

# PRINCE CON 42



**LIFE, THE MULTIVERSE, AND EVERYTHING...**



# PrinceCon 42

## Life, the Multiverse, and Everything

Using the D&D 5th Edition rules

*PrinceCon XLII will be held on March 17-19, 2017*

*PrinceCon XLIII will be held on March 16-18, 2018*

Revised v5. For more on PrinceCon, see <http://www.princecon.org/>

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# Introduction

Changes, changes.

In the long history of PrinceCon, this may be the year where the system used is closest to using someone else's published game exactly as written. We have a few tweaks, but we're trying to keep it as close as possible to the original, such that you can buy the rule book at your friendly local game store, and use the same PCs and the same rules in your home games between one PrinceCon and the next.

The goal of this document is to describe how to play at the convention, based on the rules in the D&D 5th Edition Player's Handbook. That should be the primary reference for any rules, and this mainly notes which of the various options therein will be used.

For some of us, giving up the reins of system design is a major disappointment. For others, giving up the shifting tide of poorly balanced rules is a major relief. But either way, we've agreed that even while using this more common set of rules, we can run the games we want in the worlds we create, the same as ever.

We hope you enjoy them!

*The PrinceCon 42 DMs*

## Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who have helped bring this convention to fruition. Aaron Mulder maintained the PrinceCon books, the software, and desk equipment. Joe Appel managed this year's theme. Spencer Kipe provided the con book cover art, and Yuri DeLaney provided the T-shirt art. Special thanks to Eric Bowen for keeping the student group in order and organizing this event with the University. Eric and Elisa Vera authored our new code of conduct. All the DMs had a much larger than average task this year to switch to the 5e system, and we thank each and every one of them for taking it on. Finally, we would like to thank all our players and desk staff, without whom this convention would not exist.

# Welcome to PrinceCon!

## Overview

PrinceCon is a role-playing convention where you can play a single character through the entire weekend. All the DMs at the con are running games in a single shared world, with a single overall theme and common adversaries and goals. You should expect to play with many DMs over the course of the weekend, leaving any important notes for the next party to take on each DM's scenario. Your characters will gain levels, items, and influence over the course of the weekend, culminating in a "final run" on Sunday morning that is likely to have a substantial impact on the overall result of the con. These final runs conclude by 3 PM, and after a short huddle, the DMs will present the player awards and theme resolution at our final award ceremony.

Other than the start and end of the convention, PrinceCon does not use specific time slots for given expeditions (game sessions). Instead, each DM takes as long as is needed to reach the next scenario milestone, with a typical length of 5-6 hours. At that time, your party returns to Hireling Hall, and you can regroup and level up and rearrange your party as needed, then find a new DM who's available and start your next expedition! While we can't guarantee immediate availability of DMs (particularly in the wee hours of the night when fewer players and DMs are active), we are generally able to send ready parties out in short order.

The convention uses software to roll up, track, and level up your character over the course of the con. You will create your character using one of the available touch screens when you arrive (if you haven't pre-registered and created a character using the Web site beforehand). Each time you level up, you'll use the touch screens to make any necessary selections, and print a new PC sheet. As you receive magic items over the course of the convention, you will receive index cards describing them, which must be initialed by a DM to be valid. When a DM starts an expedition, they will collect your PC sheets and item cards, in order to create the expedition in the software and generate the summary sheets, item descriptions, and scoring sheets needed by the DM. You'll get everything back shortly, often when you arrive in the room where you'll be playing.

So, with that background, we hope you'll enjoy the convention as much as we do!

## Administrative Notes

- Most of us are guests at the University. Please respect the facilities — clean up after yourselves, dispose of trash appropriately, and leave everything in the condition it was in when we arrived.
- Please treat all players and DMs with respect. You may read our full Code of Conduct (p. 20), but for a capsule summary, remember that everyone at the table deserves to have fun, and please keep the convention PG-13.
- Food and drink are allowed in Campus Club (though not in any spillover rooms used in other buildings). You can order delivery from many of the restaurants on Nassau St. During the day, the Frist Campus Center (across Washington Rd. from Campus Club) has a cafeteria, convenience store, and ATM as well.
- There is to be no sleeping in any University buildings. There are many hotels nearby along Rt 1.
- In order to be eligible for awards, you should not go on an expedition with any individual DM more than twice.

# Theme: Life, the Multiverse, and Everything

This year, action centers on a world called Qoin: a flat disk (the map of the Top Side is depicted on the back cover of this book). All of us live on the Top Side. Nobody knows who lives on the Bottom, though rumors are rife. Our great leader, Gargravarr, has declared his intention to tunnel a trade route through to meet the Bottom, though that will involve navigating the Middledark (which, in other worlds, might be called the Underdark).

Most PCs are immortals with direct experience with Gargravarr. (The few mortal exceptions are dealt with under Backgrounds.) You see, you weren't originally born on Qoin. You were born on some other world to which Gargravarr came, promising a new Golden Age, and granting immortality to those who would help bring it about. But that was only so long as you were useful. Ultimately, you witnessed his consuming, and finally destroying your world. Those who are Salotians hope to find a way to avoid that fate.

Imagine your surprise when you reincarnated here, and were immediately greeted by the Resistance, an underground group of immortals, fighting Gargravarr in his attempt to consume *this* world as well.

It will be neither easy nor popular — Gargravarr is widely acknowledged as the wise and benevolent leader of the Top Side. He commands the Council of Light, composed entirely of Top Side natives that he has made immortal and drafted into his service, as well as their Army of Light. The Resistance struggles to even slow him, and the Opposition, the political wing of the Resistance, has little enough support among the populace.

