



THE ULTIMATE ADEQUATE COMMONER



by J.M. Perkins

THE EVERYMAN'S GUIDE TO SURVIVING AND THRIVING



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THE ULTIMATE ADEQUATE COMMONER

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Published by Misfit Studios

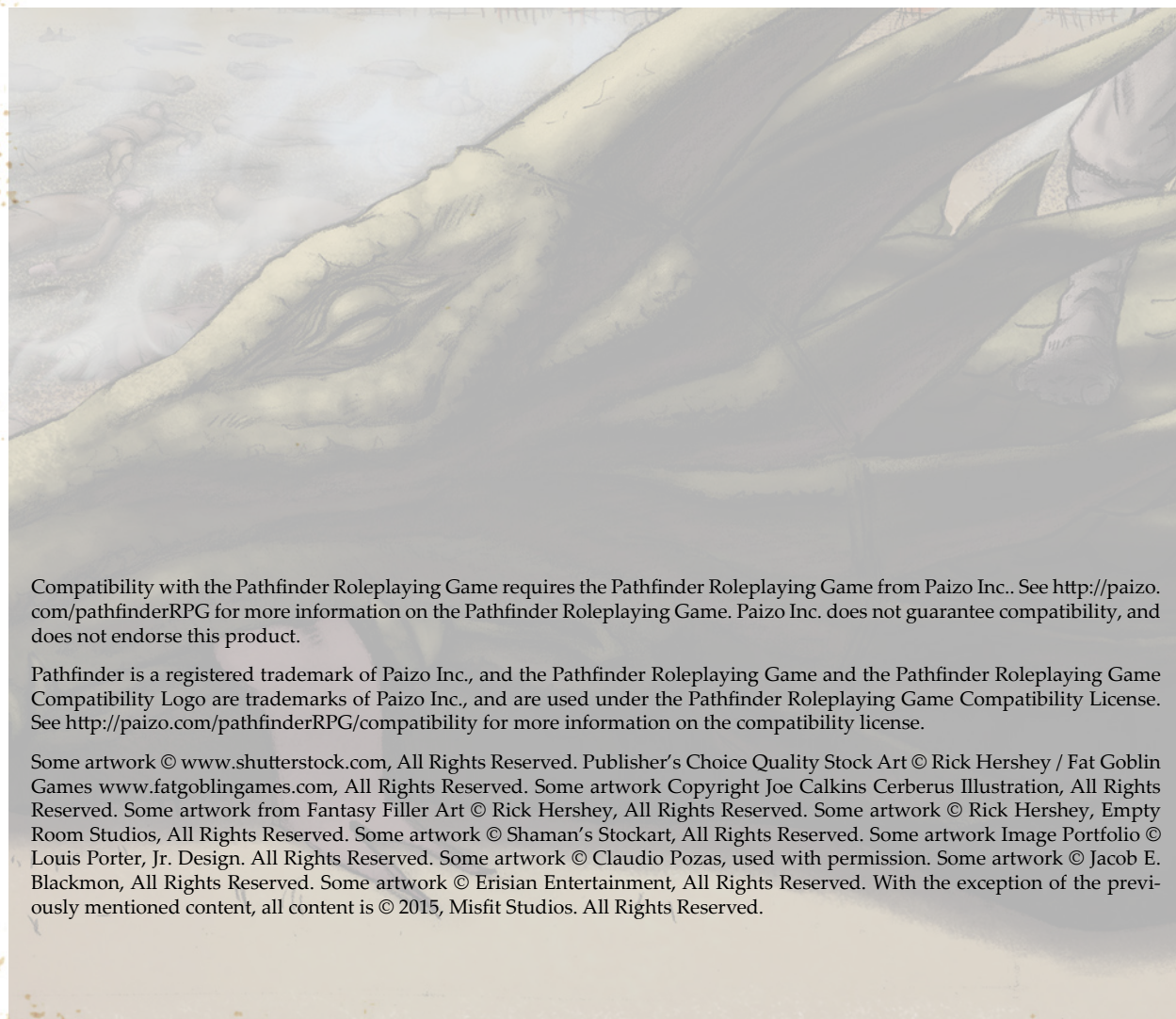


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Introduction:

Commoner?!? Why?

Bekan clutched her cloak closer, trying to ward off the frost. Silently, she cursed Schnoz, Rezzah, and Josom; all of them laying nearby, all of them possessing the foresight to buy gear suitable to the cold weather. But mostly, she cursed the goat tethered to a stake in the snow-covered field before her.

The bait chewed placidly at some oats, unbothered by the chilly night. The fact that the animal appeared to be so comfortable as Bekan bit down hard to keep her teeth from chattering pissed her off. The beast was probably too stupid to be bothered by the snow. Still, better to be here, in the blind with a nice, open field of fire than down there with the goat and whatever had been preying on the village's livestock.

From the remains they'd seen, whatever was out there in the blackness was big. Perhaps even a bear that wasn't hibernating for some reason. Maybe something worse.

On nights like these, when the cold seeped into her, Bekan felt her scars and the places where her broken bones had stitched back together. Every pang—the pained tickle of pins and needles—reminded her of a mistake made.

When she'd tried to go toe to toe with that orc war leader instead of tripping it and running away.

That kobold siege where she hadn't inspected the rookie's trench, and so they'd lost the left flank.

It was good to feel these pains, good to remember—it helped her not repeat her mistakes.

As she thought about the past, the monster came out from the tree line—paws twice as big as her hands and padding in dead silence. She almost didn't see it; the wolf. The creature was the size of a horse, but white as the snowy ground. Between its camouflage-perfect coat and the dim light, the beast was more or less invisible.

Schnoz—lying near her and the others, his light crossbow held at the ready—gasped. She cut him a dire look; any noise at this point might give them away.

Out of the corner of her eye, Rezzah adjusted his aim, anxious as ever to get his shot off.

The winter wolf stalked towards the goat, its head held low as the oblivious animal continued to chew. Suddenly, the snow-white beast stopped in its tracks and sniffed at the air. Then, gods help her, it drew back its lips into a smile made of far too many, far too large teeth. In a voice like a white sleet, it said "I smell you," then charged their position, ignoring the goat that bleated and kicked against its noose.

With a gasp, Schnoz fired his crossbow bolt, but the shot flew wide to the left. Bekan's shot struck true, but the wolf ignored it.

"Warg bung," she whispered in response, drawing a small vial from her belt. Inside the delicate glass, the glowing fungus illuminated she and her friends. The others struggled to reload their weapons before the monster reached them.

Bekan readied to throw when the winter wolf came within range.

Time to see if she'd be adding another scar to her collection.

When it comes to game balance, no class is worse than the commoner: their hit dice, base attack bonus progression, and saves are the worst in the game, and they have no class features. They are the underpowered everyman whose existence is supposed to ensure that the player characters (player characters) feel heroic and special.

So why play one?

Because it will open your eyes to aspects of the game you've taken for granted.

The wonderful(ly masochistic) thing about commoners is they require you to stretch your creative muscles in unfamiliar ways. Both in and out of combat, you must understand and coax new functionality out of racial abilities, feats, traits, equipment, and tactics in order to stay alive.

Are you bored with how easy the game is with a little optimization?

Do you feel like the "roleplayers" don't take enough time to consider the game and how it works?

Do you believe "minmaxers" strip the game of all its wonder and have a solution to every problem pre-built into their character?

If so, make everyone play a commoner and watch your group's most jaded grognard feel like a newbie again.

Another reason to potentially play commoners is, in most Pathfinder® games, the choice of what class to play is the first priority; skills, races, and feats are a secondary concern. To play a commoner means these secondary choices are now of primary import. A tengu commoner will use weapons and tactics in-



A Word on the Other NPC Classes

Although it's generally beyond the scope of the Adequate Commoner, we wanted to produce a brief word about the other NPC classes: aristocrats, experts, warriors, and adepts.

After spending so much time with commoners, these other NPC classes become wildly overpowered, even if they remain weak compared to base and core class characters. However, much of the advice and options presented in this guide will also apply if you choose to play one of the other four NPC classes.

Consider playing a warrior if you prefer to increase your reliance on weapons and armor.

Give an expert a try if you want to depend more on skill use.

The adept may be what you need if you want to use spells.

Take on an aristocrat character if you're looking for something halfway between warrior and expert.

It's our opinion that adept is the game-changing NPC class (from a commoner perspective) of the lot: even extremely limited spell casting and magical healing changes the game immensely.

Should you choose to bring other NPC classes into the game, a helpful party breakdown would be:

- A Warrior for melee combat situations.
- An Expert for problems solving and taking roguish responsibilities.
- An Expert with a focus on the Use Magic Device, Handle Animals, and Diplomat skills.
- Adept who will help with healing and combat spellcasting.

ful preparation, and tactics are closer to the mandatory side of the spectrum.

Player Assumptions in this Guide

A typical commoner in a dangerous, high fantasy world is a character who never engages in combat, who works as a servant, armorer, or some other non-combat function safe in town. If he ever ran into a problem that needed killing, he'd flee to the nearest tavern and start cryptically mumbling rumors about an ancient treasure in order to trick the nearest group of adventurers (a.k.a., unstable and armed-to-the-teeth murder hobos) into solving his problem for him. Once the adventurers killed the threat (and then some), the commoner in question could simply get on with his life much as they had before.

This isn't a guide for any such commoner who is genre-savvy enough to know their place in the fan-

tasy world hierarchy. This is a guide for commoners who actually want to go out and be adventurers or are forced to do so by circumstance, need, or when all other efforts to recruit "proper" heroes fail.

The other major assumption in this guide is that you'll be playing with a party of commoners as a unique challenge. A single player using a commoner while everyone else chooses a base or core class isn't likely to be fun for anyone unless they're utilizing one of the "Balanced Commoner" options discussed later (see the Gear Hero, Advanced Race/Template, or Mythic Options, pg 13.) And yet, some great roleplaying and the right group could make playing even a starving turtle fun, so who are we to judge?

If you are the single commoner in a traditional party, choose one or two out-of-combat needs you can fill (e.g., armorer and dentist.) Also, try to stay out of the way of the monsters, support your companions with alchemical weapons, and maybe shoot a crossbow bolt now and again.

Words of Wisdom to Ponder

Adventurers come in many stripes, but none so seemingly strange as the so-called “commoner”; ordinary members of a sentient race without claim to any superlative abilities we usually associate with the craft. This is a difficult distinction to make; fighters and wizards alike claim there is nothing inherently “special” about themselves and their qualities—all that they have is the result of hard work and training.

Perhaps.

But it seems to me there was always something unique about these divisions of adventurers. Most fighting men (and even more so barbarians) are blessed with nearly supernatural endurance and a capacity to suffer wounds that would kill most anyone else. Meanwhile, the amount of study and rote memorization required to attain the title of “Wizard” is beyond the capacity of the vast majority of mortals. I think most adventurers were always exceptional individuals. Such paths are unavailable to most, so what is the layman to do when faced by monsters threatening their homes or when feeling that pressing urge for gold and glory?

The “common man” makes up the armies of this world and, whatever tales of glory you might have heard in the tavern for a few pieces of copper. They are the first responders to crises of every stripe. At times, they merely realize that a life of adventure—while full of its own peril—is more lucrative and fun than digging in the dirt all day, trying to scratch green foodstuffs from the miserly earth.

On the most fundamental level, the common man can be effective in great numbers. Assuming no supernatural ability in the target to ignore standard weapons, everything dies when subjected to a large enough hail of crossbow bolts. But, more to the point, the canny common man can have great efficacy just by utilizing the most overlooked tool in the adventurer’s kit: their brains. By this, I don’t mean “intelligence” or even the vaunted “wisdom” of willful clerics. No, I mean looking tactically at what tools an individual or group possesses and setting the stage so they can enjoy a stack of resulting advantages while denying them to the enemy.

For instance, a hulking orc may be more than a match for an ordinary person, one-on-one in a straight-up fight, but the scales may be tipped in the common man’s favor. What would the outcome be should that same person first pepper the orc with crossbow bolts? What about spreading marbles and caltrops before him in anticipation of the orcs instinct to charge? And then, what if he held firm with a friend or two armed with long spears to stab at the brute while they remain out of reach?

Even the lowest amongst us can successfully face the horrors and monsters of this world with some forethought. And that’s not even touching on the glut of enchanted artifacts that may be used and combined to produce startlingly original tactics.

In the pages to come, I want to look at the common man gone monster hunting or adventuring. I will explore what tactics, qualities, and surprises these individuals possess that allow them to hold their own against the boldest paladin or canniest wizard. There is no greater sin of the intellect than underestimation—the reflexive dismissal of an entire class of being due to preconceptions.

I, for one, would have a blameless mind.

From the Introduction to On the Martial and Adventuring Capabilities of the Ordinary Man; the So-Called “Commoners.”

By Hayden Fillinson

Court Magus to Empress Avuncile the Fourth

Overview

Here's a summary of what you have to look forward to within this work.

Chapter 1: Getting Commoners into Your Game

The first chapter contains options for including commoners as player characters in one's game. The approaches range from options balanced against core and base class characters to viewing the commoner as a 0 level class. The former stays faithful to the commoner concept while creating play balance in unique ways and drawing inspiration from history. The latter, however, explores ways to include compelling, unbalanced commoner characters.

Chapter 2: The Adequate Commoner Class and Jobs

This chapter is a review of the commoner class with a simple modification, as well as an introduction to commoner "jobs"—options for customizing commoners akin to archetypes.

Chapter 3: Weapons and Armor

A look at the most effective existing arms and armors from the commoner perspective, in addition to an entirely new class of weapon: the commoner weapon.

Chapter 4: Making the Most of Things

A chapter detailing how to do more with less, and what choices can help a commoner and which can't. Also provided are new and creative uses of existing options.

Chapter 5: Traits

A collection of the most important existing traits, in addition to new traits suited to commoner characters.

Chapter 6: Feats

Here you will find a breakdown of commoner "combat styles," a collection of the most important existing feats, in addition to new ones.

Chapter 7: Tools, Consumables, and Ammunition

This is an essential selection of existing arrows, crossbow bolts, alchemical items, and magical consumables for the commoner's arsenal.

Chapter 8: Improvised Traps

Here you will find an entirely new class of traps, along with uses for the Craft (Traps) skill, all assembled out of whatever material is at hand.

Chapter 9: Wondrous Items

Here is a collection of the most useful magic items for commoners, along with new creations.

Chapter 10: Tactics and Ambushes

This is where you will find tactical options so they may triumph over far more dangerous opponents. Included are step-by-step examples and notes for Gamemasters on how handle opponents with unbalancing abilities. There is also advice concerning how players may use the environment and props like torch sconces, paving stones, caves, and more to their advantage.

Chapter 11: Commoners and Communities

Too often, players dismiss commoners and other non-player characters (NPC) as inconsequential and beneath notice. More to the point, such "extras" are often assumed to be virtually defenseless against adventurers and other powerful threats. This chapter is all about how active, engaged "everyman" NPCs can be a major help or hindrance to the party, and potentially the most memorable part of your campaign.

While the rest of the book chronicles how (and why) to make commoner player characters more effective and enjoyable, this chapter is all about how to make engaging, helpful, or downright terrifying commoners and other non-player characters (NPC.) It does so by discussing topics such as strategic reserves, militia tactics, community defense and development, the commoner mindset, and how they may (potentially) deliver due comeuppance upon arrogant adventurers.

Chapter 12: Commoner Sample Characters

Want some examples of commoner characters that stand out from the crowd? You'll find some here.

Appendix A: Cooks' Day Out

A beginning adventure for commoners.

Allow me to introduce myself, as I'll be providing color commentary throughout. I'm Felix Feckle, the most successful commoner adventurer ever. I've been slaying monsters, stealing treasure, and not dying since before you were born.

So what if some say I've gone totally insane?

While reading this here book, you should look for this sort of finely formatted speech bubble to receive a pithy summary, excellent advice, or a joke in the poorest of taste.



1. Getting Commoners into Your Game

This chapter is all about how commoners may be included in your game without always relegating them to the role of forgettable backdrop and nameless plot filler. Even if your game's players or Gamemaster aren't up for the unique challenges and success stories born from playing a commoner campaign, here you shall still find some ideas regarding how to use playable commoner NPCs in memorable ways.

This chapter covers assumptions about the type of situations and needs this guide is aimed at addressing. It also provides reasons for telling stories and playing games with deliberately lower-powered commoners—as well as ways to get commoners into your game to begin with.

Balanced Commoners

There are a number of methods that may be employed to balance commoner characters against the traditional player character class options. Let's have a look at some.

Using Templates or High RP Races

With any party of commoners, one of the most important decisions facing the player is which race to choose. In creating commoners balanced for standard play with characters using base and core classes, this choice can offer more freedom for players by allowing templates and high race point (RP) options. Doing so allows players to experiment with races and creatures not typically permitted, such as liches, half-dragons, half-slimes, half-dwarves, or worms that walks, balancing the commoner's challenge rating in the process. The commoners of one land where unusual races are the norm may well be the demigod heroes of another where lesser races are dominant.

When using this option, commoners with double the RP of other player characters, or who utilize a template that adds +2 to CR, balance well with traditional character types. This commonly produces characters that are front-loaded with abilities and

Using this Guide to Play Non-Commoners

So ... what if you, as a player or Gamemaster, have no interest in playing commoners whatsoever? Does this guide become useless?

Not at all.

The information in this guide, including tactics and options, will allow you to effectively play *any* character build you want, but with a twist. Do you wish to play a low-Intelligence, non-casting wizard? A pacifist fighter? This guide will help you do it.

Every tactic, stratagem, and creative problem-solving approach that allows commoners to adventure effectively can easily be utilized by the other classes. Will doing so be the most powerful option available to a traditional, base or core class? Far from it. But if commoners can make it work, *anyone* can make it work.



may be more powerful than other player characters at lower levels. Such an approach often evens out at mid-range levels and then loses its advantages at higher levels because of how relatively impotently the commoner class progresses with experience.

For Gamemasters, when a player is interested in selecting a normally game-breaking template or race, allowing them to be a commoner may be an excellent counterpoint. Doing so may also increase the game's potential for a compelling and unusual story. Furthermore, in addition to the already generated races and templates, this approach allows players to experiment with the race building rules or their own custom templates.

Mythic Commoners

The commoner class is another option for balancing commoners with base and core class characters in the group. It is ideal for experimenting with the mythic character mechanic, as presented in *Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Mythic Adventures™* (PZO1126.)

A commoner with a mythic tier equal to half their class level (rounded up) would be about the same strength as a similarly leveled standard character class. More to the point, mythic stories wherein characters receive their power from an external source (e.g., divine blood, exposure to an artifact) fit nicely with characters who were more "everyman" in nature prior to exposure/manifestation.

The "average farm boy" who discovers they are prophesied to save the world or the shopkeeper who learns they are the child of a god is more likely to be a commoner than a fighter, sorcerer, or inquisitor, by way of example. And pairing these characters with traditional adventurers who had to work for their powers and prowess creates fascinating story potential.

A single commoner with mythic tiers would be a balanced addition to a traditional party—balanced, but possess a completely different suite of abilities and (potentially) an entirely different role in the story. For example, perhaps a traditional group of mercenary/adventurer characters are required to protect a destined messiah from a dangerous world that wants them dead. Or maybe the porter/hired-

Mythic Commoners

Commoner Level	Mythic Tier
1	1
2	1
3	2
4	2
5	3
6	3
7	4
8	4
9	5
10	5
11	6
12	6
13	7
14	7
15	8
16	8
17	9
18	9
19	10
20	10

hand was exposed to some Mythic source of magic and now wants a full stake in the adventuring party (and believes themselves to be a match for the other characters.)

Alternately, having an entire party composed of mythic commoners would create a group close to traditional player character strength. The fact that their abilities would function entirely differently from core and base class abilities presents an exceptional opportunity for exploring mythic concepts and heroes, however, while running any number of traditionally created adventures.

Gamemasters wishing to keep their mythic commoner balanced with the traditional, core and base classes can simply advance the character's mythic tiers according to the accompanying table. Alternatively, Gamemasters may conspire to add mythic challenges, events, or items to generally keep the commoners at the same level of effectiveness as the other characters.

Most commoners are likely to choose (or are given) either a champion, guardian, marshal, or trickster mythic path. Commoners get less effi-

cacy from the archmage and hierophant paths because of the character's lack of appropriate prior supplementary abilities.

See Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Mythic Adventures™ (PZO1126) for more information on mythic characters and their abilities.

Gear Hero

"You're just a man in a suit."

"Well yeah, but it's a heck of a suit."

Nearly every core or base class feat or feature can be replicated with the proper equipment. At first level, for example, a "Gear Hero" commoner with a masterwork longspear hits just as often as a comparable fighter wielding a normal longspear, according to statistics. Applied wealth can make the difference. As such, some commoners may be balanced with other classes simply by being much wealthier than their companions.

