

PRINCE OF DARKNESS 44



THE LOST HOLDS

Cover Art by

D. K. King '20

PrinceCon 44

The Lost Holds

Using the D&D 5th Edition rules

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Introduction

Welcome to PrinceCon 44! 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.

Previously, 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 several additions and modifications:

- We will use the Ranger class (p. 16) proposed in *Unearthed Arcana* (with a few modifications) *instead of* the Ranger class in the PHB.
- We have a selection of Dwarf subraces (p. 8) to choose from *instead of* the ones in the PHB.
- We have picked a number of theme-appropriate subclasses (p. 15) and backgrounds (p. 16) from officially-published material, available *in addition to* the ones in the PHB

This book describes these changes and additions, as well as how to apply the PHB to playing at PrinceCon. On top of that, you'll find 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.

One change that previous players may want to be aware of is covered in the Important Changes to our Magic Item Policy (p. 18) section.

We have worked hard throughout the year to make PrinceCon 44 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!

*Conway Niles, Con Director
Michael Tummarello, Theme Master
The PrinceCon 44 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. Michael Tummarello managed this year's theme. Aaron Mulder maintained the PrinceCon books, the software, and desk equipment. Conway Niles helped us stick to our deadlines. Demi Zhang provided the awesome con book cover art and T-shirt art.

Special thanks to Conway, Michael, Jacob, and Thaddeus for leading the Simulation Games Union (SGU) and organizing this event with the University. A big thank you all the PrinceCon 44 DMs for answering the call! 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. 27), 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, as well as AirBnb options in town.
- In order to be eligible for awards, you should not go on an expedition with any individual DM more than twice.

Theme: The Lost Holds

This fateful year of 10,173, all player characters are citizens of Khazthand.

A thousand years ago the Dwarven empire of Khazthand was the most prosperous civilization above or below the surface of the world. Living in the subterranean layer between the surface and the Underdark called the Middledark, the dwarves of Khazthand hewed wondrous dwarfholds from the primordial stone, connecting them with a network of massive underground highways called the Hypogean Ways.

For hundreds of years they lived off the bounty of the stone, growing fabulously wealthy from trading their precious metals, rare gems, and unmatched magical crafts with the surface world, but eventually their wealth made them a target; their outer holds were besieged by hordes of creatures drawn from the bowels of the earth by the lure of dwarven treasure vaults. Though the dwarves were brave and well armed, decades of warfare took their toll on the slow-replenishing dwarven population; one by one, the outer settlements were lost to the numberless hordes.

As their borders shrank, the dwarves of Khazthand grew increasingly desperate; their government opened their borders to surface races to bolster their falling population while the dwarven archmagisters and master engineers delved headlong into unexplored realms of arcana and science to develop new tools to defend their realm.

The influx of new technologies and magics and the surface dwelling races forestalled the advance of darkness for a time. The surfacers soon paid the dues of their citizenship with blood and sweat; side by side with their dwarven brethren, they hammered away in the deep mines, sowed seeds in the fields, carved structures from the stone, and wielded sword and axe on the field of battle.

Nevertheless, the creatures of the deep would not be denied; as centuries passed holds once more began to fall. Furthermore, Khazthand's increasingly rapid and reckless advances in magic and technology came at the cost of caution: engines of incalculable complexity misfired, erasing entire holds in eruptions of molten metal and flame; magics capable of laying low whole armies went awry, tearing other settlements asunder (and according to some sources sometimes the very fabric of reality along with them). In the throes of their civilization's extinction, some mages even turned to the denizens of other planes of existence for aid, often inadvertently letting loose entities beyond mortal comprehension, blinded to the risks of such rituals by the direness of their need. Most terrifying were the holds that simply went silent, and the armies that were sent to reclaim them who vanished just as silently and suddenly as the holds did.

Eventually, knowing their realm was beyond salvaging, the remaining fragments of Khazthand's government retreated with all those they could bring with them to the city of Arkinthel, formerly the trade hub of Khazthand by virtue of its exclusive possession of safe tunnels to the surface world. There, the shattered remnants of the world's mightiest empire sealed off the highway connecting them to the rest of the empire (and whoever might still be fighting for survival in it) with a massive stone gate made impregnable by the most potent runes of power the surviving mages were able to carve.

As the years passed and the gates held fast with no sign of breaches, the inhabitants of Arkinthel were at last allowed to lower their guard after centuries of constant warfare. With the danger passed, they eventually returned to the trades that had first made their empire so affluent. Though their civilization had been reduced to a pale shade of its former glory, they persevered and once more returned to a state of (more moderate) prosperity. Their borders remained open to the surface races, and Khazthand became a "dwarven" realm in name only — the other races present in Arkinthel had long ago earned their citizenship.

857 years after Arkinthel was sealed, the only traces of Khazthand's origin as a dwarven empire are its renowned legal codes, a national propensity for hard work, thrift, and stout-heartedness, and a (mostly ceremonial) dwarven ruling family. Nearly a millennium of peace has allowed Arkinthel to become one of the largest and wealthiest cities of the world; its treasure vaults run over, and even the most "destitute" citizens go to sleep each night in their own homes with full bellies.