Needless to say, you have your work cut out for you if you wish to see a future for the Top Side!

## Game Notes

- An immortal can tell whether another being is immortal by perceiving the being with any mundane sense.
- Close inspection for a period of 2d6 rounds will allow the sensing immortal to imprint the perceived immortal's aura, so that once they encounter one another later (in whatever body either occupies), full recognition will require only a round.
- When an immortal dies, the body behaves like a perfectly ordinary corpse for about three days (including a very slow decomposition and the ability to be raised), then instantly crumbles into dust as the immortal gains a new body. *In practice, players whose characters are killed on a run and not raised by another PC must return to Hireling Hall, where they may roll up a new body.*
- Memories are retained broadly and abstractly life to life. It's like being told someone's life story in detail — but it's still not quite your story.
- An immortal does not retain skills or languages — you may know that you used to be able to do something, but that doesn't mean that you still can.
- Attempting to trap an immortal in his body by, say, turning him to stone, has the same mechanism as a corpse; the stoned body turns to dust after three days
- As part of creating a character, you should pick your home world (p. 9). Mortal characters are, of course, from Qoin.
- As part of your background, you should also decide how long your character has been in this world: zero to five years for immortals, and the usual lifespan for mortals.
- Additional theme information and map updates may be released between now and the convention.

# Creating a Character

Note that all page references in this document are to the 5th edition Player's Handbook unless otherwise noted.

## Avoiding the Friday-Night Crunch

Most of our players arrive at the convention Friday night. In order to play a game at the convention, you must create a PC using one of the three touch screens on-site (unless you have pre-registered and created one in advance, or brought your own laptop/tablet to access the con software). Consequently, there is a lot of pressure to get a lot of people through character creation quickly, so that they might all start playing!

We call this the "Friday-Night Crunch". Some options for character creation will not be available at this time, simply because they take longer and draw out the time required to get people in to their first games. These options are noted below.

If you want the most flexibility to create and fully flesh out your character, please consider pre-registering and creating your character ahead of your arrival at the convention.

## Starting Level

All characters will start at 5th level, as in prior years. We find the "second tier" of play from levels 5-10 to be the most interesting to explore during the convention. Most players who go on 5 or more expeditions over the course of the convention will reach 10th level for their final run (see Experience (p. 13)).

## Ability Scores

For now, use the 27-point "Customizing Ability Scores" method described on page 13 of the Player's Handbook. Note that the standard set of scores is fine (15-14-13-12-10-8), as it can be selected using the 27-point method as well.

During the actual convention, and in particular during the Friday-night crunch, we may restrict characters to either the standard array or a small group of options that would be legal by the 27-point system, in order to reduce time taken for character creation.

## Playable Races

The available races for PrinceCon XLII are:

- Dwarves (Hill or Mountain dwarves)
- Elves (High or Wood elves)
- Halflings (Lightfoot or Stout halflings)
- Humans
- Gnomes (Forest or Rock gnomes)
- Half-Elves
- Half-Orcs

In other words, the races from the Player's Handbook that are *not* allowed are Dark Elves, Dragonborn, and Tieflings.



## Variant Humans

Humans may use either the standard traits, or the Variant Human Traits, both described on page 31 of the Player's Handbook.

## Religions

At PrinceCon, we focus on Religions to a greater degree than either alignment or clerical domain. The following deities/religions are available to PCs, with the corresponding domains for cleric PCs:

**Aru (Life)** holds that life and health are our greatest resources. Without life, who could stand in opposition to evil?

**Daglir (Forge)** is the patron God of craftsmen. While originally a Dwarven religion, it has expanded to include followers of all races.

**Gaia (Nature)** is the goddess of nature, and her followers guard the natural order against waste and cruelty.

**Mavors (Light)** stands for law, truth and justice — in that order. His followers often serve as judges, arbiters, and inquisitors.

**Hione (Knowledge)** is the great guardian of knowledge. His sages collect and preserve knowledge to add to his store.

**Leo (War)** holds that honorable combat is the greatest test of a being's worth. Followers often spend a good deal of time exploring the finer aspects of a "fair" fight.

**Ratri (Trickery)** guides her followers in the covert gathering of power and influence, emphasizing guile over force.

**Pantheists** pay their respects to each of the gods in their own sphere, without any special devotion to one or another. They may choose to adopt a particular religion at a later time. Clerics, Druids, and Paladins may not be pantheists.

Note that we are using the Forge Domain from Unearthed Arcana for Daglir (and not either of the other domains described in that article). You may ask the desk for a printout of the Forge article, if it would be helpful.

As a result of this, the Tempest domain is not available to PCs this year — we're sorry, but Forge was a much better fit for Daglir.

## Clerics

Clerics must pick one of the deities listed above. In terms of game mechanics, it will be treated as selecting the corresponding Clerical Domain. But where possible, we refer to the religion rather than the domain.

## Druids

Druids must worship Gaia, though they will receive some leeway in their interpretation as long as it is largely consistent with supporting the natural order.

## Paladins

Paladins must select one of the deities listed above to witness and empower their oath. Therefore they may not be pantheists. The selected deity should be consistent with the oath, though the paladin is also granted some leeway in their interpretation.

## Followers

Characters other than Clerics, Druids, and Paladins may choose to be a follower of a particular religion, or may be a pantheist. A pantheist may choose to follow a single religion at any point (a “battlefield conversion”), but the choice to follow a single deity, once made, cannot be given up or changed.

