

PRINCECON XLIII

"THE GRAND MENAGERIE"



PrinceCon 43

The Grand Menagerie

Using the D&D 5th Edition rules

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

PrinceCon XLIV will be held on March 15-17, 2019

Revised v2. For more on PrinceCon, see <http://www.princecon.org/>

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Introduction

Welcome to PrinceCon 43! We hope you enjoy your weekend adventuring in this very special world we have created for this event. PrinceCon is the oldest amateur-run roleplaying convention in the world, and it is unlike any other convention experience anywhere.

Last year, PrinceCon switched to **Dungeons & Dragons, 5th Edition** (5e) to make our annual event more accessible to a larger number of players. For this year, we again stay with the basic 5e system as defined by the Player's Handbook (PHB) with the addition of the Forge Domain from Xanathar's Guide to Everything for the god Daglir. Compared to last year, we have added two new races for you to play (Dragonborn and Tiefling), as well as a new Divine Domain (Tempest) for the newest addition to our pantheon, Iniki (patron of Storms and Seas).

This book describes how to apply the PHB to playing at PrinceCon and has a wealth of information about the world in which you will be adventuring. It explains the pantheon, languages and other elements you may use in building and playing your character. Some races, languages, and Favored Foes may not be available this year, largely because of thematic or playability reasons.

One change that previous players may want to be aware of is covered in the Important Changes to our Magic Item Policy (p. 10) section. Another change of general interest deals with the in-game time frame and Resting (p. 11). Finally, as the Master of the Contest, Hione's influence is reflected in the Hione bonus skills (p. 8).

We have worked hard throughout the year to make PrinceCon 43 challenging and entertaining for you. All of us are volunteers, and we do this year after year because we love it deeply. So, get started making your hero and have a blast!

*Andy Zovko, Con Director
The PrinceCon 43 DMs & Staff*

Why D&D 5e?

We use D&D 5th Edition to take advantage of a system that has been balanced across a wide range of playtests and games, and which lets us focus on creating a completely new world in which to set the convention each year. We like that you can buy the rules at your friendly local game store and use them in your home games between one PrinceCon and the next. Is it perfect? No. But for now, we're sticking with it.

Acknowledgements

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who have helped bring this convention to fruition. Jacob Lisner managed this year's theme. Aaron Mulder maintained the PrinceCon books, the software, and desk equipment. Andy Zovko helped us stick to our deadlines. Emily Esser provided the con book cover art and T-shirt art.

Special thanks to Conway Niles for leading the Simulation Games Union (SGU) and organizing this event with the University. A big thank you all the PrinceCon 43 DMs for answering the call! Finally, we would like to thank all our players and desk staff, without whom this convention would not exist.

An Extra Special Note

This will be the first ever PrinceCon at which our dear friend and colleague Robert West will not be with us. Words cannot describe what he has meant to PrinceCon, to the SGU, and to all of us behind the scenes over the years. He was our Eminence Gris and so very much more. Robert will be with us in spirit, and we hope you will share your memories of him during the special story-telling sessions (p. 5) during the convention.

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 and Frist (though not most other buildings on campus). 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: The Grand Menagerie

Loqathis, a curious world with many continents, this year holds a grand competition — and you are the participants! Every 200 years, a different god sets the parameters of The Contest between all the continents (including the merfolk and sea-bound races) and bestows wondrous, divine gifts upon the winners. These competitions have become engraved in the culture of Loqathis and other conflicts fell to the wayside many millennia ago, as each country focused on the only dispute that really mattered.

Six centuries ago, Leo's battle royale saw the rise of a new generation of champions. Four hundred years ago, Aru ushered in a new era of health for the world. A mere ten generations ago, craftsmen and architects alike distinguished themselves in Daglir's build-a-wonder contest. Finally, on the first day of Spring this year, heralded by the Aurora, a new contest began. Hione, God of Knowledge, surprised many with his announcement of a menagerie contest. Hione tasked each country with collecting the largest, most diverse, and rarest creatures from around the world.

