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Advanced Feats: The Witch's Brew

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The feats in the "30 New Feats for Witches" section are open content. All other material — including descriptions, proper names, characters, story elements, designer's notes, setting material, flavor text, and society information — is product identity.

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Expanded Options and Builds for the Witch

Introduction

More than just a list of feats, Advanced Feats: The Witch's Brew stirs together new feats with the insight and expertise needed to create vivid and powerful witches full of magic and mystery. With a class breakdown, 30 new feats, and character builds showing you how to put it all together, the Advanced Feats series takes character building to a higher level.

The Advanced Feats series takes the idea of a feats supplement to a new level. Instead of providing a dry list of feats, Advanced Feats helps you put them into context to build interesting and powerful characters. For the advanced player, we hope to spark your imagination. For the casual player, we hope to show you the path to making fun characters. For the GM, Advanced Feats provides feats that your players can use without slowing down or unbalancing your adventures.

Advanced Feats draws heavily upon the Netbook of Feats, an Open Gaming License (OGL) publication for feats in the d20 system. As its chief editor, I have more than 10 years of experience crafting and editing feats for playability, accuracy, and balance. Before publication, feats in the Netbook of Feats are reviewed by a panel of experienced rules experts, and only a select number are accepted for publication.

Advanced Feats takes this a step further by selecting the best and most applicable feats for the class highlighted. Each feat in this book has been either carefully re-worked to be fully compatible with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game or created specifically for this book based on the new Advanced Player's Guide classes.

Examining the Witch

The witch is a very powerful, full-blooded spellcaster that strongly evokes all the stories and legends surrounding its name. Between their rich spell list and their near limitless use of hexes, the witch is a veritable fountain of powerful magic effects and more than a match for any wizard or sorcerer. This examination assumes you have already read the class itself; if you haven't reviewed it yet, take a look before getting started here.

Spellcasting

At the heart of any spellcasting class is its spell list, and the witch supports an impressively diverse array of options. Spells from every school can be found there with a mix of healing, damage dealing, summoning, slaying, cursing, and travel. When you consider that they also get to select a set of themed patron spells, a witch can be nearly any kind of spellcaster you can imagine.

If you have played a wizard, you will find the witch to be very similar. Its spell progression is identical and both gain a few spells automatically as they level while being able to add more as they discover them in the course of adventuring or through trade.

The differences between the two classes are mostly found in their granted at-will abilities with the witch being more of a generalist and having more potent powers and the wizard being more focused but getting a number of bonus feats.

Witch's Familiar

The witch's familiar is little different than a wizard's with the exception that it also serves as a kind of living spellbook for the witch. Witches should think twice before sending their familiars into dangerous situations, for they risk losing most of their known spells. Many of the new feats in *Advanced Feats: The Witch's Brew* make the familiar a more useful companion in combat. As it stands, the familiar is often more of a liability than an asset in battle

<u>Hexes</u>

Hexes are what make the witch class really feel like the various legends. They provoke no attacks of opportunity, require no concentration rolls, suffer no spell failure, can't be countered, and in short, have almost none of the disadvantages of spells.

On the other hand, they cannot be augmented or otherwise affected by metamagic or spell-enhancing items, so their power is relatively fixed.

A witch gains a full 11 hexes by 20th level, which is a pretty good selection of at-will powers to have on tap. The witch is unlikely to run out of useful spell effects in combat, and this makes it one of the most diverse classes in the game.

Defenses

Witches have little to recommend them as bastions of defense. They have the smallest HD for *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* classes, so hp are few. Their only strong save is Will, and they have no class abilities that affect saving throws directly. However, their spell list contains a decent array of defensive magic, and they have access to healing magic. Witches caught unprepared or in situations where casting is marginalized quickly find themselves in dire straits.

Skills

The witch's skill list is typical for a caster, but it mixes both arcane and divine staples. Intimidate stands out as an unusual but flavorful social skill. Use Magic Device is a bit weaker for a witch than for other classes as there are few spell-based items they cannot already take advantage of. While the witch gets only the minimum skill ranks, having Intelligence as their casting stat means they will likely have a fair number of skills regardless.

Summary

Witches are real magical powerhouses. They have a huge range of spells and unlimited use of hexes but almost nothing else to attack or defend with. If you want to play a character that does a lot of spellcasting and never wants for a strong magical effect, they are an excellent choice.

30 New Feats for The Witch

While the following feats are especially useful for witches, most can be chosen by any PC. The exceptions are, of course, those that have a witch class features as a requirement.