The game effects of following a single religion are:

- You must obey behavioral strictures similar to those of a Cleric of the god you follow. Sufficiently egregious violation of the strictures will cause you to lose the benefits of being a lay follower, until you perform appropriate atonement.
- You gain Inspiration automatically and immediately whenever, in the judgment of the DM, you perform (or in some cases even attempt), an extraordinary service to the cause of your religion.
- PCs who do not follow a specific religion may earn Inspiration by performing a service to a given religion as above, so long as they immediately convert to become a follower of that religion.

Note that this will be the only way to earn Inspiration at PrinceCon.

## Languages

The availability of a specific language to a party is not expected to play a deciding factor in any scenario. So in that sense, your languages selections are not particularly important. Most of the languages described in the Player’s Handbook (p. 123) are available. Specific things to be aware of:

- Common is spoken across the surface of the world (the Top Side, that is)
- There may be some language spoken on the Bottom, but none of you know it
- Undercommon appears to be widely spoken in the Middledark, based on our limited contact with its residents. Any PC who takes Undercommon as a starting language should have a pretty good background reason as to how they came to know it.
- Starting PCs may not select Druidic, Thieves’ Cant, or Draconic when selecting languages (though certain PCs get those automatically)
- Other racial languages for both PC races and monster races are available as normal, though any specific one may or may not see use during the convention.

## Backgrounds

The backgrounds in the Player’s Handbook are all available, as well as the additional options listed below. There is one background shared by all mortal player characters. You may not change the skills or features of your background.

While the convention does not track money, if you should use these expanded backgrounds outside of the convention, the starting equipment would include:

- Double Agent: a pouch with 10 GP
- Resistance Cell Leader: a pouch with 10 GP
- Council Member (Opposition): a brooch worth 15 GP
- Mortal Support: a belt with 10 GP

## Double Agent

Though you oppose Gargravarr, that is a secret. You actually have a rank in the Army of Light, the military forces of Gargravarr's Council of Light. Your unit is one that allows you substantial freedom of action; perhaps you were placed "undercover" in the resistance and report useless information back, or you are assigned advance scouting duties or other infiltration work that allows you to resist Gargravarr so long as you periodically report some findings back to your superiors.

You may decide whether you began as a Gargravarr loyalist and converted as a result of something you witnessed, or hatched a plan from the very beginning to prove your loyalty to Gargravarr and join the Army of Light under false pretenses. As an immortal, you were always destined for an elite unit, and it was not difficult to find your way to one that allows you the freedom you require.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Deception, Insight

**Tool Proficiencies:** Forgery kit, one type of gaming set

**Equipment:** A set of common clothes, insignia of your rank, a gaming set of your choice, and a forgery kit.

**Personality:** As Spy (Criminal)

### Feature: Rank in the Army of Light

You have an official rank in the Army of Light. That advantage of this position is that you often have advance notice of the enemy's important plans or initiatives. You can sometimes even pick the brains of your contacts in the Army of Light, so long as you are delicate about it. The disadvantage is that you may be called on at key moments to do the enemy's bidding, and to refuse would be to reveal your true loyalties and be forever hunted as a traitor.

## Resistance Cell Leader

You organize the resistance to Gargravarr among the common folk. As with any successful resistance, it is divided into small cells such that the capture and interrogation of one key member cannot unravel the entire organization. Therefore, while you control your own cell, and a reasonably high-level one at that, you have limited contacts beyond your own cell.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Persuasion, Investigation

**Languages:** One of your choice

**Tool Proficiencies:** Disguise kit

**Equipment:** A set of common clothes, a disguise kit, and false papers allowing a delivery of supplies into any facility of Gargravarr's (usable once only).

**Personality:** As Entertainer

### Feature: Resistance Contacts

You sometimes receive orders from your superiors in the resistance, and often pass your own orders to the few leaders you know of sub-cells beneath you. However, since you are dealing with the normal (mortal) inhabitants of the world, the amount of influence you have is somewhat limited; generally speaking, they are not adventurer-class. Still, if someone needs transport, hiding, mundane supplies, or a diversion, you can easily arrange for that.

You know the secret signals and handshakes needed to identify resistance members in other areas of the world, though they are under no obligation to follow your orders.

## Council Member (Opposition)

You are the special adviser to a regional Council Member. He or she is known to be in the Opposition, politically opposed to Gargravarr. This puts your councilor in a murky area; many of Gargravarr's supporters accuse the Opposition of simply being a figurehead for the Resistance, and agitate for any member of the Opposition to be removed or even arrested. Gargravarr certainly has the necessary support to do so, but thus far he has stuck with the tradition of allowing the Opposition to be represented in local and regional councils. (It is said that he believes in keeping his friends close and his enemies closer.)

**Skill Proficiencies:** Persuasion, Insight

**Languages:** two of your choice

**Equipment:** A quill, ink, 10 sheets of parchment, papers giving you the freedom of the council's staff, fine clothes

**Personality:** As Folk Hero

### Feature: Political Presence

As an established member of the Opposition, your councilor represents one of the few official channels to raise arguments against Gargravarr or his actions. If you present compelling evidence to your councilor, he or she can raise these issues before the regional council. You also have some influence over local administration and town or city services, though you cannot abuse that without risking your position.

Note that you do not appear before the council yourself, lest you be identified as an immortal. (Gargravarr knows who his pet immortals are, and therefore assumes any others are the enemy.)

## Mortal Support

Unlike every other PC at the convention, you are mortal. It is up to you what drew you to the cause of the Resistance, but it was not that you were born into it. Something caused you to throw in your lot with the rest, even knowing that you are risking vastly more than they are.