Khazthandians have never forgotten the never-again matched splendor of their empire of old, however. The vast libraries of now-forgotten lore, the workshops filled with schematics of lost technologies, the sturdy vaults filled with priceless artifacts — every citizen of Khazthand still longs to reclaim them.

Recent Events

For the past few months, the surface world has been ravaged by a colossal famine and its nations have become unable to sustain their current populations. After learning of the plight of its surface allies, Arkinthel saw its chance to repay the surface nations for their past help in Khazthand's hours of need while also furthering Khazthand's interests; they proposed an international treaty that was very recently ratified by the surface nations.

According to the terms of the treaty, the surface nations will pool what food stores they have to feed their populations for the next month; in the meantime, Khazthand will fund sending adventuring parties out to explore and reclaim the lost holds. When the food stores run out on the surface, the surplus population will be allowed to resettle the (then hopefully safe) lost holds as citizens of Khazthand, and with all the help from Arkinthel that citizenship entails.

The surfacers will have a place to live, and the citizens of Khazthand will get a chance to reclaim their heritage and homes of old. If all goes well, the empire of Khazthand may yet rise from the ashes of its millennium-old defeat and climb to never before seen heights! But before that can happen, the holds must be taken back from whatever fell forces or fates overcame them a thousand years ago. To that end, the adventurers of Arkinthel's Hireling Hall (the headquarters of the Reclamation) are venturing forth to reclaim **The Lost Holds!**

Player Characters

All player characters, regardless of race, clan, family, or background, are citizens of Khazthand whose families have lived for at least a century in the city of Arkinthel. You consider Arkinthel your true home. Not only are all player characters on the same side (where we very strongly encourage you to remain), but no player character will face starvation if the Reclamation fails — all Khazthandians will have safe homes no matter what happens during the Con. Khazthandians aren't in this for their own survival, but to repay surface nations for past kindnesses, to reclaim homes and heritage, and to rediscover the lost wonders of Khazthand.

Though Khazthand started off as a Dwarven empire, large numbers of people from surface races have been citizens of Khazthand for generations. While dwarves are still the most populous ethnic group, player characters from any other races are citizens of Khazthand every bit as much. The playable races in Khazthand have been living together in harmonious equality for centuries, where they are governed by a democratically elected legislative body known as the Assembly that proportionally represents all races, genders, and creeds.

Game Sessions

Deciding to go on an expedition constitutes a legally binding contract with the government of Khazthand. Each expedition will have an objective; some may be nebulous (find out what happened at this hold) and some may be specific (recover the lost pickaxe of so-and-so from this house in this hold). No matter the objective, characters agree to do their best to achieve their objective without sabotaging the efforts of any other players or Khazthandian forces. Furthermore, characters agree to turn over any discoveries of national significance (think formulas for new medicines or schematics for faster airships, not "a shiny sword") to the government of Khazthand, where they will be put to use in a way that benefits Khazthand as a whole. In exchange for their efforts, the government of Khazthand guarantees the payment of at least one magic item from Khazthand's treasure vaults per successful expedition per character, in addition to whatever the party recovers during their expeditions that is not of national importance. The quality of the magic items so paid may vary based on how well expeditions do, but every expedition that is deemed by Khazthand to have reasonably achieved its objective in any way will be paid. Unsuccessful expeditions will not receive payment from Khazthand, though players will still be able to keep anything recovered during the expedition (and all runs, successful or not, will receive an appropriate amount of XP).

To ensure that discoveries of national importance are correctly identified and that no expedition members knowingly sabotage Khazthand's interests, each expedition will be accompanied by a tiny flying automaton known as an Observer. Observers magically transmit everything they see and hear back to an oversight committee in Hireling Hall, who review the efforts of each expedition. Observers are equipped with a number of magical and mechanical mechanisms to ensure their safety and their ability to travel with expeditionary parties wherever they may go, even underwater or to other planes of existence. Observers

will not participate in combat, nor are they anticipated to burden members of the expedition with the need to protect them. If a party returns without a functioning Observer, their mission will automatically be deemed unsuccessful (and payment denied) unless there is strong evidence of exceptional circumstances. Expeditions whose success may be compromised by the presence of an Observer may petition for special waivers permitting them to proceed without an Observer.

The SpeedCircle

The SpeedCircle is a network of tubes containing machines that allow for high-speed transportation between holds, often cutting journeys from days to hours. Though not every hold has a SpeedCircle station, most do. The tubes often run parallel to the tunnel-highways of the Hypogean Ways. The system is powered by a volcano at the bottom of the Depthless Sea and maintained by specially bred repair squid.

The Map

The Imperial Cartographic Society recently made the horrifying discovery that all of the maps of the holds from before Arkinthel was sealed 857 years ago have been buried in 857 years of dust, and will therefore need to spend some time getting cleaned before they'll be available to everyone. *There will be ancient maps of the holds on hand at the Con.*

Background Information

From the Eye of a Stone

The ground slept. The occasional tickle of a hammer or pick did not disturb its slumber, nor did the echoes of falling feet. The ages of the world passed by the ground unnoticed. It was eternal and uncaring.

