

Epic Level Handbook

Frequently Asked Questions

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About the FAQ

If you have a question about *Epic Level Handbook*, chances are that you'll find them within this FAQ. Any new additions or major corrections in a version are provided in blue text for your convenience. Blue text changes to black text in the next version. If you have a question that isn't answered here, please contact 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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Page 6 of the *Epic Level Handbook* says one's base attack bonus does not increase after 20th (character) level. The fastest base attack progression I know is +1 per class level (which fighters and similar martial characters get). Yet for certain epic prestige classes, such as the divine emissary on page 27, one of the prerequisites is a base attack bonus of +23. Am I missing something obvious here?

Your epic attack bonus improves your base attack bonus for all purposes, except the number of attacks you can make in a round (see the next question).

The description for the Power Attack feat says you cannot exceed your base attack bonus when applying bonus damage. In an epic campaign, does your epic attack bonus apply for this condition? Also, does your epic attack bonus stack with base attack bonus for feats like Improved Manyshot?

Yes, an epic attack bonus increases your base attack bonus for purposes of the Power Attack feat, Improved Manyshot, and for most other purposes.

Does the Epic Prowess feat stack with Base attack, or is it simply a bonus to attack?

Epic Prowess provides an unnamed bonus to attack rolls. It does not increase your base attack bonus.

The feats Epic Weapon Focus and Epic Weapon Specialization grant a +2 bonus on attack and a +4 bonus on damage respectively. Do these numbers stack with regular weapon focus and specialization or do they overlap the original bonuses?

They stack (as all unnamed bonuses do).

The feats Epic Fortitude, Epic Reflexes, and Epic Will neither state what sort of save bonus they grant (inherent, competence, and so on) nor do they state whether or not they stack with Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, or Iron Will. Do these bonuses stack or not?

All the feats you've named provide unnamed bonuses and they all stack—but you can't take any of these feats twice (that is, you can take Great Fortitude and Epic Fortitude and stack their effects, but you can't stack either one with itself or even take it twice).

In feats where no bonus type is listed, is there a default type one should consider the bonus to be?

If no bonus is named, then the feat provides an unnamed bonus. Note, however, that some feats might seem to provide a bonus, but actually do not.

What kind of bonus do the Great Strength through Charisma Epic feats provide? Is it an inherent bonus similar to that granted by a Wish spell? Or is it like the natural increase from level-acquired ability bonuses?

These feats don't provide bonuses; they merely increase your ability scores, just as the ability bonus you get from your character level increases an ability score.

The Epic Dodge feat has the prerequisite of "defensive roll class feature." I have no idea what that means. Help!

Defensive roll is a class feature available to rogues of 10th level or higher. See the rogue class description in the *Player's Handbook* (page 48) for a description of the ability. Several prestige classes also include this class feature.

Can a character who has not reached epic levels achieve the results listed for an epic level skill DC? For example, suppose my 10th-level wizard could achieve a Spellcraft result of 50 through some combination of ability bonuses and skill bonuses; could the character identify potions quickly?

Yes. Anyone who can manage a sufficiently high skill check result can get an "epic" result.

The Listen and Spot skills have a DC 80 to automatically defeat illusions with auditory and visual aspects, respectively, without even needing to make a Will save. Is there some way to counter this automatic detect? Or is the epic illusionist simply not viable?

If someone can see or hear, there's no way to keep that person from detecting a visible or audible illusion with a Spot or Listen check, just as there is no way to keep the same person from making a Will save to accomplish the same thing. Of course, you could do something that interferes with Spot or Listen checks, such as creating magical darkness or silence; however, either of these methods could make your illusion moot.

A high-level illusionist could stick to phantasms (though one could argue that most of those have "visual" elements, phantasms are purely mental and cannot be defeated through Spot or Listen checks), or use shadows (which are quasi real and also cannot be defeated through Spot or Listen checks), or hope her foes can't make DC 80 Listen or Spot checks (hardly a vain hope).

I am a bit confused on the epic character rules regarding spells per day and base attack bonus. Suppose Reynard has 20 levels of fighter, then takes 20 levels of wizard. Now suppose Meynard has 20 levels of wizard, then 20 levels of fighter. Ignoring ability bonuses and such, how many spells per day could each cast and what would his base attack bonus be? (Assume Intelligence is high enough to cast 9th-level spells.)