**Skill Proficiencies:** Two of your choice

**Tool Proficiencies:** One set of artisan's tools or a musical instrument, land vehicles

**Equipment:** A healer's kit, fishing tackle, and common clothes

**Personality:** As Urchin

### Origin

You do not pick an origin, as you are not from another world as most of the immortal PCs are. Instead, your origin benefit is that you know of one special location in this world (subject to DM approval). Some options include: an entrance to the Middledark, a relatively safe route over the edge of the world, a comprehensive library, a secret route to a commonly known location (such as a remote stronghold or Gargravarr's dungeons), or the headquarters of a thieves' guild.

### Feature: Unswerving Dedication

As a mortal fighting immortals, nobody can question your dedication to the cause. In fact, your will to oppose Gargravarr is so strong that any time you are reduced to 0 HP, you automatically succeed on your first death save. As well, you do not detect as immortal. This means, for instance, that you can pass whenever Gargravarr's forces are searching for opposing immortals.

## Origin

Each immortal PC came from a world that Gargravarr previously destroyed (or in the case of Salot, attacked and may attack again). You may select one of the options below. This Origin is an addition to the usual character-creation process, and does not replace any other element of it.

### Alcheringa

**Citizens:** Alcheringans

We remember how the whole world would practically sing with power. And in our memory, we recall how everyone had the ability to change the reality of the world at a whim. Of course, some were better at ‘The Dreaming’ than others.

The primordial gods had faded into the distance soon after the creation of the Alcheringa. But before they began their rest, they created a group of ‘Dream Serpents’ to rule the land. Thousands of years passed with only petty squabbles erupting. The elves and the other minor races warmed their skins under the heat of the powerful sun during the day and danced amid the colored shadows cast by the seven moons at night.

In the absence of any pantheon, we all worshiped the ‘Dream Serpents’ as god-kings. The unique race of Dragonborn became the aristocracy because they shared traits of both the ‘Dream Serpents’ and those that ‘walked and breathed.’ They acted as intermediaries to the reclusive rulers and saw to the day to day governing of nations.

It was a fine and balanced world. But all of that changed when a silver tongued aristocrat owing no allegiance to any nation arrived in the courts. Gargravarr sowed the seed of discontent on the globe, and following his path of disruption, we found only oblivion, for ourselves and our world.

**Benefit:** Having lived on Alcheringa, you speak Draconic, the royal language of magic and power.

### Sahra’

**Citizens:** Sahra’yyns are humans, elves, dwarves, halflings, and half-elves

Our world was once a lush paradise teeming with all manner of life. The Great Civilizations had reached a stalemate and had settled down to enjoy a wary peace that lasted generations.

Unbeknownst to them, however, a new power was emerging on deep in the Sahra’ Desert on the edge of their great realms. A Prophet had arisen, forging the quarrelsome and disparate tribes into a mighty military force.

Bursting forth from the desert, Gargravarr’s Army of Light destroyed most realms within a few years. We held out as long as we could, but in the final conflict, we found only oblivion, for ourselves and our world.

**Benefit:** After fighting The Prophet and his army for countless lifetimes, you carry with you proficiency in the Survival skill.

### The Great Wheel

**Citizens:** Monsters and Grafts (catfolk, horsefolk known as Eponai, otterfolk known as Perrin)

We have no recollection of “Gargravarr.”

In our world, we were told that in the days of old, dragons roamed the Great Wheel and the men saw this and were displeased. Rising, they took arms and hunted the lords of the sky to their last. Following that bloody era, humankind and their cousins spread from the center of the world like branches of the Tree of Life, pulled by the irresistible force of the turning of the Wheel. The monstrous brood of the world were pushed to the very edges of the Wheel before they fought back under the leadership of Lord Taerth, eventually capturing the demihuman Tree of Life. Taerth was ascendant for a generation until the demihumans retook their Tree. Each side regrouped for the next conflict, but curious events forestalled all-out war.

Birthrates had dropped precipitously among both monstrous and demihuman folk, and sightings of the Walking Dead trickled through the rumor mill. We discovered later that the Tree of Death was returning souls to the Wheel early, in fleshy shells, to combat a threat that was leeching souls from the world. When the wizard Arawn was defeated and his Thorn Bush destroyed, there was a brief moment of combined monstrous and demihuman celebration before the Wheel cracked in two, and as we fell we saw oblivion, for ourselves and our world.

**Benefit:** Having lived among monsters for so long, you may add your proficiency bonus to any Intelligence-based skill check related to monsters (identifying them, recalling lore about them, etc.)

## The Faerie Kingdoms

**Citizens:** Faerie (Liosalfar, Alfar, Svartalfar, Pixies, and Pooka)

The Faerie Kingdoms were under siege.

Well, they were about to be, at some point in the unspecified future. But the threat felt immediate, and that's why our plans were so drastic – to face an invading army of telepaths from Beyond the World, we needed an army that couldn't be affected by mind control. The answer was simple, really; clay soldiers that only followed commands from a Faery (well, at least the Liosalfar — there was no need to extend leadership to the Alfar, Svartalfar, Pixies, or Pooka. Let's not be silly). In retrospect, we were surprised that no one thought of it before Gargravarr made the suggestion. Now the trick was to animate our Terra Cotta Army. Well, it so happens that brave adventuring Mortals were always wandering the Ways to Faerie, and by siphoning off a little of their vitality, we could harvest the power we needed.

To make a long story short, even though the Mortals eventually broke out of the magical maze we created for them, and were for some unfathomable reason very angry with us, we were able to make their animal minds see reason on the common enemy. After victory was largely secured and the main Beyonder host driven off, a bacchanal ensued, in honor of Gargravarr and the victorious army. As we approached him with laurel and ivy in hand, Gargravarr and the Terra Cotta soldiers shouted as one, and within their opened mouths we saw oblivion, for ourselves and our world.

