

NYAMBE

MASK MAKERS OF NYAMBE-TANDA

Mask-making societies are common to many areas of Nyambe. These are typically secret organizations, composed only of males, which engage in the construction of enchanted masks. In recent years, though, some have begun to question the tradition that limits membership to men.

A mask-making society is responsible for maintaining the history, mythology, and arcane lore of a community, as well as punishing criminals and enforcing morality. By concealing their identities, mask makers are able to operate without fear of reprisal. More importantly, a mask maker ritually assumes the identity of an orisha spirit by constructing and wearing an enchanted mask, and takes on the powers granted by that spirit. For this reason, masks are tremendously important to Nyamban cultures.

Some mask-making societies operate openly with the blessing and support of a community, and many rural villages are actually controlled by mask-making societies rather than any traditional form of government. Unfortunately, some mask makers become drunk with power and turn their societies into little more than magically potent organized crime gangs.

This free *Nyambe: African Adventures* preview introduces you to the mask maker prestige class, and some examples of the magical masks they create.



WEARING AN
ENCHANTED
MASK

FILLS THE
WEARER

WITH THE
POWER

OF THE
ORISHA
SPIRITS.

Nyambe: African Adventures



Stock No. AG3700 • ISBN 1-58978-023-X
256 PAGES (INCLUDING 16 PAGES IN FULL COLOR)

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Mask Maker Prestige Class

Mask makers take great pains that their membership in a society is never revealed, and the wearing of masks helps retain their anonymity. If a mask maker loans another person a mask, that person is sworn to secrecy during a special ritual. Those that violate the oath of secrecy are not always killed, but many wish they had been.

Requirements

Gender: Males only

Skills: 5 ranks Knowledge (religion); 5 ranks Craft (masks); 3 ranks Perform (dance or sing)

Feat: Craft Wondrous Item

Special: Must be accepted by a mask-making society.

Hit Die: d6

Class Skills: The mask maker's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Craft (Any) (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disguise (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (Any) (Int), Perform (Any) (Cha), Profession (Any) (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Speak Language (None).

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int Modifier

Spells: A mask maker gains the ability to cast a small number of divine spells. To cast a spell, the mask maker must have a Wisdom score of at least 10 + the spell's level. Mask maker bonus spells are based on Wisdom, and saving throws against these spells have a DC of 10 + spell level + Wisdom modifier. A mask maker has access to any spell on the cleric spell list and can freely choose which to prepare, though he casts *summon dragon* instead of *summon monster*. A mask maker prepares and casts spells just as a n'anga following the path of the cleric does, and gains the same specialized Nyamban spells, though the mask maker does not gain any of the other special abilities of the n'anga; see *Nyambe: African Adventures* for more on the n'anga PC class.

Create Mask: A mask maker has an enhanced ability to create various sorts of enchanted masks. When creating an enchanted mask, the maker only has to expend 1/2 the usual XP and 1/2 the usual gp cost. These "discounted" masks only function for their creator; they have no powers when worn by anyone else. A mask maker can also choose to create masks at the normal cost, which are usable by anyone.

Skill Focus: At 2nd level, a mask maker gains Skill Focus (Craft (masks)) as a bonus feat.

Gift Mask: At 3rd level, others can make use of the masks created by the mask-maker for 1/2 the normal gp and XP cost, provided the masks are freely given. Any exchange of money, goods, or promises negates the power of the masks. The spirits are quite strict about this, and do not allow loopholes — those who obtain the masks as gifts cannot sell them, either.

Graft Mask: At 4th level, a mask maker can magically graft a mask onto his own face as a standard action. This inflicts 1 point of temporary Constitution damage, but the mask then vanishes into the mask maker's face, permanently granting him the powers of the mask. A second mask can even be worn over a grafted mask, and provide the usual benefits.

A mask maker can only wear one grafted mask at a time; attempting to graft a second mask destroys the first one, and replaces it with the new mask. A *dispel magic* spell targeted at the mask maker can cause the grafted mask to emerge from the mask maker's face. This is the only method of retrieving a grafted mask without destroying it.

Graft Other: At 5th level, a mask maker can use the Graft Mask ability on any willing humanoid recipient, permanently granting her the powers of the grafted mask.

The Mask Maker

LEVEL	BASE ATTACK BONUS	FORT	REF	WILL	SPECIAL	SPELLS PER DAY					
						0	1	2	3	4	5
1	+0	+2	+2	+2	CREATE MASK	4	2	—	—	—	—
2	+1	+3	+3	+3	SKILL FOCUS	5	3	2	—	—	—
3	+2	+3	+3	+3	GIFT MASK	5	3	3	2	—	—
4	+3	+4	+4	+4	GRAFT MASK	6	4	3	3	2	—
5	+3	+4	+4	+4	GRAFT OTHER	6	4	4	3	3	2

New Wondrous Items: Masks

Masks are physical representations of the orisha spirits. Wearing a mask fills the wearer with the power of the orisha to which it is dedicated. To a certain extent, the wearer *becomes* the orisha.