Ability Damage Resistance

You reduce the amount of ability damage taken. **Benefit:** You reduce all ability damage you suffer by 2 points.

Special: The benefit does not apply to any selfinduced ability damage, nor does it apply to affects which "reduce" an ability score.

Counterspell Feedback

Your counterspells cause your victim to take force damage.

Prerequisite: Improved Counterspell

Benefit: When you successfully counter a spell, the caster of the spell takes force damage equal to 1d4 force damage/level of the spell countered.

Commentary—Comparing its risk and reward, counterspelling is often not worthwhile. You have to give up a guaranteed action for the mere possibility of nullifying an opponent's action. With Counterspell Feedback, if your bet pays off, you get more than a zero sum gain.

Craft Magic Tattoo [Item Creation]

You can create magical tattoos that duplicate the effects of a single spell.

Prerequisite: CL 9th.

Benefit: You can create a magical tattoo that grants a spell-like ability to its wearer. Any spell you know can be turned into a tattoo.

	Feat Name	Prerequisites	Benefit
	Ability Damage Resistance	_	Reduce all ability damage by 2 points
	Counterspell Feedback	Improved Counterspell	Damage casters when countering their spells
	Craft Magic Tattoo	CL 9th	Tattoo yourself and others with spell effects
	Delay Spell	_	Delay the effect of a spell
	Discriminating Spell	5 ranks in Knowledge (arcana)	Alter a spell to affect or not affect a chosen race or creature type
	Dispel Mastery	_	+3 bonus to dispel checks
	Expert Healing	3 ranks in Heal	Heal 1d4 damage using a healer's kit
	Extra Familiar	Ability to acquire a familiar	Summon an additional familiar
	Familiar Concentration	Ability to acquire a familiar	Familiar can maintain spell concentration
	Familiar Development	Ability to acquire a familiar	Familiar gains abilities as if 2 levels higher
	Familiar Feat	Ability to acquire a familiar	Familiar learns a feat
	Familiar Focus	Ability to acquire a familiar	Familiar's abilities are based on your character level
	Familiar Range Extension	Ability to acquire a familiar	Familiar's range extends to 100 miles
	Familiar Reincarnation	Witch's familiar class feature	New familiars know the spells of former familiars
	Familiar Training	Ability to acquire a familiar	Familiar can utilize your feats
	Guarded Casting	Combat Casting, BAB +3	Fight defensively while casting spells and activating magic items
	Hexing Familiar	Major hex class feature, witch's familiar class feature	Familiar performs hexes
	Improved Caster Level	Ability to cast spells	Increase CL by 4, up to character level
	Infer Spell	Spellbook or witch's familiar	Learn spells from spell trigger or spell completion magic items
	Linked Resistance	Ability to acquire a familiar	Gain your familiars spell resistance for 1d4 rounds
	Mass Effect Spell	_	Single target spells affect multiple targets
	Opportunity Counterspell	Quicken Spell, 15 ranks in Spellcraft	Counterspell without a readied action
	Potent Hex	Hex class feature	+1 to hex DC
	Rememorize	_	Change a prepared spell in 1 hour
	Robust Health	Con 13	+4 to saves against poison and disease
	Seduction	Cha 13	Gain bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Charm spells
	Serve Two Masters	CL 11th, Extra Familiar, witch's familiar class feature	Gain a second set of patron spells
	Signature Focus	Eschew Materials	Create an expensive item that replaces costly spell components
	Soul Mate		Sense when your soul mate is in danger and gain a bonu to skill checks used on them
	Touch Mastery	BAB +1	Use spellcasting ability score on touch attacks
	Usurp Spell	10 ranks in Spellcraft	Gain benefits of spell countered

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The base price of a tattoo is the spell's level squared \times 2,000 gp. A tattoo takes 1 day (8 hours work) to craft for each 1,000 gp of its base price. You must spend 1/2 the base price in raw materials. If the spell requires material components with a gp value, you must spend 50 \times that much on raw materials in addition to the base materials cost.

The recipient of a tattoo permanently loses 1 point of Constitution for as long as they have the tattoo.

Activating a magic tattoo is a full round action that provokes an attack of opportunity. A magic tattoo can be activated 1/day (DC 10 + spell level; CL minimum required to cast the spell).

A magic tattoo can be permanently removed using a remove curse spell on a willing subject, mage's disjunction, or wish. A magic tattoo loses its power if the wearer dies, even if resurrected or raised from the dead. If a magic tattoo is removed, the user regains the lost point of Constitution.