**Benefit:** After lifetimes in Faerie, you have an innate Minor Glamour: You may always make a Disguise check and add your proficiency bonus, whether or not you actually have a Disguise Kit on hand.

## Pangaea

**Citizens:** Shamanic Hillfolk are all human

We were wild. We were brave. We scattered our enemies, tore down their cities, and stole back our artifacts. We were the clans of the Shamanic Hillfolk, inheritors of a tradition of ritual magic that held power unlike any seen since the cataclysmic Mage Wars that scorched the planet and wiped out most of demihumankind. And for a while, after the fall of the New Kingdom that threatened our existence, we were content.

We were also curious.

Many of us wondered what we could accomplish with our magic; what limits, if any, there were when we worked together. Shaman Gargravarr encouraged these experiments. Soon we could hurl magic fire at a target on the other side of the continent, or listen to any conversation within 100 miles. We exulted, and then we lost control. When we returned to Gargravarr to beseech his assistance regaining command of these vast powers, we found only oblivion, for ourselves and our world.

**Benefit:** The magic of the Hillfolks runs strong in your veins; you gain a Cantrip, though you may not select one that does damage. Charisma is your spellcasting attribute for purposes of this Cantrip.

## Stoneheim

**Citizens:** Giants of various types, including the one-eyed Cyclops, four-armed Tetrakheire, two-headed Ettins, Trolls, and more. Betrayed in ages past and cast out of Godsheim by Hione the AllFather, we giants lived across the cold seas on the fringes of

Mannheim, biding our time. Ratri nurtured our hatred through the Ages of the World, through false starts and failed insurrections, until she could precipitate the Twilight of the Gods. When the day came, we sailed our ships to war and brought death to the Mannfolk of Jaanmark, and shouted for death to the Gods. Ratri's heroic children, long dead at the hands of Hione and Leo, the Storm Lion, in one of our previous attempts at revenge, had been replaced by a new champion, Gargravarr. While we cheered, Gargravarr smote Hione, and crushed Danu beneath his heel, and made Mavors beg for mercy. Joyous, Ratri (parading Carrunos around on a leash) ordered the ale casks of Valor Hall opened for the surviving giants, and then Gargravarr, in his moment of victory, opened his mouth, and within we saw oblivion, for ourselves and our world.

**Benefit:** Well-accustomed to massive feats of strength, you have a Powerful Build: you count as one size larger when determining your carrying capacity and the weight you can push, drag, or lift

## Salot

**Citizens:** Salotians are of all PC races plus Grafts (catfolk, horsefolk known as Eponai, otterfolk known as Perrin) and Fey (tiny flying humanoids).

Centuries ago, the great Mage-Sage Peintre the Watchman developed a subtle, nuanced approach to magic that emphasized Weather Magic, Pyromancy, Illusion and Hallucination, as well as the ability to analyze and fine-tune magical effects, rather than focusing on spells that deal damage to foes directly. This approach has proven incompatible with other realms of the Multiverse, but it stood us in good stead when Gargravarr arrived, for the effects of this alien intruder were soon felt. While we could not hope to match him in battle, we were able to drive him away, at least for a time, using our power of illusion and hallucination. An entire army was trapped in enclosed boxes of their own imaginations, while other forces fought among themselves, making them easy pickings for our heroes. But, our sages tell us that our advantage cannot last, and so brave emissaries risked The Transition in the hope of finding new defenses, ere Gargravarr return with new knowledge that will pierce our veils. Alone among immortals we have met, we have the Transition, not Gargravarr, to thank for our immortality.

Those of us who were sent hope we shall find success before Salot and her citizens are lost to the oblivion. Many of our fellows were disabled by The Transition: Fey, whose caloric requirements were always prodigious, must spend so much time eating they are useless. Grafts either went insane, or split into two: a humanoid and a hostile animal of great power. Some of us here were formerly grafts, and carry the scars of battling the other parts of our selves. Others were more fortunate; though Half-Elves and Half-Orcs are vanishingly rare on Salot (the former restricted to a few royal families, the latter nearly exterminated in the ancient wars against Sumerilon), they proved well-adapted to The Transition.

**Benefit:** Because of your mastery of the Watchman's techniques, you gain advantage on any roll involving detecting an illusion.

## Personality Selections

You are encouraged to select two Traits, one Ideal, one Bond, and one Flaw for your character. During the Friday-Night Crunch, you may only select from the options suggested for your background (you may skip individual selections, or skip all of them if the provided options don't work for you). If you skip personality selections for any reason, you can edit your personality selections later in the con and enter anything you like.

**A Note on Flaws:** the purpose of selecting a flaw is to give your PC an interesting characteristic to struggle against, and perhaps overcome, over the course of the weekend. Please choose wisely; character flaws such as habitual lying or stealing (whether involving other PCs or NPCs) are likely to divert the game and lead to less fun for everyone. On the other hand, flaws such as misplaced belief or trust, integrity or reliability (or lack thereof), elements of your background you wish to keep secret, or sense of duty may provide better opportunities for enhancing the game instead.

## Spell Selection

Players will not select specific spells for their characters during character creation. Instead, each Arcane Trickster, Bard, Eldritch Knight, Ranger, Sorcerer, Warlock, and Wizard will select their spells known using the touch screens after their first game session. After that, the touch screen will prompt to select additional spells and/or swap existing spells as the characters level up.

Partly, this is to save time during the Friday-Night Crunch, and partly this is to allow players to try out their spell selection before locking it into their sheet.

