

# Megadungeon

#1





# MEGADUNGEON





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# HOW TO USE?

This contains dungeon resources dual-statted for Basic/Expert and 5th edition Dungeons and Dragons. It's done in the least invasive way possible. If the mechanical utility differs between the two editions, then they will be separated by the conjunction "or". E.g. "This provides a +2 bonus versus surprise or grants advantage on Wisdom(Perception) checks"

Numenhalla is not a "classic" dungeon in the sense that it contains kobolds and orcs, but is classic in the sense that you will feel as if you are exploring a strange fever dream of youth, filled with things you forgot you saw when you were younger, but now wonder how you ever forgot.

This is ostensibly a presentation of the Numenhalla megadungeon, but since it's being presented bit by bit, how do you use it? Lots of different ways. The most honest and wonderful thing you could do would use the entrance halls to start your own dungeon adding in sections from this as they are completed. You could break out the individual dungeon sections or modules and use them as lairs or over world dungeons. You can use any of the various bits or pieces, such as non-player characters or magic items in any campaign.

Megadungeons expand infinitely so connectors and dead ends like the ettercop map can be used as a lair, or a miniature themed area in the megadungeon.

## CONTACTING US

If you'd like to be a paid art or writing contributor, please feel free to send samples or queries to [campbell@oook.cz](mailto:campbell@oook.cz) with the subject line "Megadungeon Query". Also, if you like this, or have any thoughts I'd love to know. So would reddit, twitter, or any of those other places people talk about things they like.

Megadungeon exists because of your support. Your support, your actions, are the deciding factor in whether this project lives or dies.

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# AGONARCH'S ARGOT

Welcome to the first issue of Megadungeon!

It is impossible to publish a megadungeon. This is trivially proveable. Pick up your copy of Maze of the Blue Medusa, Rappan Athuk, or Stonehell—whichever megadungeon you have nearby. See how it is a discrete finite object?

Megadungeons are infinite.

I imagine a more pedantic person exists, who launches into tirade about how the experience of exploring such a space renders the physical object less discrete and less finite. And yet, if you play 100 sessions of Stonehell, what would you feel about restarting another Stonehell campaign. Would it feel exciting? Would it feel infinite?

Why Megadungeons?

Megadungeons are important. One has heard in passing about the mythic underworld and its relation to Dungeons and Dragons without understanding the immensity of it. I will speak as directly as I know how.

The world is interpreted by us based not on objects and physics, but meaning. You and your relationship to that world is incomplete by virtue of your autonomy. After meeting our basic needs, one of the ways we integrate with the world is that we explore our dangerous environment, acquire vital knowledge about ourselves and the world, and then return. It is the hero's journey; as long as you perform the steps—whether you did so in your imagination or in reality, the result is the same. You integrate the shadow within yourself and become more whole.

I speak as the oracle not in riddles to send you on a quest of understanding, but in plain direct language. If you are reading this, you are more likely to understand it already than not. I don't have the patience to hold your hand through this great work without end. Believe it or not. It makes me no never mind.

Oh, and to be sure to leave no doubt, one final message.

I am compelled to do this. At times throughout my life, I have had non-drug induced visions. Once I was introduced to the eidolon of Numenhalla, imagine my surprise when I later found myself within its halls. I have touched its walls and walked among its paths. I have gone only a few times and long to return. I have recorded what I remember. And from the depths of my unknowable interior, ideas have come unbidden to me, and I can only surmise that these represent drops of precious knowledge of Numenhalla's reality leaking into mine.

The work will never be finished, and you hold the first part in your hand. Welcome and enjoy.





# PILLARS OF MEGADUNGEON PLAY

There are three primary activities that take place within the megadungeon: Exploration, Encounters, and Extraction.

**Exploration:** This is the process of exploring the environment. The key factors are moving from area to area, examining things and searching for secrets, avoiding traps, and mapping.

Your choices struggle to conserve resources. Your approach determines your preparedness for battle. Gaining knowledge about your environment allows discoveries of hidden chambers and the ability to flee.

- Are you scouting ahead? Or will you be surprised by monsters?
- Will you discover secret rooms using your map?
- Will you avoid the traps and the relevant reduction in resources?
- Have you made good choices to maximize your distance moved per turn to minimize your chance of a wandering encounter?

**Encounters:** This occurs when you interact with other denizens. The key factors in this are surviving the encounter, extracting information from the denizen, and managing your faction relationships.

- Are you playing the factions against each other?
- What can you gain from the encounter, versus what you have to lose? Information? A quest? Fighting and losing hit points?
- If you do encounter a monster denizen, can you lure it away? avoid it? make sure you have the advantage when you kill it?

**Extraction:** Treasure is heavy. A substantial part Megadungeon game-play is attempting to remove treasure from the dungeon.

What is most valuable? How slowly are we willing to move (i.e. how many random encounters are we willing to expose ourselves to) bringing this treasure out of the dungeon?

- Did you bring a cart? a mule? Are you willing to take the extra risk of encounters by bringing a tasty mule?
- Do you have a method of determining which treasure is most valuable?

Megadungeon play is a slow, methodical, game, where every decision is one of degrees of badness, the tension mounting and mounting as you move further away from safety. When you discover a treasure hoard, you must pick and choose, knowing the more you take, the more vulnerable it makes you to death. When you become friendly with one faction, several others dislike you. Every choice is one between what you believe is the least worst option. And when action finally occurs, with the fire and the yelling and screaming and dying, you know you've already failed.

# NUMENHALLA

*Numenhalla lies beneath all cities,  
All mounts and valleys,  
And all lands.*

*Lord Typhon made it so,  
When he reforged the sun.*

*A great war had been fought  
The land ruined,  
But the mighty gods provided for their children.*

*The land was remade  
The sun, undone and made anew  
A lance burning across the sky with his promise;  
Men would again know peace.  
Once man had learned to live in peace,  
The promised land would arrive.*

*Mankind did leave in peace.  
They basked in the holy warmth of the gods  
Who provided guidance and service,  
But the promise was not upheld.*

*It has been many years since the gods have spoken to man,  
Their ancient altars long shadowed from glorious radiance,  
Only the oldest remember when the gods would speak.*

*Now the hour grows long and the future is uncertain.  
The crops are fallow.  
People are growing ill.  
Strange things roam at night.*

*Men seek answers by turning to dark powers,*

*It is said that Typhon and the gods below wander the Numenhalla  
For that is their home.*

*Perhaps they have fallen asleep,  
Perhaps they are imprisoned,  
Perhaps you have been abandoned.*

*The answers lie below,  
In the Numenhalla  
Where the gods are said to walk.*

**NUMENHALLA** is a deadly megadungeon with a grotty muppet aesthetic. All the action takes place within the dungeon itself. This is facilitated by design. Interaction in town is with a menu, and the gameplay begins once the players choose to enter the dungeon.

The introductory text above is true, both literally and figuratively. The world is coming to an end. Numenhalla is the puzzle that is the key to survival. The *Soma of the Gis* is the world that was reformed by Typhon. Gis means world, or place one lives. Numen means God or God's light. Numenhalla is simply the God Halls or Halls of God's light.

Numenhalla is different from many megadungeons in several key ways. The first is that it is not endlessly deep. In theory, a first level party that knows what is actually going on in Numenhalla could "beat" the dungeon in one session. There are functionally 4 levels, and in a matter of seconds players could reach the flooded level 3 by simply descending the main staircase.

Difficulty then, doesn't scale directly with depth, but rather a combination of depth and distance from the entrance. Colloquially in real play, I'll grant the title, difficulty level, and thematic music upon entry into each section.

The second factor in Numenhalla is the extreme interconnectedness of the dungeon. In addition to the option of repairing the mirrors in the main hall, there are numerous secret paths, black doors, lifts, elevators, loops, hidden stairs, and more. Once you know your way around, there's always a fast way to get to any other given point in the dungeon from where you are.

Once players enter Numenhalla, the session continues until they choose to leave, at which point the session ends. Entering and exiting Numenhalla involves a timed resource. The entrance cannot be opened at will. Leaving the dungeon means it will be a week before it can be reentered. (This mechanic is unspecified because it is irrelevant. Perhaps the door is timed. Perhaps the tide must be out. What is important is that the dark of the psyche is not something you can just run in and out of.) This is just the way things are. Feel free to provide this explanation to your players.

Another key factor to Numenhalla is that excepting the introduction above, interacting with the background and lore of the dungeon is entirely optional and completely player driven. Lots of lore is available, but none is necessary for player success. Players will frequently become interested in the lore when it reveals Numenhalla as an unreliable narrator.

If you plan on playing Numenhalla spoilers follow. The dungeon is so large and contains so many different things, that even if you read every word of the rooms, you'll still be able to play without issue, but the following section contains major spoilers.



## UNRELIABLE NARRATION

The unreliable narration of Numenhalla is difficult and important. What comes into a player's mind when you say a word doesn't match the reality of the situation in the dungeon. It is this bending of perception that is core to the experience of exploring Numenhalla.

This is a difficult topic, because it is easy to pick out a single statement and misunderstand. Obfuscation is *not* the point of unreliable narration. Confusing the players is not the point of unreliable narration. Removing their agency is not the point of unreliable narration. I say it three times, that makes it so.

The way to handle this situation in play is to describe things using their terms (The sea of logos, altars, the sun, etc.). Once they interact with these objects, describe the reality of the item very accurately, adding no explanation. Let the players draw their own conclusions about what is actually going on.

To reiterate, Players should understand the situation in game as you do, and they should understand the meaning of objects and items, e.g. You should know you can use altars to enter the logos and contact the gods, but you should not explain or contextualize those objects.