You are among the most skilled residents of Whiggam and have been preparing for this new Contest for much of your young life. The Pentacle of Seven, Wiggam's ruling council, has appointed the enigmatic genius Lord High Vizier Theo Welvern to oversee the creation of the Grand Menagerie, and he has commissioned you to collect creatures and other sundries to make the most choice exhibits.

All player characters, regardless of race or background, are from Whiggam, i.e., you are on the same side. We *strongly encourage* you to remain so. Expeditions are being organized out The Princely University next to which the Menagerie is being constructed.

One month has passed since Hione's decree, and the countries of the world are beginning to fully mobilize their resources to properly stock their respective Menageries. Now you, the adventurers of Hunters' Hall, are being sent all over the world to capture the rare and mythical creatures of Loqathis, inevitably coming into conflict or parlay with the various powers arcane and obscure as you assemble **The Grand Menagerie!**

The Map

The world of Loqathis is shown on the back cover. The edges connect; you can travel off any map edge and you enter again from the same place on the opposite edge. (It's about 12,000 miles in circumference.) The map is as faithful as the scribes of Whiggam have been able to make it, given our current level of technology and navigational skills. In any case, it should be sufficiently accurate to find the continents you may be dispatched to in search of residents for our Menagerie.

The Celestial Bodies of Loqathis

Each day, Loqathis's sun passes over the plane, its path ever westward above the Boreal Band. Its distance to Loqathis slowly shifts over the course of the year, from its furthest on the winter solstice, to its closest at the peak of summer. The cycle of day and night remains a constant 12 hours each throughout the year, and while half of Loqathis is day, the other half is night.

Loqathis's moon is used by seafarers as a guiding light, as it always hangs in the southern sky, visible from the entire plane. The further north one travels, the lower in the sky it appears, until observers within the Boreal Band see the moon along the horizon, part of it visible in each direction towards the south pole. During the day, it pales compared to the blaze of the sun, but during the night, its pale glow is still enough for some creatures to see by. It grows and shrinks (or moves close and distant, according to some theories) throughout the day, bobbing in time with the tides. At the start of a competition year, the moon hangs full and bright, its glow slowly draining over the year, like a sand timer, until its light completely disappears at the competition's close. Over the next 199 years of an era, the moon slowly regains its glow, although it takes a few years following a competition before its glow is bright enough to use for navigation once again.

People have theorized which direction an observer at the south pole would see the sun circling, but the perpetual blizzard cloaking the southern ice cap blots out visibility of the sun from anywhere more than a mile in-land. Only the moon's glow penetrates the blizzard, as it bobs in the sky high above.

Menagerie Contest Rules

- You cannot build a small circular fence and say the world is your zoo
- More difficult creatures are worth more
- Rarer creatures are worth more
- Extra creatures of the same type beyond the first are worth less, but not zero
- Large bonus for writing down all info on captured creatures
- Constructs/Undead/Extraplanar creatures are all worth zero
- Dead creatures are worth zero
- Bonus points for creating themed ecosystems

Background Information

Contest Announcement

Hear ye! Hear ye! Let all people throughout the lands hear! Let no one live in ignorance!

The end of the Age of Wonders is at hand. The time of Divine Judgment draws nigh! Great Hione has set The Challenge to usher in the Age of Enlightenment. All peoples are instructed to create a Grand Menagerie, filled with creatures and exhibits to amaze and astound, that all who witness them will know the Greatness and Glory of Hione.

Our Lords of Whiggam have declared that our homelands must not be outdone this time. Our entry must surpass all others. It is right and fitting that we lead in the Age-To-Come. They order all heroes, adventurers, and soldiers of fortune to gather at Hunters Hall on March 16th at 5 of the clock to further organize stocking The Grand Menagerie.

Hear ye! Hear ye! Tell One! Tell All!

Historical Excerpt

We did not lose — especially NOT to those tree huggers from the Feron Isles. Still, a close Fifth was not the First place of which the Elves boasted. The Blessing bestowed upon them was incomparable. To think Aru would bequeath those introverts with such long life was an affront to our ancestry. WE, the proud Dwarven clerics of The Spirepine Mountains of Eldruent-Vangruldear who helmed the innovation of Regeneration, deserved such a prize! All they did was put a horn on a horse...