Clerics, Druids, Paladins, and Wizards will never select their *prepared* spells through the touch screen. The PC sheet will show any auto-prepared spells (such as cleric Domain spells or paladin Oath spells), but other prepared spells are always subject to change and therefore best not printed irreversibly on the PC sheet.

## Alignment

PrinceCon does not use alignment. Any spells, items, or effects that refer to alignment should be read to use “religion” or “deity” if possible. Otherwise, the DM will interpret the effect.

Largely, this is because we’d prefer you roleplay your character according to his or her motivations and principles, rather than putting additional weight on the simplified measure of “alignment.”

## Starting Equipment & Wealth

PrinceCon does not track wealth. There is simply not enough time at the convention for a detailed accounting, and the characters are influential enough to get the equipment they need.

All characters will start with any weapons and armor they like, and one of the standard equipment packs listed on page 151.

## Encumbrance

PrinceCon does not track the encumbrance caused by a character’s equipment, again to avoid detailed accounting at the convention. Please don’t make us regret this.

Characters who are not strong enough for their armor will automatically have their speed reduced by 10’ as usual. (See “Heavy Armor,” page 144, and the armor chart on page 145.)

If a special circumstance requires a DM to calculate a character’s ability to carry a load, we will use the usual Lifting and Carrying rules (typically  $15 \times \text{Strength}$ ) found on page 176.



# Leveling Up

## Experience

PrinceCon uses a customized Experience Points track, in which the XP needed for each level is double the last. XP are awarded based on the time and duration of each expedition, modified by the scores the DM gives to each player. The same amount of expedition time gives more XP later in the con, when levels also cost more.

The whole point of this is that if someone joins the convention on Saturday or Sunday, the large XP awards late in the con will rapidly catch them up with their peers.

Player who game consistently through the weekend typically gain about one level after each expedition. The players who play the most and score the highest may reach level 11 for their final expedition. Most others will be level 10 for their final expeditions.

## Wizards & Spellbooks

In addition to the basic progression of learning spells (page 114), Wizards will be awarded one additional spellbook spell for each level, representing the spells they might learn from research, NPCs, or side quests in a game outside of the convention.

Additionally, a wizard will be awarded one additional spellbook spell for every expedition they go on with another wizard PC (representing the exchange of arcane knowledge along the way).

Wizard PCs should not go out of their way to seek out additional spells in-game: the rules above are a substitute for wizard PCs taking game time at the convention in the pursuit of improving their own capabilities. DMs will not award extra spells just for seeking them out.

At their discretion, a DM may still give out spell scrolls as items or allow wizards to learn specific plot-relevant spells to forward their scenarios.

## Feats and Multiclassing

Feats are allowed: both for Variant Humans, and in lieu of Ability Score Improvements for any character.

Multiclassing is not allowed at the convention.

## Magic Items

Magic Items will be given out on item cards. An item card must be initialed by a DM in magic pen to be valid. Whenever you begin an expedition, you must hand in all your item cards along with your PC sheet for processing at the desk.

Note that you may carry at most three items that require attunement. If you have more than three, you must return one to Hireling Hall.

In general, returning players should expect fewer and less powerful magic items compared to previous conventions; the balance of the 5e system is predicated on “Bounded Accuracy” – meaning in this case fewer, smaller bonuses.

# Game Play

## Inspiration

PrinceCon does not use the normal Inspiration rules on p. 125; instead, PCs are granted Inspiration under the conditions described in Religious Followers (p. 6).

## Spell Casting

### Interrupting Casters

Note that in most cases, spell casting cannot be interrupted in the way it could be in previous years. We evaluated continuing to use the Phase System with 5e, but there are simply too many powers and effects that last “until the end of your next turn” or have similar timing effects that would be very difficult to replicate in the phase system.

While you cannot stop a caster from casting a spell by damaging them, be aware of the following:

- Counterspell is a spell that can be used as a reaction to prevent another caster from casting (page 228). You may Counterspell a Counterspell, though each character only gets one Reaction per turn.
- Damaging a caster causes them to make a Concentration check (page 203) if they are maintaining a spell that requires concentration.
- You may Ready an action (page 193) to attack a caster if they cast a spell. You cannot actually interrupt the casting of the spell, but if it is a concentration spell, you can force a concentration check immediately after the spell goes off.
- You may close to within 5’ of a caster or engage them in melee, in which case any ranged spell attacks they make would be made with Disadvantage (page 195)

### Ritual Casting

Note that you can move or travel while casting a ritual (or another spell with a long casting time), but it uses your action each turn and you must maintain concentration (“Longer Casting Times” p. 202, and “Concentration” p. 203).

## Material Components

All casters may start with either a component pouch or focus that will serve in lieu of *all* material components (even those normally consumed by the spell). This is meant to streamline play at the convention. Please do not abuse spells that would normally require expensive components and force us to rethink this policy!

# Rules Interpretations & Reminders

## Surprise

Note that there is not a “surprise round.”

Initiative is determined like normal for the first round of a combat involving surprise. Anyone who is surprised cannot move or act on their first turn of combat, and cannot take reactions until that first turn passes. (p. 189)

Once a creature is in combat, it cannot be “surprised” on later rounds, even by the arrival of hidden or invisible enemies.

## Assassinate

As opposed to attempting to agree on the duration of “surprise” and deciding whether a turn in which you cannot act counts as “taking a turn,” we will use this definition for Assassinate (the Rogue class feature on p. 97):

You have advantage on attack rolls against any opponent you surprise, during the first round of combat only. If you hit under those conditions, your hit is automatically a critical hit.