Ambiguity that does not affect agency is good. It generates interest.

Sometimes you will have a player who will try to drill down to specifics. If they ask you to clarify the ambiguity, don't. Answer their questions with what their characters know and understand. I won't pretend to imagine what questions your players might ask, but as long as they have agency and comprehension of the game space matching your own, there's no reason to explain ambiguity.

Reiterate the reality, don't clarify the ambiguity. Those who attempt to repair or mess with altars or mirrors, use their religion or devices skills to do so; that covers the logistics. The players are free to draw their own conclusions as to the mechanical reality of the situation.

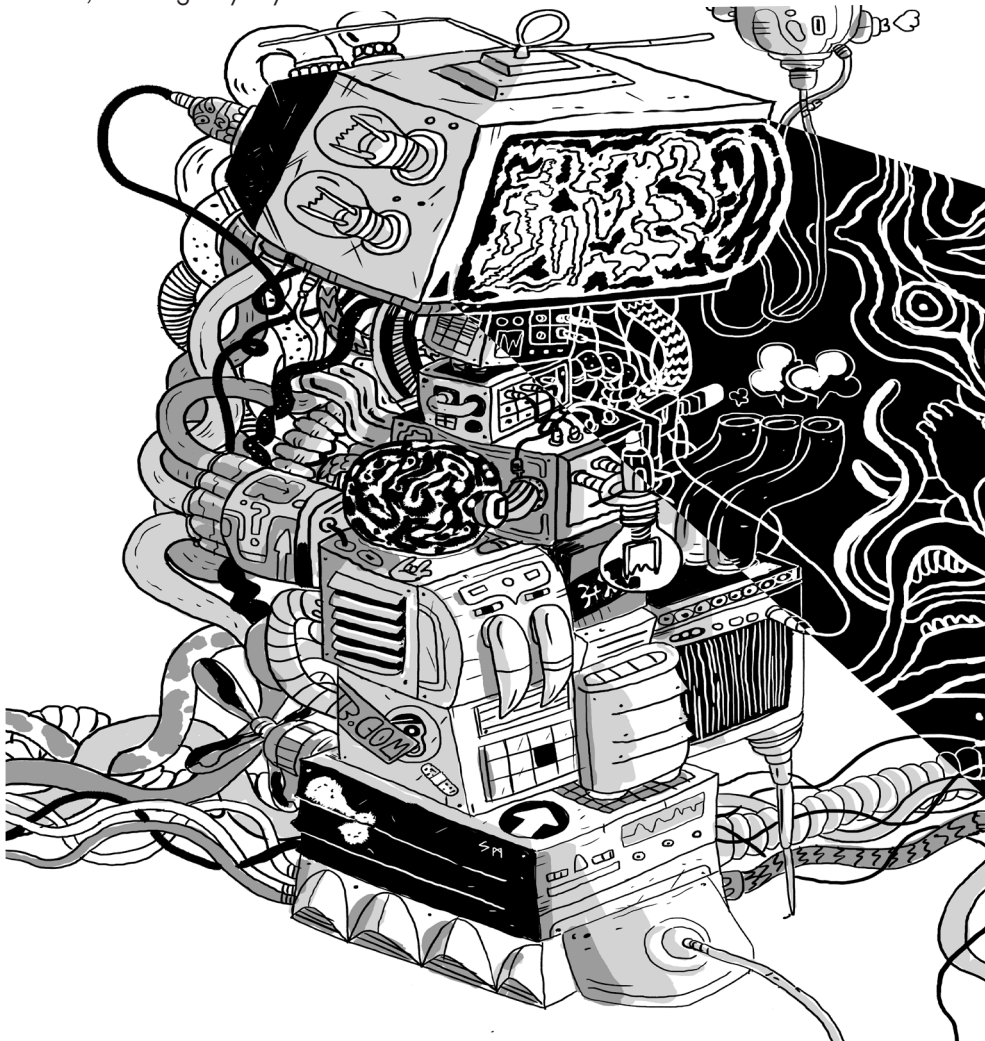
What's important here, and why this is worth spending so many words on, is this is *not* designed to be a way to screw with the players or make the play of the game difficult. Agency must be maintained. It is specifically a way to transmit the experience of sliding across the shifting soap bubble of reality without any effort from the players.

Your approach must be both open and yet firm. Your communication must clarify the meaning without explaining the mundane. You must be vested in the experience of the player and yet remain an impartial arbiter. You must define the minimum of what is, so that the wind of imagination will correctly communicate the rest. You must balance meaning and discovery while avoiding player frustration. This stance is hard to learn, but grows easier with practice.

# THE ALTARS AND LOGOS

The gods are a large part of the experience of Numenhalla. The key about the gods is that they are a hot mess. Not one remains alive, whole, or sane. The players will be constantly interfacing with the gods and their plans, through factions within Numenhalla, the altars and the logos.

The Altars are how the gods communicate with man. They are activated by religious rites and sacrifice. After successfully contacting the gods, a rainbow kaleidoscopic light sprays from the altar, bathing the worshipers in radiance. It is in this consciously sedated state that players can communicate with the gods, receive requests to their prayers, become possessed or influenced by the gods, or enter the logos. When it ends, players have vague memories of their experiences, retaining only key information.

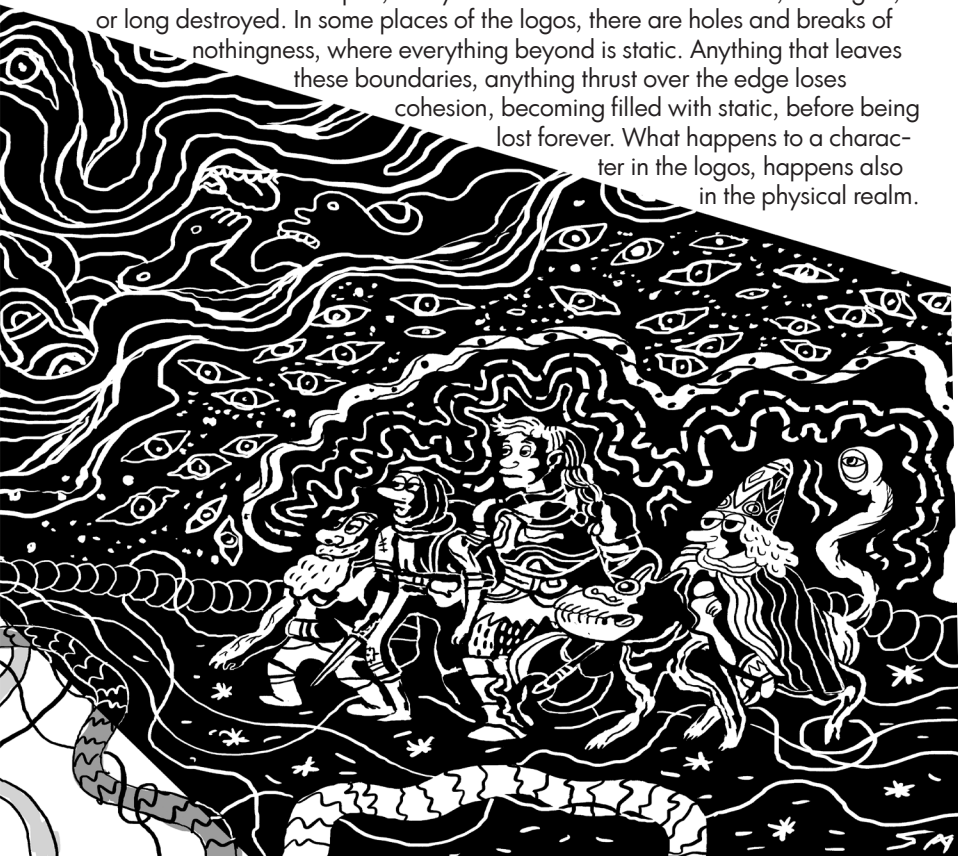


The logos is a nearby plane. The character's bodies are frozen in front of kaleidoscopic light as their minds explore the mystical plane. The logos allows the gods to communicate with mortals and grants them much of their power over Numenhalla. Like the ethereal plane, there are parallels between the logos and the real world, and changes in the logos have effects in the real world.

The halls of the logos are neon-colored; bright blue beams intersecting in the corners of walls and floors, with lines of bright energy that streak around the borders of the room intermittently. Surfaces appear nearly transparent, but when touched ripple as if the surface of the lake, creating the sound of electronic resonance. The translucent barrier is made up of up of minuscule symbols and runes that run across its surface.

Here, characters are washed out monochromatic outlines of themselves, though possessed of all their faculties. Creatures: autonomous, alive, and divine wander the logos; the autonomous ones present as platonic shapes and frequently act as guardians.

This realm too is in disrepair, many of the altars and nodes broken, damaged, or long destroyed. In some places of the logos, there are holes and breaks of nothingness, where everything beyond is static. Anything that leaves these boundaries, anything thrust over the edge loses cohesion, becoming filled with static, before being lost forever. What happens to a character in the logos, happens also in the physical realm.





# RACES OF THE GIS

Numenhalla has all the standard races of a D&D campaign in addition to some special races. Players are not required to use any of the special vocabulary or setting information. The design of Numenhalla should allow (and encourages) any race or class from any nonofficial source your players use.

While playing using B/X rules, players brought blue mages, a war dog (as a character), warlords, chaos monks and more. It's a megadungeon, if there's ever a time to have strange races or classes, this is it! The most important thing is to limit darkvision/infravision, only allowing a race to have it, if it is core to the race identity.