Perhaps the commoner player characters are dilettantes with no real skills who buy their power and advantages. It could otherwise be they have an assortment of magical items that level up with them (granting them the equivalent of a bonus of several thousand gold every level.) Alternatively, they could be merchants with an almost supernatural gift for finding the best deals.

Commoner Starting Wealth by Level

Gear Hero Commoner Level	Starting Wealth
1	400 gp
2	2,000 gp
3	6,000 gp
4	12,000 gp
5	21,000 gp
6	32,000 gp
7	47,000 gp
8	66,000 gp
9	92,000 gp
10	124,000 gp



While the idea of wealthy commoners can take some Gamemaster finagling to handle appropriately, the basic formula is simple. The commoner

Gear Hero Commoner Level	Starting Wealth
11	164,000 gp
12	216,000 gp
13	280,000 gp
14	370,000 gp
15	480,000 gp
16	630,000 gp
17	820,000 gp
18	1,060,000 gp
19	1,370,000 gp
20	1,760,000 gp

gets an even share of whatever gear or money the party acquires through the course of normal adventuring but, additionally, they receive bonus gear every time they gain a new experience level. The commoner selects gear that is equal to their wealth-per-level guidelines (see the accompanying tables.) Opening up the portfolio of magical and mundane equipment in such a fashion can produce new tactics and facilitate exciting stories.

A Gear Hero commoner receives an amount of gold to be spent on magical items and gear equal to what is indicated in the Commoner Starting Wealth by Level table. This accommodates creating Gear Hero commoner characters that start play at greater than 1st level.

This table shows the bonus gold granted to gear-based commoners per level (in addition to an equal share of the party's gold and gear gained through adventuring.) If the character begins at a level higher than 1st, only grant them the money provided

Commoner Bonus Wealth by Level

Player Character Level	Bonus Wealth
1	None *
2	850 gp
3	2,000 gp
4	3,000 gp
5	4,500 gp
6	5,500 gp
7	7,500 gp
8	9,500 gp
9	13,000 gp
10	16,000 gp
11	20,000 gp
12	26,000 gp
13	32,000 gp
14	45,000 gp
15	55,000 gp
16	75,000 gp
17	95,000 gp
18	120,000 gp
19	155,000 gp
20	195,000 gp

* This is the minimum starting level the character can begin at, so this level is not obtained via experience. See the Commoner Starting Wealth by Level table to determine how much additional money the character begins play with.

in the Commoner Starting Wealth by Level table to begin with. As they level up in play, add the Gear Hero commoner bonus wealth.

Unbalanced Commoners

It is not always desirable for commoner characters to be balanced with characters that use the base or core classes. Sometimes, the fun is to be found in trying to keep up with everyone else—the best part of the game is the struggle. As such, there are a number of steps that may be taken to accommodate commoner characters in your game without forcing a sense of game balance into the mix.

In such games, your commoner is not intended to keep pace with core or base class characters, but figuring out how to do this without quickly ending the character's life is still necessary. What follows in this section are concepts for commoner characters and games where the underpowered nature of commoners is precisely the point.

Benefits of an Unbalanced Commoner Story

So, if your unbalanced commoner is not going to be able to keep pace with the group's other characters, what benefits does the player achieve by taking on this challenge? There are several benefits to such a game that should be considered.

Old School Flavor

In the original version of the World's Oldest Role Playing game, challenges were greater, death far more frequent, and paranoia and inventiveness were the only things keeping you alive (or not.) Games like Labyrinth Lord play heavily on this, although their rulesets can make the conversion of the exceptional abundance of OGL 3.5 and Pathfinder® material something of a chore. By playing a commoner, players emulate the feel of old school RPGs while still drawing on the most extensive game library available for a single ruleset—that of Pathfinder® and OGL 3.5.

As commoners, you're always vulnerable, no fight can be dismissed as easy, draining your re-

sources in combat cannot be avoided, and you won't always have an obvious solution to the challenge pre-built into your party. In short, dungeons and the things that inhabit them are terrifying nightmares.

Freedom From Expectations

When playing a typical roleplaying game, players are often burdened by the expectations of what their characters should or shouldn't be, based on class selection. Wizards are supposed to be smart (as well as encouraged to take a wide variety of Superior-level feats), for example. Similarly, more often than not, a fighter learns Power Attack. Not because the character necessarily needs to be able to strike harder and more recklessly, but because they were a fighter and that's simply what fighters are expected to do. With base and core classes, a player's concept of who their character is will often be limited and reshaped by which class is selected.

While great roleplaying can work around these issues, playing a commoner sidesteps them entirely. There are no assumptions or expectations regarding the commoner class other than that they "suck" compared to traditional classes (a view this guide is designed to try and dispel.) And although this guide provides a lot of advice about how to effectively create a commoner adventure, a commoner

can be any sort of person, with any distribution of ability stats. They do not suffer from endless, pre-existing opinions about how they operate or what kind of role they serve.

By having no class abilities, commoners have the freedom to be *anyone* their player imagines them to be.

Commoners as Level 0 Characters

One of the most innovative and interesting ways to include commoners in a traditional game without trying to create a sense of balance is to consider commoners to be a "level 0" class. A level 0 character starts at -500 experience points (XP) and thus earns their first player character level upon reaching 0 XP instead of starting at that point, as is the norm. In this play style, a level 0 character is equivalent to a first level commoner, but they gain their first class level when the characters earn 500 XP, reaching the starting point of 0 XP in total. At this stage, the various class features of their chosen base or core class replace those of the commoner

As a level 0 commoner, a character may have $d6+3$ HP, which would be replaced by

Modifying the Leadership Feat

Leadership is arguably the game's most commonly banned feat, and understandably so. No choice is so unbalanced as the acquisition of a new and loyal character only two levels below your own, as well as a veritable army of other less-powerful additions, merely by taking a feat rather than via roleplaying.

That said, inspiring others to great deeds is a classic aspect of heroes; for every Frodo there is a Samwise. Or, alternately, Leadership is brilliant for creating a framework for the charismatic cleric to found his own temple, or the master thief to found his own guild of private security consultants. There should be more to the process than just selecting a feat, however. One way to use the material and advice in this supplement is to permit the Leadership feat in your game, but require that all cohorts and followers be commoners (or other NPC classes.)

From a game design perspective, this ensures the followers and cohorts never overshadow the actual player characters while (if this supplement teaches nothing else) being useful both in and out of combat.

From the story's perspective, moderating the Leadership feat this way reinforces the idea that the heroes are special, but their influence and actions mean more than slaying threats and acquiring loot. Their presence actually makes the ordinary people of the world yearn for something better.

Moreover, if a player wishes to create game stats for every one of their cohorts and followers, the commoner class makes the process much simpler.

For more information, see "Leadership (Inspiration of the Common Man)" in **Chapter 6: Feats**, page 54.

Commoners and the E6/True 6 Threshold

A game designer posited that the World's Oldest Role Playing Game has 4 distinct quartiles of play, ranging from gritty fantasy (levels 1-5) up to demigodhood/super-heroic (levels 15-20.) From this observation (as well as someone pointing out that Gandalf was probably only a fifth level wizard), some gamers formulated the concept of "Epic 6," better known as "E6." This concept posits sixth level is the highest level attainable (by players) while still keeping the game grounded. This threshold prevents players from facing the need to navigate the inherent difficulties of epic (post 6) level abilities such as *wish* spells.

Playing with commoner player characters is an easier implementation of the E6 concept. Experience earned continues to level characters as normal, but given their distinct lack of class abilities, commoner player characters will always be operating in a gritty fantasy world. As such, they will be forced to continue to solve problems akin to those faced by lower level versions of player characters build upon the base and core classes. This is done without creating the largely arbitrary (and intricate) E6 level and ability cap.

the fighter's d10+3 HP upon reaching level 1, and so forth and so on.

Normally, characters receive a bonus feat at first level but, when starting at level 0, there are several options that may instead be used:

Option 1: Give the characters a bonus 0 level feat in addition to a bonus level 1 feat, resulting in characters who is a little stronger than average upon attaining level 1.

Option 2: Give the characters a bonus feat at level 0, but skipping the level 1 bonus feat. Doing so allows for slightly stronger level 0 characters, although perhaps with a less than ideal feat selection, as they might not yet qualify for the feat they would prefer to take upon reaching level 1.

Option 3: Do not provide a bonus feat at level 0, resulting in even weaker level 0 characters. However, the usual bonus feat at level 1 is still gained.

Utilizing the level 0 commoner character option allows players to get a feel for the game and their playstyle before attempting a traditional class. Also, it creates a richer backstory, as the events and choices made during their level 0 experience can influence what class they eventually pick.

For a slightly higher powered alternative, level 0 commoner class abilities could stack with 1st level player class abilities. This would translate into first level characters with an extra d6 HD, an additional 2 skill points, and some potentially useful class skills.

The Commoner as Teacher

Gamemasters can create a useful and inventive NPC commoner ally or opponent for the novelty of the experience, or to teach the players aspects of the game they are ignoring (e.g., the value of gear, tactics, racial abilities, and so on.) An NPC commoner's cleverness could be used to successfully defend a village against an invasion the player characters thought was overwhelming because of their limited perspective, for instance. Such a scenario would teach the characters a valuable lesson.

Clever commoners could demonstrate tactics beyond "the barbarian swings his axe and the cleric heals." Or—perhaps most sadistically—a group of clever commoners could overpower and embarrass overconfident player characters, teaching them this same lesson the hard way. "That group of mercenaries that almost killed you? Commoners," is not something players like to hear, so they'll figure out how to avoid it in the future.

Because nothing says you're a real Gamemaster like humbling your players.

In the end, there is more to creating compelling encounters than merely calculating an encounter's correct Challenge Ratings. Weaker opponents or allies used intelligently can turn the tide in ways that are fascinating and fun to watch play out.

Traditional Ninja and Peasant Revolt

Today we think of ninjas as black-clad shadow warriors waiting to slip into the darkness or fling

a poisoned shuriken with bonus sneak attack damage (much like the Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game's own ninja class.) In feudal Japan, however, ninjas did not begin as black cloaked masters of assassination, shadow-stepping into and out of hiding with their near-mystical martial arts.

Ninja were often common folk protecting their land from corrupt samurai and lords, whose weapons were modified farm equipment they went to great lengths to hide. They weren't fighting samurai in the open field. Instead, they were lighting castles on fire, wearing disguises so they could sneak up on foes, laying traps, and planning ambushes. They didn't work on becoming better at wielding the katana; they wrapped the large swords in weighted chains or picked situations where the long swords were unwieldy.

In doing this, ninja terrified Japan's warrior elite and gained their fearsome reputation because they didn't give a ratfolk's butt about honor. They struck without warning, they used better tactics, and they got into places they weren't supposed to in part *because no one paid attention to the peasant classes*. In this way, commoners are much closer to traditional ninja than they are to a fighter, wizard, or similar character class. Following this example, commoners used in a campaign focused on revolution and the resistance of the ordinary people can challenge the players and Gamemaster in fascinating ways.

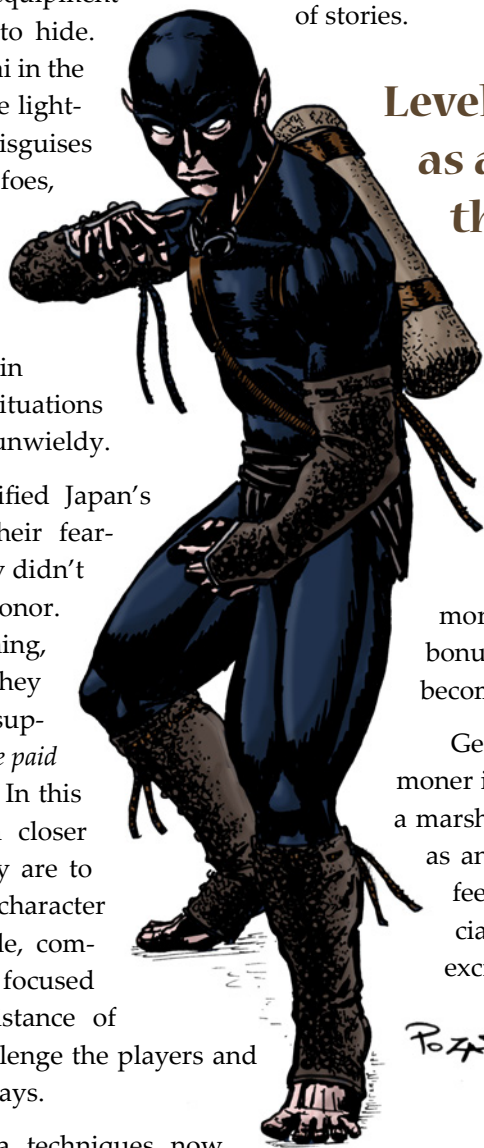
Additionally, many ninja techniques now collected under the banner "ninjutsu" concern how to avoid being spotted for as long as possible using whatever means necessary, to be armed and dangerous without appearing so, and to use surprise and cleverness to overwhelm superior forces (or even just assassinating the high value target, and avoiding every obstacle that wasn't mission critical.) All of these options are available to commoners without the need for a ki pool.

Historically, not only in Japan but all over the world, most fighting was done by conscript farmers with terrible gear and inferior (if not wholly non-existent) training: in a word, commoners. And despite the story focus on the settled warrior class trained from childhood, often these ordinary people would grow in skill until they became every bit a match for the warrior elite, especially when working together. Playing with commoners is a way to tell these kinds of stories.

Leveling as a Player or as a Group Rather than as a Character

Traditionally, roleplaying games have focused on your character gaining experience and advancing in power. By playing a commoner, advancement is more a matter of what happens to you as a *player*, or to your group, than gaining a new class level. For a commoner, gaining experience is more about when knowledge of tactics, bonuses, and creative problem-solving become honed to perfection.

Getting from level 5 to level 6 as a commoner isn't what will allow you to take on a marsh giant—being a better player, both as an individual and a team, will. And feeling a sense of yourself as a tactician growing and getting better is an exciting twist on the roleplaying rules you know and love.



POZOR

Do note that the difference between "creative" and "insane" is not as clearly defined as one would imagine.

Here's a brief list of potential plot hooks and motivations to get the characters moving and adventuring in a fascinating commoner game.

- commoners. With the help of this amazing bounty, the commoners believe they can make a go of an adventuring life.

-
- A full-body illustration of a medieval knight. He is wearing a brown surcoat over a green tunic, green hose, and brown shoes. He has a brown helmet with a visor and a beard. His arms are crossed, and a sword is visible in a scabbard on his left hip. The illustration is signed 'Pete 8/8' in the bottom right corner.

19

2. The Adequate Commoner Class and Jobs

This chapter presents the adequate commoner class. It is identical to the commoner class from the Pathfinder® Core Rulebook except for the addition of proficiency with a commoner weapon and a slight alteration to the favored class bonus available to commoners. In addition to the class description, this chapter also provides multiple commoner “jobs” one can use to customize commoner characters based on their regular employment before they were thrust into adventure.

Adequate Commoner Class

Commoners are just that: common. They are ordinary people of any race, from multiple walks of life. They till the soil, bake bread, labor, and generally do all the things that make the world go round. Sometimes, though, these “common” men and women are called upon to do great deeds while others make the choice to do so. While not possessing superhuman abilities, commoners have nonetheless been able to defeat and destroy monsters, defend their homes, and perform incredible feats.

Alignment: Any.

Hit Die: d6.

Starting Wealth: 5d6 × 10 gp (average 175 gp.) In addition, each character begins play with an outfit worth 10 gp or less.

Class Skills

The adequate commoner’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Craft (Int),



Handle Animal (Cha), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), and Swim (Str.)

Skill Ranks per Level: 2 + Int modifier.

Table: Adequate Commoner

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save
1st	+0	+0	+0	+0
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+0
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+1
4th	+2	+1	+1	+1
5th	+2	+1	+1	+1
6th	+3	+2	+2	+2
7th	+3	+2	+2	+2
8th	+4	+2	+2	+2
9th	+4	+3	+3	+3
10th	+5	+3	+3	+3
11th	+5	+3	+3	+3
12th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+4
13th	+6/+1	+4	+4	+4
14th	+7/+2	+4	+4	+4
15th	+7/+2	+5	+5	+5
16th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+5
17th	+8/+3	+5	+5	+5
18th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+6
19th	+9/+4	+6	+6	+6
20th	+10/+5	+6	+6	+6

Class Features

The following are the class features of the adequate commoner NPC class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: The adequate commoner is proficient with one simple weapon and one commoner weapon. He is not proficient with any other weapons, nor is he proficient with any type of armor or shield.

Favored Class Bonus: An adequate commoner (of any race) may use their favored class bonus to gain proficiency with one additional simple or commoner weapon. This replaces the usual benefits of obtaining a level of one's favored class.

Commoner Jobs

The "standard" commoner is assumed to be a yeoman/peasant farmer or the like. They probably work in food production (as was the case for the majority of the human population before the modern era.) However, in a settled society, common-

ers can come from many backgrounds, each with a slightly different skill set that makes them ideal for a particular job.

Commoner jobs are similar to the concept of class archetypes, although they are much simpler because they have significantly fewer class features to alter. Most commoner jobs simply alter a commoner's class skills and choice of commoner weapon. When creating your commoner characters, you can view the following options as a way of customizing the commoner to fit your intended concept more precisely.

Note: Each commoner job must have at least a single skill rank placed in Profession (appropriate occupation) to qualify for that job. For example, a commoner (servant) must have at least one skill rank in Profession (servant) in order to be eligible for the job.

Blacksmith

The need to work metal is a constant for almost every community; not only weapons and armor, but horseshoes, nails, hinges, pots, pans, and more.



Blacksmiths (in addition to tinsmiths, silversmiths, and goldsmiths) are strong and skilled, muscles hardened from work, and of incredible value to the communities they serve.

Class Skills

The blacksmith's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Knowledge Engineering (Cha), Perception (Wis), and Profession (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Blacksmiths are proficient with mallets and one simple weapon.

Bouncer

Although not as tough as fighters, many urban locations involve bouncers and other toughs to help their businesses run smoothly and sort out who will be a problem from who won't. All bouncers know how to present a gruff and intimidating exterior—whether or not they have the skills to back up their pointed growls is a different matter.

Note that this job also includes many bartenders, who are often called upon to sort rowdy clients.

Class Skills

The bouncer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Diplomacy (Cha), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (local) (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (bouncer) (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), and Stealth (Dex.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Bouncers are proficient with mallets and one simple weapon.

Brewer

Some sages theorize the entire reason civilization exists is to provide the necessary infrastructure for the brewing of beer or wine. Many (many) commoners are employed to create alcoholic beverages.

Class Skills

The brewer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Perception (Wis), and Profession (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Brewers are proficient with walking sticks and one simple weapon.

Cook

Food preparation is a tremendous, labor intensive job, and many are employed in the kitchen as chefs, scullions, butchers, prep cooks, etc. Skilled

cooks are always in high demand by the nobility, and often cooks gain access to fascinating places through the kitchen door.

Class Skills

The cook's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Cha), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Perception (Wis), and Profession (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Cooks are proficient with cleavers and one simple weapon.

Failed Apprentice

Some men and women simply have no knack for magic. They lack the inborn ability of sorcerers or the unique mental rigor to learn to be wizards, no matter how intelligent they otherwise are. These men and women spent their formative years in an arcane academy but have left it with little magic of their own to show for it. Still, their education did verse them in the basics of arcane theory, both as applied to making magical devices work and also in the theoretical; pontificating on the nature of magic or the planes themselves.

Prerequisites

Arcane Dabbler trait.

Class Skills

The failed apprentice's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Cha), Bluff (Cha), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Use Magic Device (Cha.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Failed apprentices are proficient in throwing stones and one simple weapon.

Mason

Commoners who make their living building with stone, masons are generally strong, methodi-

cal people who take their time and see flaws others might miss. Many dwarf commoners make their living in this profession.

Class Skills

The mason's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Cha), Climb (Str), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (engineering) (Int), Perception (Wis), and Profession (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Masons are proficient with mallets and one simple weapon.

Militiaman

Typically conscripts, these commoners have training or possibly direct experience fighting monsters and other threats to village or urban life. Usually not as well trained or prepared as professional soldiers, these individuals nonetheless have experience in the necessities of war and have spent time developing some of the requisite skills.

Class Skills

The militiaman's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex), Sense Motive (Wis) and Survival (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Militiamen are proficient with spades and one simple weapon.

Performer

Without the supernatural abilities of the bard, commoner performers often settle for being backup singers or dancers. Only in the rarest cases do they rise to the level of superstardom. Still, for those drawn to the arts there is no possibility of choosing another path.

Class Skills

The performer's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Cha), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Perception (Wis), Perform (Cha),

Profession (Wis), and Sense Motive (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Performers are proficient with torches and one simple weapon.

Sailor

Commoners are often employed as crewman of ships. Sailing ships being the primary means by which trade is accomplished around the world, these individuals are in high demand even if draconian shipboard rules often make for hard men without close ties to any one community.