One day, the faint sensations of hammer and pick grew louder and more focused. Something was different. A part of it was becoming more defined, more isolated. An individual was separated from the whole.

The stone towered over the masons who had carved it from the earth, who had given it form. They were tiny, whimsical things, here one century and gone the next, but they seemed serious now. More serious than the stone or its fellows had ever known them to be.

Something else different — motion. The stone was rolling. The tiny things were pushing it somewhere. Off to one side some of the earth had been removed save for a number of smaller stones, hollowed out and shaped into hard angles. Every other direction, including up and down, was more stone. More tiny things came out of the hollowed stones to watch it roll.

The motion slowed. Was this the stone's destination? It was in a long tunnel that stretched uniformly straight and level for miles. On the far end of the tunnel, the end now separated from the space where the tiny things lived by the stone, something was drawing nearer. The tiny things grew more agitated. The stone studied them more closely. They were tired. They were frightened. They were mourning. They were dying.

Impact. The stone could roll no further. It sealed every inch of the massive tunnel.

It was a gate.

But the tiny things were not finished. They began to carve the stone again. This time, they were not shaping — they were writing. The stone felt them etch into it ancient runes, symbols of power written in the language of reality. And because the language was reality's own, reality was subject to its commands. The stone's nature was changed. It felt... different. Stronger. It knew nothing could harm it now. Secure in that knowledge, it fell asleep. Pounding came from the other side of the sealed tunnel, but it could not break the stone, and so the stone continued to sleep. At length, it dreamed.

The seasons passed, first in their tens, then in their hundreds. The tiny things grew more whimsical and more numerous, as did

the hollowed out stones in their cavern. Even in its dreams, the stone could hear the tiny things — at first just words, but with the passing of the seasons came laughter, and then songs, songs of honest work and warm fires and golden halls. The stone slept more deeply. The passing seasons went from hundreds to thousands.

Suddenly, sensation. The tiny things had gathered around the stone again. They were different. They looked strong, happy, confident. Above all, they looked purposeful. The sensation grew stronger. The stone began to understand; the tiny things were making it ready.

The gate would soon be opened. The tiny things were going back out. Back into the darkness.

A Journal Entry

...from the last Watch Commander of Mizark Hold, Xanathia Nailodel, approximately 857 years before the present day:

As I study the deployment charts, the familiar music of the sonic cannons cannot distract me from the truth of our situation — we are losing this fight.

We have been under siege for seven months. It's gotten to the point that the hordes have to use ladders to crawl over the bodies of their own dead in order to advance, but they show no sign of slowing down — if anything, they seem more numerous than ever. It used to only take a single shot from a sonic cannon to scare any ill-wishers away from the fortification lines — seeing the bodies of a hundred or so of their friends undergo concussive molecular disintegration couldn't exactly have been good for morale, I'd imagine — but now the entire battery firing day and night at maximum harmonic capacity barely slows them down. Something has bound them together, given them purpose — turned them from nuisances to an army hell-bent on our destruction. I pray I never find out what has such power.

I spoke with Master Sergeant Kragentharr today. Though he is resilient and stout-hearted, even for a dwarf, he advised me to order a full tactical withdrawal — to pull everyone out and run for it, civilians and soldiers alike. The thirteenth defensive line was breached this morning; there's now only one more standing between the enemy and the people of Mizark.

Our allies are gone. One by one, they have fallen — some to armies, others to fell entities from across the planes, and yet more to the mechanical and magical misfires of their own creations. There can be only one outcome in this siege. There just aren't enough of us left.

Kragentharr is right about the civilians; I've given the order for them to make for the trade hub of Arkinthel, where I've heard rumors that a final defense is being prepared. Though most will die during the journey, there is a chance that some may live, and a chance is more than they'll get if they stay here. As for me and my soldiers, though... I am old enough to remember when my family first heard the calls for help from Khazthand, when they left the forests of the wood elves, our ancestral homelands, and ventured below the surface of the earth. It was difficult for all of us to adjust, at first — to exchange bow and arrow for hammer and pick — but over the centuries, "home" has come to mean Mizark, to mean the empire of Khazthand.

I cannot abandon my home. After the civilians are clear of the hold, I'll order the chief tonal engineer to increase the harmonic capacity of the sonic cannons to one hundred and fifty percent of maximum. He's done the calculations — there's a 3.7 percent chance of successfully doing so without causing the galvanic ley matrix to overload and a 96.3 percent chance of catastrophic failure. Not good odds, but better than nothing. Sometimes you need to roll the dice. At one hundred and fifty percent power, the cannons should allow us to hold the line if we don't all go up in smoke; if the operation fails, the explosion should bring the entire cavern down on top of us. Either way, we should be able to buy the civilians a little time. I pray that it's enough. I pray that Arkinthel still stands when they arrive. I pray that there is someone hearing my prayers, that the gods have not forsaken our civilization to the creatures of the deep. I pray that when the sun rises tomorrow, there will be a Khazthand left to pray for.