Assuming neither character takes the Improved Spell Capacity feat, and that both have the same Intelligence score, both example characters will have the same number of spells per day: 4 spells of each spell level 0–9, plus bonus spells for Intelligence. You don't get any extra spells for having 21 or more levels in a spellcasting class, but a multiclass character still gets all the spells to which he'd normally be entitled for class levels 1–20, no matter what his total character level is.

Your base attack bonus, however, is capped at whatever you had when you reached character level 20. After character level 20, you gain only an epic attack bonus, no matter what class you take. Reynard, the fighter/wizard, has a base attack bonus of +20 and an epic attack bonus of +10. When using the full attack action, Reynard gets 4 attacks: +30/+25/+20/+15.

Meynard, the wizard/fighter has a base attack bonus of +10 and an epic attack bonus of +10 and gets 2 attacks with the full attack action: +20/+15.

Once you reach caster level 20 in any spellcasting class, you no longer gain any spells per day without the appropriate feat, right? Does a wizard of level 21 or higher, however, still learn two spells for every level gained even though she gets no additional spells to cast each day? What about other level-based benefits?

Yes to both. Once you reach 20th-level in a spellcasting class, you no longer gain any more spells per day for that class. The Improved Spell Capacity feat, however, will give you more daily spells. No matter what spellcasting class you have, your caster level continues to increase as you add levels to that class beyond 20. As noted on pages 16–17 of the *Epic Level Handbook*, a wizard still gains two new spells to add to her spellbook at each level, and a wizard's familiar continues to improve. The wizard also gets 2 (+ Intelligence bonus) skill points at each level beyond 20 and gets save and attack bonus as an epic level character.

How do I choose feats for my multiclass, epic level character? Suppose I have a character that is a 17th-level cleric/3rd-level fighter. For my 21st level I take my 4th level of fighter. Now, my 4th level of fighter gives me a bonus feat. Is this bonus feat chosen from the list of basic bonus feats detailed in the *Player's Handbook*, or is it from the epic level fighter feats in the *Epic Level Handbook* or can I choose from either one?

The example character gets a bonus feat for becoming a 4th-level fighter. That feat has to be a non-epic feat from the fighter's list of bonus feats. To get an epic bonus feat, the class level that gives you the bonus feat has to be an epic level (21 or higher).

As 21st-level character, the example character also gets a regular feat, which can be a non-epic feat or an epic feat. To get epic regular feats, the character level that gives you the feat has to be an epic level (21 or higher). Note that the example character has an epic character level without having any epic class levels.

Suppose I reach 21st-level in a spellcasting class (say wizard) and I choose Improved Spell Capacity as my epic feat. Is it true that I get only one 10th-level spell slot? How can I get an 11th-level spell slot? Do I have to choose Improved Spell Capacity again the next time I can pick up an epic feat?

When you choose Improved Spell Capacity, you choose any spell level up to one higher than the level of spell you can currently cast. If you add a new level of spell, you also gain any bonus spells to which you would normally be entitled. If the example character has an Intelligence score of 31 and chooses to add a 10th-level spell slot, she would have three 10th-level slots (1 for the feat, plus 2 bonus 10th-level spells).

To get an 11th-level spell slot, the example character would have to take Improved Spell Capacity again. If the example character has an Intelligence score of 31, taking Improved Spell Capacity again would give the character only one 11th-level spell slot, because Intelligence 31 is not sufficient to get a bonus 11th-level spell (see Table 1–35 in the *Epic Level Handbook*).

The chart on page 59 in the *Epic Level Handbook* shows

the bonus spell from the Improved Spell Capacity feat and the bonus spell for the high ability score. Am I right?

Right. If you've used Improved Spell Capacity to gain a spell slot of any level of 10 or higher, Table 1–35: Expanded Ability Modifiers and Bonus Spells in the *Epic Level Handbook* shows the correct number of spells and bonus spells for you. For example, if you're a wizard with an Intelligence score of 44 and you've gained a 10th-level spell slot through the Improved Spell Capacity feat, you get three 10th-level spells a day: one from the feat and two bonus spells from your Intelligence score.

If you're a specialist wizard, do you get a bonus spell for each spell level you gain from the Improved Spell Capacity feat?