Class Skills

The sailor's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Climb (Str), Intimidate (Cha), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis) Swim (Str), and Survival (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Sailors are proficient in crowbars and one simple weapon.

Servant

Commoners make their livelihood by serving others—generally nobility and merchants. Hands not rough with callous, these commoners know how to move quietly, speak to their betters, and—when the situation calls for it—flatter and lie through their teeth to get through the day.

Class Skills

The servant's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Int), Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Linguistics (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), and Stealth (Dex.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Servants are proficient with kitchen knives and one simple weapon.

Shopkeeper

This is someone who spends their time working at in a mercantile function, minding a store or tending to caravan duties. Shopkeepers are well-versed in dealing with people from all walks of life and equally familiar with judging worth and intentions.

Class Skills

The shopkeeper's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Cha), Bluff (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), and Sense Motive (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Shopkeepers are proficient with pans and one simple weapon.

Surgeon-Barber

Surgeon-Barbers perform many roles in their community. In addition to being herbalists, they provide much of the non-magical healing and medical care, along with cutting hair and caring for teeth.

Class Skills

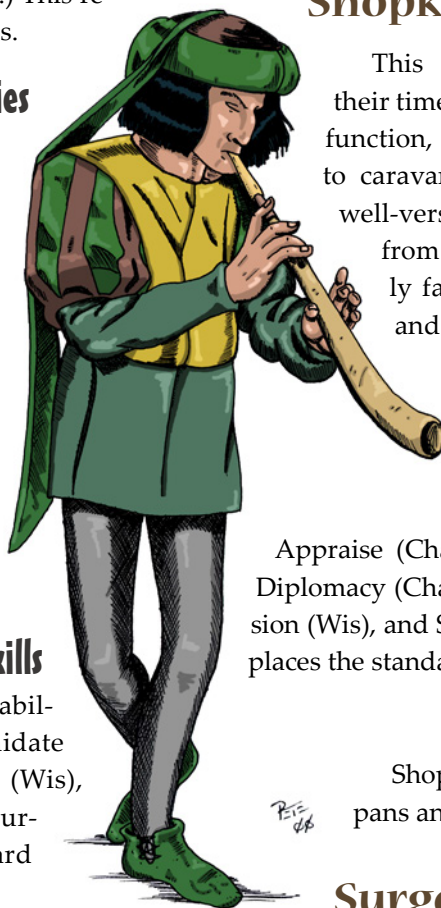
The surgeon-barber's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Surgeon-barbers are proficient in kitchen knives and one simple weapon.

Tanner

The work of treating and preparing animal skins into leather is a tremendous industry, one that employs thousands who are versed in handling noxious chemicals. This job falls to tanners.



Class Skills

The tanner's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Cha), Craft (Int), Handle Animal (Cha), Knowledge (nature) (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis), Ride (Dex) and Survival (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Tanners are proficient in mallets and one simple weapon.

Temple Keeper

The great temples employ thousands of people as lay-clergy; not possessed of any particular connection to the various divinities but needed as servants, orderlies, ushers, and more. Even so, these commoners pick up many of the skills (and even postures) of full-fledged clerics.

Class Skills

The temple keeper's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Appraise (Cha), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge

(religion) (Int), Perception (Wis), Profession (Wis.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Temple keepers are proficient in spades and one simple weapon.

Vagabond

Children of the street who were abandoned at a young age or who were raised by parents in a similar state, vagabonds know how to get by even if their methods can be less than legal. Thieves guilds and militaries looking for scouts and spies recruit equally from this population.

Class Skills

The vagabond's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Acrobatics (Dex), Bluff (Cha), Disable Device (Dex), Perception (Wis), Perform (Cha), Sleight of Hand (Dex), and Stealth (Dex.) This replaces the standard commoner class skills.

Proficiencies

Vagabonds are proficient with throwing stones and one simple weapon.



3. Weapons and Armor

Commoners are not typically thought of as prolific (or competent) users of weapons or armor. Indeed, the class has the distinction of being the only one with proficiency in a *single* simple weapon as opposed to simple weapons as a category. This means that even a feeble wizard never planning on using a weapon in their career has greater martial flexibility than a commoner. Additionally, commoners are not proficient with any manner of armor. However, these limitations disguise a great many options available to commoners—despite their limitations commoners can (and do) utilize weapons and armor effectively.

In this chapter, let's discuss the "best of the best" weapons and armor available to commoners (and how they're likely to get to make use of them.) We've also proved the new concept of "commoner weapons." These are improvised weapons and tools related to ordinary life that can be utilized as highly flavorful options by commoners in defense of their homes or on the path of adventure.

Whether you see your commoners wielding a poorly balanced pitchfork and donning makeshift armor, or mastering a weapon uniquely suited to their abilities, you'll find options and inspiration in the pages to follow.

Existing Weapons and Armor

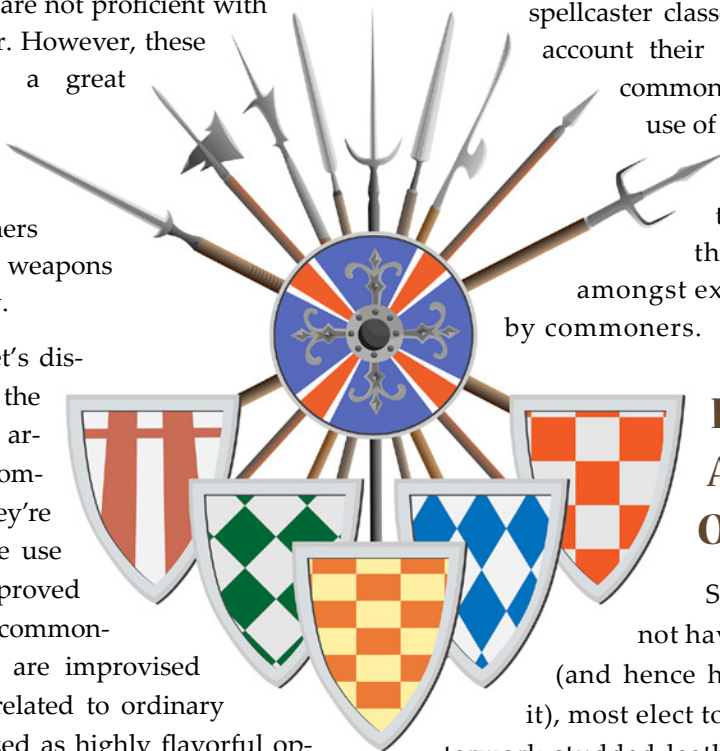
Great care must be taken by adventuring commoners in their selection of weapons and armor. Their class' limitations in this regard mean that they cannot approach weapons with the flexible mastery of the martial classes or the blithe non-concern of the spellcaster classes. Still, by taking into account their limitations and needs, commoners can make excellent use of arms and armors.

In this first section, we'll discuss the best of the best amongst existing options for use by commoners.

Ideal Existing Armor Options

Since commoners do not have training with armor (and hence have no proficiency in it), most elect to wear leather (or masterwork studded leather. Both can be worn without penalty.

Who needs armor when you've got party members who can stand between you and the threat?



Ideal Armor for Commoners

Armor	Cost	Armor / Shield Bonus	Maximum Dex Bonus	Armor Check Penalty	Speed (Base 30 ft)	Speed (Base 20ft)	Weight
Leather Armor	10 gp	+2	+6	0	30 ft.	20 ft.	15 lbs.
Masterwork Studded leather	175 gp	+3	+5	0	30 ft.	20 ft.	20 lbs.
Masterwork Chain Shirt	250 gp	+4	+4	-1	30 ft.	20 ft.	25 lbs.
<i>Mithral Breastplate</i>	4,200 gp	+6	+5	-1	30 ft.	15 ft.	15 lbs.

Occasionally, a commoner will gain increased comfort in armor (see the Armor Expert trait, pg 36) and can don masterwork chain shirt. If basking in the wealth of successful adventures, they may even be able to afford a mithril breastplate without suffering limitations to their movement or skills. In the following table, we discuss the best and most common options with which a commoner can utilize armor without impairment. Alternately, a commoner can elect time to gain proficiency in armor (via armor proficiency feats) but this is of course at the expense of what else the might have learned.

Ideal Existing Weapon Options

For weapons, most commoners favor ranged attacks followed by reach options, always striving to keep themselves a step ahead of (and away from) their opponents. As such, they typically use non-reach weapons as a last resort, as only the most confident or foolhardy believe themselves to be a match for opponents face-to-face.

Commoners favor reach because it keeps a foe beyond arm's length or may give them the chance to make an additional attack while the baddies are moving up to fight them (let the fool orc rush into the

longspear rather than the alternative.) Reach weapons also allow commoners to attack from behind an obstacle or from higher ground while keeping their distance. These advantages, while usually deemed insignificant to traditional adventurers, are absolutely critical for adventuring commoners to master.

Melee Weapons

When it comes to melee, the longspear is arguably the most sensible simple weapon for commoners. It doubles as a way of interacting with dangerous objects or terrain from a distance, as well as serving as a weapon. However, parties of commoners need to ensure they will some ability to mete out slashing or bludgeoning damage, lest a single zombie or skeleton overwhelm them.

*Undead? More like Fundead!
Am I right? Guys, guys?*

It is not surprising that many adventuring commoners have a unique family armament they are familiar with (see the Heirloom Weapon trait, pg 37) and/or have a racial weapon proficiency granting them competencies that might not be expected given their origins. Commoners also favor reach weapons that allow them to trip or otherwise im-

Ideal Melee Weapons for Commoners

Simple Weapons	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Type	Special
Longspear	5 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	—	9 lbs.	P	Brace, reach
Ranseur	10 gp	1d6	2d4	×3	—	12 lbs.	P	Disarm, reach
Horsechopper	10 gp	1d8	1d10	×3	—	12 lbs.	P or S	Reach, trip
Whip	1 gp	1d2	1d3	×2	—	2 lbs.	S	Disarm, nonlethal, reach, trip

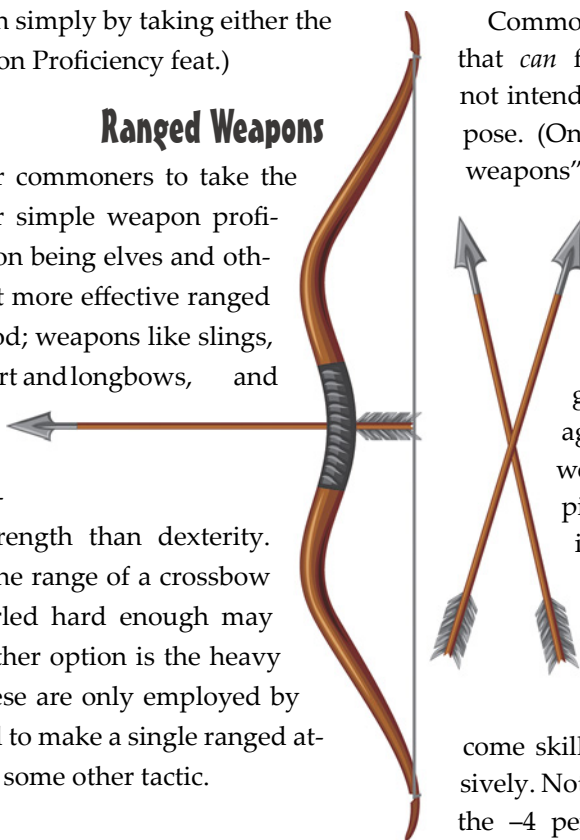
Ideal Ranged Weapons for Commoners

Ranged Weapon	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Type	Special
Heavy crossbow	50 gp	1d8	1d10	19–20/×2	120 ft.	8 lbs.	P	—
Light crossbow	35 gp	1d6	1d8	19–20/×2	80 ft.	4 lbs.	P	—
Sling	—	1d3	1d4	×2	50 ft.	—	B	—
Composite longbow	100 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	110 ft.	3 lbs.	P	—
Longbow	75 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	100 ft.	3 lbs.	P	—
Sling staff, halfling	20 gp	1d6	1d8	×3	80 ft.	3 lbs.	B	—

pair their opponents: the horsechopper, whip, and other exotic weapons with maneuver bonuses. (This assumes that the adventurers in question haven't learned to use a weapon simply by taking either the Martial or Exotic Weapon Proficiency feat.)

Ranged Weapons

It is also typical for commoners to take the light crossbow as their simple weapon proficiency (notable exception being elves and other races who are taught more effective ranged weapons from childhood; weapons like slings, halfling sling staffs, short and longbows, and composite bows.) Slings are also a popular option for commoners with more strength than dexterity. While it doesn't have the range of a crossbow bolt, a sling stone hurled hard enough may do more damage. Another option is the heavy crossbow, although these are only employed by commoners who intend to make a single ranged attack before resorting to some other tactic.



Commoner Weapons

Commoner weapons are generally tools that *can* function as weapons, but were not intended to be wielded for such a purpose. (One or more of these “commoner weapons” can be found in just about every home.) As such, using a commoner weapon with proficiency means the wielder suffers a –1 penalty to attack. Also, commoner weapons are generally one step lower in damage than a comparative simple weapon (using a spear and using a pitchfork is similar, but a pitchfork is a 1d6 weapon while a spear is a 1d8, for example.)

That said, characters who have selected the Commoner Weapon Focus feat (pg 44) become skilled at wielding their tools offensively. Note that this –1 to attack stacks with the –4 penalty to wield a non-proficient

An essential choice for commoners is deciding whether to play it safe by selecting the Simple Weapon Proficiency feat in order to gain access to all simple weapons, thus delaying other feat selections, or opting for a greater degree of specialization and/or acquisition of other vital feats. The latter means choosing to make do with the commoner's default, single simple weapon (and possibly an additional exceptional weapon via Heirloom Weapon), and perhaps starting to obtain your other desperately needed feats sooner.

A human could choose to be only proficient with the commoner's default single simple weapon (e.g., the sling), but they can select Point Blank Shot and Precise Shot at first level as a result of passing on Simple Weapon Proficiency. This is part of the reason why gaining appropriate Weapon Familiarity from one's race is important—it can give your character increased flexibility in weapon choice.

Remember that commoners, as presented in this guide, enjoy slightly increased weapon flexibility (even without choosing the simple weapon proficiency feat) thanks to their favored class bonus ability to gain proficiency with additional simple weapons in addition to their proficiency with commoner weapons.

Commoner Weapons

Commoner Weapons	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Type	Special
Cleaver	5 sp	1d3	1d4	x3	10ft	1 lb.	S	—
Crowbar	2 gp	1d4	1d6	x2	—	5 lb.	B	—
Kitchen Knife	2 sp	1d2	1d3	19-20/×2	10 ft.	1 lb.	P or S	—
Mallet	1 sp	1d2	1d3	×2	—	1 lb.	B	—
Pan	1 sp	1d3	1d4	x3	—	1 lb.	B	—
Pitchfork	5 sp	1d4	1d6	×3	—	4 lbs.	P	2 Hands
Spade	5 sp	1d4	1d6	19-20/×2	—	4 lb.	B or S	2 Hands
Throwing Stones	1 cp	1d2	1d3	x2	20ft	1 lb. (10)	B	—
Torch	1 cp	1d2	1d3	x2	10ft	1 lb.	B	+1 fire damage, fragile
Walking Stick	2 cp	1d3/1d3	1d4/1d4	x2	—	2 lbs.	B	—

weapon if a character attempts to use a weapon they are not proficient with.

Characters with proficiency with all simple weapons are assumed to be proficient in all commoner weapons as well.

Betsy is a level 1 commoner with a base attack bonus of 0 and a Strength modifier of +1. She is wielding a pitchfork with which she has proficiency. Her attack modifier with the pitchfork is +0 (BAB 0 + Strength + 1 – 1 for Commoner Weapon penalty.)

Cleaver: This heavy blade is used for separating animal parts with strength more than its edge, and can be used on butchered livestock or living enemies alike.

Crowbar: This versatile tool is designed to help pry open whatever the user desires. A crowbar grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Strength checks made to force open a door or chest.

Kitchen Knife: Sharp enough to cut through beef and the skin of enemies alike, although not as elegant as a traditional fighting dagger, these knives come in many (slightly unwieldy) shapes.

Mallet: A simple hammer (usually wooden) used in food preparation or crafting; can be used to hammer in nails or to break bones.

Pan: Heavy pieces of cooking equipment can be readily used as a bludgeoning weapon.

Pitchfork: This two-handed weapon can be an effective means of self-defense; one favored by mobs and often paired with torches.

Spade: This heavy shovel can be wielded as a makeshift weapon when not being used to dig latrines, irrigation channels, or pit traps.

Throwing Stones: By looking for smooth stones, a practiced thrower can use rocks as a weapon while avoiding (most) of the penalties for improvised weapons

Torch: Commoners can grow gifted at using torches as weapons.

Walking Stick: Similar to a quarterstaff, but without the perfect balance or refinement.



4. Making the Most of Things

Much like any character, the capacities and likely playstyle of a commoner is determined largely by their abilities, though these are largely unrelated to their class. In the following chapter, we analyze the various attributes, explain how commoners are likely to use each, and offer advice on how to make best use and prioritize these abilities in creating your concept commoner character. We also provide opinion on how commoners should choose the skills they will master and how they may use those skills cleverly to meet the challenges they're likely to face. Finally, we discuss how a commoner's race provides access to unexpected tactics and options.

Overview of Ability Scores

Let's look at how a commoner character's ability scores relate to their capabilities and the choices players should make as such a character develops.

Strength

This attribute is important for commoners specializing in melee damage (preferably with reach), combat maneuvers (again, preferably with reach), or using a composite longbow or some kind of sling. More to the point, commoners need to make use of strength-based skills that magically equipped adventurers rarely bother with, giving the former another reason to favor developing Strength. For commoners not interested in climbing, swimming, or melee fighting, Strength can be ignored. Except, that is, when pack-muling their (often extensive) goods. See *muleback chords*

in **Chapter 9: Wondrous Items** for an option for lower strength commoners to still be able to carry their necessary supplies and equipment.

Constitution

Not blessed with the superhuman endurance of fighters or barbarians (or even rogues or clerics), most commoners are naturally hardy from a lifetime of toil. This will serve them well when the time comes to better survive a dangerous world, whether they are shrugging off wounds, disease, or even poison.

Simply put, having a high Constitution represents a commoner's best chances for surviving being hit in combat.



I've known plenty of tough people, but very few are tough when you catch them asleep in their bed with their armor off and their weapons out of reach. After that, you can be the tough guy as you promenade around town with your shiny new armor and wondrous items!

Dexterity

Most successful adventuring commoners are blessed with quick reflexes that allow them to act before their enemies, dodge attacks and traps, avoid combat maneuvers, hit opponents at range, and use a number of vital skills. Some even use their high Dexterity with melee weapons (see the Dervish Dance and Weapon Finesse feats, explained further in **Chapter 6**, page 41, and the *agile weapon* enchantment.)

Dexterity is perhaps the single most valuable ability score for commoners.

Intelligence

Adventuring commoners are not known for their worldliness and education. Being magically challenged, they must rely on raw physicality and no-nonsense tactics to sort out problems—and being intelligent does not aid in any of these pursuits. All told, most adventuring commoners are dumb.

Their lack of brain power creates a number of issues for commoners, namely difficulties in communication (Linguistics) and identifying threats or the best way to handle threats (Knowledge.) This is not to mention them lacking a broad range of skills they can master. Still, some commoners are reasonably—even exceptionally—intelligent. Most such common men and women often develop their Intelligence to the point where they can master all skills they deem essential but no higher.

Wisdom

Adventuring commoners are known for being willful and blessed with common sense. They can use this quality to be more perceptive (Percep-

tion, Sense Motive), apply basic medical assistance (Heal), and to resist the mental influence of others (Will saving throws.)

Charisma

At least one member of a party of adventuring commoners should learn to survive by being exceedingly charismatic. They can use their personality to navigate the social world (Diplomacy, Bluff, and Intimidate), train animals (Handle Animals), and even activate magical devices (Use Magic Device.) Usually, however, a party of commoners has room for only one such individual and will need all others to gain martial options via favoring Strength or Dexterity.

Overview of Skills

Commoners use skills with far more regularity than most other adventurers. Without magic, or supernatural or exceptional martial abilities, skills remain their only way to solve, sort, and outflank the challenges they face.

Ordinary adventurers hardly ever climb, swim, or heal the hard way. Commoners, however, are often forced to handle their business with toilsome, exhausting methods. As such, they make use of mundane skills in surprising ways and are reliant on skills to a degree unlike any other class (although perhaps most similar to a rogue.)

When considering skill choices, commoners specialize in those that have utility both in and out of combat. The commoner should focus their skill points into two, three, or four particular skills. They rarely have the mental flexibility to learn more and cannot afford to dilute the value of what few points they have available. Commoners also take care to associate with allies whose skills compliment their own.