Commentary—The rules have some nice guides for pricing magic items which were used as a general guideline for this feat. The ability to give nearly any character nearly any spell is quite powerful, but it also opens up great roleplaying and character customization possibilities. The spell is also one the party has access to regardless, so it's not likely to be unbalancing.

Delay Spell (Metamagic)

You may delay the effect of a spell you cast.

Benefit: When you cast a delayed spell, you may specify 1–5 rounds. When that number of rounds has passed, the spell takes effect at the beginning of your turn. You may cause the spell to take effect earlier than initially selected by taking a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity. Only area, personal, and touch spells can be delayed.

Any decisions you would make about the delayed spell, including attack rolls, designating targets, or determining or shaping an area, are decided when the spell is cast. Any effects resolved by those affected by the spell, including saving throws, are decided when the delay period ends. h

A delayed spell can be dispelled normally during the delay and can be detected normally with spells or abilities that can detect spell effects. A delayed spell takes up a spell slot 2 levels higher than the spell's actual level.

Commentary—Delay Spell has some interesting uses for the strategic planner. For instance, heals can be cast before injuries are sustained, so you could be healed in the thick of a fight without having to stop fighting.

Area spells can be cast and then a coordinated retreat arranged, leaving the enemy to take the brunt of it. You could use such a spell as a convincing threat: "This room will be a fiery tomb in 5 seconds, flee now!"

Discriminating Spell (Metamagic)

You can protect or target one race or creature type from the effects of your spells.

Prerequisite: 5 ranks in Knowledge (arcana).

Benefit: You can select one race or creature type, chosen at the time of casting, to be completely immune to the effects of your spell. Alternatively, you can elect to target your spell against a chosen race or creature type, causing only that specific race or creature type to be affected by your spell. A discriminating spell uses up a spell slot 2 levels higher than the spell's actual level.

Special: You cannot name specific individuals, only races and creature types recognized by the game or GM. For instance, you cannot name Zandor the dragon over there by the hill, but you could name dragons—or white dragons. You must use names or types commonly used in the rules or approved by your GM.

Commentary—The potency of this depends a bit on factors beyond your control as a player, but often adventures are themed, so you can, to some extent, predict what kinds of creatures you will face. The most practical use is to exclude the race of an ally.

This feat cuts both ways, of course. A clever GM could use it as a great monster feat on an enemy caster with a hatred for a particular adventuring race.

Dispel Mastery

You are an expert at dispelling spells. Benefit: You receive a +3 bonus to all dispel checks.

Expert Healing

You can use a healing kit to heal damage. **Prerequisite:** 3 ranks in Heal.

Benefit: You may treat recent injuries received by living corporeal creatures by expending one use of a healer's kit and taking 1 minute (10 rounds) to treat the creature, healing 1d4 hp damage (DC 20). You may heal an additional 1d4 for each 10 points by which you exceeded the target number on your skill check. You may not heal more damage than the target has taken in the previous 10 minutes. A given target may receive 1 healing/10 minutes.

Notes: A full healer's kit contains 10 uses.

Commentary—This is what most new players expect the Heal skill to do, and I think having it allows you to make a naturalist healer rather than a spellcaster if that is what you want to play. It's not enough to steal the spotlight from a real healer. Along with the witch's healing curse, this can help make a witch into a strong party healer.

Extra Familiar

You can acquire more than one familiar **Prerequisite:** Ability to acquire a familiar.

Benefit: You gain a second familiar.

Special: A witch taking second familiar must keep track of which familiar knows which spells as each must be taught separately. A spell may be taught to more than one familiar, but each familiar does not automatically know the spells learned by the others.

Commentary—Familiars by themselves are not especially strong, and— if used extensively in combat they can be a liability. Because of the idea that familiars represent patron powers for the witch, having a second familiar raises interesting roleplaying opportunities with competing patrons and divided loyalties.

Familiar Concentration

Your familiar can concentrate on spells for you. **Prerequisite:** Ability to acquire a familiar.

Benefit: When you cast a spell that normally requires your concentration to maintain, you can let your familiar do the concentrating for you if it is within 5 ft. of you at the time of casting. Your familiar must remain within 5 ft. of you while concentrating to maintain your spell; otherwise, your familiar's concentration is automatically broken. To maintain a spell, the familiar must have an Intelligence score of 5 + the level of the spell or higher. The familiar may only concentrate on one spell at a time.

Commentary—This is a potentially powerful use for a familiar in combat, but it can also draw the attention of your enemies to the familiar so it is not without its risks.

Familiar Development

You have put time and effort into developing your familiar.

Prerequisite: Ability to acquire a familiar.

