-level fighter/1st-level monk has a base attack bonus of +10/+5, which is much better than a 1st-level monk's +0. The character can make two unarmed attacks and still use her 1st-level unarmed damage of 1d6.

You seem to be confused by the text dealing with multiclass monks on page 55 of the *Player's Handbook*. This text merely points out that a monk has the option to use only her unarmed attack bonus for unarmed attacks if doing so would give her more attacks. For example, a 1st-level fighter/10th-level monk has a total attack bonus of +8/+3. (That's +1 for being a 1st-level fighter, and +7 for being a 10th-level monk.) When attacking unarmed, the monk can make two attacks at +8/+3, or the monk can use just her 10th-level unarmed attack bonus of +7/+4/+1 since that gives the monk more attacks.

**I can find nowhere in the *Player's Handbook* a mention of a monk's unarmed strike having a critical of x2. However, on the monk character sheet, it lists it that way. What is the**

**correct value? Also, when does an unarmed attack score a threat?**

Any weapon (including an unarmed strike and a monster's natural weapon) threatens a critical on an attack roll of 20 and deals x2 damage on a confirmed critical hit unless some other value is listed.

**How long does it take a monk to use the wholeness of body ability? Is it treated as a spell-like ability for use in combat? Does it function in antimagic fields?**

Wholeness of body is a supernatural ability. Supernatural abilities don't work in antimagic fields and do not provoke

**Monk Speed by Level and Base Speed\***

	70	60	50	40	30	20	15	10	5
1–2	70	60	50	40	30	20	15	10	5
3–5	90	80	65	50	40	25	20	15	10
6–8	110	100	80	60	50	35	25	20	15
9–11	130	120	95	70	60	40	30	25	20
12–14	150	140	115	80	70	45	35	30	25
15–17	170	160	125	90	80	55	40	35	30
18–20	190	180	140	100	90	60	45	40	35

\*If a base speed falls between the numbers on this table, use the lower of the two values. For example, a 6th-level monk whose race has a base speed of 45 would have a speed of 60.

For speeds of 65 and higher, just round down to the nearest multiple of 10, subtract 60 from the result, and add the difference to the number shown on the "60" column. The "70" column is an example.

The table below, which is an expanded version of a similar table from *Sword and Fist*, shows unarmed damage for monks of various sizes:

**Monk Damage by Size and Level**

	1–3	4–7	8–11	12–15	16–20
Fine	1	1d2	1d3	1d4	1d6
Diminutive	1d2	1d3	1d4	1d6	1d8
Tiny	1d3	1d4	1d6	1d8	1d10
Small	1d4	1d6	1d8	1d10	2d6
Medium	1d6	1d8	1d10	1d12	1d20
Large	1d8	1d10	1d12	2d8	2d10
Huge	1d10	1d12	2d8	2d10	2d12
Gargantuan	1d12	2d8	2d10	2d12	4d8
Colossal	2d8	2d10	2d12	4d8	4d10

A monk can freely mix attacks with special monk weapons into an unarmed attack routine. The monk's attacks can all be with the weapon, they can all be unarmed, or the monk can mix them up.

**If a monk wields a one-handed weapon, can she use her unarmed damage if she kicks or headbutts someone? Or does the monk have to actually be unarmed to get this damage? What if the monk is armed with a two-handed weapon?**

A monk wielding a one-handed weapon (other than a special monk weapon) can use the rules for fighting with two weapons and can use her unarmed strike as an off-hand attack, with all the appropriate penalties (see page 39 in the *Player's Handbook*). The unarmed strike is considered a light weapon.

Although the *Player's Handbook* mentions using the unarmed attack only as an off-hand attack, there's no reason why a monk couldn't make her unarmed attack her primary attack. In this case, the monk still must use her (lower) armed attack rate.

If the monk wields a two-handed weapon, she can use a kick or similar attack as an off-hand attack. This works just like an off-hand attack made along with a one-handed weapon attack.

**If a monk is holding something (say a lantern, a torch, or**

attacks of opportunity. Using a wholeness of body is a standard action (Using any supernatural ability is a standard action unless its description specifically says otherwise.)

**Can a monk mix weapon attacks with monk unarmed attacks as long as the weapons she uses are martial arts weapons? For example, a monk is allowed 2 unarmed attacks (let's say +4/+1) and is armed with a single tonfa. Could the monk make her first attack with an unarmed attack that deals unarmed damage and then use her tonfa for her second attack? Or must she use only weapon attacks or only unarmed attacks during her turn?**

**even a crossbow), can she still make her normal unarmed attacks?**

Monks are assumed to use their whole bodies—hands, feet, knees, elbows, and so on—when making unarmed attacks. Holding an item in one hand makes unarmed attacks only slightly more difficult.

A monk who is holding an item (not wielding a weapon) in one hand and wants to make multiple attacks can give up her best unarmed attack and make the remainder of her normal number of unarmed attacks in a turn. For example, a monk with an unarmed attack bonus of +8/+5/+2 could make two unarmed attacks (+5/+2) while holding a torch.

The monk in the example above can also use the flurry of blows option, giving up one of her best attacks from the flurry. The monk in the previous example could use flurry of blows while holding the torch and attack at +6/+3/+0.

A monk holding an item in two hands uses the same procedure but gives up her two best attacks.

If a monk does not want to give up one of her best attacks, she can always attack at the normal rate instead of the faster unarmed attack rate: For example, a monk with a base attack bonus of +8 could simply make two attacks at +8/+3.

**Page 137 of the *Player's Handbook* says that monks can deal normal damage when grappling without taking the –4**

**penalty on attack. Is it therefore safe to conclude that monks have the Improved Grapple feat from page 63 of the *Oriental Adventures* book, even though it is not explicitly stated?**

No. A monk can deal normal damage in a grapple attack without penalty (just as a monk can deal subdual damage with unarmed attacks without penalty), but the monk still uses the regular grappling procedure and must grab a foe (and provoke an attack of opportunity) before attempting to establish a hold.

**A small discussion has evolved in my group regarding the use of the monk's wholeness of body ability in battle. We have settled that it takes an action to use this ability. We are not set on exactly how many hit points can be healed. Is it the monk's maximum number of hit points, or is it the monk's current hit point total? Could it be something else?**

Wholeness of body is a supernatural ability, so it takes a standard action to use.

Wholeness of body is a healing ability similar to the paladin's ability to lay on hands, except that the ability works only on the monk. Each day, the monk can heal damage she sustains equal to twice her monk level; for example, a 7th-level monk can heal up to 14 points of damage each day. The monk does not have to use all her healing at once, but she can heal herself in smaller amounts so long as the total amount healed that day does not exceed her daily limit.

Wholeness of body is a healing ability, so it doesn't do any good unless the monk has taken damage, and even then the monk cannot use this ability to exceed her normal maximum hit points. Any excess healing the monk applies to herself is wasted.

**The shadowdancer's hide in plain sight ability is a supernatural ability, so by definition it takes a standard action to hide in plain sight, right? The monk's speed becomes a supernatural ability at 9th level. Does a monk have to spend a standard action to move greater than 50 feet in one action?**

Though supernatural abilities usually require a standard action to use, a few of them do not. Hide in plain sight, for example, works just like any other use of the Hide skill, so you use it as a move action or as part of a move action.

A monk's supernatural speed works anytime the monk moves. In general, whenever a supernatural ability changes the way one of the user's actions works, it works just like the action it modifies.

## Paladin

**Is it true that a paladin without a positive Charisma modifier cannot use *lay on hands*?**

Yes. A paladin's Charisma bonus governs the *lay on hands* ability. If you don't have a Charisma bonus, you don't *lay on hands*, so be sure to assign good Charisma scores to your paladin characters.

**If I'm a paladin 5/templar 4, I have two different smiting abilities, right? Now suppose I have a weapon with the mighty smiting property (from the *Oriental Adventures* book). Will the weapon give me two extra smites a day?**

No. First of all, a paladin/templar has only one smite ability, which is usable twice a day or more. Your example character can smite evil twice per day (see the templar description in

*Defenders of the Faith*). A weapon of mighty smiting gives the character one extra smite per day.

Alternatively, a character such as a paladin/cleric with the Destruction domain could have two or more different smite abilities. Such a character has the smite evil ability once per day as a paladin and the smite (anything) ability once per day as a cleric. In this case, only the character's paladin level determines the damage bonus for the smite evil ability and only her cleric level determines the damage bonus for the smite ability she receives as a granted power for her domain.

Any power or effect that increases the number of smites such a character is allowed applies to only one of her smite abilities. For example, if the paladin/cleric became a templar, she could combine the templar's smite ability with either her paladin smite evil ability or her clerical smite ability. (Once this choice is made, the character cannot change it.) If the same character then picked up a weapon of mighty smiting, she gains one extra smite ability per day—either an extra paladin smite evil or an extra clerical smite—but she could freely choose which one gained the extra use each day.

## Ranger

**Since undead are immune to critical hits, I assume a ranger whose favored enemy is undead never gets a damage bonus against undead. I had been leaning toward giving the damage bonus anyway. All undead are critical proof, most are also immune to Bluff checks, and the Wilderness Lore skill wouldn't be too useful against undead, either. ("Flee! These are zombie squirrels!"). It seems to me that choosing undead as a favored enemy just seems exceptionally weak compared to the other choices.**

Undead are indeed immune to critical hits and are also immune to sneak attacks and the ranger's favored enemy bonuses. (The same holds true for constructs, elementals, and oozes.) Rangers who choose these types of creatures as favored enemies are giving up power. (The designers did this intentionally.) Oozes probably are the weakest choice, since these creatures are all mindless and thus hard to bluff (Sense Motive against an ooze tends to be pointless), but the ranger still gets a bonus on Listen, Spot, and Wilderness Lore checks against the creature. Keep in mind that you make Wilderness Lore checks to track a creature.

**The description of the ranger class says rangers cannot use double-headed weapons when using their two-weapon fighting ability. What, exactly, is a double-headed weapon? The glossary has an entry for a double weapon, but not for a double-headed weapon. Is a quarterstaff a double-headed weapon?**

Though the ranger class description refers to a double-headed weapon, the correct term is "double weapon." (A "double-ended" weapon also is a double weapon.) All double weapons are shown on Table 7-4. If the weapon has two damage ratings separated by a slash, it is a double weapon. A quarterstaff is a double weapon.

One can use both ends of a double weapon just as if they were two weapons, or just one end. (If you use one end in two hands, you get one and half times your Strength bonus to damage.) Rangers, however, cannot use double weapons with their special two-weapon fighting abilities—not even quarterstaves.



# Rogue

**I don't see any limit on the number of sneak attacks a rogue can make in a round. Suppose a high-level rogue is hiding. Two villains walk within 5 feet of her. Can the rogue use an attack of opportunity as a sneak attack and then, assuming she gets initiative, make as many sneak attacks as she has attacks? Can she sneak attack each of the villains? What if the rogue has a bow? If she has Rapid Shot, does this increase the number of sneak attacks she can make?**

A rogue deals extra damage with a sneak attack anytime the target is denied Dexterity bonus to Armor Class or anytime the rogue flanks the target, no matter how many attacks the rogue makes. These conditions are not likely to occur during an attack of opportunity, but if they do (such as when the rogue is unseen), the rogue gets her sneak attack bonus damage. The same holds true for ranged weapons (but see the next question), provided that the rogue is within 30 feet of her target. Note that sneak attacks are never possible when the rogue cannot see her target.

**Say a rogue attempts to perform a sneak attack on a target and the target is flanked and engaged with another character, but aware of the rogue. Does the rogue get the extra damage dice for the sneak attack? My DM believes that a foe that is aware of the rogue can protect itself and is not subject to sneak attacks. I disagree.**

Whenever a rogue attacks an opponent that the rogue flanks, or who is denied a Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (such as when caught flat-footed), the rogue's attack is a sneak attack. It makes no difference how many attacks the rogue makes or whether the opponent is aware of the rogue or not. (Note that opponents who are not subject to critical hits, such as constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, and undead, are not subject to sneak attacks.) Note that in earlier versions of the game only the first attack a rogue made in a round could be a sneak attack. That is no longer the case.

**If a rogue were blinded, stunned, or suffering any other physical problem that would normally cause her to lose her Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, would her uncanny dodge ability still allow her to keep that bonus? I'm basically wondering what conditions can cause you to lose the benefits of uncanny dodge.**

Uncanny dodge allows you to keep your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class when flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. It doesn't help you if you're immobilized. Here's a quick summary of the relevant conditions:

**Blinded:** When you're blinded, all your opponents are effectively invisible to you. If you have uncanny dodge, you retain your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class when blinded, but you still suffer all the other effects of blindness.

**Cowering:** This condition leaves you frozen in fear, which means you're immobile. Therefore you lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, even if you have uncanny dodge.

**Flat-Footed:** Uncanny dodge negates the effects of this condition.

**Grappled:** When you're grappled, you're immobile, so you lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, even if you have uncanny dodge.

**Held:** You're helpless and therefore immobile. Uncanny dodge doesn't alleviate this condition or its effects.

**Helpless:** When you're helpless, you're immobile, so you

lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, even if you have uncanny dodge.

**Incapacitated:** You're helpless and therefore immobile. Uncanny dodge doesn't alleviate this condition or its effects.

**Pinned:** When you're pinned, you're also grappled (and therefore immobile), so you lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, even if you have uncanny dodge.

**Stunned:** This condition leaves you unable to act. You're immobile when stunned, so you lose your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, even if you have uncanny dodge.

**I am unable to come to a succinct understanding of how often a rogue should be able to make sneak attacks in certain conditions. For example, take a rogue who is armed with a bow and who also has darkvision. Suppose this rogue preys on creatures that can't see in the dark. The first round of combat is clear: As long as the target hasn't heard the rogue's approach, the target is flat-footed and subject to sneak attack damage from a ranged weapon (provided the rogue is within 30 feet, of course). The following rounds don't seem as clear. If the rogue is still out of vision range, can the rogue continue to make sneak attacks? What happens if the foes light up a torch? Can the rogue just step back into darkness and keep making sneak attacks? My gaming group is ready to decide that an attacker in complete darkness is effectively invisible to the defender, rendering him flat-footed and subject to sneak attacks. Is that a good idea?**

If your foe can't see you, that foe loses his Dexterity bonus against your attacks and you can sneak attack the foe if you have the sneak attack class feature and you meet all the other requirements for a sneak attack. Being unseen due to darkness is just like being invisible.

It's worth noting that the rogue in your first example could make a sneak attack even if her foe heard her coming. Knowing that you're nearby or even knowing your approximate location (as might happen when the foe makes a successful Listen check or uses a special quality such as scent) doesn't make the foe any more able to defend himself. The foe must be able to observe your actions to use his Dexterity bonus to deny you a sneak attack.

There are a few ways creatures can avoid sneak attacks from unseen foes. For example, the blindsight special quality allows creatures to "see" the unseen, and the uncanny dodge class feature allows characters to retain their Dexterity bonuses against foes they cannot see.

# Sorcerer

**The *Player's Handbook* says a sorcerer class casts arcane spells by virtue of raw magical talent or a gift, as opposed to the wizard's academic, systematic approach. If this is the case, can a sorcerer cast a spell that requires material components or a focus without using the components or focus?**

No, a sorcerer has a natural talent or gift for arcane spells, but that talent or gift only allows the sorcerer to cast a spell without preparing it ahead of time. If you were to watch a wizard and a sorcerer casting the same spell, you could not tell just by looking which was the sorcerer and which was the wizard. (Not even a successful Spellcraft check would reveal that.) The sorcerer uses all the components the spell requires (verbal, somatic, and material) and uses them the same way a

wizard does. Of course, the sorcerer can use a feat to make a component unnecessary, such as Still Spell to eliminate a spell's somatic component.

## Wizard

**Can a diviner prepare *detect magic* as a bonus spell, because it's a detection spell, or is it from the Universal school and therefore not a Divination spell?**

The *detect magic* spell belongs to the Universal school, not the Divination school, so diviners can't claim it as a bonus school spell.

**The entry for the wizard class lists Knowledge as a class skill, along with a parenthetical note that says: "all skills, taken individually." I take this to mean: All fields of study, taken individually, with examples of such fields of study given under the description of the Knowledge skill. A fellow player has taken this to mean that for each rank purchased in this skill he can have any skill (Listen, Hide, Disable Device, and so on) and pay for that skill as if it were a class skill instead of a cross-class skill. Is my friend confused or am I?**

Your friend seems very confused. A wizard has the Knowledge skill as a class skill and can take any version of the Knowledge skill, such as Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (history) as a class skill. A wizard cannot just pick any darn skill she likes as a class skill.

## Familiars

**Can masters who possess spell-like or supernatural abilities share those abilities with their familiars (or paladins' mounts)? Can the master share any spell she receives? Or just spells she casts.**

Master and familiar (or paladin's mount) can share only spells the master casts on herself. (That is, the master must cast the spell and select herself as the target.) Spell-like or supernatural abilities can be shared, provided the master is using the ability and targets herself. See Chapter 1 of *Tome and Blood* for details.

**The list of familiar abilities says the familiar uses either the skills listed for the kind of animal that the familiar is or the master's skills, whichever are better. What are "better" skills? How can you compare skills?**

If the master has it and the familiar doesn't, it's "better," and the familiar can use it provided that it is physically able to do so. (It would be hard for a cat, for example, to use a Craft skill). In this case, use the master's skill ranks and the familiar's relevant ability score.

If the master and the familiar both have the same skill, the familiar uses the master's skill ranks, or the familiar's, whichever are higher.

**The *Player's Handbook* says a familiar gets half the master's hit points. What constitutes the master's hit points? Does the master's Constitution adjustment apply? What about the Toughness feat? What about temporary hit point increases such as *aid* spells or extra hit points from temporary Constitution increases such as the *endurance* spell?**

The familiar gets half the master's (undamaged) hit points,

rounded down. Constitution bonuses and the Toughness feat count, as does any other permanent hit point gain, such as from gaining a level or a permanent increase in Constitution. Temporary hit point gains don't affect the familiar's hit points.

**Does the natural armor bonus of a creature that happens to be a familiar stack with the natural armor bonus received from being a familiar? The examples in *Tome and Blood* would seem to indicate so. Some text on page 11 in *Tome and Blood*, however, would appear to indicate otherwise. In other words, what would be the Armor Class of a pseudodragon familiar (acquired with Improved Familiar feat) for a 7th-level sorcerer and how would it be calculated?**

Increase the pseudodragon's natural armor by 4 points, just as you would for any 7th-level character's familiar. For a pseudodragon, this yields a final Armor Class of 22, which is exactly what the example pseudodragon familiar's statistics on page 16 shows. The text on page 11 merely points out that this increase to natural armor is not any kind of magical bonus; the familiar's natural armor rating simply gets bigger. Because the increase is not a bonus, you don't have to worry about it going away in an *antimagic field* or about how it stacks with any kind of bonus. For example, a 7th-level character's pseudodragon familiar would have an Armor Class of 26 if it received a *mage armor* spell (+2 size, +10 natural, +4 armor).

**I'd like to have an owl familiar. In the *Monster Manual*, the owl is listed as dealing damage of 1d2-2. If this is true, an owl does, at most, 0 points of damage. Is this the correct way to interpret this? How can an owl attack?**

There is a minimum of 1 point for a successful attack; see Damage on page 7 of the *Monster Manual*. (This applies to characters as well; see page 118 in the *Player's Handbook*.)

**What are the proper skill bonuses for an owl? The text in the *Monster Manual* seems to contradict the tabular listing. Or perhaps one somehow derived from the other? If the latter, how is it calculated?**

The owl's skills are as follows: Listen +14, Move Silently +20, Spot +6\*, exactly as listed in the *Monster Manual*. These numbers include a +8 racial bonus on Listen checks and a +14 racial bonus on Move Silently checks, as explained in the Skills section of the owl entry. At night, the owl gets an extra +8 bonus on Spot checks, for a total Spot score of +14. (The asterisk after the Spot score indicates that the skill is subject to a special conditional modifier.)

Many creatures in the *Monster Manual* have similar skill entries. See Skills on page 11 of the *Monster Manual*.

**Do all familiars grant their masters improved evasion, or is this an ability possessed only by the familiar itself? I ask because the text on page 13 of *Tome and Blood* seems to say that familiars grant improved evasion.**

No familiar in the *Player's Handbook* or in *Tome and Blood* grants improved evasion (though they all have it). You've been misled by an error in the granted abilities text that appears on pages 13 and 14, which should read as follows:

**Granted Abilities:** All familiars grant their master the benefits of the Alertness feat (when the familiar is within 5 feet), empathic link, and shared spells at 1st level in addition to any special abilities listed above.

**If a master and familiar can speak telepathically at 1st**

**level (though the empathic link), what's the major advantage to verbal speech at 5th level?**

First, the familiar is now smart enough to actually speak, so it's a darn sight easier to understand than it was when the master was 1st level. This clarity of communication is mostly a function of the familiar's increasing Intelligence score, however, and the main reason speech is broken out into a separate ability at 5th level is to remind players and DMs that the familiar can carry on a normal conversation. Also the speech ability is not supernatural, so it works in antimagic areas. It also possible for characters other than the master to understand the familiar's speech, provided that have access to a *tongues* or *comprehend languages* spell.

**I'm thinking about making a wizard character multiclass by adding a level of cleric. The wizard has a familiar. When the wizard starts gaining levels as a cleric, can the familiar deliver cleric spells that have touch range?**

If the character already is at least a 3rd-level wizard, the character has the touch ability and the familiar can deliver any spell with a range of touch that the master casts, no matter what class the spell is from. The familiar also can share any spell the master casts, though it's subject to the limits of that ability. The character's cleric levels, however, don't increase the familiar's natural armor, Intelligence, or special abilities.

## Multiclass Characters

**How does a multiclass character add skills? All of the examples use single-class characters. So what happens when Leopard, a rogue with an Intelligence score of 14, switches to a fighter after 1st level? This would make Leopard a 1st-level fighter/1st-level rogue, right? Does he get 2 skill points for being a fighter, plus 2 points for Intelligence? Does he get 4 skill points for being a warrior-type character (as barbarians and rangers do)? Does he get quadruple skill points for being 1st level? And if Leopard is a human, does he get his +1 skill point for being human again?**

Leopard gets 2 skill points for gaining a fighter level, +2 points for his Intelligence, and +1 point for being human. You multiply a character's allotment of skill points by four only when the character chooses his initial set of skills at 1st level; as a 1st-level fighter/1st-level rogue, Leopard is a 2nd-level character. When adding a class level, you always add the allotment of skill points for that class, as shown on Table 4-1 in the *Player's Handbook*, plus any adjustments for race and Intelligence scores. If Leopard had added a level of ranger or barbarian, he would have added 4 points for his class, plus 3 points for Intelligence and race.

**I have a multiclass dwarf who is a 6th-level fighter and a 1st-level rogue. I want to pick up a level of cleric. Am I correct in thinking that my character doesn't incur any XP penalties because fighter is her favored class and her other classes are within a level of each other?**

Yes, you are correct. The levels a character has in a favored class don't count when determining if the character takes an XP penalty for multiclassing.

**I have a multiclass character with the uncanny dodge class ability and the Deflect Arrows feat. Can she deflect arrows on a surprise round if she's the one surprised?**

No. You're flat-footed when you're surprised and you can't deflect arrows when you're flat-footed. Uncanny dodge lets you use your Dexterity bonus while flat-footed, but it doesn't keep her from becoming flat-footed. Note that uncanny dodge also does not allow her to make attacks of opportunity while flat-footed.

**I plan on playing a multiclass character. Does it matter which class I pick first?**

Not really, but which class comes first can have a big impact on the character. For example, a character gets the maximum result for her first Hit Die, so sometimes it is advisable to make that first die as large as possible, especially if you plan to have the character fight often. (A few extra hit points also will make it more likely that the character will live to see 2nd level.) On the other hand, a character's initial allotment of skill points is quadrupled for her first character level, so if you're interested in having a lot of skills, put the class that has the most skill points first.

Consider these two versions of a fighter/rogue, level 1/1: Assuming the character has an Intelligence and Constitution scores of 12, the character would have 21 skill points and 13 to 18 hit points (average of 15) if she was a fighter first. If the same character was a rogue first she would have 39 skill points and 9 to 18 hit points (average of 13).

If one of your character's classes is paladin or monk, you'll face multiclassing restrictions. Once you quit the paladin or monk class, you can't go back. Don't put the paladin or monk class first unless you're willing to either wave the class goodbye or stick with it for a good while. (Either option is slightly easier with a human character.)

Your first class also will determine how old your character is. (See Table 6-4 in the *Player's Handbook*.)

**A sorcerer can have only so many spells. What if the sorcerer is also a wizard? Can she use the spells from her spellbook as sorcerer spells? Or can she use only her sorcerer spell slots to cast spells she knows as a sorcerer? Can she transcribe spells she knows as a sorcerer into her wizard spellbook?**

You keep a separate list of spells for each class. A sorcerer/wizard could not use a spell from her wizard spell book in a sorcerer spell slot unless she also had the spell in question as part of her sorcerer repertoire. The same holds true for any other multiclass spellcaster. Likewise, the character must use spells from her spellbook to fill her wizard spell slots and she cannot use a spell she knows as a sorcerer as a wizard spell unless that spell is also recorded in her spellbook.

A wizard/sorcerer cannot simply transcribe spells from her sorcerer repertoire into her spellbook. The character must find the spell on a scroll or in another spellbook, pick it up when she gains a new level, or research the spell from scratch.

**Suppose Odo is an 11th-level conjurer and 3rd-level bard, with 18 Intelligence and 16 Charisma. He finds a ring of wizardry that doubles 1st-level spells. How many 1st-level spells can he prepare?**

The ring doubles the 1st-level arcane spells from each class. Bonus spells from school specialization or high ability scores are not doubled. (See the last sentence of the first paragraph in the item description.)

Note that Odo does not prepare his bard spells, but the ring still doubles his 1st-level spells because bards are arcane spellcasters. As a 3rd-level bard, Odo has two 1st-level spell

slots. The ring doubles that to 4 slots. Odo's 16 Charisma gives him one bonus 1st-level spell, for a total of five 1st-level bard spell slots.

As an 11th-level wizard, Odo has four 1st-level spell slots, which the ring doubles to 8. As a conjurer, Odo gains a bonus 1st-level Conjuration spell, and his 18 Intelligence gives him another 1st-level spell of any school, for a total of ten 1st-level wizard spell slots.

Odo's bard and wizard spell slots are not interchangeable.

**Can you raise a skill as a cross-class skill if you have it already as a class skill or vice-versa? For example, can a 3rd-level wizard with 6 ranks of Concentration take a level as a fighter and raise Concentration as a cross-class skill? If the skill wasn't maxed out would it matter? Is a skill's maximum rank dependent on the character's class level or the character level?**

A multiclass character's maximum rank in a skill is based on character level; character level plus 3 if the skill is a class skill for any of the character's classes, or half that if the skill is cross class for all the character's classes. (See page 56 in the *Player's Handbook*.)

A 3rd-level wizard/1st-level fighter has a maximum rank of 7 (4+3) in Concentration or in any other skill that's a class skill for a fighter or for a wizard. The character in your example would have to pay 2 skill points for 1 rank of Concentration since he's buying the rank with fighter skill points.

**How are feats handled for multiclass characters? Say I have a character who is a fighter/wizard. I understand that every character, regardless of class, receives a new feat every three levels. What about bonus feats from a class? A fighter gets a bonus feat at 1st level and every two levels. Wizards receive Scribe Scroll at 1st level and a bonus feat every five levels. Would all these bonus feats stack? Would the aforementioned fighter/wizard receive all these feats?**

Every character gets one feat for every three character levels. (Character level is the sum of all your class levels.) Characters get bonus feats from their classes according to their class levels. For example, a 5th-level fighter/5th-level wizard would have 4 feats for her class levels (you get a feat at 1st, 3rd, 6th, and 9th levels), plus 3 extra fighter feats (at 1st, 2nd, and 4th level), plus 2 wizard feats (Scribe Scroll 1st level and a bonus feat at 5th level), for a total of 9 feats.

**The descriptions for the human and the half-elf list the favored class of each as "any" and explain that multiclass humans ignore their highest-level classes when determining if they take experience penalties. Half elves have the same ability. Can a human or half-elf choose to ignore his lowest-level class, as the "any" would imply, or must he ignore his highest-level class? If he must ignore his highest-level class, would a human 8th-level monk/7th-level paladin then be stuck with a -20% experience penalty if he then becomes a barbarian, even though a half-orc 8th-level monk/7th-level paladin would receive no experience penalty in the same situation?**

Yes, the human in your example would indeed take an experience penalty, as would a half-elf in the same situation. In this case, "any" means there is no single class these races favor. If humans and half-elves were free to pick any favored class they wanted, and were free to change that choice whenever it suited them, that's what the rules would say. But multiclass humans and half-elves both ignore their highest level classes

instead. Note that a multiclass human or half-elf with only two classes never has to worry about an experience penalty. Adding a third class, however, takes some planning if one wishes to avoid an experience penalty.

**Can a multiclass rogue or a rogue with additional weapon proficiencies perform a sneak attack with a weapon that's not on the rogue's weapon list? For instance, can a fighter/rogue make a sneak attack with a broadsword?**

A rogue can use any kind of weapon in a sneak attack. (See the limits in the sneak attack description on page 47 of the *Player's Handbook*.)

**My character has just become a 5th-level sacred fist. This prestige class gives him the uncanny dodge ability (can't be flanked) and makes him a 14th-level character overall. Does that mean it would take an 18th-level rogue to flank and sneak attack him, or just a 9th-level rogue, since he has only five levels in the class that grants the ability? Suppose the attacking rogue is a multiclass character who gets sneak attack from her new class as well as her old one. Do you add the class levels from both classes to determine whether the sneak attack is more powerful than the uncanny dodge?**

Add up all the attacker's class levels in classes that grant sneak attack. Then add up all the defender's class levels in classes that grant uncanny dodge. Then just compare the two normally.

Assuming that the example character has only one class that grants uncanny dodge, it would take a 9th-level rogue (or a character with a total of 9 class levels in classes that grant sneak attack) to flank him.

**Can a multiclass character who can cast both divine and arcane spells use the spells from one class to affect spells from another class? For example, can a cleric/wizard cast *spectral hand* and use it to deliver a cleric spell with a touch range?**

Unless the spell description specifically says it works only on a certain kind of spell, it will work on any spell the character casts. The *spectral hand* description says the spell works on any touch range spell of 4th level or lower; the effect is not limited to arcane spells.

**Would it be possible to multiclass as two different types of cleric and gain four domain powers?**

No, you can take a class only once.

**Can multiclass spellcasters combine their levels to satisfy the level prerequisites for item creation feats? For example, the Forge Ring feat requires a spellcaster of level 12+. If I am a 6th-level cleric/6th-level wizard do I qualify, or would I need to be 12th level in one or the other?**

You need to have the listed number of levels in a single spellcasting class. In the case of Forge Ring, you need 12 levels in a spellcasting class. Note that if you have a prestige class that improves the spellcasting ability of another class, you use your effective caster level to meet the prerequisite. For example, a 10th-level wizard/2nd-level loremaster is a 12th-level spellcaster and meets the prerequisite for Forge Ring.

**Let's say I have a 1st-level fighter/7th-level cleric. If that character gets hit by a creature that causes level loss and becomes a 0-level fighter/7th-level cleric, can she pick up a third class without any penalties?**

When you lose a level, you lose your highest level. In a case where all levels are equal, you must randomly determine which one is lost. Thus, your example character would become a 1st-level fighter/6th-level cleric. Should a multiclass character's level in any class ever fall to zero, the character is no longer a member of that class. A character who had only two levels to begin with is no longer a multiclass character. For example, a 1st-level fighter/1st-level cleric who loses a level winds up as either a 1st-level fighter or a 1st-level cleric (50% chance for each).

**My character is a multiclass cleric/paladin. Do his cleric levels count as caster levels toward paladin spells, or the other way round if the spells are on both classes' spell lists?**

No to both. Any multiclass spellcaster keeps track of spells for each class separately and uses his or her class level in each class as the caster level for all spells cast as a member of that class. For example, a 10th-level paladin/1st-level cleric casts paladin spells as a 10th-level paladin (caster level 5 because a paladin's caster level is 1/2 paladin level) and casts cleric spells as a 1st-level cleric. If the character prepares a spell as a paladin and the same spell again as a cleric, the cleric spell will have the lower, cleric caster level and the paladin spell works just like any other spell cast by a 10th-level paladin.

**Suppose a multiclass cleric/paladin takes the Strength domain. The description for the domain power says you can perform a feat of Strength, which is the supernatural ability to gain an enhancement bonus to Strength equal to your level. Does this mean cleric level only, or do paladin levels count, too?**

Only the cleric level applies. Any class ability uses only the levels in the class that gives you the ability. If you get the same ability from more than one class, the levels in those classes stack when figuring any level-dependant variable or statistic.

**How many times can a multiclass cleric/paladin turn undead? Does the character get additional turning attempts per day? That is, 3 + Charisma modifier for paladin plus 3 + Charisma modifier for cleric?**

Whenever you get the same class ability from two or more classes, you don't get extra uses of the ability, but you combine the levels in each class to determine your effective level with that ability. For example, a 10th-level paladin/1st-level cleric turns undead as a 9th-level character (paladin level -2 + cleric level). The example character still turns undead 3 + Charisma modifier times per day.

## Prestige Classes

**I can't find any information about how many spells prestige class spellcasters know. I am going on the presumption that those that gain bonus spells per day of their existing class (such as loremaster and spellsword) do not automatically add additional spells to their spellbook as they gain levels.**

They do add spells to their lists. For example, a wizard/loremaster gains 2 spells for her spellbook when using a loremaster level to increase spellcasting. A sorcerer/loremaster would learn more spells as well. Adding spells to your spellbook or personal repertoire is part of spellcasting.

**If you become a multiclass character by adding a prestige**

**class, do you have to keep the two classes at roughly even levels to prevent an experience penalty?**

Taking a prestige class doesn't cause an experience penalty; see page 27 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*.

**Can you take levels in more than one prestige class? How do all these levels affect your experience?**

You can take any number of prestige classes, provided that you qualify for them. Prestige classes do not impose multiclass experience penalties, no matter how many prestige classes you have.

**When a prestige class casts spells from its own spell list, such as the assassin, blackguard, or bladesinger, how do I determine how many spells the character knows and how do I determine the save DCs for those spells. Are there any rules for this?**

The prestige class description gives you this information. For example, when a character casts spells as a wizard, her spellcaster's magic works just like a wizard's. The assassin and bladesinger cast spells and gain new spells as wizards; they keep spellbooks and add two spells to their books at each level, just as wizards do. Their Intelligence scores give them bonus spells and determine the save DCs for their spells. (See the sidebar for corrections and additions to the bladesinger at <http://www.wizards.com/dnd/article.asp?x=dnd/we/we20010713a>.)

A blackguard is a divine spellcaster and "knows" all the spells on the blackguard spell list; this is true for any prestige class that casts divine spells.

**When a prestige class adds levels of spellcasting from a previous class but no other class benefit, does that include benefits to a familiar? Or is improving your familiar a benefit to your familiar?**

Improving your familiar is a class benefit of the class that made the familiar available in the first place, and classes that merely advance your spellcasting ability do not also advance your familiar. For example, a 10th-level wizard/5th-level loremaster has a familiar with only 10th-level abilities.

**The assassin prestige class has a prerequisite of 8 ranks in Hide. Is that 8 ranks as in what was purchased with skill points, or 8 ranks total? That is, if my character had a Dexterity score of 26 (+8 Dexterity bonus on Hide checks), would I meet the Hide prerequisite for the assassin class? How about if I had a racial modifier that was +8 to Hide?**

You would not meet the prerequisite in either example case. You have to buy 8 ranks in the Hide skill—that's why the prerequisite says "ranks" instead of "score" or "bonus."

**Is the assassin's death attack considered a death effect for purposes of a raise dead spell? That is, can an assassination victim be raised, or must a resurrection spell be used?**

Only attacks with the death descriptor (see page 152 in the *Player's Handbook*) interfere with the *raise dead* spell. The assassin's death attack does not have the death descriptor.

It's possible for a special attack to have a descriptor that is not specifically mentioned in its description. For example, the beholder's *finger of death* eye ray does have the death descriptor because it duplicates the effects of a *finger of death* spell, which has the death descriptor.

**In *DRAGON Magazine* 287, the dreadmaster prestige class is detailed on pages 82–83. I plan to have a 6th-level priest of Bane (NPC) pick up a level in the dreadmaster prestige class. I have chosen the Destruction and Hatred domains for him. When he picks up a level as a dreadmaster, does he continue to improve in his granted power (Destruction domain): smite power (in other words, bonus on damage becomes +7 or stays at +6)?**

None of the character's cleric class features improve with dreadmaster levels, including domain powers.