Most successful adventuring commoners have backgrounds (either thanks to their job or due to some trait) that grant them a bonus to necessary skills that wouldn't otherwise be available to them as commoners. That being said, let's look at the skill options to see which fit best with a commoner's aptitudes and needs.

Acrobatics

Useful both in and out of combat for gaining non-magical freedom of movement and avoiding attacks of opportunity as they move about the battlefield. Acrobatics can mean the difference between life and death.

Appraise

Most commoners set on adventure do not have the mental resources to “waste” on determining something’s exact value, given market fluctuations. (However, they may regret this when cannier shopkeepers take advantage of their naiveté.)

Bluff

Social skills are extraordinarily important, and commoners argue as to whether they’re better off lying or just trying to charm their way through social difficulties. Ultimately, both are needed at various points (although it should be noted that it is usually pointless to try to be charming to someone you’ve unsuccessfully attempted to deceive or intimidate.)

Why be a better fighter when you can just convince the enemy you are? Besides, all that talk about undead and insects and the like being immune to lies is just hogwash—you just have to want to bluff them enough.

Trust me.

Climb

Commoner adventurers are probably the only ones who regularly need to make use of this skill due to a lack of alternatives. The ability it provides to get around obstacles, take on a problem from an unexpected angle, or keep themselves out of reach and harm’s way is essential. It also happens to be a class skill. Still, one gifted climber and some knotted rope will probably be all a group of commoners ever needs (at least for non-emergencies.)

Craft

As a commoner, making creative use of downtime significantly increases the group’s chance of survival. Craft (alchemy) is perhaps the most useful of the

available options, as it allows one to create beneficial items with a varied set of advantages. Many alchemical items can serve as stop-gaps to try and minimize the deficiencies in the commoner’s spell casting ability, for example. Thankfully, crafting alchemical items is an activity that commoners can excel at if they put their mind (and skill points) to it.

Diplomacy

This may be the most consistently useful social skill because, usually, there are no repercussions for attempting to be polite (unlike trying to lie or intimidate.) Diplomatic commoners should always try to remind their fellows that the order of attempted negotiation is Diplomacy followed by Bluff with Intimidate being a last resort.

Disable Device

Somebody on a “crew” is going to require some expertise in these matters. Most commoners attempt to deal with traps with a ten foot pole or other bits of creativity but still require aid with locks. Smart groups also travel with a *skeleton key* or even a *traveler’s anytool* as backup.

Disguise

This skill is not without its uses, although most commoners can’t be bothered (and may otherwise seek to acquire or commission a *hat of disguise* once they get their first true haul.)

Escape Artist

It is a sad fact that a commoner incapacitated is most likely a commoner doomed.

Also a commoner who is paralyzed, lightly wounded, inconvenienced, paper-cut, forced to fill out paperwork, or jocularly insulted is also probably doomed.

Fly

The ordinary man rarely, if ever, flies.

And when they do, it is often because a plan involving a catapult or trebuchet was not properly considered.

Commoner Animal Friends

Commoners rely on animals to accomplish many of their daily tasks, such as farming and hunting. While a commoner will never have the bond with an animal that a druid or ranger has, they can develop an amazing rapport with an animal they have raised and worked with most of its life. The following traits and feats represent the abilities a talented character can coax out of their animal friend(s).

Traits: Draft Animal Rider and Puppy.

Feats: Animal Breeder, Beast Friend, Beast of Burden, Hale Animal, Impromptu Combat Training, Improved Impromptu Combat Training, Non-verbal Training, Skilled Animal Friend, Sustainable Task Accomplishment, Trusted Animal Friend, and Whipping Animal Trainer.

Handle Animal

Commoners may never be able to summon monsters or creatures from the great beyond, but they can and do train dogs, raven, horses, bears, and even axebeaks. The cultural aptitude commoner possess in this area can be complemented by those that are inherently charismatic.

Linguistics

As with Knowledge, few commoners can afford to put many skill points into a skill having to do with learning esoteric tongues. However, some groups of commoners take time to learn an obscure (and sometimes silent) language so they can speak freely amongst themselves.

Heal

Lacking magical healing, this is a skill of exceptional importance to commoners to get the wounded back up on their feet and in fighting shape as quickly as possible.

Intimidate

This skill provides some helpful in-combat utility especially when paired with the correct techniques and strategies. This skill is also useful for select social challenges (as long as the intimidator in question is not turned over to the town militia for their threats.)

Knowledge

Commoners generally focus on other skills and leave “book learning” to others.



Gamemaster Note on Knowledge

Commoners rarely have sufficient available skill points to spare putting into the various Knowledge skills. This leaves them at a(n even more) severe disadvantage when it comes to facing new monsters and unique challenges. If at all possible, allow (and encourage) the player characters to learn about likely opponents and hazards via the local Adventuring Guild, from a mentor, from relevant texts, and other sources to make up for this shortcoming.

For more information about using non-magical texts to enhance skill checks, gain feats, retrain skills and more, check out **Mundane No More: Texts and Tomes** by Rich Howard and published by **Christina Stiles Presents**.

Perception

The ability to spot enemies, threats, and opportunities as quickly and as accurately as possible is essential to any who would adventure—doubly so for the almost inevitably overmatched commoner. Thankfully, this is a class skill for commoners.

Perform

The rigors and realities of the adventuring life rarely leave commoners the requisite resource to learn how to entertain and distract better. The notable exceptions are those with the Performer job, of course.

Profession

Most commoners have worked in a profession though commoners focused on adventuring often forgo this or (alternately) struggle to find applications for their professional skills.

Ride

This skill is often utilized by slow, small commoners that could use a boost in mobility. Commoners tend to have exposure to this talent because of their upbringing, and this skill goes nicely with more generalized animal handling.

Sense Motive

Most adventuring commoners tend to become more than a little paranoid, assuming everyone and everything are out to get them without bothering to learn about the tiny tells that give away liars.

Sleight of Hand

Pickpocketing has its uses, but commoners who aren't vagabonds or thieves are likely too busy learning other things.

The ultimate sleight of hand is when the pickpocket is caught and the city guard uses his sword to make the hand disappear entirely!

Spellcraft

Most commoners are fatalistic when it comes to magic use: does it really matter what the finger wagger is throwing at them if they have no way of countering it? Still, some commoners try to discern the purpose of discovered magical items while still in the field to reduce the chance of it blowing up in their face.

Stealth

One of the best possible skills for commoner adventurers, everyone could use this (see the Stealth Synergy teamwork feat.) Commoners use this to catch their enemies off guard, and get into and out of places they are not technically supposed to be. It is also great in combat (or more accurately pre-combat) for getting the better of one's opponent.

Survival

A knack for living in wild places is rarer than many other skills. Most commoners attempt to stay (relatively) close to the city or village in order to avail themselves of a greater selection of goods and spellcasting services they are unable to provide for themselves.

Swim

Commoners will swim when the opportunity presents itself, but most find it's wiser to invest in a

Gamemaster Note on Profession

In the rules-as-written (RAW), Profession isn't a tremendously useful skill; it's more or less used to allow players to make a little extra money on the side. However, we recommend allowing your players to make clever uses of this skill.

Profession (sailor) could get a bonus working with knots, for example, whether they were tying or untying. Profession (bouncer) might grant a bonus to Gather Information checks in a bar.

You can easily implement an optional rule where characters get their Profession bonus to any other role in an environment or situation where they would reasonably have familiarity with the setting or situation. A Profession (mason) +5 skill would get +5 on Perception roles to notice where a wall was weak, for instance.

See **Superior Synergy** by Steven Trustum and published by **Misfit Studios** for more information and ideas.

selection of potions rather than try to master such a limited skill.

Use Magic Device

Knowledge of this subject creates the closest approximation to a wizard or a cleric for adventuring commoners one is likely to encounter.

Overview of Commoner Races

Commoners can be of any race, although the aspects and special abilities of certain races lead to commoners who are better able to survive the rigors and dangers of adventuring. In this section, we'll do a brief overview of what various races provide for commoner characters in terms of the best chance of triumphing over dangerous odds.

As far as the core races go, most adventuring commoners are human since the bonus feat and bonus skill points per level provide them more of what they can use. Humans also have the flexibility to pick a bonus point for a single ability score. All of this is very helpful considering many are of below average intelligence as well, relying on humanity's natural propensity for mastering new skills to allow them to thrive even if they are somewhat dim-witted.

Half-elves are also a popular option since they can select a weapon proficiency or skill to focus on in addition to some useful immunities and bonuses. Also, a surprising number of drow-blooded half-elf commoners choose an adventuring life as the combination of casting darkness with darkvision usually counteracts the penalties associated with their light sensitivity.

Taking an entirely different approach, commoner gnomes can be highly effective. Their naturally charismatic personalities, as well as their ability to speak with animals, make them the premier non-magical animal trainers.

Of the Featured Races, half-elemental races (like ifrit, undine, and oread) blend useful spell-like abilities and resistances with the capacity to magically heal when exposed to their element to succeed in

adventures. Additionally, aasimars and tieflings combine innate magical gifts with helpful natural bonuses—again, the combination of casting darkness while possessing darkvision makes for a tremendous advantage against the normally-sighted.

Finally, tengu seem to be natural commoner combatants. While their lack of heartiness (–2 to Constitution) hurts their chances of survival, their innate mastery of swordplay (or, alternatively, exotic weapons) gives them options on the battlefield that are nearly impossible for other commoners to possess. And while they are considered monsters by many, even commoner drow can be effective on adventure via the aforementioned darkness plus darkvision combo coupled with their innate spell resistance.



5. Traits

Because adventuring commoners lead such dangerous lives, it is not at all unexpected that those who do survive tend to have a narrow selection of background traits, ones that are of particular aid to their strategies. In this chapter, we analyze and collect the “best of the best” of existing traits for commoners, explaining why they are an ideal choice. We also provide a selection of new traits available for you to customize and breathe life into your particular commoner character.

Existing Traits

Of the innumerable traits available as part of the Pathfinder® Role Playing game, the following are some of the most useful to adventuring commoners. Let’s have a look at some, which we have reprinted here for your convenience.

Arcane Dabbler

Your study of magic is shown by your expertise in the simplest of magical exploits.

Benefit: Select two non-harmful arcane cantrips. You can cast these two cantrips once per day each (caster level 1st.)

If you have levels in a class that can cast these cantrips, your caster level for these cantrips is equal to that class level.

Category: Regional

Consider being an Arcane Dabbler to provide just a pinch of magic, the value of which to a commoner cannot be underestimated.

Armor Expert

You have worn armor as long as you can remember, either as part of your training to become a knight’s squire or simply because you were seeking to emulate a hero. Your childhood armor wasn’t the real thing as far as protection, but it did encumber you as much as real armor would have, and you’ve grown used to moving in such suits with relative grace.

Benefit: When you wear armor of any sort, reduce that suit’s armor check penalty by 1, to a minimum check penalty of 0.

Category: Combat

While often not taking the necessary training to become truly proficient in armor, many commoners nonetheless become an Armor Expert by taking time to move about in homemade armor. They do so while imitating heroes they admire and wish to emulate. This allows them to wear masterwork chain shirts or even mithral breastplates without being hampered.

Bred for War

You tower above most other humans and possess a physique of hard, corded muscle.

Benefit You gain a +1 trait bonus on Intimidate checks and a +1 trait bonus on your CMB because of your great size. You must be at least 6 feet tall.

Category: Race (Human)

Human adventuring commoners often are Bred for War (and may even possess an Unnatural Pres-

ence) to intimidate their foes. This trait is helpful for granting commoners a bit of an edge in rough social situations and to help out in a fight.

Dangerously Curious

You have always been intrigued by magic, possibly because you were the child of a magician or priest. You often snuck into your parent's laboratory or shrine to tinker with spell components and magic devices, and frequently caused quite a bit of damage and headaches for your parent as a result.

Benefits: You gain a +1 bonus on Use Magic Device checks, and Use Magic Device is always a class skill for you.

Category: Magic

Dangerously Curious is handy when it comes to using magic items, making it much more likely commoners may use these objects successfully.

Fate's Favored

The fates watch over you.

Benefit: Whenever you are under the effect of a luck bonus of any kind, that bonus increases by 1.

Category: Faith

A commoner can always use a bit of extra luck. Half-orcs with a sacred tattoo (or any commoner expecting to regularly receive a luck bonus) should consider selecting Fate's Favored.

Heirloom Weapon

You carry a non-masterwork simple or martial weapon that has been passed down from generation to generation in your family.

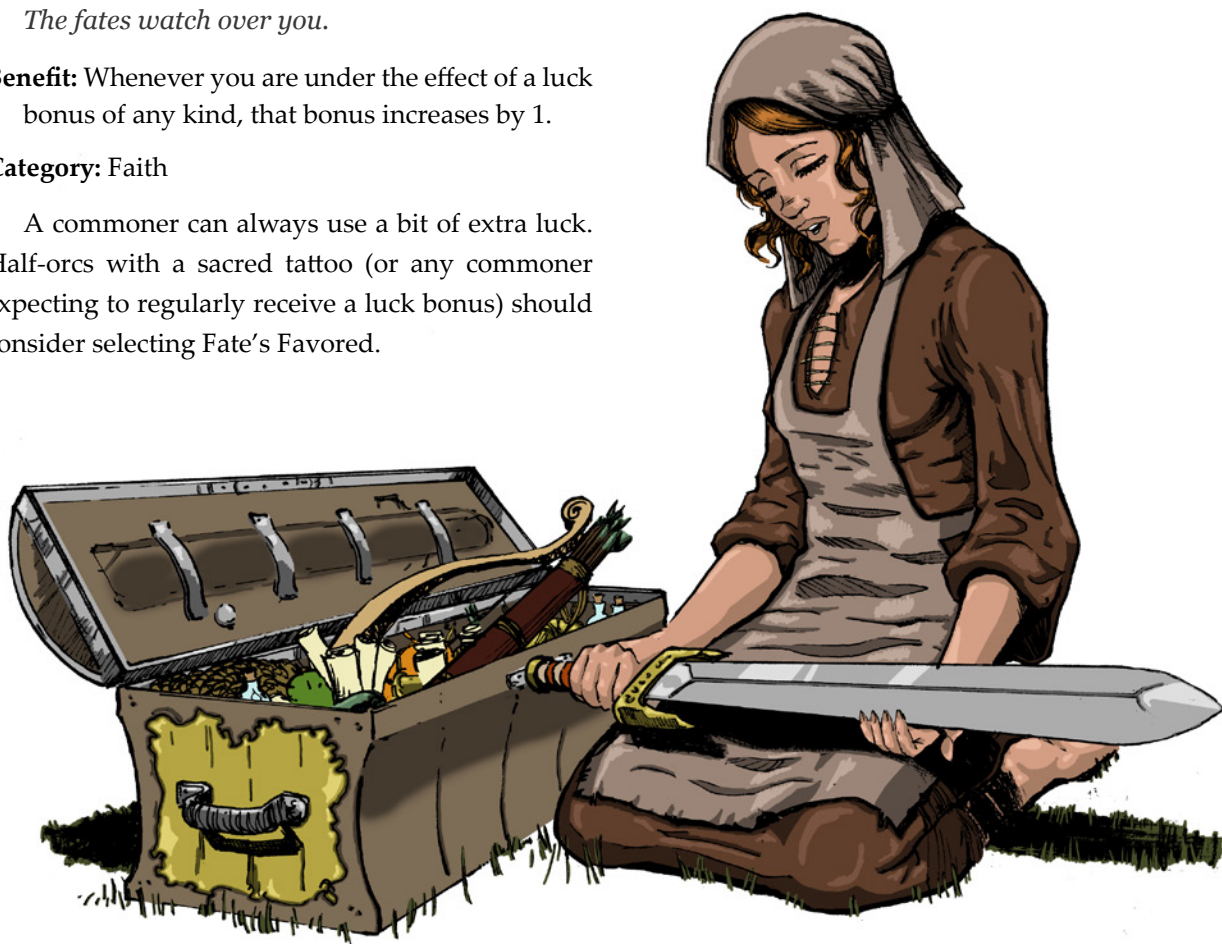
Benefit: When you select this trait, choose one of the following benefits:

- Proficiency with that specific weapon
- A +1 trait bonus on attacks of opportunity with that specific weapon
- A +2 trait bonus on one kind of combat maneuver when using that specific weapon.

Note: You pay the standard gp cost for the weapon.

Category: Equipment

Many commoners drawn to adventure are in possession of an Heirloom Weapon, which is a close approximation to having a full proficiency with the relevant weapon type (though they risk being relatively defenseless if the specific weapon is lost or



broken.) Cherishing these items, many commoners will hire a mage (or even attempt to use a *masterwork transformation* scroll) to keep their weapon capable of enchantment over an adventuring career.

Which, for most adventuring commoners, is about a day.

Rich Parents

You were born into a rich family, perhaps even the nobility, and even though you turned to a life of adventure, you enjoy a one-time benefit to your initial finances.

Benefit: Your starting wealth increases to 900 gp.

Category: Social

For people without exceptional abilities, the value of having Rich Parents to help provide better starting equipment.

Unnatural Presence (Old Cults)

Your prolonged association with alien forces leaks from your pores.

Benefit: You can use your Intimidate skill to demoralize animals and vermin; Intimidate is a class skill for you.

Category: Faith

When even vermin and the weakest beasts pose a dire threat, who wouldn't want a better chance of scaring them off?

New Commoner Traits

In addition to the previous traits from existing sources, we've included the following selection of commoner traits, which are all related to the likely experience and exploits of commoners. All of the following traits fall into the new Commoner trait category. As such, they are only available to commoner characters and only one may be selected per commoner character because each trait selected must come from a different category.

Busker

You've had to make your living with your performance, and you've become adept at being blessed with just a little more coin for your work.

Benefit: +1 trait bonus to Perform checks. Add an additional d6 to whatever dice you would normally roll to determine how much money you generated from your performance when using Perform to make money.

Butcher's Anatomy

Your extensive experience slaughtering animals has provided you with skills on how to strike more damaging blows against opponents.

Benefit: You gain +1 trait bonus on rolls to confirm critical hits.

Draft Animal Rider

Your time spent raising farm animals gives you the unique ability to competently ride them.

Benefit: You gain a +2 trait bonus on Ride checks for cows, donkeys, draft horses, and other draft animals (at the Gamemaster's discretion.)

Imitator

Somewhat embarrassed by your humble origins, you spent a lot of time trying to appear something you are not and developed the requisite skills.

Benefit: +2 trait bonus to Bluff when attempting to appear as a different class or above your social station. Bluff becomes a class skill.

Know Your Place

You are well practiced in speaking to your social betters: knights, lords, and government bureaucrats have all been soothed by your silvered tongue.



Benefit: You gain +1 trait bonus to Diplomacy and Bluff checks when dealing with someone who perceives they have a higher social standing than you. Diplomacy becomes a class skill.

Magic Shop Clerk

You have previously worked in a store that specialized in the buying and selling of some kind of magical item and have gained a familiarity with many “common” magical items.

Benefit: +1 trait bonus to Appraise checks, and pick one category of magical item: wondrous items, wands, scrolls, magical weapons and armor, or potions. You can use Appraise checks to identify items of that category in place of Spellcraft checks.

Medic

You have a background providing healing when no magical healing options are available. As a result, you’re very skilled at facilitating healing.

Benefit: +1 trait bonus to Heal checks. Your charges heal hit points and ability damage at three times the normal rate instead of double when providing long-term care.

Nonthreatening

You have extensive experience in appearing non-threatening, perhaps genuflecting to the landed nobility or cultivating an air of ostentatious agreeableness.

Benefit: +2 trait bonus to Bluff checks when used to convince authorities to allow you to carry prohibited weapons or to gain access to a secure area. Bluff becomes a class skill.

Paranoid

You grew up in an area known for monster attacks, where your physical safety was constantly at risk. As such, you’ve developed a twitchy personality.

Benefit: Gain a +1 trait bonus on Reflex saves.

Persistent Magical Improviser

Utterly captivated by them, you never quite learned when to give up trying to activate a magical device.

Benefit: Use Magical Device becomes a class skill for you. Once per day, when you roll a natural one on a Use Magic Device check, you may reroll (you must take the results of the second roll.)

Puppy

You've always had an affinity for animals, and you have a special bond with a young (but already well-trained) riding dog that follows you around everywhere.

Benefit: You gain a riding dog (or other animal with Gamemaster approval) with the Young template. The animal loses the Young template when you gain your next level or at your Gamemaster's discretion. You also gain a +1 trait bonus to Handle Animal checks. This bonus increases to +2 when handling the pet gained through this trait.

Revolutionary

Your experience in a peasant uprising taught you how to use commoner weapons more effectively.

Benefit: +1 trait bonus on damage rolls for all commoner weapons.

Rough Living

In your time, you've worked hard every day and often eaten food that would turn the stomach of "softer" people; you are hale and hearty.

Benefit: Gain a +1 trait bonus to Fortitude saves.

Trapping Experience

Your experience in the woods, trapping animals for subsistence, has given you a passing familiarity with snares and other basic traps.