Benefit: Your familiar's abilities are figured as if you were 2 levels higher.

Special: This feat can be learned more than once and stacks with itself, each time raising your effective level by 2 when determining your familiar's special abilities.

Familiar Feat

Your familiar learns a new feat.

Prerequisite: Ability to acquire a familiar.

Benefit: Your familiar learns any one new feat it qualifies for. This new feat is unavailable to you. In many cases, familiars can learn feats you could not, such as monster feats. If your familiar dies, any replacement will also know this feat although, if it does not meet the prerequisites, it does not gain the benefit.

Special: If you have more than one familiar you must choose which one this feat applies to.

Commentary—Sacrificing a feat for your familiar is probably not a power play, but with a huge range of feats, you can probably find one that will give them a leg—or a wing—up on surviving or being useful in combat.

Familiar Focus

You compensate for any lack in focus when developing your familiar

Prerequisite: Ability to acquire a familiar.

Benefit: The abilities of your familiar are now based on your character level, not your class level.

Commentary—The witch is not a bad casting class to multi-class thanks to its wide range of spellcasting. Even splashing the class for the healing hex could be of great benefit. This feat helps you keep your familiar as an important part of your character no matter your build.

Familiar Range Extension

You can communicate with your familiar over long distances

Prerequisite: Ability to acquire a familiar.

Benefit: Your empathic communication with your familiar extends to a range of 100 miles.

Commentary—This feat opens up more roleplaying avenues as a familiar operates independently of its master on some mission or another, letting the story of the characters unfold in multiple locations. The rule this feat alters seems to be one that exists more for the sake of flavor rather than game balance.

Familiar Reincarnation

Your familiar's spirit returns from the dead with all its memories intact.

Prerequisite: Witch's familiar class feature.

Benefit: When you replace a familiar, the new familiar knows all the spells your former familiar knew.

Commentary—Think of it as the familiar insurance program.

Commentary on Familiar Development

Pretty much all of the familiar abilities gained by level are not very potent, so this feat poses little danger of unbalancing a game despite breaking a fairly significant taboo to avoid granting any character a trait that goes beyond their character level. Upon reaching upper levels this feat offers almost no benefit so it's likely to be swapped out for another choice.

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Familiar Training

Your familiar gains the benefits of your feats. **Prerequisite:** Ability to acquire a familiar.

Benefit: Your familiar gains the benefit from all feats you know so long as the familiar meets the prerequisites of the feat and the benefit applies to a trait or ability the familiar phbcossesses. Benefits to skills or saving throws apply to the familiars score and not the scores it derives from its master. The familiar's hp cannot be altered directly through these feats.

Commentary—A great many feats that a typical character might have are either unavailable to a familiar due to prerequisites or useless because they enhance some trait or ability the familiar does not possess. However, if you plan carefully, you may be able to align them, creating a familiar to be reckoned with. The notion of pets looking like their owners leaps to mind and could be a great roleplaying shtick to go along with the feat.

Guarded Casting

You can cast spells and use magic items while fighting defensively.

Prerequisite: Combat Casting, BAB +3.

Benefit: So long as you are considered armed or are carrying a shield, you can use the fighting defensively option when casting spells or activating a magic item. The benefits are the same as when attacking: -4 to hit and +2 to AC until your next turn. You can also gain the benefits of Combat Expertise while casting or activating.

Normal: You can only fight defensively with an attack or full-attack action.

Commentary—Fighting defensively is not commonly used due to the steep penalty and the fairly meager benefit. Most who would want to fight that way will choose Combat Expertise instead. While it may seem the caster gets a free ride, this is only a small benefit for being in a potentially dangerous situation, and the feat cost makes it a specialized choice for a caster that likes the thick of combat.

Hexing Familiar

Your familiar can throw hexes for you.

Prerequisite: Major hex class feature, witch's familiar class feature.

Benefit: Your familiar can perform any basic hex you know. It cannot perform major or grand hexes. It performs the hex using your caster level and its Intelligence modifier to determine DC and hex effects. The familiar cannot perform a hex in the same round that you perform a hex and vice versa.

Improved Caster Level

You raise your caster level.

Prerequisite: Ability to cast spells.

Benefit: Your effective caster level in all spellcasting classes is increased by 4, but no higher than your character level.

Special: You can take this feat multiple times; its effects stack.

Commentary—The loss of caster level is one of the things that makes it very hard to multiclass full casters and still have them be effective with the spells they know. Many spells are designed to scale up in power as you level the caster to ensure they stay useful at higher levels. Casters who multiclass not only deny themselves more powerful high level spells, but also, the spells they do have become weaker relative to their foes. Characters who try to mix together two casting classes are doubly hit by this problem. Improved Caster Level gives multiclassing characters a tool to keep their lower level spells relevant.