**Some prestige class descriptions specify whether or not you may or freely multiclass with your previous class, but others say nothing about the matter. When a prestige class description does not mention multiclassing, can you still go back to your previous class or classes?**

You can always go back to your old class unless its description specifically prohibits returning, as those for paladin and monk do. Some prestige classes lift that restriction for paladins or monks.

**The description of the lore class feature for the loremaster prestige class says loremasters gather knowledge just as bards do and can make knowledge checks as bards can. The text goes on to say the loremaster adds her level and her Intelligence modifier to the knowledge check. Does this mean that a loremaster adds her loremaster level to Knowledge skill checks?**

No, a loremaster adds her loremaster levels just to loremaster knowledge checks, which work just like bardic knowledge checks.

# Skills

**Can a character use a synergy bonus for a skill she doesn't have? For example, a character has 7 ranks in the Tumble skill, which provides a +2 synergy bonus on Balance checks. Would the character still get the bonus if she had no ranks in Balance?**

Yes. When your skills give you a synergy bonus on another skill, you get that bonus any time you make a check using that skill, even if you're making a skill check untrained. Note, however, that having a synergy bonus does not make you skilled; only having at least 1 rank in a skill does that.

**We're confused as to which skills you can take 10 and take 20 on. Can we take 10 or take 20 on a Hide check, for example?**

Taking 10 is a way to eliminate chance from a skill check; you can take 10 pretty much anytime you're using a skill and there are no distractions. Taking 20 represents using a skill over and over again until you succeed. (That's why taking 20 uses up so much time.) You can't take 20 if there's a consequence for failure. Since failing a Hide check means you're spotted, you can't take 20 on a Hide check. In general, you can't take 20 on any check that is resolved with an opposed roll.

It might be possible to take 10 on a Hide check. For example, suppose a sentry looks around for a suitable place to hide at the beginning of his watch and then settles in. Since the sentry is not trying to hide from anyone in particular, the DM might very well allow the sentry to take 10 on the Hide check.

**According to page 104 in the *Player's Handbook*, you take a penalty on skill checks that involve moving if you're not proficient with the kind of armor you wear. What skills does this refer to?**

The armor nonproficiency penalty applies to Balance, Climb, Disable Device\*, Escape Artist, Hide, Jump, Move Silently, Open Lock\*, Pick Pocket, Ride\*, and Tumble.

\*This skill does not normally have an armor check penalty, but it has the armor nonproficiency penalty.

**What is the base DC for a Spot or Listen check? The *Player's Handbook* seems to say that the base DC is 5 for Spot checks, whereas the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* states it is a base of 20. Likewise, Listen checks seem to have a base DC of 5 in some places and more in others.**

As with any skill, the DC for Spot or Listen depends on the situation, and that's why you see so many different DCs listed. Usually, a Spot or Listen check requires an opposed roll. In the case of Spot, the user's Spot check is opposed by a Hide check by the creature trying to avoid notice. Listen works the same way, except that Move Silently is the opposing skill.

An opposed check has no base DC; the opposing check result sets the DC (see Opposed Checks on page 60 of the *Player's Handbook* for details). Sometimes, the prevailing conditions will affect the DC of an opposed check. For example, distance affects most Spot and Listen checks; you increase the DC by +1 for every 10 feet of distance between the Spot or Listen user and whoever is trying to avoid notice.

**I am having trouble adjudicating surprise and awareness in my adventures. Do you use both Spot and Listen checks to determine awareness to opponents, or just one of the**

**two? If it's the latter, when do you determine which is to be used? Obviously, factors such as distance, visibility, obstacles, light sources, and sight type will affect difficulty for a Spot check, and the higher a player (or monster) rolls, the farther away they should notice activity, but this seems to be accounted for with a purely random dice roll for distance between the two parties instead. Is this correct? If so, why?**

Before you can decide who's aware of whom at the beginning of an encounter, you have to determine the initial encounter distance between the two groups using the system presented on pages 59–60 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*. The distance between the two parties when the encounter begins is mostly a function of the terrain and visibility.

When PCs adventure outdoors, a random roll is necessary to determine initial encounter distance because outdoor encounters tend to include variables that DMs can't really account for, such as the following: Was anyone looking in exactly the right place during the split second that the orcs were visible through the trees? Exactly when are the PCs looking around for danger and when are they watching the ground 3 feet ahead to keep from tripping and falling flat on their faces? Is there a nice, flat open space to look across right here? Or is there a bush or a small rise that's blocking sight? (Most DMs don't plot every dip, rise, tree, or bush on their outdoor maps.)

Table 3-1 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* shows how to randomly determine initial encounter distance in various kinds of terrain.

Once you determine the distance between two groups outdoors, make Spot checks for each group using the modifiers shown on Table 3-2 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* to determine if the two groups see each other. There is no distance modifier to this Spot check. As noted in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, anyone who succeeds sees the other creature or group. Anyone who fails the check remains unaware of the other group until the distance between them is lessened to half the distance originally rolled. For example, a party of four adventurers emerges from a forest into a sunlit glade where eight trolls are finishing a meal. As the DM, you decide to treat the glade as a grassland, so you roll 6d6×10 feet to determine how close the party gets before anyone has a chance to see the other party. You get a result of 210 feet (an average roll). When the party comes within 210 feet of the trolls, you secretly make Spot checks for each party member and for each troll.

The Spot DC for the party is 24, which you derive as follows: 20 (the starting DC for a Spot check in this particular circumstance), -4 for the trolls' size, +5 for contrast (you decide the trolls blend into the background fairly well), +5 for stillness (the trolls aren't moving), and -2 because there are 6 or more trolls.

The trolls' Spot DC is 20 (base), +0 for size, -5 for contrast (all the party's armor and weapons stand out pretty well in the sunlit glade), for a total DC of 15.

If nobody in either group makes a successful Spot check, both groups automatically see each other at a distance of 105 feet, and the encounter begins at that distance with both groups mutually aware (see page 61 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*). If only one group sees the other, the group that made the successful check is aware of the other and can act while the

other remains unaware until circumstances make them aware.

Let's assume the PCs fail to spot the trolls, but the trolls spot the PCs (a fairly likely occurrence). If the trolls merely advance on the PCs, the PCs see the trolls at a distance of 105 feet, and you roll for initiative. If the trolls have ranged weapons, they can decide to open fire on the party. If so, they surprise the PCs provided they don't come within 105 feet before firing.

If the trolls have no missile weapons, but show a little cunning, they might decide to lie in wait for the PCs. Let's assume the trolls creep forward and crawl into a thicket of bushes, where they hope to hide until the PCs come into charging range.

Although the PCs don't know it, the encounter already has begun. To determine if the trolls surprise the PCs, I recommend allowing the group Spot checks at a distance of 105 feet (half the original encounter distance roll), again at 50 feet (half the previous distance, rounded down), and a final check at 30 feet (just before the trolls charge). Resolve the checks as normal Spot checks, opposed by the trolls' Hide checks and modified for distance. Do not use the procedure for initial encounter distance again because the encounter already has begun.

For the troll's Hide checks, allow a +2 bonus for having plenty of time to hide well, and another +5 bonus as an ad hoc circumstance bonus for hiding in the thicket. (In this case, the same bonus they got for contrast when determining encounter distance.) Allow the trolls to take 10 on their Hide checks, because they're hiding carefully and it makes things easier.

The DC for the PCs' Spot checks is 10 (the trolls are taking 10), +2 for the trolls' Dexterity scores of 14 (using the troll statistics from the *Monster Manual*), -4 because trolls are size Large (see the Hide skill description in the *Player's Handbook*), and +7 for the trolls' circumstance bonuses for a total DC of 15. At a range of 105 feet, the Spot DC for the PCs is 25 (15 + 10 for distance), the DC falls to 20 at 50 feet and to 18 at 30 feet.

If the PCs get lucky and see the trolls at a distance of 105 or 50 feet, you can assume that the trolls' ploy fails and they fail to surprise the group. There's not much point in running a surprise round when that much distance separates the groups (especially when the group that is aware is merely hiding and waiting for the other group to come closer), so just start the encounter as though the two groups are mutually aware of each other. If the PCs come within 30 feet before seeing the trolls, some or all of the PCs might be surprised, depending on the results of the Spot checks they make when they get within 30 feet. Run a surprise round as explained on page 61 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*.

You could allow the PCs Listen checks to notice the trolls, but since they're standing still, they aren't making too much noise, and the Listen DC would be 30 (the same as for hearing a creature that is motionless and invisible; see page 78 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*), modified for distance. In such cases, use only the skill that allows the best chance of success (Spot), not both.

When you're running an adventure in a dungeon or inside a building, you don't need to make a random roll to determine encounter distance because you can look at your map and tell whether a creature's line of sight is blocked or not. In such cases, Listen checks are often better than Spot checks for determining awareness. In general, if the initial encounter distance is limited by illumination or line of sight, consider using Listen checks to determine awareness.

Let's assume our example party of four characters meets those eight trolls underground. The trolls are resting in a

doorless room at the end of a 50-foot passage that ends in a right-angle turn, and from there the passage runs 40 feet to another turn. Under most circumstances, the trolls and the PCs see each other at a range of 50 feet, when the PCs round the corner. If one group or the other is being particularly quiet or particularly noisy, however, a Listen check might be in order.

Let's say the trolls are busy playing knucklebones. When the party rounds the first turn, they might hear the trolls. The base Listen DC for hearing creatures talking is 0, modified for distance (in this case 90 feet) for a Listen DC of 9. Assuming that the party hears the trolls, the encounter begins (though the trolls don't know that) and the PCs can try to sneak up to the corner and possibly surprise the trolls. To do so, the PCs have to make Move Silently checks, adjusted for their movement and armor (as noted in the Move Silently skill description), and the trolls make Listen checks based on the worst Move Silently result among the PCs, adjusted for distance (in this case, 50 feet, which is as close as the PCs can come without being seen).

**I am somewhat confused on how hiding works. In the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, on page 60, it shows how to determine who spots whom at the beginning of any encounter. But in the Hide skill description in the *Player's Handbook*, it gives a range penalty of -1 per 10 feet. This does not seem to be used in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*. How does this work?**

If someone is trying to Hide from someone else, the creature trying to remain unseen makes a Hide check opposed by the other creature's Spot check, which is indeed subject to a penalty of -1 for each 10 feet of distance.

The material to which you refer is not an example of hiding, however. Rather, it refers to the effects of keeping a low profile when determining the initial distance for an encounter, which is not the same thing as hiding.

If the PCs in the previous question's example were attempting to use their Hide skills, their overland movement rate would be lessened by half, and their own Spot checks to notice other creatures would take a -2 penalty (all this is explained under Hiding and Spotting on page 60 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*), making their Spot DC for seeing the trolls 22.

The trolls in the previous example would have a harder time seeing the PCs. Exactly how much harder depends on whatever Hide modifiers the PCs might have. In this case, use the worst Hide modifier in the group. Let's say the person with the worst Hide skill in the PC party has a Hide modifier of 0. That makes the trolls' Spot DC 25 (the starting value when the group you're spotting is hiding), +0 for size, +0 for the party's worst Hide modifier, +0 for contrast (in the previous example, there was a -5 modifier for contrast due to the PCs' armor and equipment; in this case, the effects of armor already is taken into account in the party's Hide modifier), for a total DC of 25.

The effects of successful or failed Spot rolls would be exactly as noted in the previous question.

**Half-orcs have a -2 penalty to their Charisma scores, and this makes sense given their lack of charm and their brutal social graces. However the Intimidate skill is based on Charisma and this means that a half-orc barbarian wielding a bloody double axe is a less frightening individual than your average gnome farmer wielding a cob of corn. Is there a reasoning behind this or is this something due for a rules patch?**



No “rules patch” is planned.

You can however, give the half-orc in your example a +2 check bonus (or more) for a favorable circumstance. In some cases, you can even allow the half-orc (or any other character) to use an ability modifier other than Charisma for Intimidate checks. For example, if the half-orc decides to tie a knot in a horseshoe to intimidate someone, you can use the character’s Strength modifier instead (see Skills with Different Abilities on page 91 of the *DUNGEON MASTER’s Guide*).

**My monk character can jump so far as to surpass his speed. Combine this with the 20-foot run it requires to do a running jump, and my monk must use two move actions just to run, jump, and land, because the distance jumped counts against his maximum movement for that turn. Do you have to jump the full distance that was rolled? For example, I only want to leap across a 10-foot chasm, but I roll so well that my monk jumps 25 feet. Does he have to sail the full 25 feet?**

No. Your Jump check result says how far you can jump, not how far you must jump.

Many things influence how far a character can jump. Which of these variables stack and which don’t? For those that stack, in what order do you apply the modifications? Consider a halfling with one level in barbarian (speed 30), a Jump skill modifier of +12, a *ring of jumping*, and *boots of speed*. Now suppose the character uses the run action. Just how far can this character jump? What would happen if the character has *boots of striding and springing* instead of *boots of speed*? What if the character was a monk instead of a barbarian?

Always figure out your character’s base speed first, including magical increases. Then figure out the effect of your Jump check, and then any increases to that; figure in changes to your character’s speed before applying multipliers to the distance jumped.

As a barbarian, the character in the example has a base speed of 30 (20 feet for halflings, +10 feet for being at least a 1st-level barbarian).

Assuming no magical effects, a running broad jump, and a roll of 20 on a Jump check, the character would clear an absolute maximum of 27 feet. (That’s a 5-foot minimum plus 1 foot for every point the Jump result exceeds 10 –  $12 + 20 = 32$ ;  $32 - 10 = 22$ ;  $22 + 5 = 27$ .) However, the maximum distance anyone can clear in a running broad jump is 6 times his height. For the average male halfling, that’s about 18 1/2 feet. (Halfling males average 3 feet, 1 inch tall.)

You’d figure out the distance for any other kind of jump the same way, although the minimum distance and the effect of the Jump check would vary with the kind of jump.

A *ring of jumping* adds +30 to Jump checks and eliminates the height limitation. *Boots of speed*, because they confer a *haste* effect, increase the distance jumped by 50%. So, in a running broad jump, our sample character can clear 85 1/2 feet ( $12 + 20 + 30 - 10 = 52 + 5 = 57 \times 1.5 = 85.5$ ).

*Boots of striding and springing* double the wearer’s base speed, giving the sample character a base speed of 60 feet. The distances given in the Jump skill description are based on a speed of 30 feet, and any increases or decreases in speed affect the distance jumped proportionately. In this case, jumping distances are doubled, and the sample character can jump 114 feet in a running broad jump ( $12 + 20 + 30 - 10 = 52 + 5 = 57 \times 2 = 114$ ).

Running doesn’t increase the distance you jump because it does not increase your base speed; it simply allows you to

move farther during your turn.

If the sample character was a monk instead of a barbarian, the distances jumped would be slightly less because the character’s base speed would be lower. Note that the monk’s fast movement ability becomes a supernatural ability starting at 9th level. Once that occurs, the monk’s fast movement no longer stacks with *boots of striding and springing*. A 9th-level human monk, for example, has a speed of 60. If wearing *boots of striding and springing*, the monk’s speed is 100. (This is twice the 50-foot speed the monk would have at 8th-level, which is the fastest nonsupernatural speed the monk can achieve.)

**The description for the Intimidate skill says you can use it to get a bully to back down or to make a prisoner give you the information you want. It strikes me that while a high Charisma score would be beneficial in some situations, having a low Charisma score would be even more effective other times. Is there any leeway in determining whether a high or low score would be used?**

Never turn an ability penalty into a bonus. A character with a low Charisma score is not effective at persuasion. A low Charisma character might be ugly enough to startle his own mother, but that doesn’t mean the character can make his ugliness work to his advantage. Contrary to what many people seem to believe, scared people do not always do what you want them to do. In fact, scared people tend to act in very contrary and unpredictable ways. When a character with a high Charisma score uses the Intimidate skill, he has a knack for throwing just enough scare into someone to make him a little more pliable, but not so much as to cause panic or revulsion.

You can grant a bonus on an Intimidate check (or to any other check) based on the situation or use another ability score for the check.

**The description of the Jump skill says that any distance you jump counts against your movement for the turn. What happens if my character jumps farther than her speed allows or faster than the character can move in a turn? Suppose I have a speed of 40 and I activate a magic item (a standard action), then make the required 20-foot run for a running broad jump. I can move only another 20 feet this turn. What if my Jump check indicates a jump of 25 feet or more?**

When you jump farther than you’re allowed to move, you can just jump a shorter distance, or you can just finish your turn in midair and finish your jump on the next turn. There’s no rule that says your jumping distance is limited by your speed. There is a rule that says any jump counts against your move for the turn. (In this case, you’re using your Jump check to determine how much distance you can cover in a single jump, and then spending as much movement as necessary to complete the jump.)

If you finish a turn in midair, your next action must be a move action to finish or continue the jump. Note that you make only one check for the jump.

**The description for the Jump skill shows how much distance you can achieve in a broad or high jump, but what about the combination? How high can you go in a broad jump? How far can you go in a high jump?**

Horizontal jumps are as high as 1/4 the distance jumped, which occurs at the midpoint of the jump. For high jumps, just assume the horizontal distance is equal to the minimum

horizontal jump for the type of jump you're making. That's 3 feet for standing jumps and 5 feet for running jumps.

**If someone were to jump 30 feet into the air, does he take damage from falling? Or better, if someone can make a 200-foot broad jump, does he take falling damage? If so, how much?**

The *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* says you take falling damage when you deliberately jump down from a height. However, you're not jumping down from a height unless the place where you land is lower than the place you start, no matter how high you actually jump when traveling between the two. In any case, if your jump check result is 15 or higher, then you take no damage from the first 10 feet you drop, and the damage from the second 10 feet is subdual damage. (See page 112 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*.) If you make a high jump to get over a 30-foot barrier, and the floor is the same level on the other side, you take no falling damage. If, however, you discover that the floor is 30 feet lower on the other side, you fall the extra 30 feet. The damage would be 1d6 normal and 1d6 subdual (none for the 30 feet you jumped, none for the first 10 feet of the fall, 1d6 subdual from the second 10 feet of the fall, and 1d6 normal for the third 10 feet of the fall)—provided, of course, that your Jump check result was at least a 15.

**If my PC spots a mold that causes damage, what is the DC for me to figure out what kind of mold it is? Would it be Wilderness Lore or Knowledge (nature)? What is the difference between these two skills? It seems that anything Wilderness Lore can do, Knowledge (nature) can do better since you can figure out many more things. With Wilderness Lore, you can avoid getting lost—but it seems that with Knowledge (nature), you would know what the procedure is for getting out of trouble in a natural setting.**

Neither Wilderness Lore nor Knowledge (nature) lets you recognize monsters. Wilderness Lore might let you recognize the area containing the mold as hazardous by spotting bones or by noticing that the local animals seem to avoid it. The Wilderness Lore DC for recognizing such a hazard is at least 15, and a DC of 20 would be more appropriate since dangerous mold is hardly a run-of-the-mill hazard. In any case, the mold would have to be in a wilderness setting for the Wilderness Lore skill to be of any use in recognizing the mold as a hazard.

It's possible that a character with the Knowledge (nature) skill might know something about a killer mold. Noting a killer mold (or any other harmful creature that is not obviously dangerous) has a DC in the 20 to 30 range; the rarer the creature, the higher the DC.

Knowledge (nature) is not a substitute for the Wilderness Lore skill. Indeed, even today the great outdoors is sprinkled with the broken, frozen, starved, or dehydrated bodies of folks who thought they knew what they were doing outside, but really didn't. A character with the Knowledge (nature) skill might have some book learning that suggests the proper course of action in a wilderness setting, but a Knowledge skill does not impart much in the way of practical know-how. At best, a successful Knowledge (nature) check will grant a +2 circumstance bonus when making Wilderness Lore checks; the DC of the Knowledge check will depend on how difficult the DM thinks the question is, but it should always be at least 15.

**What are the differences between a Craft skill, a Profession skill, and a Knowledge skill?**

A Craft skill involves a character making something with her

hands (usually also with tools, but not always). The relevant ability for a Craft skill is Intelligence, mostly because one must remember and use the right materials, procedures, and techniques and apply them in the proper order.

A Profession skill also involves specialized knowledge and techniques, but usually does not involve working with the hands. The relevant ability for a Profession skill is Wisdom, because it usually requires the character to apply her skills in an abstract, indirect, or speculative manner. Stonemasonry is a Craft, but architecture is a Profession. A Profession skill also implies a broader, less concrete know-how than a Craft skill does; a stonemason can build a stone house, but not a wooden one. An architect can design a house made out of almost anything. Note that the Wilderness Lore skill could be called Profession (Outdoorsman), but the design team decided to break it out into its own skill because it was much more likely to see use in play than other Profession skills.

A Knowledge skill involves academic learning that includes little practical training. The relevant ability for a Knowledge skill is Intelligence because it involves the memorization and recall of facts. A character with Knowledge (geology) knows her stones, but would be hard pressed to carve a statue, build a stone bridge, or dig a mine. A Knowledge skill allows a character to recall facts that might be relevant in a particular time and place, but it does not impart any special ability to put those facts to practical use. For example, a character lost in the woods might use a Knowledge (nature) skill to recall that moss usually grows the thickest on the north side of trees. But Knowledge (nature) probably will not reveal when moss does not grow thickest on the north sides of trees, which is all the time in some locales. Nor will the Knowledge (nature) skill help the character remember the direction to the nearest settlement or allow the character to make sure she walks in a straight line when moving cross country.

**I'm confused about the Sense Motive skill. It is not clear when the DM secretly rolls a check for the player, and when the player actively decides to use it as a conscious choice. For opposed Bluff checks, it's obvious that the DM secretly rolls for the player. However, for hunches and for interacting with enchanted characters, who rolls? Does the DM secretly roll when a player encounters an enchanted NPC, or does the player tell the DM he thinks the NPC is enchanted and wants to check? The issue I have with many of the skills is that they state "the player can roll a skill check," when several times what I feel it means to say is "the DM secretly rolls a skill check for the player" (for opposed rolls like Spot and Listen).**

In general, the player rolls the check whenever actively using any skill. The DM usually rolls the check secretly in circumstances when the character might happen to notice something without really trying, or anytime the DM wants to keep what's really going on a secret. For example, the character listens at a door, and the DM rolls the Listen check secretly so that the player doesn't know if there's really no noise there or if he just got a bad roll. Exactly when to let the player roll and when to roll secretly is a matter of judgment and personal preference—that's why the game has a DM.

**I am confused about the Speak Language skill. I always thought that it just enabled a member of an illiterate character class to learn languages. Then I noticed that the loremaster has it as a class skill. What is this skill used for? Do you use 2 skill points to become literate, or do you use**

**the skill points to learn languages at a rate of 2 skill points/language? Let's say that I am an elf wizard/lorekeeper and want to spend points on this skill. Will I be limited to the number of languages I learn because of my race, or is the limitation only for my Intelligence modifier? Does my level affect how many languages I can know? What if my Intelligence score changes?**

The Speak Language skill lets you learn to speak a new language. If you're literate, you can also read and write any language you can speak. Any languages you can speak courtesy of this skill are in addition to the languages you can speak because of your race, class, and Intelligence score. For example, an elf character who begins play with an Intelligence score of 18 speaks six languages: Common, Elven, and four additional languages chosen from the list on page 16 of the *Player's Handbook*. (The character's choice of class could expand the selection a little more, as noted on page 12 of the *Player's Handbook*). If the character ever buys the Speak Language skill, he learns to speak other languages in addition to these. Most characters must spend 2 skill points to learn a new language, but lorekeepers have Speak Language as a class skill and can learn new languages for one skill point each.

You do not buy ranks in Speak Language, so there is no maximum rank to worry about. You can learn to speak as many languages as you like, provided you have the skill points to spend on them.

Your beginning Intelligence score determines how many languages you can speak without the skill. You do not learn new languages if you have an Intelligence increase, and you do

not lose languages if your Intelligence decreases.

As for the use of the skill by barbarians, all characters except barbarians are automatically literate when they begin play. A barbarian can become literate by spending 2 skill points, but this is not the same as choosing a new language.

**The description for the Tumble skill says you can tumble up to 20 feet as part of normal movement to move through an area occupied by an enemy (DC 25), or through an area threatened by an enemy (DC 15). Does the 20 feet have to be continuous? If your enemies are staggered apart and you have enough movement to go through or past all of them, can you break the 20 feet up into 5-foot chunks to get past each enemy? Or is this not allowed because it counts as multiple uses of the Tumble skill? If it is allowed, do you have to make a separate roll for each enemy you try to pass? What if you tumble as part of a Spring Attack?**

Tumbling is part of movement, not a separate action. You can tumble any number of times during a move action, so long as you do not tumble more than 20 feet or move farther than your speed. Each time you tumble, you make a separate Tumble check, using whatever DC is applicable at the time. If you tumble during a double move, you're allowed 20 feet of tumbling as part of each move action.

If you're using the Spring Attack feat, you're taking a move action and the attack action, so you're moving once and can tumble a maximum of 20 feet as part of that single move. You could, however, tumble both before and after the attack.

# Feats

The Feats section is organized by general feats, item creation feats, metamagic feats, and special feats. The questions within each section start with general questions for that category and then are alphabetized by feat when the question covers a specific single feat.

## General Feats

**How many attacks would a character with the Whirlwind Attack feat get if she were attacking with two weapons? What if she has Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting? What if she also has Improved Two-Weapon Fighting?**

If you don't have Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, you get one attack against every foe within 5 feet, plus one attack for the second weapon. The Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting feats lessen your penalties, but they don't give you any extra attacks.

If you have Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, you get one attack against every foe within 5 feet, plus two attacks with the second weapon.

In either case, you must use your primary hand for the Whirlwind Attack, though you can decide which weapon will be "primary." Note that your two-weapon attack penalties apply to every attack you make during the Whirlwind Attack.

**Do the Whirlwind Attack and Cleave feats stack? For example, can I use Cleave to get extra attacks if a Whirlwind Attack kills one of my targets?**

You can use Cleave only once a round. If you have the Great Cleave feat, however, you can cleave each time you drop an opponent, even when the opponent drops in a Whirlwind Attack. (When a foe drops, resolve the extra cleave attack before finishing the rest of the attack rolls in the Whirlwind Attacks.)

**If the abilities you receive from gaining a new level let you meet the prerequisites for a feat, can you take that feat right away (provided that you also have an unused feat)? For example, the Blindsight feat from *Masters of the Wild* requires the ability to become a dire bat, which the druid gains at 12th level. Can I take Blindsight with the feat I gain at 12th level, or must I wait until I get my next feat at 15th level?**

Yes. When you add a new level, you choose what class level to add before you choose your feat (if a feat is available); see Level Advancement on pages 145–146 in the *Player's Handbook*. Note that because you must choose your class level before choosing skills or feats, you often cannot enter a prestige class the very moment you meet the prerequisites. For example, if you took the Spring Attack feat at 9th level, the soonest you could take a level in a prestige class that has Spring Attack as a prerequisite would be 10th level.

**First, suppose I don't have Ambidexterity, and I attack with my off hand. Do I lose half my Strength bonus on my attack roll and my damage roll, or just my damage roll? Second, please tell me that Ambidexterity negates the damage penalty for off-hand attacks. If not, why not?**

Your full Strength bonus applies to off-hand melee attack

rolls, and only your damage bonus is lessened for the off hand.

Your damage bonus from Strength is always lessened with your off hand, even if you have the Ambidexterity feat. Ambidexterity negates the penalties for making off-hand attack, but the damage reduction is not a "penalty;" it's a rule that governs how Strength bonus on damage works. If you use two hands to attack, you get one and half times your Strength bonus on damage. In the case of a two-handed weapon, you multiply your Strength bonus by 1.5 (and round down to the nearest whole number). If you're using two weapons, you apply the full damage bonus on the primary hand and half the bonus (rounded down to the nearest whole number) to the secondary hand.

If the game did not have this rule, you'd actually get more benefit from a high Strength score from using two small, lighter weapons than you would for using a really big heavy weapon in two hands.

**Do you have to use the full attack action to get the benefits of the Cleave or Great Cleave feats? I'd say so, since you have to use the full attack action to get more than one attack.**

No, you don't have to use the full attack action to get the benefit of either one of these feats. If you have either or both of the feats, you get an extra attack (or possibly extra attacks with Great Cleave) whenever you drop a foe, no matter what type of action you used to drop the foe.

**Do I have to make an attack to use the Expertise feat to improve my Armor Class?**

No, you don't have to attack, but you do have to choose the attack or full attack action. That is, you can declare an attack or full attack, claim the Armor Class bonus, and then not make the attacks to which you are entitled. You cannot use Expertise with the total defense action or any other action except attack or full attack.

**Does the Armor Class bonus from Expertise apply to the whole round, or just from the moment when I start swinging? For example, I want to use a standard action to run past some bugbears and hit the goblin shaman from behind. Can I apply the Expertise bonus on the bugbears' attacks of opportunity?**

The Armor Class bonus—and the attack penalty—applies from the moment you use it (on your turn), until it's your turn again. Suppose the character in the example above chooses to allocate 3 points of attack bonus to AC; the character gets a +3 Armor Class bonus against the bugbears' attacks of opportunity and takes a –3 attack penalty against the bugbear shaman. If the bugbear shaman chooses to cast a spell later in the round (before it's the character's turn to act again) and provokes an attack of opportunity from the character, the character also takes a –3 penalty on the attack of opportunity.

**My group is having some difficulty with the Expertise feat. What happens when you use Expertise along with Two-Weapon Fighting? Do you get the Armor Class bonus from Expertise once for each weapon? Once for each attack? What if you use the total defense option or the fight defensively option? (Or is Expertise just another way of**

fighting defensively?) **If you have 5 or more ranks in the Tumble skill, you get a bonus to defensive fighting or total defense. How does that work with Expertise?**

Any attack bonus you devote to defense with the Expertise feat (up to your base attack bonus or +5, whichever is lower) applies as a penalty on all the attacks you make until it's your turn again—including attacks of opportunity. You get the defense bonus only once, no matter how many attacks you make or how many weapons you use. (It, too, remains until it's your turn again.) For example, a 9th-level fighter with a base attack bonus of +9/+4 has Expertise, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Ambidexterity. If the character uses a light weapon in her off hand, she'll get 3 attacks, each at a -2 penalty: +7/+2 with her primary hand and an extra attack with her off hand at +7. If the character claims a +2 bonus to Armor Class from Expertise, her attack bonuses become +5/+0 and +5.

You can fight defensively only when you use the full attack action or attack action (see page 124 of the *Player's Handbook*), but if you do, you can use Expertise along with it. (Because fighting defensively is mentioned in the Expertise feat description on page 82 of the *Player's Handbook*, some people think Expertise is just a better way of fighting defensively, but that's not true.) When you use Expertise and defensive fighting together, you simply add up all the Armor Class bonuses and attack penalties. Note that both Expertise and defensive fighting provide dodge bonuses to Armor Class. Dodge bonuses, unlike most other bonuses in the game, stack (see page 119 in the *Player's Handbook*). If the character in the previous example decided to fight defensively, she would add another +2 bonus to Armor Class (for a total of +4) and an extra -4 attack penalty, which would lessen her attacks to +1/-4 and +1. The combination of Expertise and defensive fighting isn't very efficient.

If the character in the example also had 5 or more ranks in the Tumble skill, her dodge bonus from fighting defensively would be +3 instead of +2, and her total Armor Class bonus would be +5.

Since Expertise is not the same as fighting defensively, your Tumble ranks don't help you when you use Expertise without also fighting defensively.

**Can characters apply the Improved Critical feat to unarmed strike?**

Yes, an unarmed strike or other natural weapon is a "weapon" for purposes of the Improved Critical feat (and for most other purposes).

**I have a bard multiclassing into wizard. As a wizard, I can gain a familiar. If I take the Improved Familiar feat (from the *FORGOTTEN REALMS® Campaign Setting and Tome and Blood*), do bard levels apply to the feat's arcane spellcaster level prerequisite?**

No, only levels in arcane spellcasting classes that include getting a familiar as a class feature (currently wizard and sorcerer) apply. If you have levels in both wizard and sorcerer, you can add them together both for purposes of determining what kind of special familiar you can get and for determining any familiar's special abilities.

**Suppose a character has the Improved Initiative feat, giving him a +4 bonus on initiative rolls, while another character has the Quick Draw feat, letting him draw weapons as a free action instead of a full-round action. Now, when the combat round is announced and the**

**characters roll for initiative, who goes first? Does the character with the Quick Draw feat have to roll for initiative, or will his feat suffice and give him the first action?**

First, note that without the Quick Draw feat, you draw a weapon as move-equivalent action, not a full-round action. If your base attack bonus is +1 or higher, you can draw a weapon while taking a move action, but you still wind up using at least one move action before you get your weapon out.

The character with the higher initiative acts first. Quick Draw lets you draw a weapon as a free action. You can take a free action only when it's your turn, and the only way to know when it's your turn is to roll initiative.

**If you successfully trip an opponent during an overrun, do you get a free attack if you have the Improved Trip feat?**

No. The Improved Trip feat gives you a free attack only if you use a melee attack to trip a foe and you succeed. (In effect, this replaces the attack you used to make the trip with an attack that can deal damage.) When you're overrunning, you're making a trip as part of the move portion of a charge, not as a melee attack. You can, however, end your charge and use your normal attack against an opponent you've knocked down during an overrun.

**If I have Martial Weapon Proficiency, Weapon Focus, or Weapon Specialization with a longbow, can I also use a composite longbow?**

Officially, any weapon that gets its own entry in Table 7-4: Weapons in the *Player's Handbook* requires a separate proficiency, focus, or specialization. For example, the game has four kinds of bows: shortbows, composite shortbows, longbows, and composite longbows. Individual DMs might want to experiment with weapon groups, but such house rules are appropriate only for proficiency, not focus or specialization.

**Does the penalty for not having a Martial Weapon Proficiency feat stack with the penalty for not having an Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat? For example, what happens if a sorcerer uses a bastard sword in one hand and does not have either the Martial Weapon Proficiency or the Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat for a bastard sword? Is her penalty a straight -4 for not having the Exotic Weapon Proficiency, or does she suffer a -4 for not having the Martial Weapon Proficiency in addition to the -4 for not having the Exotic Weapon Proficiency because a bastard sword requires special training to use with one hand?**

No, you don't get two penalties for nonproficiency. You're either proficient with a weapon or you're not.

If you're Medium-size, you have to be proficient with a bastard sword to use it in one hand; if you're not proficient, you don't have the option to use the sword one-handed at all. Assuming that the sorcerer in your example is Medium-size, she would have to use the sword in two hands and would suffer the -4 nonproficiency penalty when doing so.

**Why would a fighter ever take the Quick Draw feat?**

So he can draw a weapon quickly. Actually, this feat is particularly useful to fighters of 6th level or higher because the feat makes drawing a weapon a free action. That means the fighter can draw a weapon and still use the full attack action.

**The Rapid Shot feat description says you get two attacks at -2 as a full-round action. When your base attack**

**becomes +6/+1 do you get a third attack after the Rapid Shot attacks? The way I see it, you get one or the other, but Rapid Shot gives you +4/+4. If this is so, doesn't having multiple attacks make Rapid Shot obsolete?**

The Rapid Shot feat allows you to make one extra attack with a projectile weapon at your base attack bonus (not two attacks). To use the feat, you must use the full attack action, and all the attacks you make during that full attack action suffer a -2 penalty. If your base attack bonus is +6, you make two attacks with the full attack action at +6/+1, if you use Rapid Shot with that full attack action, you make 3 attacks at +4/+4/-1.

**The description for the Spring Attack feat says the attacker's movement during a springing attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity from the defender. Does this mean a character with Spring Attack can disregard the problems associated with approaching and attacking an opponent with reach? This could be a huge benefit. Does the Spring Attack feat help you run away? Or must you move both before and after your attack to avoid attacks of opportunity?**

When you use Spring Attack to attack a foe, your movement during your turn does not provoke attacks of opportunity from that foe, even if your movement takes you through several squares the foe threatens (as would be the case for an opponent with reach).

When or how often you move during your turn is irrelevant, but you must make an attack to get the benefit. Only the opponent you attack becomes unable to respond to your movement with an attack of opportunity; that opponent's allies suffer no such restriction.

**Can you use the Weapon Finesse feat while fighting with two weapons? If so, can both weapons benefit from the feat (provided, of course, the feats were taken as needed)? The text seems to indicate a free hand is needed for balance. But then it turns around and gives a specific penalty for having a shield in the hand.**

Yes, you can use Weapon Finesse when fighting with two weapons. If you have Weapon Finesse with both weapons, you get the benefit for both weapons.