Archivist's note: Civilian accounts of the flight from Mizark to Arkinthel agree that an explosion and sounds of a cave-in were heard several hours after the final departure from Mizark. The watch commander was doubtless buried in the fallen hold, along with the rest of her command and the only known schematics for harmonic weaponry.

The Famine

The room was richly furnished. The polished stone walls were lined with shelves of engraved Khazthandian steel tablets and books imported from the surface with gold-worked leather bindings; three-dimensional maps wrought from solid silver in

exquisite detail were casually strewn across the various tables, each one a technical and artistic masterpiece worth more than a king's ransom; and in front of the comfortably crackling fireplace at the far end of the room was a massive onyx desk covered with scenes of battles fought long ago etched with wondrous detail and craftsmanship into the long-remembering stone.

At the desk sat a dwarf. Though his desk was in the heart of Arkinthel, the dwarf wore a full set of plate armor; it was ornately gilded with the symbols befitting his station, but the marks of countless old battle-scars — each carefully repaired — were still visible underneath the gilding to the discerning eye. The well-manicured length of his prodigious beard was interwoven with the emblems of Clan Klaxton.

There was a knock on the door.

"Enter," commanded the dwarf.

A dragonborn carefully opened the door and just as carefully shut it behind her before turning to salute the sitting dwarf, the Khazthandian crests on her cuirass burnished until they shone like the stars she had never seen.

"General Dumac, I've been sent with a message from the Assembly," she said, an uncharacteristic slight tremor of excitement detectable in the normally professional cadence of her speech.

"At ease, Captain. What news from the Assembly chambers?"

The aged dwarf had much more practice concealing unprofessional emotions — his voice contained no hint of the inferno of curiosity raging in every recess of his mind.

"The treaty has been ratified, sir."

The dwarf sharply released a breath he hadn't realized he'd been holding.

"It's been ratified? I didn't think there was a force under stone or sky that could get those bickering surfacer delegations to agree on anything. The famine on the surface must be as bad as the reports say."

The dragonborn, whose rigid posture hadn't shifted in the slightest after the dwarf's "at ease," nodded her head a single time.

"Yes, sir. The Assembly has instructed me to offer you command of the Reclamation, if you'll accept the post."

This time the dwarf's military stoicism failed him completely. Mouth slightly ajar, he spent several seconds collecting himself.

Command of the Reclamation. Overseeing the unsealing of Arkinthel; organizing the expeditions of Khazthandian adventurers to reclaim the holds of old lost a millennia ago during the Fall from whatever creatures or machinations or plain-old bad luck had overcome them; making those holds safe and fit for dwarvenoid habitation, before any surfacers who don't have a place to stay in the Middledark run out of food and starve to death aboveground; leading the charge to take back the homes, the technologies, the magics, and the pride which every Khazthandian lost when Arkinthel was sealed away from the death-throes of the rest of the empire.

The Assembly was entrusting him not only with the survival of millions of surfacers, but with the past and the future of his people. Was he up to the task? Was Khazthand?

"Captain."

The dwarf's voice was quiet but resolute.

"Yes, General?"

"Tell the Assembly I accept the post."

He paused a moment before continuing, picking up emotion and determination with every passing word.

"Tell them to find every adventurer, every patriot, every mercenary, every scholar, and every other fool daft enough to think this is going to work and send them all to Reclamation HQ at Hireling Hall. We've been waiting eight hundred and fifty-seven years for this day, and now the clock has started. It's time to go home."

"Right away, Gener-... Begging your pardon, sir. Right away, Expeditionary Marshal."

Creating a Character

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

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. 18)).

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 44 include all races in the Player's Handbook, *except* Dark Elves. Notes on specific races follow:

Variant Humans

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

Dwarves

Since all dwarves ultimately came from the Holds of Khazthand, every dwarf this year must select one of the following subraces, according to their ancestry.

Each subrace represents one of five major hereditary groups that used to be part of a strict caste system in Khazthand. Unlike real-world caste systems, this was not hierarchical. Each caste played a vital role in dwarven society and was considered valuable and essential. The caste system ended centuries ago, when Landrrol (the merchant caste) was deemed traitorous and exiled to the surface. The equilibrium did not survive this upheaval, and the dwarves were forced to redistribute societal responsibilities, but the five are still culturally distinct. Multiple clans can exist within each of the castes, but the castes themselves are more commonly called 'clans' than 'castes' these days. The five clans are genetically nearly identical and dwarves from different clans occasionally marry and raise children. Subraces in this context are cultural, and dwarves have the mechanical 'subrace' of the clan in which they were raised.

Tool Proficiency. Dwarves (other than Clan Landrrol) have two additional options available for their Tool Proficiency selection: Mining Tools and Scribe's Tools.