## MEN

*These are the blessed men of the numen. Known as men, they are craftsmen, wizards, priests, nobles, deceivers, and laborers. They were given the grace of living in the cities of the land, the gods caring for their every need. They are served by Gortha. Slaves, servants of the numen, commanded to be the servants of men.*

Men average 5' in height and have a wide variety of features, with skin ranging from red or yellow, to a deep brown or black. They have a lifespans of 100 years.

Gortha are a race of thralls, empty of will and bereft of rights, who exist for the sole purpose of serving men. They live to serve and know no other way to exist. Service brings them joy, they will always gladly do as they are asked, having no instinct for deception or self-preservation. They are often used for labor or other personal services. They average 6' in height and their skin ranges in color from cream to olive. They will do as they are told and have no desire other than to serve their owner. They are considered to be in service to the gods and are blessed. They may be purchased in town and used for any purpose in Numenhalla.

Men have no numerical differences from the standard human race.

Most Gortha have 12's in all statistics except Charisma which is 16. They have no will of their own and may take no action unless instructed and may not be player characters.



#### GRETIDOTEN (HALFLINGS)

*These are the blessed men of the Pithavin. They are the cultivators with a bond to the living earth. They were given the grace to dwell in the Myrkfell, close to the heart of the earth.*

They average 4' in height and live among the land for all of their days. They always go barefoot. They live an average of 130 years.

Halflings have no numerical differences from the standard halfling race.

#### BINDI (ELVES AND HALF-ELVES)

*These are the blessed men of the Aispindar. They are the sentinels of knowledge and the lost arts. Responsible for the safekeeping of lore, they were given the grace of dwelling in the Bokgnaefa, giant spires that rise up out from the cities that dot the land. They are rarely seen, never leaving their towers. The only Bindi known and seen are those on their "Karesh" where they leave in their youth and gain knowledge of the land before returning to their tower.*

They average 6' in height and have narrow features with thin gold to white hair and ashen skin. Their eyes are often gold or violet.

Elves have no numerical differences from the standard elf or half-elf race. However they do not possess infravision or darkvision.

#### WESTRADOR (DWARVES & GNOMES)

*These are the blessed men of the Mardoren, selected by Typhon to be his hands. They worked from the ground itself the Gis and the Numenhalls below. They were given the grace of dwelling in the Holdstyri, the mountainous lands at either end of the Gis, which hold the lance of the sun. The Holdstyri were created for them as a reward for their sacrifice.*

They average 4' in height, often wear beards, and show great knowledge and foresight underground. Their hard labors have given them health, and they live an average of 200 years.

#### SIDARTHA (HALF-ORCS, TIEFLINGS, DRAGONMEN)

*These are the blessed men of the Veraloth. They are caretakers of the wold, the forms of all living things. They are responsible for preservation of flora and fauna. They were given the grace of dwelling in the Obygo, the realms between cities. Sometimes the decay of the Gis has caused them to develop strangely.*

Any alternative or non-standard races can be Sidartha

## AUGATICS (CHEMICAL MEN)

*Augatics are a race of immortal golems. They were servants of the gods to men. Each is a living creature blessed by the gods with a will.*

Many are in poor disrepair, as the mastery of the Bindi (elves) to maintain them has been failing as of late. They are often found non-functional, with arm or legs that don't work, blind, or no longer responsive. Do not confuse the independently willed Augatics from their less advanced brethren, the drunjus. Though a drunjus may speak, they are nothing more than clockworks.





# BASIC MEGADUNGEON PLAY AND PROCEDURES

A megadungeon campaign differs mechanically in several important ways from a normal campaign.

Sessions are objective-focused. Each session revolves around the completion of a specific quest. Sometimes this is a request from someone with a reward granted upon successful completion, sometimes this is the players with a specific goal, such as finding the location indicated on a treasure map. The dungeon is a puzzle (or death trap) designed to be solved, rather than a story to be completed.

## MOVEMENT

Movement and turns are tracked rather strictly and in a game-like fashion. Historically turn is approximately 10 minutes, there are six turns an hour. This is not rigid, a turn means “the time it takes to complete a significant action”. During a character’s turn the party may move, pick a lock, try to bash open a door, etc.

Players may move a number of 10’ squares as indicated by their movement. An unencumbered 5<sup>th</sup> edition party may move 12 squares or 120’. Encumbrance slows this pace. A 5<sup>th</sup> edition party with an encumbered character can only move 8 squares. In B/X a party is granted its movement rate in squares. This is assuming careful, quiet, cautious observant movement. Players that move more quickly over unknown ground receive substantial penalties.

## ENCOUNTERS

Traditional dungeon exploration uses an encounter die that is rolled, with a 1 indicating an encounter. More modern takes on this turn this die into a **hazard** die with every result indicating some sort of decay of resources. This die is traditionally rolled every other turn, or three times in an hour. Often this die is rolled additionally in response to players arguing, making noise, or wasting time. The Hazard Die for Numenhalla is as follows.

1. Encounter
2. Rest or gain a level of exhaustion
3. Torches & Lanterns burn, Ongoing effects, conditions, and statuses end
4. Dungeon Effect
5. Monster Sign
6. Free from effect



## ENCOUNTER

I generally pre-generate 6 encounters or so, and select one randomly when this occurs. It is perfectly acceptable to generate encounters on the fly, which often happens when players exercise their agency to go anywhere in the dungeon they wish.

The encounter begins per the standard rules 20'–120' away from the party as long as they are within detection range. If you roll 100' for the distance, and the farthest visible point of dim light is 80' away, start the encounter at 80'. If you roll 100' and the party can see 60', but psionically detect opponents to 100' then start the encounter at 100'. If either party is surprised, then the encounter distance is 10'–30' away.

This will frequently require adjustment based on the layout of the immediate area! You are encouraged to use your judgement to create a reasonable scene based on what the dice tell you. If you are in a giant room, and are surprised by trolls, have them drop from the ceiling or climb out of a secret hatch in the floor, or burst through a nearby door moving to the encounter distance indicated by the die.

The combination of the randomness of the encounter and your skill at integrating it into the current action contributes significantly to the emergent gameplay of the megadungeon.

## REST

Characters must spend this turn at rest, checking their equipment, eating, catching their breath. If they do not, they gain a level of exhaustion. Adding this to the hazard die, rather than attempting to recall when 6 turns have passed makes this easier to keep track of. Unencumbered characters may ignore this result one time. If this is the initial roll or rolled twice in a row, feel free to ignore this result.

## TORCHES AND LANTERNS BURN

Torches are either brightly lit, dim, or burnt. Each time this result occurs, lit torches decay. Brightly lit torches provide 40' of illumination, 20 feet of bright and 20 feet of dim. Dim torches provide 20' of illumination, 10 feet of bright and 10 feet of dim. Burnt torches do not provide light. Lanterns are always brightly lit. A single flask of oil will survive 3 depletions. On the 4th depletion, the lantern goes out.

Lanterns and torches require a hand to use. If holding a torch or lantern in your shield arm you cannot use your shield. If dropped, lanterns have a 2 in 6 chance of breaking and starting a small fire. If torches are dropped they become dim, dim torches that are dropped become burnt. It takes an action to set a lantern down gently.

Also, variable effects such as nausea, paralysis, temporary blessings, or other limited conditions end when this result is rolled.

## DUNGEON EFFECT

Each area in the dungeon has certain features that help distinguish it from other areas. When this is rolled, one of the listed effects occurs. This can be anything from sounds in the distance, to monsters being released, to blessings, curses, flooding, tunnel collapse, wormsign, etc.

## MONSTER SIGN

This is identical to an encounter roll; except the encounter is out of detection range. Perhaps the players hear the encounter nearby or see signs of its passage. You choose a location for the encounter, and when the players take a turn, the encounter group moves its movement in a random direction or a direction based on your judgment. They then temporarily become another entity moving around the dungeon. If the players continue to follow where it has been, then they will continue to see signs of its activity. Alternately, the players may attempt to track down the encounter.

It is partly this cat and mouse that make the feature of empty rooms significant.

## DOORS

Doors are inimical to dungeon explorers. Unless otherwise noted, doors are stuck. In B/X stuck doors open with a 2 in 6 chance. For 5<sup>th</sup> edition doors have a listed difficulty. If not, they have a DC of  $13 + 2 * \text{the Dungeon level}$  to open.

On a failure, they door does not open. The players may try again, but no matter what they roll, the door won't open.

Once open, unless a player specifies that they are holding the door open, the door rapidly shuts. Players may choose to spike a door open, but this triggers a roll of the hazard die. Unless they are one way doors, players need not check to open an already unstuck door.

Finally, if you are unable to kick down a door, you may if the door is wooden (or rarely stone) hack the door apart. A wooden door takes 1 turn to hack apart, if reinforced by bars 2 turns. A stone door can be destroyed in 4 turns. If players are hacking down or through a door, roll for encounters 3 times each turn as nearby wanderers investigate the noise and assume all monsters in rooms within 200' are aware of the attempt. If an inappropriate non-magical weapon is used it may break. Some doors may not be destroyed.





