Alchemist Apprentice Background

You are an alchemist of some renown, having established yourself in the field after a lengthy apprenticeship to a well-established master.

Forgoing the mercantile side of the profession, you’ve lived your life tinkering, experimenting, and improving upon alchemical concoctions.

While lacking the support of a guild, your master’s teachings advanced your mastery of the art. You may not have the mercantile success that comes with guild membership, but that’s allowed the freedom to ponder new ways to improve each tincture you brew.

**Skill Proficiencies**: [Medicine](http://www.5esrd.com/using-ability-scores/#Medicine), Nature

**Tool Proficiencies**: Alchemist’s supplies

**Language**: One of your choice

**Equipment**: A set of alchemist’s supplies, one vial of acid, a set of common clothes, and a belt pouch containing four empty vials and 5 gp.

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Alchemical Specialization

Alchemists generally dwell in large cities where they can develop and enhance their craft, but it is not unusual to find them even in the smallest of villages.

Often eccentric and obsessed with a particular field of study, most alchemists choose a specialty to master. Choose or randomly determine your specialization.

| **d8** | **Alchemical Specialization** |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | Snake oils and “miracle” cures |
| 2 | Deadly toxins |
| 3 | Restorative elixirs |
| 4 | Explosives and inflammables |
| 5 | Glues, solvents, and similar agents |
| 6 | Acids, bases, and everything in between |
| 7 | Cosmetic aids and alterations |
| 8 | Hangover cures and minor medicinals |

Feature: Chemical Exposure

As an alchemist, you’ve likely been exposed to a wide range of chemicals by design or otherwise.

Consequently, you’ve learned to quickly identify what properties a nonmagical substance might have—ideally before it causes any damage to you or your work by sampling a portion or inhaling the scent. Your experience limits accidental injury during such analyses. At the GM’s discretion, this feature may work with magical substances, but accidental exposure is much more likely.

Suggested Characteristics

Alchemists are well known for their hard work and obsessive nature. Even non-adventuring alchemists are eccentric at best. They value science and knowledge above almost all else, and are particularly vulnerable to blurring the lines of morality if it means furthering their craft.

| **d6** | **Personality Trait** |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | The past is the greatest teacher, the future the worst student. |
| 2 | I deal in facts and only facts, though I may often withhold them when speaking to my rivals. |
| 3 | I’ll readily curry favor with others… if I think I can use them later. |
| 4 | I am a stickler for the fine line between alchemy and magic. |
| 5 | Through discovery, I discover myself. |
| 6 | Nature provides for me; I innovate for it. |
| **d6** | **Ideal** |
| 1 | Scientific Method. Structured learning is key to societal and social success. (Lawful) |
| 2 | Treatment. Innumerable people can benefit from my talents. (Good) |
| 3 | Experimentation. Imagination is boundless. The law is not. (Chaotic) |
| 4 | Greed. Wealth is worth any of its consequences. (Evil) |
| 5 | Knowledge. A day’s learning is never done. (Neutral) |
| 6 | Mastery. Only in the relentless pursuit of perfection can one achieve excellence. (Any) |

| **d6** | **Bond** |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | My master’s reputation was falsely ruined. I just need to prove it. |
| 2 | Alchemy may always be evolving, but I want to revolutionize it. |
| 3 | The thieves that stole my greatest work don’t know that I’m still after them. |
| 4 | The natural world is the source of my reagents, so my work must help protect it. |
| 5 | I know my craft can help heal and protect the meek. |
| 6 | I am a living library of knowledge, and seek an apprentice of my own. |
| **d6** | **Flaw** |
| 1 | For all my work, I can’t save two coppers! |
| 2 | I’ll do whatever it takes to be the best and stay there. |
| 3 | I need to keep notes for everything, or I’m bound to forget. |
| 4 | Everything I’ve learned I stole from someone else. |
| 5 | Alchemy was not my first love, but it will be my last. |
| 6 | The accident that caused my master’s death wasn’t her fault—it was mine. |

Variant Alchemist’s Apprentice: Self-Made Master

Not every alchemist is fortunate enough to earn an apprenticeship. Instead, you may simply have an innate knack for alchemy or learn it through extensive trial and error. You might never have had someone teaching you the ropes, but you’ve learned them the hard way—your way. As a result of your unorthodox education in alchemy, however, you tend to approach problems a little differently. your acids are just as caustic, your poisons as deadly, and your tonics as soothing, but you lack the careful, practiced methodology that apprenticeship teaches.

If you wish to be a self-made master, use the Unorthodox Alchemy feature, below. You may trade your skill proficiency with Medicine for Survival, if you learned your trade in the wilderness, or for Deception, if you practiced it in secret.

Variant Feature: Unorthodox Alchemy

You may select this background feature instead of Chemical Exposure.

Your alchemy is a little different from everyone else, but that’s what makes it special. Your unique way of approaching the science grants you an esoteric knowledge of the world. When attempting to recall a piece of dArcana or Nature lore, you often have an idea on how to learn more, even if you don’t know anything specific. Usually, this method involves experimental, time-consuming, and potentially dangerous alchemy. Your GM might rule that there are certain things you cannot know nor further explore via alchemy.

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