Clan Landrrol

Known for: Merchants, traders, mercenaries, scouts

Typical Class: Rogue, Ranger, Bard

Clan Landrrol was historically the merchant caste. They already had a disreputable reputation (“Landrrol scales come in two balances - depending on how *much* they plan to cheat you”), but it turned out they were coordinating as a single cartel to set the prices of goods, while pretending that they were competing with each other. When the conspiracy was exposed, dwarven society was shaken to its core. The entire Caste was exiled to the surface. However they had been responsible for running most of the kingdom’s economy at that point, and the caste system fell apart patching the holes and redistributing responsibilities.

A Scattered Itinerant People

An entire clan of money handlers with little in the way of practical skills, rather than form an independent society, they broke into small troupes and spread out among the dwarvenoid surface folk. The clan acclimated well to surface life as itinerant merchants, entertainers and mercenaries making (to various degrees) an honest living. Landrrol troupes rarely settle down for more than a few years at a time, although some stay put for a decade or two (still not an especially long tenure from a dwarven perspective) in particularly profitable situations. Though their lifestyle has begun to change following their recent return to Khazthand, most Landrrol dwarves still remember their surface way of life.

Natural Adventurers

Most Landrrol dwarves still consider Khazthand as their formerly-lost but still one true home and their time spent on the surface as just a temporary stop before their longed-for return to Khazthand. Others see the ancestral homeland as nothing but a reminder that the Landrrol have no solid home anywhere. Regardless of philosophy, or perhaps because of both, Landrrol’s culture of not setting down roots instills in its dwarves a wanderlust which leads many Landrrol dwarves to take up lives of adventure or exploration.

An Exile Concluded

Even as Arkinthel became a cosmopolitan nation, centuries were not enough to heal the grudge against Clan Landrrol. Landrrol dwarves were still forbidden entrance despite its gates being open to anyone else. However, a century before the present day the millennium-old exile of the Landrrol dwarves was rescinded, allowing Clan Landrrol to return to Khazthand and dwell once again in the halls of their ancestors.

Khazthand’s legislative body, the Assembly, decreed that dwarves of Clan Landrrol should be treated the same was as any other dwarves. Legally, that has been the case, but some dwarves of the other clans still regard them with unconcealed hostility. In spite of this, Landrrol dwarves are just as committed to reclaiming the lost holds and their people’s history as much as any other dwarf in Arkinthel.

Clan Landrrol Traits

Ability Score Increase. Your Dexterity score increases by 1.

Resourceful. After you make a saving throw, but before the DM says whether the roll succeeds or fails, you can roll 1d12 and add it to the result of your saving throw. You can’t use this feature again until you finish a long rest.

Keen Appraisers. You have advantage on any ability checks to determine the value of an object.

Tool Proficiency. You gain proficiency with the vehicle of your choice: land vehicles, water vehicles, or air vehicles. This feature replaces the standard Dwarf Trait of the same name.

Well Traveled. You can speak one extra language of your choice.

Clan Potenkhan

Known for: Diplomats, managers, miners, advisors

Typical Class: Bard, Warlock, Paladin

Clan Potenkhan was historically the mining caste. They worked long hours deep below the other dwarves. And in the darkness, they heard whispers. Whispers of a echoing rhythm. It spoke to them and they spoke back. They offered it gifts, and it offered gifts back. A permanent bond was forged between Clan Potenkhan and the Beating Heart of Stone. On that day, so long ago, Clan Potenkhan emerged from the mines' depths with eyes and tongues as silver as the ore they carted up. All Potenkhan dwarves are inducted into the ancestral pact at birth and have a personal relationship with the Beating Heart of Stone, who whispers behind their eyelids and awaits their deaths.

Unusual Mannerisms

Potenkhan dwarves can always see the Beating Heart of Stone in their peripheral vision and tend to stare unblinking into space with a metallic glint in their eyes, or have one sided conversations out loud when thinking. These are just a sample of the many odd, concerning, and downright creepy quirks that Potenkhan dwarves have been known to exhibit.

The Beating Heart of Stone and I

Each Potenkhan dwarf has their own personal relationship with the Beating Heart of Stone. Some are deferential, or religious towards the Beating Heart of Stone. Others regularly bicker or sassily converse with the Beating Heart of Stone.

No matter what their relationship with Beating Heart of Stone is, it is undeniably one of the most important relationships, and reflected directly into their relationship with and perspective of the rest of the world.

Some dwarven philosophers have theorized that the Beating Heart of Stone is not actually a real entity, but rather a psychic manifestation of an isolated conscience — a societal hallucination if you will. Potenkhan dwarves vehemently disregard this crackpot theory of a poor soul unfortunately incapable of ever understanding the Beating Heart of Stone.

Deep Dwellers

While a fair number of the other clans (and all of Landrrol) are represented among dwarves who have moved to the surface over the centuries, very few Potenkhan have emigrated. Popular tale has it that their silver eyes are sensitive to the sun, but the truth is that Potenkhan dwarves have no problems operating in daylight; their issue isn't with the sun, but the sky. They find it inexplicably unnerving and entirely at-odds with the nature of the Beating Heart of Stone.