# NON-PLAYER CHARACTERS



## Sebastos Ludul

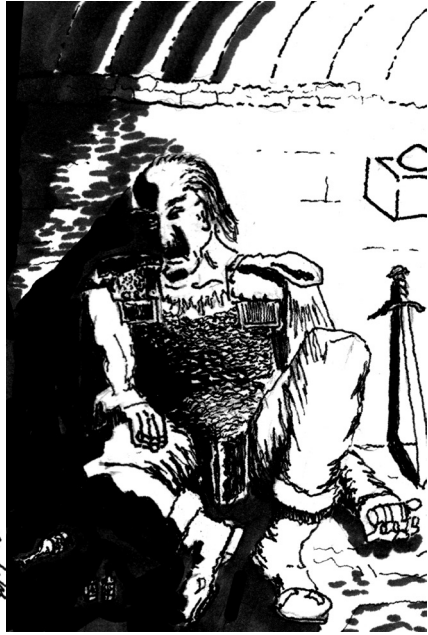
*Human, Cleric 3, Male, Chaotic*

STR 7/ DEX 11/ CON 9  
INT 10/ WIS 10/ CHA 10

*Dagger, Ring of Protection +1, Mirror,  
Rations, Spellbook*

Tentacle Beard, Neurotic, Obdurate,  
Pugnacious, Warns of end times

If befriended he will join a party temporary, or offer to guide them somewhere they haven't been. If threatened or allied with, he will teach the principles of chaos magic



## Ameinokles the Vast

*Human, Fighter 2, Male, Lawful*

STR 12/ DEX 12/ CON 15  
INT 13/ WIS 13/ CHA 10

*Two-handed sword +1, Leather Shield,  
Rations, Wine, 10' Pole*

Craven (conflict-averse?), Oblivious,  
Giant-sized (12' tall), Perennially drunk,  
Secretly enlarged royalty

Drinks and enjoys it, granting a positive reaction to those that offer. Can act as a source of local information. If insulted or treated badly will mention his royal status. On a positive enough reaction, he may permanently join an adventuring party.

# GODS OF NUMENHALLA

The gods have been long distant, though there are those who remember when they once talked to man. They are known by many names. Are they trapped, lost, uncaring, or perhaps even dead?

**TYPHON** is the father of nine who were eleven; the two-headed god of gods. He fought a battle against the lords of chaos.

*“And the land was smote by mountains, hurled in a fit of anger—the lords of Chaos fleeing their homes as the earth was wrecked beneath them. Typhon’s dark flickering tongues lashed fire at the forms of Chaos, the din of one thousand screams silenced in fury gushed from his ears. The earth split open, spitting up water as death fountained around his malevolent form, until he ended his rage by pulling the mount of Etna atop himself.”*

**HERA** is the wife of **TYPHON**.

*“She is the goat-eater of heights! Queen of Argos, the cow-eyed lady of the mound; the white armed, child-virgin mother of the nine who were eleven!”*



**HERAX** is a cloaked figure, man of green skin, blind, god of the afterlife and guardian of the realm of the dead.



**BALDUR** is a lord of men.

*“Baldur is son of Typhon and a brother to man, good things are to be said of him. He is best and all praise him. He is fair of feature and so bright that a shining light blinds those that gaze upon him. He is the wisest of gods, most eloquent and most gregarious and that quality attends him, and none may gainsay his adjudication.”*

**TETHYS** is the mother of the sea.

*“Tethys was born to Typhon and Hera, sister of the nine who were eleven, and in the ancient days became the sea, and therefore mother to Typhon and Hera.”*

**THEIA** is mother of the sun.

*“Theia provides vision, her light shining through all times and places, mothered the lance of the sun and Selene, the moon.”*



**SELENE** is the mother of night and darkness, guardian of the dark-time light, the moon

*“Typhon fabricated another boundless Gis, which the gods call Selene, but men call Mene, which has many mountains, many cities, and many homes.”*

**HEIMDALL** is the guardian.

*“Hemidall guards humanity along the quaking path of fire, earth, and water, his sight and hearing so keen that he can see 100 leagues at night as well as day and can hear the grass growing on earth and the wool on the back of sheep. He guards man with a flashing sword. he is said to have 9 mothers, seven besides Tethys and Hera and feeds on the strength of the earth and sea.”*

**FREYA** is madness, goddess of magic, gold, and betrayal.

*“Freya loves music, spring and flowers, and is fond of the ephemeral creatures and pieces of mind most. She looked upon the wonders Typhon had brought into the Gis, a golden thread of sun, the forge fires, the Numen halls, and she dreamt of the wonders she might possess while waking and sleeping.”*

**TYR** is lord of everything that is contained within the world.

*Fenir said, “Deception is the watchword of the gods. I am the infinite. I am the light, the heat, the vast coldness of terror. You may try to bind me, if one among you will consent to suffer your hand within me.”*

*The gods looked askance at each other in silence, fearful and cowardly. Then stepped forward brave Tyr, valiant and without fear. With devoir, he held his hand within the vastness of Fenir.*



**HUGINN** and **MUNINN** are gods of memory and knowledge

*“Huginn is of light and sun and thought, his brother Muninn of the moist, dark, memory. Birthed from the ever-changing Hera, daughter/mother of Tethys, they fly cross the entire world and tell Typhon of all the knowledge in the Logos and Gis.”*



Finally there is the **RATATOSKR**, who travels the length of the Gis, to bring news to the entirety of it. He would speak badly of all others and ask, *“Since you now know their thoughts, what are yours?”*

The gods exist, and may be found, deep within the Numen halls.



<i>TYPHON</i> Alias: Seth, Pas, Piaton. Domain: Tempest	Weapon: Spiked Club
<i>HERA</i> Alias: Cumean, Echidna. Domain: Grave	Weapon: Knife
<i>HIERAX</i> Alias: Hastur, Hel, Death, Hodr Domain: Death	Weapon: Scythe
<i>BALDUR</i> Alias: Baldr, Bauldag, Beldeg Domain: Protection	Weapon: Staff
<i>TETHYS</i> Alias: Scylla, Cilinia Domain: Life	Weapon: Sword
<i>THEIA</i> Alias: Phaea Domain: Light	Weapon: Orb
<i>SELENE</i> Alias: Tataros Domain: Nature	Weapon: Sickle
<i>HEMIDALL</i> Alias: Sphigx Domain: War	Weapon: Bow
<i>FREYA</i> Alias: Molpe Domain: Arcana	Weapon: Whip
<i>TYR</i> Alias: Mars, Dyeus Domain: Forge	Weapon: Hammer
<i>HUGINN/MUNINN</i> Alias: Eros and Anteros, Kastor and Polydeuces Domain: Knowledge	Weapon: Javelin
<i>RATATOSKR</i> Alias: Thelxiepeia, Loki Domain: Trickery	Weapon: Rapier





# ENTRANCE HALLS

The first room has half the floor covered in a metal grate, underneath which lie dozens of plastic coolers (“strange light boxes with rough surfaces”). This is an opportunity for the players to waste time and experiment with randomness. This room is also well lit with the standard lightning in Numenhalla.

Concrete rectangles extrude from the walls and contain a rounded depression. Within these depressions sit spherical granite spheres that radiate bright light out to 30'. The spheres sit loose in the depressions and weigh approximately 30 pounds.

Just past the entrance lies a pitch black door that exudes cold, killing all who touch it. It can only be opened by the dead. This is a puzzle door that can be opened at any time that leads deep within the dungeon.

The first chamber includes six exits and two doors. There's the long mosaic hall with mirrors, then the chamber of the gods containing the main central staircase and eight exits.

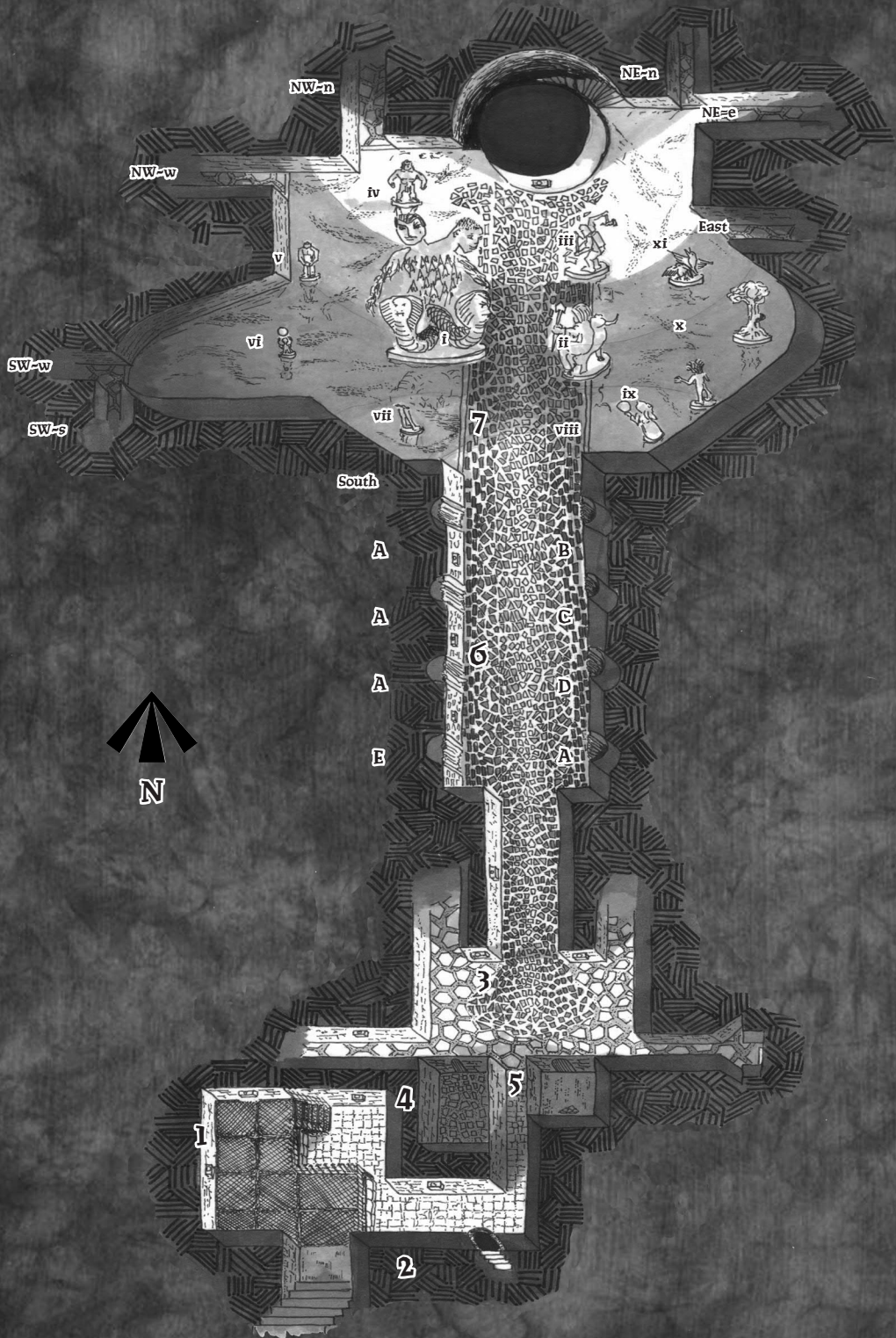
The first chamber has two doors for the players to practice on. Each contains a feature of Numenhalla, keys and augatic parts. Four exits lead to different sections of the dungeon, but the pathway north is a mosaic hall. The mosaic is of the sun, a lance that burns across the sky of Numenhalla.