For the next two-hundred years, at every Beltine Market, every Masque, those pine-scented Feronites would brag endlessly of their paltry victory. No matter! We would forge ahead. Though the frustration at our 'misstep' was palpable for two centuries, at least we weren't those simpering wretches from Svalden! HA! Producing a spell that Inflicts Wounds instead of curing them... how does an entire continent (however small) mess up that badly? They definitely needed the Fountain of Healing given to them. Too bad it froze over almost immediately and is barely functional — though they're probably happy last place didn't constitute a more disastrous 'prize.'

That Age of Innervation ended when I was 234 years old, and the next Competition began, as usual, with the resounding beauty of The Aurora. The Age of Wonders had begun and, by Daglir, was Eldruent-Vangruldear ready. We built The Greatest Dimaryp with our cumulative generational resolve, earning us First place and the Divine Favor that came with it for the next two-hundred years, befit of our prodigious skill.

— *Rangrim Mountaincarver, Eldruent-Vangruldearan Architect and Anthropologist writing on the transition from The Age of Innervation to The Age of Wonders in his book Why We Won, 149 BCA (Before Current Age)*

Ancient Document

Q kg moquqvr unqd fvuoa qv hwlf kvl nqlqvr qu lffe zvlforowzvl, dw qu gqrnu dzopqpf unf vfyu Qvjwogkuqvw Ezorf. Qu qd wvca bckhtdggun gvvund qvuuf unf Krf wj Dfhofud, bzu qu kcofkla jffcd kd unwzrn unf mnwcf mwocl nkd rwvf gkl. Unfof mkd k boqfj efoqwl wj hkeg kvl hwvjzdwv kjufo Okuoq kvvwzvhl unf dukou wj nfo hwvufdu mqunwzu kva gfvuqvw wj unf ufogd wo kmkold, bzu unku izqhtca ekddfl kd fpfoawvf bfrkv rzfddqvr mnku khuqvwv gqrnu ecfkdf Nfo. Unf Rokvl Uwoa Cqbokoa nkd bffv bzovfl uw unf rowzvl, dwze uqgfd. Hnzohn Tqvr nkpf kcofkla bffv kddkddqvkufl, kvl vwm vw hnwhwckuf qd mqccqvr uw uktf unf howmv. Wzo hzoofvha nkd bfhwgf vfkoca mwounccdd mnfv fpfoaunqvr awz wmv mqcc rfu duwcfv bkdtfu uqgfd wpfo, fpfv qj qu qd vkqcf lwmv. Qv lfdefokuqvw Q uoqfl uw ofgqvl unf efweef uw lqofhu unfqo ewwo kuufgeud ku fdeqvwkrf krkqvdu unf wunfo hwvuqvfvd, bzu qu dffgd unku ofizqofd uww gzhn hwwefokuqvw jwo gwdu uw fpfv kuufgeu. Qj wvca mf nkl workvqxfl jowg lka nwufc, qvdufl wj dizkvlfoqvr wzo uqgf kmka qv fgeua lfbkufd, qu gqrnu vfpo nkpf hwgf uw unqd. Qu qd vfkoca kd bkl kd unf Krf wj Dckzrnufo dwgf lwcenqv bkvvk afkod krw.

Vfqet Unqft, Jwogfo Owack Nqrn Hnkvhfccwo uw Tqvr Mnqr YPQ

— *Whiggam's only surviving document that was written during the Age of Secrets' Contest, exactly 1600 BCA. Can be seen on display at The Princely Museum, with a deciphered copy available for purchase at The Princely Gift Shop.*

A Dragon's Offer (Storytelling Sessions)

A PROCLAMATION TO THE CITIZENS OF WHIGGAM

I, Krite Kalliope, Father of Bronze Dragons, Preeminent Patron of Bards Puissant and Poets Peerless, and Faithful Servant of Hione the Wise and Knowledgeable, ...

Will take up residence at your Princely University from the 16th day until the 18th day of March in the vicinity of the edifice known as Campus Club to hear your most mysterious and miraculous tales of heroism, adventure, magic, and merriment.