## Hiding & Invisibility

Note that the most relevant rules for hiding and for attacking or being attacked while invisible or hidden are:

- Hiding (sidebar), page 177
- Lightly Obscured or Heavily Obscured areas, page 183
- the Hide action in combat, page 192
- “Unseen Attackers and Targets”, page 194
- the Blinded condition in darkness or Heavily Obscured areas, page 290
- the Invisible condition, page 291

In particular, if a character wants to be able to attack from hiding, he must first hide (p. 177), which cannot be done when he is clearly visible to whoever he is attempting to hide from (p. 177).

An invisible character already has effectively the same combat advantages as a hidden character (p. 194), and only needs to Hide in addition if he wants an opponent to be completely unaware of his location.

## Perception vs. Investigation

The rules on whether to use Perception or Investigation are somewhat muddy, for instance, the examples for both on page 178 suggest they can be used to find clues, but don’t clarify what the difference is between the two.

To try to distinguish (and avoid always just using whichever skill is better), we will say that Perception is used to “notice” while Investigation is used to “search” or “deduce.”

Some things may be still detected either way. A Secret Door could potentially be noticed (by noticing a draft, a light leaking out from behind it, a trigger to operate it, etc.). If you didn’t notice one, you might still search a room to see if you can find one.

Other things may only be detected one way. An item tucked into the back of a desk drawer could typically only be found with a search, or you might deduce that a chest must have a false bottom because the space inside is not as large as the exterior (both Investigation).

## Tool Proficiency vs. Skill Proficiency

A given check might be:

- A straight ability check
- A skill check, involving adding your proficiency bonus to the relevant ability bonus, if you have proficiency in that skill
- A tool check, involving adding your proficiency bonus to the relevant ability bonus, if you have proficiency in that tool and also have the tool on hand.

Note that you never apply both a tool proficiency and a skill proficiency – every check would only allow one or the other.

In some cases, tool proficiency is required. For instance, a lock might be picked with a DC 15 check if you have thieves' tools and you're proficient with them – but if you lack the tools or lack the proficiency, it just can't be done. (In special cases, such as improvised tools, you might check with disadvantage.)

In other cases, you might be able to approach a problem in different ways and end up making different checks. For instance, to open a set of manacles:

- You might force them, a DC 20 Strength check
- You might slip them, a DC 20 Dexterity check
- You might pick them, a DC 15 check with thieves' tools, made at disadvantage in the likely event that you need to improvise the tools. This check is only possible if you're proficient with thieves' tools.

## Item Interactions

Everyone gets one free item interaction on their turn.

In the common case of a weapon switch, there are several possibilities:

- You might drop whatever's currently in your hand, and then use your item interaction to draw the weapon you want
- At the end of turn 1, you might use your item interaction to stow whatever's currently in your hand. Then at the start of turn 2, you might use your item interaction to draw a new weapon.
- You can use your item interaction to stow a weapon and your regular action to draw a new one, but then you can't attack unless you have some other way to do so

Note that there's no way to draw or stow two weapons (or a weapon and a shield) using only your item interaction, unless you have the Dual Wielder feat (p. 165).

## Hands for Casting

Casters need a free hand for any spells that require Somatic or Material components (p. 203). If both hands are full, the caster must either stow an item using her item interaction or drop an item in order to cast.

Exceptions include:

- A caster with the War Caster feat (p. 170) can cast with a hand that's holding a weapon or shield. This covers both somatic and material components, so long as the caster has a component pouch or arcane focus.
- A cleric or paladin may use an amulet or the emblem on her shield as a Holy Symbol (p. 151) and therefore as her spellcasting focus, so she does not require a hand for material components
- A wizard or druid who uses a staff as an Arcane Focus or Druidic Focus (p. 151) can also use the focus as a quarterstaff, so he may cast with that weapon in hand.

## Shooting into Melee

Note that there is no explicit penalty for firing into melee. A DM may decide to grant the opponent cover (typically half cover, for +2 AC; page 196). There is usually no chance of harming a friend in the melee by accident.

## Interposing Movement

With different characters' movement split across different turns in the initiative sequence, there is no particular way to interrupt somebody's movement in order to block them from moving someplace they're trying to go. Though if you know it's a possibility, you can Ready an action to "step in the way if X moves toward Y."

There's also no general way to safely extract another character from a dangerous melee. However, if you can cause the opponent to use their Reaction, then the other character can escape without taking an opportunity attack. Alternately, you can join the melee, then the other character can take a Disengage action, and the opponent won't be able to follow without taking an opportunity attack from you.

# Religions in Detail

## Apostles of Life

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Aru	Healers	Life	Caduceus

**Beliefs:** The Apostles of Life believe that life and health are the gift of Aru and our greatest possessions. Who would not give any amount of riches to preserve their life or their health? It is the holy work of clerics of Aru to preserve the life and health of all good people. They are especially proficient in the art of healing.

While some Healers are full pacifists, most are willing to engage in combat for just causes. For without those willing to stand up to evil and death, there can be no preservation of life. Even so, all followers of Aru abhor meaningless violence and destruction, and combat is typically a last resort.

## Brethren of the Forge

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Daglir	Shapers	Forge	Hammer/Bellows

**Beliefs:** The Brethren of the Forge are craftsman who have achieved a holy level of proficiency at creating items and working metal. They believe that all of creation is raw material, and when the entire world has been shaped into its perfect form, then the new age of prosperity will begin.

Daglir Firsthammer was the first being to transform metal into useful tools and beautiful forms. He taught many secrets to the Dwarves at the Dawning of the World. For this reason he is often depicted as a Dwarf or in Dwarven attire. However, he now receives worship from all civilized races and regions.