Benefit: When crafting a trap, you add a +1 trait bonus to the difficulty of the opposed perception check to notice the trap you set. Also, gain an additional +1 trait bonus to opposed Reflex save to avoid being injured by the trap.

Unsupervised Childhood

You spent your childhood largely unsupervised while playing, running, swimming, and climbing.

Benefit: You gain a +1 trait bonus to Climb and Swim checks. Once per day, you can choose to reroll a Swim or Climb check (you must take the result of the second roll.)

Working Hard

Your background with hard, physical labor has granted you a greater ability to carry weight.

Benefit: Your Strength score is considered 2 points higher when calculating carrying capacity and encumbrance. **Note:** this does stack with the Hard Working feat.



6. Feats

After race, ability, and skill selection, feats are the way in which commoners may most differentiate themselves and develop strategies for how to operate successfully in the game. What limited efficacy is available to commoners is granted from clever feat selection. This chapter suggests the best of the best existing feats, reprinting them for your convenience, and how these fit into an overall framework of Combat Styles. Also provided is a selection of new, commoner-specific feats to help better customize and prepare commoner characters.

Existing Feats and Commoner Combat Styles

For adventuring commoners, most feats (with a few exceptions listed below) are selected to access a feat-based "Combat Style." This is an overall strategy as to how feats may supplement each other to become more effective in combat. Commoners generally utilize one of the following Combat Styles, which will be elaborated on later in the chapter.

Archery

This ranged feat Combat Style keeps commoners out of range of most opponents and is ideal for setting up ambushes. Even better, a lot of the relevant feats are available without any sort of base attack

bonus, which is especially useful for martially challenged commoners.

In this section, we'll analyze the choices made by commoners primarily interested in utilizing an archery combat style.

Primary Ability Score: Dexterity

Weapons to Consider: Light crossbow, longbow, composite longbow, or halfling slingstaff.

After mastering Point-Blank Shot and other essential techniques, commoners often learn Far Shot to maximize their range (especially with longbow.) It is unfortunate that the realities of adventuring (map design) don't allow for more use of this tactic in confined spaces, but when available it is a lifesaver. Greater range allows technically inferior archers to best their betters.

Also popular is Deadly Aim, which is essentially Power Attack for archers (although commoners usually can't get this feat until level 3.) And if the commoner in question can survive long enough (12th Level), they can pick up Manyshot as a near-capstone ability, in addition to Rapid Shot.

Lastly, many commoners will master Mounted Combat in order to learn Mounted Archery and maximize their maneuverability while firing accurately. On the right battlefield (and throughout most of history), few can face Mounted Archers who zoom in and out of range firing projectiles.



Deadly Aim

Combat

You can make exceptionally deadly ranged attacks by pinpointing a foe's weak spot, at the expense of making the attack less likely to succeed.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You can choose to take a -1 penalty on all ranged attack rolls to gain a +2 bonus on all ranged damage rolls. When your base attack bonus reaches +4, and every +4 thereafter, the penalty increases by -1 and the bonus to damage increases by +2. You must choose to use this feat before making an attack roll and its effects last until your next turn. The bonus damage does not apply to touch attacks or effects that do not deal hit point damage.

Gaining an enhanced damage bonus to more easily take on one's foes cannot be overlooked.

Far Shot

Combat

You are more accurate at longer ranges.

Prerequisites: Point-Blank Shot.

Benefit: You only suffer a -1 penalty per full range increment between you and your target when using a ranged weapon.

Normal: You suffer a -2 penalty per full range increment between you and your target.

Great for increasing the distance between the commoner and their target.

Point-Blank Shot

Combat

You are especially accurate when making ranged attacks against close targets.

Benefit: You get a +1 bonus on attack and damage rolls with ranged weapons at ranges of up to 30 feet.

This feat is helpful with taking care of opponents who get too close. It also serves as a gateway for many other feats relevant to this Combat Style.

Precise Shot

Combat

You are adept at firing ranged attacks into melee.

Prerequisite: Point-Blank Shot.

Benefit: You can shoot or throw ranged weapons at an opponent engaged in melee without taking the standard -4 penalty on your attack roll.

Handy for taking on foes who are tangled up with your allies without getting close yourself.

Rapid Shot

Combat

You can make an additional ranged attack.

Prerequisites: Dex 13, Point-Blank Shot.

Benefit: When making a full-attack action with a ranged weapon, you can fire one additional time this round. All of your attack rolls take a -2 penalty when using Rapid Shot.

Extremely useful to increase a commoner's chance of hitting their foe by granting an additional attempt to do so.

Manyshot

Combat

You can fire multiple arrows at a single target.

Prerequisites: Dex 17, Point-Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, base attack bonus +6.

Benefit: When making a full-attack action with a bow, your first attack fires two arrows. If the attack hits, both arrows hit. Apply precision-based damage (such as sneak attack) and critical hit damage only once for this attack. Damage bonuses from using a composite bow with a high Strength bonus apply to each arrow, as do other damage bonuses, such as a ranger's favored enemy bonus. Damage reduction and resistances apply separately to each arrow.

This is yet another feat that grants the commoner yet another chance to harm their opponents.

Reach Melee

When commoners fight in melee, they often prefer to improve their chance of success by employing combat maneuvers and by piling on attacks while remaining just out of reach. This strategy can be surprisingly effective with the right bonuses. While it's true that commoners, with their terrible base attack bonuses, sometimes struggle to trip or disarm their

A Word on Reach Combat Maneuver Weapons

When seeking to perform combat maneuvers, commoners favor reach weapons. By staying out of reach of their opponents, commoners can trip safely without mastering Improved Trip (although some will acquire that feat all the same.)

The whip is favored by commoners seeking to alternate Combat Maneuvers with maximum reach. However, such commoners will find themselves hampered while trying to damage armored opponents and unable to make attacks of opportunity. They will also be vulnerable to counter attacks. Other popular options include the horsechopper or ranseur because these weapons allow a commoner to hamper an opponent from a distance (via tripping and disarming respectively) in addition to dealing damage.

A longspear can be used effectively for “safe” combat maneuvers, although focusing on this weapon sacrifices some damage potential. It also risks countertrips (instead of dropping the weapon) if a trip is failed spectacularly and is less effective at disarming than weapons specifically designed to do so.

If utilizing a weapon designed for tripping, commoners are wise to attach a weapon chord to lessen the impairment that comes from dropping a weapon following a failed trip attempt. However, this comes at the expense of being able to switch quickly between ranged and melee.

foes effectively, attempting to do so is still a superior option than winding up face-to-face, blow-for-blow with a greatsword-wielding barbarian.

In this section, we'll analyze the feats utilized by commoners primarily interested in using a Reach Combat Maneuver Style.

Primary Ability Score: Strength

Weapons to Consider: Horsechopper, ranseur, longspear, whip.

Most commoners attempting to use the Reach Combat Maneuver Style will begin by taking Combat Reflexes to maximize their ability to attack approaching enemies (or even standing enemies that have already been tripped.) Many martially-oriented character classes (e.g., fighters, barbarians) interested in tripping use Combat Expertise and Improved Trip, but commoners tend to pass on these feats. Commoners endeavor to avoid counterattacks and countertrips by keeping out of their opponent's reach.

Many commoners opt for Weapon Focus, the benefits of which complement the bonus they gain from an Heirloom Weapon. Also, much more than the martial classes, commoners know they do not stand alone, so they are likely to team up for Coordinated Maneuvers to improve their skills.

Besides tripping, commoners can learn disarm with similar abilities, although most abstain be-

cause more of their opponents can be tripped than disarmed. Additionally, care and coordination must be used to work well with the archers of their group. Timing arrows for when enemies are standing and when the opponent is “not in melee” is critical.

Combat Expertise

Combat

You can increase your defense at the expense of your accuracy.

Prerequisite: Int 13.

Benefit: You can choose to take a -1 penalty on melee attack rolls and combat maneuver checks to gain a +1 dodge bonus to your Armor Class. When your base attack bonus reaches +4, and every +4 thereafter, the penalty increases by -1 and the dodge bonus increases by +1. You can only choose to use this feat when you declare that you are making an attack or a full-attack action with a melee weapon. The effects of this feat last until your next turn.

Best for when surviving is currently more important to the commoner than defeating their enemy.

Combat Reflexes

Combat

You can make additional attacks of opportunity.

Benefit: You may make a number of additional attacks of opportunity per round equal to your

Dexterity bonus. With this feat, you may also make attacks of opportunity while flat-footed.

Normal: A character without this feat can make only one attack of opportunity per round and can't make attacks of opportunity while flat-footed.

A handy feat for when a commoner is surrounded by opponents on the move.

Coordinated Maneuvers Combat, Teamwork

You are skilled at working with your allies to perform dangerous combat maneuvers.

Benefit: Whenever you are adjacent to an ally who also has this feat, you receive a +2 competence bonus on all combat maneuver checks. This bonus increases to +4 when attempting to break free from a grapple.

Considering how much commoner adventurers must rely on each other, the benefits of this feat to the group cannot be overlooked.

Improved Trip Combat

You are skilled at sending your opponents to the ground.

Prerequisite: Int 13, Combat Expertise.

Benefit: You do not provoke an attack of opportunity when performing a trip combat maneuver. In addition, you receive a +2 bonus on checks made to trip a foe. You also receive a +2 bonus to your Combat Maneuver Defense whenever an opponent tries to trip you.

Normal: You provoke an attack of opportunity when performing a trip combat maneuver.

A chance to trip your opponent without opening yourself up to attack? Yes, please!

Weapon Focus Combat

Choose one type of weapon. You can also choose unarmed strike or grapple (or ray if you are a spellcaster) as your weapon for the purposes of this feat.

Prerequisites: Proficiency with selected weapon, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on all attack rolls you make using the selected weapon.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of weapon.

There's no denying this feat's usefulness for gaining an edge in combat.



STORM

Dexterity-Based Melee

Focusing on melee attacks that make use of Dexterity rather than Strength is not a common strategy for commoner adventurers, but it has been known to happen. This approach attempts to deal out damage while keeping the commoner out of danger by helping the character evade attacks.

This section discusses feat selection for commoner interested in utilizing a Dexterity-Based Melee combat style.

Primary Ability Score: Dexterity

Weapons to Consider: Light weapon, elven curve blade, rapier, whip, or spiked chain

Some commoners seek to enter melee but rely on their Dexterity to keep them safe from attack and wound their opponents. Weapon Finesse is the foundation of this Combat Style, with Piranha Strike being added to eke out extra damage. While rare, some commoners have mastered the art of the Dervish Dance to become whirling agents of death.

Commoners interested in pursuing this path often spend considerable gold on Agile Weapon enchantments in order for their Dexterity to be translated directly into damage.

The Dexterity-Based Melee Combat Style stragem has the added bonus of making its adherents gifted with ranged weapons. However, such a split focus ensures the character will never master either.

Dervish Dance

Combat

You have learned to turn your speed into power, even with a heavier blade.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 13, Weapon Finesse, Perform (dance) 2 ranks, proficient with scimitar.

Benefit: When wielding a scimitar with one hand, you can use your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier on melee attack and damage rolls. You treat the scimitar as a one-handed piercing weapon for all feats and class abilities that require such a weapon (such as a duelist's precise strike ability.) The scimitar must be for a creature of your size. You cannot

use this feat if you are carrying a weapon or shield in your off hand.

Piranha Strike

Combat

You make a combination of quick strikes, sacrificing accuracy for multiple, minor wounds that prove exceptionally deadly.

Prerequisites: Weapon Finesse, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: When wielding a light weapon, you can choose to take a -1 penalty on all melee attack rolls and combat maneuver checks to gain a +2 bonus on all melee damage rolls. This bonus to damage is halved (-50%) if you are making an attack with an off-hand weapon or secondary natural weapon. When your base attack bonus reaches +4, and for every 4 points thereafter, the penalty increases by -1 and the bonus on damage rolls increases by +2. You must choose to use this feat before the attack roll, and its effects last until your next turn. The bonus damage does not apply to touch attacks or effects that do not deal hit point damage. This feat cannot be used in conjunction with the Power Attack feat.

This is a very helpful feat to help Dexterity-oriented commoners who may have sacrificed Strength deal greater damage.

Weapon Finesse

Combat

You are trained in using your agility in melee combat, as opposed to brute strength.

Benefit: With a light weapon, elven curve blade, rapier, whip, or spiked chain made for a creature of your size category, you may use your Dexterity modifier instead of your Strength modifier on attack rolls. If you carry a shield, its armor check penalty applies to your attack rolls.

Special: Natural weapons are considered light weapons.

A must have for any commoner with a Dexterity bonus that surpasses their Strength, it's unfortunate that most attacks that can utilize this feat are limited to minimal damage. (Of course, this means striking successfully more often is all that more crucial.)

Strength-Based Reach Melee

This section analyzes how commoners utilize a Reach Melee Combat style focused on dealing damage with the help of Strength. Focusing on melee attacks that combine Strength with Reach is a very uncommon strategy for commoners, but they're not unheard of. The idea is to pile on the damage while keeping the commoner out of danger using reach weapons, keeping the commoner (hopefully) one step away for their opponent.

Primary Ability Score: Strength

Weapons to Consider: Horsechopper, longspear, flying blade

Some commoners include enhancing damage options with their Strength-Based Reach Melee Combat Style, and some seek to focus on damage exclusively.

For weapons, commoners who practice Strength-Based Reach Melee almost always pick longspear or some other two-handed weapon (unless they wish to utilize a Commoner Weapon to honor their origin.) Power Attack is usually the first order of business, although they won't be able to gain that until 3rd level. If they grow truly skilled with their weapon, they might wish to work on Improved Critical and Critical Focus to become even more deadly with it.

Critical Focus

Combat

You are trained in the art of causing pain.

Prerequisites: Base attack bonus +9.

Benefit: You receive a +4 circumstance bonus on attack rolls made to confirm critical hits.

Here is yet another feat to increase the chance of landing a critical hit. This feat presents the opportunity of delivering more damage without having to sacrifice attack modifier.

Improved Critical

Combat

Attacks made with your chosen weapon are quite deadly.

Prerequisite: Proficient with weapon, base attack bonus +8.

Benefit: When using the weapon you selected, your threat range is doubled.

Special: You can gain Improved Critical multiple times. The effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of weapon.

This effect doesn't stack with any other effect that expands the threat range of a weapon.

This feat is especially helpful if the commoner is armed with a weapon that already enjoys a greater than normal threat range. It's a way of increasing the chance of doing more damage without having to sacrifice attack modifier or the like.

Power Attack

Combat

You can make exceptionally deadly melee attacks by sacrificing accuracy for strength.

Prerequisites: Str 13, base attack bonus +1.

Benefit: You can choose to take a -1 penalty on all melee attack rolls and combat maneuver checks to gain a +2 bonus on all melee damage rolls. This bonus to damage is increased by half (+50%) if you are making an attack with a two-handed weapon, a one-handed weapon using two hands, or a primary natural weapon that adds 1-1/2 times your Strength modifier on damage rolls. This bonus to damage is halved (-50%) if you are making an attack with an off-hand weapon or secondary natural weapon.

When your base attack bonus reaches +4, and every 4 points thereafter, the penalty increases by -1 and the bonus to damage increases by +2.

You must choose to use this feat before making an attack roll, and its effects last until your next turn. The bonus damage does not apply to touch attacks or effects that do not deal hit point damage.

This is a great feat for trying to take out an opponent at the start of a fight.

Strength-Based Non-Reach Melee

Given the lack of both magic and hardness they possess, employing close-up, Strength-based melee attacks is perhaps the worst martial strategy com-

moners can employ. Commoners are unlikely to out damage their opponents, nor are they likely to endure any but the weakest opponents.

Feats for this style are essentially identical to what a commoner would select for Strength-Based Reach Melee Combat Style— with probable weapon selection being greatsword.

Intimidation Attacks Combat Substyle

Not as robust and fully realized as the other Combat Styles, commoners who are capable of making use of melee attacks and intimidating opponents have options for fusing the together. We refer to the resulting combination as Intimidation Attacks.

Primary Attribute: Strength and Charisma

Weapons to Consider: Any listed for the Strength-Based Reach Melee or Reach Melee Combat Styles

If they feel that they have mastered their weapons offensive capabilities, some commoners train to also put fear into their enemies during a fight. Such commoners are likely to learn Dazzling Display, which can be nearly as effective as magic for changing the course of a battle. And commoners who focus on this often improve their skill checks with Intimidating Prowess and/or Skill Focus (Intimidate.) Alternately, commoners can intimidate specific enemies with Corangun Smash.

Cornugon Smash Combat

On your powerful strikes, you often put fear into your opponent's heart.

Prerequisites: Power Attack, Intimidate 6 ranks.

Benefit: When you damage an opponent with a Power Attack, you may make an immediate Intimidate check as a free action to attempt to demoralize your opponent.

This feat effectively allows you to try to put the fear of your commoner might into an enemy with a successful attack.

Dazzling Display Combat

Your skill with your favored weapon can frighten enemies.

Prerequisite: Weapon Focus, proficiency with the selected weapon.

Benefit: While wielding the weapon in which you have Weapon Focus, you can perform a bewildering show of prowess as a full-round action. Make an Intimidate check to demoralize all foes within 30 feet who can see your display.

Use this feat to gain an edge over your enemies you can follow up on.

Intimidating Prowess Combat

Your physical might is intimidating to others.

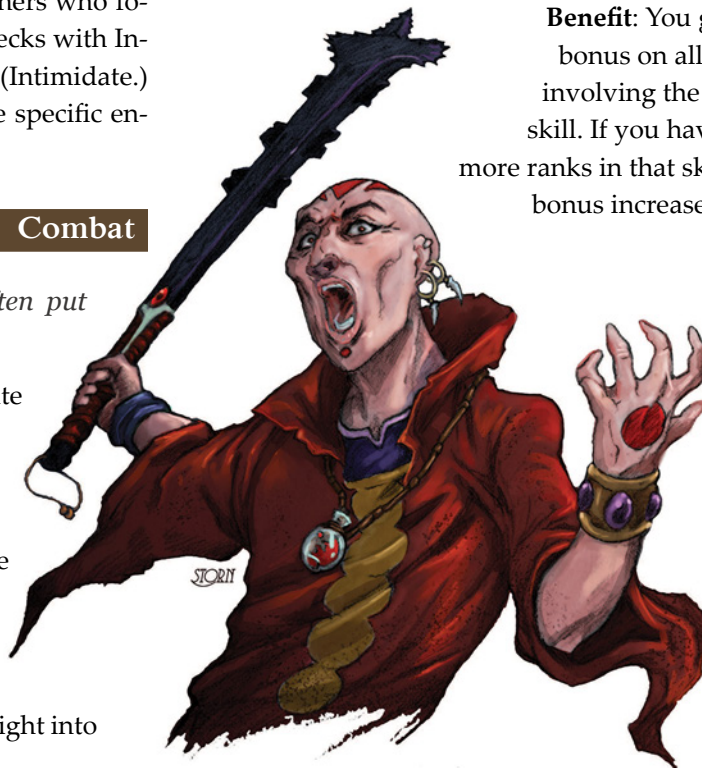
Benefit: Add your Strength modifier to Intimidate skill checks in addition to your Charisma modifier.

A great way for strong commoners to throw their weight around in more ways than one.

Skill Focus

Choose a skill. You are particularly adept at that skill.

Benefit: You get a +3 bonus on all checks involving the chosen skill. If you have 10 or more ranks in that skill, this bonus increases to +6.



Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new skill.

Although useful in its own right, this feat helps a commoner even more in combination with other Intimidate-based feats that provide an advantage in a fight.

Nonspecific Feats

In addition to feats related to their Combat Style of choices, there are nonspecific feats that are also likely to be selected by commoner characters. The following are feats not associated with a specific Combat Style that commoners often take for their various benefits to adventurers in their circumstance.

Additional Traits

You have more traits than normal.

Benefit: You gain two character traits of your choice. These traits must be chosen from different lists, and cannot be chosen from lists from which you have already selected a character trait. You must meet any additional qualifications for the character traits you choose.

Adventuring commoners often have varied and colorful backgrounds, picking up trades and experiences to give them Additional Traits.

Fast Learner

Human

Your progress gain extra versatility.

Prerequisites: Int 13, human.

Benefit: When you gain a level in a favored class, you gain both +1 hit point and +1 skill rank instead of choosing either one or the other benefit, or you can choose an alternate class reward.

Human commoners often make use of Fast Learner to maximize their preferred class bonuses.

Skill Focus

Choose a skill. You are particularly adept at that skill.

Benefit: You get a +3 bonus on all checks involving the chosen skill. If you have 10 or more ranks in that skill, this bonus increases to +6.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new skill.

Commoner adventurers may choose a Skill Focus or three to help master some trade or other.

Stealth Synergy

Teamwork

Working closely with an ally, you are able to move like twin shadows.

Benefit: While you can see one or more allies who also have this feat, whenever you and your allies make a Stealth check, you all take the highest roll and add all your modifiers to Stealth.