Bring only your best unto me, for if these stories please and inspire me, then I, Krites, Lord of Dragons and Most Versant Versifier, will join your Grand Menagerie (of course) as its star attraction, guaranteeing Whiggam will prevail most-staggeringly over the other nations in this vital Contest.

This year we are trying something new at PrinceCon. As part of the theme, there will special runs in which you as Players will be asked to share your roleplaying stories with us. You will gain experience as normal for these runs, and thereby have a chance to further influence the outcome of the overall main storyline.

Sharing stories is what this hobby is really all about. It is how we bond with each other as a community. While we especially want to hear about any experiences in past PrinceCons, you need not feel limited to that. The most important thing is to share an entertaining story that helps us get to know you and how you relate to the game. So think about what you might want to tell; notes are allowed.

EDITORS NOTE: This is our first PrinceCon without Robert (Bob) West, one of the Fathers of PrinceCon and the only one of us to have attended all forty-two of the previous conventions. Stories of Bob in any capacity are eagerly encouraged and will be cherished.

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 four 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. 10)).

Ability Scores

PrinceCon uses 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.

Playable Races

The available races for PrinceCon 43 include all races in the Player's Handbook, *except* Dark Elves.

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?

Carrunos (Nature) is the Master of the Hunt and the personification of wilderness in natural balance. He is often found in the vicinity of Danu.

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

Danu (Nature) is the goddess of nature, and her followers guard the natural order against waste and cruelty. She is often found in the company of Carrunos.

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

Iniki (Tempest) is the deity of storms and seas, and by extension, all waters. Her clerics vary greatly, from the Storm Khans of the grazelands to the pirate Windfinders.

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

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.

Notes:

- The gods **Kjallintar** (Wrath) and **Ronkel** (Death) are widely recognized throughout most lands, but their followers, if any, are not integrated into civilized society. These cults are not available to Player Characters.
- We are using the **Forge Domain** from Xanathar's Guide to Everything for Daglir (and not anything else from that book). You may ask the desk for a printout of the Forge domain, if it would be helpful.

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 Danu if they are Circle of the Land or Carrunos if they are Circle of the Moon; all druids acknowledge both deities as patrons of Nature and 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.

Skills

Due to Hione’s increased influence this year, any clerics of Hione or followers of Hione will be granted one bonus skill proficiency selected from: Arcana, History, Nature, or Religion. For Clerics of Hione, this will be treated as a third selection for your “Blessings of Knowledge,” and therefore your proficiency bonus will be doubled.

For battlefield conversions, the new skill may be selected and the bonus will apply immediately, though you’ll have to record it permanently to your PC when you check in at the end of your expedition.

If for some reason your PC is already proficient with all four of those skills, the bonus will be lost.

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
- Undercommon appears to be widely spoken in the Underdark, 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 or Thieves’ Cant when selecting languages (though PCs of the appropriate class get these automatically)
- We do not expect Goblin to see much use during the convention
- Other racial languages for both PC races and monster races are available as normal, though there’s no guarantee the particular expeditions you go on will use any particular one. The Exotic languages, rare by design, are also much less likely to be used.

Backgrounds

The backgrounds in the Player’s Handbook are all available. You may not change the skills or features of your background.

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 relying 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. 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.

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.)

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 at that time.

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.

Important Changes to Magic Item Policy

In contrast to prior conventions, PrinceCon 43 will de-emphasize items that give fixed bonuses to attack rolls, Armor Class, or spell save DC, as well as items that provide flight or invisibility. These are all areas that we have found unbalancing, especially with multiple items later in the convention. The DMs will strive to give out creative items with real game value, just ones that can't be combined as egregiously.

Game Play

Inspiration

PrinceCon does not use the normal Inspiration rules; instead, we use the rules described in Religious Followers (p. 8).

Resting

PrinceCon 43 takes place over the course of an in-game year. Roughly speaking:

- Friday is **Spring**
- Saturday morning is **Summer**
- Saturday evening is **Fall**
- Sunday is **Winter**

Most (not all) runs will take place over several weeks, and have corresponding rules for rests. On such runs:

- A **short rest** is about *6-8 hours of sleep* anywhere
- A **long rest** is a *full day of downtime* in a safe and comfortable location such as a town or roadside inn.