To activate a mask, it must be worn, at which point it functions continuously until removed. The *Nyambe: African Adventures* sourcebook gives details on just under forty of these wondrous items; here are just a few examples:

Cheetah

Masks representing the natural orisha provide their users with ability score bonuses. The mask representing the spirit of the Cheetah is made from lightweight wood painted yellow and decorated with black spots. It grants the user a +2, +4, or +6 enhancement bonus to Dexterity.

Caster Level: 7th (minor), 9th (medium), 11th (major);
Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, *cat's grace*; **Market Price:** 4,000 gp (minor), 16,000 gp (medium), 36,000 gp (major); **Weight:** 3 lb.

Dar!ak the Bloody

The masks of the fiendish orisha allow the wearer to cast a single spell. Those of Dar!ak the Bloody — the spirit of assassination and murder — are always manufactured so as to appear as some other type of item. As a minor wondrous item this mask provides the new spell *incantation of the broken limb* once per day, as a medium item it gives the new spell *lobir* once per day, and as a major item it allows *flesh to stone* to be cast once per day.


Caster Level: 5th (minor), 9th (medium), 11th (major);
Prerequisites: Craft Wondrous Item, the appropriate spell;
Market Price: 1,800 gp (minor), 9,720 gp (medium), 23,760 gp (major); **Weight:** 3 lbs.

Fire

Elemental masks give their users resistance to attacks. The mask of the spirit of Fire is roughly humanoid, constructed from a dark wood and decorated with colorful cloth streamers in various shades of red, yellow, and orange. It grants the user 5, 10, or 15 points of Fire and Lightning Resistance.

Caster Level: 5th (minor), 7th (medium), 9th (major); **Prerequisites:**





Craft Wondrous Item, *resist elements*; **Market Price:** 6,000 gp (minor), 12,000 gp (medium), 24,000 gp (major); **Weight:** 3 lb.

Bedaga the Trickster

The masks of the celestial orisha provide bonuses to skill checks. That of Bedaga the Trickster is a wooden mask carved to resemble a male humanoid, and painted in a black and white checkerboard pattern. It grants the user a +10, +20, or +30 competence bonus to both Bluff and Pick Pocket checks.

Caster Level: 5th (minor), 7th (medium), 12th (major); **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, creator must have 5 ranks (minor), 10 ranks (medium), or 15 ranks (major) in the indicated skills; **Market Price:** 4,200 gp (minor), 16,800 gp (medium), 37,800 gp (major); **Weight:** 3 lb..

Advice

Ancestral masks provide the user with luck bonuses. The Advice mask is made from hardwood, painted white and carved in the image of a departed ancestor. The user is able to hear the advice of an ancestor, though not necessarily the one depicted, giving him a +1, +3, or +4 luck bonus to attacks and weapon damage rolls.

Caster Level: 5th (minor), 9th (medium), 13th (major); **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, *divine favor*; **Market Price:** 5,000 gp (minor), 20,000 gp (medium), 45,000 gp (major); **Weight:** 3 lb.

Ocean

Geographic masks allow the user with a deflection or natural armor bonus. The Ocean mask is made of liquid ocean water, magically held in the form of a humanoid face. It provides the user with a +2, +3, or +4 deflection bonus to his AC.

Caster Level: 7th (minor), 9th (medium), 11th (major); **Prerequisites:** Craft Wondrous Item, caster must be of a level three times that of the AC bonus, *shield of faith*; **Market Price:** 8,000 gp (minor), 18,000 gp (medium), 32,000 gp (major); **Weight:** 3 lb.

NYAMBE™

African Adventures

Nyambe™ is a vast land of exotic creatures and wide expanses, where ancestral orishas cry for brave warriors to carve out the hearts of foul mchawi wizards, and where dragon-blooded sei sorcerers once joined the fierce Amazons of Nibomay in the bloody Rebellious Time to win their freedom. This eagerly anticipated campaign setting for the D20 System™ brings high fantasy together with African myth, legend, and history in a hardcover sourcebook of epic proportions for both players and GMs.

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- **New skills and feats** like Ancestral Blessing, Drum Dancer, Elephant Warrior, and Fire Blood are the heritage of every Nyamban, as well as new weapons, armor, and equipment designed for a tropical climate where the heat of the vast savannah is more dangerous than an enemy's spear.
- Mortals who honor the orisha spirits have been gifted with **new spells and domains** such as

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- **New arcane wonders**, as mad mchawi wizards contemplate the contents of mojuba bags to prepare their divination spells, and new magic items like zombi powder turn fallen warriors into true zombis that keep a hideous memory of their former lives, ritual masks let the wearer become an orisha, and vodou nkisi statues hurl powerful curses at those who dare to use them.
- And in the dark interior of the continent lurk **new monsters**, creatures never before seen by the men of the tamed north lands ... and ravenous beasts of the jungle and desert are only the beginning of the danger that awaits those who walk the lands of Nyambe!

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