The mosaic hall has four alcoves, in which sit ruined mirrors. These mirrors, once repaired, allow you to traverse the mirror corridors, which lead to many places within Numenhalla. The functioning mirrors are connected seamlessly to their emplacements with wires and cables. Each mirror currently lacks a functioning pair. They must be paired to function.

Finally, the main chamber contains statues of each of the gods. Typhon is the largest followed by Hera and Tyr. The statue of Tethys is defaced because of her betrayal of Typhon. To the north is the central staircase, which leads down to level 2, as well as to the flooded level 3. Each of the other 7 exits leads to a different area of the dungeon.

Although each of these sections will be detailed much like this one in future publications, no megadungeon works separately from the person running it. It's expected that you'll rearrange sections, jam new dungeon sections you designed in, reorganize the way the sections connect, and create a megadungeon experience that's uniquely yours.

Don't worry about it matching, lining up, or what 'officially' goes anywhere. That's a waste of time. Create your own links, secret passages, new sections, or whatever you want, using this as a tool to supplement your creativity.



# ENTRANCE HALL KEY

## 1. Entrance

*Forgotten temperature-controlled storage, light dust, musty odor, well lit. A steel grate with an iron rail creates a second level covering half the room.*

**Steel Grate** ☞ 5' off floor, corrugated, boxes underneath

boxes ☞ Underneath grate,  
Stuck (DC 10) Open see *table*.  
Industrial plastic coolers

## Box Contents

1. Empty
2. Empty
3. Random Trinket.
4. Rotting detritus/molds Save versus poison or become nauseated

## 2. Black Door

*A magically sealed dark door under an arch of skulls that radiates cold.*

**Black Door** ☞ Arched black marble, radiates cold

Arch ☞ covered in skulls; Cold ☞ 1d8+1 on contact  
Door can only be opened by undead.

Door: requires 6 turns to break apart. Immune to Knock and bashing.

## 3. Central Chamber

*A dusty chamber with five ways forward and two doors.*

**Arenose bare flagstone floor** ☞ Mosaic Tile heads North

North ☞ Dim light, mosaic of long sun, sun glows lightly  
Northeast ☞ Debris in hallway East ☞ Light Mist  
South ☞ Bare, cool breeze West ☞ Barnyard smell  
Northwest ☞ cool and still

60'×40' Ceiling: 14' Southwest Door (to 4): *Sturdy, Wooden, Stuck* (\*DC 15)

Southeast Door (to 5): *Sturdy Wooden Locked* (☛DC 12) (\*DC 20)

## 4. Green Key Room

*An empty room, with nothing but a strange green key lying on the floor.*

**Key** ☞ Green key lying on floor in back of room.

Green Key ☞ Flat 1" wooden key with an L-shaped bow (79)

20'×30' Ceiling: 9' North Door (to 3): *Sturdy, Wooden, Stuck* (\*DC 15)

## 5. Empty Room

*A room containing nothing but two piles of Augatic Parts*

**Pile of Debris** ☞ Two dust-covered piles of augatic parts.

20'×20' Ceiling: 9' North Door(to 3) *Sturdy Wooden Locked* (☛DC 12) (\*DC 20)

## 6. Hall of Mirrors

*A long hall with a tile mosaic of the sun, and four pairs of alcoves covered in red velvet curtains. These alcoves contain the remains of the mirrors. . .*

**Red Curtains** ☞ Velvet, threadbare in places, dingy gold trim

Mirrors behind curtains ☞ grey, steely

A ☞ mirror in place B ☞ Broken, dented and torn mirror

C ☞ Missing ☞ small hole in wall, wires and cables behind

D ☞ Covered in thick enamel black paint.

E ☞ Missing as C

**Tile Mosaic** ☞ mosaic of sun, center tiles glow softly

180' foot long hallway, 20' wide, opening to 40' Ceiling 14' rising to 30'

## 7. Grand Staircase

*A grand chamber filled with giant statues of the gods, corridors head off in every direction, and an imposing spiral staircase dominates the room.*

**South** ☞ Dim mural of sun glowing Southwest-south ☞ Saline scent

**Southwest-west** ☞ Arch with coin symbol down hallway

**Northwest-west** ☞ Cool, dusky smell Northwest-north ☞ Warm corridor

**Northeast-north** ☞ Dark and cool

**Northeast-east** ☞ Corridor ends with metal door, covered in 100 locks on east wall and stairway down on north wall

**East** ☞ Ends at Portcullis, adjacent to Barred Metal Door (\*DC 20) on north wall

Each of the gods (Excepting Hierax) has a statue in this room

I Typhon, II Hera, III Tyr, IV Baldur, V Hemidall, VI Theia

VII Tethys-defaced, VIII Selene, IX Freya, X Ratatoskr, XI Huginn & Muginn

# AUGATIC CLASS

Augatics or Chems are a new race/class. They are men and women given artificial form by the gods and maintained by the Bindu. It has been so long for these immortal golems remember little and are worn and pitiable creatures.

## BASIC/EXPERT

THACO	Lvl	Title	XP	Hit die	Death	Wands	Para.	Breath	Spells
19	1	Trooper	0	1d8+6	8	9	10	13	12
19	2	Corporal	4,000	2d8+6	8	9	10	13	12
19	3	Sergeant	8,000	3d8+6	8	9	10	13	12
17	4	Lieutenant	16,000	4d8+6	6	7	8	10	10
17	5	Captain	32,000	5d8+6	6	7	8	10	10
17	6	Major	64,000	6d8+6	6	7	8	10	10
14	7	Colonel	120,000	7d8+6	4	5	6	7	8
14	8	Brigadier	250,000	8d8+6	4	5	6	7	8
14	9	General	400,000	8d8+8	2	3	4	4	8

Augatics use Constitution as their prime requisite. If their Constitution is higher than 16, they gain a 10% bonus to experience.

They have a base armor class of 2, Infravision out to 30' and reduce all damage taken by 1 point per die. They are immune to sleep, paralyzation, poison, disease, blood drain, and nausea. They cannot use potions, wands, staves, rods, scrolls, rings, or miscellaneous items. They have Equipment slots as noted below.

## 5<sup>TH</sup> EDITION RACIAL TRAITS

As an Augatic you have the following traits

**Ability Score Increase.** Your Strength and Constitution both increase by 1 point.

**Size.** You are human sized, although considerably heavier, weighing between 300–450 pounds. You average 5' in height.

**Speed.** Your base speed is 30'

**Mechanical Form.** You are hard to damage, you gain DR 1.

**Living Construct.** Even though you are a machine, you are blessed by the gods. You are immune to disease and poison. You do not need to sleep or eat. Your mechanical nature prevents you from using potions, wands, staves, rods, scrolls, and rings.

**Equipment slots.** You have six equipment slots. By installing hardware into these slots you may gain special benefits. The six slots are Eyes, Head, Torso, Limbs and Hands, and Joints.





## AUGATIC PARTS

Augatics do not heal over time. A set of augatic parts is needed for an augatic to heal. Parts are available for 10 gold coins in town. Each one allows you to heal 1d6+1 hit points if you have 1 turn and know someone who is skilled in devices to do the repair. If you are at full hit points, you can use augatic parts to re-roll your hit dice to calculate a new hit point total. If you roll under your current maximum then your maximum hit points increase by 1.

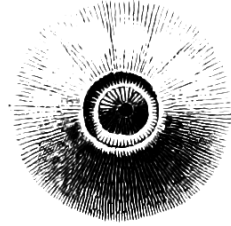
Many different enhancements can be found for Augatics: Only one may be installed in each slot.

### Eyes

#### Enhanced Perception Module

*Eyes, Uncommon, 5,000 gold coins*

Once installed, these grant infravision/darkvision to 80' as well a +1 bonus to detect secret doors or a +5 bonus to passive perception to notice secret doors.