Infer Spell

You can learn spells from magic items. Prerequisite: Spellbook or witch's familiar.

Benefit: You can learn spells from spell trigger and spell completion magic items. You must study the item for 1 day/spell level you are attempting to learn. The item must be able to produce an effect identical to the spell you are learning.

After the period of study, you must make a Spellcraft check identical to copying a spell from another spellbook (DC 15 + the level of the spell). If you fail, you are subject to the same limitations as when failing to copy a spell from a scroll. The spell must be one you are normally permitted to learn.

Commentary—One of the fun things about casters that learn spells from the environment is the hunt for new and powerful enchantments. This feat is a nice way to expand the sources you can draw on.

Commentary on Hexing Familiar

The benefit with Hexing Familiar is you can use your lower level hexes in combat without sacrificing the use of more powerful effects. In each round of combat, actions have an opportunity cost of not doing something else that is more powerful. That tends to mean weaker effects become near useless, and since hexes are used at will, you have little reason to use weaker ones when stronger ones are available.

Linked Resistance

When touching your familiar, you benefit from its spell resistance.

Prerequisite: Ability to acquire a familiar.

Benefit: So long as your familiar remains within 5 ft. of you, you may take a standard action that provokes an attack of opportunity to gain spell resistance equal to that of your familiar for 1d4 rounds.

Commentary—Familiar spell resistance seems intended to help the survivability of pets in upper levels. One can imagine the familiar expanding its aura or bravely blocking the incoming magic. The benefit is substantial but the duration is far shorter than the spell resistance spell.

Mass Effect Spell (Metamagic)

Your spells can affect more targets.

Benefit: A spell that normally affects a single target now affects 1 target/caster level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart. A mass effect spell uses up a spell slot 4 levels higher than the spell's actual level.

Special: If used with a touch spell, all targets must be in physical contact with one another. This feat does not work on spells with a range of "personal."

Commentary—This feat could help make spell supplements a bit slimmer as many spells are mass versions of other spells. It's a great feat for a high-level caster that likes to buff the party or cast de-buffing spells on the enemy. It isn't always the sexiest way to play a caster, but such spells can have a huge impact on combat.

Opportunity Counterspell

You can counterspell without a readied action.

Prerequisite: Quicken Spell, 15 ranks in Spellcraft.

Benefit: You can counterspell any spell cast within line of sight as an immediate reaction without having readied an action or designated a target (1/round). The DC of your Spellcraft check is increased by 10 when using this feat.

Commentary—This is a huge advantage in a caster versus caster scenario. It does have a hefty penalty to overcome, but at higher levels, the base DC is nearly an auto success for most casters. I think it is another good feat for making counterspell more than just a once in a character's lifetime event.

Potent Hex

You have developed more powerful hexes.

Prerequisite: Hex class feature.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to the DC of all your hexes.

Rememorize

You can change a prepared spell in 1 hour.

Benefit: By spending 1 hour, you can change one prepared spell for another you know of the same or lower level. You must have access to the same materials you would need to prepare spells normally.

Commentary—This is a great feat for players new to running casters that prepare spells ahead of time, and it can really help keep a game running along because characters don't have to spend 24 hours waiting for the spell they need to get through a locked door or the like. It still leaves spontaneous casters with a big advantage in combat versatility.

Robust Health

You are highly resistant to poison and disease. Prerequisite: Con 13

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on saving throws to resist poison and disease and do not automatically fail such saving throws on a natural 1.

Commentary—It's hard to make a feat that is tempting when it only offers a bonus to a passive defense you use on special occasions and for which there are many remedies. A pure immunity may be too much as it allows min-maxing. This offers near immunity so long as you invest in good saves to begin with.

Seduction

You are good at using your sexual charms. Prerequisites: Cha 13

Benefit: You gain +4 circumstance bonus to Bluff and Diplomacy checks with creatures who you are sexually compatible with. You also gain a +2 bonus to the DC of your charm spells.

Special: If you act with hostility toward or bluntly reject the advances of a creature you have used this feat with, their attitude toward you automatically declines by one step and you may not use seduction with them again until it has improved. Sexual compatibility is determined by apparent race and sex of the seducer with respect to the normal sexual preferences of the target.