*Note that the Forge domain does not appear in the Player's Handbook; please ask the desk if you'd like a copy.*

## Keepers of Nature

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Gaia	Stewards	Nature	Blooming Tree

**Beliefs:** Keepers of Nature worship the life force of the natural world, personified in the goddess Gaia. They celebrate the many natural cycles, especially the seasons. They seek to facilitate the transitions from one natural state to the next and guard the natural order against waste and cruelty.

To them, the "Speaking-Peoples" (Humans, Elves, Dwarves, etc.) are integral parts of the Web of Life and not separate from it. They endorse and bless the natural behaviors of all beings: subsistence hunting (i.e., not sport), cultivation of crops and orchards, and creating comfortable dens and shelters. They punish those who would pollute or otherwise recklessly abuse the bounty of Gaia.

## Order of the Hermit

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Hione	Sages	Knowledge	Lamp/Open Book

**Beliefs:** Sages worship the god Hione, who sits alone on an enchanted isle and guards all knowledge. They are devoted to the acquisition and preservation of knowledge. While their more sedentary pursuits (such as libraries and universities) are more often the first thought people have of The Order, there are many very active clergy searching unto the edge of Creation for the novel and undiscovered. Others strive to better understand the workings of the world and all that is in it.

Hione's followers are scribes, teachers, explorers, traders, and field researchers as well as librarians and archivists. They delight in a well-told tale or a good mystery, are impatient with inaccurate information, and downright contemptuous of falsehoods.

## Pride of Leo

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Leo	Chaplains	War	Flaming Sword/Red Shield

**Beliefs:** Leo is the patron of trial by combat, and detests cowardice and unfair fights, by which he means the use of healing or damaging spells to alter the outcome of individual combat. His followers believe that combat is the greatest test of a being's worth, and consequently, that the best fighter is the most divinely blessed.

Chaplains fill key roles in the organized armies of the World from religious support of the troops up to and including generals and admirals. They are often good tacticians or wily strategists; they are always potent direct combatants in their own right.

## Seekers of Truth

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Mavors	Seekers	Light	White Feather/Scales

**Beliefs:** Mavors is the Truefriend, the Honest Broker, and the Judge of the Dead. He codifies the Law and enforces it dispassionately. He ensures that trades are fair and honest.

Seekers, in turn, are the sworn defenders of Law, Truth, and Justice — in that order. Their strict discipline favors Courage, Loyalty, Honesty, and Compassion. Bullying, Lying, Betrayal, and Oath-breaking are considered major sins. They hold that those who break the Law should be tried and punished or make restitution.

In many places, Seekers serve as Judges, Arbiters, and the Watch. Killing is not forbidden them, but more often they prefer to see scofflaws condemned by due process of Law. Specialists with the clergy may serve as Jailers and Inquisitors. They strongly believe that "confession is good for the soul."

## Shadows of Ratri

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Ratri	Shadows	Trickery	New Moon

**Beliefs:** Ratri is the goddess of the Night and Keeper of Secrets whispered in the Dark. She prizes discretion and subtlety, preferring to let others labor in the darkness of their ignorance.

She is worshiped mostly by those who work on the edges of polite society: entertainers, thieves, beggars, and bandits. Even diplomats have been known to honor her — in private, of course. She is often invoked before playing a game of riddles or when solving a difficult puzzle.

Ratri's clergy avoid direct confrontation in favor of misdirection. They will go to great lengths to infiltrate their enemies and destroy them from within. They can be enigmatic and their influence is only increased by being personally mysterious. Knowing the true will of Ratri is the Ultimate Mystery.

# Code of Conduct

## Introduction

PrinceCon is meant to be an event that is both fun and comfortable for everyone involved.

PrinceCon is a Role-Playing convention, and thus ideas and words expressed by players may be “in character” and not intended to offend or make anyone uncomfortable. However, we must recognize that things said in character are still capable of offending or causing discomfort.

## Ground Rules

- Do not violate any federal, state, or local laws, facility rules or convention policies
- Always comply with the instructions of PrinceCon staff and university Department of Public Safety
- Do not use anything in a threatening or destructive manner against person or property, or endanger the safety of yourself or others
- Always conduct yourself in a mature manner

## Principles

**Communication.** Everyone deserves a turn to speak at the table. No one character is more important than the others.

**Respect.** We expect players, DMs, and staff to respect each other’s views, opinions, and beliefs. Try to keep everyone around you comfortable and respect their property and person.

**Harassment.** We are dedicated to providing a harassment-free experience. Harassment includes but is not limited to discrimination on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race, religion, or affiliation. Physical, verbal, emotional, and sexual harassment will not be tolerated.

**Mature Content.** For the comfort of all involved, players and DMs at PrinceCon should limit themselves to PG-13 content. While we do not deny that games with more adult content can be fun, we don’t generally know each other well enough to know where to draw the line at the con. For this reason, we believe the PG-13 approach is best.

## Reporting Violations

Any violations during a game should be raised to the DM. A player may always request a private discussion with the DM if they do not feel comfortable discussing the issue at the table.

If the DM is involved in the violation, it should be reported to the desk staff.

## Responding to Violations

Violators will typically be warned. If that doesn’t work they may be removed from the game session. Finally, if that doesn’t work, they may be removed from the convention without a refund.

If necessary, a final decision on violations and punishments will be made by the Student Officers of the Simulation Games Union.

Remember: you don’t ever have to keep playing with somebody who’s determined to make things unfun for others.







The (top) Face of Qoin