#### Strobic Immobilizer Module

*Eyes, Uncommon, 9,000 gold coins*

These eyes have two uses. They can be activated to provide bright light out to 60' and dim light out to 120' until a hazard depletion roll is made. Or they can be activated in an attempt to blind a target. The target must save versus polymorph/constitution to avoid becoming blinded. The save DC is 8 + your Constitution bonus + your Proficiency bonus. The eyes have 5 charges and regain 1d4 each night.

#### Vital Detection Module

*Eyes, Rare, 15,000 gold coins*

These eyes inform the augatic of the specific (numerical) health of any creature in her vision. This also detects invisible or concealed creatures,

#### Enhanced Resolution Module

*Eyes, Rare, 15,000 gold coins*

These eyes allow the augatic to magnify her vision. This grants +2 or advantage on Dexterity (Slight of hand) checks involving manipulating objects, Intelligence (Investigation) checks, and Wisdom (Medicine) checks. She may also treat dim light as bright light.

### Head

#### Auditory Enchantment Module

*Head, Uncommon, 8,000 gold coins*

This grants a +2 bonus to listen checks and surprise or +2 bonus to all Wisdom (Perception) checks.

## Olfactory Enhancement Module

*Head, Rare, 10,000 gold coins*

This grants a +1 bonus to avoid surprise, or it grants advantage on all Wisdom (Perception) checks that rely on scent.

## Autonomic Cognition Module

*Head, Rare/Very Rare, 15,000 or 50,000 gold coins*

Installing this allows you to gain a skill. A module containing one skill at the level of master or expertise at a skill costs 15,000 gold. A module containing two skills at the level of master or expertise at two skill costs 50,000.

## Torso

### Dense Armor Plating Module

*Torso, Rare, 15,000 gold coins*

This grants +2 to your armor class.

### Thick Armor Plating Module

*Torso, Uncommon, 5,000 gold coins*

This grants +1 to your armor class.

### Enhanced Structural Integrity

*Torso, Rare, 20,000 gold coins*

This allows you to ignore the first 2 points of damage from any die.

### Resonant Plating Module

*Torso, Common, 5,000 gold coins*

When the Augatic is struck by a melee weapon, the attacker must save vs. paralyzation/Constitution or be deafened. The save DC is 8 + your Constitution bonus + your Proficiency bonus.

### Repair Unit Module

*Torso, Rare, 25,000 gold coins*

Once per day, the Augatic can activate the repair module outside of combat and heal 3d8+3 damage.

### Rotateatron Gyrostablization Module

*Torso, Uncommon, 5,000 gold coins*

This grants a +4 bonus against all forced movement, disarming, tripping, falling, climbing checks, and fall chances or it grants advantage against any of the listed effects.

### Extreme Hazard Resistance Module

*Torso, Rare, 20,000 gold coins*

Gain Resistance against an energy type.



## Limbs or Hands

### **Azoth**

*Limbs or Hands, Rare, 4,000 gold coins*

This is a blade of energy that splits reality asunder. Ignores half of object hardness.  
Martial Melee Weapon, 1d12 force, Finesse

### **Cannon**

*Limbs or Hands, Uncommon, 8,000 gold coins*

This is a cannon that replaces your arm. Each shell costs 40 gp.  
Martial Ranged Weapon, 2d6 bludgeoning, Two-Handed (Ammunition range 120/400)

### **Sawblade**

*Limbs or Hands, Uncommon, 2,000 gold coins*

This is a spinning sawblade. BzzzzZZZZZ!!  
Martial Melee Weapon, 2d6 slashing, Special: Becomes ineffective until maintained on any roll of 1 to hit. It takes 1 turn to maintain.

### **Mighty Limbs**

*Limbs or Hands, Rare, 20,000 gold coins*

This grants the Augatic a +2 bonus to Strength.

## Joins

### **Oiled Gears**

*Joins, Rare, 10,000 gold coins*

This grants the Augatic a +1 (+15%) bonus to Stealth checks and Surprise or it grants the Augatic expertise on stealth checks.

### **High Quality Bearing Joins**

*Joins, Uncommon, 2,500 gold coins*

This grants the Augatic a +3" bonus to their speed.

### **Heavy Load-bearing shocks**

*Joins, Rare, 2,500 gold coins*

This increases the amount the Augatic can carry, adding 3 slots.

# SKILLS IN NUMENHALLA

For Basic/Expert Numenhalla uses a variation on Skills: the Middle Road (developed by Benjamin David). Anyone may attempt any skill. You roll a die, usually a d6 for an unskilled person, and generally a roll of 6 or better is a success.

Each character knows one skill for each point of their intelligence bonus. If they have no intelligence bonus and they get no bonus skills, then they know no skills. This replaces the Thief skill system. Thieves start knowing five skills at skilled (in addition to what their Intelligence grants) and can train up two skills for free every time they level.

Unskilled characters roll a d6

Skilled characters roll a d8

Expert characters roll a d10

Characters who have mastered skills roll a d12

Skills may be improved independent of leveling. Learning a skill at the level of skilled requires 1 month of training and 1000 gp. Improving a skill to expert requires 3 months of training and 3000 gp. Improving a skill to master requires 6 months of training and 10,000 gp. Note that the character cannot adventure during this time.

Unless otherwise stated, the default target to hit is 6.

**Agility/Athletics:** This skill is used for a variety of purposes. It may be rolled to avoid an attack by a monster while escaping, or to move past a monster blocking a hallway. It may be used to climb a difficult or hostile surface (such as on the back of a monsters). This is also used to resolve challenging situations when climbing or swimming (though keep in mind, no roll is generally necessary to climb or swim). Armor penalizes this check, -1 for light, -2 for medium, and -4 for heavy.

**Alchemy:** This skill allows identification of potions on a successful roll. It can also be used to craft any alchemical item you have a sample or recipe of as long as you have all the relevant crafting materials.

**Appraisal:** This skill allows a character to accurately determine the worth of an object or treasure while in the dungeon. A character (whether skilled or unskilled) may choose to apply either a Wisdom or Intelligence bonus to this roll.

**Arcana:** This skill allows the user to identify magical effects and items. This also allows the user on a successful roll to use an out of class magic item or read a scroll even if not of the correct class. In this case the target number remains 6, but the user may add 1/2 their level rounded down to the roll.

**Assay:** On a successful check, determine one of the following about an opponent: HD, AC, Attack Type, Damage Range. Unskilled use only allows you to determine if they have more or less hit dice than you. Equal hit dice reads as more.

**Devices:** This allows you to repair devices in Numenhalla, such as mirrors, altars and augatics. With augatic parts, you may use this skill to repair augatics as the healing skill. This skill is also used to disarm or disable traps or to open locks.

**Focus:** Spend 1 turn focusing or meditating. On a successful roll you may grant yourself +1 temporary hit point, +1 on your next attack, or +1 on your next spell roll. Useful for when everyone else has something to do during the turn.

**Haggling:** Skilled grants a +10% and eliminates charisma penalties, expert grants a +1 and +15%, and master grants a +2 and 20% bonus on rolls to haggle and sell/buy goods only. The % bonus is the degree which they move toward the player price. This skill does stack with the charisma modifier.

**Healing:** A successful use of this skill will heal the user of damage after battle. Those unskilled heal 1 point. At skilled this heals 1d6+1 points of damage, at expert it heals 1d8+3 points of damage and at master it heals 2d10+5 points of damage. This may only be used once per wounded person per fight. It takes one full turn to use per person.

**Listening:** This allows characters to hear what is behind doors. If your first attempt at this skill is successful, you receive a permanent +1 bonus to the skill forever (Rolling 1d6+1 if unskilled or 1dX+1 if skilled, versus a target number of 6). Per the rules, demi-humans must only beat a target number of 5.

**Nature Affinity:** This skill is used to calm animals and beasts with an animal intelligence. It is also used to identify flora and fauna. On a successful skill roll the character may force a reaction re-roll against animals with a +2 bonus to the roll. The character may also have an animal companion or pet for each level of this skill. Using food will grant a +2 bonus.

**Poison Use:** Having poison use at skilled or higher negates the chance of poisoning yourself when using poison. This skill is used to correctly identify poisons and to treat poison wounds. A successful skill roll will allow another saving throw versus poison at +4. Applying poison to a weapon takes 1 full round. The next strike you make will poison your opponent.

**Religion:** This skill provides additional information regarding the gods and their influence in Numenhalla. It also allows special utility to be provided from altars and other holy artifacts and interfaces.

**Sleight of Hand:** This allows theft from creatures without detection, and the ability to perform other light fingered tasks. The difficulty to avoid notice is 5 + 1/2 their hit die (minimum 1). You may add your Dexterity modifier to the roll.



**Sneak Attack:** This skill allows the user to strike a vital point or weak spot. It affects all monsters with a discernible anatomy, including undead and constructs. The only creatures not affected are oozes, elementals, and incorporeal creatures. The creatures must not be aware of you. Damage is doubled at skilled, tripled at expert, and quadrupled at master. This skill is not rolled. Only thieves may learn Sneak Attack.

**Stealth:** This skill is used to avoid detection, surprise opponents, and create opportunities to sneak attack. Moving stealthily at least 60' away from others gives opponents a -2 on their surprise rolls. A character fleeing a monster, if out of line of sight may hide in a shadow or other secluded area, causing the monsters to bypass them. A character that spends a round doing nothing (hiding) in combat and makes a successful stealth roll may attack a monster with a Sneak Attack next round. Armor penalizes this check, -1 for light, -2 for medium, and -4 for heavy.