Patron Options

Clan Potenkhan warlocks must choose the Beating Heart of Stone as their Patron, but may treat it as any of the available Patron types.

Non-Potenkhan warlocks may never choose the Beating Heart of Stone as their patron.

Clan Potenkhan Traits

Ability Score Increase. Your Charisma score increases by 1.

Potenkhan Magic. You know the *chill touch* cantrip. When you reach 5th level, you can cast the *armor of agathys* spell as a 2nd-level spell (once per long rest). Charisma is your spellcasting ability for these spells.

Brightvision. You can channel the power of the Beating Heart of Stone directly into one of your eyes to gain supernatural awareness of your surroundings. For one hour, you can see everything (including invisible things) within a 120-foot range in 'brightvision', which is similar to darkvision but allows you to see everything around you as if it was in bright light. Brightvision also allows you to see color, though all colors are tinted silver. After one hour has passed, you lose brightvision and one of your eyes permanently turns to solid silver, overloaded by the power of the Beating Heart of Stone.

There are no mechanical penalties to the loss of vision in one eye. However, should you call upon this trait a second time, you gain the benefits again as described above, but when your second eye also turns to solid silver, you are rendered instantly and incurably blind.

Deity averse. You do not worship a god and can't take levels in Cleric.

Clan Klaxton

Known for: Artists, smiths, warriors, mages

Typical Class: Monk, Barbarian, Forge Domain Cleric, Wizard

Clan Klaxton was historically the smithing caste. For millennia they kept the forges of Khazthand burning around the clock, refining and shaping the ore that the miners brought up. Even after the collapse of the caste system, most of Clan Klaxton continued to work in the forges, far fewer of them taking advantage of the newly allowed social mobility.

Art and Accomplishment

Clan Klaxton still views artisanship as a form of art, and art as a truly noble profession. It is said that “a Klaxton is not judged by their words, but by the production of their hands.” This is not to say that they do not also value deeds of a more ephemeral nature, but such accomplishments are important to immortalize in art, ideally on a living canvas - the accomplisher themselves. When a Klaxton dwarf completes their studies under a teacher, reaches a milestone of age or life, or births a child, those memories are tattooed on the dwarf as a permanent artifact of the event. These tattoos are known as the Iron Riddles.

Iron Riddles

The forges of Clan Klaxton were too hot and unforgiving for mere ink tattoos to survive in those conditions. As such, the clan developed iron based inks to inject while molten that can survive the rigors of Klaxton life. While not all Klaxton dwarves still work in those conditions, these metal tattoos are a longstanding tradition among the Clan, and every tattoo is unique and tells its own story in a tapestry just beneath the flesh. It is rare, but not impossible to find smaller Iron Riddles on a non-Klaxton. Most non-dwarves could get sick or die from the toxic metals, and even other dwarves can rarely tolerate the heat and pain of that much molten metal being injected under their skin. Klaxton dwarves tend to wear loose or revealing clothing which chafes less against the riddles and bares their accomplishments for friend and foe to see.

Heat Metal and Iron Riddles

The *heat metal* spell can be cast on your iron riddles. While you aren't immune to its damage, you never suffer disadvantage from that spell. In addition, while affected, your unarmed strikes deal an additional 1d6 fire damage when you hit.

This is a popular technique among some Forge Furies, but not recommended by dermatologists.

“The Forge Furies”

Probably the most notorious members of Clan Klaxton are the Forge Furies, an elite fighting force of Klaxton dwarves who have devoted their lives to forging the ultimate weapons — themselves. They hone their bodies and spirits into a deadly arsenal, treating their weapons (if they even wield weapons beyond their body and minds) as edges of their ‘own blade.’ Most Forge Furies are Barbarians, Monks, and Wizards, but anyone with the right attitude and aptitude can make it into their ranks.

Clan Klaxton Traits

Ability Score Increase. Your Strength score increases by 1.

Forge Conditioning. You have resistance to fire damage.

Iron Riddles. A tapestry of Iron ink tattoos cover your skin. Your base AC while unarmored or wearing light armor is 15 + your Dexterity modifier (max +2). You can use a shield and still gain this benefit.

Clan Diazoden

Known for: Scholars, explorers, bookkeepers, and nobles

Typical Class: Wizard, Arcane Trickster, Eldritch Knight

Clan Diazoden was historically the bureaucratic class, responsible for handling laws and records. They maintained censuses and histories for Khazthand and ran the educational systems to make sure every dwarf was literate and historically knowledgeable. After the caste system collapsed, many Diazoden dwarves stepped into the gap of trade and economics that Clan Landrrol previously oversaw.

Policy without Politics

Diazoden dwarves are still very common among dwarven bureaucracy, including the current ruling family of Khazthand, but they have little patience for the ‘politics’ of the surface races, which they find irrational and a complete waste of time. (“It is stupid of you to be offended that I told you to shut up. Nothing of value was coming out of your mouth in the first place.”)