A shield throws you off balance when fighting with Weapon Finesse. (You have to apply the shield's check penalty on your attack rolls.) Weapons don't have check penalties and don't interfere with Weapon Finesse. Of course, if one of your weapons is a shield (such as a spiked buckler), then you'll take the shield's armor check penalty on all your attacks—even the ones you make with the shield.

Some DMs may want to use a house rule that imposes a check penalty for holding something really heavy in your off hand, say -1 per 5 pounds.

**The Weapon Finesse feat allows a character to use her Dexterity bonus rather than her Strength bonus for melee attacks with light weapons. Does the character use her Dexterity bonus for attack rolls and damage rolls or just attack rolls? Suppose the character has Weapon Finesse (dagger) and uses one dagger in each hand. Does the off-hand weapon get only half of the Dexterity bonus on damage (following the same rules for Strength)? Can you even use Weapon Finesse when attacking with two weapons? If so, how would that work? Exactly which weapons can you use with Weapon Finesse anyway?**

Weapon Finesse affects only attack rolls, not damage rolls. If you use Weapon Finesse and you hit, your Strength modifier still determines how much damage you deal.

Yes, you can use Weapon Finesse when you're attacking with two weapons. If you have the feat for a weapon you're using, the feat applies to any melee attack you make with that weapon, whether it's your sole weapon or one of the weapons you use in a two-weapon attack. When using Weapon Finesse in a two-weapon attack, conduct the attack as you would any other two-weapon attack, just use the attacker's Dexterity modifier for the attack rolls where it is applicable. For example, a 6th-level rogue of at least Medium-size has a Strength score of 7 and a Dexterity score of 18. The character has the Ambidexterity, Two-Weapon Fighting, and Weapon Finesse (dagger) feats. If the character uses the full attack action and strikes with both daggers, the character's attack bonus is +6 with each dagger (+4 base, +4 Dexterity, -2 two weapons used with the Ambidexterity and Two-Weapon Fighting feats, and the off-hand weapon is light). The character deals 1d4-2 points of damage with a successful hit (minimum of 1 point of damage). Note that if the character had a Strength bonus instead of a Strength penalty, only half the bonus would apply for the secondary weapon. (You take your full Strength penalty with an off-hand weapon.)

The Weapon Finesse feat applies only to light weapons, rapiers, or spiked chains. (See page 97 in the *Player's Handbook* for the definition of the term "light weapon.") Note that you have to be at least Medium-size to use a spiked chain with Weapon Finesse, and you can use a rapier with Weapon Finesse only if you can wield it in one hand.

## Item Creation Feats

**All the item creation feats have prerequisites of "x spellcaster level." Do spellcaster levels from different spellcasting classes stack? In other words, is a Wiz4/Sor4 an 8th-level or 4th-level spellcaster?**

Spellcasting levels don't stack; if a prerequisite is x spellcaster level you need x levels in a spellcasting class to meet the prerequisite.

**The description of the Scribe Scroll feat says the base price of a scroll is its spell level multiplied by its caster level multiplied by 25 gp. It goes on to say that a character must spend 1/25 of the base price in XP and 1/2 the base price in raw materials. My question is this: Are 0-level spells off limits or are they free due to the fact that any number multiplied by 0 equals 0?**

Treat any level 0 spell as level 1/2 for purposes of assigning a cost to a magic item. (This makes the base price of creating a scroll of one 0-level spell  $1/2 \times 25 \times$  caster level.) For more information on creating magic items and the cost for doing so, see pages 241-246 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*.

## Metamagic Feats

**Can you add a metamagic feat more than once to any particular spell? For example, double Maximize Spell, or double Extend Spell?**

You can apply most metamagic feats more than once. Just stack up the costs and remember to apply the additional effects to the basic spell. For example, if you extend a spell twice, you get 3 times the duration, not 4 times the duration. (Each

extension adds 100% of the spell's base duration.)

There are a few metamagic feats that are constructed so as to make stacking worthless or pointless. You cannot, for example, get more than maximum damage out of a spell by maximizing the spell more than once. (If you want to send the spell's damage through the roof, use Empower Spell multiple times.) Heighten Spell already allows you set the spell's effective level anywhere you want (and can manage), so there's no point in applying the feat more than once.

**When a sorcerer or bard uses a metamagic feat, it requires a full round action, or an extra full round action if the spell already required a full round action. However, what if a bard or sorcerer used two or more metamagic feats on a single spell? Does the delay keep stacking and make the spell go off several rounds later, or is this penalty for any number of metamagic feats used in a round?**

No, the delay is for one or more metamagic feats applied to a single spell, not for each metamagic feat applied to a spell.

**Can I use Empower Spell to make a wand of magic missile with a caster level of 1 because it's still "really" a 1st-level spell, for a cost of 3 1 750 (effective spell level 3, caster level 1, wand multiplier), or does it need to be level 5, because that's the lowest level at which I can cast any 3rd-level spell?**

It's the latter. A *magic missile* spell that takes advantage of the Empower Spell feat is "really" just a 1st-level spell, but you have to be at least 5th level to cast it (if you're a wizard) because any spell that uses the Empower Spell feat requires a spell slot two levels higher than normal. You have to use the higher, metamagiced level to calculate the wand's price, and you have to increase the wand's caster level accordingly. The example wand's market price is 11,250 gp (3x5x750). For that price, you get a wand that produces 3 magic missiles (a 5th-level caster creates 3 missiles with a *magic missile* spell), each dealing 1d4+1x1.5 points of damage.

**The description for the Enlarge Spell feat says an enlarged spell has its range doubled. The description also says that a spell whose area or effect is determined by its range (such as *bless* or a cone spell) has the dimensions of its area or effect increased proportionally. The *lightning bolt* spell has a range of 100 feet + 10 feet per caster level if it is 5 feet wide. If the area is 10 feet wide, the range is 50 feet + 5 feet per level. If a 6th-level wizard throws an enlarged *lightning bolt* that is 10 feet wide, is the bolt produced 10 feet wide by 160 feet long or 20 feet wide by 160 feet long? What happens when you use the Empower Spell feat on a *lightning bolt*? Empower Spell increases all variables by one-half. So how wide and long is an empowered *lightning bolt*?**

The width the caster chooses determines a *lightning bolt* spell's range. If the *lightning bolt* is enlarged, it has double the range, but the width remains unchanged. So, if a 7th-level wizard casts an enlarged *lightning bolt* that is 10 feet wide, the lightning bolt's range would be 170 feet (5 feet x 7=35 feet + 50 feet base range=85 feet, doubled to 170 feet). If the same caster chose a 5-foot bolt, its range would be 340 feet. Note that a 6th-level wizard could not cast an enlarged *lightning bolt*, because doing so would require a 4th-level spell slot, and a 6th-level wizard doesn't have one of those.

The Empower Spell feat only affects randomly variable

aspects of a spell. (See the second to the last line of the feat description.) A *lightning bolt* spell's range is configurable, but not "variable" for purposes of Empower Spell. A *lightning bolt* spell's damage is "variable," and an empowered lightning bolt deals 1.5 times damage. (Apply the multiplier before rolling saving throws.)

**Since an empowered spell affects half again as many targets as its normal version, why doesn't a 5th-level wizard's empowered *magic missile* fire off more than three missiles?**

Because the Empower Spell feat increases a spell's variable, numeric effects. In the case of *magic missile*, that's the spell's damage, not the number of missiles. A spell such as *sleep*, on the other hand, truly affects a variable number of targets: 2d4 HD worth of creatures. An empowered *sleep* spell affects 2d4 times 1.5 HD worth of creatures.

**The Heighten Spell metamagic feat actually changes a spell's level, correct? Does this mean you can use the feat to make your spells bypass wards such as *minor globe of invulnerability*?**

Yes. The Heighten Spell description specifically mentions overcoming a *minor globe of invulnerability*. To do so, one would have to heighten the spell to 4th level or higher, you'd need to have a 4th-level or higher spell slot available, and your ability score that governs your spellcasting would have to be at least 14. As pointed out before, when you use a higher-level spell slot to cast a lower-level spell, you normally need an ability score only high enough to cast the spell at its base (unmodified by metamagic) level. But Heighten Spell is a special case because it actually changes the spell's level.

**Can you use the feats Heighten Spell and Improved Counterspell to counter just about any spell? Improved Counterspell allows you to use a spell of a higher level from the same school to counterspell, and Heighten Spell actually changes a spell's level (unlike most other metamagic feats). It would seem that using these two together works to counter darn near anything, especially if you are a sorcerer or bard and you learn at least one spell of each school (which wouldn't be too hard). If this deed is possible, could a sorcerer or bard use heightened spells as improved counterspells, or is that impossible because a character must ready a counterspell? The ready action triggers a standard action, but sorcerer or bard needs a full-round action to cast a spell altered by metamagic.**

You can indeed use Heighten Spell to make a spell useful with the Improved Counterspell feat; as noted in the previous answer, Heighten Spell actually increases the affected spell's level.

The counterspell action is always a standard action that must be readied (see the Counterspell section in Chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook*), no matter what the actual casting time of the spell being used as a counterspell actually happens to be.

A sorcerer or bard could indeed counter almost any spell using a combination of Heighten Spell and Improved Counterspell, but keep in mind that a successful counterspell still must be readied in advance (which means you'll spend a whole lot of time waiting around for your opponents to act if you decide to use counterspells regularly), and you still have to successfully identify your opponent's spell with a Spellcraft check before you can attempt a counterspell.

**If you cast a maximized *summon monster* spell, does the summoned creature get maximum hit points? The same question applies to the psionic power *astral construct*, do you get the maximum hit points for those creatures? What about an astral construct's special qualities that increase hit points, such as buff and extra buff? Are those maximized as well?**

No. The number of creatures is the numerical effect of the spell or power. Any die rolls the creature makes are not.

**Can someone who has taken the Persistent Spell feat from the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* or the *Tome and Blood* book make two different spells persistent? For example, could a 10th-level cleric cast *shield of faith* from a 5th-level spell slot (giving himself a +3 deflection bonus to AC) and also cast *divine favor* from another 5th-level slot (also giving himself a +3 luck bonus on attacks and damage) and have both spells last 24 hours (barring dispelling)?**

Persistent Spell is a metamagic feat that works just like any other metamagic feat. If you have the feat and the spell slots to spend, you could make every spell you cast persistent, provided all of them are eligible to receive the feat. *Divine favor* is eligible, but *shield of faith* is not.

**Would spells that have touch range, such as *spell resistance*, be considered to have a fixed range, and therefore be usable with the Persistent Spell feat?**

No. Range touch is not "fixed" for purposes of the Persistent Spell feat. The spell must affect the caster's person (personal range) or have some effect that radiates from the caster's person (a fixed range, expressed in feet).

**Are sorcerers, bards, and clerics using spontaneous casting able to use the Quicken Spell metamagic feat?**

They can, but there is no point in their doing so. A sorcerer or bard who uses a metamagic feat on a spell must cast the spell as a full-round action (or the normal casting time plus an extra full-round action if the spell's casting time normally is longer than 1 action). Clerics using spontaneous casting must follow the same rule. This rule makes Quicken Spell worthless for these characters.

**Does a quickened spell still require the components it usually does (verbal, somatic, and material)? For example, can a silenced or grappled wizard still cast a quickened *dispel magic*?**

Quicken Spell makes a spell quick; you still need all the components normally required for a quickened spell. If you want help casting spells while grappled, you need Still Spell. If you want help casting spells while silenced, you need Silent Spell.

**Does casting a quickened spell provoke an attack of opportunity? Can a counterattack or counterspell be readied against a quickened spell or is it too quick to identify or counter?**

A quickened spell does not provoke an attack of opportunity (see Table 8-4 in the *Player's Handbook*). A quickened spell can be counterspelled using the normal rules.

**When do you apply the automatic metamagic feats in the *Epic Level Handbook* (Quicken Spell, Silent Spell, and Still**

**Spell)? Do you have to apply them when the spells are prepared, or can you wait until they are about to be cast? For example, suppose I'm a wizard with Automatic Quicken Spell. If I prepare two *magic missile* spells, are both of them quickened? This distinction could be important because a character is still allowed only one quickened spell per round, right?**

When you have one of the automatic metamagic feats, you acquire your daily spells normally. You also cast them normally, but any spell of the appropriate level can have the feat applied (or not applied) upon casting, as you desire. For example, if you have taken Automatic Quicken Spell once, any 3rd-level or lower spell you cast can be quickened, provided that it doesn't have a normal casting time of more than 1 full round. However, you are not obligated to cast all of your qualifying spells as quickened spells. For example, you could cast a quickened *magic missile* and a regular *magic missile* during your turn, provided that you had two *magic missile* spells available to cast. Both would take up their normal 1st-level spell slots.

**Say an 11th-level wizard has an Intelligence of 15. Can the wizard prepare a *teleport* spell (5th-level spell) enhanced with the Silent Spell metamagic feat and thus use a 6th-level spell slot that the character (thanks to low Intelligence) could not use to prepare a 6th-level spell?**

Using a metamagic feat makes the spell occupy a spell slot of higher level, but it does not actually change the spell's level, except for Heighten Spell, which does increase the spell's level. So long as the wizard in question has enough Intelligence to cast the spell at its actual level (15 for the 5th-level *teleport* spell) the character can cast the metamagic spell. Note that the character doesn't have to use metamagic to use the 6th-level spell slot; the character can simply prepare any lower level spell in the slot.

## Special Feats

Using the rules in the *Player's Handbook*, a player creates a cleric of Obad-Hai and chooses the Fire and Air domains. The cleric has a Charisma score of 12 (+1 Charisma modifier), so the character would get 4 undead turning attempts each day. The granted powers from the character's domains also give him 4 turning attempts each day against fire and water creatures and 4 more attempts against air and earth creatures. Now he chooses his feats. If the cleric chooses the Divine Might feat from the *Defenders of the Faith* book, he can use one turning attempt to add his Charisma modifier (+1) as a damage bonus for melee attacks against any foe. Does this mean he can use any and all turning attempts, or just turning attempts against undead to do this? What if he chooses Extra Turning as a feat? Does he get 4 extra turning attempts just to turn undead? Four extra uses of each turning ability? A pool of 4 extra turning uses each day that he can use for any of his 3 different turning abilities? What happens if he chooses Heighten Turning from *Defenders of the Faith*? Can he use this feat to affect elemental turning as well as undead turning?

The Divine Might feat, and all the divine feats from *Defenders of the Faith*, allow you to use a turn/rebuke undead attempt to get a special effect, not any other type of turning. Though this is not clear from the general description of divine



feats on page 19 of *Defenders of the Faith*, the individual feat descriptions are crystal clear in this regard. (See the Benefit section of each feat description.)

As noted before extra turning technically can be applied only to undead turning, but there's no good reason you can't apply it to another type of turning. If you have more than one type of turning ability, you choose which type the feat will affect when you take the feat. You can take the feat more than once, applying it to a different type of turning each time.

Like Extra Turning, Heighten Turning technically applies only to turning undead. Also like Extra Turning, there's no reason you couldn't apply Heighten Turning to another type of turning, but you choose one type of turning to affect when you pick the feat.

**Does the Extra Turning feat work for a neutral or evil cleric who has the power to rebuke undead?**

Yes, clerics who rebuke undead can use the Extra Turning feat to gain four more uses of the rebuke power each day. Note that true neutral clerics either turn or rebuke undead; they

cannot have it both ways. For example, a true neutral cleric who has chosen to rebuke undead can choose the Extra Turning feat to gain four extra uses of the rebuke power each day, but he cannot use Extra Turning to get four uses of the turn power.

**If a cleric with an Elemental domain or the Plant domain takes the Extra Turning feat, does the feat add to all turnings and rebukings?**

The rule is pretty clear; the Extra Turning feat applies to turning undead (see pages 32 and page 42), not to other kinds of turning.

That said, there's no compelling reason to limit Extra Turning to undead. I recommend that DMs allow characters to apply the Extra Turning to other types of turning. Each time you take Extra Turning, you apply it to either undead, or to another kind of turning your character can perform. You don't increase both by picking the feat once. If you have the Sun domain, any successful turning attempts you make against undead still destroy those undead.

# Equipment and Magic Items

The Equipment and Magic Items section is divided into the categories of Weapons (including magic weapons), Armor (including magic armor), and Magic Items, which contains all items that aren't weapons or armor.

## Weapons

**Do piercing weapons cause one-half damage or no damage to skeletons? The *Player's Handbook* indicates the latter, but the *Monster Manual* indicates the former, as do some modules.**

Skeletons take half damage from piercing or slashing weapons.

**Why isn't there any information in the rules about the rate of fire for a ranged weapon?**

Because there is no such thing as "rate of fire" in the game.

Your base attack bonus determines how many times you can attack in a round with any weapon. Note that you must use the full attack action to attack more than once. Certain weapons, such as crossbows, require actions to reload, so you can't use the full attack action with them. Bows and slings don't require an action to reload.

All thrown weapons require a move action to draw, so you can throw only one a round, though you can get around that with the Quick Draw feat.

**The *Players Handbook* says a heavy crossbow takes a full round to reload. But the description for the Rapid Shot feat says you can get one extra attack per round with a ranged weapon. Does that mean I can take two shots in one round with a heavy crossbow? If so, do I have to spend a full round reloading the crossbow, or can I take two rapid shots on my next turn?**

You have to use the full attack action to get more than one attack (see the previous question). Since it takes an action to reload a crossbow, you can't make a full attack with a crossbow and you can't benefit from the Rapid Shot feat when using a hand, light, or heavy crossbow.

You can use the full attack action to make multiple attacks with a repeating crossbow and you can benefit from the Rapid Shot feat when firing it, provided the repeating crossbow is holding a number of bolts equal to or exceeding the number of attacks you're making.

If you have the Rapid Reload feat from *Sword and Fist*, you can reload a hand or light crossbow as a free action, which allows you to take the full attack action and to benefit from Rapid Shot.

**The descriptions for light and heavy crossbows in the *Player's Handbook* say a character can fire one of them with each hand. The hand crossbow description, however, makes no mention of such an action. Is this penalty the same for hand crossbows, or is such an action implicitly prohibited, which seems extremely odd?**

Heavy and light crossbows are two-handed weapons that can be fired (but not loaded) with one hand at an extra penalty (-4), provided the wielder is of sufficient size. Firing off a crossbow

in each hand is even more difficult (-6 for the primary hand and -10 for the off hand, or -6 for each hand if the shooter has Ambidexterity). The hand crossbow is a one-handed weapon and there is no penalty for using a hand crossbow in one hand. Note that since a hand crossbow is Tiny, a Diminutive creature would need two hands to use it. In such a case, treat one-handed use just like a light crossbow used one-handed.

Small or Medium-size characters can fire a hand crossbow from each hand. According to the normal rules for attacking with two weapons, usually the shooter will take a -4 penalty for the primary hand and -8 penalty for the off hand (-4/-4 penalty with Ambidexterity). See pages 124-125 in the *Player's Handbook*. Note that the Two-Weapon Fighting feat is for melee and does not lessen the penalties for using two ranged weapons.

**Do I have to roll three times when attacking with three shuriken, or just once? If I have to roll three times, are there penalties on the second and third attacks? If I have to roll only once, is there any reason why I would throw fewer than three shuriken?**

When you throw three shuriken, make a separate attack roll for each, even though it counts as one attack. There's no attack penalty for the extra two shuriken.

**Can a rogue sneak attack with three shuriken if she is within 30 feet of a target? If each hits, does each gain the sneak attack bonus?**

You apply sneak attack damage only once per attack. If you use one attack to throw three shuriken, you get to apply sneak attack bonus damage only once. Sneak attack damage—and a ranger's favored enemy bonus damage—apply only to one of the three shuriken that you throw. You do not have enough precision with the extra shuriken to get bonus sneak attack or favored enemy damage.

**An earlier question says a rogue deals extra damage with a sneak attack anytime the target is denied its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class or anytime the rogue flanks the target, no matter how many attacks the rogue makes. But it also says you apply sneak attack damage only once per attack. If you use one attack to throw three shuriken, you get to apply sneak attack. Which is correct?**

They're both correct. The difference here is the number of attack rolls you make with one attack. You can throw up to three shuriken with one attack. If you do so, you're still making only one attack—even though you're making more than one attack roll. Only the first shuriken in the volley can be a sneak attack. Note that this also means that you don't have to use the full attack action to throw multiple shuriken.

**The description of the shuriken in the *Player's Handbook* says you can't apply your Strength bonus on shuriken damage. Can you use the +2 damage bonus from specialization if you're specialized with shuriken?**

Yes, you can apply the damage bonus for specialization in shuriken, but only if the target is within 30 feet. Only the first shuriken you throw in an attack gets the bonus damage. As noted before, only one shuriken thrown in an attack has any

real degree on precision; the other one or two are just along for the ride.

**Is the throwing rate for throwing shuriken always 3 shuriken a round, or is that 3 per normal attack? (So if you have 3 attacks, you can actually throw 9 shuriken?)**

You throw 3 shuriken as a single attack. If you're allowed more than one attack each round, you could throw more than three shuriken; however, unless you have the Quick Draw feat, you'll need an action to draw more shuriken and one attack is all you'll get.

**Mighty bows give a Strength bonus on damage, but what happens when a character with insufficient Strength tries to use one? Can the character use the bow without a damage bonus? Can the character even draw the bow? What about stringing the bow? Can a person without sufficient Strength to use a mighty bow even string it?**

For any bow, you apply your Strength modifier to bow damage or you apply the bow's maximum Strength, whichever is lower. A normal bow is effectively a mighty bow (Strength 10). Individual DMs who recall the tale of Ulysses against Penelope's suitors might wish to implement a house rule that limits a weak character's ability to string or fire a mighty bow, but there is no official rule that keeps weak characters from stringing or using mighty bows.

**If you use only one end of a double weapon, but you use it in two hands, do you get one and a half times your Strength bonus on damage like you get for a normal weapon used in two hands?**

Yes. Note, however, that if you're in the habit of always using a double weapon in this fashion you're better off just using a two-handed weapon.

**The rules say you can use a double weapon as if fighting with two weapons. It does not clearly state whether or not Two-Weapon Fighting and Ambidexterity bonuses apply to these weapons. Could you please clarify this for me?**

They do. Using both ends of a double weapon works *exactly* like fighting with a one-handed weapon in your primary hand and a light weapon in your off hand (see Double Weapons on page 125 in the *Player's Handbook*).

**Do you have to actively wield a *weapon of defending* to use its power? Or could you hold a *longsword of defending* in your left hand, not use it to attack (so you are not actually using the two weapons) and still wield a sword in your right hand without penalties? Or is the defending bonus considered part of the normal parrying that happens in the background?**

Using a *weapon of defending* works just like the Expertise feat. (You have to use an attack or full attack action.) You can't use the weapon like a shield; if you hold the weapon in your off hand and claim an Armor Class bonus for it, you take all the penalties for fighting with two weapons, even if you don't actually attack with the weapon.

**The whip is considered a ranged weapon. As far as I can tell, that means that striking with a whip provokes an attack of opportunity! Surely that's not correct? I have a hard time believing that swinging a whip opens up my defenses that much more than, say, swinging a spiked chain. That also means that a whip wielder can't use the**

**whip (as an attack of opportunity) to trip that orc when it tries to run past.**

Using a whip indeed provokes an attack of opportunity. It takes more time and effort to crank up a whip attack than it does to, say, pull a crossbow trigger. (With the exception of the sling, most ranged weapons are a tad handier and quicker than a whip more than 15 feet long.) A spiked chain is a melee weapon and considerably less ponderous than a whip (mostly because it's much shorter).

No, you can't make an attack of opportunity with a whip, but you could prepare a whip attack or delay attacking until a foe comes within range.

**Just what does a Small character have to do to use a bastard sword? I have gotten the impression that a halfling can use a bastard sword as a two-handed weapon provided that she has a Strength score of 13 or better and she takes Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword). Correct?**

There is no Strength requirement to use a bastard sword. A bastard sword is a Medium-Size weapon. It follows all the rules for Medium-Size weapons, except that a Medium-Size creature wielding the sword in one hand takes a -4 attack penalty with it unless she has Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword). A Small creature using the sword in two hands is just like a Medium-Size creature wielding it in one hand. So, your halfling (or gnome) takes a -4 attack penalty when using the sword two-handed and takes no attack penalty if she has Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword) and uses two hands; because the sword is Medium-Size, a Small character cannot use it one-handed.

**Is a character who is wearing a pair of gauntlets considered armed? What if the character wears spiked gauntlets?**

Wearing a gauntlet lets you deal normal damage with an unarmed strike, but you are still considered unarmed, and you still provoke an attack of opportunity if you strike an armed foe—unless you are a monk (see the relevant question in the Monk section). This is noted in the descriptions for gauntlets on page 100 in the *Player's Handbook*.

When you attack with spiked gauntlets, you're making an armed attack. You deal normal damage and you do not provoke attacks of opportunity from armed foes.

**Are gauntlets and spiked gauntlets considered weapons? Could a monk wearing a pair of gauntlets attack and still apply her unarmed attack bonus and unarmed damage? Could the monk use her class abilities that require successful unarmed strikes, such as her stun ability, while wearing gauntlets? How much damage would a monk wearing a pair of gauntlets deal? If the gauntlets had an enhancement bonus (such as a +2 enhancement bonus) or a special ability (such as flaming burst), would a monk wearing these gauntlets gain any benefit? Can gauntlets even have weapon enhancement bonuses or weapon special abilities?**

Both gauntlets and spiked gauntlets are weapons (that's why they are both listed on Table 7-4 in the *Player's Handbook*). A pair of gauntlets or spiked gauntlets can be magically enhanced, just as any other weapon can.

Although a nonmonk wearing a pair of gauntlets is still considered unarmed (see the next two questions), a monk wearing gauntlets is using a weapon. A monk cannot use any of her special unarmed attack abilities (unarmed damage, stunning

attack, and so on) when using a weapon. A monk can use her unarmed attack rate with a special monk weapon, but gauntlets are not a special monk weapon. A monk wearing gauntlets does not provoke attacks of opportunity when striking an armed foe with gauntlets. The monk deals the same damage as any other character of her size (1d3 points of damage for a Medium-size character). The monk would get the benefits of any magical properties the gauntlets might have.

**If a spellcaster is wearing gauntlets, could the character cast a spell with a touch range and perform an unarmed strike in addition to the spell's effects? Could a spellcaster wearing spiked gauntlets do an armed strike in addition to the spell's effects?**

No, you cannot deliver a touch spell through a weapon attack. You can, however, still make a melee touch attack to deliver a spell with touch range while wearing gauntlets.

**Can a character wearing gauntlets opt to deal subdual damage in melee rather than normal damage, or would she be required to remove her gauntlets first? Could a character wearing spiked gauntlets strike with the palm or side of her hand to avoid doing normal damage in melee, choosing to deal subdual damage instead?**

You can use any weapon to deal subdual damage, but you take a -4 penalty on the attack (see page 135 in the *Player's Handbook*).

**Does a +1 short sword with the shock enhancement (total enhancement of +2 for pricing purposes) overcome a creature's damage reduction of 15/+2?**

No, only the weapon's actual magical enhancement bonus for attack and damage counts. The weapon in this example is considered a +1 weapon for overcoming damage reduction.

**If I have a +2 mighty [Str 14] composite longbow, does the bow's +2 enhancement bonus and the Strength bonus stack or not? Does it apply to both my attack and damage rolls?**

Strength bonuses do not apply to ranged attack rolls, no matter what ranged weapon you use. Strength bonuses apply to damage from thrown weapons and to damage from mighty bows.

A mighty bow's enhancement bonus applies to any damage an arrow from the bow deals, and that stacks with your Strength bonus, up to the limit the bow allows; in this case, up to +2. Note that a mighty bow does not provide a Strength bonus, it just allows you to use your Strength bonus, so you'd need a Strength score of 14 or more to get the mighty bow's +2 Strength bonus on damage.

In general, two or more different bonus types that affect the same thing stack. See Combining Magical Effects in Chapter 3 of the *Player's Handbook* and Bonuses From Magic in Chapter 8 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*. Strength bonuses and other ability score bonuses are not "magical" bonuses, but they follow the same stacking rules that apply to other bonuses.

**The description for the speed weapon property says it is not cumulative with the haste spell, but exactly how this applies in the game seems unclear, especially when two weapons of speed are involved. Can you use two speed weapons at the same time? What, exactly, is meant when the rules say haste and speed don't stack? Does it mean you can use the speed property during the normal portion of**

**your turn, but not during the "extra" partial action you get from haste?**

You can use two weapons of speed at a time all right, but you still only get one extra attack, from one weapon or the other, not both. If you are under the effects of a *haste* spell, you can use the extra attack action from one weapon of speed, or the extra partial action from the *haste* spell, but not both.

**The descriptions of the light and heavy crossbows say that they both require two hands for reloading. The descriptions of the hand crossbow and repeating crossbow say nothing about reloading with two hands. Does this mean that a character needs only one hand to reload a hand crossbow or repeating crossbow?**

Reloading any crossbow normally takes two hands. In some cases, a character might contrive to reload using only one hand, probably by making some kind of arrangement to hold the crossbow steady while cocking the weapon and fitting a bolt. Doing so should take an extra full-round action.

**Can you hold throwing weapons in your off hand so that you don't have to use an action to draw them? If so, how many skiprocks (or daggers, shurikens, darts, bullets, and so on) can be held "drawn" in an off-hand by a Small or Medium-size character?**

Sure, you can hold a few throwing weapons in one hand so that they're ready to throw without a separate action to draw them.

Bullets are ammunition and don't have to be drawn. The other weapons on your list are thrown weapons and have to be drawn (except that skiprock can be used with a sling as ammunition). Refer to the table below:

Weapon Size*	Number Held	Extra Shafted Weapons**
One Size Larger	1	—
Your size	1	+2
One size smaller	2	+2
Two or more sizes smaller	3	+2

\*In relation to your size

\*\*Spears, javelins, darts, and other weapons with fairly skinny shafts, but not weapons with fairly thick hafts such as axes.

When holding multiple weapons in your hand (or a single weapon too large for you to wield in one hand), you can't use the weapons to attack, and you can't do anything else with that hand.

**Assuming you have several weapons you can throw together in a pocket, can you scoop up several of them simultaneously as one move-equivalent draw weapon action (or free action with the Quick Draw feat)?**

Loading up your hand with more than one weapon is a full-round action.

**A magical sun blade deals double damage (and 1/3 on a critical hit instead of the usual 1/2) against creatures from the Negative Energy Plane. This implies the sun blade can critical hit an undead. Is that true? If so, can a rogue using the sword make sneak attacks against undead creatures? Can a ranger use his favored enemy bonus against undead**

creatures? Also, when dealing double damage, what gets doubled and how? Do you roll damage once and double everything? Or do you just roll damage twice?

You can't inflict a critical hit on an undead creature, even with a *sun blade*, and you cannot make sneak attacks against undead creatures or use the ranger's favored enemy bonus against them.

To get the  $\times 3$  critical with the *sun blade*, you have to use the weapon against a negative energy creature that is susceptible to critical hits, such as an outsider or magical beast.

When dealing double damage to an undead or negative energy creature, roll all damage (including all your normal damage bonuses and the sword's +4 bonus against evil creatures, if applicable) twice. Note that the reason the sword deals a  $\times 3$  critical against negative energy creatures is because it's dealing double damage. (When you double a double, you get a triple, see Multiplying on page 275 of the *Player's Handbook*.)

## Armor

**I'm a little unclear on how the tower shield works. I assume if you crouch behind it, you can get total cover against ranged attacks. If you plan to peek around and, say, throw a javelin, how much cover does it provide against enemy missiles? How much cover does a tower shield provide against melee attacks?**

The tower shield gives cover against both ranged and melee attacks. It also can provide cover against spells and other magical attacks.

To determine how effective a tower shield is, you have to know where it is in relation to the character trying to use it, just like any other form of cover. If you think of the tower shield user occupying a square, the user can place the shield either along one of the square's sides or at one of the square's corners. Placing the shield along a side gives total cover against attacks that come from or through the square across from that side, half cover from attacks coming from or through squares at the adjacent corners, and no cover against attacks coming from anywhere else.

The user also can place the shield at a corner of his square at a 45-degree angle or at a shallower angle. If placed at a 45-degree angle, the shield gives total cover against attacks coming from or through the square at the corner, half cover against attacks coming from or through the squares next to the adjacent sides, and no cover against attacks from anywhere else. A shallow angle gives total cover at the corner, as described above, three quarters cover along one side, and quarter cover along the other side.

Each round on his turn, the tower shield user decides where to place the shield, and there it stays until the user's next turn. When the user isn't engaged in combat, he decides where the shield will be as he is walking around; when combat starts, he cannot change the shield's location until his turn.

When the shield's user attacks, his foes get the same cover that the shield would give him against them.

To resolve ranged attacks or melee attacks made with reach, draw a line from the center of the attacker's square to the center of the defender's square. The defender gets the cover from whatever square the line passes through. If the line passes through more than one square the shield covers, use the highest cover value.

**Will a tower shield protect against dragon's breath, magical rays, and the like? Can the user automatically make a save against a *fireball* or even take no damage if taking total cover behind the shield?**

It depends on the type of magical attack. The shield is a piece of the user's equipment and attacking a creature's equipment is the same as attacking the creature.

If the magical attack has the shield user as a specific target (that is it does not merely affect the area that contains the shield user but is aimed right at the shield user), the shield has no effect. All rays fall into this category, as does any spell that has a Target entry in its header and any spell that has an Effect entry and affects creatures (provided, of course, that the attacker can and does choose the shield user as a target).

Magical attacks that fill areas (bursts, cones, cylinders, lines, emanations, and spreads) are subject to all the rules for cover on page 133 of the *Player's Handbook*. Note that spread effects might be able to reach around the shield; if so, the shield provides only one half cover.

**The *Player's Handbook* says you can use a buckler and fire a bow or crossbow without penalty. Does this mean you get the armor bonus from the buckler while firing the bow or crossbow?**

No. You can't use the buckler's armor bonus during any round when you fire the bow or crossbow. Once you fire, you lose the buckler's armor bonus until your next turn.

**The illustration of the repeating crossbow on page 101 of the *Player's Handbook* seems to indicate that this weapon can be fired with only two hands, but there's no mention of this in the weapon's description on the opposite page. Does the repeating crossbow require two hands to use? Are there circumstances under which it can be fired in one hand, as with all other crossbows?**

You can shoot a repeating crossbow one handed, once, just like a light crossbow. You need two hands to hold the repeating crossbow and pull the reloading lever, and you need two hands to load a new case of bolts into the crossbow.

**Does magic armor lessen the chance for spell failure? Does it weigh the same as nonmagic armor? Does it encumber as much?**

Being magical doesn't lessen armor's arcane spell failure chance, weight, or encumbrance. Note, however, that magic armor is masterwork, which lessens the armor's check penalty by 1 (see page 113 in the *Player's Handbook*).

**Does the magic armor bonus provided by the *mage armor* spell or *bracers of armor* stack with nonmagic armor? Would they stack with each other? Would they stack with magic armor? Would it stack with a magic or nonmagic shield? Why or why not? In the previous edition of the game, the *mage armor* spell description specifically said the spell didn't stack with armor or other defensive spells. Why doesn't the current version of the spell so state?**

Because it doesn't have to. A *mage armor* spell provides an armor bonus, as do *bracers of armor*. Two armor bonuses do not stack, so a *mage armor* spell does not stack with *bracers of armor*. Nor will a *mage armor* spell or *bracers of armor* stack with a shield, which also provides an armor bonus. Note that the armor bonus from a shield stacks with the armor bonus from a suit of armor you wear, but that's a special property of shields and an exception to the stacking rule. Neither the *mage*

*armor* spell nor *bracers of armor* are suits of armor, so the armor bonus from a shield does not stack with either of them.

**When you purchase barding for a mount, is it proficient in the armor, or does the mount take the armor check penalty?**

Anyone wearing armor takes the appropriate armor check penalty. Trained war mounts are proficient in light, medium, and heavy armor, while untrained mounts are not proficient in any kind of armor, and they take additional penalties for untrained armor use as noted on page 80 of the *Player's Handbook*.

**What's the procedure for attacking a character's armor or shield? Suits of armor and shields grant armor bonuses, but what are their own Armor Classes? What are their hit points?**

You can attack a character's shield using the rules for striking a weapon in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*. This requires an opposed attack roll against the character wielding the shield, and there is a modifier for the size of the shield, as noted on page 136 of the *Player's Handbook*.