A cohesive group of commoners would be wise to use Stealth Synergy to allow the entire party benefit from its sneakiest member, as well as providing insurance against the inevitable misstep.

Steel Soul

You are especially resistant to magic.

Prerequisites: Dwarf, hardy racial trait.

Benefit: You receive a +4 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like abilities. This replaces the normal bonus from the dwarf's hardy racial trait.

Normal: Dwarves normally receive a +2 racial bonus on saving throws against spells and spell-like abilities.

Dwarven commoners often have a Steel Soul to better resist the world's perils.

Toughness

You have enhanced physical stamina.

Benefit: You gain +3 hit points. For every Hit Die you possess beyond 3, you gain an additional +1 hit point. If you have more than 3 Hit Dice, you gain +1 hit points whenever you gain a Hit Die (such as when you gain a level.)

Many adventuring commoners display more toughness than most people because of their rough upbringing.

New Commoner Feats

Feats	Prerequisites	Benefits
(Un)common Sense	Wis 13, 1st-level commoner, Any Knowledge Skill 3 ranks	Can make untrained Knowledge checks, use Wis instead of Int for Knowledge
Animal Breeder	1st-level commoner, Handle Animal 5 ranks	Apply the Advanced template to an animal
Non-Verbal Training	9th-level commoner, Animal Breeder, Handle Animal 9 ranks	Pass secret commands to your animal
Skilled Animal Friend	5th-level commoner, Animal Breeder, Handle Animal 5 ranks	The animal gains a +3 bonus on one skill (+6 at 10 ranks)
Sustainable Animal Task	1st-level commoner1, Animal Breeder, Handle Animal 11 ranks	You can task an animal with something that lasts multiple days
Trusted Animal Friend	1st-level commoner1, Animal Handler, Handle Animal 7 ranks	+2 bonus to Handle Animal checks (+4 at 10 ranks)
Beast of Burden	3rd-level commoner, Handle Animal or Ride 3 ranks	Your draft animal is +8 Strength regarding its carrying capacity
Commoner Arcane Magic	Int 11, 1st-level commoner	Cast a 0-level sorcerer/wizard spell four times per day
Improved Commoner Arcane Magic	Commoner Arcane Magic	Cast a 1st-level sorcerer/wizard spell twice per day
Commoner Divine Magic	Wis 11, 1st-level commoner, divine devotion	Cast a 0-level cleric/paladin spell four times per day
Improved Commoner Divine Magic	Commoner Divine Magic	Cast a 1st-level cleric/paladin spell twice per day
Commoner Martial Training	1st-level commoner	BAB is equal to the character's commoner levels for the sake of feat prerequisites
Commoner Nature Magic	Wis 11, 1st-level commoner	Cast a 0-level ranger/druid spell four times per day
Improved Commoner Nature Magic	Commoner Nature Magic	Cast a 1st-level ranger/druid spell twice per day
Commoner Poison Handling	1st-level commoner, Craft (alchemy) 6 ranks	The chance of poisoning yourself is reduced to 1% while handling poison

New Commoner Feats

In the following pages, we present entirely new feats specifically related and useable only by commoner characters.

(Un)Common Sense

You're not sure about all this book learning, but between what your grandpappy told you and the obvious, you can suss out some basics on a variety of subjects.

Requirement: Wis 13, 1st-level commoner, Any Knowledge Skill 3 ranks

Benefit: Through direct experience and folk wisdom, a commoner is able to understand basics

about various subjects. A commoner adds their Wisdom bonus to Knowledge skills instead of Intelligence. Also, they can roll Knowledge skill checks untrained.

Animal Breeder

Your experience working with animals has allowed you to coax more out of them.

Prerequisite: 1st-level commoner, Handle Animal 5 ranks

Benefit: You can apply the Advanced template to any animal you have trained. Doing so follows the craft rules, but uses Handle Animal in place of Craft, and is a DC 20 task at an effective cost of 200 gp per hit die of the animal. This gold is not actually spent—it is only used to calculate the time needed for training.

New Commoner Feats, Continued

Feats	Prerequisites	Benefits
Commoner Surprise Attack	1st-level commoner (minimum level 3 overall)	Gain 1d6 of extra damage on a qualifying sneak attack
Commoner Weapon Focus	1st-level commoner, base attack bonus +1	Increase weapon's damage by one die step, +1 bonus on attack rolls with the one commoner weapon
Dirtiest Fighter	1st-level commoner	You can coat your weapons in filth in order to inflict filth fever upon targets
Don't Know the Meaning of the Word Fizzled	1st-level commoner, Use Magic Device 3 ranks	Reroll a Use Magic Device check once per day
Fury	1st-level commoner, nonlawful alignment	You may enter a fury, which is a less potent version of a barbarian rage
Hale Animal	5th-level commoner, Handle Animal or Ride 5 ranks	An animal you've trained gains bonuses to HD, skills, feats, BAB, saves, and possibly abilities
Hard Working	—	You are +4 Strength regarding your carrying capacity
Harvest Poison	1st-level commoner, Heal 1 rank <i>or</i> Profession (butcher) 1 rank	You can extract poison from the cadavers of dead, poison-producing creatures
Impromptu Combat Training	5th-level commoner, Ride 5 ranks	Make a Ride check to treat a mount as combat-trained that actually is not
Improved Impromptu Combat Training	9th-level commoner, Impromptu Combat Training, Ride 9 ranks	The mount may behave as though combat trained longer and with briefer repercussions for doing so
Leadership (Alternate)	Character level 7th	Gain a cohort and followers
Trap Master	1st-level commoner, Craft (traps) ranks 3	Increase trap saving throw and DCs to spot the trap by +2
Unremarkable	1st-level commoner	Some Perception and Sense Motive checks against the character suffer a –2 (or –4) penalty if the commoner is near enough others of their type
Whipping Animal Trainer	Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Whip) or equivalent	+5 to Handle Animals checks regarding an animal if wielding a whip

Crossbow, longbow, or bonobo: I know what I'd rather hit my enemies with.

Beast of Burden

An animal you use for carrying and pulling loads improves its ability to do so.

Prerequisites: 3rd-level commoner, Handle Animal or Ride 3 ranks

Benefit: A draft animal you have worked with for at least 30 days treats its Strength as 8 higher with respect to its carrying capacity.

Commoner Arcane Magic

Through hard work and dedication, you've managed to master some rudimentary arcane magic.

Prerequisites: Int 11, 1st-level commoner

Benefit: A commoner with this feat gains the ability to cast a 0-level spell from the sorcerer/wizard spell list. This spell can be cast four times per day as a spell-like ability. The caster level for this ability is equal to the commoner's level. The save DC for this spell is 10 + the commoner's Intelligence modifier.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new 0-level spell.

Commoner Divine Magic

Through hard work and dedication, you've managed to master some rudimentary divine magic.

Prerequisites: Wis 11, 1st-level commoner, devotion to an appropriate divinity

Benefit: A commoner with this feat gains the ability to cast a 0-level spell from the cleric/paladin spell list. This spell can be cast four times per day as a spell-like ability. The caster level for this ability is equal to the commoner's level. The save DC for this spell is 10 + the commoner's Wisdom modifier.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new 0-level spell.

Commoner Martial Training

Even though you're not a gifted fighter, you've practiced enough to begin mastering some advanced maneuvers.

Prerequisite: 1st-level commoner

Benefit: A commoner may be considered to have a base attack bonus equal to their levels of commoner *only* for the sake of BAB feat prerequisites.

Commoner Nature Magic

Through hard work and dedication, you've managed to master some rudimentary nature magic.

Prerequisites: Wis 11, 1st-level commoner

Benefit: A commoner with this feat gains the ability to cast a 0-level spell from the ranger/druid spell list. This spell can be cast four times a day as a spell-like ability. The caster level for this ability is equal to the commoner's level. The save DC for this spell is 10 + the commoner's Wisdom modifier.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new 0-level spell.

Commoner Poison Handling

You've grown accustomed to handling poisons.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, Craft (alchemy) 6 ranks

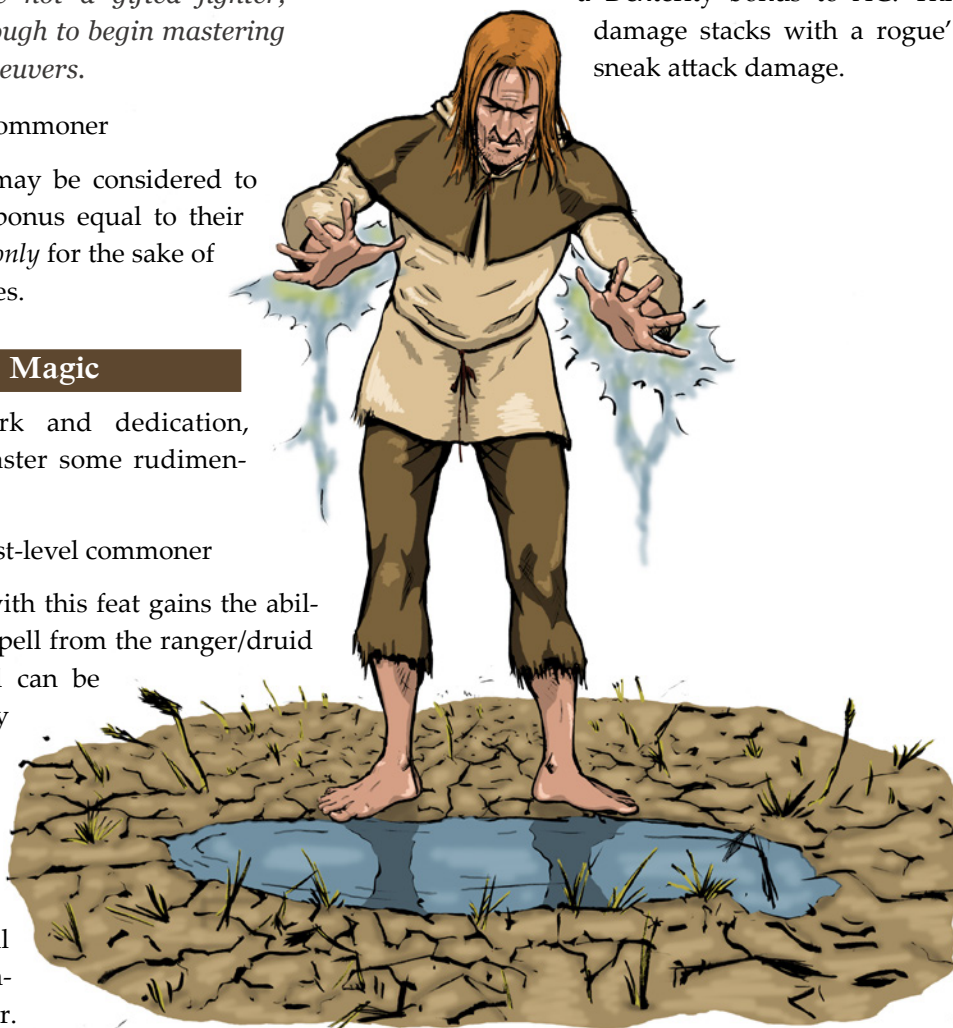
Benefit: Your risk of accidentally poisoning yourself while applying poison drops from 5% to 1%.

Commoner Surprise Attack

You've learned where to stick your weapon to do the most damage.

Prerequisite: 1st-level commoner (minimum level 3 overall)

Benefit: A commoner gains 1d6 of sneak attack extra damage anytime their target would be denied a Dexterity bonus to AC. This damage stacks with a rogue's sneak attack damage.



Commoner Weapon Focus

You have truly mastered using a particular Commoner Weapon.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, base attack bonus +1

Benefit: Select a Commoner Weapon for which you have proficiency; that weapon's damage dice go up one step. Also, you no longer suffer the -1 to hit penalty for using that commoner weapon, instead receiving a +1 to attack rolls when using it.

This feat can be used to qualify for the Weapon Focus feat with the relevant commoner weapon.

Dirtiest Fighter

You've learned to fight dirty ... really dirty.

Prerequisite: 1st-level commoner

Benefit: A commoner with this feat can apply filth from garbage, a sewer, a city street, a polluted area, corpse, a long-unwashed clothing or fur, etc. to a piercing or slashing weapon or trap as a standard action. Doing so causes the object to inflict filth fever on its next successful attack. Only creatures damaged by the weapon are at risk for exposure to the disease. After a successful attack with the weapon or trap, the filth is dispersed and must be reapplied.

Don't Know the Meaning of the Word Fizzled

Through painstaking practice, you've grown incredibly skilled at coaxing extra functionality from magical devices.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, Use Magic Device 3 ranks

Benefit: Once per day, a commoner with this feat may reroll a Use Magic Device check although they must take the second result (even if it is worse.)

Fury

You've turned your poor anger management into an asset by channeling your fury in battle.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, nonlawful alignment

Benefit: You can use fury, which is similar (but less powerful) than a Barbarian's rage, for a number of rounds per day equal to 2 + your Constitution modifier. Temporary increases to Constitution, such as those gained from rage and spells like *bear's endurance*, do not increase the total number of rounds of fury. Fury can be entered as a free action. The total number of rounds of fury per day is renewed after resting for 8 hours, although these hours do not need to be consecutive.

While in a fury, you gain +4 morale bonus to Strength, a +2 morale bonus to Constitution, as well as a +2 morale bonus on Will saves. In addition, you suffer a -4 penalty to Armor Class. This increase to Constitution grants you an additional 1 hit point per Hit Dice, but these disappear when the rage ends and are not lost first like temporary hit points. While in fury, you cannot use any Charisma-, Dexterity-, or Intelligence-based skills (except Acrobatics, Fly, Intimidate, and Ride) or any ability that requires patience or concentration.

You can end your fury as a free action and are exhausted after fury for a number of rounds equal to 2 times the number of rounds spent in the rage. You cannot enter a new fury while fatigued or exhausted but can otherwise enter fury multiple times during a single encounter or combat. If you fall unconscious, your fury immediately ends, placing you in peril of death.

Hale Animal

You have treated your animal quite well, giving it incredible health and vigor.

Prerequisites: 5th-level commoner, Handle Animal or Ride 5 ranks

Benefit: An animal you have personally trained or spent at least 30 days working with gains one Hit Die, one skill point, and one feat. Additionally, if it has Hit Dice evenly divisible by 4, it gains a +1 increase to an ability score of your choice. Finally, use the table below to determine its base attack and saving throw bonuses.

Special: You may take this feat any number of times, and its benefits stack. The animal cannot have more HD than half your character level.

Hit Dice	Base Attack Bonus	Fort/Ref Saves	Will Save
2	+1	+3	+0
3	+2	+3	+1
4	+3	+4	+1
5	+3	+4	+1
6	+4	+5	+2
7	+5	+5	+2
8	+6	+6	+2
9	+6	+6	+3
10	+7	+7	+3

Hard Working

A lifetime of toil has given you incredible strength when it comes carrying goods.

Benefit: Treat your Strength as 4 higher with respect to your carrying capacity.

Harvest Poison

Your knowledge of anatomy has given you the skill necessary to harvest poison from creatures that naturally produce it.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, Heal 1 rank or Profession (butcher) 1 rank

Benefit: If you come across a cadaver of a creature that naturally produces poison, you may take five minutes to harvest two doses of its natural poison. While attempting to harvest this poison, there is a 5% chance of accidental exposure to the poison.

Impromptu Combat Training

For a short period, you can instill a sense of fearlessness into a mount not normally used to the rigors of battle.

Prerequisites: 5th-level commoner, Ride 5 ranks

Benefit: If you succeed at a DC 20 Ride check, you treat a mount that is not combat trained as though it were combat trained. This persists for a number of rounds equal to half your character level plus your Charisma modifier. The mount becomes fatigued for a number of minutes equal to the number of rounds it acted as a combat trained mount.

Improved Commoner Arcane Magic

Drawing on your previous experience, you've gained access to even more arcane magic, although with the understanding of your own limits.



Prerequisite: Commoner Arcane Magic

Benefit: A commoner with this feat gains the ability to cast a 1st-level spell from the sorcerer/wizard spell list twice per day as a spell-like ability. The caster level for this ability is equal to the commoner's level. The save DC for this spell is 11 + the commoner's Intelligence modifier.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new 1st-level spell.

Improved Commoner Divine Magic

Drawing on your previous experience, you've gained access to even more divine magic, although with the understanding of your own limits.

Prerequisite: Commoner Divine Magic

Benefit: A commoner with this feat gains the ability to cast a 1st-level spell from the cleric or paladin spell list two times per day as a spell-like ability. The caster level for this ability is equal to the commoner's level. The save DC for this spell is 11 + the commoner's Wisdom modifier.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new 1st-level spell.

Improved Commoner Nature Magic

Drawing on your previous experience, you've gained access to even more nature magic, although with the understanding of your own limits.

Prerequisite: Commoner Nature Magic

Benefit: A commoner with this feat gains the ability to cast a 1st-level spell from the ranger/druid spell list two times a day as a spell-like ability. The caster level for this ability is equal to the Commoner's level. The save DC for this spell is 11 + the Commoner's Wisdom modifier.

Special: You can gain this feat multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new 1st-level spell.

Improved Impromptu Combat Training

Your mount has gotten used to your goading during battle.

Prerequisites: 9th-level commoner, Impromptu Combat Training, Ride 9 ranks

Benefit: The duration provided by Impromptu Combat Training increases to your character level plus your Charisma modifier. Additionally, your mount is fatigued for a number of rounds equal to the number of rounds it acting as a combat trained mount.

Leadership (Alternate)

Inspiration of the Common Man

You attract followers from common stock to your cause as well as a companion to join you on your adventures.

Prerequisite: Character level 7th

Benefit: This feat enables you to attract a loyal cohort and a number of devoted subordinates who assist you. A cohort is an NPC with levels of Commoner (or another NPC class subject to Gamemaster approval), while followers are typically lower level NPCs (also Commoners or other NPC classes.) See **Table: Leadership** for what level of cohort and how many followers you can recruit.

Leadership Modifiers: Several factors can affect your Leadership score, causing it to vary from the base score (character level + Cha modifier.) Your reputation (from the point of view of the cohort or follower you are trying to attract) raises or lowers your Leadership score:

Leader's Reputation	Modifier
Great renown	+2
Fairness and generosity	+1
Special power	+1
Failure	-1
Aloofness	-1
Cruelty	-2

Other modifiers may apply when you try to attract a cohort, as listed below.

The Leader...	Modifier
Has a familiar, special mount, or animal companion	-2
Recruits a cohort of a different alignment	-1
Caused the death of a cohort	-2*

* Cumulative per cohort killed.

Followers have different priorities from cohorts. When you try to attract a follower, use the following modifiers.

The Leader...	Modifier
Has a stronghold, base of operations, guildhouse, etc.	+2
Moves around a lot	-1
Caused the death of other followers	-1

Leadership Score: Your base Leadership score equals your level plus your Charisma modifier. In order to take into account negative Charisma modifiers, this table allows for very low Leadership scores, but you must still be 7th level or higher in order to gain the Leadership feat. Outside factors can affect your Leadership score, as previously detailed.

Cohort Level: You can attract a cohort of up to this level. Regardless of your Leadership score, you can only recruit a cohort who is two or more levels lower than yourself. The cohort should be equipped with gear appropriate for its level. A cohort can be of any race or class. The cohort's alignment may not be opposed to your alignment on either the law/chaos or good/evil axis, and you take a -1 penalty to your Leadership score if you recruit a cohort of an alignment different from your own.

Leadership

Leadership Score	Cohort Level	Number of Followers by Level					
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th
1 or lower	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2	1st	—	—	—	—	—	—
3	2nd	—	—	—	—	—	—
4	3rd	—	—	—	—	—	—
5	3rd	—	—	—	—	—	—
6	4th	—	—	—	—	—	—
7	5th	—	—	—	—	—	—
8	5th	—	—	—	—	—	—
9	6th	—	—	—	—	—	—
10	7th	5	—	—	—	—	—
11	7th	6	—	—	—	—	—
12	8th	8	—	—	—	—	—
13	9th	10	1	—	—	—	—
14	10th	15	1	—	—	—	—
15	10th	20	2	1	—	—	—
16	11th	25	2	1	—	—	—
17	12th	30	3	1	1	—	—
18	12th	35	3	1	1	—	—
19	13th	40	4	2	1	1	—
20	14th	50	5	3	2	1	—
21	15th	60	6	3	2	1	1
22	15th	75	7	4	2	2	1
23	16th	90	9	5	3	2	1
24	17th	110	11	6	3	2	1
25 or higher	17th	135	13	7	4	2	2

A cohort does not count as a party member when determining the party's XP. Instead, divide the cohort's level by your level. Multiply this result by the total XP awarded to you, then add that number of experience points to the cohort's total.

If a cohort gains enough XP to bring it to a level one lower than your level, the cohort does not gain the new level—its new XP total is 1 less than the amount needed to attain the next level.