Even as Khazthand has become cosmopolitan and evolved beyond a ‘dwarven’ nation, the Diazoden attitude towards policy has continued to shape international relations. This political attitude has frustrated and offended rulers of the surface world hundreds of times over the years. However, it hasn’t been successful at keeping ‘politics’ out of Arkinthel itself. By this point, the ruling family has begrudgingly accepted the new status quo. While it used to publicly denounce any bureaucrat it found spending more time on politics than policy, it has in recent years chosen more delicately when to throw its own weight around.

Knowledge is Power

Above all, the Diazoden value information and the skills to share and act on it. Diazoden parents strongly value their children’s education and often take great financial pains to make sure they get the best tutors, have access to robust libraries, and apply themselves. While the vigilance and pressure from their parents has led some Diazoden dwarves to rebel, running off to live a life their parents are sure to disapprove of, most young Diazoden put their noses to the grindstones (mostly proverbial, but anecdotally literal among especially strict disciplinarians) and submit to the educational pipeline.

Arcane Traditions

To the Diazoden, magic is a valuable tool for both the acquisition and processing of information. They especially value divination spells that help them make more educated decisions about situations, but they understand that every spell has its tactically appropriate uses. (“The right spell at the right time is worth six times the effort.”) Even Diazoden dwarves who do not specialize in the arcane arts study it to one extent or another.

Clan Diazoden Traits

Ability Score Increase. Your Intelligence score increases by 1.

Well Educated. You gain proficiency in one of the following: Arcana, History, Nature, or Religion.

Arcane Training. Choose two of the following spells: *comprehend languages*, *detect magic*, *identify*, or *illusory script*. You can cast the chosen spells, but only as rituals, as described in chapter 10 of the Player’s Handbook. In addition, you know the *message* cantrip.

Clan Myletha

Known for: Farmers, brewers, scientists, naturalists

Typical Class: Druid, Ranger, Drunken Master Monk

Clan Myletha was historically the farming caste. They tended the agriculture and wildlife of Khazthand, as well as the food and beer production from them. After the collapse of the caste system, many Myletha dwarves moved into the commercial sector to fill the gaps left behind by Clan Landrol and other areas of work. Likewise, dwarves from other clans took up some of the farm work and the focus of food production shifted from Myletha to individual dwarven households.

Dwarven Fungal Ale However, there was one role Clan Myletha refused to share. Even to this day, Clan Myletha jealously guards the secrets to brewing Dwarven Fungal Ale, refusing to write the method down. Recipes are passed from brewmaster to apprentice. Different families/breweries have cultivated unique strains of the fermentable funguses. It’s said that if a recipe got out, a brewery would render it useless by burning the fungal colonies it was designed for rather than let it become public, although this has yet to actually happen. Other dwarves brew beer too, from barley and other imported or localized surface grains, but Clan Myletha continues to maintain its monopoly on Dwarven Fungal Ale with as much effort as a country guards its state secrets. The Clan has, on more than one occasion, allowed a fake recipe to get stolen in order to sniff out a mole.

Etiquette and Hospitality

Myletha culture teaches that regardless of trust, strangers are to be honored. Guests in your home, visitors in your camp, or even prisoners in your captivity — their sustenance and well being is your responsibility. Some dwarves do this begrudgingly, putting on a veneer of kindness and concern that masks their exhaustion with such pleasantries, while others take legitimate joy and pride in accommodating others. A lifetime of politeness sometimes makes it hard for a stranger to notice the difference, but around friends and family, Myletha dwarves tend to let their true attitudes show without reservations. Especially introverted Myletha often prefer to work away from others, or with plants and animals, so they can avoid social encounters whenever possible.

Science and Exploration

Not unlike the Diazoden who highly value knowledge, the Myletha also value a lifetime of learning, but their attitude is slightly different. They teach that information is not inherently useful, but rather that it can open doors to new ways of understanding and a closer relationship with the subjects one studies. (“Don’t ‘know.’ Understand.”) Myletha scientists tend to worry less about answering the questions people have and more about finding the important questions which nobody has yet thought to ask.

Dwarven ‘Spellbooks’

While some dwarves have adopted the use of paper from surface cultures, most dwarves still don’t use it — especially not for something as important as a spellbook. Dwarven spellbooks are usually integrated directly into their armor, clothing, weapons, etc. with spells engraved, carved, embroidered, or woven into the surfaces and folds. Spellscarves are especially popular.

Beyond the inherent advantages and limitations of wearing or wielding your ‘spellbook,’ adding spells to and preparing spells from a spellbook of steel is functionally identical to a standard spellbook.

Clan Klaxton wizards often go a step further, engraving their ‘spellbooks’ directly onto their iron riddles.

Clan Myletha Traits

Ability Score Increase. Your Wisdom score increases by 1.

Herblore. Whenever you make a Wisdom (Survival) check related to edible or poisonous plants, you are considered proficient in the Survival skill and add double your proficiency bonus to the check, instead of your normal proficiency bonus.