If you attack a shield that no one is using, the procedure is a little different. Use the rules for attacking inanimate objects on page 135 of the *Player's Handbook*. A shield's base Armor Class is 10, plus a modifier for size as shown on Table 8–11 in the *Player's Handbook*. As noted on page 136 of the *Player's Handbook*, treat a buckler as a Small object (AC 11), a small shield as a Medium-size object (AC 10), a large shield as a Large object (AC 9), and a tower shield as a Huge object (AC 8).

Like any other inanimate object, an unattended shield has no Dexterity score and has a Dexterity modifier to Armor Class of –5 (see page 135 in the *Player's Handbook*). Note that you get a +4 attack bonus when you attack an immobile object with a melee weapon, and if you spend a round lining up the attacks, you get an automatic hit with a melee weapon and a +5 bonus with a ranged weapon.

Table 8–13 in the *Player's Handbook* shows hardness and hit points for shields.

When a creature wears a suit of armor, you cannot attack the armor without attacking the wearer (although some creatures have special attacks that get around this limitation).

To determine the Armor Class for a suit of unattended armor, use Table 8–11 in the *Player's Handbook*, as noted above for shields. The armor's size is the same size as the kind of creature for which it was made (a suit of armor made for a dwarf, elf, or human would be a Medium-size object for the purpose of attacking it). Otherwise, attacking an unattended suit of armor is just like attacking an unattended shield or other inanimate object.

As an object, armor has a hardness appropriate to its construction: 10 for metal, 5 for leather or hide, and 0 for padded armor. (Treat studded leather as leather.) Armor has 5 hit points per point of armor bonus the armor provides.

**Is an armor-clad character who can use arcane scrolls subject to the spell failure chance from armor when using an arcane scroll? What about other magic items?**

Arcane spell failure doesn't apply when you're activating a magic item—not even a scroll.

**I and many others have found the *armor of speed*, which gives a permanent *haste* effect to the wearer, far more**

**powerful than its +3 enchantment cost ascribes. Are there any official errata or words of advice on how to rule usage of *armor of speed* in a game?**

Yes, the armor works like *boots of speed* (command activated, up to 10 rounds of haste each day). The speed armor quality costs the same as +2 armor bonus.

**Let's say my fighter has a Dexterity score of 16 and wears +3 *full plate armor*. If a creature makes a touch attack against her, what is her Dexterity modifier to Armor Class? What is her Dexterity modifier for other purposes, such as initiative or Reflex saves? Do I use the +3 bonus for her Dexterity score or do I use +1 because that's the maximum Dexterity bonus the armor allows? What if my character is carrying a load heavy enough to reduce her Dexterity bonus?**

The example character's Dexterity bonus to Armor Class is +1, because of the armor's maximum Dexterity rating. The maximum applies to any attack the character suffers, even when the armor itself doesn't help against the attack.

The character's Dexterity bonus for all other purposes, including initiative rolls and Reflex saves remains +3. The maximum Dexterity bonus from armor applies only to Armor Class.

Maximum Dexterity from a load a character carries works just like maximum Dexterity from armor. It affects only Armor Class (see Carrying Capacity in Chapter 9 of the *Player's Handbook*).

## Goods and Services

**I am wondering about a 10-foot pole. On a square grid map, do you reach two squares diagonally from your location? Do you reach two squares in every direction? Also, how much of your speed does diagonal movement take up?**

When counting diagonals, the first (and all odd diagonal) is 5 feet and the second (and all even diagonal) is 10 feet. You'd need a reach of 15 feet to attack 2 diagonals away (but only a 20-foot reach to attack 3 diagonals away). Likewise, if you move 3 diagonals, your total movement would be 20 feet.

**Okay, so I can't reach 15 feet on the diagonal with my 10-foot reach weapon. Does that mean I don't get attacks of opportunity against foes who approach me on the diagonal?**

If you're a Medium-size character armed with a reach weapon, you do not threaten a foe 2 diagonals (15 feet away), but if a foe moves up to attack you on the diagonal, you still get an attack of opportunity against that foe before the foe gets adjacent to you. (At some point the approaching foe had to be 10 feet away and threatened by you.) Note, however, that if the foe moves adjacent to you with a 5-foot step, you do not get an attack of opportunity, even if the foe takes that step along a diagonal.

## Magic Items

**Can undead, which lack metabolisms, use potions, which require ingestion? I believe undead can use magic oils, which are applied externally.**

Potions require swallowing, not ingestion. Any corporeal creature can use a potion (see page 191 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*), provided it can swallow. Anything with an

intact throat can swallow. Some DMs say skeletal creatures cannot swallow, others say they can. Check with your DM. Any corporeal creature can use an oil.

**When a domain's granted power is a caster level increase, how does that affect making magic items? For example, the Healing domain gives you a +1 caster level for healing spells. How does that affect making potions and scrolls made with the Scribe Scroll and Brew Potion feats? Do you make the item at its normal caster level and then apply the increase, thus getting a better item for the money?**

For potions, scrolls, and wands, you can set the caster level of the item at any number high enough to cast the stored spell and not higher than your own caster level.

If you get a caster-level boost from a domain (or from just about any other source), you can use the increased caster level as the item's caster level. If you do so, however, you must not only pay the cost for the increased caster level, but you also get the benefits of the increased caster level (if any). For example, a 5th-level cleric normally could brew a *potion of cure moderate wounds* and set the caster level anywhere from 3rd level (the minimum level for casting *cure moderate wounds*, a 2nd-level spell, as a cleric) to 5th level (the creator's caster level). If the same cleric had the Healing domain, you could set the caster level for the *potion of cure moderate wounds* anywhere from 3rd level to 6th level. A *potion of cure moderate wounds* with a caster level of 6 would have a market value of 600 gp (spell level x caster level x 50 gp) and could heal 2d8+6 points of damage.

**At what caster level do potions, wands, and the like operate?**

At whatever caster level the character who made the item decided to set. An item's caster level can be no higher than its creator's level at the time the item was made and no lower than the minimum level required to cast the spell effect the item generates or the spell used to create the item.

The *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* has default caster levels for magic items. Note that the 2nd Edition AD&D® game used preset caster levels for all magic items. If you're converting from that set of rules to the new rules, use the old caster levels. Those caster levels are as follows: Wand is 6th-level; staff is 8th-level; potion is 12th-level; other item is 12th-level; artifact is DM's discretion, though usually 20th-level.

**For magic items that store spells (scrolls, potions, runes, wands), I assume the spell's saving throw DC is determined by the caster's relevant ability score (Wisdom, Intelligence, or Charisma) and feats such as Spell Focus, provided that the person who made the item is also the person using the item. What happens if the item creator is different from item user? Also, is it possible for characters other than the item creator to provide a spell for an item? How is the saving throw DC for the spell determined then?**

The saving throw DC for any spell effect generated from a magic item is equal to 10 + 1.5 times the spell level, rounded down. (See Saving Throws Against Magic Item Powers on page 176 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*.) This applies no matter who makes the item and no matter who uses the item.

**Does a ring require an "activate a magic item" action? Also, how frequently can one use a ring?**

A ring is command activated (see page 192 in the *DUNGEON*

*MASTER's Guide*), unless the ring's description says otherwise. Any such item requires a standard action to activate.

Unless otherwise stated in the ring's description, there are no limits on the number of times it can be used or on how frequently it can be used. Since activating a ring requires an action, it usually cannot be activated more than once a round. Note that most rings function continuously once activated, which allows for virtually unlimited use unless the ring produces an effect that can be broken.

**The description for *boots of speed* says that on command the boots enable the wearer to act as though *hasted* for up to 10 rounds each day and that the duration of the *haste* need not be consecutive rounds. Does "on command" refer to the item as being command-word activated, therefore requiring a standard action to activate? Also if the rounds need not be consecutive, does it need to be deactivated on command, again with a standard action? Or are the boots use-activated at will so that you have 10 rounds a day where you are under the *haste* effect?**

*Boots of speed* are command-word activated. It takes an action to activate the boots and an action to deactivate them. If the first thing you do in a round is deactivate the boots, that round does not count against the daily 10-round limit, but you also don't get an extra partial action that round or any other benefit of the *haste* effect.

**A player in my game is fond of activating his *ring of invisibility*, attacking, then becoming invisible again. Is that possible? How many times can a *ring of invisibility* be used?**

A *ring of invisibility* requires a standard action to activate, just as most rings do. Once a character activates the *ring of invisibility*, he can take any move-equivalent action. Having already used a standard action to activate the ring, he cannot attack (or take any other standard action) until his next turn unless he is entitled to an extra partial action, such as from a *haste* spell.

If the character attacks on his next turn, the *invisibility* effect from the ring is broken, and the character cannot activate the ring until his next turn (again, unless he is entitled to an extra partial action).

**I've noticed in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* that a *ring of regeneration* can regenerate lost body parts or organs, but it does not specifically say it brings the wearer back from the dead. The description does say that the ring can regenerate any organ or body part, so presumably it could regenerate the wearer's head or heart. If it can do that, why can't it bring the wearer back from the dead?**

The ring works only for a living wearer. (See the first line of the item description.) The ring can regenerate a head or heart, but only if the wearer is still living after losing the head or heart. (For example, a multiheaded creature could survive the loss of a single head.)

**In the scrolls section of Chapter 8 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, it says a spellcaster trying to cast a spell from a scroll of a higher caster level than he is must make a caster level check. What is a caster level check? What modifiers do I add to the roll? For example, I presume that the spellcaster's own level is added as a modifier. What about the applicable ability bonus? What about the Spellcraft skill?**

To make a caster level check, roll 1d20 and add your caster

level—no other modifiers apply (see page 276 in the *Player's Handbook*). The Spellcraft skill can help decipher the writing on a scroll so you can identify the spell, but that doesn't help you activate the spell.

It's possible that your caster level could vary. For example, if you are a multiclass character, say a 5th-level wizard/6th-level cleric, your caster level for wizard spells is 5th. To use a scroll with a wizard spell on it, your caster level check will be 1d20+5. If you were using a scroll with a cleric spell on it, however, your caster level check would be 1d20+6.

**How do you determine the DC for the caster level check required for a scroll? For example, a 1st-level wizard tries to use a scroll of *magic missile* scribed at 5th level. The spell level of the scroll is 1st level, but the caster level is 5th. Does the 1st-level wizard have to make a caster level check to activate this scroll?**

First, keep in mind that the level of the character who scribed the scroll does not solely determine the caster level. The character scribing a scroll can set any caster level, so long as it is no higher than the character's own caster level and no lower than the minimum level required to cast the spell. A 5th-level wizard scribing the 1st-level *magic missile* spell on a scroll could set the caster level anywhere from 1st level to 5th level (see page 178 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*).

To determine if a scroll user has to make a level check to activate a scroll spell, you compare the spell's caster level (not the spell's level) to the user's caster level (see page 203 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*). The scroll user must make the check if her caster level is lower than the scroll's. The DC is the scroll's caster level +1. Note that there are numerous other requirements for using a spell off a scroll (see pages 199–203 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*).

**What happens when a sorcerer finds an arcane scroll bearing a spell with a caster level lower than the sorcerer would have to be to cast the spell? For example, a sorcerer must be 6th-level to cast a *fireball* spell. What happens if a sorcerer finds a *fireball* scroll that a wizard has scribed at 5th level? Can a sorcerer of 6th-level or higher use the scroll?**

Yes, the scroll is an arcane scroll (because a wizard made it) and *fireball* is on the sorcerer class list. The sorcerer must be at least 5th level to use the scroll without a chance for failure. The scroll's caster level determines if there is a chance for failure and the level check DC if there is one; where the spell falls on the scroll user's class spell list is irrelevant.

**Suppose a 3rd-level bard decides to take the Scribe Scroll feat. During an adventure, the bard decides to cast a spell from one of the scrolls she scribed. Does the bard cast the spell from the scroll as a wizard or sorcerer normally would? Or does the bard have to use the Use Magic Device skill? If the bard doesn't need Use Magic Device, what good is this skill to a bard?**

To use a scroll, the character has to fulfill three requirements (see page 203 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*):

1. The spell on the scroll must be of the correct type (arcane or divine) for the character's spellcasting class. Bards are arcane spellcasters and meet this requirement for any arcane scroll.

2. The user must have the spell on his or her class list. A spellcaster using a scroll she has scribed meets this requirement (because you can't scribe a scroll with a spell you don't know;

see the Scribe Scroll feat description).

3. The user must have the requisite ability score. A spellcaster using a scroll she has scribed herself probably meets this requirement. You cannot "know" a spell that you cannot cast. The only time the character would not meet this requirement for a scroll she made herself is if she suffered some sort of ability drain or ability damage between the time the scroll was scribed and the time it was used.

Note that bards have several spells, such as *cure light wounds*, that are much more common as divine spells. A bard cannot use a divine scroll without recourse to the Use Magic Device skill, even if the spell on the scroll is on the bard spell list.

As noted in the previous question, there might be a caster level check required to activate the scroll. In most cases, this is not necessary for a scroll the character has scribed herself unless the caster has taken some kind of level loss between scribing the scroll and using it.

A bard with the Use Magic Device skill can use it to accomplish tasks like deciphering and activating divine scrolls or activating other items that have activation requirements the bard does not meet. See page 175 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* for item activation requirements.

**Is it possible for wizards to cast curative spells such as *cure moderate wounds* or *cure light wounds*? It seems that they can under the right circumstances. Suppose Willie, a halfling bard in my party, has the Scribe Scroll feat. The *Player's Handbook* says wizards, sorcerers, and bards all cast arcane magic. That means the cure spells a bard casts are arcane and not divine regardless of what the spell is, right? That also means that if Willie scribes a scroll with *cure light wounds* on it, the scroll will still be an arcane scroll. If that's correct, it means that if my wizard gets the *cure light wounds* scroll from Willie, he can scribe it into his spellbook and then prepare it as an arcane spell that he can use time and time again, right?**

You can't read a spell off a scroll unless the spell is on your class list (see page 203 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*). You also cannot scribe a spell into your book unless it's on your class list. Only another bard can use Willie's *cure light wounds* scrolls (because bards are the only arcane casters who have *cure* spells on their class lists).

Remember that spell trigger items, such as wands, do not come in arcane or divine versions. If a bard makes a *wand of cure light wounds*, any character who has *cure light wounds* on his spell list can use the wand.

Some time ago, "Sage Advice" said that multiclass sorcerer/wizards cannot scribe their sorcerer spells into their wizard spell books. What happens if a sorcerer/wizard writes one of her sorcerer spells on a scroll? Can she then write the spell into her spellbook? If so, does the wizard/sorcerer have to go through the extra associated costs and XP expenditure of making an intermediary scroll, which is subsequently destroyed if successfully written to the spellbook?

A wizard can scribe any spell she finds on a scroll into her spellbook, but doing so uses up the scroll. If a sorcerer/wizard makes a scroll of a spell from her sorcerer spell repertoire, she has to pay all the normal cash and experience costs for doing so. Once the scroll is made, however, the character can use the scroll to write the spell into her spellbook, just as she could with any other scroll. The character also must pay the normal



costs for writing the spell into the spellbook.

**The *Player's Handbook* says it takes 1 day to scribe a scroll per 1,000 gp of the scroll's market price. Since the price for a scroll is caster level times spell level times 25 gp, a 1st-level spell scribed on a scroll costs only 25 gp. How long does it take to scribe the scroll?**

The minimum time to create any magic item is one day (see page 242 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*).

**What's the DC for saving against a spell cast from a wand or scroll? How do you determine the Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma modifier for the character who made the item, or is it the character who uses the item that determines the save DC?**

The ability score of the item maker or item user is irrelevant. The saving throw DC for any spell effect generated from an item is 10 + 1.5 times the spell level, rounded down. (See Saving Throws Against Magic Item Powers on page 176 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*.)

**Can a character of any class properly use a wand of bull's strength if he has the necessary activation words? How does the Use Magic Device skill affect your ability to use this wand?**

A wand is a spell trigger item. To use such an item, you must have the spell it contains on your class spell list; see page 175 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*.

If you have the Use Magic Device skill, you can attempt to use a wand as though you had the spell it contains on your class spell list—even if you're not a spellcaster at all. The Use Magic Device DC for activating a wand is 20 (emulate spell ability). You need to repeat this check each time you activate the wand. (See the Use Magic Device skill description.)

**Can a 1st-level paladin or ranger use a wand of cure light wounds? Or must the character have enough levels to actually be a spellcaster.**

The requirement for using a spell trigger item (such as a wand) is having the spell stored in the item on your class spell list, not having the ability to cast the spell (see page 175 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*). Since *cure light wounds* is on both the paladin and ranger class spell lists, paladins or rangers of any level can use wands of *cure light wounds*.

**How is the body feeder weapon quality supposed to work? Do the temporary hit points from the weapon stack? The same question applies to mind feeder weapons and to spell effects, such as vampiric touch.**

Temporary hit points from a *body feeder* weapon stack with each other, but not with temporary hit points from any other source. Likewise, temporary psionic points from a *mind feeder* weapon stack, but not with temporary psionic points from any other source.

In general, any effect that allows you to gain temporary hit points over time allows you to stack those points, but only those points. For example, if you use the *vampiric touch* spell, the temporary hit points you gain from that particular casting of the spell stack. They don't stack with the temporary hit points you get from an *aid* spell, nor would the effects of two *vampiric touch* or *aid* spells stack. If you were to use two *body feeder* weapons (or two *mind feeder* weapons), you could not stack the temporary points from the two weapons.

**Do magic weapons have to be masterwork weapons first? If so, why don't the masterwork and magic bonuses stack?**

Yes, you have to have a masterwork weapon before you can enchant it. Masterwork and enhancement bonuses don't stack because they're the same basic type of bonus; they both make a weapon handier and more effective.

**Can a normal weapon be used for awhile, then be made into a masterwork weapon?**

No. I suppose a used weapon could be taken apart and melted down to provide materials for a new masterwork weapon though. The resulting masterwork weapon would not be any cheaper to make.

**The apparatus of Kwalish has presented some problems for my group. Can you cast spells with a range through the apparatus? Specifically, can a wizard inside the apparatus (not operating the levers) cast a dispel magic spell at a target or area outside the apparatus? Does being a magic item prevent the apparatus from being treated like any other obstruction?**

Any solid barrier blocks magic by blocking line of effect between the caster and the spell's target or area. You can't cast spells through the hull of an *apparatus of Kwalish* without opening the hatch (and flooding the vehicle if it is submerged). Likewise, a closed window blocks line of effect for spells.

**Can I open my bag of holding on the Ethereal Plane? Can I open it on the Astral Plane? If the answer is yes to both, why does page 33 of Manual of the Planes even have a list of extradimensional spells?**

The answer is yes to both, at least within the context of the Great Wheel. The *Manual of the Planes* lists extradimensional spells because it's possible to create a cosmology that has a single dimension. In such a cosmology, spells that use extradimensional space will not function.

**Will extradimensional items rupture a bag of holding? The DUNGEON MASTER's Guide says that a bag of holding placed within a portable hole tears a rift to the Astral Plane. Bag and hole alike are then sucked into the void and forever lost. The DUNGEON MASTER's Guide also says that when a portable hole is placed within a bag of holding, it opens a gate to the Astral Plane. The hole, the bag, and any creatures within a 10-foot radius are drawn there, destroying the portable hole and bag of holding in the process. However, the description for Heward's handy haversack makes no mention of any rifts or gates. This implies that only the combination of a bag of holding and portable hole forms a rift or gate. Thus, a bag of holding could be placed inside another bag of holding with no unusual effects.**

It's a general rule that you can't mix items containing nondimensional or extradimensional spaces (things that are bigger inside than out) with each other or with *portable holes*. Such combinations tend to strain the fabric of the cosmos. Putting one *bag of holding* within another is just like putting the bag into a *portable hole*. Items that function like *bags of holding*, such as *Heward's handy haversacks*, cause the same mishaps when mishandled.

Note you can freely go plane hopping with *portable holes*, *bags of holding*, and the like. Spells that produce their own extradimensional spaces, such as *rope trick*, pose no danger to occupants who may be using *portable holes*, *bags of holding*,

and the like.

**Say a character is forced into the Astral Plane because he placed a *portable hole* into a *bag of holding*. His bag and hole are destroyed. Could he pick up the stuff and just step back through the gate? There is no mention that the gate closes, so I would assume it works just like *gate spell*, which allows two-way travel provided someone holds the gate open. In this case, how long do you have to pick up all your stuff, and who has to concentrate on holding it open? Also, how far are the contents of the *portable hole* and *bag of holding* likely to scatter?**

The gate created in such a circumstance stays open only for an instant, then closes. Anything sucked through the gate is stuck on the Astral Plane and must find another way to leave the plane.

Unattended objects can't move on the Astral Plane (see page 47 of the *Manual of the Planes*), so they're likely to be heaped up right next to the gate, and gathering them up shouldn't be too big a problem, provided that there are no denizens of the Astral Plane on hand to interfere with the process.

**Exactly what kind of Armor Class bonus do *bracers of armor* provide?**

They provide an armor bonus. Although it is not specifically mentioned in the item description, the bracers produce a force effect and are effective against incorporeal touch attacks (see next question).

**Just what is the difference between a touch attack and an incorporeal touch attack? Aren't they just two names for the same thing?**

No, they're not two names for the same thing. An incorporeal touch attack usually is natural weapon attack that a creature with the incorporeal subtype uses. In most cases, it resembles a slam attack. Like a touch attack, however, an incorporeal touch attack ignores most armor and natural armor bonuses, including armor bonuses from shields (because the blow passes right through armor as though it wasn't there at all).

Unlike a touch attack, an incorporeal touch attack ignores most cover bonuses because it can just pass right through any object that might lie between the attacker and the target.

Also unlike a touch attack, an incorporeal touch attack does not ignore armor bonuses from force effects, such as the *mage armor* spell or *bracers of armor*. For example, a wizard wearing +2 *bracers of armor*, a +2 *ring of protection*, and a +2 *amulet of natural armor* normally has an Armor Class of 16. Against a touch attack, the wizard's Armor Class is 12 (only the +2 deflection from the *ring of protection* applies). Against an incorporeal touch attack, the wizard's Armor Class is 14; the +2 deflection bonus applies and so does the +2 armor bonus from the bracers because they produce a force effect.

**How many characters can fit inside the barrier generated by a *cube of force*? Is the barrier centered on the character who activated the cube, or does the cube user just have to be somewhere inside the barrier?**

The barrier is a 10-foot cube, so four Medium-size or Small characters will fit inside in most circumstances. Each such character takes up a 5-foot-square space, at least when they are moving or fighting (see Table 8-7 in the *Player's Handbook*).

If you're not using a grid and miniature figures, the *cube of force* user is at the center of the effect, and the user's allies

simply crowd around. If you are using a grid and miniature figures, the effect is two squares long and two squares wide, and the center is any corner of the square where the *cube of force* user stands. (The cube user picks the corner.)

**The description for *dust of appearance* says when you throw a handful of the dust into the air, you coat nearby objects and creatures with the dust, just like a *glitterdust* spell (a 10-foot spread). Does *dust of disappearance* work the same way?**

No. One application of *dust of disappearance* coats one Small or Medium-size creature. One application can cover two Tiny, four Diminutive, or eight Fine creatures. It takes two applications of *dust of disappearance* to cover a Large creature, four applications to cover a Huge creature, eight applications to cover a Gargantuan creature, and 16 applications to cover a Colossal creature.

**When a character loses ability points due to a draining attack, poison, or whatever, how do enhancements such as a *headband of intellect* or *gauntlets of ogre power* work. Are those points lost first? If a character takes the item off, does the item still work? Does the character lose more points if he takes the item off?**

Apply ability score losses to the victim's total score, no matter where the score came from. An ability enhancing item is not harmed by an ability draining attack, and if the victim takes off the item, the victim's ability score drops accordingly. No ability score, however, can be lessened to less than 0.

A creature with an ability score lessened to 0 cannot benefit from magic that enhances that ability score until rest or healing increases the ability to at least 1. For example, a human lessened to Strength 0 cannot benefit from a *bull's strength* spell or a *belt of giant strength* while the score is at 0. After a day of rest, the character recovers 1 point of Strength and can once again benefit from Strength enhancements.

**The *bead of karma* from the *necklace of prayer beads* allows divine spells to be cast at +4 caster level and the effect lasts 10 minutes. How does this work, exactly? How do you tell when the 10 minutes starts? Also does this mean spells with durations longer than 10 minutes lose the +4 bonus after the 10 minutes is up? What about spells cast into spell storing items during the 10 minutes? Do they get the effect once the 10 minutes is over?**

A *bead of karma* is activated with a command word. You use an action to activate the item, and for the next 10 minutes any divine spell you cast functions at +4 caster level. Any aspect of the spell that depends on caster level (usually range, duration, damage, or any combination of the three) increases accordingly. An affected spell gets the benefit for its entire duration, even if that duration is more than 10 minutes.

Storing a spell is not the same as casting it for purposes of using the bead, and the spell is stored at your regular caster level. The bead does not affect spell effects you cast from a device, even if you stored them yourself while the bead was functioning.

**Is it possible to activate a *karma* bead from a *necklace of prayer beads* while wearing a *periapt of wisdom* +2?**

No, both the necklace and the periapt occupy the same item location on the user's body. You'd have to take off the periapt before putting on the necklace, or vice versa.

**Under the description for the *Orbs of Dragonkind* artifact in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, it says that each one has a different special power based on the color. For the green Orb, the power listed is *spectral force*. I can't find *spectral force* anywhere. What is it?**

*Spectral force* is an old name for the *major image* spell.

**If my character has a *robe of the archmagi* and is in the area of effect of a *holy aura* spell, does my character now**

**have a 42 spell resistance?**

No. The general rule against stacking similar effects applies here; the character gets only the best spell resistance. Against most effects, the character uses the spell resistance of 17 that the *robe of the archmagi* provides. Against evil spells or effects from evil opponents, the character uses the spell resistance of 25 that the *holy aura* spell provides.

# Combat and Initiative

The following section covers questions dealing with an element of combat and initiative. They are arranged by topic where possible.

## Combat Statistics

**If a melee attack causes a saving throw every time it damages an opponent (a monster with a poisonous bite, for example) and the attack is a confirmed critical hit, are two saves rolled because there are two damage rolls?**

A critical hit doesn't deliver any extra poison; however, there are special attacks that do have extra effects with critical hits. These include energy drains, ability drains, and most kinds of ability damage that are not dealt through poison. See the introduction to the *Monster Manual* or Chapter 3 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*.

**Most poisons, including the *poison* spell, cause ability damage once, and then again around a minute later. Do you have to make the second save even if you succeeded at the first? Is this the general rule for poisons—always two saves?**

Yes, you must always make two saves against poison; you have one save when the creature is poisoned and one save at the end of the onset time—even if the first save is successful.

**How do attacks work for monsters with two primary attacks, such as a bear? The first attack listed is supposed to be the primary and the bear's first is 2 claws +6 melee. The secondary attack is the bite +1 melee. Are the two claw attacks rolled as a single attack at +6, or is it two rolls for the two claws, each at +6? If it's two attacks, then does the bear need to use the full attack action to get both claw attacks? Also, why are both claws at +6, and not +6 and +1? Why don't monsters get multiple attacks like characters do?**

The basics of monster attacks are explained in the Attacks section of the introduction to the *Monster Manual* (page 7). A bear, or any other creature, has to use the full attack action to get more than one attack in a round. (Hydras are an exception.) A bear has two primary natural weapons—both claws. If the bear uses the full attack action, roll two claw attacks, each at +6, and one bite attack at +1. If both claws were part of a single attack, the attack entry would read “claws +6 melee” as they do for the raven. (See page 201 of the *Monster Manual*.)

Both claws have a +6 attack bonus because both claws are primary weapons. Natural weaponry does not follow the same rules as manufactured weaponry. First, creatures with multiple natural weapons are generally hardwired to use all of them simultaneously. (As opposed to a human, who has no natural weaponry at all and doesn't fight well without special training.)

A creature is assigned primary and secondary attacks that reflect its natural ability and style fighting. Consider a giant octopus lashing with all eight tentacles. An octopus doesn't have one primary tentacle and seven “off” tentacles. It does have a secondary attack: a bite. Note that most creatures that have clawed limbs and a bite usually have all their limbs as primary weapons and the bite as a secondary, even when the

bite deals more damage. Creatures are usually much more adroit with their claws than with their mouths.

Natural weapons don't give creatures multiple attacks for similar reasons. A bear or a lion doesn't make a series of quick nips with its mouth; it chomps down hard and tears. Also, natural weapons aren't as quick or as handy as manufactured weapons, so they can't get a high attack rate. It's not hard to imagine a high-level fighter making multiple swings with a sword in the course of a six-second melee round, but it would be pretty wild to see a dragon the size of a freight train snapping away like some kind of scaly buzzsaw.

**What bonuses get multiplied when a character confirms a critical hit? Suppose a 10th-level barbarian with a Strength score of 18 confirms a critical hit while raging and using a +3 *greataxe* and a maximum Power Attack. How much damage does the barbarian deal? Can you even use the Power Attack feat while raging? What if the character is a paladin using the smite evil ability, a fighter with Weapon Specialization, or a rogue using a sneak attack?**

It's easiest to think of a confirmed critical hit as a number of hits equal to the weapon's critical damage multiplier. The example character is using a greataxe, which has a critical multiplier of x3, so the damage for a confirmed critical is just like the damage for hitting the foe three times. The only damage that is not multiplied in this way is damage expressed in extra dice, such as for a rogue's sneak attack (see page 123 in the *Player's Handbook*).

The example character has a base attack bonus of +10, so the damage bonus for a “maximum power attack” is +10. (Yes, you can use Power Attack while raging. In fact, you can use just about any feat except Expertise while raging; see the section on rage in the barbarian class description in the *Player's Handbook*.) The character's Strength score increases to 22 while he rages, giving him a +6 damage bonus for Strength, which increases to +9 because a greataxe is a two-handed weapon. The greataxe's +3 enhancement bonus also applies to damage, so the character's total damage from one hit with the greataxe is 1d12+22 (10+9+3). A confirmed critical hit makes the damage 3d12+66, just as if you had rolled 1d12+22 three times.

As noted earlier, any damage expressed in extra points of damage is multiplied with a confirmed critical hit, so the extra damage from the smite evil ability or the Weapon Specialization feat is also multiplied. But damage expressed as extra dice does not increase, so a rogue doesn't roll any extra sneak attack damage dice for a confirmed critical hit. However, some magic weapons that deal extra dice of damage do deal some extra damage on a confirmed critical hit, as noted in their descriptions. This ability is a special feature of these weapons.

You do not multiply damage that has already been multiplied. If the example character were striking a foe for double damage already, you would apply the extra (“doubled”) damage only once to the critical damage. For example, suppose the sample barbarian above is an azer, who deals fire damage along with his greataxe attack. The character's total damage from one hit with the greataxe is 1d12+23 (10+9+3+1 fire). A confirmed critical hit would make the damage 3d12+69, just as if you had rolled 1d12+23 three times. But if the azer attacks a

creature with the cold subtype, the fire damage is doubled, so the base damage for the attack is 1d12+24 (10+9+3+2 fire). The doubled damage is not applied to a confirmed critical hit; instead the total damage becomes 3d12+70 (1d12+23 three times, plus one extra point for the “doubled” fire damage).

Sharp readers may notice that two-handed weapons by their nature deal “multiplied” damage (Strength bonus x1.5), but this is not a true damage multiplier in the sense that the term is used in the **D&D** game. Thus, the extra damage from a two-handed weapon is multiplied for a confirmed critical hit.

#### **How is touch Armor Class determined?**

Touch Armor Class ignores armor (including shields) and natural armor bonuses. See Touch AC in the *Player’s Handbook* glossary and Touch Attack in Chapter 8 of the *Player’s Handbook*. Every other component of Armor Class still applies (size, Dexterity, deflection bonuses, and so on).

**When my character is subjected to a touch attack, exactly what elements of my character’s usual Armor Class apply? If I’m wearing magical armor, does the armor’s enhancement bonus help?**

Touch attacks ignore armor bonuses, natural armor bonuses, and armor bonuses from shields. Everything else that contributes to your character’s Armor Class still applies. That list includes your size modifier to Armor Class, your Dexterity modifier, any deflection bonus, any dodge bonuses, the Armor Class bonus from a *haste* spell, any luck bonus to Armor Class, any insight bonus to Armor Class, any profane bonus to Armor Class, and any sacred bonus to Armor Class, and any cover bonus to Armor Class you might have.

Enhancement bonuses to your armor or to your shield make the armor bonuses these items give you bigger, and they don’t apply to touch attacks.

## Initiative

**If a character is paralyzed, then recovers during the same encounter, do you keep the same initiative or roll a new one?**

If by the “same encounter” you mean the same battle in which the character was paralyzed, the character keeps the initiative number. The same is true for a magically held character or a character lessened to negative hit points. The character hasn’t actually left the battle—the character just did not get to do much when her turns came up. There may be cases when a character really has effectively left the battle. For example, say a character fails a save against a *hold person* spell and the rest of the combatants keep moving while fighting, leaving the *held* character behind. If the *held* character decided to rejoin the fray after the spell wears off, treat her as a new combatant (see New Combatants Enter the Fray in Chapter 3 of the *DUNGEON MASTER’s Guide*).

**If a character has a shield (any shield), does the character get the Armor Class bonus from it if surprised or flat-footed?**

Being flat-footed doesn’t remove Armor Class bonus from a shield.

## Actions in Combat

**Is discharging a wand an attack?**

It depends on what you mean by “attack.” To discharge a wand, you need to use the activate a magic item action, which is a standard action. As with any other standard action, you can move either before or after you activate the magic item, but you cannot use another standard action or full-round action that turn. For example, if your level is high enough to allow you multiple attacks with the full attack action (a full-round action), you could not activate a wand as one of your “attacks.”

If your ability to “attack” enemies is restricted in some manner, such as when you’re using a *sanctuary* or *invisibility* spell, discharging a wand is considered an “attack” that breaks your *sanctuary* or *invisibility* spell if the spell-like effect you release from the wand makes another creature make a saving throw, take damage, or otherwise suffer harm or impairment (see Special Spell effects on page 152 of the *Player’s Handbook*).

**Page 124 of the *Player’s Handbook* says you can decide whether to take the normal attack action or the full attack action depending on how the first attack turns out. Suppose I have the Rapid Shot feat, which allows me an extra ranged attack if I take –2 penalty on every attack I make during my turn. Suppose I’m holding a weapon in each hand, so that I can get an extra attack with the second weapon provided I take some penalties to all my attacks. Can I use the attack action to make one attack at no penalty at all, and then decide to use Rapid Shot or an off-hand weapon and take penalties only to the attacks I make after I’ve decided to use full attack?**

No. If you choose to use Rapid Shot or to fight with two weapons, you must choose the full attack action before you make any attack rolls.

You can indeed “wait to see how your first attack turns out,” before deciding between the attack and full attack action, but if you do, you can’t take any option that would affect that first, unmodified, attack roll.

**If I cast a ray spell (ranged touch attack) at a foe who is engaged in melee with an ally of mine, do I take the standard –4 penalty for firing a ranged weapon into melee?**

Yes, and there may be an additional attack penalty if the target has cover from your ally. If your ally provides cover to your target, the ray could strike your ally (see Striking the Cover Instead of a Missed Target on page 133 of the *Player’s Handbook*).

**Do melee touch attacks (delivering an *inflict light wounds* spell, for example) use only the base attack bonus? It doesn’t seem right to get the Strength bonus since touch attacks ignore armor. What about ranged touch attacks?**

A melee touch attack uses your melee attack bonus: Base attack bonus plus Strength modifier, plus any miscellaneous modifier that might apply. If you have Weapon Finesse with the weapon you’re using, you use your Dexterity instead of your Strength score. Just because the attack ignores armor doesn’t mean Strength isn’t relevant; you still have to have a firm contact with your opponent’s body and you have to overcome your opponent’s attempt to parry or block your attack.

A ranged touch attack uses your range attack bonus: base attack bonus plus Dexterity modifier plus any miscellaneous modifier that might apply.

**The description for the Tumble skill in the *Player’s***

**Handbook says that if you have 5 or more ranks in Tumble, you receive a +3 to your Armor Class for fighting defensively instead of the normal +2. How does tumbling affect the Expertise feat? Do you have to shift at least 2 points of base attack to Armor Class to get the extra Armor Class from tumbling? Or does this require just 1 point of base attack? Or can you just say that you're fighting defensively with Expertise and shift no base attack?**

Fighting defensively and using Expertise have nothing to do with each other.

Because fighting defensively is mentioned in the Expertise feat description on page 82 of the *Player's Handbook*, some people think Expertise is just a better way of fighting defensively, but that's not true.