Yes, when you're a specialist wizard and you get access to spells of a new spell level, you also get a bonus spell (of your specialty school) for that spell level.

It is true that all my arcane spellcaster needs to cast epic healing spells (using the heal or life seeds) is to have the 24 ranks of Knowledge (Religion)? Or do I also have to be a divine spellcaster?

It depends on how you're using the heal or life seed.

Most spells that use the heal or life seeds are divine spells, which are not available to arcane spellcasters. Some spells that use these seeds, however, manipulate negative energy and are available as arcane spells (see the descriptions of the heal and life seeds for details). For example, you would have to be a divine spellcaster with the Epic Spellcasting feat to use the *Origin of Species: Achaierai* epic spell (because it uses the life seed and is not a negative energy spell).

Note that you must have the Epic Spellcasting feat before using any spell seed, and you must first develop an epic spell before you can cast it. Once you have the Epic Spellcasting feat, you can use pretty much use any seed you want, except that the heal and life seeds are generally restricted to divine spellcasters.

To qualify as a "divine caster," you must be able to cast 9th-level divine spells and have 24 ranks of Knowledge (Religion) or 24 ranks of Knowledge (Nature).

As a divine spellcaster, what does a druid is have to do to cast epic spells? How do you determine how many epic spells a druid can cast each day?

A druid has to have the Epic Spellcasting feat to cast epic spells, just as any other epic spellcaster does. It does not matter how the druid qualifies for the feat. As a divine spellcaster, the druid is limited to a number of epic spells each day equal to 1/10th his Knowledge (nature) ranks or 1/10th his Knowledge (religion) ranks—whichever is higher.

Our 27th-level bard has taken the Improved Spell Capacity feat four times and now she wants to take the Epic Spellcasting feat. Can she do this? If so, will it do her any good?

If the character has an epic feat slot available and meets the prerequisites for Epic Spellcasting, yes. A bard who has taken the Improved Spell Capacity feat at least three times (and has a Charisma score of at least 19) can cast 9th-level spells and can qualify for the Epic Spellcasting feat. Once your bard has the feat, she can start developing and casting epic spells.

Other spellcasting characters, such as paladins and rangers, also can do the same thing, provided they take the Improved Spell Capacity feat enough times to enable them to cast 9th-level spells and provided they have the necessary ability scores to cast 9th-level spells.

Many epic feats have ability scores of 25+ as prerequisites, for example Epic Endurance has a prerequisite of Constitution 25+ and the Endurance feat. Is that base or with magic items? If a character has a Constitution score of 21, a +4 amulet of health, and the Endurance feat, does that meet the prerequisite?

Yes. Always use your current ability score (no matter how you managed to get it) to determine if you qualify for any feat. Keep in mind that you cannot use a feat if you no longer meet the prerequisites (which may happen if you lose the item you're depending on to meet a prerequisite).

Can you use the Automatic Quicken Spell feat to quicken a metamagiced spell? For example, could you automatically quicken a silent *magic missile*?

Yes, but you must use the spell's higher metamagiced level to determine if the spell is automatically quickened. Since Silent Spell adds only 1 level to the spell, you could automatically quicken a silent *magic missile* or any other spell of level 0, 1, or 2. Of course, you need to have the Silent Spell feat to this, and the quickened, silent *magic missile* uses up a 2nd-level spell slot (just as any silent *magic missile* would).

Which of the following spells could be used with the Epic feat Permanent Emanation: Any of the “*detect*” spells; *antilife shell*, *antimagic field*, *eyebite*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, *silence*, *true seeing*?

To use Permanent Emanation with a spell, the spell must have an area entry and the area must be an emanation (see Area in Chapter 10 of the *Player's Handbook*).

The emanation spells in your list are *antilife shell*, *antimagic field*, *minor globe of invulnerability*, and *silence*. The other spells on your list are not emanation spells and Permanent Emanation will not work on them.

When I'm creating an epic spell and I change the target to an area, what is the default area?

There isn't one. Pay +10 to go from a target to an area, then pay the cost for the area you select. For example, if you're using the destroy seed and you want the spell to have a 40-foot cone as an area of, you pay +12 (+10 to make a target an area and +2 for the area).