**Stonelore:** This skill allows the detection of grades, slopes, new construction, or sliding or shifting walls with a target number of 3, detection of traps involving pits, falling blocks or other stonework, as well as approximate depth underground with a target number of 4. Westrador (dwarves) automatically receive a check when passing within 10' of one of these items. Attempting to discern these things when unskilled carries the standard target number of 6.

## Other Dungeon Mechanics

**Secret Doors:** Secret doors can be detected by taking a turn to search a 10' × 10' area on a roll of 6 on a 1d6. Bindi detect secret doors on a 5 or 6. Bindi also receive a free check when passing a secret door, discovering it on a roll of 6.

**Traps:** Traps generally trigger on a roll of 1 or 2 when someone crosses them. Using a pole to check ahead will give you this same chance (and will obviously indicate traps like illusion covered pits) of discovering a trap. Thieves detect traps when searching on a target number of 6 on a 1d6. They add their level to this roll. A thief in the lead with a pole makes two checks, one to see if the pole triggers the trap, and a second to see if they detect the trap. Traps on doors and chests will be discovered by anyone asking if the door or chest is trapped.

**Doors:** Stuck and locked doors may usually be broken down on a 5 or greater on a 1d6 roll. Metal, stone or barred doors may require up to a DC 9. This check is modified by strength modifier. A crowbar or other implement will add +1. A ram allows multiple people to apply their strength modifiers. A failure indicates the door is sealed, regardless of repeated tries. Breaking down a door triggers a Hazard die roll.

**Spikes:** You may spike shut or open a door. Spiking a door closed means that the door is treated as stuck for inhabitants of Numenhalla. (They need a 5+ to open it). Hammering in a spike causes a Hazard die roll.

# 5TH EDITION AND THE MEGADUNGEON

Numenhalla was designed and playtested using the Moldvay/Cook Basic/Expert set of rules (colloquially B/X), which were optimized for dungeon style play and campaigns. The 5th edition of the worlds greatest role-playing game is designed around the three pillars of adventure, Exploration, Role-Playing, and Combat.

This differs significantly from the pillars of Megadungeon play. Whereas exploration in 5e is about discovery, exploration in a megadungeon is about resources. Combat occurs in a megadungeon often as a failure state. Role-playing in a megadungeon has more to do with “taking the role” of an individual hero, rather than representing a specific character. The challenge is for you, the player, to outwit the megadungeon, not develop a dynamic personality that comes out through interactions with non-player characters.

No one will take your books away if you decide to play differently, but embracing pure mega-dungeon play has a number of tremendous advantages. It allows free drop in and out play, supporting up to dozens of different players. No “catching up on the plot” is needed. Characters are in charge of determining their own risk/reward. Characters have complete agency within the dungeon. The design of such creates constant choices between risk and reward, making player choice significant.

However, 5th edition nearly obviates megadungeon design. Encumbrance is often handwaved, if used at all; this eliminates an entire pillar of play of figuring out how to safely extract treasure from the dungeon. When used, it’s complicated and non-intuitive (E.g. Strength to pounds, coins to pounds as opposed to Strength to coins.) The treasure itself becomes irrelevant because it no longer provides experience. Getting experience from combat means players are disincentivized to build positive relationships with factions. Gaining levels happens very quickly, granting the players powers and abilities that trivialize many encounters. Cantrips quickly remove any sort of resource management associated with exploration. Many of the skills are irrelevant to dungeon exploration.

Thankfully, only a few minor changes are needed. The below are the suggested changes to use 5th edition in a megadungeon campaign.



## Experience

Experience is only given for combat when the players are attacked. If the players attack neutral creatures or non-hostile or non-attacking beings, or if they intentionally incite creatures to attack they gain no experience from the fight. Players gain no experience for random or wandering encounters.

Experience is given on a 1:10 basis for gold value of treasure extracted.

Experience is reduced by the difficulty tier of the area. Adventurers in lower tier areas gain no experience.

Experience should be extremely curtailed for Megadungeon play. You're still working with the same amount of gold, but 100,000 gold pieces makes a 6<sup>th</sup> level Basic character. . . but a 12<sup>th</sup> level 5<sup>th</sup> edition character.

It's suggested for this reason that the general experience available for megadungeon play be constrained. Players shouldn't gain a level every session or two, aiming for a more traditional rate of 1 level every 4-6 weeks to level 7, and then every 8-12 sessions after that. Your mileage may vary.

## Encumbrance

You can carry a number of significant items equal to your Strength. A significant item would be a suit of light or medium armor, a weapon, a bundle 5 of torches, a potion, a vial of oil, a lantern, 200 coins, etc. A suit of heavy armor or a bulky item takes 2 slots. If you have more than 1/2 your slots filled, you are encumbered per the variant rules in the 5<sup>th</sup> edition Player's Handbook on page 176. If you are wearing a suit of armor that grants disadvantage on Stealth (Dex) checks, you are encumbered. If you have more than 3/4 of your slots filled, you are heavily encumbered. Let common sense carry the day.

Eliminate the "History (Int)" skill and replace it with "Appraisal (Int)". Eliminate the "Survival (Wis)" skill and replace it with "Devices (Wis)". The history of a megadungeon should be discovered, not already known. Survival is useless for the scale of exploration measured in hours and not days. A successful appraisal roll will give you the approximate value of a piece of treasure if it is examined for 1 minute. A successful devices roll will allow you to repair or disarm traps, repair machinery or equipment, or activate or use machinery. In Numenhalla, it will also allow you to install and repair Augatic parts.

Remove Darkvision from Elves, Half-Elves, Half-Orcs, and Tileflings. This leaves Dwarves and Gnomes as the only races that can see in the dark. For an adventure game, it would be tedious to track light sources. Megadungeons are more survival horror than adventure. Trying to survive in a pitch black underground environment filled with nightmares and terrors, light is a resource that must be carefully managed. Removing the ability of the dark to encroach upon the party significantly reduces the tension in megadungeon play.

## Spells

The following changes are made to the spell lists:

*Light* is a 1st level spell for all classes.

*Continual Flame* is a 3rd level spell for all classes.

If *Produce Flame* is used 6 times, it consumes a first level spell slot.

Spells that cause noise (thunder), immediately draw a hazard die roll.

Spells require material components. *Identify* is powerful in a megadungeon, less so if it requires 100 gp in pearl every time it is cast.

## Challenge

In each tier of play, wandering encounters will range from trivial to deadly. You shouldn't strive to have the majority of the encounters match the player's level, because the goal is not to provide a series of well balanced combat encounters. Combat against weak or strong monsters is always a fail state. Weak ones will worsen your reputation and strong ones will wreck the party. If you fight all the even ones, then word spreads about your hostility, which affects the opinion of the denizens no matter their power level.

Certain monsters and traps will be considered legendary, having access to a higher threat level based on the average threat of the area. This will still allow dangerous things in areas as well as allowing players to return to an area to defeat a tough opponent.

Tiers are Adventurer, Heroic, Superheroic, and Epic. Adventurer covers level 1-4, Heroic covers levels 5-8, Super-heroic covers levels 9-12, and Epic covers levels 13-16.

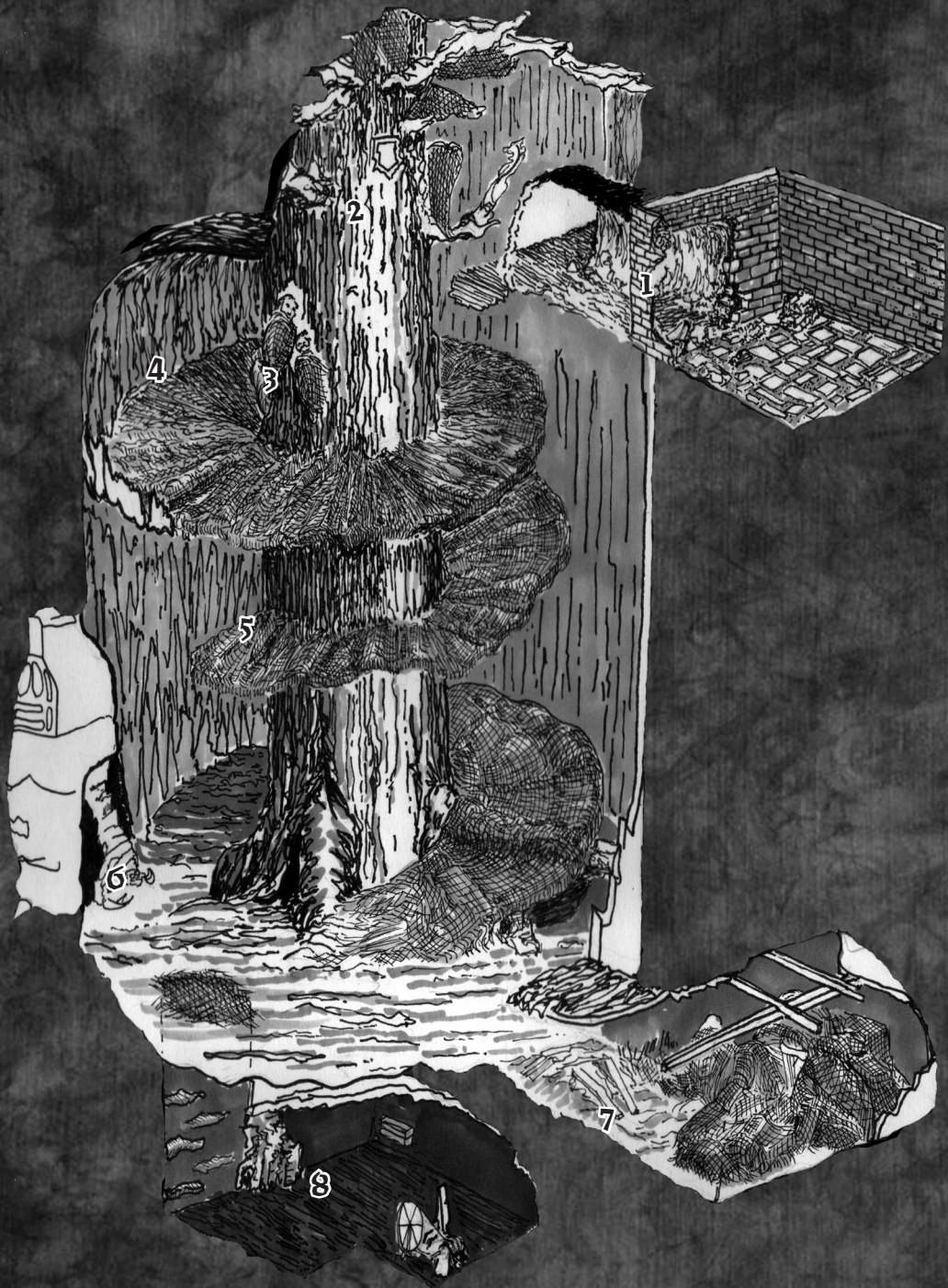
Megadungeons are about challenging the player through rewarding play experience, rather than rewarding the player with advancement for experiencing play.