Commentary—This feat requires a GM judgment call and could pull a game in directions not everyone wants in their dungeon crawl. Its fairly large bonuses are counter balanced by the danger of scorning the affection of those you seduce, and the narrow range of those you can use it on. It's a key element of many stories that is often missing in the rules. For more information on adding sex and romance to your game, see *Kobold Quarterly* magazine #13. Serve Two Masters

You now have two patrons

Prerequisites: CL 11, Extra Familiar, witch's familiar class feature.

Benefit: You gain a second patron and an additional set of patron spells. The new set of spells is learned by the familiar gained with the Extra Familiar feat.

Commentary—This feat is rich with interesting roleplaying potential both for the player and GM. The mysterious source of a witch's power is a wonderful hook for story telling. The benefit is significant but with such a diverse spell list, it is unlikely more spell selections will greatly increase the per encounter power of the witch that takes it.

Signature Focus

You may replace costly material components with a special focus item.

Prerequisite: Eschew Materials

Benefit: To use this feat, you must create – or have an artisan create for you – a personalized and distinctive valuable non-magical item that you can hold or openly wear while casting spells. You must own this item for at least 1 week before utilizing it.

So long as you hold or wear the item, you may cast spells without needing its material components if the cost of the components is less than half the cost of your signature focus. You cannot spend more than 25 gp times your caster level when creating or buying a signature focus. You can create or buy a new signature focus at any time you wish.

Commentary—The primary benefit of this feat is that it lets you save money in the long run by investing up front in a fancy item. The requirements for the item are mostly there to provide roleplaying favor and to avoid someone simply declaring whatever magic item they find to be their focus and thus not having to make any kind of investment.

Soul Mate (Teamwork)

You and your loved one share a special bond.

Benefit: You and your chosen soul mate must both take this feat to benefit from it. You develop a sixth sense that warns you whenever your soul mate is in danger as well as a +5 insight bonus to all skill checks targeting your soul mate. Finally, any supernatural effect that compels you to directly harm your soul mate is immediately dispelled.

Special: If your soul mate is killed, you may select a new feat to replace soul mate after 1 month of grieving or you may retain the feat in the hope they are brought back to life.

Example: Your soul mate is abducted at the market while you are at home. You sense the danger and go searching for him or her. You gain a +5 insight bonus to Gather Information checks for relevant information and a +5 bonus to Heal checks when you find your soul mate beaten in an alley after you chase off the abductors.

Commentary—This feat stretches the rules of feat design pretty far: it requires some GM adjudication as to when the skill bonus can be applied, it offers multiple separate benefits, and it grants somewhat supernatural abilities. It will appeal most to roleplaying couples or as a feat taken along with an NPC during a campaign.

Touch Mastery

You let magical energies guide your touch. **Prerequisite:** BAB +1

Benefit: When making a touch attack with a spell, you can substitute your spellcasting ability score bonus for the usual Strength bonus to the attack roll.

Usurp Spell

You can attempt to steal control of any spell that you counterspell.

Prerequisite: 10 ranks in Spellcraft

Benefit: Whenever you successfully counter a spell where the caster of the spell is the target, you become the target of the spell instead.

Commentary—This bears some similarity to Parry Spell from Advanced Players Guide, but they are effective against different types of spells. Together, they let you steal a wide range of magic.

Character Builds

Planning out a character can be a lot of fun, and you avoid finding yourself at a loss for what to take at your next level or unable to take what you want because a prerequisite is missing from your build. These builds are handy for players who may not know all the ins and outs of the rules but still want to create a powerful and well thought out character.

These character builds were created using the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* Core Rulebook, the *Advanced Players Guide*, and the *Advanced Feats* series from Open Design as source material. Ability scores were purchased using 15 points (standard fantasy). I list only those elements of the character where you are making build choices, and – in the leveling charts – only those levels where such choices occur are shown.

Arch Witch

The arch-witch is a master of all things magical and specializes in dominating other spellcasters, bringing them to heel and claiming their secrets. Many archwitches eventually turn on their patrons, seeking to usurp even their masters' powers.

The primary focus of this build is to take advantage of the counterspell mechanic to dominate other casters in magical combat. At the start of the build, the foundation is set with Improved Counterspell and Magical Aptitude to give you a greater chance to counterspell, both in having the right spell and in giving you a bonus to the necessary Spellcraft check. Dispel Mastery is taken as soon as you gain access to dispel magic, which can be used as a generic counter to any spell.

Every feat available to add to the effect of countering spells is taken so that counterspelling is not just a reactive and defensive tactic. Counterspell Feedback lets you damage your victim while Usurp Spell and Parry Spell allow you to turn and steal spell effects.