Family Fungal Recipe. Besides the commercial ales that Myletha sells, individual families pass down their personal brew recipes from generation to generation. These brews, while non-magical, are especially potent. These family recipes are just as closely guarded as the Clan’s commercial ales, but are gladly shared with comrades and loved ones. Myletha dwarves always carry enough for themselves and to share with their friends.

When a character imbibes a Family Fungal Recipe brew during a short or long rest, they get a specific benefit that lasts until their next short or long rest. Once they have received this benefit, they cannot benefit from the same Family Fungal Recipe brew until their next long rest.

At character creation, choose one of the following benefits that your Family Fungal Recipe brews grant:

Fortifying. These brews are so rich and satisfying, you’re sure to stay on your feet! You gain temporary hit points equal to half your level (rounded up). You may only gain this benefit once before your next short or long rest.

Resilience. These brews will bolster your mind and body, so you can handle whatever life throws at you! When making a saving throw of any type after drinking this brew, you can choose to roll 1d4 and add the number rolled to the saving throw. You can roll the die before or after making the saving throw. You may only gain this benefit once before your next short or long rest.

Alertness. These brews are sure to perk you up and keep you on your toes! When making an initiative check after drinking this brew, you can choose to roll 1d6 and add the number rolled to the initiative check. You can roll the die before or after making the initiative check. You may only gain this benefit once before your next short or long rest.

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), **Ronkel** (Death), and **Thoki** (Undeath) 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. You may ask the desk for a printout of the Forge domain, if you plan to play a Forge cleric.

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 any 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.

Classes

Barbarians

Barbarians may choose **Path of the Ancestral Guardian** as their Primal Path, from Xanathar's Guide to Everything: *Call on the spirits of your ancestors to protect your tribe and allies.*

The **Path of the Battlerager** Primal Path is also available, from the Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide: *Turn your entire body into a spiky weapon with which to maul your enemies.* NOTE: this path is available to adventurers of all races, though of course it originated with the Dwarves.

You may ask the desk for a printout of ones of these Primal Paths, if you plan to play one.

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.

Again, be aware that we are using the **Forge Domain** from Xanathar's Guide to Everything for Daglir. You may ask the desk for a printout of the Forge domain, if you plan to play a Forge cleric.

Druids

Druids must worship one of the Nature deities: Danu or Carrunos. Danu is recommended for Circle of the Land druids, while Carrunos is more natural for Circle of the Moon druids. In any case, all druids acknowledge both deities as patrons of Nature and the natural order.

Monks

Monks may choose the **Way of the Drunken Master** as their Monastic Tradition, from Xanathar's Guide to Everything: *Move with the erratic stumbles of a drunkard to conceal the steps of your masterful martial dance.* You may ask the desk for a printout of this Monastic Way, if you plan to play a Drunken Master.

Paladins

Paladins may choose the **Oath of the Crown** as their Sacred Oath, from the Sword Coast Adventurer's Guide: *Defend the ideals of civilization against encroaching forces of savagery.* You may ask the desk for a printout of this Oath if you plan to take it.

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 granted some leeway in their interpretation.

Rangers

This year we will use the Unearthed Arcana Ranger class from the 2016 Unearthed Arcana issue “The Ranger, Revised,” instead of the PHB Ranger. All three Ranger Conclaves included in that article will be available.

In the interest of balance, however, there are three important changes to the class as described in the article:

- The Primeval Awareness ability can be used once per long rest
- When using Primeval Awareness to sense favored enemies, you do not discover their number, only their presence, direction, and distance in miles.
- To clarify the advantage of the Deep Stalker Underdark Scout ability against creatures with darkvision, the only mechanical benefit we will use is: *Darkvision-based perception checks to detect you in dark and dim conditions are made at disadvantage.*

https://media.wizards.com/2016/dnd/downloads/UA_RevisedRanger.pdf

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. As they hail from Arkinthel, all PCs this year also speak Dwarvish.
- 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)
- 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, plus the **Archeologist** and **Anthropologist** from Tomb of Annihilation. You may ask the desk for a printout of one of these backgrounds, if you take it.

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 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. 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 per expedition. The players who play the most and score the highest may reach level 11 for their final expedition, while most others will be level 10.

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 for private advancement. 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 44 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

Each DM may use inspiration as they prefer. However, in addition to rewarding exceptional roleplaying, we recommend DMs grant inspiration for events of religious significance as described in Religious Followers (p. 14).

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).

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 force us to reconsider 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.

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.

Disciples of Necromancy

God:	Clerics:	Domain:	Symbol:
Thoki	Necromancers	Death	Skull

Beliefs: Disciples of Necromancy consider death only the beginning of a being's greatest journey, and devote themselves to life after death. Many Undeath clerics are themselves undead, while others choose to study 'from the other side' until the time comes for them to put their knowledge to the test.

Clerics of Thoki typically pity the poor Aru followers (who, through ignorance, abandon their own destiny). They save their animosity for Ronkel, who intentionally denies a dwarvenoid their ordained fate.

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	Grave	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.



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