Number of Followers by Level: You can lead up to the indicated number of characters of each level. Followers are similar to cohorts, except they're generally low-level NPCs. Because they're usually 5 or more levels behind you, they're rarely effective in combat.

Followers don't earn experience and thus don't gain levels. When you gain a new level, consult the **Leadership table** to determine if you acquire more followers, some of whom may be higher level than the existing followers. Don't consult the table to see if your cohort gains levels, however, because cohorts earn experience on their own.

Non-Verbal Training

You have worked out a series of gestures and whistles with your animal friend, allowing it to surprise onlookers and opponents.

Prerequisites: 9th-level commoner, Animal Breeder, Handle Animal 9 ranks

Benefit: You can make a Handle Animal check in place of a Bluff check to pass a command to your animal such that it understands it, using the DCs for passing secret messages. Other creatures can make Sense Motive checks against your Handle Animal check to decipher the command.

Skilled Animal Friend

You bring out the best in your animal's natural abilities.

Prerequisites: 5th-level commoner, Animal Breeder, Handle Animal 5 ranks

Benefit: An animal you have personally trained or worked with for at least 30 days gains a +3 bonus on all checks for one of the animal's class skills. If the animal has 10 or more ranks in that skill, this bonus increases to +6.

Sustainable Animal Task

Your animal is so well trained, it can follow instructions that require a considerable amount of time to complete.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, Animal Breeder, Handle Animal 11 ranks

Benefit: With a successful Handle Animal check, you can give your animal a command that takes multiple days to accomplish. For example, you could request the animal to guard a location until your return or carry a package to a particular location. The DC for the Handle Animal check equals 20 + 1 per day to carry out the command, and the roll is typically done in secret. Failure by 5 or more means the animal appears to understand the command, but instead wanders off after 1 day.

Trap Master

You know how to make the most of traps, both in making them more inconspicuous and making them slightly more dangerous.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, Craft (traps) ranks 3

Benefit: When setting or making a trap, the Perception DC for others to spot the trap increases by +2. Also, increase the trap's relevant saving throw DCs by +2.

Trusted Animal Friend

You and your animal companion empathetically communicate your good treatment of it to other animals.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, Animal Handler, Handle Animal 7 ranks

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Handle Animal checks, which increases to +4 if you have 10 or more ranks in Handle Animal. These bonuses are doubled with respect to animals of the same type as your animal friend.

Unremarkable

Your features and mannerisms make you unremarkable and beneath the notice of most.

Requirement: 1st-level commoner

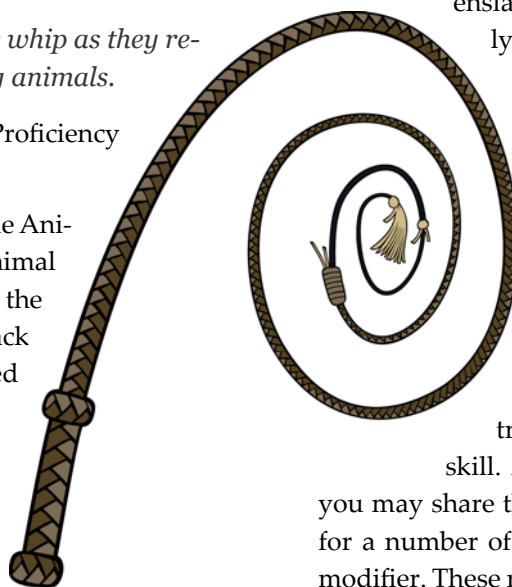
Benefit: A commoner with this feat blends into groups easily. Opposed Perception and Sense Motive checks suffer a -2 penalty when made against the Commoner's Bluff, Disguise, Sleight of Hand, or Stealth checks if the commoner is within 45 feet of two or more other creatures who appear to be the same creature type as the commoner. This penalty increases to -4 if the commoner is within 45 feet of six or more such creatures or is currently in a square occupied by a crowd.

Whipping Animal Tamer

You know the secrets of the whip as they relate to training and taming animals.

Prerequisite: Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Whip) or equivalent

Benefit: You gain a +5 to Handle Animal check involving an animal if you're holding a whip at the time. This bonus does stack with that which is provided by a Training Whip.



Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, you must have had your life saved by the actions of an animal

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, and on Acrobatics, Climb, Heal, Intimidate, Perception, Survival, and Stealth skill checks when your actions are in defense of an animal. The bonus is also enjoyed when in defense of a druid, ranger, or other NPC ally who also defends nature.

Goal: You must decisively defeat an appropriate number of creatures that threaten the homes and lives of a species of animal, such as a band of goblins destroying a forest or group of bandits enslaving local owlbears. Alternatively, you must thwart a challenging foe performing the same function, such as an evil druid corrupting the local wildlife or an abomination feeding on an endangered herd of deer.

Completion Benefit: Your bonus now applies whenever you are within 30 feet of an allied animal, including one trained by the Animal Handling skill. Additionally, as a swift action, you may share this bonus with an allied animal for a number of rounds equal to your Wisdom modifier. These rounds do not need to be consecutive, but must be taken in 1 round increments.

New Story Feats

With the following story feats, we present entirely new feats specifically related to commoner stories and quests. You can use these feats to guide stories, add depth and interest to your character, and provide motivation and foreshadowing for future adventures. For more options and further explanation about story feats, see **Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Campaign™** or **Ultimate Options: Story Feats** from **Rogue Genius Games**.

Animal Debt

Story

An animal saved your life and since this happened, you've gained a new respect for the creatures.

Body Discovery

Story

You were launched into adventure after finding the body of an adventurer, and now wish to discover more of their story.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, you must have discovered a body of an adventurer and taken gear or gold from it

Benefit: You are now seen by NPC classes, and any class that has a lower level than you, as an adventurer. You gain +2 to Diplomacy checks to gather information from such individuals, as well as +2 to Appraise checks and to Diplomacy checks when evaluating or negotiating the price of adventuring gear.

New Story Feats

Feats	Prerequisites	Benefits	Completion Benefits
Animal Friend	1st-level commoner, you must have had your life saved by the actions of an animal	+1 to certain rolls while defending an animal, druid, or ranger	Benefit from the previous bonus while within 30 feet of an animal ally, and share the bonus with same
Body Discovery	1st-level commoner, you must have discovered a body of an adventurer and taken gear or gold from it	+2 to some adventuring-related Appraise and Diplomacy checks	Gain Weapon Proficiency and Weapon Focus, or Skill Focus
Chip on Your Shoulder	Commoner as favored class, you must have been bested in a contest by an adventurer	Gain an additional favored class bonus per new commoner level	Increase a chosen ability by 2
Clawed Your Way Back, Never Gonna Stop	1st-level commoner, you've recovered from a severe wound (75% or more of your HP) without magical healing	Increase your possible negative hit points, and gain 1 temporary hit point per HD once per day	Gain +1 hit point per HD
Failed a Friend	1st-level commoner, an ally or friend must have died because of an especially bad roll on your part (attack, stealth, etc.)	+2 to an ability, attack, saving throw, or skill check once per hour, but become shaken	Replace the previous benefit with the ability to reroll any such check once per day
Love above Your Station	1st-level commoner, you must have found love with a person of a higher station than your ignoble birth	+2 to Sense Motive checks (+4 at 10 ranks), and know the direction to your true love	+2 to attack, saving throw, and skill checks upon losing more than three-quarters of your hit points
Magic Obsessed	1st-level commoner, you must have let other important duties lapse in favor of studying magic	+2 to Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft checks (+4 at 10 ranks)	+1 to spell saving throw DCs and effective caster level
Monstrous Commoner	1st-level commoner, you must have slain five intelligent non-combatants for either your own personal gain or for no cause at all	Automatically roll a 15 for Intimidate checks three times per day	+2 to Intimidate (+4 at 10 ranks), and +1 to certain rolls after slaying an intelligent creature
Outdoorsman	1st-level commoner, you must have lived one year in the wild without support from civilization	+2 to Knowledge (geography) checks (+4 at 10 ranks), and double food and water provided by Survival checks for others	Conditionally gain benefits similar to <i>find the path</i> and <i>goodberry</i>
Revolutionary	1st-level commoner, choose a municipality that possesses an alignment opposite to (on at least one axis away from) yours that you have lived in for at least one year	+1 to Bluff, Intimidate, and Diplomacy checks (+2 at 10 ranks)	Double previous bonuses, and once per day consider yourself to roll a 10 with Bluff, Intimidate, or Diplomacy

Goal: Discover the history of the adventurer you discovered, and tie up their “loose ends” as thanks for providing you with your start.

Completion Benefit: You gain the Weapon Proficiency feat for the weapon type you took from the adventurer, and the Weapon Focus feat for the specific weapon you took. Alternately, you gain the Skill Focus relevant to what gear you

discovered on the body such as Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (religion), or Use Magic Device for a spellbook or wand (subject to Game-master discretion.)

Chip on Your Shoulder

Story

You've had a humiliating run-in with an adventurer, and long to prove your worth.

Prerequisites: Commoner as favored class, you must have been bested in a contest by an adventurer

Benefit: You're driven to work harder toward your development as an adventurer. At each new commoner level you gain, you may select one additional favored class bonus.

Goal: You must decisively defeat a challenging foe who is an adventurer. This defeat can be in a martial, spellcasting, or skill-based contest.

Completion Benefit: Increase an ability value of your choice by 2.

Clawed Your Way Back, Never Gonna Stop Story

You've survived and recovered from a wound without magical assistance.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, you've recovered from a severe wound (75% or more of your HP) without magical healing

Benefit: You don't die until your negative hit point total is equal to or greater than 4 + your Constitution score. Once per day as a standard action, you can force yourself to carry on by strength of will alone, gaining 1 temporary hit point per hit die. These temporary hit points last for 10 minutes.

Goal: Slay a challenging foe when you are less than one-quarter of your hit points. Temporary hit points do not count toward this total.

Completion Benefit: You gain +1 hit points per hit die.

Failed a Friend Story

Your inaction or failure resulted in the death of someone you cared for deeply.

Prerequisite: 1st-level commoner, an ally or friend must have died because of an especially bad roll on your part (attack, stealth, etc.)

Benefit: As an immediate action, you can add a +2 bonus to the result of one ability check, attack roll, saving throw, or skill check you have just rolled. Starting the round after you use this ability, you become shaken for 1 minute as memories of your failure fill your mind. You may not use this ability again for 1 hour.

Goal: Gain atonement for your failure, usually through a combination of making restitution to the deceased loved ones, honoring their memory, and taking on and fulfilling a cause or quest that was important to them.

Completion Benefit: You gain the ability to reroll a failed attack roll, ability check, or skill check once per day. You must keep the result of the second roll, even if it is lower. This ability replaces the previous benefit.

Love above Your Station Story

The one you love you can't be with you due to their social rank.

Prerequisite: 1st-level commoner, you must have found love with a person of a higher station than your ignoble birth

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Sense Motive checks. If you have 10 or more ranks in Sense Motive, this bonus increases to +4. In addition, you are always aware of your true love's direction from your own. This may be due to an item, minor enchantment, or being fed information by a mutual friend or ally.

Goal: Find a way to be with your true love (even if you can't formally wed.)

Completion Benefit: The inspiration of knowing your love waits for your return grants a +2 bonus on attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks whenever your hit points drop below one-quarter (not counting any temporary hit points.) Even if your true love dies, you carry their love with you, either to avenge their death or to continue to be the person they saw you to be.

Magic Obsessed Story

Despite little to no talent for magic, you are utterly obsessed with researching and understanding the arcane.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, you must have let other important duties lapse in favor of studying magic

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Spellcraft and Knowledge (arcana) checks. If you have 10 or more ranks in either of these skills, the bonus for that skill increases to +4.

Goal: Cast at least two spells of each spell school via magical effects other than potions (scrolls, wands, wondrous items, etc.)

Completion Benefit: The save DCs for any spell-like effects you generate or spells you cast (through any means) increase by 1. In addition, the effective caster level of spells and spell-like effects you generate increases by 1.



Monstrous Commoner

Story

With each kill, you climb ever closer towards glory.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, you must have slain five intelligent noncombatants for either your own personal gain or for no cause at all

Benefit: Three times per day, you can treat an Intimidate check as though you rolled a 15.

Goal: Slay 100 intelligent non-combatants, then slay a challenging foe that seeks to either bring you to justice for your crimes or usurp your position.

Completion Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Intimidate checks. If you have 10 or more ranks in Intimidate, this bonus increases to +4. When you slay an intelligent creature, you gain a +1 feat bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, skill rolls, and caster level checks for 1 minute.

Outdoorsman

Story

You dream of exploring the trackless wild.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, you must have lived one year in the wild without support from civilization

Benefit: You can provide twice as much food and water for other people when attempting a Survival check to get along in the wild. In addition, you gain a +2 bonus on all Knowledge (geography) checks. If you have 10 or more ranks in Knowledge (geography), increase your bonus to +4.

Goal: Cross 100 miles of dangerous terrain without a map or a guide knowledgeable about the area. You may stop for no longer than 16 hours at one time to rest and heal. You must overcome an appropriate number of natural hazards, obstacles, and/or enemies.

Completion Benefit: Once per day, you can make a preternaturally accurate prediction of your path, as if you had cast *find the path* on yourself (caster level equals your character level.) In addition, you are an expert in finding beneficial herbs and plants. You may spend one day gathering supplies even in seemingly barren wastes. When you do, you gain an amount of supplies and healing herbs equivalent to casting *goodberry* (caster level equals your character level.)

Revolutionary

Story

You plan to tear down an existing aristocratic power structure.

Prerequisites: 1st-level commoner, choose a municipality that possesses an alignment opposite to (on at least one axis away from) yours that you have lived in for at least one year

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus on Bluff, Intimidate, and Diplomacy checks. If you have 10 ranks in one or more of these skills, this bonus increases to +2.

Goal: You must thwart a challenging foe that is directly involved in the rule and/or oppression of your chosen municipality.

Completion Benefit: Your bonus doubles (to +2 and +4 respectively.) Also, once per day instead of attempting a standard Bluff, Intimidate, or Diplomacy, you may choose to determine the result as if you had rolled a 10. If you have 10 or more ranks in the skill, you can use this ability twice per day.

7. Tools, Consumables, and Ammunition

Even if adventuring commoners don't (usually) have inherent magic, they still often operate in a world rich in magic or extraordinary alchemical items. This means spending the money necessary to access such magic. Typical adventuring group might not spend much of their gold on consumable items (both magical and mundane) because they are blessed with considerable class abilities that commoners can't rely on. Commoners, on the other hand, would probably be better off spending something like one-third or more of their money on such items. Doing so will likely be the only way to deal with a variety of situations most adventurers take for granted.

In the chapter to follow, we discuss some of the tools, ammunition, and consumable magical and alchemical items that allow commoners to triumph over foes despite the former's lack of class abilities. We analyze the best and most consistently useful, existing offerings and provide new options to round out your commoner's arsenal.

Mundane Items and Tools

Commoners carry a seemingly endless assortment of tools and mundane gear to deal with the various situations they encounter.

Block and Tackle

Price 5 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.

Whether it is used to hoist treasure from a pit or move supplies, a simple block-and-tackle pulley, when it is properly secured, adds a +5 circumstance bonus on Strength checks to lift heavy objects. Securing the pulley requires 1 minute.

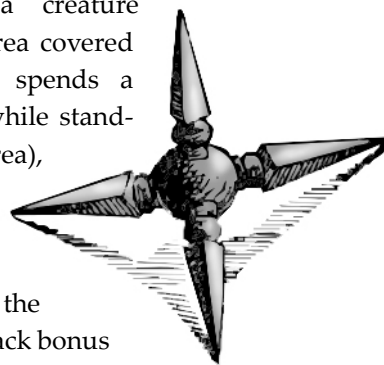
This tool is helpful whenever relatively weak commoners need to move something heavy.

Caltrops

Price 1 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

A caltrop is a four-pronged metal spike crafted so that one prong always faces up no matter how the caltrop comes to rest. You scatter caltrops on the ground in the hope that your enemies step on them or are forced to slow down to avoid them. One 2-pound bag of caltrops covers a 5-foot square area.

Each time a creature moves into an area covered by caltrops (or spends a round fighting while standing in such an area), it runs the risk of stepping on one. Make an attack roll for the caltrops (base attack bonus +0) against the creature. For this attack, the creature's shield, armor, and deflection bonuses do not count. If the creature is wearing shoes or other footwear, it gets a +2 armor bonus to AC. If the attack succeeds, the creature has stepped on a caltrop.



The caltrop deals 1 point of damage, and the creature's speed is reduced by half because its foot is wounded. This movement penalty lasts for 24 hours, until the creature is successfully treated with a DC 15 Heal check, or until it receives at least 1 point of magical healing. A charging or running creature must immediately stop if it steps on a caltrop. Any creature moving at half speed or slower can pick its way through a bed of caltrops with no trouble.

Caltrops may not work against unusual opponents.

Caltrops and marbles (see following) allow commoners to modify terrain, by either impeding their enemies or to shaping how they move, enabling commoners to exert control over a battlefield.

Crowbar

Price 2 gp; **Weight** 5 lbs.

This versatile tool is designed to help pry open whatever the user desires. A crowbar grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Strength checks made to force open a door or chest.

This is a must-have for dungeon-delving commoners who lack the strength or magic to open sealed doors and tombs.

Grappling Hook

Type	Price	Weight
Common	1 gp	4 lbs.
Mithral	1,000 gp	2 lbs.

Throwing a grappling hook requires a ranged attack roll, treating the hook as a thrown weapon with a range increment of 10 feet. Objects with ample places to catch the hook have an AC of 5.

Grappling hooks allow clever commoners to make use of their brain instead of brawn to move insurmountable obstacles, not to mention get over them.



Marbles

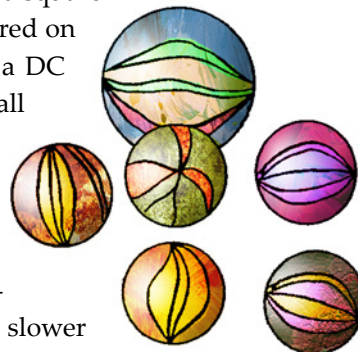
Price 1 sp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

Marbles can be used to slow opponents. One 2-pound bag of marbles covers a 5-foot square area.

A creature entering a square with marbles scattered on it must succeed at a DC 10 Reflex save or fall

prone (the creature's stability bonus to trip applies to this save.)

Any creature moving at half speed or slower can pick its way through a square of marbles with no trouble.



Powder

Price 1 cp; **Weight** 1/2 lb.

Powdered chalk, flour, and similar materials are popular with adventurers for their utility in pinpointing invisible creatures. Throwing a bag of powder into a square is an attack against AC 5, and momentarily reveals whether an invisible creature is there. A much more effective method is to spread powder on a surface (which takes 1 full round) and look for footprints.

Throwable bags of powder are an inexpensive solution for invisible attackers, particularly since spells like *glitterdust* and *see invisibility* are generally unavailable to them.

Rope

Price 1 gp; **Weight** 10 lbs.

This 50-foot length of hemp rope has 2 hit points and can be burst with a DC 23 Strength check.

Skeleton Key

Price 85 gp; **Weight** —

Many door locks have a similar design and thus can be unlocked by a similar key. A skeleton key may be tried on any standard door lock that uses a key, even if you don't have the Disable Device skill. You use the key's Disable Device bonus of +10 rather than your own total; you cannot take 10 when using a skeleton key. The key only gets one roll for any

particular lock. If the roll fails, the key is unable to open or close that lock. Inferior skeleton keys may only have a +5 bonus.

A skeleton key is a useful backup for opening locks commoners would otherwise be unable to access.

Smokestick

Price 20 gp; **Weight** 1/2 lb.

This alchemically treated wooden stick instantly creates thick, opaque smoke when burned. The smoke fills a 10-foot cube (treat the effect as a *fog cloud* spell, except that a moderate or stronger wind dissipates the smoke in 1 round.) The stick is consumed after 1 round, and the smoke dissipates naturally after 1 minute.

Wrist Sheath, Spring-Loaded

Price 5 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

This item works like a standard wrist sheath, but releasing an item from it is a swift action. Preparing the sheath for this use requires cranking the sheath's tiny gears and springs into place (a full-round action that provokes an attack of opportunity.)

Every adventuring commoner should be equipped with a twin set of wrist mounted sheaths to gain quick access to a brace of necessary items. It would be wise to have a smoke stick in one of the sheaths, as this is perhaps one of most affordable ways for commoners to escape or obtain battlefield control.

Alchemical Remedies and Protection

Given that commoners don't have ready access to divine or otherwise protective magic, adventuring commoners necessarily place much more value on alchemical items. Antitoxin, antiplague, twitch tonic, soothe syrup, and mediation tea all grant bonus to resist harmful or environmental effects with the added bonus that all but antitoxin and soothe syrup can be used *after* the impairment. Doing so offers an extra chance to resist the respective ill effects.