It seems very easy to develop permanent epic spells and avoid any real cost for developing them just by piling up mitigating factors. It's true that there's a big multiplier for a permanent effect, but since you apply the multiplier last, you can mitigate the spell's DC down to nothing and then still wind up with nothing after applying the multiplier. Is that correct? Also, is there a minimum DC for an epic spell? Or can you really mitigate the DC down to nothing and so avoid any time or expense for developing the spell?

When you see a multiplier on Table 2-2: Epic Spell Factors, you apply the multiplier last after adding up all the

factors. You have to apply the multiplier before moving on to Table 2-3: Epic Spell Mitigating Factors. This makes it very difficult to reduce an epic spell's DC to nothing unless the spell is fairly weak as epic spells go.

There is no minimum DC for an epic spell; if you want to pile on the mitigating factors, you can go ahead. Keep in mind, however, that epic spells work on a pay-me-now-or-pay-me-later basis. You might avoid the development time and cost, but you'll pay for the mitigating factors every time you cast the spell. A smart spellcaster stops applying mitigating factors when she gets the DCs down to 10 + her Spellcraft score. Any more than that is a waste unless the spell in question is something you won't cast very often.

If this bothers you, feel free to impose a minimum DC on an epic spell. A DC 10 would be a good limit.

Can a magic trap be created with epic spells or spell seeds? If so, how would this affect Search or Disable Device checks?

You can't make a magic item that contains an epic spell, so you can't make a trap that contains one either. You could research an epic spell that functions as a trap (in the manner of a *glyph of warding* or a *symbol*). In the latter case, the Search and Disable Device DC is 20 + the epic spell's caster level.

The epic psion description says a psion's number of power points per day does not increase after 20th level. The very next line says that instead they get 34 power points per level. This seems contradictory. Could you clarify what was intended by these lines?

These lines are contradictory. An epic psion gains no more power points from level advancement after 20th level, but the limit on power points spent on a metapsionic power is 19 (though feats such as Improves Manifestation can increase that). Each time the psion achieves a new level, he learns a new power of any power level that he can manifest (according to his new level) that is within his primary discipline. Also, the Improved Manifestation feat (on page 58 of the *Epic Level Handbook*) grants 19 power points when first taken. You can take Improved Manifestation multiple times, and each time you'll gain additional extra power points equal to the previous benefit, plus 2. For example, when you take Improved Manifestation a second time, you gain 21 extra power points, and if you Improved Manifestation a third time, you gain 23 extra power points, and so on. The psion continues to gain bonus power points for a high ability score.

Can the Spell Stowaway feat be used by a creature that has only spell-like abilities, since they are mentioned specifically in the description? An epic half-celestial, for example?

Yes. Note that feat functions whenever the effect you designate is used near you, and it doesn't have to be a spell. It can be a spell-like ability, supernatural ability, or spell effect from a magic item (so long as it duplicates the spell you named when taking the Spell Stowaway feat).

The demilich description in the *Epic Level Handbook* says the entity has magic immunity, which is an extraordinary ability. The description says that the demilich is “immune to all magical and supernatural

effects,” then proceeds to caveat that statement, allowing three magical effects to hinder or harm it. Not included in that list is any mention of demiliches being impeded by *antimagic field*. If a demilich enters or is forced into an *antimagic field*, what happens? While it’s safe to assume that any magical enhancements, spell casting ability, and supernatural effects the entity cast on itself would be suppressed while the being is in the field, would the demilich itself be harmed? Would its “natural” attacks and mobility (fly, specifically) be compromised?

Though a demilich is not immune to antimagic, neither is it in any way vulnerable to antimagic; nothing special happens to the creature if it finds itself within an area of antimagic. It can still fly and its attacks still work—except that the paralysis effect is supernatural and therefore suppressed.

The demilich description says the creature has a flying speed of 180 (perfect), or the base lich’s supernatural flying ability, whichever is greater. What is “greater?” Also, does this mean a demilich with a supernatural flying ability will be immobilized in an antimagic field?

Any demilich has a natural ability to fly at a speed of 180, with perfect maneuverability. If the base lich had a supernatural flying ability, the demilich has that, too, and can use either its supernatural flying ability or its natural ability. It will do so only when the supernatural flying ability allows it a higher speed, and even then it might choose to use its natural ability if its supernatural flight allows for less maneuverability. Should the demilich’s supernatural flying ability ever be suppressed, it still can use its natural flying ability.