*Purchasing Gortha at the Market*





# ETTERCOP KEY

## 1. Entrance

*A crumbling debris choked portal torn open in the wall leads to a long forgotten web-choked chamber*

## 2. Plaque

*A large wooden plaque with a brass plate says "Ettercop"*

## 3. Willing Martyrs

*A group of three bound creatures hang here, eager to speak and joyful at the thought of service.*

## 4. Webbed Tunnels

*The only way down is to squeeze through a claustrophobic murky web tube.*

## 5. Imposter Spiders

*Anthropomorphic ants wearing community theater fake spider legs, desperate to convince bystanders that they are "real spiders" and they should let them feast on them.*

## 6. Spider Queen

*She eats gluttonously as her small spider servants bring her food. Will she trade something valuable for food?*

## 7. Webbed Junk

*There's a crowded low-ceiling room full of junk covered in spider webs. What happens when you pull something out?*

## 8. Concealed room

*This poorly concealed tunnel leads to a magic spinning wheel. But as long as the queen lives, she keeps a close eye on this room.*

# Dungeon Effects

## Debris Broken bricks and mortar

## Passage Tunneled out




20' x 20' Exits: 2, Ceiling: 12'




## Plaque Wooden brass plate, 3' x 5' Reverse says "Poison Head"



Tree is 15' away from entrance, web-covered branches 25' down

**Web-covered branches**  soft, spongy, not sticky. Mostly stable.

## Martyrs Man, Woman, and Halfling

**Man**  George  Congenial, Boisterous  Balding

**Woman**  Bruna  Reticent, Advocate  Monobrow


**Halfling**  Bertin  Erudite, Unsure  Wears Glasses

They are enthusiastic supporters of being consumed by the Etter-cop and will gladly talk about it at length. 20' wide path Exits: 2, Ceiling: 20'

## Webtunnels Safe, stressful. As webbing, can burn, be torn.

if so, can spawn baby spider swarms. Tubes stretch and have a 1'-3' diameter

## Imposter Spiders Giant ants, wearing pairs of extra legs

Convince players that they are real spiders  may attempt to eat party if weak  
25' wide path, Ceiling: Varies

2d6+1 **Spider-ant Imposters**

## Spider Queen Xullra Famished, Royal Trapped in Egg Cocoon.

She will offer to trade one item below in exchange for a Gortha-sized (i.e. sentient) morsel of food.

- 500 gold coins
- A mutating spider bite-enhancing a physical attribute
- A Spider-henchman
- a squad of spider hirelings
- The truth or story behind a rumor or place in Numenhalla

She is otherwise immobile and consumed with eating. If the players feed her 10 creatures She will break out of her cocoon, fully grown, and eat the party

*Spider Queen + Spider Court*

## Webbed Junk Various treasures and antiques covered in webs.


When removing an item, roll on the table on the following page. 40' x 30' Room

Ceiling: 6'

## Rough wall Roots come out of the walls, providing an easy descent

**Bare Room**  Bare

**Tree Trunk**  Unremarkable

**Shelves**  Bare, but they grow across the wall as the wheel spins thread

**Spinning wheel**  Can transmute any type of "thread" into another.

Straw into gold, twine to silk, etc.

## What happens when you pull something from the webbing?

It takes 1 turn to extract an object per player. If multiple players extract objects, resolve all results simultaneously. Searching triggers a hazard roll also. When the curios are exhausted, the result is identical to 1-10.

- 1-10 Nothing. You come away with useless junk.
- 11-15 Ouch! Take 1d4 points of damage from a scrape.
- 16-25 Spiders pour out startling you. Save versus paralyzation or bump your head for 1d4 points of damage, or make a DC 13 Wisdom save or take 1d6 points of damage.
- 26-50 Useless Trinket
- 51-65 Minor Curio worth 1D4×10 gold!
- 66-75 Fragile Curio worth 1D8×100 gold!
- 76-90 Attacked by Crab Spiders! There are 1d4 spiders +1 per party member.
- 91-95 Attacked by 1d4 Black Widow Spiders plus 2d6 Crab Spiders!
- 96-99 Rare Curio worth 2D8×100 gold.
- 00 Magical Item

### List of Minor Curios

- Brass Bird in Amber Hemisphere,
- A dancing fan with feathers made out of light.
- Golden cufflinks
- A pen that writes upsidedown (The text comes out vertically inverted)
- Stone that creates a pleasant breeze
- Silver studded belt with giant mug buckle
- Hair tie that has two ends held aloft by sparkly holographic butterflies

### List of Fragile Curios

- A brass statue of Hera aboard a bovine
- An accurate working silver stopwatch
- A glass sphere that increases air moisture with a selection of fragrant
- Antique glass lampshade, stained glass images of Selene
- A glass lattice that looks like a flower

### List of Rare Curios

- Platinum Harp, weighs 8 stone
- Grand Piano, Weighs 10 stone
- A petrified eagle head that shrieks like an eagle when swung in the air
- A set of granite statues in vaguely humanoid shapes, 2 stone each
- Brass Horse Statue, 4 stone

# MONSTER LIST

## SPIDER QUEEN

*Large insect, chaotic starving*

**Armor Class** 19 (Natural Armor)  
**Hit Points** base 112 (15d8 + 45 + 20 per Player)  
**Speed** 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
18 (+4)	14 (+2)	16 (+3)	11 (+0)	14 (+2)	14 (+2)

**Saving Throws** Str +8, Dex +6, Con +7  
**Skills** Deception +6, Insight +4  
**Damage Resistances** bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing from nonmagical weapons  
**Damage Immunities** Poison  
**Condition Immunities** Frightened, Paralyzed, Poisoned, Stunned  
**Senses** Darkvision 120 ft., Blindsight 30 ft., passive Perception 12  
**Languages** Common, Whispers of the Spider People  
**Challenge** 9 (5,000 XP)

**Legendary Resistance (1/Day)** If the Spider Queen fails a saving throw, she can choose to succeed instead.

**Elemental Resistance** The Spider Queen has advantage on saving throws versus elemental spells and effects.

### Actions

**Multitask.** The Spider Queen can bite and strike with her sting.

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 17 (3d8+4) piercing damage.

**Sting.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +8 to hit, reach 15 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (1d6+4) piercing and 18 (4d8) poison damage.

### Legendary Actions

The Spider queen can take 2 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. The Spider Queen regains spent legendary actions at the start of her turn.

**Sting Attack.** The Spider queen can move up to her movement and make a sting attack. **Bite Attack.** The Spider queen attacks twice with her bite.

## SPIDER ANT IMPOSTER

*Medium insect, neutral annoying*

**Armor Class** 15 (Natural Armor)  
**Hit Points** 26 (4d8 + 8)  
**Speed** 50 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
11 (+0)	9 (+0)	14 (+2)	11 (+0)	7 (-2)	8 (-1)

**Senses** passive Perception 8  
**Languages** Common  
**Challenge** 2 (450 XP)

### Actions

**Bite.** *Melee Weapon Attack:* +4 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 7 (2d6)

## 5th Edition

Crab Spiders use the Giant Wolf Spider statblock, Monster Manual, page 330  
 Black Widows use the Giant Spider statblock, Monster Manual, page 328  
 The Baby Spider Swarms use the Swarm of Poisonous Snakes statblock, MM, page 338

## Basic/Expert

Spider Ant-Imposters (AC 3, HD 4, MV 180', Att# 1/2-12, ML 7, SV F2)

Spider Queen (AC 1, HD 9, MV 180', Att 3/1-6/1-6-/2-12+Poison, ML-, SV F9)  
 Poison: Save or be permanently paralyzed

Baby Spider Swarms (HP 6, Damage 1d4, save vs. Poison or take 1d6 damage. They automatically hit any target and take no damage from normal weapons.

The Spider Court is 2-24 Crab Spiders, 2-20 Black Widow Spiders

Crab Spider (AC 7, HD 2, MV 120', Att# 1 / 1-8 + Poison, ML 7, SV F1)  
 Poison: Save at +2 or die in 1d4 turns

Black Widow (AC 6, HD 3, MV 60'/120'web, Att# 1/2-12 + Poison, ML 8, SV F2)  
 Poison: Save or die in 1 turn