You can fight defensively whenever you use the full attack action or attack action (see page 124 of the *Player's Handbook*). If you have the Expertise feat you can fight defensively without using the feat.

You also can use Expertise while fighting defensively. When you use Expertise and defensive fighting together, you simply add up all the Armor Class bonuses and attack penalties. Note that both Expertise and defensive fighting provide dodge bonuses to Armor Class. Dodge bonuses, unlike most other bonuses in the game, stack (see page 119 in the *Player's Handbook*). If you have 5 ranks in Tumble, you get a bigger dodge bonus for fighting defensively, but not for using Expertise.

**Can I use the Tumble skill to avoid any attacks of opportunity I might otherwise suffer when moving away from an opponent? If I do so, can I still cast a spell or fire a bow after moving?**

Yes, you can. A successful Tumble check (DC 15) allows you to move up to 20 feet through threatened squares without triggering any attacks of opportunity. This counts as a move action for you, but you can move and cast or fire, provided that the distance you've tumbled doesn't exceed your speed. If your speed is more than 20, you can finish out your move normally before casting or firing. For example, if your speed is 30, you can tumble 20 feet, triggering no attacks of opportunity, then move 10 more feet before shooting or casting a spell. In any case, if you wind up in a space that isn't threatened after tumbling, then you won't trigger any attacks of opportunity for what you do in that space.

Note that you cannot use the Tumble skill if your speed has been lessened by armor or encumbrance (see the Tumble skill description on page 75 of the *Player's Handbook*). If you're carrying a fairly large weapon, such as a longbow or any kind of crossbow (except for a hand crossbow), your DM might impose a circumstance penalty on your Tumble check.

**How can I get away from someone without them getting an attack of opportunity against me?**

Once you factor in the effects of skills and spells, the game offers a plethora of ways to escape unharmed. Even if you don't have a spell or skill to get you out of trouble, you can disengage from an opponent and not receive an opportunity attack just by moving. If all you do during your turn is move (not run), the first 5-foot square you leave is not considered threatened and nobody can get an attack of opportunity against you. If you later move through another threatened area, however, you are subject to attacks of opportunity. (If your opponent has reach, forget about getting away without drawing an attack of opportunity.)

Even if you take advantage of this rule, you'll need to have a better movement rate than your opponent or move someplace where your opponent can't follow to get clean away.

**If I receive a *haste* effect, can I use the Spring Attack feat to move, make a full attack, and retreat all in the same round and avoid attacks of opportunity from the foe I attack?**

No. A *haste* effect gives you an extra partial action before or after your normal action. If you move first as your partial action, you can make one attack and then move up to your speed as a spring attack. In this case, the move partial action is not part of your spring attack, and that movement can provoke an attack of opportunity from the foe you attack.

**The AD&D game had a rule that allowed characters with multiple attacks to attack before foes who were entitled only single attacks, but the rule also made them wait to make the second and later attacks until their foes had acted at least once. The all-out attack action seems to break that rule. Is this correct?**

Yes, it is. If you choose the all-out attack action, you make all your attacks during your turn, no matter how many attacks you have or what your position in the initiative order is. Your multiple attacks do not change your initiative number.

Note that all-out attack does not allow a move (except for a 5-foot step), which usually means that a character with a high initiative number cannot use it until the second round of a combat.

**If I'm fighting with two weapons and I have multiple attacks (say, two at +6/+1), do I then have three attacks per round or do I use the second weapon for the +1 attack? How do I calculate the bonuses (assuming I don't have Ambidexterity or Two-Weapon Fighting)? Do I use the +6 or the +1 for calculating the penalty for the additional attack?**

A second weapon gives you one extra attack each round at your best attack bonus. You make your normal number of attacks with your primary hand and one attack with your other hand. When you use an extra weapon, however, all the attacks you make take a penalty. If you don't have the Two-Weapon Fighting or Ambidexterity feats, all the attacks you make with your primary hand take a -6 penalty, and the attack you make with your other hand takes a -10 penalty. Assuming no other bonuses, the character in your example would make two attacks with her primary hand at +0/-5 and one attack with her other hand at -4.

If you use a light weapon on your other hand, the attack penalties are slightly lower, see Table 8-2 in the *Player's Handbook* (and the text accompanying it) for details.

**When you attack with two weapons, how do you figure out the attack bonus for the second weapon? The Improved Two-Weapon Fighting feat gives you two extra attacks with your second weapon. How do you figure out the attack bonus for those attacks?**

An attack with a second weapon uses the wielder's base attack bonus, plus all applicable modifiers; some penalty for attacking with two weapons always applies (see pages 124-125 in the *Player's Handbook*).

If you're using Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, you figure the attack bonus for the first attack exactly as for regular two-weapon fighting; the attack bonus for the second attack is 5

points less than for the first attack.

**Can someone who charges get an attack of opportunity if someone moves through his threatened area later that round?**

Yes. Charging imposes an Armor Class penalty, but it doesn't keep you from threatening an area or making attacks of opportunity.

**I can't find any rules on a partial charge. I would assume that it is just a charge at half the speed of normal, but I don't know where I can find that information. So what exactly is a partial charge?**

A partial charge is a charge you take as a partial action. It works just like a regular charge, except that you can only move your speed—not up to twice your speed as in a regular charge.

**Is it possible to prepare a partial charge, move, turn, and then execute the charge? Do I get a 5-foot step in between my move and my charge? Can I squeeze an extra 5 feet of movement out of each round by moving as a partial action, then taking a 5-foot step and attacking as a partial action?**

No in all cases. When you charge, all your movement must be in a straight line (and in the same direction); any movement you make before a partial charge counts against you.

You don't get a move-equivalent action plus a partial action as your turn. You get either a standard action (which does not allow a 5-foot step), a full-move action (which allows a 5-foot step if the action itself doesn't include movement), or a partial action (which also allows a 5-foot step if the action doesn't include movement).

**What are the restrictions are on a partial charge? I cannot find the information anywhere.**

You can make a charge as a partial action, such as when you surprise a foe and would like to dash in for a quick attack. See the footnotes to Table 8-3 in the *Player's Handbook* for more information.

**There's a footnote for the "draw a weapon" action on Table 8-4 that says you can combine this action with a regular move. Correct me if I'm wrong, but I assume that means you can draw your weapon at the same time your character moves. If so, does that mean that drawing your weapon becomes a free action and you can still make your attack when you reach your destination or does it take the place of your attack?**

If you have a base attack of +1, you can move and draw a weapon as part of that same move action. This lets you move, draw, and attack once at the end of your move. Note that the draw is technically not a free action; it's a bonus action that you can take as part of your move action, so you also could take at least one free action (see Table 8-4) in addition to moving, drawing, and attacking.

**Is lowering your spell resistance a free action? If yes, can you lower it automatically when your ally the priest comes over to you to cure you, or should you have done it at your last initiative?**

It's a standard action (see page 82 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*). You must wait until your turn to take a standard action, though you or your ally can use a prepared action or a delay to deliver a *cure* spell in a timely fashion.

**Does moving away from an opponent who threatens you (which is a move action) to load a crossbow (which is a move-equivalent action) provoke an attack of opportunity (assuming you complete your initial move action in a space that isn't threatened)? I realize the act of loading a light crossbow alone provokes an attack of opportunity (assuming someone threatens the loader). I would think that if a character moves away from a threatened area to load a crossbow, that character would be taking a double move action and not take an attack of opportunity.**

In this case, you do indeed provoke an attack of opportunity when you leave the first threatened space if you move more than 5 feet. Taking a move plus a move-equivalent action is not a double move action; a double move action is moving twice your speed. Move-equivalent actions are so named not because they're exactly the same as moving, but because you can perform them and still do something that you normally would combine with a move, such as firing the crossbow you have just reloaded.

**My wizard cast a spell in combat and drew an attack of opportunity. The attack missed. Does my wizard still have to make a Concentration check to cast the spell?**

No, the attack of opportunity must hit to force a Concentration check.

**If I want to disrupt someone's spell, do I have to deal damage on the same initiative number as the caster (by using a readied action) or can I deal damage to the enemy spellcaster anytime during the round before the spell is cast?**

Damage a spellcaster takes before his turn doesn't affect his spellcasting unless it comes in the form of continuing damage, such as from *Melf's acid arrow*. (See the Concentration section of Chapter 10 in the *Player's Handbook* and the description of the Concentration skill in Chapter 4.) You can use a readied action to try and disrupt the spellcaster, but you might not need to. Spellcasting provokes an attack of opportunity unless the spellcaster successfully casts on the defensive. (See the Magic Actions section of Chapter 8.) Perhaps the best way to disrupt an opponent's spells is to grapple him.

**If a spellcaster is casting a full-round or longer spell, does she provoke an attack of opportunity only when she begins casting or does anyone who gets near her get an attack of opportunity? What happens when a new round starts?**

Taking the cast a spell action while threatened provokes an attack of opportunity. The character takes that action at the start of the spell's casting time, during her turn in the initiative order. Foes who did not threaten the caster when she took the action don't get attacks of opportunity, even if they subsequently threaten the character. Note, however, that any damage the caster takes during the casting time requires a Concentration check, so that foes who move up and attack can still disrupt the spell.

**Suppose a wizard is in melee with a fighter. If the wizard takes a move and casts a spell, the fighter gets an attack of opportunity as the wizard leaves. Would that cause a Concentration roll for the spell?**

No, because the wizard is not casting the spell when the attack of opportunity occurred.

**Suppose the fighter in the previous question had readied**

**an action to follow the wizard. Could the fighter skip the first attack of opportunity to make one when the wizard actually casts the spell?**

Yes, but note that the wizard could opt to cast defensively and would not provoke an attack of opportunity if the attempt succeeds. (If the attempt failed, the wizard would lose the spell.)

**Is a spellcaster who chooses to cast defensively considered to be fighting defensively with a +2 dodge bonus to Armor Class and a -4 penalty on the attack roll? Does the result of the character's Concentration check before casting a spell make a difference?**

No, and no. To fight defensively, you have to use the attack or full-attack action. If you cast a spell, you use the cast a spell action.

**Can spells be cast for attacks of opportunity? The *Player's Handbook* says you can make a melee attack as an attack of opportunity. Does that mean touch spells count? What if you have a quickened spell available? What about spell-like or supernatural abilities?**

You cannot cast a spell (any spell) as an attack of opportunity, nor can you use a spell-like ability or a supernatural ability as an attack of opportunity.

If an opponent provokes an attack of opportunity from you, you can make only a melee attack or do something that you do as a melee attack (such as trip the opponent). Note that some spells, spell-like abilities, or supernatural abilities have ongoing or automatic effects that will come into play during an attack of opportunity. For example, if you are already holding the charge for a touch spell such as *shocking grasp* or you have a spell such as *produce flame* running, you can use the touch attacks these spells provide as attacks of opportunity. Likewise, energy drain is a supernatural ability, but it usually works whenever the creature makes a successful melee attack and will work as part of an attack of opportunity.

**When firing a ranged weapon, does the -4 attack penalty for firing into a melee apply when only one combatant can make melee attacks due to differing melee reach? For example, if an ogre (10-foot reach) is fighting a human (5-foot reach) that is 10-foot away, and an elf fires an arrow at the ogre, is that firing into a melee? If no, then what if the human was using a long spear? Would natural reach be handled differently than reach from a weapon?**

If your target is at least 10 feet away from its nearest melee opponent, you don't take the -4 attack penalty (see page 124 of the *Player's Handbook*).

**If a character charges a foe who has a reach weapon (such as a long spear) set to receive a charge, does the creature receiving the charge get an attack of opportunity? Does the character with the spear get to attack for being set to receive a charge and get an attack of opportunity before the charging character gets to make his attack? What about a creature with reach who has prepared to receive a charge?**

Preparing an action doesn't affect who you threaten or impair your ability to make attacks of opportunity. If a character with a reach weapon (or creature with natural reach) prepares an attack, the creature makes the prepared attack when the first foe comes within reach. If the foe survives the prepared attack and leaves the 5-foot square where the prepared

attack was delivered, it draws an attack of opportunity from the creature because it's leaving a threatened space.

**In my gaming group we have come across the slam ability that is used by monsters, but we have not been able to find in print what exactly a slam is. We assume that it is an attack with enough force that can knock someone down. If that is the case, what is the typical DC of a slam attack?**

It's a blunt attack, like a punch or slap (see page 7 in the *Monster Manual*). A slam attack doesn't imply any sort of ability to knock down opponents. If a creature has such an ability, it will be noted in the combat section of the creature's description.

**Suppose Gruntharg the barbarian carries a long spear and wears spiked gauntlets. He has a throwing axe at his belt. He encounters two orcs 60 feet away and wins initiative. For his action, Gruntharg draws the axe and moves and also readies an action to throw the axe at any orc that comes within 15 feet. The orcs charge. As soon as the first orc gets within 15 feet, Gruntharg throws the axe and kills that orc. After throwing the axe, is Gruntharg assumed to be carrying and wielding the long spear in both hands? Thus, does he get an attack of opportunity as the surviving orc passes from 10 feet away from him to 5 feet away? (Gruntharg does not possess the Monkey Grip feat from *Sword and Fist*.) If not, what are the rules for going from a one-handed (or carrying) grip to a two-handed grip for a weapon, and what kind of action is it to change this grip? Now suppose Gruntharg has the long spear in both hands when a spellcaster 5 feet away from him starts casting a spell. The long spear does not threaten the spellcaster because it's a reach weapon and the spellcaster is too close. Can Gruntharg just let go of the long spear and smack the spellcaster with his spiked gauntlet? What kind of action is it to let go of a two-handed weapon with only one hand?**

Gruntharg's action in the first example (throwing the readied axe) is possible. Presumably, Gruntharg holds the long spear in one hand, perhaps letting the shaft rest on his shoulder, or perhaps just letting the butt drag on the ground. This arrangement leaves one hand free to draw the throwing axe while moving, which Gruntharg can manage because he has at least a +1 base attack bonus. (Even a 1st-level barbarian has a +1 base attack bonus.) As a general rule, if you're big enough to wield a weapon in two hands, you can just carry it (somehow) with one hand.

The second example (an attack of opportunity against the second orc) is not possible. Holding a two-handed weapon is not the same as wielding the weapon. If Gruntharg wants to use that long spear he has been holding on his shoulder or dragging on the ground, he has to get his free hand on it. This maneuver is similar to drawing the weapon, but a little easier, since Gruntharg already has one hand on it. Therefore, it's a free action. But Gruntharg can do this only during his own turn, and in any case, he does not threaten an area with the long spear when he's holding it in only one hand.

The third example (smacking the spellcaster with the gauntlet) is not possible as described. A spiked gauntlet is a melee weapon, and Gruntharg threatens the area around him with it, but only when he has that hand free. In the example, Gruntharg is holding the long spear with that hand, not wielding the gauntlet. He could indeed just let go of the long spear with one hand; this maneuver is the equivalent of dropping the



weapon, even though he is still holding onto it with the other hand. Dropping a weapon is a free action, but you can use free actions only on your own turn. Gruntharg could shift the spear to one hand as a free action at the end of his turn, leaving one hand free to threaten the area around him with the spiked gauntlet, but then he would not threaten any area with the long spear.

**Can a rogue use a sneak attack while charging and when her enemy is flat footed? Suppose I have a Small rogue and I ride into battle on a riding dog. Can I use a light lance to make a sneak attack? If I charge, the lance deals double damage. Is my sneak attack damage doubled, too?**

Any melee attack (or ranged attack from a distance of 30 feet or less) can be a sneak attack, no matter what weapon you use. Some things (such as concealment) prevent sneak attacks, but charging isn't one of them.

When you deal double damage with a lance in a charge attack, do not double sneak attack damage or any damage expressed as extra dice.

## Injury and Death

**I was wondering about the effects of fast healing once a character has entered negative hit points. Does fast healing still occur? If it does, then the epic feat Fast Healing, which allows you to heal at least 3 points of damage, would allow a PC to stabilize, recover, and regain consciousness, right?**

A creature with the fast healing quality regains the stated number of hit points each round, so long as it remains alive. Unlike regeneration, fast healing doesn't keep a creature from dying.

A creature with a hit point total of -1 to -9 is dying, but it's still alive. Fast healing (and regeneration) restores lost hit points each round at the beginning of the creature's turn. Whenever a dying creature heals at least 1 point of damage, it becomes stable and eventually regains consciousness, providing it does not suffer any additional damage.

## Movement and Position

**Suppose I'm a spellcaster or an archer and I'm toe-to-toe with a foe. If I want to move away and cast a spell or fire my bow, but I also want to avoid getting hit by an attack of opportunity, how do I accomplish that? From what I understand, moving away from the opponent triggers an attack of opportunity if I'm doing more than a 5-foot step, and if I'm doing more than just moving. It doesn't matter that I'm no longer in a threatened area when I cast the spell or fire the arrow; the fact that my action is not just movement and not just a 5-foot step will trigger an attack of opportunity. Correct?**

You seem to be confusing two exceptions to the rules for triggering an attack of opportunity (see page 122 in the *Player's Handbook*). Leaving a space your opponent threatens triggers an attack of opportunity unless your only movement for the turn is a 5-foot step; however, you can sometimes move more than 5 feet and avoid an attack of opportunity. If your only action is to move, then you can treat the first space you leave as if it is not threatened, and leaving that space does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

If you choose the first option (a 5-foot step as your sole movement), then what you do afterward has no effect on what

happens when you leave the threatened space. For example, you take a 5-foot step back and cast a spell. If the 5-foot step puts you in a space your opponent does not threaten, then you will not trigger an attack of opportunity from that opponent when you cast the spell. Think of this tactic as waiting for an opportune moment to leap back out of harm's way before casting the spell.

If you choose the second option (just moving away), then what you do after leaving the space is relevant to what happens when you leave the space. This option represents a careful withdrawal from combat. The only thing you can do in a turn when you make such a withdrawal is move. If you try anything else during the turn, you're not carefully withdrawing and you trigger an attack of opportunity when you leave the space. There are ways to exit the space, move more than 5 feet, and avoid the attack of opportunity. There also are some ways to prevent opponents from just stepping back 5 feet from you and casting spells or making ranged attacks.

**I have a fighter character. Is there any way I can keep enemy spellcasters and archers from simply stepping 5 feet back from me and blasting me with ranged attacks or spells?**

Yes, but you probably don't need to. The foe's 5-foot step keeps you from making an attack of opportunity when the opponent fires or casts a spell, but on your turn you can take a 5-foot step of your own and use the full attack action to chop the foe to bits. Alternatively, you could prepare an action to disrupt a spellcaster and you can make a 5-foot step or even a partial charge to close with the spellcaster and deliver the attack.

You can't disrupt an archer, but if you're getting tired of the step back and shoot tactic, consider using a reach weapon. That way, you'll still threaten foes 10 feet away from you. Of course, you don't threaten foes who are only 5 feet away when you're armed with most reach weapons. You can solve that problem by having an ally who can threaten the space adjacent to you or by gaining the Exotic Weapon Proficiency (spiked chain) feat, as the spiked chain is a reach weapon that also works against foes 5 feet away.

Also, don't forget grappling or striking the foe's weapon. Most spellcasters won't be holding a weapon, and foes holding ranged weapons don't threaten you, so you don't have to worry about triggering an attack of opportunity when using either tactic. Foes you've grappled can't step away from you until they escape your hold. Striking a foe's weapon is often less troublesome, and if you break it, you won't need to worry about ranged attacks. Normally you need to make an opposed attack roll to strike a foe's weapon or shield, but if the item you're striking is not a melee weapon or a shield, just use the rules for striking a held, carried, or worn object (pages 135 and 136 in the *Player's Handbook*). Again, you'd normally trigger an attack of opportunity for striking the foe's equipment, but a foe armed with a ranged weapon doesn't threaten you.

This can be a very effective tactic against opponents armed with bows. A longbow, composite longbow, or heavy crossbow has an Armor Class of 14 (base 10, -1 for size, +5 for being a held object) plus the wielder's Dexterity bonus and whatever deflection bonus the wielder might have, which makes it a fairly easy target. A shortbow, short composite bow, light crossbow, or repeating crossbow has an Armor Class of 15, which is same as a longbow, but they have no size adjustment because these weapons are Medium-size. Bows have hardness 5 and 2 hit points (just like spears), crossbows are tougher

(hardness 10, 5 hit points). If you have multiple attacks, it's usually best to aim your attacks with the highest attack bonuses at the opponent and save your later attacks with lower attack bonuses for the weapon. Often, you'll have difficulty hitting the opponent with these attacks, but you'll find the weapon an easier target.

You also could do the following: Ready an action so that when the archer steps away from you, you make a partial charge against him or just a 5-foot step and an attack). When you've finished your attack, he's within your reach and you'll get an attack of opportunity against him if he tries to shoot. The higher level you are, however, the worse the trade-off between taking a single attack with a prepared action and taking the full attack action.

**Suppose there's a combat on a turret or parapet 5 feet above a lower turret or parapet. What happens when a character makes a 5-foot step off the upper turret, falling 5 feet? Is there an attack of opportunity in there somewhere? Can you withdraw and not take an attack of opportunity when vertical movement is involved? Or do you have to "jump" the equivalent of 10 feet to go 5 feet back and 5 feet down, thus making the movement more than 5 feet and provoking an attack of opportunity?**

I suppose you could call the movement you've described a 5-foot step. If the character in question was right at the edge of the drop-off, you could say that he's moving 1 diagonal to the lower surface. (The first diagonal you use during a move counts as 5 feet.) In this case the character could still attack or take another action and would not provoke an attack of opportunity when withdrawing, because when your only movement is a 5-foot step, that movement does not provoke an attack of opportunity. If there was a battlement or something that the character has to step over before dropping down, or if there is more than 5 feet of space between the character and the drop-off, then the move isn't just a 5-foot step. However, the character still can withdraw from the fight by doing nothing except moving. (In this case, jumping off the battlement is movement.) When all you do is move, the first 5-foot area you leave is not considered threatened.

**Is it possible to flank an opponent when you're using a reach weapon, such as a halberd, from more than 5 feet away? What about with ranged weapons?**

You can flank any opponent within melee reach, even if you use a reach weapon to put the foe within reach. If you're out of melee reach and you have a ranged weapon, you cannot flank an opponent.

**Since any giant is much larger than human (from 10 feet to 20 feet taller) and its base speed is higher, when a giant takes a "5-foot step" how far does it move?**

Five feet. When a creature takes a 5-foot step, it moves 5 feet, regardless of its size or speed, hence the maneuver's name.

**Given two rogues, one of whom has a reach weapon and is 10 feet away from an opponent, and the other of whom is in melee on the opposite side of the opponent, do both rogues qualify for sneak attacks due to flanking, or only the one with the reach weapon? What if one of the rogues is armed with a ranged weapon?**

You can get a flanking bonus—and provide an ally with a flanking bonus—with a reach weapon, but not with a ranged

weapon.

**Suppose an ally of mine is attacking one foe, then I somehow become invisible, draw my sword, and move to the other side of that foe, thus flanking the foe. Does my ally still get a flanking bonus even if I am invisible?**

You get a flanking bonus from any ally your foe can see (and who is in the correct position to flank). If your foe can't see you, you don't provide a flanking bonus to any ally.

Sharp readers will note that this means you cannot flank a blind creature; however, truly blind creatures are effectively flanked already (they can't use their Dexterity bonus to AC and you a +2 bonus to attack them). Creatures with the blindsight ability effectively "see" within blindsight range and can be flanked.

## Combat Modifiers

**I understand that if an opponent is grappled and pinned that opponent is not helpless and therefore not subject to a coup de grace. But if that same opponent was rendered unconscious, could you perform a coup de grace as an unarmed attack? If so, what would the damage be?**

You are correct, pinned characters are not helpless and are not subject to coup de grace. You can use an unarmed attack for a coup de grace. The target has to save as noted on page 133 of the *Player's Handbook*. Note that you can deal normal damage with an unarmed attack by taking a -4 penalty on the attack. (You automatically hit when you deal the coup de grace, so the penalty isn't relevant.) If you choose to deal real damage, you'll eventually kill a helpless foe even if the foe keeps making successful saving throws.

**Can you attack through an ally's square with a reach weapon? Would the target have cover? Could you hit your ally?**

You can attack through another creature's square with a reach weapon. It doesn't make a difference if it's an ally or foe. Your target gets cover from the intervening creature. If the intervening creature and the target are the same size, the target has 50% cover (+4 to AC) and is not subject to attacks of opportunity from you. If you miss, there is no chance that you will strike the intervening creature.

**My monk recently got lucky and dealt a stunning blow to a pesky displacer beast. On my next turn, I went into full coup de grace mode on the creature. My DM ruled that even though a coup de grace hits automatically, I still needed to roll to see if I hit the creature because its displacement was still in effect. Was that right?**

The DM is always right. Your DM, however, seems like a much more generous individual than I am. First, a stunning attack from a monk leaves the creature stunned for one round. By the time it was your turn again, the displacer beast wouldn't have been stunned anymore. Second, stunned creatures aren't helpless; they can't take any actions and they lose their Dexterity bonus to Armor Class (which makes them subject to sneak attacks), but they are not subject to coup de grace.

Finally, a coup de grace requires a fairly precise hit (that's why it takes a full-round action to do it), so I wouldn't allow a coup against any creature that has concealment or that imposes a miss chance on the attacker, just as with a sneak attack (see pages 47 and 48 in the *Player's Handbook*).

Your DM was completely right on one count: a live displacer beast is displaced, even if unconscious, otherwise helpless, or stunned.

**In my group, we have a ranger who sees himself as a bit of an archer—he has most of the ranged attack feats available. During our last game, he found an ally directly between himself and the target. He has the Precise Shot feat, so he ignores the –4 penalty for firing into melee. Does this also mean he can fire past his ally to hit his target with no penalties, or does his target get cover for being directly behind another combatant?**

Yes, an intervening creature between the defender and the attacker provides cover from a ranged attack. The Precise Shot feat eliminates the –4 penalty for firing into a melee, but it doesn't eliminate cover bonuses. A shooter without the Precise Shot feat would take the –4 penalty for firing into melee, and the target would get a cover bonus to Armor Class as well.

**Does any level of concealment prevent a rogue from using sneak attack, or does it have to be total concealment? Can the *true strike* spell negate that? What about miss chance that doesn't come from concealment, such as the 50% miss chance from the *blink* spell?**

If your opponent has enough concealment to impose a miss chance on you, you can't make sneak attacks against that opponent. If you somehow negate the opponent's miss chance for concealment, such as by using a *true strike* spell, you can sneak attack that opponent.

Miss chances that don't rely on concealment, such as the miss chance from the *blink* spell, don't prevent sneak attacks. Concealment negates sneak attacks by interfering with your ability to study the foe's anatomy and place an attack in precisely the right place. The *blink* spell does not interfere with your ability to make a precise attack, although it can foil your whole attack by whisking your foe out of harm's way before you can land a blow. Note that *true strike* doesn't negate the miss chance from a *blink* spell.

## Special Initiative Actions

**Is the refocus combat maneuver intended for the next combat round only? Do you reroll initiative the next round? I can see this being abused by most all character's who do not gain a very good initiative for the combat session—they can refocus and possibly win initiative for the rest of the combat.**

When you refocus, you spend your entire round refocusing; you cannot act or move. You can't even move except for a 5-foot step. You do not reroll initiative next round; your initiative is treated as though you've rolled a 20 on your initiative check. Though many people seem to think refocus is great option, it's seldom—if ever—worth doing.

**What's the use of the refocus action when you can ready an action and go at the highest person's initiative?**

If your initiative number is not the "highest" and you wind up holding a readied action until a person with a higher initiative number acts, you're effectively giving up your action so you can go earlier in a later round, which is pretty much the same as refocusing. In some rare instances, refocus could be better, because it can set your initiative number fairly high, and that could be an advantage if new foes enter the fight. In

general, you're right though. Refocus is mostly a "feel good" option, as in: "I've refocused and now look at what a *great* initiative number I have!"

In the game's cyclical initiative system, it's almost always to your advantage to act as soon as you can, and refocus actually delays your action by forcing it into the next round. Using delay or ready is just about always smarter than refocusing. About the only time refocus isn't a foolish thing to do is when you've got absolutely nothing useful to do anyway.

**Does someone who readies a weapon against a charge get his Strength modifier to attack and damage?**

Yes. Attacking a charging opponent with a readied weapon is a melee attack and all the rules for melee attacks apply.

**Can someone who has been tripped or is otherwise prone get an attack of opportunity if someone goes through his threatened area?**

Just being prone doesn't prevent you from threatening the area around you or making attacks of opportunity. Any attacks of opportunity a prone creature makes takes the –4 attack penalty for being prone.

**Can someone take an action and then instead of moving after the action go on the ready to move? A typical use for this would be the wizard who gets ready to run away after casting her spell if someone comes after her.**

You can ready any partial action. You can't take a standard action, such as casting a spell, and ready an action. (Readying is a standard action all by itself.) Note that you can take a move after any standard action, so you can cast a spell and move away. So, if you want to get out of Dodge after casting a spell, you've got to do it right after you finish the spell.

**Can you ready the coup de grace action?**

No. A coup de grace is a full round action and you can ready only partial actions.

**Is it possible to ready an action as follows: If the wizard casts a spell, I attack him; if he leaves, I follow. Or is that condition not specific enough?**

It's actually over specific, because you're really specifying two different conditions and two different actions here. The ready action allows you to specify one partial action and the condition under which you will perform the action. You could simply ready an attack on the wizard whenever he casts a spell, and this would allow you to do any number of things, including attack, take a 5-foot step and attack, or even make a partial charge and attack. In such a case, you would not get an attack of opportunity on the wizard when he cast the spell, but you would force a Concentration check if you damage the wizard.

## Special Attacks and Damage

**Can a creature with two natural weapons, say two claws, make two grapple attempts in a single round? Could a character using the rules for fighting with two weapons pull off the same trick? Exactly how many grapple checks can you make each round?**

You can make one grapple check for every attack your base attack bonus normally allows. The number of weapons you use

doesn't affect the number of grapple checks you can make. For example, a dire ape, an animal with 5 Hit Dice, has a base attack bonus of +3, so it can make only one grapple check each round despite its three natural weapons. Note that when you opt to deal damage with a grapple, you deal subdual damage according to your size, not your natural weapon. For example, a dire ape (a Large creature) deals 1d4 points of subdual damage with a successful grapple attack, plus its Strength bonus of +6. Note that creatures with the improved grab special attack can use their natural weapons in a grapple. Note also that monk characters deal their unarmed strike damage with successful grapple checks. Monks and creatures with improved grab are formidable grapplers.

The normal grappling rules assume that the attacker uses pretty much her whole body in the attack. (When you grapple, you wrap your arms and maybe your legs around the foe.) You can grapple while using a shield, but the shield's armor check penalty applies to your grapple check.

If the creature has the improved grab special attack, it can opt to use only one appendage to make a grapple attack, but it takes a -20 penalty on its grapple checks if it does so. A character also could use the -20 option, but as you point out, the character also would have to use the two-weapon fighting rules. See Table 8-2 in the *Player's Handbook*, and remember that a character's own hands are considered light weapons.

The two-weapon fighting penalties apply to both grab attempts and any grapple checks that occur after successful grabs. The -20 penalty applies only to grapple checks. For example, a character who has both the Two-Weapon Fighting and Ambidexterity feats would take a -2 penalty on each grab attempt and a -22 penalty on any grapple check she makes after a successful grab.

On her turn, the character can stop making separate grapple checks with each hand and instead use both hands on one opponent; if the character does so, neither the two-weapon penalties nor the -20 penalty apply to grapple checks she makes that turn.

**When grappling, is it possible to just pick up your opponent and carry him away? Do you always have to move into your opponent's space when grappling? Can you pull your opponent into your space instead?**

There's no rule covering moving your opponent during grappling, but it seems like a reasonable thing to try. Here's what I recommend:

Treat moving your opponent as another option you can use while you're grappling. If you choose this option, you must win an opposed grapple check to move your opponent. If you win the opposed check, you still have to be strong enough to drag the opponent's weight to move, and you move as though encumbered with a heavy load. For example, a human fighter has a Strength score of 17, and this character grapples an elf wizard who weighs 110 pounds and carries 18 pounds of equipment. The fighter can drag more than 1,000 pounds (see Table 9-1 in the *Player's Handbook* and the accompanying text), so he can easily drag the wizard.

When moving, you also can put your opponent into any space within your melee reach. So, for example, you could drag your opponent over to a pit and drop him in. You also could stay put and place your opponent in a space you can reach, but doing so is a move-equivalent action. When you're moving an opponent in this fashion, you're assumed to be holding onto your foe tightly and shuffling along, or rolling along the floor with your opponent held against your body.

If you and your opponent are moving together, your mutual movement provokes attacks of opportunity from foes who threaten you, but shifting your opponent from space to space while you stay put does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Since moving your opponent requires an attack action, you can move only once a round. Note that if you took a -20 penalty on your grapple check, you're literally holding your opponent in one hand. When you hold an opponent that way, you can move around freely, provided you're strong enough to actually carry the load.

If you're making a normal grapple attempt, the rules say you have to move into your opponent's space; however, you can use the rule described above to move your opponent out of the space you both occupy.

Here's another recommendation: If you're two or more size categories larger than an opponent you have grabbed, you can opt to pull the opponent into your space instead of entering the opponent's space. Yanking your opponent into your space doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity against your opponent.

**When two opponents are grappling and occupying the same square, what happens if a character attacks one of the grapplers? Is the roll subject to any chances of hitting either grappler, as is the case of attacking character in the middle of a bull rush? Nothing is clearly stated on the subject and any information you may give would be greatly appreciated.**

There currently is no chance to strike the wrong target when you attack someone involved in a grapple. Many DMs I know give you an equal chance to strike any of the creatures involved in a grapple whenever you strike at grapplers. (For example, if there are two grapplers, you have a 50% chance to strike one or the other). If one grappler is of sufficient size, you can attack a part of that grapple that is at least 10 feet from where the grappling is actually taking place without any chance of striking the wrong target, just as you can shoot 10 feet away from a melee to avoid the attack penalty for shooting into a melee.

**If two characters are engaged in a grapple and the attacker fails his opposed grapple check against the defender, what happens? Does the grapple simply continue, with the defender unable to respond because it is not his turn? Or does the defender escape when the attacker fails his grapple check?**

Once a grappler establishes a hold, he maintains the hold until he releases the defender or until the defender escapes. The attacker must move into defender's space to establish or maintain the hold.

When it's not the defender's turn, the defender can't do anything to affect the attacker or to escape from the grapple, although the defender probably will make some opposed grapple checks to resolve the attacker's grappling actions.

**Will a character ever die from environmental effects such as heat, cold, starvation, or suffocation? These effects deal only subdual damage.**

Once a creature is rendered unconscious by an environmental effect, that effect begins dealing normal damage instead of subdual damage. The *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* includes this rule for heat and cold (see page 86), but it also applies to thirst, starvation, suffocation, and smoke inhalation.

**What are the effects of fighting underwater?**

Here are some rules Jonathan Tweet and I cooked up.

If you don't have a swimming speed (or a *freedom of movement* effect), you take a -2 penalty on attacks and damage when underwater. Any slashing weapon, blunt weapon, claw attack, or tail attack also deals half damage. (Subtract the 2 points first, then take half of the rest and round down.) Remember that a successful hit still deals at least 1 point of damage.

Even if you have a swimming speed, you deal half damage with slashing or blunt weapons (but not claws) unless you have a *freedom of movement* effect.

**Does a stunned character always drop anything he is holding?**

Yes, stunned creatures drop what they're holding, as noted in the *Player's Handbook* glossary (page 282).

**The introduction to the *Monster Manual* says a creature with the improved grab ability can take a -20 penalty on grappling checks to avoid being treated as grappled and so keep its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class and continue to threaten the area around it, among other benefits. How long does the -20 penalty last? And how long is the creature not considered grappled?**

Any creature can opt to take -20 on a grapple check to avoid the more unpleasant aspects of grappling (such as losing your Dexterity bonus and being subject to sneak attacks from rogues), not just creatures with the improved grab ability.

Once you decide to take the -20 penalty, the penalty applies to all grapple checks you make until your next turn. Should you succeed at a grapple check and actually establish a hold on an opponent despite the penalty, you are not considered grappled. (If you fail to establish a hold, you wouldn't be grappling in any case, unless someone grabbed and held you.) On your next turn, you can stop taking the -20 penalty (which could help you maintain your hold or pin your opponent), but if you do, you are considered grappled until it's your turn again, at which point you can either let go or start taking the penalty again.