The familiar feats allow your familiar to augment your number of effective actions per turn, leaving you free to counterspell and still make some headway in offense. Quicken Spell and Opportunity Counterspell allow you to counterspell and cast in the same turn.

Hexes were chosen for combat use, so you can use your spells for counterspells and still have an endless number of strong actions to take during a fight.

Arch Witch Build Details

Race: Human

Stats: Str 8, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 12, Cha 8 **Skills**: Craft (alchemy), Heal, Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (nature)*, Knowledge (planes), Knowledge (religion)*, Spellcraft, Use Magic Device

*Acquired after increasing Intelligence

Favored Class: Human witch or +1 hp

Patron Spells: Wisdom

Leveling Guide (class features, feats, and ability increase choices per level):

- 1—Healing hex, Improved Counterspell feat, Magical Aptitude feat
- 2—Flight hex
- 3—Familiar Concentration feat
- 4—Slumber hex, Int +1
- 5-Counterspell Feedback feat
- 6—Evil eye hex
- 7—Dispel Mastery feat
- 8-Tongues hex, Int +1
- 9-Quicken Spell feat
- 10-Major healing major hex
- 11-Usurp Spell feat
- 12—Agony major hex, Int +1
- 13—Hexing Familiar feat
- 14—Retribution major hex
- 15—Opportunity Counterspell feat
- 16—Waxen image major hex, Int +1
- 17—Parry Spell feat
- 18—Eternal slumber grand hex
- 19-Heighten Spell feat
- 20—Natural disaster grand hex, Int +1

Spells that combine especially well with this build:

- 1st—burning hands, detect secret doors, mage armor, shield of faith
- 2nd—alter self, blindness/deafness, levitate, web
- 3rd—arcane sight, dispel magic, fly, lightning bolt
- 4th—death ward, enervation, moonstruck, threefold aspect
- 5th—baleful polymorph, break enchantment, magic jar, teleport
- 6th—analyze dweomer, greater dispel magic, guards and wards, true seeing
- 7th—greater arcane sight, heal, plane shift, symbol of stunning
- 8th—horrid wilting, irresistible dance, protection from spells, trap the soul
- 9th—astral projection, mage's disjunction, power word kill, soul bind

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White Witch

The white witch defies the expectations of those who think all witches serve dark powers. Your mission is to heal the sick and make whole the damage done to the world. While mostly benevolent, the white witch still has the power and the will to punish those who do evil or need to learn humility.

This build starts with a roleplaying concept and then uses the game mechanics to support it. The central notion is that you only rarely use your power to kill or destroy and, instead, prefer to aid others. Because most games involve a lot of violent conflict and every party member is needed for victory, this build gives you a number of tools to debilitate foes without killing them.

The build starts out with a healing focus, giving the witch the choice of skill, hex, and spell-based healing. Between the three, you should be able to handle healing for your friends with aplomb. This trend continues throughout the build.

Merciful Spell is a great new feat that lets you cut loose with potent damage spells without actually killing your foes. It's also great for bar fights where casting lightning bolts is normally a faux pas. Much later, Empower Spell gives some muscle for those damage spells and can also aid in your healing. Late in the build, Discriminating Spell helps you be selective in who you catch in area spells.

Persistent Spell, Heighten Spell, and Focused Spell all help crank up your DC values for spells that incapacitate foes, making this a potent control casting build. Mass Effect Spell is great for both control spells, heals, and buffs getting more mileage out of each spellcasting action if at a fairly steep metamagic cost.

Craft Rod is fairly key to the build since all that metamagic can really crowd the high-level spell slots. Crafting metamagic rods will help relieve that pressure a bit. Spell Perfection also performs this function but comes much later in the build. Also on the crafting side, you get Cauldron Hex which enables potion brewing to aid your allies.

The hex selection mirrors the build's helpful and nonviolent approach. A high-level white witch could easily stitch a whole army back together given enough time. While the retribution major hex may deal lethal damage, it does have a kind of karmic justice to it that seems appropriate here.