Spell Casting

Interrupting Casters

Note that in most cases, spell casting cannot be interrupted in the way it could before the switch to 5th edition. Though 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 concentration spell.
- 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, forcing Disadvantage for ranged spell attacks (p. 195).

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 to streamline play at the convention; please do not force us to reconsider this policy!

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).

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.

Children of Iniki

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Iniki	<i>varies</i>	Tempest	usually Lightning Bolt or Trident

Beliefs: Iniki is the deity of storms, seas, and by extension, all waters. Above all, Iniki represents Change – sometimes violent, sometimes peaceful. Iniki is the harmony of opposites, like the push-and-pull of the tides. Change is not Chaos to Iniki, but the natural unfolding of the Universe in its most raw form.

Over the years, Iniki has been worshiped as a man or a woman, a transcendent being, or a genderless beast. Each of these are not reflections of the god but of the societies that worship Iniki and what that society chooses to see in its deity.

Clergy of Iniki vary as widely as the cults of the god, from the Storm Khans of the grazelands to the pirate Windfinders. They all share a reverence for the power of Iniki and the changes it brings to the world. They seek to use and shape these changes to the advantage of their communities.

Keepers of Nature

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

Beliefs: Keepers of Nature worship the life force of the natural world, personified in the goddess Danu. 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 Danu.

Danu and Carrunos are often found together, and followers of either one may earn inspiration for advancing the causes of either deity.

Knights of Justice

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Janda	Justicars	Light	White Rose

Beliefs: Knights of Justice worship Janda, goddess of truth. They are devoted to the cause of truth, the preservation of oaths, and the protection of the innocent. They regard order and law as the greatest good.

In many places, Justicars serve as Judges, Arbiters, and the Watch. Killing is not forbidden them, but they prefer to see scofflaws condemned by due process of Law. (Of course, the law may move quite rapidly when urgency is required, and any of Janda’s clergy may temporarily assume the role of Judge.) Specialists with the clergy serve as Jailers and Inquisitors. In the pursuit of truth, they strongly believe that “confession is good for the soul.”

Masters of Death

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Ronkel	Reapers	Death	Scythe

Beliefs: Ronkel is the personification of Death, the Ultimate Victor, the One Unshakable Truth. He does not need to kill wantonly, for all will die in their own time. Undead are an abomination to him as they cheat the Gravelord of his rightful subjects.

There is no formal clergy of Ronkel, and it is considered blasphemy to take him as a patron deity. He is as implacable and merciless as he is inevitable. All living beings seek to appease him but know that they will not stay his hand in the end.

Masters of the Hunt

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Carrunos	Hunters	Nature	Wolf Tooth

Beliefs: Masters of the Hunt worship Carrunos the Hunter, who governs the natural order between hunter and prey. Carrunos personifies the processes by which natural creatures interact, and in so doing, take part in the Great Web of Life.

Carrunos' clerics despise pointless cruelty and wasteful killing, such as killing for sport or killing more than is needed. Animal products are not to be wasted nor used frivolously. They also hold that the spirits of animals killed with proper respect reincarnate into their own kind.

Danu and Carrunos are often found together, and followers of either one may earn inspiration for advancing the causes of either deity.

Order of the Hermit

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

Beliefs: Hione is the God of Knowledge and Learning, and his followers are devoted to the acquisition, preservation, and sharing 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.

Scourges of Wrath

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Kjallintar	Scourges	Tempest	Crossed Swords

Beliefs: Kjallintar appears as an unusually large, powerfully built woman with faces on both sides of her head. She is typically pictured wielding two broadswords – one, a blade of fire, the other, a blade of ice.

Quick to anger, Kjallintar brings retribution to the wicked, answering every slight and transgression unflinchingly. The severity of her punishments serve as a warning to others not to similarly err. She does not abide bullies or oppressors.

Her followers place extreme value on honor, both the goddess' and their own. Any slight is sure to be repaid, with prejudice.

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.