**Exactly how and when does a creature with the improved grab ability deal damage to an opponent? The material at the beginning of the *Monster Manual* doesn't seem to match the material in the various monster descriptions. How does the constrict ability affect a creature's ability to deal damage while grappling?**

Improved grab lets you attempt to grapple a foe after you have made a successful melee attack with a natural weapon, which is usually either a claw or a tentacle. (The creature description says which natural weapon can be used for improved grabs.) On the first round of grappling, the grabbing creature deals damage normally with a successful melee hit. If the creature then decides to grab and it wins the ensuing grapple check (see page 137 in the *Player's Handbook* for the grappling procedure), it deals no extra damage unless it also has the constrict ability. If it can constrict, it deals constriction damage when it wins the grapple check.

If the creature begins its turn with an opponent in its grasp, the creature can just hold on or it can attempt another grappling check. If it elects to grapple again and it succeeds, the natural weapon the attacker used in the improved grab deals normal damage on the opponent. If the attacker also has the constriction ability, it deals constriction damage in addition to natural weapon damage.

**How does the swallow whole ability work? Can a creature with this ability try to swallow someone immediately after biting? The *Monster Manual* says a swallowed creature can cut its way out with a Tiny or Small slashing weapon. What happens if the creature is Large? Can it use a bigger weapon? A short sword is a piercing weapon, but it is a sword. Can you cut your way out with a short sword?**

A creature with the swallow whole ability must first grab a foe with its mouth. On the first round it bites and deals bite damage, then tries to grab its prey as noted in the answer to the previous question. On the creature's next turn, it can attempt to grapple again. If it succeeds, it deals bite damage and swallows the foe.

Being swallowed has various consequences, depending on the creature doing the swallowing, but a swallowed creature is considered grappled, while the creature that did the swallowing is not. A swallowed creature can try to cut its way free with any light piercing or slashing weapon, or it can just try to escape the grapple. If the swallowed creature chooses the latter course, success puts it back in the attacker's mouth, where it may be bitten or swallowed again.

**On page 77 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, it says that each character within range of a gaze attack must attempt a saving throw each round at the beginning of his turn to avoid the gaze. In the *Monster Manual* on pages 8-9, it says that each opponent within range of a gaze attack must attempt a saving throw at the beginning of his turn to avoid the gaze. Are allies of a creature with a gaze attack affected by the gaze attack? Logically, allies don't have to look at each other to fight, but what if they're flanking? Also, if a creature decided to avert its eyes to avoid a gaze attack (thus having a 50% chance to avoid having to make a saving throw at the beginning of its turn), does the creature with the gaze attack get any benefit?**

Each creature (not just foes) within range of a gaze attack has a chance to be affected at the beginning of its turn. Note that allies of the creature with the gaze attack usually can look away from the creature. These allies, however, cannot then see the creature with the gaze attack, and that could make life pretty complicated for them in some cases. If the allies want to gain a flanking bonus from the creature with the gaze attack, it's perfectly reasonable to assume that the best these allies can do is avert their eyes. (This grants a 50% chance to avoid risking a saving throw.)

In any case, when you avert your eyes from a gaze attack, the creature with the gaze attack gains one-half concealment against you, and your attacks against the creature have a 20% miss chance (see Concealment Miss Chance on page 133 of the *Player's Handbook*).

**When rolling opposed attack rolls (such as in a grapple or a disarm attempt), does a natural 1 mean automatic failure as it does for a normal attack roll?**

For the attacker (that is, the character trying to disarm a foe or accomplish something with a grapple check) a natural 1 fails and a natural 20 succeeds, no matter what the defender rolls. Although the defender's roll is called an "opposed attack roll," the defender is really just setting the DC for the attacker: 1s and 20s aren't special for the defender. Just apply the defender's modifiers to set the DC for the attacker. If both the attacker and the defender roll a 1, the attacker fails. If both the attacker and the defender roll a 20, the attacker succeeds. Note that you

cannot get a hold on a foe two or more sizes larger than you (see page 137 in the *Player's Handbook*).

All of the foregoing assumes that you are indeed making an opposed attack roll, which is subject to automatic success or failure. Checks are not subject to automatic success or failure. For example, if you are making an opposed check (as you would when making a Hide check opposed by a foe's Spot check), a roll of 1 or 20 has no special significance.

**On a normal disarm attempt, you and the target make opposed checks using a melee attack. But what if you're trying to knock a wand out of a wizard's hand? Would the wizard make a roll using only her Dexterity modifier?**

Use opposed attack rolls for any disarm attempts. (The better you are at combat, the harder it is to take things away from you.)

If the target of the disarm is not a weapon, and the target is something that the defender has in hand or carries on a belt or other fairly accessible place, the attacker makes an attack roll against the item first. (A normal disarm attempt against a weapon doesn't require an initial attack roll, but that is because the weapon is assumed to be in use and pretty easy to strike.) Use the rules for attacking inanimate objects on page 135 of the *Player's Handbook*. The item's Armor Class depends on its size, as shown on Table 8-11; remember that a held, worn, or carried object uses the wielder's Dexterity modifier to Armor Class (instead of its own -5 penalty) and gains the benefit of any deflection bonus to Armor Class that the wielder has.

If the initial attack strikes the object, make an opposed attack roll to see if the defender drops the item.

If the item being worn is particularly well secured to the defender's body (such as a ring), an attacker probably can't knock it loose with a melee attack. In this case, you have to attempt a grapple and take the item. Use the normal grappling procedure. If you start a round and have your opponent pinned (see page 137 in the *Player's Handbook*) you can then attempt a grapple check to take any item the opponent wears or carries. The item's size modifier to Armor Class (from Table 8-11 in the *Player's Handbook*) applies as a modifier to your opponent's opposed roll. If you win the opposed roll, you take the item from the opponent. You can't take away an item this way unless the opponent wears or carries it someplace where you can reach it. For example, you cannot dig an item out of the bottom of a foe's pack. You can, however, yank off the opponent's pack and then search it.

**Suppose a character makes a trip attempt against a foe who is flat-footed. Now, the foe loses her Dexterity modifier against the melee touch attack that the attacker makes as part of the trip attack, but does she also lose her Strength modifier when resolving the trip attempt (assuming that the melee touch attack succeeds)? Normally, one can resist a trip attempt with either a Strength or Dexterity check. Is using Dexterity an option if you're caught flat-footed? Similar questions arise when trying to grapple, bull rush, and disarm flat-footed opponents.**

Being flat-footed negates your Dexterity bonus to Armor Class, but it does not affect your ability to make opposed rolls. Your ability to react to danger is somewhat compromised when flat-footed, but only slightly. For example, you become subject

to sneak attacks, but you make saving throws (even Reflex saving throws) normally.

If you're caught flat-footed and an opponent attempts to trip you, you lose your Dexterity bonus (assuming you have one) to Armor Class against the initial touch attack, but you make the ensuing opposed roll normally. You still can use either Dexterity or Strength for your opposed roll. (The attacker always uses Strength.)

The same is true for grappling: You lose your Dexterity bonus against the grab, but you make a normal opposed roll against the hold.

Bull rushing and disarming don't require initial attack rolls against the targets, so it isn't any easier to carry out these actions against flat-footed opponents than it is against more active foes.

**I know that you can't cast spells that require somatic or material components while you're being grappled. Suppose I have the Still Spell feat, or I'm casting a spell that has only a verbal component, and I cast a spell while being grappled. Does the opponent who is grappling me get an attack of opportunity against me when I cast the spell? Do I provoke an attack of opportunity from a nongrappling enemy in a square next to me (say the grappler's buddy, who is standing by to prevent just such a thing)? How many Concentration checks do I have to make to pull off this action?**

Actually, you can cast a spell with a material component while you're being grappled or pinned; you just have to have the material component in hand before you cast the spell (see page 137 in the *Player's Handbook*). Under normal circumstances, you can get a material component out of a pocket or a spell component pouch as part of your spellcasting action. To have a component in your hand when being grappled or pinned, you either must have previously told the DM that you were holding the component, or you have to take an action to retrieve the component. This is similar to retrieving a stored item, but it is a full-round action when you're grappled. It provokes an attack of opportunity (but see below), and it's not possible if you're pinned.

When you cast the spell (or retrieve the necessary component), you provoke an attack of opportunity, but not from the foe who is grappling you. When you're involved in a grapple, you don't threaten any area (see page 138 in the *Player's Handbook*). Any foes who threaten you while you're being grappled (such as an enemy standing apart from the grapple) make attacks of opportunity normally against you.

In this situation, you need to make a Concentration check with a DC of 20 + the spell level to cast a spell while grappled, and possibly a second check with a DC of 10 + spell level + the damage dealt if your grappler's ally hits you with an attack of opportunity. Make one check and apply the roll to both DCs. If you aren't successful with both checks, you lose the spell. You can attempt to cast defensively in this situation; if you do, you also make one check and compare the result to the defensive casting (DC 15 + spell level) and the DC for casting while grappling (DC 20 + spell level).

# Spells

Questions about spells in general come first in the Spells section. After that comes questions organized alphabetically by the single spell that each question covers.

## General Spell Questions

**Can anyone see the auras revealed by a detection spell? Or does only the spellcaster see the aura? Also, how do I use the information about the length of an aura, which is given in units of time depending on the strength? If the spell has a duration, how do these time periods, which are mostly longer than the duration, fit in?**

Only the caster of a detection spell sees the auras the spell reveals.

The second half of your question seems to be about the length of time an aura lingers. This refers to magical effects whose durations have run out.

Once an effect's duration ends, it leaves a lingering aura behind. The length of time an aura lingers depends on the original effect's strength, as shown in the description for whatever detection spell you're using. For example, a *fireball* is a 3rd-level spell with an instantaneous duration. A *fireball* spell has a faint magical aura that lasts for an instant; thereafter, the aura lingers of 1d6 minutes, leaving a dim magical aura throughout the area the *fireball* spell affected. Note that all lingering auras have dim strength.

**Suppose a spellcaster has a very high ability score and is entitled to bonus spells of levels that are too high for the character to cast. Are these spells available for use with lower-level spells? Are they available for metamagiced spells? For example, could a 4th-level wizard with an 18 Intelligence score use her 3rd-level bonus slot to cast *magic missile* with both *Silent Spell* and *Still Spell* feats?**

No. You can't use a bonus spell slot until you are of sufficient level to use spells of that spell level (see *Abilities and Spellcasters*, pages 7 and 8 in the *Player's Handbook*).

**The *Player's Handbook* says that a cleric prepares one or the other of the two domain spells available to the character at each level each day. This implies that the cleric cannot prepare a lower-level domain spell in a higher-level slot. It also implies that a cleric cannot use metamagic feats on a domain spell since that would require a higher-level slot. Wizards who have specialized in a school of magic would seem to face a similar restriction. Is that what was intended?**

No, that's not what was intended, though the wording of the rules certainly implies that is the case. Each domain slot can hold a spell only from one of the cleric's domains, but a cleric can use metamagic on domain spells (which makes them fill higher-level slots), or the cleric can simply prepare a domain spell in a higher-level domain slot.

Specialist wizards can likewise fill their bonus spell slots with lower-level spells or with metamagiced spells, provided the spells are from the wizard's specialty school.

**Does a sorcerer need spell components?**

Yes. When casting a spell, a sorcerer uses the same

components (verbal, somatic, and material) that a wizard uses.

**Can a spellcaster, arcane or divine, cast a spell requiring somatic or material components if he has a weapon in one hand and a buckler in the other? A small shield? A large shield?**

No in all cases. You must have at least one free hand to use a somatic component (see page 151 in the *Player's Handbook*). You could drop the weapon (or the buckler or shield) as a free action and then cast the spell.

**Many cleric spells have both a somatic component and a divine focus. With a somatic component you must have a free hand to cast, but what about a spell with a divine focus? Do you need to have a divine focus in your hand to cast spells? Could a divine focus be worn around you neck? Or do clerics just need both hands to cast spells?**

Any character needs one free hand to cast a spell with a somatic component, no matter what other components the spell has. In the case of a divine focus, it is sufficient to simply wear the focus (usually a holy symbol). Other kinds of focus components are manipulated during spellcasting along with any material components the spell has, or they are simply carried on the caster's person.

**Is it possible to use the "take 10" rule when copying a spell from a scroll into a spellbook? My friends say no because the rules specify that if you fail your Spellcraft check, you cannot retry copying the spell into your spellbook until you gain a rank in the Spellcraft skill. Thus, they say that taking 10 does not apply because it is the equivalent of rolling ten times.**

Yes, you can take 10 on the Spellcraft check when copying a spell from any source into a spellbook. Your friends seem to be confusing the "take 10" rule with the "take 20" rule. Taking 20 is the equivalent of rolling twenty times—that's why taking 20 uses up more time the making a regular check. You cannot take 20 on the Spellcraft check to add a spell to a spellbook because there is a consequence for failure (namely, having to wait until you gain a Spellcraft rank before trying again).

Taking 10 just means you're being careful; it doesn't take extra time. Note that you cannot take 10 if you are rushed or distracted in any way, but then if you were rushed or distracted you couldn't copy a spell into a spellbook, either.

**Does a spellcaster who has a base attack of +6/+1 or better get to cast 2 one-action spells each round?**

No, casting a one-action spell is a standard action, not an attack (see page 125 in the *Player's Handbook*). That's true even if the spell in question requires an attack roll. There are times when you can cast more than one spell in round, such as when you're using the *haste* spell or the *Quicken Spell* feat, but those have nothing to do with your attack bonus.

**Monks and members of several prestige classes, such as the divine disciple from the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*, eventually become outsiders if they gain enough class levels. How are these characters affected by spells like *dismissal* and *banishment*?**

*Dismissal* and *banishment* affect extraplanar creatures, not

outsiders. Those spells affect outsider monks and outsider divine disciples only if the monks or divine disciples aren't on their home plane when they're subjected to the spells. If they're on their home planes, you can't even target them with either spell (see each spell's Target entry).

**Let's say my party goes plane hopping. When we're visiting another plane, are we considered outsiders and vulnerable to *protection from evil*, *banishment*, and other spells that affect outsiders? What if we visit an entirely different cosmology?**

Just for the record, neither of the spells you mentioned has any special effect on outsiders. *Protection from evil* grants Armor Class and saving throw bonuses against assaults from evil creatures, blocks mental control, and prevents bodily contact by conjured or summoned creatures—except good elementals and outsiders. As noted in a previous question, *banishment* affects extraplanar creatures, which might or might not be outsiders.

In any case, traveling the planes doesn't change your creature type, even if you leave your home cosmology and enter a different one. Once you leave your home plane, however, you are extraplanar. A spell such as *dismissal* or *banishment* will send you back to your home plane (or another plane 20% of the time).

**The descriptions of the spells *blasphemy*, *holy word*, *word of law*, and *word of chaos* say that if you are on your home plane, casting one of these spells banishes those not of your plane back to their home planes, and creatures native to your plane (with an alignment opposed to the spell) suffer various ill effects. Several evil outsiders have this spell-like ability. How does this spell-like ability work for an outsider on the Prime Material Plane, which is not its home plane. Conversely, when these outsiders are on their home planes, how are these spells useful? For example, what use is *word of law* to a devil on Baator, where just about everything is lawful evil?**

If the subjects of any of these spells are not extraplanar elementals or outsiders, they suffer effects according to their alignments and Hit Dice. In spite of what the beginning of the third paragraph in each spell's description says, you don't have to be native to the caster's home plane to be affected.

If the spell's subjects are extraplanar elementals or outsiders, and the caster is on his or her home plane, the spell blasts the subjects back to their home planes. These creatures also suffer effects according to their alignments and Hit Dice. Being returned to their home plane is an additional effect, not an alternate effect, as the spells' descriptions imply.

**The *Manual of the Planes* contains the spell *seal portal*, which seems to be almost identical to the spell *gate seal* that was presented in *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*. *Seal portal* is listed as being available only to sorcerer and wizards as a 6th-level spell, while *gate seal* is listed as a 6th-level spell for bards, clerics, druids, sorcerer, and wizards. Is this a misprint or am I missing a fundamental difference between the two spells besides the name?**

You haven't missed anything, and there's no misprint, either. Both spells are fundamentally the same. However, the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting* is rife with portals, and spellcasters of all stripes have to be able to deal with them. Because portals are rarer in the Great Wheel cosmology, portal sealing spells are rarer. If you are using both the *FORGOTTEN*

*REALMS Campaign Setting* and the *Manual of the Planes*, use the *FORGOTTEN REALMS* description and the *Manual of the Planes* name.

**I play a divine spellcaster and I generally leave a spell slot open. I'm concerned about whether I am following the rules correctly. After reading the *Player's Handbook*, I have assumed that divine casters can leave slots open; although, they must still perform the daily prayer session to prepare any spells that day. However, I can understand the argument that all spells must be prepared at the daily prayer session, and no slots can be left open. Page 156 of the *Player's Handbook* says a divine caster's mind is considered fresh only during his first daily spell preparation, so he cannot fill a slot that is empty because he has cast a spell or abandoned a previously prepared spell. I'm a little confused by this statement.**

A divine spellcaster does not have to prepare all his spells at once (see page 156 in the *Player's Handbook*). This means you can leave slots open.

The text you've quoted merely points out that you can replace spells you have cast or can switch prepared (but uncast) spells for other prepared spells when your mind is fresh (and only then). If you've left open slots, you can fill them in 15 minutes, even when your mind is not fresh. Arcane casters have the same rule (see page 154 of the *Player's Handbook*).

**Can a monster's spell-like ability counterspell a character's spell?**

A spell-like ability cannot be counterspelled, nor can it be used as a counterspell.

**Is a spellcaster who is protected by a spell turning effect safe from the counterspell action? What effect does the turned portion of a counterspell have on the character who cast the counterspell?**

A spellcaster protected by a spell turning effect is not entirely safe from counterspells. By definition, a counterspell is targeted on the caster, so a spell turning effect can turn the counterspell. If the whole counterspell is turned, the counterspell fails. If the counterspell is only partially turned, there's a chance equal to the unturned portion of the spell that the counterspell works. For example, if you turn 2 levels of a 6th-level counterspell, there's a 4-in-6 chance the counterspell works anyway.

The turned portion of a counterspell has no effect on the caster of the counterspell. A counterspell is altered slightly to create the counterspell effect, and it cannot produce anything but a counterspell effect.

**Can a monk or other character use an unarmed strike to deliver a spell with touch range? If so, how do you resolve the attack?**

Yes, you can use an unarmed strike to deliver a touch spell. Since casting a spell is a standard action, you usually have to wait until your next turn to make the unarmed attack. Resolve the unarmed attack exactly the same way you resolve any other unarmed strike. The attacker has to beat the defender's Armor Class with all adjustments, including armor and shield, added in. (The attacker is trying to land a damaging blow, not just touch the opponent.) If the attacker doesn't have the Improved Unarmed Strike feat, the attack draws an attack of opportunity. (Striking for damage exposes the attacker to more risk than merely touching the opponent to deliver a spell.) If the attack is



a hit, the attacker deals unarmed damage and discharges the spell. If the attack is a miss, the attacker is still holding the charge.

**Can a creature with a gaze attack—say, for purposes of discussion, a medusa—use its gaze attack when under the influence of a *change self* spell? *Alter self*? (The answer is obviously “no” when polymorphed, as the gaze is a supernatural ability.)**

*Change self* and *alter self* do not prevent the use of supernatural abilities. Nevertheless, glamers can disrupt gaze attacks. You’ve got to be able to see a medusa’s eyes or face to be subject to its gaze. An invisible medusa can’t petrify you, and neither can a medusa who has assumed a form that’s no longer recognizable as a medusa. Of course, if the medusa assumes a form that has a gaze attack of its own, the gaze still works. (A medusa masquerading as a basilisk can still petrify you.) You are correct about a polymorphed medusa; polymorphed creatures cannot use their supernatural abilities.

**When a spell description, such as *divine favor* or *greater magic weapon*, says the spell gives a bonus for every 3 levels (or some other number of levels), do you round up or down? For example, *divine favor* gives a +1 luck bonus per 3 caster levels; do you get +2 at caster level 4 or caster level 6?**

If a spell gives a bonus per X caster levels, divide the caster’s level by X and round down to determine the bonus. (You always round down in the D&D® game unless you’re specifically told to round up.) You’d have to be a 6th-level caster to get a +2 bonus from *divine favor*. (Note that the spell always gives a bonus of at least +1.)

**Since spellcasters can now cast a critical spell with all touch and rays that cause damage, what about *Melf’s acid arrow*? Assuming that you cause a critical, does the spell cause 4d4 every round or only on the first round? What about rays that cause ability damage, such as *ray of enfeeblement*? Can you roll a critical with that spell, as well, and thus cause the target to lose a whole pile of Strength? Can I take the Improved Critical feat for touch attacks or ranged touch attacks and expand my critical range for such spells?**

If you score a critical hit with *Melf’s acid arrow*, only the initial damage gets boosted with a critical hit. So, the critical hit deals 4d4 points of damage, and the acid deals 2d4 points each subsequent round (while the acid lasts). A spell must require an attack roll and deal damage to score a critical hit. The *ray of enfeeblement* imposes a Strength penalty; it does not deal damage, so it cannot cause a critical hit.

You can use combat-enhancing feats on spells. You must apply these feats to one of the following categories of spells: ray (spells that deal damage and produce ray effects), energy missile (spells such as *Melf’s acid arrow*), or touch spell (any damage-dealing spell that has a range of touch).

See Chapter 2 and Chapter 5 of *Tome and Blood* for more information on weaponlike spells.

**Is it correct that all cones are as wide at any point as they are long at that point?**

Absolutely. This makes cones much easier to adjudicate in play.

**Are bonus spells for high ability scores cumulative in**

**D&D as they were in the AD&D game?**

No, each line on Table 2–1 gives you the all bonus spells you get for a particular ability score.

**On page 148 of the *Player’s Handbook* under Casting Time, it says you must make all pertinent decisions about a spell (range, target, area, effect, version, and so on) when you begin casting. However, on the same page under Aiming a Spell it says you do not have to select your target until the moment you finish casting the spell. Which is it?**

You have to make all the decisions required to complete the spell when you begin the spell, just as noted under the Casting Time heading—except the spell’s target. The process is analogous to loading a gun. You have to decide what kind of ammunition to load before you can aim and pull the trigger, but you don’t have to pick a target until you’re ready to pull the trigger.

**The *Player’s Handbook* says a spell’s range is the maximum distance from the caster that the spell’s effect can occur. It also says that if any portion of the spell’s area would extend beyond the range, that area is wasted. Does that mean that if a character casts a *fireball* so that its point of origin is at the spell’s maximum range, the area that would be affected by the *fireball* would be only the hemisphere from the point of origin back toward the caster? Would half the spell’s volume be wasted?**

Yes, part the *fireball* is wasted. No portion of the *fireball*’s spread can be out of the spell’s range. You can’t squeeze a few extra feet of range out of a spell by placing the spell’s point of origin at maximum range. Note that this is a departure from the way previous editions of the game did things.

**Many spells in the *Player’s Handbook* list areas of effect by saying something like one target per level, no two of which can be more than X feet apart. What exactly does this mean? The description of the *mass invisibility* spell really confuses me. This spell says there can be no less than 180 feet between any target and the nearest other target. That makes the spell’s area of effect potentially very large.**

When a spell has a target entry that says no two targets can be more than X feet apart, it means no more than X feet can separate any two targets. (All the targets also must be within range.) For example, the *magic missile* spell has a target entry that says the spell affects up to 5 creatures, no two of which can be more than 15 feet apart. That means that no more than 15 feet can separate any two creatures affected by the spell. It might be helpful to think of a sphere with a diameter (not a radius) equal to the listed distance. For example, all creatures targeted by a *magic missile* must fit within a sphere with a diameter of 15 feet or less. The rules don’t describe spells like *magic missile* this way because that tends to make people think of it as an area spell rather than a targeted spell. (The design team learned this the hard way during playtesting.)

In any case, the *mass invisibility* spell has a target entry and a special condition for maintaining the spell’s effect once a target has received the spell. These two things seem to be confusing you. When the spell is cast, no two targets can more than 180 feet apart. Once you have received the spell, however, you must remain within 180 feet of some other spell recipient or you break the effect for yourself (any other recipient, not the most distant other recipient); this allows all the spell’s recipients to spread out after receiving the spell.

When an opposite spell is used to negate an effect that is already in place (such as using *slow* spell to counter and dispel a *haste* spell), is the success of the dispel automatic, or is a level check required? Does the subject or the caster of the spell being countered and dispelled get a saving throw?

Two opposite spells simply negate each other. No dispel check is required, no saving throw is allowed, and spell resistance does not apply.

If a character encounters a figment (Illusion) of a monster and decides to attack, what are the odds of a character striking the figment? I realize that according to the new rules for figments, if the character strikes an illusory creature, and the spellcaster does not cause the creature to react in an appropriate manner, the character will realize the monster is an illusion (incontrovertible evidence). However, what does the character need to roll on attack dice to hit the illusion in the first place? In addition, during this fake-combat, how many disbelief rolls will the character get, anyway?

Since the creature isn't real, the attack roll is irrelevant. If you want to make an attack roll anyway, give the figment an Armor Class of 10, adjusted for size. After each attack, allow a save for disbelief whether the character hits or not. The very act of attacking means the character is interacting with the illusion. A hit will not necessarily lead to automatic disbelief if the caster is around to make the illusory creature react. The caster could, for example make the illusion roll with a blow and emerge with a mere nick, or even without scratch.

Do you need to see the target of spells such as *chain lightning*, *fireball*, and *blade barrier*? Could you target people inside a *fog cloud*, *obscuring mist*, or *deeper darkness* area without being able to see them?

If the spell has a Target entry, you must be able to see or touch the subject to use the spell. The *chain lightning* spell has a Target entry, so you must be able to see or touch your target to use the spell. If a spell has an Area or Effect entry (*fireball* has an Area entry; *blade barrier* has an Effect entry) instead of a Target, you don't actually have to see your subjects. You can simply state where the effect or area will originate and any subject you happen to catch within the effect or area will be affected by the spell. If you can't see the point where the area or effect will originate, you must specify exactly where that point lies. For example, you can say your *fireball* spell will detonate exactly 30 feet away from you at the height of your shoulder. You need an unobstructed line of effect between you and the point of origin you specify (see page 150 in the *Player's Handbook*).

If the spell has an Effect entry and normally requires an attack roll against a specific target, you still can hit an unseen target, provided you have an unobstructed line of effect. To strike the unseen target, use the rules for attacking an invisible target. That is, to have any chance of success, you must select a particular 5-foot-square area to attack. If the area you select does not contain a subject, you miss with the spell. If the area you've selected does contain a subject, you still have a 50% chance to miss the subject. If you beat the miss chance, you can roll a normal attack against the subject and the subject is affected by the spell if you hit. See page 78 in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide* for more details on the procedures for attacking invisible foes.

On page 149 of the *Player's Handbook*, the diagram and accompanying notes indicate that Mialee can't target creature #1 because she does not have a line of effect. The diagram seems to indicate that Mialee can't target the creature because it's under partial cover (50%, it appears) from a wall. So, does the same apply to a bugbear standing behind a small stalagmite (to its knees), for 25% cover?

Cover of less than 100% does not block line effect. Look at the diagram on page 149 again. Creature #1 doesn't have 50% cover from Mialee, it has 100% cover. Even though the disk sticks out a little, the creature isn't really that big. Mialee can't cast a spell at the creature, and she cannot fire an arrow. If Mialee was standing 5 feet farther to the right, the creature would have only 50% cover, and Mialee could attack with an arrow at a penalty or with a *magic missile* at no penalty at all.

Suppose a character is in the back of a party and decides to target an enemy with a spell. There are several allies and enemies between the spellcaster and the target. Does the caster have a clear line of effect to the target?

Creatures don't block line of effect. They do provide cover, so they can interfere with rays and other spells that require attack rolls.

The descriptions for spells such as *summon monster* or *summon nature's ally* say the summoned creature disappears at the end of the spell's duration. What if a druid cast *summon nature's ally*, then cast *animal friendship* on it and befriended it? It would still disappear, right, but would it attempt to find the druid? Is there an unstated range from which the spell draws the creature?

Summoned creatures aren't really present; they dissolve at their original location, appear where summoned, then reform at their original location after the spell ends (see page 157 in the *Player's Handbook*). If slain while summoned, it takes them a day to reform. In any case, they suffer no lasting effects (for good or for ill) from any summoning episode. If a character uses a *summon nature's ally* spell to summon an animal, the caster could indeed cast an *animal friendship* spell on it. When the *summon nature's ally* spell ends, however, the animal is gone, and it is no longer affected by the *animal friendship* spell. The animal's Hit Dice also no longer count against the limited number of Hit Dice the caster can affect through *animal friendship*.

What happens when a character targets a polymorphed creature with scrying? Suppose someone kills someone else and assumes the victim's form with a *polymorph self* spell. A character then uses scrying to find the victim. Does the scrying show an image of the victim (unknown to the scryer that it is really an imposter), or does it come up with nothing? What if that same person scryed for the imposter? Would it show the imposter in his assumed form?

Being polymorphed doesn't change your identity—you're still you. Scrying effects tuned to your own identity can still locate you. They also can locate you when they're keyed to assumed identity, too, depending on the scrying character's knowledge of you.

In the example situation, a scrying attempt directed at finding the imposter in his true identity will reveal the imposter in his assumed form. Someone scrying for the victim would locate the victim's dead body. Someone who knows the imposter only in his assumed identity can scry for him and locate him in that identity.

Note that the difficulty of a scrying check depends on how well the scrying character knows the subject. If you know the subject only in an assumed identify, you can claim firsthand knowledge of the subject at best, so your scrying check will have a DC of at least 10 (see page 247 in the *Player's Handbook*).

**I just noticed that my *Monster Manual* says slain outsiders cannot be raised or resurrected by anything short of a *wish* or *miracle* spell. However, among the various spell descriptions, only the *raise dead* spell has specific prohibitions on which types of creatures it can be used upon. The others (*resurrection*, *true resurrection*) say the spells can restore life and complete strength to any deceased creature—except that the creature cannot have died of old age. Which of these is correct? For instance, could a 20th-level monk (with the perfect self ability) be resurrected, or would a *wish* be necessary?**

Constructs, outsiders, and elementals cannot be raised or resurrected. Undead cannot be raised, but they can be resurrected if they're willing to return to life. The words "any deceased creature" in the *resurrection* and *true resurrection* spell descriptions are incorrect. High-level monks can be raised or resurrected, however. They get an exception because they start life as mortals.

**I've heard some people insist that spells such as *cure light wounds* or *fly* are effective on only one friend, even if the caster is holding the charge. On page 151 in the *Player's Handbook*, it says that a touch spell can be used on up to six friends as a full-round action. Doesn't this mean that a single touch spell can have up to six recipients?**

It depends on what the spell's Target entry says. The Target entries for both *cure light wounds* and *fly* say "creature touched." Touching one creature completely discharges either of these spells.

You can indeed hold the charge on a spell with a touch range and touch up to six friends as a full-round action. Doing so doesn't accomplish anything, unless you have a spell that only partially discharges with a single touch. For example, the *water breathing* spell's Target entry reads "living creatures touched." As noted in the spell's description, you can divide the spell's duration among multiple recipients. To do so, you'd use the rule on page 151 in the *Player's Handbook*, and you could divide up the duration among up to six friends.

**What happens to a ray effect when it misses? Is there a chance that the ray will hit something else? Do you have to see your target to make a ray attack, or can you fire blindly at an invisible target or at one concealed in fog or darkness?**

You make a ranged attack roll when you use a ray. What happens to a ray that misses depends on why it misses. If you shoot a ray effect and simply fail the attack roll, the ray does not hit a thing. You cannot, for example, accidentally blow a hole in the ceiling if you miss with a *disintegrate* spell.

A ray (or other spell that uses a ranged attack roll) follows all the rules that govern ranged attacks, including the rule that says you can strike cover instead of a missed target (see page 133 in the *Player's Handbook*). Note that this rule applies only when your target has cover and you miss the target because of that cover. Even though you won't accidentally blow a hole in the ceiling when you miss with a *disintegrate* spell, you might accidentally blow a hole in whatever your target might be

trying to use for cover.

You can indeed shoot a ray or other ranged touch spell blindly. You pick a space to attack, just as if you were attacking an invisible creature (see pages 78–79 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*). Anything in that space has total concealment. If the effect misses—either because you fail the miss chance or because you fail the attack roll—the effect hits nothing. The ray or other effect dissipates harmlessly somewhere in the space where you directed the ray. Note that very large targets might not get the full benefit of total concealment, as noted in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*.

**Do the miss chances for *blink* and *displacement* stack? I know that two bonuses of the same type rarely stack; however, the *blink* spell description says the spell provides a 50% miss chance because the target might not be physically present when the attack strikes. *Displacement* has the same 50% miss chance; however the miss chance is based on the premise that the target is a short distance from where it appears to be. So, if a target is attacked when under the effects of *blink* and *displacement*, would the DM need to resolve both of the miss chances provided by each of the spells?**

While it's true that two or more miss chances from concealment don't stack (just use the best one), the *blink* spell does not use concealment. If a *blinking* character also has concealment (from a *displacement* spell, *blur* spell, *invisibility*, or some other effect or circumstance), both miss chances apply. The miss chances do not stack, you must check each separately. The attack misses if the attacker fails either miss chance. It's usually best to check the *blink* miss chance first, since things such as the Blind-Fight feat are not effective against *blink*.

**As a DM, I have ruled that spells with the range of "touch" are the only spells that allow you to use the holding the charge rule from Chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook*. My players argued that any spell that uses a ranged touch attack, such as *disintegrate*, also qualified. Which is correct?**

Look at the spell's range entry. If it doesn't say "touch," you can't hold the charge. *Disintegrate* is a medium range spell (100 ft + 10 ft. per caster level), not a touch range spell. Because *disintegrate* is a ray, you do indeed make a ranged touch attack when using the spell, but that's not the same as a range of touch.

**If I suspect that an opponent is a spellcaster and my initiative score is higher than the opponent's initiative, can I ready a spell with a one-action casting time to use against him (for example, *magic missile*) with the trigger "if he begins to cast a spell," and thus possibly disrupt the spell? Note that I'm trying to deal damage or otherwise adversely affect the caster, not counterspell the spell he's casting. What happens if my opponent decides not to cast? I would lose my readied action, but do I also lose the spell that I had prepared to use against him?**

Yes, you can ready a spell and use it to disrupt (not counter) an enemy spellcaster's spell.

Readying is an action all by itself. If the event you specify as the trigger doesn't happen, the action is wasted (see Ready in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*). You don't cast the spell until you use the action readied. If you don't use the readied action, you don't use (or lose) the spell you intended to cast.

**I know a spellcaster can't deliver a touch spell with a**

**weapon, but can a spellcaster deliver a touch spell by touching an opponent's weapon? For example, suppose an enemy fighter has a weapon with a 10-foot reach. Can a spellcaster step into the area that fighter threatens and touch the weapon to affect the wielder? Is there a limit on how far a touch spell can travel through equipment?**

For the purposes of most magical effects, touching a creature's equipment is exactly the same as touching the creature. That's why touch attacks ignore armor, natural armor, and shields. The point of contact does have to be fairly close to the target's body, though.

There is no set limit to how far away a spellcaster can be when delivering a touch spell, but the basic requirement is being able to reach into the space the creature occupies. For example, a human occupies a 5-foot space. Thus, a foe must be able to reach into that space to deliver a touch attack, even if a piece of the human's equipment (such as 50 feet of dangling rope or a manufactured reach weapon) sticks out of the space.

A creature with natural reach is an exception to this rule—you can use a touch spell against such a creature by touching one of its natural reach weapons, even if its body is out of your reach. Such a tactic might require some preparation, however. If a creature can reach you with a natural weapon (such as a bite, claw, or tentacle), you can ready an action to use a touch spell against that natural weapon when it is used to make a melee attack against you. Though casting a spell usually requires a standard action, you can cast the spell and try to touch the target as your readied action, so long as the spell's casting time is 1 action or less. (This is just like casting a spell and making a touch attack as part of your regular action.) If the spell has a longer casting time, you must first cast it and then hold the charge until it can be delivered to pull off this maneuver.

**When casting a lightning bolt spell at a group of characters who are more or less standing in a line (one behind the other), does the bolt continue through the first character and on through those behind, dealing damage until it reaches the end of its range? Or does the first character in the line act as an interposing barrier that stops the bolt? In other words, can you affect only creatures that are side by side (or staggered behind each other) within the spell's 5- or 10-foot width, or can the bolt travel through creatures and continue? What about other effects described as "lines," such as black dragon breath? Also, does an object (such as a table) cause the effect to stop, or does it continue on to its maximum range?**

Any spell or supernatural ability that fills an area affects everything in that area, so long as the spell's line of effect is not blocked.