White Witch Build Details

Race: Gnome

Stats: Str 8, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 16, Wis 10, Cha 14 Skills: Craft (alchemy), Craft (jewelry), Diplomacy, Heal, Knowledge (arcana)*, Knowledge (nature)*, Spellcraft

*Acquired after increasing Intelligence

Favored Class: +1 hp

Patron Spells: Animals

Leveling Guide: (class features, feats, and ability increase choices per level):

1-Expert Healing feat, healing hex

2—Slumber hex

3-Merciful Spell feat

- 4—Cauldron hex, Int +1
- 5—Persistent Spell feat

6—Charm hex

- 7—Focused Spell feat
- 8—Disguise hex, Int +1
- 9—Craft Rod feat
- 10—Major healing major hex
- 11-Heighten Spell feat
- 12-Retribution major hex, Con +1
- 13-Mass Effect Spell feat
- 14—Weather control major hex
- 15—Empower Spell feat
- 16—Vision major hex, Int +1
- 17—Discriminating Spell feat
- 18—Life giver grand hex
- 19—Spell Perfection feat
- 20-Eternal slumber grand hex, Int +1

Spells that combine especially well with this build:

- 1st—cure light wounds, mage armor, ray of enfeeblement, sleep
- 2nd—cure moderate wounds, hold person, web, zone of truth
- 3rd—fly, lightning bolt, remove curse, remove disease
- 4th—cure serious wounds, death ward, threefold aspect, wandering star motes
- 5th—cure critical wounds, hold monster, reincarnate, teleport
- 6th—cone of cold, geas/quest, greater heroism, summon monster VI
- 7th—heal, regenerate, symbol of stunning, waves of exhaustion
- 8th—animal shapes, mass charm monster, maze, power word stun
- 9th—dominate monster, elemental swarm, summon nature's ally IX, teleportation circle

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Wicked Witch

The wicked witch is everything village mothers warn their children about to keep them on the straight and narrow. You are the dark reflection the guilty see in the mirror and are prepared – not to mention delighted! – to punish them for each immoral deed or thought they dare to have. Since the world is rich with evil, there are always places in need of your services.

You start your career with potent powers of seduction and trickery used to outsmart your enemies. The disguise hex allows the use of seduction without lasting consequence and allows you to play on the passions of either sex. Your charm hex gives you a magical boost when conventional means aren't working.

The Potent Hex feat supports a range of nasty offensive hex powers that develop in the mid and late levels of the build. Metamagic feats perform a similar function for casting potency at later levels. A very high Intelligence provides a strong DC while the misfortune hex and Bouncing Spell feat both provide a way to force additional saving throws. Heighten Spell and Maximize Spell provide you with a well-rounded spell repertoire.

In the middle of the build, you develop your familiar's powers. Familiar Reincarnation helps reduce the danger of using your familiar in combat and provides a smooth transition to more advanced familiars when you take Improved Familiar, allowing you to keep all your spells. Familiar Focus combined with Hexing Familiar gives your fiendish companion the ability to do many of the things you could accomplish at lower levels allowing you to focus on your more powerful, late-level spells and abilities. With the Seduction feat and the charm and disguise hexes at your familiar's command, it can get into quite a lot of mischief.

Craft Magic Tattoo is a great way to augment your own power or that of your familiar or companions while also providing a fun roleplaying hook. Even wicked witches need a hobby, and tattoos grant pain along with their power.

Wicked Witch Build Details

Race: Elf

Stats: Str 8, Dex 10, Con 13, Int 18, Wis 8, Cha 14 Skills: Bluff, Craft (alchemy), Disguise, Intimidate, Knowledge (history)*, Spellcraft, Use Magic Device

*Acquired after increasing Intelligence

Favored Class: +1 hp

Patron Spells: Trickery **Leveling Guide**: (class features, feats, and ability

increase choices per level)

1—Disguise hex, Seduction feat

2—Charm hex

2 - Charminex

3—Potent Hex feat 4—Evil eye hex, Int +1

5—Familiar Reincarnation feat

6—Misfortune hex

7—Improved Familiar feat

8—Blight hex, Int +1

9—Familiar Training feat

10—Agony major hex

11—Hexing Familiar feat

12—Retribution major hex, Int +1

13—Bouncing Spell feat

14—Waxen image major hex

15—Craft Magic Tattoo feat

16—Nightmares major hex, Int +1

17—Heighten Spell feat

18—Death curse grand hex

19-Maximize Spell feat

20—Natural disaster grand hex, Int +1

Spells that combine especially well with this build:

1st—beguiling gift, burning hands, hypnotism, mask dweomer

2nd—cure moderate wounds, feast of ashes, hold person, mirror image

3rd—fly, pain strike, speak with dead, vampiric touch

4th—black tentacles, fear, ice storm, phantasmal killer

5th—baleful polymorph, cure critical wounds, magic jar, teleport

6th—cloak of dreams, flesh to stone, raise dead, slay living

7th—chain lightning, heal, insanity, summon monster VII

8th—clone, summon monster VIII, symbol of death, trap the soul

9th—elemental swarm, mass suffocation, time stop, wail of the banshee

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