Objects block line of effect for most spells and supernatural abilities, though some of these (such as *detect magic*) can penetrate barriers and others (such as *teleport*) ignore barriers. Line of effect remains unblocked if there is at least 1 square foot of open space per 25 square feet of barrier (5-foot-by-5-foot section). For example, a closed door that is 5 feet wide and 8 feet high and that has no openings other than a keyhole blocks line of effect. Replace the door with a set of bars or a fishnet, and line of effect is no longer blocked. A small object, such as an overturned table, won't block line of effect unless it is at least 5 feet high and 5 feet wide. If it's smaller than that, there's enough space around the edges to let magical effects pass right by. (Such an object can still provide cover, though).

A creature generally doesn't block line of effect because it

almost always leaves the requisite 1 square foot of open space per 5-foot-square area it happens to occupy. A *lightning bolt* spell or a black dragon's breath weapon can rip through any number of such creatures standing one behind the other in a line, to the limit of the effect's range. For example, a *lightning bolt* spell cast at 10th level can create a line 5 feet wide and 200 feet long. Forty Medium-size creatures could stand single-file in an area that size, and a bolt with those dimensions would affect them all. Furthermore, the creatures at the front of such a line do not provide cover against the effect to the creatures behind them.

Some creatures, however, can completely block off the requisite amount of area. For example, a gelatinous cube can completely fill a corridor that is 10 feet square. If it does so, it blocks line of effect for all spells. A creature that is significantly bigger than a spell's area also can block line of effect. For example, a spell with a line- or cone-shaped area could be blocked by a colossal dragon standing near the spell's point of origin—sometimes there's just no way to aim a 5-foot-wide stroke of lightning so that it can get past a really big body.

Always check the description of a spell or special ability before deciding whether the effect can pass through multiple creatures. For example, spells such as *ray of enfeeblement* and *disintegrate* are effect spells, not area spells. Each of these spells creates a ray, and a ray can affect only one target.

**Is it possible to regain concentration on a spell once you lose it? What happens if a spell lasts a while after concentration ceases (hypnotic pattern, for example)? Could you conceivably stop and restart concentration as long the spell has not ended? What about if you're hasted? Could you use an action to concentrate and an action to do something else?**

If a spell's duration depends on your concentration, you cannot regain concentration on the spell once you lose it, even when the spell doesn't end immediately when your concentration ceases or is broken.

Concentrating to maintain a spell requires a standard action on your turn. As long as you spend that standard action, you can take other actions, time permitting. If you're entitled to an extra action, as you would be after receiving a *haste* spell, you're free to use that action. You also could use the partial action from *haste* to maintain concentration and use your normal actions for other things.

**Suppose you cast a spell against someone with spell resistance, a rod of absorption, and a spell turning effect. Which acts on the spell first?**

The caster makes a level check to overcome spell resistance first. If the spell fails to penetrate the spell resistance, it still can be turned or absorbed, but it cannot affect the creature. A spell that has been absorbed cannot also be turned, and a spell that has been fully turned cannot be absorbed. A spell that has been partially turned can be absorbed as though its level were the same as the spell levels that were not turned. The spell recipient decides whether to resolve absorption or spell turning first.

## Specific Spell Questions

**Would an animate rope spell placed on a whip grant any bonus on disarm or trip attempts made with the whip? Could I cast animate rope on a whip, attack with the whip on my next attack with the intent of having the whip**

**enwrap my foe (letting go of my end if the save was failed), rather than making a ranged touch attack to throw the whip?**

An *animate rope* spell will help you tie up someone with the whole rope, but it won't help you use a whip to disarm or trip someone.

You can cast *animate rope* on a whip; it's sufficiently ropelike to receive the spell. You can then use the whip to make an entangle attack on a foe, which would be better than simply tossing the whip at a foe if you had Weapon Focus with the whip, but you must let go of the whip before the target attempts the save against the spell. (It takes the whole "rope" to make the entangle attack.)

**Does *antimagic field* actually prevent the casting of a spell from within the field? That is, does the spell automatically fail, and is it wasted?**

No. An *antimagic field* suppresses magic used within, brought into, or cast into its area, but it does not dispel it (see the second paragraph of the spell description).

**Does an *antimagic field* suppress a spell effect at the point of origin or the area of effect? For instance, if I cast *silence* on myself and then cast *antimagic field* (assuming I have the Silent Spell feat), would the entire *silence* spell be suppressed (because it's centered on me), or just the 10-foot radius surrounding me, leaving a 5-foot ring of *silence* around the outside of the *antimagic field*?**

It depends on the spell. *Silence* is an emanation, so the whole effect is suppressed if the point from which the effect emanates is inside the *antimagic field*. With an area spell, only the part of the area that is within the *antimagic field* is suppressed. Note that the *antimagic field* blocks line of effect, so an area cannot extend through the *antimagic field*. For example, if you brought the *antimagic field* into a *fog cloud* effect, only the portion of the *fog cloud* that is within the *antimagic field* would be suppressed. On the other hand, if you cast *antimagic field* in a corridor 10 feet wide, the *fog cloud* effect could not spread past the *antimagic field*. Note that a spread effect will flow around an *antimagic field* if it has space to do so, just as it would spread around any other barrier.

**Does *antimagic field* suppress effects such as doors sealed with *arcane lock*, magic traps, magic secret doors, and so on? The *arcane lock* spell specifically states that only destruction of the door, *knock*, or *dispel magic* can get through a door sealed with *arcane lock*.**

*Antimagic field* is an emanation. As such, it does not extend through or into solid barriers, such as closed doors. In your example, the *antimagic field* stops at the door with the *arcane lock*. Because the *antimagic field* touches the door, the *arcane lock* effect on the door is suppressed. (If a creature or object touches the *antimagic field* it is "in," the *antimagic field* and any magic operating on it are suppressed.) Note that if the door in question is not a solid barrier, the *antimagic field* could extend through it. For example, if the door has an opening in it that is 1 foot square (see Line of Effect in Chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook*), the door does not block the *antimagic field*. Any magical effect operating on the door is suppressed by the *antimagic field*, and the *antimagic field* reaches beyond the door according to the normal rules for line of effect. Likewise, if the door is not a physical barrier at all, but it is a magical effect itself (perhaps a figment such as *minor image*), the *antimagic field* suppresses the magic and the "door" disappears.

Most magic traps are also rendered inert by an *antimagic field*.

**What happens when a *prismatic wall*, *prismatic sphere*, or *wall of force* is cast so that it intersects an *antimagic field*? Does the intersection count as the space being occupied, as noted in the descriptions for these spells?**

Yes. These are cases in which the pre-existing spell has squatter's rights over the space. An *antimagic field* blocks line of effect for any spell area or spell effect that extends into it. If you try to cast any wall effects into or through a space containing an *antimagic field*, the effect is disrupted just as it would be if cast into a space containing an object or creature.

All three of the effects you mention, however, are impervious to *antimagic field*. If one of these effects is already in place, the *antimagic field* stops where it meets them, just as it stops where it meets a solid barrier.

**Say that I'm using *astral projection* and step through a color pool leading to another plane. When I appear on the new plane, I create a new body, correct? What happens to my equipment? For example, say I've brought along my *ring of protection +1*. While on the Astral Plane, do I have an astral version of the ring? Do I have the ring after I step through the pool? If so, what happens if the ring is destroyed or if I leave it behind on the plane I'm visiting? I can understand the astral version of the ring, but I am a bit confused as to what happens when I leave the Astral Plane to visit another plane.**

You form a new body when you pass through the color pool, and all your "astral equipment" goes with you. Essentially, your astral body and equipment is transformed into a new physical replica of your original form and equipment. Your new body and equipment continues to function, just as it did while you were on the Astral Plane. Your original body and equipment remains behind in the place where you began your astral projection.

If the astral version of a piece of equipment is destroyed, you lose the copy, but the original item is unharmed. If you lose the astral copy and leave it behind, it exists until you exit the plane, then it fades into oblivion.

**When the *awaken* spell makes an animal a magical beast, do the animal's Hit Dice get any bigger? Does the animal gain any extra skill points, feats, or attack bonuses?**

An *awakened* animal gains no new hit points, bigger Hit Dice, new feats, better saves, or extra skill points, except as noted in the *awaken* spell description. The subject does get the benefit of its extra Hit Dice. If the subject is an animal, it gains +2d8, and its new base attack is 3/4 of its new total Hit Dice. Its saves improve according to its new Hit Dice total (an animal has good Fortitude and Reflex saves). In addition, an *awakened* animal's type determines how magic affects it, just as a familiar or paladin's mount does.

**When a *Bigby's forceful hand* spell bull rushes an opponent, does the opponent get an attack of opportunity against the *forceful hand*? Does a *Bigby's grasping hand* trigger an attack of opportunity when it grapples a foe?**

No in both cases. Mobile spell effects, even ones that can be attacked as though they were creatures, do not trigger attacks of opportunity when they act or move unless their descriptions say they do.

**When you're hit by a *blade barrier* spell, does a successful Reflex save allow you an extra move to get out of the area of effect? For example, if you had already completed your action before the *blade barrier* appeared, are you allowed an extra move to get out of the area of effect? When do I make the save and the move? Do I have to wait until it's my turn?**

You don't exactly get an extra move. On a successful save, you move out of the *blade barrier* area by the shortest route to a safe place. This is not an action for you, and you do not choose your path. You make the save and any movement that results from the save, when the *blade barrier* strikes you. You do not have to wait until your own turn.

**There seem to be two ways to interpret how a *bless* spell is supposed to work. One interpretation is that the spell goes off at the caster's location (centered on the caster) and *blesses* everyone allied with the caster that is within the area of effect at the time of casting. The *blessed* individuals can move out of the area and retain the *blessing* (for the duration of the spell) and anyone entering the area after the casting receives no benefit at all. Or you could assume that the spell effect emanates from the caster for the duration of the spell, and that allies within 50 feet of the caster get the bonus, whether they were in the area at the time the spell was cast or not. Of course, in this interpretation, when you leave the area, you lose the benefit of the spell.**

The first interpretation is correct. The *bless* spell's Area entry should read: "The caster and all allies within a 50-foot burst, centered on the caster."

**The description of the cleric spell *bless water* says the duration is instantaneous. What exactly does this mean? How long will the water retain the benefits of the spell?**

An instantaneous duration for a spell means that the magic comes and goes in an instant (see page 151 in the *Player's Handbook*). That has no effect on how long the holy water lasts, but it does mean that effects such as *dispel magic* or *antimagic field* don't affect holy water.

Once created with the *bless water* spell, holy water lasts indefinitely. The spell instantly turns water into holy water, which thereafter is nonmagical. (This works in the same sense that a *fireball* or *circle of death* spell is instantaneous—the magic lasts an instant, and thereafter the target/subject is still burned or killed.)

**The description of the *bless weapon* spell reads, in part: "The weapon negates the damage reduction of evil creatures and is capable of striking evil incorporeal creatures as if it had a +1 enhancement bonus." Does that mean: (The weapon negates damage reduction) and (strikes evil incorporeal creatures as if +1)? Or does it mean: (The weapon negates damage reduction and strikes evil incorporeal creatures) as if +1? That is, does the "as if it had a +1 enhancement bonus" phrase apply to the entire sentence or only to the second clause? Does a weapon that receives this spell actually gain a +1 enhancement bonus?**

The phrase in question applies to the entire sentence. (To be grammatically precise, it applies to the sentence's entire compound predicate.) The weapon gains no enhancement bonus; it just functions as though it had one when used against an evil creature with damage reduction or an incorporeal evil creature.

Perhaps the sentence would be clearer to you if it read as follows: The weapon functions as though it had a +1

enchantment bonus when it strikes an evil creature with damage reduction or when it strikes an evil, incorporeal creature.

**Suppose a PC has been petrified, and the party cleric is about to cast a *break enchantment* spell to bring him back. Can the cleric first cast an *endurance* spell to boost the petrified character's Constitution score so that he or she won't fail the required Fortitude save to avoid death? Can he be considered an ally (for the purposes of spells or effects that help allies) even when in stone form? Is he even considered a creature as far as the *endurance* spell is concerned?**

First, when you restore a petrified creature with *break enchantment*, no Fortitude save is required. The *stone to flesh* spell requires the subject to make a Fortitude save (DC 15) to survive the process, but *break enchantment* does not.

A petrified creature is mindless and without senses, but it is still a creature. For all intents and purposes, a petrified creature is an immobile construct, and magical effects applied to it function as they would if used on any other construct. Since a construct has no Constitution score in the first place, it cannot benefit from an *endurance* spell, or from any other effect that increases Constitution. When a petrified creature receives a *stone to flesh* spell, it uses its normal Constitution score for the required Fortitude save. In the case of a *stone to flesh* spell, the recipient first turns back to flesh (and regains its normal creature type complete with Constitution score), then makes the Fortitude save.

**Why does *bull's strength* have a saving throw (albeit the harmless kind) when *cat's grace* and *endurance* don't?**

It's an error. All three of these spells should have the same saving throw entry: Will negates (harmless).

**Most touch-range spells have instantaneous durations. So how do they work? Is the action that you use to cast the spell the same action that you use to touch someone? The *chill touch* spell is particularly hard to use. If it has an instantaneous duration, there is no way the caster could get multiple attacks; however, it is obvious that you are supposed to get more than one touch with it because of the number of targets.**

In the case of touch-range spells, the duration refers to how long the magic lasts once you touch the target, though there are one or two oddballs, such as *shocking grasp*, that are described in a slightly different way. When you cast a spell with touch range, you can try to touch a recipient on the same round you cast the spell (see Touch Spells in Combat on page 125 of the *Player's Handbook*).

If you do not touch a recipient on the round you cast the spell, you hold the charge until you do touch a recipient or until you cast another spell; see Touch Spells and Holding the Charge on page 151 of the *Player's Handbook*. In the case of the *chill touch* spell, the spell remains until you make your allowed number of touches (you lose one charge each time you touch something) or until you cast another spell.

**If the duration of a *chill touch* spell is instantaneous, how long does the damage and Strength loss from the spell last?**

A *chill touch* spell's effects are instantaneous, but they have lasting consequences. There are many such examples in the rules. A *fireball* spell, for example, creates an instantaneous burst of fire, but the damage it causes remains behind after the

spell's magical effect is gone. Normal damage from a *chill touch* (or a *fireball*) spell remains until healed or *cured*. The Strength damage heals at the rate of 1 or 2 points each day, or until restored, just like any other kind of temporary ability damage (see Healing Ability Damage on page 129 of the *Player's Handbook*). Also see the question on healing ability damage.

**When a character casts *chill touch*, the caster's hand glows blue and a successful touch attack with the hand causes damage and perhaps Strength damage, too. Could a character have *chill touch* in effect and use a weapon in the other hand? If so, would the normal penalties for attacking with two weapons apply?**

*Chill touch* follows all the rules for holding the charge on a touch spell except that a *chill touch* spell has one "charge" per caster level. Each time you touch anything with your hand, you lose one charge off the *chill touch*, but anything you already had in your hand when you cast the spell doesn't count as being touched. You can't have two *chill touch* spells running at once, because if you cast a spell while holding a charge, the whole spell you're holding dissipates.

Otherwise, you can indeed use the hand bearing the *chill touch* effect as a weapon. When you're using the two-weapon fighting rules, your own hand is a light weapon for you.

**When you use a *command* spell to order a foe to "die" or to "sleep," is the target rendered helpless and thus subject to a coup de grace attack?**

When a creature fails its save against the *command* spell, the creature obeys the one-word order from the spell to the best of its ability. In most circumstances, a command (from the spell) to "sleep" or "die" makes the subject prone and effectively stunned, not helpless. One simply cannot just go to sleep or play dead in the middle of a battle.

**Say I'm a cleric and I ready the *command* spell to disrupt an opposing spellcaster's spell. When my opponent begins casting, I use my readied *command* spell and order her to babble or to stutter. It would seem that if my opponent fails her save and is casting a spell with a verbal component, then I would interrupt her spell without my opponent getting to make a Concentration check, right?**

No, the opponent gets a Concentration check, just as she would if affected by any other spell while casting (see the Concentration skill description in Chapter 4 of the *Player's Handbook* and Concentration in Chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook*). If the opponent's saving throw fails and the Concentration check succeeds, the opponent indeed mumbles or stutters, but not badly enough to ruin the spell. There are spells you could use that would make finishing a spell impossible if the target fails her save (*disintegrate*, *finger of death*, *silence*, and many more), but *command* isn't one of them.

Note that in this situation, you are not getting a *command* spell ready. You're using the ready action to disrupt an enemy spellcaster. You don't actually do any spellcasting until some event triggers the readied action.

**The description for the *desecrate* spell says all Charisma checks made to turn undead within the spell's area take a -3 profane penalty. Does this penalty apply to the turning damage roll (2d6 + level + Charisma modifier) or just the turning check roll?**

Just the turning check. A turning damage roll is subject to Charisma modifiers, but it is not a Charisma check. The turning check itself, however, is a Charisma check and is subject to the penalty.

**The *detect evil* spell lets you detect the aura of evil creatures but not characters. Are characters counted as creatures with their level as their Hit Dice?**

The terms "creature" and "character" are interchangeable. Any subject with an evil alignment has an evil aura. If this subject has a character class, you calculate the aura's strength by dividing the subject's character level by five. If the subject is the cleric of an evil deity, do not divide the subject's cleric levels. For example, an 11th-level barbarian with an evil alignment has an evil aura of moderate strength ( $11/5=2.2$ , which indicates a moderate aura). If the character was an 11th-level cleric of an evil deity, the character would have an overwhelming evil aura. If the character were a 5th-level barbarian/6th-level cleric, the character would have only a strong evil aura ( $5/5=1 + 6 = 7$  for a strong aura).

**Is it possible to use a spell such as *detect magic* or *detect evil* to detect an invisible foe?**

Yes, but not very efficiently. Let's say a character uses a *detect magic* spell; the spell reveals nothing about the invisible foe unless the character happens to aim the spell at the area containing the invisible foe. If the foe is using an *invisibility* spell, a spell-like *invisibility* power, or a supernatural *invisibility* power, the *detect magic* spell merely reveals that there is magic somewhere in the area. The *detect magic* caster has no idea where the magical aura is, what sort of creature or object bears the aura, or if the aura is in motion or not.

One round later, the *detect magic* user can search for magical auras again. If the user aims the spell at the invisible foe again, *detect magic* spell will reveal the number of magical auras on the foe and the strength of the strongest aura. (The user has scanned the same subject for 2 consecutive rounds.) The *detect magic* user still has no idea exactly where the foe is, what the foe is like, or whether the foe is moving.

After another round goes by, the *detect magic* user can scan for magical auras once again. If the user is lucky enough to catch the invisible foe for a third time, she will have scanned the same subject for 3 consecutive rounds. The *detect magic* spell now reveals the strength and location of each aura. The *detect magic* user still does not "see" the foe and does not know whether it's moving or not. She only knows the strength and locations of magical auras during her turn in the initiative order. In this case a "location" is the 5-foot square that contains the aura. If the creature or item bearing the aura takes up more than one square, the *detect magic* user can get some idea of its size. (See Big and Little Creatures in Combat in Chapter 8 of the *Player's Handbook*.) It is possible for the *detect magic* user to attack the location of one of the auras the spell has revealed. If the spell revealed auras in different locations, the *detect magic* user still might not choose the right location to attack. Even if she does, the foe has 100% concealment and the attack has a 50% chance to miss no matter what the attack roll is.

Remember that all of the foregoing depends on the *detect magic* spell user scanning the invisible foe for 3 consecutive rounds. If the *detect magic* user guesses wrong about where to scan even once, she'll have to start the process of zeroing in on the invisible foe all over again.

**Can someone using a *discern location* spell find someone**

**using *mind blank* spell?**

No. While the *discern location* spell description contains some pretty strong language about the spell's ability to overcome effects that block scrying of divinations, the general rule in the D&D game favors defense over offense, so *mind blank*'s ability to block scrying and all forms of divination trumps *discern location*'s ability to penetrate such defenses. Blocking spells of 7th level or less, however, are still ineffective against *discern location*.

**If a character fails her saving throw against a *disintegrate* spell, are all her items disintegrated with her?**

No. When a character fails a saving throw against a spell or other magical attack, all her items survive unless the spell or attack description says otherwise or the character rolls a natural 1 on the save. If the character rolled a natural 1 on the save, one item the character wore or carried is affected by the spell or attack. (See Table 10-1 in the *Player's Handbook* and the accompanying text for details.) The exposed item must make its own saving throw against the spell or attack.

**Is spell resistance affected by negative levels such as those from an *enervation* spell? For example, if I hit a white dragon with an *enervation* and bestow 4 negative levels, is the dragon's spell resistance now 4 points lower?**

No, negative levels don't affect a creature's spell resistance; however, an attacker's level check to overcome spell resistance is subject to negative levels. For example, an 18th-level character with 4 negative level rolls 1d20+14 to make a level check.

**The *Player's Handbook* says the maximum that anyone can be enlarged is 50%. Are duergar restricted to this maximum, too?**

Yes, the duergar's *enlarge* spell-like ability works just like the spell.

**My new *Player's Handbook* shows the range for the *fireball* spell as a base 400 yards! Shouldn't this be base 100 yards, like *lightning bolt*?**

No. *Fireball* is a long-range spell, so its range is 400 feet + 40 feet per caster level (not yards). This is longer than the range for a *lightning bolt*, which is medium-range (100 feet + 10 feet per caster level).

Older versions of the game listed ranges in yards, but the current rules list all ranges in feet.

Note that a *lightning bolt* spell creates a stroke of electricity that extends from the caster to the maximum range of the spell (space permitting). This is very different from the way the spell used to work in older versions of the game. In the previous edition, a *lightning bolt* was very like a *fireball*; it produced a small missile that detonated and generated a stroke of electricity 40 or 80 feet long. The new version of the spell has a shorter overall range, but it produces a much longer bolt (300 feet long for a 20th-level caster).

**Does the *fireball* spell expand in confined spaces as it did in previous versions of the game? If not, how does it interact with creatures in total cover or around corners? According to table 8-9 on page 133 of the *Player's Handbook*, total cover has no saving throw bonus. But if a *fireball* expands around a corner like the diagram on page 204 what sort of save bonus would a creature around the corner get?**

No, a *fireball* does not have a fixed volume that fills up a confined space as it did in the older version of the game. It does follow the rules for a spread, (see page 149 in the *Player's Handbook*), which means it can reach around corners.

In general, you use Table 8-9 in the *Player's Handbook* to determine saving throw bonuses from cover. Trace line of effect from the spell's point of origin to determine what sort of cover might be available and use diagrams on page 133 of the *Player's Handbook* to determine the degree of cover. There's no saving throw bonus listed for total cover because if you have total cover against a spell, the spell can't affect you at all.

When you're hit by a spread, you cannot claim total cover if the spell's effect can reach you somehow. Determine the degree of cover by how small a constriction the spread has to pass through to reach you. For example, if you're peering around the corner when a *fireball* hits, the best you can claim one-quarter cover. If you're completely behind the corner, but otherwise in the open, the best you can claim is one-half cover. If you're around a corner and halfway behind a door, you can claim is three-quarters cover. If the *fireball* comes at you through an arrow slit, you can claim nine-tenths cover.

**I have always assumed that a *fireball* caster is not affected by his own work, but another player pointed out that the spell description doesn't actually say that. What's the verdict?**

If you place the *fireball* so that you're within the spread, you get burned. Note that the spell produces a ball of fire that fills a 20-foot radius spread. If you place the spell so that the spread's point of origin is more than 20 feet away from you, you won't be caught in the spread. In previous editions of the game, a *fireball* always filled a fixed volume and the effect would always fill that volume if it could. This often caused the caster to be caught in the effect. The current version of the spell doesn't do that; it follows the rules for a spread effect on page 149 of the *Player's Handbook*.

**Half the damage from a *flame strike* spell comes from divine power. I have seen claims that this damage is holy damage, which would defeat a fiend's regeneration. Is this correct?**

No. If the spell dealt holy damage, the spell description would say so. It deals fire damage and "divine" damage that is not subject to protection against fire. It would not be a bad house rule to say that good clerics deal half holy damage with the spell and that evil clerics deal half unholy damage. Neutral clerics would deal either holy or unholy damage, depending on whether they turn (holy damage) or command (unholy damage) undead.

**Why is it that when you dispel *fly* the user doesn't drop like a stone? If it's dispelled, shouldn't it be dispelled?**

A *fly* spell is "dispelled when dispelled." *Dispel magic* ends a spell just as if its duration had run out. (See the first paragraph of the *dispel magic* spell description, second sentence.) When a *fly* spell's duration runs out, the user falls gently to the ground.

**Can a creature fly underwater? I've never heard of a normal bird flying underwater. What are the rules regarding this? If it's possible, what is the penalty to movement and maneuverability?**

Flying creatures must swim when they enter the water, just as other creatures do. A *fly* spell lets you swim at your normal



flying speed, but with the same maneuverability as other swimmers (perfect maneuverability). Incorporeal creatures also can fly/swim in this manner (they move through water just as easily as they move through other substances). Note that gaseous creatures cannot enter water.

**What happens when a character who has received a *freedom of movement* spell jumps or falls into water? My DM seems to think that the character falls straight through the water and goes “splat” on the bottom. My DM explains that the spell eliminates all water resistance, which prevents the character from swimming or floating.**

While the DM is always right, he’s followed a faulty line of reasoning here. It’s always a bad idea to use scientific—or pseudoscientific—reasoning to adjudicate spells. In this case, your DM has erroneously supposed that water resistance has something to do with buoyancy. Buoyancy depends on the water literally pushing something up toward the surface, and a *freedom of movement* spell doesn’t prevent that any more than it prevents a floor from pushing up against a character’s feet and keeping him from falling through it. (You might not be in the habit of thinking of floors as “pushing” anything, but that is the way modern physics describes any object or body resting on any surface; the object pushes down and the surface pushes back with equal force.)

In any case, the *freedom of movement* spell (and its cousin from earlier editions, the *free action* spell) has nothing to do with eliminating water resistance or friction; it allows normal movement and attacks even under conditions in which normal movement and attacks are not possible, such as underwater or when *webbed*, *held*, or *entangled*. Exactly how the spell accomplishes that is unrevealed—that’s what makes it magic. Your DM would have been on firmer ground (as it were) if he had claimed that falling is a form of “normal movement” that water usually prevents. That, however, is not the case. “Normal movement” in water is swimming or walking along the bottom. When a character under a *freedom of movement* effect enters water, he makes a Swim check; if he fails, he cannot move, and he sinks if he fails by 5 or more. Note that failing to make progress or sinking are both “normal movement” in this instance.

**The *haste* and *mass haste* spells allow their subjects an extra partial action. Spellcasting is a partial action. Does this mean that a *hasted* spellcaster can cast two spells in a single round?**

Yes, a *hasted* cleric or wizard with the Quicken Spell feat could cast three spells in a round, one as a standard action, the quickened spell as a free action, and a third spell as her extra partial action.

**If a character has multiple attacks and becomes *hasted*, he would receive only one extra attack per round? What if he had two weapons? Would he get two extra attacks (one with each weapon)? Also what happens when a character has two weapons and uses the attack or charge action rather than the full attack action? Does the character attack once with each weapon or just once?**

You can attack only once with a partial or standard action, no matter how many weapons you have. You’ve got to use the full attack action (a full-round action) to get any additional attacks to which you may be entitled.

**If a character receives a *haste* spell, she gets an extra**

**partial action on her turn. Do movement options that are limited “per turn” apply over the whole turn, or should they be interpreted to be on a per-action basis? For example, can a *hasted* person do the following:**

- **Make a standard move, and then take a partial attack action with normal 5-foot step (as per Table 8-3)?**
- **Make a double move, and then a partial attack, without suffering an attack of opportunity in the initial square of movement?**
- **Make a standard charge and then partial move in a different direction?**

No to all. *Haste* gives you an extra partial action each round. It doesn’t let you break the rules otherwise, and it does not give you an “extra” round during your turn.

If you move during your turn, you cannot also take a 5-foot step, *haste* notwithstanding.

If you start your turn in a threatened space and you leave that space, you provoke an attack of opportunity when you leave unless you do nothing else during the rest of your turn except move, *haste* notwithstanding.

When you charge, all your movement during the round must be in a straight line and in the same direction, *haste* notwithstanding.

**You’re poisoned with something that causes ability loss, then you’re healed by a *heal* spell. Since all the poison does is cause ability damage, was the poison cured by the *heal* or will it continue to cause damage since *heal* doesn’t cure poison?**

Actually, a *heal* spell does remove poison; see the third sentence in the spell description. A poison, however, deals damage until its onset time (usually 1 minute) is over or the poison is removed, even when all the damage the poison has caused has been removed. For example, a character takes 2 points of temporary Strength damage from a poison and the character receives a *lesser restoration* spell before the poison’s onset time is over. Even if the spell cures all the Strength damage, the character has to make another saving throw against the poison when the onset time expires because *lesser restoration* doesn’t remove poison.

**The description of the *identify* spell says you get only the weakest power of each item. But what if you cast *identify* more than once? What if you have fewer items than your caster level would allow you to identify? Can you never identify more than the basic power?**

You’ll get the same result (the item’s weakest power) with each use of the *identify* spell on a particular item. Other spells, such as *analyze dweomer*, will give you more information.

**When you imbue another creature with a spell, using either the *imbue with spell ability* spell or the divine disciple class ability (from the *FORGOTTEN REALMS Campaign Setting*), can you imbue a metamagiced spell? If so, does the metamagiced spell use the real level of the spell or the higher-level spell slot the metamagiced spell consumes? For instance, can a persistent *divine favor* spell be imbued (it’s only a 1st-level spell, despite the slot it requires)?**

Yes. You can imbue metamagiced spells. Use the spell’s higher metamagiced level to determine if the spell can be imbued. This is the case whenever a spell is transferred, stored, or duplicated somewhere. For example, when you create a

magic item that uses a metamagiced spell, you must use the spell's higher metamagiced level to determine the item's costs.

The Persistent Spell feat requires a spell slot four levels higher than the base spell, so you'd need a 5th-level slot to make the 1st-level divine favor spell persistent. The highest-level spell that an *imbue with spell ability* caster or divine disciple can imbue is a 2nd-level spell, so neither the spell nor the class ability can imbue a persistent divine favor spell.

**Can the 0-level *light* spell be cast on an opponent's eyes (perhaps as a touch attack)? There is no spell resistance to this new version of the *light* spell, and so this could be an effective use of the spell to blind someone. However, I feel this was not in the spirit of what was intended for the spell.**

You're right. The spell doesn't work on creatures, only objects. You can't cast the spell on a point in space, either; it has to be an object. Note that casting a spell on a creature's equipment is the same as casting on the creature. In this case, you can cast the spell on an object in a creature's possession if the creature is willing, but not if it is unwilling.

**Does *lightning bolt* work underwater?**

Yes. It functions exactly the same as it does above water. Most spells work underwater in just the same way they work above water. The article "Water, Water, Everywhere" in *Dragon Magazine* #291 covers the mechanics of underwater environment in some detail.

**I can use *locate object* to find a general item, such as a jewel. I can use it to find specific items. Can I use it to find particular types of items, such as an emerald worth at least 1,000 gp? The spell says that I need a clear mental image of a "specific" item to find it. Then it says I must have seen a "unique" item in person in order to locate it. Is there a difference between a "specific" item (requiring only a mental image) and a "unique" item (requiring one to have seen it with one's own eyes)?**

The spell allows you to look for three different classes of objects:

**General objects (Platonic objects):** You can look for something such as a chair, a stairway, or a gem. If you do, you get the nearest object of the specified type.

**Specific objects:** The monetary value of a gem is somewhat arbitrary, and it won't suffice for a *locate object* spell. You can search for an emerald or one of a specific size and weight, and if you have the Knowledge (gems) skill or the Craft (gemcutting) skill or maybe even the Appraise skill, you probably know enough to specify the size or weight that corresponds to the gem value you want. If you just search for an emerald, you'll get the closest emerald, no matter what its size or weight. If you specify a size or weight, and you have a clear mental image of such an emerald, you'll get the closest emerald of that size or weight, but the spell will not find any other emeralds that might be within range. You cannot specify a range of sizes and weights, because that will not allow you to develop a clear mental picture of a single emerald.

**Unique objects:** You can look for a particular emerald (such as the one in the king's ring, for example), provided you've seen that particular emerald before.

**What happens when I'm using a personal range spell, such as *stoneskin*, and I take over a body using *magic jar*? What happens if I take over a body with *magic jar* and then cast a personal range spell?**

A personal range spell goes where you go. When you take over a body with *magic jar*, any personal range spell you had before the takeover goes with you, and you can continue to use it in the body you have taken over. When you leave the body, all your personal range spell effects go with you, including any you cast while in the body you've taken over.

**How many hit points do you have when you take over another body with a *magic jar* spell? What if the body you take over is damaged?**

In the case of *magic jar*, hit points go with the body. When you possess a body, you have whatever hit points that body has at the time.

**Would a spell like *magic missile* be subject to the miss chance from a displacer beast? The *magic missile* description says it automatically hits the target.**

Miss chances of any kind don't apply to spells that don't require attack rolls, though in most cases you have to see the target to aim the spell at it. A displacer beast gets a +2 resistance bonus on saves against any targeted spell, but *magic missile* doesn't allow a save.

**Can a spellcaster on the Ethereal Plane affect anybody on the Material Plane with a *magic missile* spell?**

No. A *magic missile* spell is a force effect. While force effects created on the Material Plane do affect things on the Ethereal Plane, the reverse is not true. One exception to this rule is a manifested ghost, which exists on the Ethereal and Material Planes simultaneously and so can be affected by attacks from either plane.

**If you cast the *mass heal* spell during combat, can you choose which creatures are affected or does the spell affect everyone in the area, friend and foe?**

Look at the summary information at the beginning of the spell. If the spell has a Target or Targets entry, the caster chooses who receives the spell (see page 148 in the *Player's Handbook*).

If the spell has an Effect or Area entry, the caster usually can decide where to place the area or effect, but every subject that is within the selected area or effect will be affected, no matter what the caster wants. As noted in the previous answer, some effects, such as rays, allow the caster to select specific subjects.

In any case, *mass heal* has a Target entry, so the caster can select who is affected. (Note that the caster cannot select targets more than 30 feet apart.)

**The spells *minor globe of invulnerability* and *globe of invulnerability* create a spherical emanation with a 10-foot radius. Does this assume an effect that fills in the whole of the sphere, like a standard spell area, or is it a hollow sphere that prevents spell effects from crossing into it? Is a spellcaster within the globe affected by her own spells?**

The effect fills the entire globe. No spell has any effect inside the globe, even spells a character casts on herself. Unlike an *antimagic field*, the globe does not block line of effect. A character can cast spells from inside the globe to the outside, or from outside the globe, through the globe, to another place outside the globe—but never inside the globe. Note that the globe only suppresses spells. If you're in the globe and you cast a spell on yourself, the spell's duration starts running, but there is no effect. If you later leave the globe, the spell takes effect.

**If I get hit by a *fireball* spell while I'm using a *mirror image* spell, do all my images disappear? The spell as written in the book seems to imply that they survive but it would seem to me that any area effect damage should wipe them all out.**

Area spells don't destroy the figments created by the *mirror image* spell, but targeted spells do. To determine if a spell is "targeted," look at the information that precedes each spell description. If there is a Target or Targets entry, the spell is targeted. A spell also is "targeted" if it has an Effect entry and the effect is a ray or something else that requires a melee or ranged attack to strike a foe, such as the missile created by the *Melf's acid arrow* spell or the beam of fire from a *flame blade* spell.

**When you cast *Nystul's undetectable aura*, what spells does it protect against? Does it protect the targeted item against only *detect magic* or will it also protect a sentient item against *detect thoughts*? What about invisible items? If the spell is cast on an item enchanted with the *invisibility* spell, will it be impossible to detect the item? I have a friend who believes that if you cast *Nystul's undetectable aura* on an invisible item, spells such as *see invisibility* cannot locate the item since its aura, and therefore the item, remain beyond the means of detection. For that matter, what does the magical aura consist of? Is a sentient weapon's intelligence located within the aura? And lastly, will *Nystul's undetectable aura* protect the targeted item from spells such as *detect evil*?**

*Nystul's undetectable aura* masks an item's magical aura, which is the aura a *detect magic* spell detects. The spell does not block any other aura. The only divination spell (*detect magic* is a universal spell) *Nystul's undetectable aura* affects is *identify*; the *identify* user must make a Will save to determine the item's actual power.

Note that *detect magic* reveals active or residual magical auras, not the effects magic produces. An invisible character or object has a magical aura, but it does not have an invisibility aura. Such a character or item can be detected with *detect magic*, but not very efficiently. Note also that many "sentient objects" are not objects at all, but creatures of the construct type. The intelligent items described in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, for example, have Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores and are therefore creatures (see Abilities on page 10 of the *Monster Manual*), and spells that work only on items, such as *Nystul's undetectable aura*, don't work on them.

**Will the *planeshift* spell take you to any plane, or just to the Astral, Ethereal, and Shadow Planes?**

Any plane. You will find specific references to the *planeshift* spell in the descriptions of these planes in *Manual of the Planes*. These were meant to clarify that the spell would work in those transitive planes, not that it would work only on those planes.

**The second function of the *protection from evil* spell blocks any attempt to possess the warded creature or to exercise mental control over the creature. What, exactly, counts as mental control?**

"Mental control" includes all spells of the school of Enchantment that have the Charm subschool, such as *animal friendship*, *charm person*, and *charm monster*. It also includes some Enchantment spells of the Compulsion subschool if those spells grant the caster ongoing control over the subject; such

spells include *dominate person* and *dominate monster*. Compulsions that merely dictate the subject's action at the time the spell takes effect are not blocked. Such spells include *command*, *hold person*, *geas/quest*, *hypnotism*, *insanity*, *Otto's irresistible dance*, *random action*, *suggestion*, and *zone of truth*.

**Would a *protection from evil* spell block mind-affecting spells that aren't from the Enchantment school, such as *cause fear*, *create undead*, *gate*, *hypnotic pattern*, *mount*, *rainbow pattern*, *sanctuary*, and *summon monster*?**

No, see previous question.

**One of the *protection from evil* spell's effects grants the subject a +2 deflection bonus to Armor Class and a +2 resistance bonus on saves. Both these bonuses apply against attacks made by evil creatures. To cast a spell isn't an attack action but a magic action. Does that mean that the bonus from *protection from evil* applies only if the caster of the spell has to make a touch attack or ranged touch attack to affect the protected target? Or does it apply to any spells cast by evil creatures?**

A spell is an "attack" whenever its target, area, or effect includes a foe. See Special Spell Effects on page 152 of the *Player's Handbook*.

It's possible that both the Armor Class and the save bonus from *protection from evil* could apply to the same effect. For example, the *disintegrate* spell produces a ray that requires a ranged touch attack, so the *protection from evil* spell's deflection bonus to Armor Class applies to that attack if the spell's caster is evil. *Disintegrate* also allows a Fortitude save. If the caster is evil, a *protection from evil* spell provides a saving throw bonus as well.

**Are elves treated differently than the other races when it comes to *raise* and *resurrection* type spells?**

No. In previous versions of the D&D game, elves were hard to bring back from the dead, but that is no longer the case. Note that spells such as *raise dead* can now bring any living creature back from the dead, not just humans and humanlike creatures.

**How does the *searing light* spell function against an incorporeal creature such as a spectre? The spell description says it produces a ray of holy power, like a ray of the sun. Does this ray have a miss chance when used against a spectre? One of my players sure doesn't think so! Also, a spectre has a special quality that makes it powerless in sunlight. Does this mean it takes extra damage from the *searing light* spell?**

Whenever a corporeal caster uses a spell on an incorporeal creature such as a spectre, there is a 50% chance that the spell has no effect. Spells with the force descriptor have no miss chance, but any other spell does unless its description specifically says otherwise. *Searing light* is not a force spell, and though its spell description has some expressive language about its effect, it does not specifically state that the spell ignores the incorporeal miss chance.

If a *searing light* spell actually works on a spectre, it inflicts 1d8 points of damage per caster level (maximum 10d8). In general, if a creature's description mentions any sort of detrimental effect from sunlight, that creature is "particularly vulnerable" to sunlight and takes the higher amount of damage amount from a *searing light* spell. Since spectres are powerless in sunlight, they qualify.

It's also worth noting that the powerlessness effect of actual sunlight has no miss chance against incorporeal undead. That is, a spectre that goes out in the sun automatically becomes powerless.

**If I cast a *shadow evocation* spell and duplicate a *wall of force*, do I get all the effects of a *wall of force*? I think so, because *shadow evocation* creates all the effects of the spell, including touch, sight, sound, and so forth. Would the *shadow wall of force* prevent creatures from passing through it? The wall is invisible, but it can be touched. As the caster, I disbelieve my own spells, so could I cast spells through the *shadow wall of force*?**

You cannot duplicate a *wall of force* spell with the *shadow evocation* spell, but you could do so with the *greater shadow evocation* spell.

A *shadow wall of force* is partially real and remains in place whether it is seen or not. Creatures that fail to disbelieve the wall cannot pass through it. Their spells do not have line of effect, and ranged or melee attacks bounce off the wall.

To receive a save to disbelieve the wall, a creature must interact with it somehow—by touching it, firing an arrow through it, or attempting to cast a spell through it. The spell description states that nondamaging effects are only 40% likely to work against those who recognize that the effect is illusory. Thus, a creature that successfully disbelieves the wall is blocked in 40% of its attempts to pass through it, spells cast by the creature fail to have line of effect 40% of the time, and ranged or melee attacks are blocked 40% of the time.

Although you do indeed disbelieve the shadow effects you create, the *wall of force* is still partially real to you. Therefore, your movement, spells, and ranged or melee attacks are also blocked 40% of the time.

**A *shield* spell is supposed to protect you from attacks launched from half the battlefield, with the caster on the dividing line. How is that supposed to work in play?**

The effect is somewhat similar to a tower shield, except that the spell doesn't interfere with your attacks and you are protected against attacks launched from a much larger area.

If you think of the *shield* spell caster as standing in a square, the spell effect can be placed so that it lines up with one side of the caster's square and extends out infinitely to the left and right. The spell gives cover against any attack that has to cross that line. The spell effect also can be placed on a diagonal so that it covers two sides of the caster square, in which case the line extends away like steps in a staircase.

**Can the *shield* spell add to the Armor Class bonus from the *mage armor* spell or a suit of armor? How about a regular shield? What about the *shield* spell and *bracers of armor*?**

A *shield* spell provides a cover bonus to Armor Class, which stacks with most other defensive bonuses (everything except other cover bonuses), including armor bonuses from any source.

**Can you cast two *shield* spells and cover yourself against attacks from anywhere on the battlefield?**

No. The spell's target is you (the caster), so when you cast it you get a disc of force you can use for defense. If you cast the spell a second time, you still have a (single) disc of force you can use for defense. If the spell's target was the disc (or if the spell was an area of effect spell) you could have more than one,

just like you can summon more than one monster or create more than one *wall of force*. The target is you, however, so you can have only one *shield* spell running at a time.

**The description for the *shield* spell says it provides three-quarters cover. Page 132 of the *Player's Handbook* says an attacker can't execute an attack of opportunity against a character with one-half or better cover. So, a spellcaster with a *shield* spell up is immune to attacks of opportunity, even when casting spells in melee?**

No. The spell description is erroneous. The spell grants a +7 cover bonus to Armor Class, not three-quarters cover. It does not negate attacks of opportunity, nor does it provide any saving throw bonuses. The spell's cover bonus to Armor Class applies to any attacks of opportunity made from the half of the battlefield covered by the shield.

**I understand that a character who stands behind another character of the same size gains a one-half cover bonus. What if the character in front is a wizard with a *shield* spell up? Would the character in the rear benefit from the spell as well?**

No, a *shield* spell protects only the caster (and possibly the caster's familiar or bonded mount, via the share spell ability). Anyone claiming the caster as cover gets no benefit from the *shield* spell. The caster, however, does get the full benefit of the *shield* spell against any attacks that might strike the cover instead of a missed target (see page 133 in the *Player's Handbook*).

**The *shocking grasp* spell's description says you get a +3 attack bonus if you use the spell to attack a foe who is wearing metal armor. Isn't this a bit illogical since the spellcaster ignores the armor for the purpose of hitting the foe with this kind of spell? Doesn't this take the armor out of the equation?**

No. The metal attracts the electrical discharge from the spell and makes the target even easier to hit than normal. (The target still does not get the benefit of armor, natural armor, or a shield.)

**If a wizard casts *shocking grasp*, grabs at her target, and misses, would the spell still be active or will it have dissipated harmlessly?**

Once you cast a touch spell, the spell effect remains, untriggered, until you touch something with your hand or until you cast another spell. (See Touch Spells and Holding the Charge on page 151 of the *Player's Handbook*.)

**Can a spellcaster use a *shocking grasp* spell on a metal object the character is holding when casting the spell? For example, could the spellcaster cast *shocking grasp* with sword (metal) in hand, and then strike, dealing sword and spell damage at the same time?**

No, if the caster touches an object, she'll discharge the spell into that object and waste the spell. Objects the caster has in hand already aren't electrified, so the caster has to touch a creature or object herself to discharge the spell.

**Older editions of the game listed the *silence* spell in the Alteration school, but now *silence* is part of the Illusion school. Does this mean that anyone in the area of effect can try to disbelieve the spell, negating most of its effect for enemy spellcasters?**

No, if you could disbelieve a *silence* spell, its save listing would be “Will disbelief.” *Silence* removes all noise in its area and nobody gets a save against that. If the spell is actually targeted on a creature or on a creature’s equipment, that creature gets a Will save to negate the spell. If the save succeeds, the spell fails and the area is not silenced.

**If my character casts a *sleep* spell, do I get to decide who is affected? For example, if friendly characters are in the area the spell effects, can I opt to affect only enemies? Do I ever get to decide who is affected by my character’s spells? In spell descriptions where it is not specifically spelled out, is there a way to adjudicate whether or not a caster can choose to just affect his enemies?**

A *sleep* spell affects 2d4 Hit Dice worth of creatures within a 15-foot burst; creatures with fewer Hit Dice are affected before creatures with more Hit Dice. The caster can place the burst so friendlies are not inside, but that’s the only control the caster has over who is affected.

To determine how much control the caster has over a spell’s targeting, start by looking at the header information for the spell. If the spell has an Effect or Area entry, it affects creatures within the area of effect and the caster can’t influence who the spell hits except by choosing the spell’s area or point of origin.

If the spell has a “Target” entry, usually the caster can decide who receives the spell (see pages 148–149 in the *Player’s Handbook*), but read the target entry carefully; sometimes it specifies something about the target that you can’t control. For example, the *teleport* spell targets the caster and all objects and willing creatures the caster touches. If the *teleport* caster is touching something, that something is automatically a target of the spell, unless it is a creature and unwilling to take the trip.

**What happens if you cast a *slow* spell on a zombie? Specifically, how does one simulate magical slowness in a creature that is already limited to partial actions each round.**

The zombie under the effects of a *slow* spell can take only partial actions and takes a –2 Armor Class penalty, just like any other creature subjected to a *slow* spell.

**Can I use *spell immunity* to make myself immune to the *detect magic* spell? How about other spells such as *see invisibility* or *dispel magic*?**

No. *Spell immunity* gives the subject an unbeatable SR against the specified spell. Since none of the spells named here are subject to spell resistance, *spell immunity* is useless against them.

**If a cleric casts *spell immunity* and chooses, say, *fireball*, would the spell stop a heightened *fireball*? Or a *fireball* that has been subjected to another metamagic feat?**

Yes, a *fireball* that has been modified by metamagic is still a *fireball*. The metamagic *fireball* also can be counterspelled by a normal *fireball*.

**Can a *stoneskin* spell keep you from being poisoned? Say a giant scorpion stings me when I have a *stoneskin* spell. Am I poisoned if the attack doesn’t deal me any damage because of the damage reduction from the spell?**

Whenever damage reduction from any source completely negates the damage from an attack, it also negates most special effects that accompany the attack, such as injury type poison (which is what a scorpion has), monk’s stunning, and injury-

type disease. Damage reduction does not negate touch attacks, energy damage dealt along with an attack (such as fire damage from a fire elemental), or energy drains. Nor does it affect poisons or diseases delivered by inhalation, ingestion, or contact. See the section on damage reduction in Chapter 3 of the *DUNGEON MASTER’s Guide* for more details.

**In the description of the *summon monster I* spell, there’s a sentence that says in the last round of the duration of the spell that the monster “acts normally.” Does this mean that the monster acts normally for the type of monster it is—that is, no longer under the control of the summoner?**

No, it means that there are no special limits on what the creature can do during the last round of the spell. It takes a normal round’s worth of actions, then disappears.

**My wizard used *summon monster VI* to summon a red slaad for a battle. One of a slaad’s attacks is implanting eggs in its victims, which is apparently how slaadi reproduce. Will the eggs disappear when the spell expires and the slaad departs, or do they remain?**

Any magical effect a summoned creature creates ends when the summoning ends (even if it is normally permanent). Many such effects, however, actually have instantaneous durations, but lasting consequences. Energy drain, for example, is instantaneous, though the victim may feel the loss for a long time.

Anything separated from a summoned creature’s body also vanishes when the summoning ends. This includes parts severed from the body and anything produced from the creature’s body, such as poison or eggs. In the case of poison, any effects the venom already has caused remain. For example, a summoned fiendish viper bites and poisons a character, who takes 3 points of temporary Constitution damage. If the summoning ends before the poison’s onset time expires, the poisoned character takes no additional effects from the poison, but the 3 points of temporary Constitution damage remain.

**Can a summoned monster summon another monster? What if it has a racial ability to summon others of its kind? For example, can a summoned mephit summon another mephit? Can either of these creatures immediately summon again once they are summoned, or is there a waiting period prior to them acting normally and using the special ability?**

A summoned creature cannot use any of its own summoning abilities (see Summoning, page 157 of the *Player’s Handbook*) while the effect that summoned it lasts. This applies to any spells or devices it has as well as to any innate summoning abilities it has.

**Our companion was turned to stone, and we want to use a *teleport* spell to get him out of danger. Does his weight increase, or is it the same? What would the weight change be if it does?**

Stone is certainly heavier than flesh. As a rule of thumb, a petrified character is about 2.5 times heavier than normal.

**Assuming you are high enough level to cast a persistent *time stop* spell, could you use the virtual 24 hours the spell lasts to rest and recover your spells?**

You can’t make *time stop* persistent. (Its duration is effectively instantaneous for purposes of the Persistent Spell feat.)

**The 1st-level sorcerer/wizard spell *true strike* gives a +20 attack bonus on the user's next attack, but only for the duration of the spell, which is 1 round. First off, is +20 correct? Even if for only one attack, +20 seems like a major bonus for a 1st-level spell. Also, if I'm understanding initiative properly, the spell would expire on your initiative the following round. Would you be able to gain the bonus on that attack then? For example, if I have a wizard who moves her 30-foot speed and casts *true strike* (a one action spell), would she get the +20 attack bonus the next round when she moves another 30 feet and stabs a foe with her dagger?**

Yes, *true strike* grants a +20 bonus on your next attack.

In the D&D game, a "round" begins on your turn and ends when it's your turn again. In the case of *true strike*, the spell lasts until you make a single attack or one round passes. If you can't attack until the round after you cast the spell, your first action on the next round must be to attack, or you lose the benefit of the spell. The character in your example would have to attack before she moves on the round after she casts the spell to benefit from the spell.

**If you use the *true strike* spell and you get a threat, does the +20 bonus from the apply to the critical confirmation roll? Would the +20 bonus apply to the extra attacks you get from the Cleave, Great Cleave, or Whirlwind attack feats?**

When you roll to confirm a critical, you use whatever bonuses applied to the attack roll that made the threat, no matter where those bonuses came from.

*True strike* affects only one attack. (Rolling to confirm a critical is not a separate attack for this purpose.) If you make multiple attacks in a round, your bonus from *true strike* applies only to the first attack you make, no matter how you managed to get multiple attacks.

**How does the *true strike* spell work against invisible opponents? Do you have to know where they are to shoot them? Please explain how you would handle a character trying to use *true strike* against an invisible foe. I know the spell is supposed to negate any miss chance the attacker has, but what exactly does that mean?**

When you use a *true strike* spell against an opponent you cannot see, the procedure is exactly the same as it would be if you attacked without the benefit of the spell. You must choose a space to attack. If you chose the correct space (the one your opponent occupies) the *true strike* spell negates the 50% miss chance you would normally have for attacking an unseen foe, you roll normally to hit, and you get the spell's +20 insight bonus on the attack roll. If you attack the wrong space, you neatly hit the space you're aiming at, but if there's nothing there, you hit nothing.

The *true strike* spell negates any miss chance you might have for the target's concealment, but not any other miss chance. For example, *true strike* would negate the miss chance from the *displacement* spell or the miss chance for attacking in fog or an *obscuring mist* spell because both of those effects conceal the target. *True strike* does not negate the miss chance from the *blink* spell or the miss chance when attacking an incorporeal creature because those miss chances don't have anything to do with concealment.

**Can the servant you create with the *unseen servant* spell fly? Can it only move along the ground? Does the servant**

**trigger attacks of opportunity when it moves?**

Though an *unseen servant* does not have a fly speed, the caster can nevertheless direct the servant go anywhere within the spell's range (including up or down), provided that the servant does not pass through a solid barrier to get there and that the caster has line of effect to the servant at the beginning of its movement for the turn.

The servant's movement does not trigger attacks of opportunity (and the servant is not subject to melee attack in any case).

**Can an *unseen servant* run? Is it subject to encumbrance?**

Though the spell description mentions "running and fetching," an *unseen servant* cannot use the run action (because it has no Constitution score). An *unseen servant* has a Strength score, and it is subject to the encumbrance rules. It moves at its full speed of 15 feet only when carrying a load of 6 pounds or less. If carrying 7 to 20 pounds, its speed is 10 feet. It also moves at a speed of 10 feet when dragging 7 to 100 pounds. Because it has a Strength of 2, it can lift as much as 40 pounds (double its heavy load) and can move 5 feet a round (staggering) when doing so. Note that an *unseen servant* must move along the ground when dragging something, but it can move in three dimensions when carrying anything it can lift.

**An *unseen servant* has a Strength score of 2. What are its other ability scores (Dexterity, Constitution, Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma)?**

An *unseen servant* does not have any of these ability scores—it's merely a force—pure Strength.

**How much space does an *unseen servant* take up? Does it block a space or provide cover?**

An *unseen servant* is a shapeless force. It takes up no space (but as a spell effect it cannot pass barriers) and does not provide cover. It does not block attacks or magical effects, and it does not prevent movement through the space where it is located. When an *unseen servant* spell is cast, however, you do need to keep track of its location, because the spell ends if the caster goes out of range. You'll also need to know the servant's location to know how long it takes the servant to carry something to the caster, and, since area effects can destroy the servant, you'll need to know its location to know if an area effect can harm it.

**What sorts of tasks can an *unseen servant* do? Does it have any skills? Can it hold a curtain or rope rigid? Is there a limit to the number of objects the servant can carry?**

In general, an *unseen servant* can do anything human with a Strength score of 2 could do (but remember that it can move in three dimensions). The servant has no mind and no skills of its own. If left to operate on its own, it can perform very simple actions of the sort that a human could do while holding a conversation (sweeping the floor, darning a sock, flipping the pages of a book, picking up objects).

The servant has no senses and no ability to make judgments when left to operate on its own. For example, if directed to pick up objects and left to operate unattended, it cannot select specific objects to pick up, though you can instruct the servant to pick up objects of a certain size or weight when it is acting alone. For example, you can tell it to pick up all the Fine size objects the weight of a coin from the floor in a room. You cannot tell the servant to pick up all the coins and gems from

the floor. You can have the servant pick up only coins or gems, but only if you direct the servant to each coin or gem, but to do that you must see the coins or gems or know exactly where they are, and even then you must concentrate on the servant to have it perform so precisely.

A servant cannot perform any really complex task, even if you concentrate on the servant. You cannot use it to perform any task that requires a trained skill check or an untrained check with a difficulty higher than 10.

Though a servant can hold anything that it is strong enough to lift, it can hold only about 6 feet of a flexible object (such as a rope or curtain) rigid.

An *unseen servant* can carry any number of objects at once, so long as their total weight does not exceed its carrying capacity. Though the servant can carry any number of objects at once, it can manipulate only two of them at a time. For example, a servant could carry a broom, dustpan, mop, and bucket at once, but it could use only two of those at once.

**DRAGON Magazine 268, page 25, says a *wall of force* spell remains in place regardless of the caster's wishes unless he or she uses *dispel magic*. The description of the *wall of force* spell in the *Player's Handbook*, however, says *wall of force* is dismissible and that it is not subject to dispel magic. Which is right?**

The *Player's Handbook* is right on both counts. *Wall of force* is dismissible and it is impervious to *dispel magic*—even dispels from the *wall of force* caster. While you automatically succeed on dispel checks against spells you have cast yourself, a successful dispel check has no effect on a *wall of force*.

**A *wall of force* is transparent. Does that mean you can cast spells on the other side of it? I know if the spell actually travels from the caster to the target that it will be blocked, but what about situations where you designate the originating point, such as *flame strike*? Common sense suggests that it would be possible to cast such spells, but I know I am going to need more than common sense to resolve this issue.**

Perhaps you are confusing the rule for line of effect with the rule for line of sight. If your spell has a target entry, you must have line of sight to your target or be able to touch your target (see Aiming a Spell in Chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook*). If your spell has an effect or area, you need not see the place where you aim the spell, but you have to designate the place where you're aiming somehow (also see Aiming a Spell in Chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook*). So, if your line of sight is blocked by something that does not also block line of effect (such as darkness), you can still cast an area or effect spell through the blockage.

A *wall of force* blocks line of effect, just like any other solid barrier. As noted above, you need line of effect between you and the point of origin for your spell (or to your spell's target, or to the space in which you create an effect with a spell; see Line of Effect in Chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook*).

If the line of effect from the example *flame strike* spell passes through a *wall of force*, the spell is blocked. The blocked spell fails and is wasted. The spellcaster knows the spell failed but does not necessarily know why. A successful Spellcraft check (DC 15) reveals that line of effect was somehow blocked.

**If you try to enclose someone with a hemispherical *wall of force*, do they get any sort of save to avoid being trapped? By the book, the answer is clearly no. However, the *wall of ice* spell description specifically mentions that targets get a save from this use of the spell. That leads one to think that there should have been a mention, one way or the other, for *wall of force*. Was the omission intentional? In any case, what is the result of a successful save?**

A hemispherical *wall of ice* does allow a save to avoid being trapped underneath—that's why the spell's save entry says "see text." A successful save allows creatures under the hemisphere to immediately move out from underneath by the shortest safe route, just as with a *blade barrier* spell.

There is no save against a hemispherical *wall of force*, and that's why the spell's saving throw entry reads "none."

**If I'm caught in a *web* spell, but I'm at the edge of the area of effect, can someone else outside the web melee with me without getting entangled? What if they stick a spear at me? Does the spear get caught automatically, or just if it misses me?**

I'm assuming that by the "edge" of a *web* effect, you mean that there is not 5 or more feet of webbing between you and your opponent, leaving you sort of embedded in one side of the mass of webbing. You are subject to attack, you get no cover from the webbing, and you are entangled (–4 to your effective Dexterity score).

Only creatures that are in the *web* spell's area of effect when the spell is cast can become stuck in the webs, and then only if they fail their Reflex saves. Your opponents can whack away at you without fear of getting stuck themselves, no matter what weapons they use.

**Will a *wind wall* spell affect a sling bullet or sling stone?**

Yes, a sling bullet or stone has a 30% miss chance (just like any other normal ranged weapon does) if it passes through the wall.

**With the *wish* spell, one of the things you can wish for is an inherent bonus of +1 to an ability score. With many *wish* spells cast in rapid order, you can get a +2 to +5 inherent bonus. Is this bonus applied to the ability score itself? Or is it a bonus applied only to rolls that the ability modifies?**

An inherent bonus applies to the ability score. For example, if a character with a Strength score of 14 gains a +1 inherent bonus to Strength, the character's Strength increases to 15. Apply the ability's new ability modifier to all rolls the ability affects.

# Miscellaneous

Questions that defy easy categorization fall into the Miscellaneous category. Questions about similar topics should fall together in this section.

**We've noticed a number of times where you can divide a number and round the quotient up or down, but the rules doesn't say what to do. Is there a general rule that we've overlooked?**

Indeed there is. You'll find it on the first page of the glossary (page 275) in the *Player's Handbook*. Always round a fraction down (even if it is bigger than one half) unless the rules tell you to round up.

**Is a natural "20" always a hit and natural "1" always a miss when using weapons? Is a natural "20" always a success and natural "1" always a failure when rolling a saving throw? Is a natural "20" always a success and natural "1" always a failure when rolling an ability check or a skill check?**

On an attack roll or a saving throw, a roll of "20" on the die is always a success and a roll of "1" is always a failure. This represents the inherently chancy nature of combat; it has innumerable variables that are completely beyond the acting character's control. In the case of attack rolls, common sense must prevail. A roll of "20" cannot produce a hit when a hit is not possible. (For example: It won't hit when a target is beyond the attacker's melee reach or beyond a ranged attack's maximum range.) Some circumstances always produce a hit or a miss no matter what the attack roll is. For example, an attack against a concealed target has a flat chance to produce an automatic miss (see Table 8–10 in the *Player's Handbook*), no matter what the attack roll is. Likewise if you're using the coup de grace rule or take a full round to line up a melee attack on an unattended object, you always hit.

Saving throws are similar to attack rolls in that there's always a little something beyond the character's control. Like combat, there are cases where the roll is irrelevant, even if it's a "1" or "20." Creatures that are immune to an attack never have to roll saving throws against that attack. Likewise, if a spell or attack form doesn't allow a saving throw in the first place, you can't roll a saving throw and hope to get a "20."

Skill checks are not subject to automatic success or failure. Some tasks are just too easy for failure or too hard for success. (Most people don't fail once on every 20 attempts to tie their shoes.) Ability checks are likewise not subject to automatic failure or success. (No matter how lucky you are, you're just not going to kick down a castle wall.) If the DM feels that chance might affect the outcome, a saving throw or attack roll is probably more appropriate.

**A rogue in my party has no magic weapons but did a sneak attack against a monster with damage reduction 20/+2. How should this attack be resolved? Do I roll the damage for the hit, add the bonus damage from the sneak attack, then compare the total to the DR? Or is there no sneak attack damage unless the basic attack beats the DR? According to what I could find in the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, special effects from ranged or melee attacks don't apply unless they're magical, such as fire damage from the flaming weapon, or the attack that delivered the special**

**effect beats the DR. So, is sneak attack a special effect?**

A sneak attack provides bonus damage, not a special effect. In a sneak attack, roll the bonus damage and apply that against the DR. For example, a rogue who hits a foe that has DR 20/+2 with a nonmagic short sword for 6 points of damage doesn't get through the DR. If the same rogue sneak attacks for 25 points of damage, 5 points get through DR.

If the same rogue struck the same foe with a poisoned short sword for 6 points of damage, the foe would not be damaged, and the poison would not take effect because the DR stops all the damage. The same rogue sneak attacking the same foe with a poisoned short sword for 25 points of damage would deal 5 points to the foe and the foe would then have to save against the poison.

**Just how much temporary ability damage can a character heal in a day? Suppose my character has fought a battle with a couple of shadows and also has been poisoned a few times. The character has taken 4 points of temporary Strength damage, 3 points of Constitution damage, and 1 point of Wisdom damage. The character regains 1 point of ability damage in a day, so what do the character's ability scores look like after 1 day? If my character gets bed rest and regains 2 points of ability damage, what happens then?**

In one day of light activity (no combat or spellcasting), the character heals 1 point for each damaged ability. After one day of bed rest the character regains 2 points to each damaged ability.

**Can a paralyzed person voluntarily stop breathing (if submerged) to avoid drowning?**

Yes. A paralyzed creature is unable to move or take physical actions, but holding one's breath is not a physical action for game purposes.

**Are fear effects persistent if the frightened or cowering character goes to negative hit points and then is raised to positive hit points?**

Yes. Losing consciousness doesn't break a *fear* effect.

**The rules on page 153 of the *Player's Handbook* say a character who is resurrected immediately loses a level of experience, or a point of Constitution if the character is 1st level. If a multiclass character is brought back to life, (for instance, a 5th-level fighter/4th-level wizard) does the character get to choose which level is removed? Or is it the highest level that the character has attained? Would this level loss immediately result in the -20% XP loss if the levels differed by more than 1?**

You lose the highest level; this may actually remove an XP penalty by making character's class levels more even.

**When a character loses a level, how do you lose levels in an abandoned class? For example, what happens to an ex-paladin or and ex-bard? Can you lose levels of experience in a class whose abilities you no longer have access to?**

Yes, you can lose these levels. The loss works just like any other level loss. (Hit points, skills, saves, attack bonus and any other benefits the level grants are lessened accordingly.) In most cases, the character cannot regain the lost class level by



earning experience (to gain a level in a class, you have to meet any requirements the class may have), though the character could earn a level in another class instead.

**Does a character with a low Strength score really deal more damage with his off hand? The rules say you apply half your Strength bonus on an off hand attack. Also, you get one and a half times your Strength bonus when using a two-handed weapon. So does a character with a Strength penalty deal even less damage with a two-handed weapon? I am similarly confused over Dexterity modifiers and Armor Class.**

A bonus is a positive modifier and a penalty is a negative modifier. There are no negative bonuses or positive penalties in the game. When attacking with an off hand or with a two-handed weapon, you take your full Strength penalty. When surprised, you lose your Dexterity bonus, but you retain your Dexterity penalty.

**Do inherent bonuses stack? Let's say a fighter with a Strength score of 16 finds a *manual of gainful exercise +1* or simply wishes for a +1 inherent bonus to Strength. What happens if the character later receives a *manual of gainful exercise +2*?**

Inherent bonuses don't stack. The character in your example would benefit only from the larger +2 inherent bonus and would have a Strength score of 18.

**When you gain skill points or a feat, do you have to spend the points or choose the feat right away? Is there any way to save skill points or feats?**

You have to spend skill points or choose feats as soon as you get them.

There's no reason for DMs to be absolute about this. If you're running a campaign and one of your players just can't decide right away, it's okay to let the player wait awhile, but the character must spend the points or choose the feat before the character in question gains another level. Just delay all the benefits for the new level until the player spends the points or chooses the feat.

**If you go from a medium load to a heavy load, your movement doesn't change. Why is this? Everything else changes?**

Because a really heavy load just doesn't affect your speed that much. It will affect your ability to accelerate, maneuver, or stop, which is why the heavily loaded creature's maximum Dexterity bonus goes down and its check penalty goes up. Essentially, the creature can lumber along at a pretty good clip once it gets going.

**How far can someone throw something that is not a weapon? How much damage would a hit with such an object deal?**

Here's an informal system the Sage worked up for throwing things. It's offered to readers for commentary and playtesting.

You can throw an item that weighs up to one third your light load rating as an improvised thrown weapon. Your light load rating depends on your Strength score and size, as shown on Table 9-1 in the *Player's Handbook*. Improvised thrown weapons are discussed on page 97 of the *Player's Handbook*. Remember that nobody is proficient with an improvised thrown weapon, and an attack with an improvised thrown weapon takes a -4 nonproficiency penalty. You can throw the item with

one hand, provided it is no larger or heavier than what would be a one-handed weapon for you (see page 97 in the *Player's Handbook*). Medium-size weapons (which Medium-size creatures can wield one-handed), for example, range from clubs to dwarven waraxes. Anything bigger than what would be a one-handed weapon for you must be thrown with two hands and the throw requires a full-round action.

If you want to throw an object that's heavier than one third your light load, you cannot use it as a weapon. Instead, you make a Strength check to lob it near your target in the hopes of doing some damage. The result of the check determines the distance you throw the object, according to the guidelines below. If the item does not exceed your light load rating, triple the distance you can throw it as figured by the guidelines below. If the item exceeds your light load rating but does not exceed your medium load rating, double the distance as figured by the guidelines below.

For a running throw (at least 10 feet of movement toward your target), you throw the item 5 feet +1 foot per point your Strength check exceeds 10.

For a standing throw, you can throw the item 5 feet +1 foot per 2 points your Strength check exceeds 10.

If the item exceeds your maximum load rating but is not heavier than what you can lift, 5 feet is the maximum distance you can throw the item (but see below); you can't throw what you can't lift. For these heavy objects, don't bother with an attack roll. Just have the thrower pick a spot for the object to land.

If the Strength check result is too low to reach the target spot, the DM should pick one that's on a straight line between the thrower and the target spot. All such heavy objects require two hands to throw and thus throwing them is a full-round action.

In all such cases, use the deviation diagrams on page 69 of the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide* to see where the item really lands (assume a range increment of 10 feet). It's possible that the deviation roll will make the item travel slightly farther than the Strength roll indicates. If the throw was only 5 feet, do not roll for deviation.

A creature in the object's landing space gets a Reflex save (DC 15 + the thrower's Strength modifier) to avoid the object.

Damage from an improvised thrown weapon or a larger thrown item is equal to the thrower's unarmed strike damage or 1d6 points per 200 pounds of weight (which is the minimum for a falling object of that weight, see page 89 in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*), whichever is higher.

Here are a few numbers that illustrate the effects of this system:

A human with a Strength score of 12 throws a 16-pound bowling ball, on average, 18 feet on a standing throw and 21 feet on a running throw. Maximum on the standing throw is 40 feet, and maximum on the running throw is 50 feet.

At 4th level, Krusk, the half-orc barbarian (Strength 18), can throw a full keg of beer (160 pounds) 14 feet standing and 18 feet running. Maximum distances are 24 feet and 38 feet respectively.

A 20th-level Tordek (Strength 30) can throw his warhorse (1,400 pounds) 10 feet standing and 15 feet running. Maximum distances are 20 feet and 35 feet respectively.

**It seems that when a creature is burdened (carrying a medium or heavy load) its movement is lessened. But what is the formula for that reduction? Is it simply reducing the speed by 10 feet? (For creatures with base speeds of 40 feet**

and 30 feet that works.) Or does the creature lose some fraction of its speed? How does this encumbered movement affect a creature's speed on the local or overland scale?

Encumbered movement is explained on page 142 in the *Player's Handbook* (Table 9–2). You can figure out any creature's encumbered movement by comparing base speed to Table 9–2, which shows base speeds of 20 and 30 feet. To find encumbered speed for other creatures, just add up the values for slower creatures. For example a creature with speed of 60 moves twice as fast as a creature with a speed of 30, so its encumbered speed is 40 feet. Common encumbered speeds are listed on the page before. You can use the same method to find a creature's speed on the local or overland scales. Common local and overland speeds are listed below.

**Does the armor you wear change your encumbrance? I seem to remember reading somewhere that it does not, but my friends all think otherwise.**

The *D&D Conversion Guide*, which is still available as a

download from the Wizards of the Coast website <[http://www.wizards.com/dnd/DnD\\_CYC\\_intro.asp](http://www.wizards.com/dnd/DnD_CYC_intro.asp)>, says that armor does not contribute to encumbrance, but that is incorrect. (It probably was correct when the *Conversion Guide* was written, but the rules changed a bit after its release.) You'll find the actual rule in Chapter 9 in the *Player's Handbook* (page 141). It says that all the weight a character carries (including the weight of any armor worn) affects encumbrance. For a character wearing armor, use either the encumbrance category that the armor imposes, or the one that the total weight carried imposes, whichever is worse.

For example, suppose a human with a Strength score of 18 wears a breastplate (30 pounds) and also carries 25 pounds of weapons and miscellaneous gear, for a total load of 55 pounds. A Medium-size character with a Strength score of 18 can carry up to 100 pounds and still be lightly loaded, but a breastplate is medium armor, so the character has a medium load. However, the character can pick up an additional 145 pounds of stuff and still have only a medium load.

## Speed Table

Base Speed	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	15	10	5
<b>Encumbered Speed</b>	70	65	60	50	40	35	30	20	15	10	5	5
<b>One Minute (Local)</b>												
Current Speed*	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	15	10	5
Walk	1,000	900	800	700	600	500	400	300	200	150	100	50
Hustle	2,000	1,800	1,600	1,400	1,200	1,000	800	600	400	300	200	100
Run (3)	3,000	2,700	2,400	2,100	1,800	1,500	1,200	900	600	450	300	150
Run (4)	4,000	3,600	3,200	2,800	2,400	2,000	1,600	1,200	800	600	400	200
<b>One Hour (Overland)**</b>												
Current Speed*	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	15	10	5
Walk	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1.5	1	0.5
Hustle	20	18	16	14	12	10	8	6	4	3	2	1
<b>One Day (Overland)</b>												
Current Speed*	100	90	80	70	60	50	40	30	20	15	10	5
Walk	80	72	64	56	48	40	32	24	16	12	8	4

\*Use normal or encumbered speed, whichever applies to the creature.

\*\*Overland movement is measured in miles.