Vermin repellent is extremely effective in keeping most swarms away from the most vulnerable members of the group (although, if every adventurer uses it, dedicated vermin will inevitably make their Fortitude save to approach.) Fire and/or frost ward gel are great for countering the damage from most common elemental attacks.

Air Crystals

Cost: 50gp; **Weight:** —

These unpleasant-tasting, alchemically grown crystals release breathable air when chewed. A pouch of air crystals provides 1 minute of breathable air. Placing air crystals in your mouth takes a standard action; chewing them each round is a free action. Any attempt to speak while chewing air crystals negates any remaining duration.

Air crystals provide emergency breathing in a variety of situations where it would otherwise be denied to a commoner.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 25



Antiplague

Price: 50 gp; **Weight:** —

If you drink a vial of this foul-tasting, milky tonic, you gain a +5 alchemical bonus on Fortitude saving throws against disease for the next hour. If already infected, you may also make two saving throws (without the +5 bonus) that day and use the better result.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 25

Antitoxin

Price: 50 gp; **Weight:** —

If you drink a vial of antitoxin, you get a +5 alchemical bonus on Fortitude saving throws against poison for 1 hour.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 25

Fire Ward Gel

Price: 150 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

When you apply this thin gel to your skin, armor, or clothing, it creates a resistant barrier that protects you from fire or heat damage. You gain fire resistance 5. The gel burns away as it absorbs fire damage; when it absorbs a total of 20 points of fire damage, it is discharged.

Fire ward gel counts as *protection from energy* for the purpose of stacking multiple fire protection effects. Applying fire ward gel takes 1 minute, and it lasts for 1 hour before losing its potency. Multiple applications of fire ward gel do not stack; applying more while a dose is active merely resets the potential amount of fire damage absorbed to 20 points.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 25

Frost Ward Gel

Price: 150 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

When you apply this thin gel to your skin, armor, or clothing, it creates a resistant barrier that protects you from cold damage. You gain cold resistance 5. The gel flakes away as it absorbs cold damage; when it absorbs a total of 20 points of cold damage, it is discharged.

Frost ward gel counts as *protection from energy* for the purpose of stacking multiple cold protection effects. Applying frost ward gel takes 1 minute, and it lasts for 1 hour before losing its potency. Multiple applications of frost ward gel do not stack; applying more while a dose is active merely resets the potential amount of cold damage absorbed to 20 points.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 25



Meditation Tea

Price: 30 gp; **Weight:** —

Drinking this cloudy tea has a soothing effect that clarifies your thoughts. For 10 minutes after drinking the tea, you gain a +2 alchemical bonus against mind-affecting effects. If you drink meditation tea while suffering from a mind-affecting effect, you may immediately roll another saving throw (with the +2 bonus) against the effect; you may gain this particular benefit only once per day.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 20



Smelling Salts

Cost: 25gp; **Weight:** —

These sharply scented gray crystals cause people inhaling them to regain consciousness. Smelling salts grant you a new saving throw to resist any spell or effect that has rendered you unconscious or staggered. If exposed to smelling salts while dying, you immediately become conscious and staggered, but must still make stabilization checks each round. If you perform any standard action (or any other strenuous action) you take 1 point of damage after completing the act and fall unconscious again.

A container of smelling salts has dozens of uses if stoppered after each use, but depletes in a matter of hours if left opened.

Smelling salts make for excellent emergency battlefield medicine by getting a downed party member conscious again and back in the fight.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 20

Soothe Syrup

Price: 25 gp; **Weight:** 1/2 lb.

This sweet and wholesome tasting blue liquid creates a sense of warmth and comfort. Soothe syrup coats your stomach and makes it much more difficult for you to succumb to queasiness. For 1 hour after drinking soothe syrup, you gain a +5 alchemical bonus on saving throws made to resist effects that would make you nauseated or sickened.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 15

Troll Oil

Price 50 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

This crimson liquid is viscous and tastes foul. If you drink it, for the next hour you automatically stabilize when reduced to negative hit points (unless the damage is sufficient to instantly kill you.) You also have a 50% chance each round to end any bleed effect on you. If you take fire or acid damage, the benefits of troll oil are suspended for 1 round.

Troll oil to great ensure that even if a commoner is downed in battle, they are unlikely to die.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 30

Twitch Tonic

Price: 45 gp; **Weight:** —

This thick syrup is extracted from bitter herbs and enhanced by alchemy to ward against *sleep*, *paralysis*, and the staggered condition. If you drink twitch tonic, you gain a +2 alchemical bonus on saving throws made against these effects for the next hour. If you drink twitch tonic while suffering from any of these effects, you may immediately roll another saving throw against the effect (with the +2 bonus.) You may gain

this particular benefit only once per day. You can administer twitch tonic to an unconscious or paralyzed creature as a full-round action, similar to administering a *potion*.

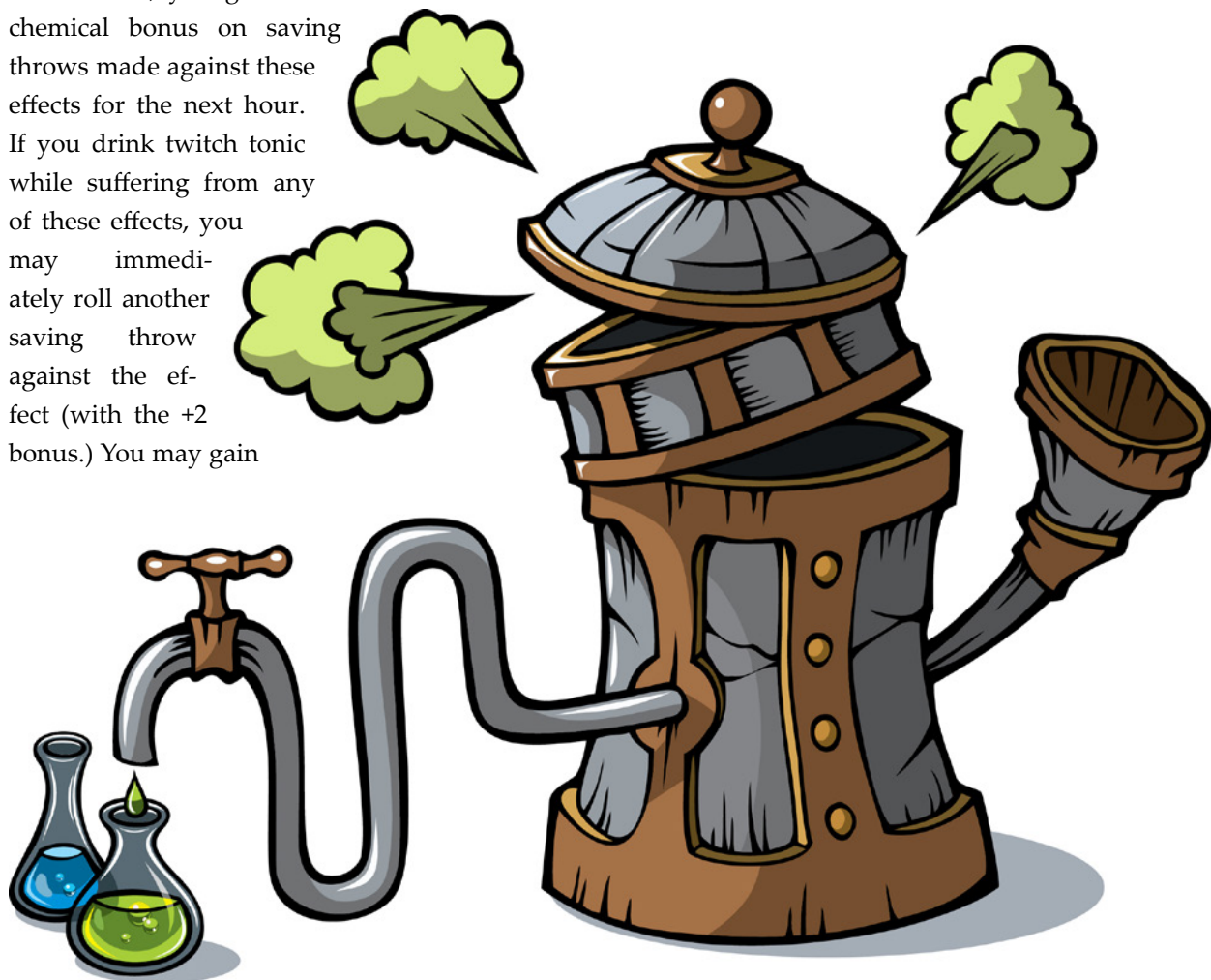
Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 25

Vermin Repellent

Cost: 5 gp; **Weight:** —

This vile-smelling white paste keeps vermin at bay if spread on the skin. Normal-sized (fine) vermin avoid you. Swarms of vermin must make a DC 15 Fortitude saving throw in order to enter your square. Once applied, vermin repellent remains effective for 4 hours or until you spend 1 round washing it off.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 20





Alchemical Weapons

Let's discuss some of the most essential alchemical weapons from existing sources. Selecting the appropriate weapon for the job is the main way commoners gain advantage over opponents. For example, thrown alchemical weapons are a mainstay of the adventuring commoner's kit.

Acid

Price: 10 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

You can throw a flask of acid as a splash weapon. Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet. A direct hit deals 1d6 points of acid damage. Every creature within 5 feet of the point where the acid hits takes 1 point of acid damage from the splash.

A vial of acid is invaluable as a weapon against foes that are otherwise invulnerable to the commoner's (admittedly limited) range of attacks. The downside is that acid inflicts relatively little damage.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 15

Alchemist's Fire

Price: 20 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Alchemist's fire is a mix of several volatile liquids that ignite when exposed to air. You can throw a flask of alchemist's fire as a splash weapon. Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet.

A direct hit deals 1d6 points of fire damage. Every creature within 5 feet of the point where the flask hits takes 1 point of fire damage from the splash. On the round following a direct hit, the target takes an ad-

ditional 1d6 points of damage. If desired, the target can use a full-round action to attempt to extinguish the flames before taking this additional damage. Extinguishing the flames requires a DC 15 Reflex save. Rolling on the ground provides the target a +2 bonus on the save. Leaping into a large body of water or magically extinguishing the flames automatically smothers the fire.



Alchemist's fire is invaluable for taking on a group of enemies or a foe that is simply too well armored for the lowly commoner to easily strike. Each flask causes relatively little damage, though, so commoners may want to consider an alchemical weapon that produces a more effective impairment.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 20

Burst Jar

Price: 35 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

This simple clay pot has two sealed, airtight inner chambers containing alchemical liquids. The jar is thrown as a splash weapon. It shatters on impact, covering the target with a mixture of the two liquids. One round later on your turn, the liquids react and explode with concussive force. The target takes 1 point of sonic damage, is deafened for 1d4 rounds, and must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1 round. Creatures within 5 feet of the explosion take 1 point of sonic damage.

The target can use a full-round action to scrape or wash off the liquid before it detonates, depositing the material in its square or an adjacent square. The material detonates as normal, though the original target only takes damage as if it were within 5 feet of the explosion.

Because burst jars deal damage while deafening or even stunning an opponent, they offer commoners two great attacks in one convenient package. Deafening is effective against spellcasters and others who coordinate their strategies during a fight using words, so a burst jar's value should not be underestimated.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 20

Darkflare

Price: 50 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Created by drow-hunters, this alchemical flare explodes in black sparks 1 round after lighting. Any creature in the same square as a darkflare when it explodes must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be unable to see with darkvision for 1d10 rounds. Affected creatures can still see in normal light with no penalty. A darkflare has no effect on creatures without darkvision.

While tricky to use, a darkflare can wholly cripple an opponent relying on darkvision (perhaps tossed at him or her after he or she was stuck in place by a tanglefoot bag or bear trap.) This is just the sort of advantage commoners rely on to survive.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 20

Fungal Stun Vial

Price: 75 gp; **Weight:** 1/2 lb.

Harvested from a rare fungus, these small vials emit a bright blue glow and are commonly used in intertribal kobold disputes. When broken, a fungal stun vial releases a flash of bright blue light in a 10-foot radius and dim light in a 20-foot radius. All creatures within the flash area must make a DC 20 Will save. Creatures that fail are stunned for 1d2 rounds if they're in the area of bright light, or are confused for 1 round if in the area of dim light.

Because fungal stun vials create bright light (and thus dazzle creatures with light sensitivity), as well as produce a stun or confusion effect, it is difficult for a smart commoner to pass on bringing some along. Two effects from one attack simply cannot be beaten as a weapon for a class that won't be gaining any additional attacks any time soon.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 30

Ghast Retch Flask

Price: 50 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Harvested and concentrated from the remains of slain ghouls, this foul-smelling powder is kept in tightly sealed flasks. It is thrown as a splash weapon and the flask breaks on impact, releasing noxious dust. The target is nauseated for 1 round and sickened for 3 rounds after that. A successful DC 12 Fortitude save prevents the nauseated condition,

but not the sickened condition. Creatures within 5 feet of where the flask hits are sickened for 1 round. This is a poison effect.

The ghastritch flask is an extremely effective addition to a commoner's arsenal. While the nausea it induces is relatively easy to resist, it will shut down any opponent who fails their save, and its sickening effect is unpreventable.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 20

Holy Water

Price: 25 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Holy water damages undead creatures and evil outsiders almost as if it were acid. A flask of holy water can be thrown as a splash weapon.

Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet. A flask breaks if thrown against the body of a corporeal creature, but to use it against an incorporeal creature, you must open the flask and pour the holy water out onto the target. Thus, you can douse an incorporeal creature with holy water only if you are adjacent to it. Doing so is a ranged touch attack that does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

A direct hit by a flask of holy water deals 2d4 points of damage to an undead creature or an evil outsider. Each such creature within 5 feet of the point where the flask hits takes 1 point of damage from the splash.

Temples to good deities sell holy water at cost (making no profit.) Holy water is made using the *bless water* spell. While categorized with the other thrown weapons, this item cannot be made via alchemy. It can be instead be bought at cost at nearly any good-aligned temple.

Commoners should always have holy water on hand to deal with undead and the like that will take advantage of the party's lack of holy magic.

Shard Gel

Price: 25 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

This vivid green gel instantly crystallizes into needle-like shards upon contact with the air. You can throw a flask of shard gel as a splash weapon. A direct hit deals 1d4 points of piercing damage as the shards penetrate the target's flesh. The target's

square and each square adjacent to it are covered in shards that function like caltrops. The caltrops last for 5 rounds before dissolving into harmless green sludge. Any effect that deals sonic damage to an area (such as *sound burst* or *shout*) immediately destroys all gel shards in that area.

Shard gel deals direct damage but also immediately creates a large zone enemies will not want to cross. This ability to cause some damage and provide instant battlefield control makes it a must for commoners.

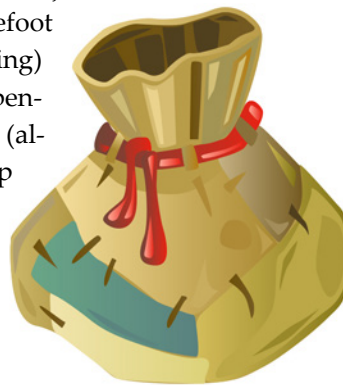
Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 20

Tangleburn Bag

Price: 150 gp; **Weight:** 5 lbs.

This sack contains tanglefoot bag materials and alchemical powders that burn at a high temperature. It functions like a tanglefoot bag, plus a direct hit on a creature deals 1d6 points of fire damage, and the creature must make a DC 20 Reflex save or catch on fire. If it catches on fire, for the next 2 rounds extinguishing the flames is a DC 25 Reflex save instead of a DC 15 save. Using water to extinguish the flames creates a burst of burning material equivalent to alchemist's fire making a direct hit on the target (including splash damage.) After the initial 2 rounds, the flames may be extinguished as normal.

Tangleburn bags are just as effective as tanglefoot bags (see following) with the added benefit of fire damage (although with a steep increase in cost.) They can be a commoner's best friend—if the gold is on hand to pay for them, that is.



Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 30

Tanglefoot Bag

Price: 50 gp; **Weight:** 4 lbs.

A tanglefoot bag is a small sack filled with tar, resin, and other sticky substances. When you throw a tanglefoot bag at a creature (as a ranged touch at-

tack with a range increment of 10 feet), the bag comes apart and goo bursts out, entangling the target and then becoming tough and resilient upon exposure to air. An entangled creature takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls and a –4 penalty to Dexterity and must make a DC 15 Reflex save or be glued to the floor, unable to move. Even on a successful save, it can move only at half speed. Huge or larger creatures are unaffected by a tanglefoot bag. A flying creature is not stuck to the floor, but it must make a DC 15 Reflex save or be unable to fly (assuming it uses its wings to fly) and fall to the ground. A tanglefoot bag does not function underwater.

A creature that is glued to the floor (or unable to fly) can break free by making a DC 17 Strength check or by dealing 15 points of damage to the goo with a slashing weapon. A creature trying to scrape goo off itself, or another creature assisting, does not need to make an attack roll; hitting the goo is automatic, after which the creature that hit makes a damage roll to see how much of the goo was scraped off. Once free, the creature can move (including flying) at half speed. If the entangled creature attempts to cast a spell, it must make a concentration check with a DC of 15 + the spell's level or be unable to cast the spell.

The goo becomes brittle and fragile after 2d4 rounds, cracking apart and losing its effectiveness. An application of universal solvent to a stuck creature dissolves the alchemical goo immediately.

Arguably the most common alchemical weapon is a tanglefoot bag because they are effective against most opponents (with the exception of incorporeal, or Huge and larger opponents) and simple to use effectively. Entanglement is a powerful impairment against those hit by the weapon and is coupled with being stuck to one spot (or being downed if flying.) It's not an exaggeration to say that a single tanglefoot bag can change the course of a fight.

Create: Craft (alchemy) DC 25

Thunderstone

Price: 30 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

You can throw this stone as a ranged attack with a range increment of 20 feet. When it strikes a hard surface (or is struck hard), it creates a deafening bang that is treated as a sonic attack. Each creature within a 10-foot-radius spread must make a DC 15

Fortitude save or be deafened for 1 hour. A deafened creature, in addition to the obvious effects, takes a –4 penalty on initiative and has a 20% chance to miscast and lose any spell with a verbal component that it tries to cast.

Since you don't need to hit a specific target, you can simply aim at a particular 5-foot square. Treat the target square as AC 5.

A thunderstone can be best be used during a surprise round to impair spell casters and ruin reaction times. This can be the difference between life and death for a commoner.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 25

Weapon Blanches

Price: varies; **Weight:** 1/2 lb.

When poured on a weapon and placed over a hot flame for a full round, they melt and form a temporary coating on the weapon. The blanching gives the weapon the ability to bypass one kind of material-based damage reduction, such as adamantine, cold iron, silver, or even allowing a weapon to do full damage to incorporeal creatures in the case of a ghost salt weapon blanch. The blanching remains effective until the weapon makes a successful attack.

Each dose of blanching can coat one weapon or up to 10 pieces of ammunition. Only one kind of weapon blanch can be on a weapon at one time. However, a weapon made of one special material (such as adamantine) can have a different material blanch (such as silver), and counts as both materials for the first successful hit.

Adventuring commoners are great manufacturers and users of weapon blanches to circumvent damage reduction, more often than not using these compounds on ammunition for greater cost effectiveness. These alchemical powders have a gritty consistency.

Weapon Blanches

Type	Price	Craft (alchemy) DC
Adamantine	100 gp	25
Cold iron	20 gp	20
Ghost salt	20 gp	25
Silver	5 gp	20

Magic Consumables

All commoner magic (with rare exceptions) comes from their ability to acquire and use magic items, which is most often reliant upon their skill with Use Magic Device. As such, they have a different relationship with magic than most adventurers, prioritizing and using items differently. For more information about the source of most of the magical items, see **The Adequate Adept** by J.M. Perkins and Michael Ficklin.

Wands

Wands are perhaps the most coveted magical items commoners can acquire. The ability to cast even low-level spells repeatedly is lifesaving. Generally utilized after (or before) combat, essential wand choices include healing wands (*cure light wounds* and *lesser restoration* being standouts), as well as popular buffs or debuffs (*enlarge person* or *protection from evil*.) For the healing wands especially, wealthy parties should carry multiple instances of the same wand (or at least a few backup scrolls in case of failure.) Flubs that prevent further use for that day are fairly common, and while a failed *enlarge person* is unfortunate, failed healing is potentially deadly if the commoners don't have a backup.

Essential Commoner Wands Include:

Cure light wounds—healing in a stick

Enlarge person—useful for engaging melee combat

Lesser restoration—fixing what isn't that great to begin with

Magic missile—automatic hits at range!

Protection from evil—because every little bit helps

Reduce person—useful for ranged combat

Oils and Potions

Expensive potions and oils are treated as emergency measures. When status effects or some aspect of the combat environment would shut down a fight and the commoners don't have an opportunity to escape, a potion or oil will grant the commoners a chance to triumph. These "fail-proof" items are

treasured (no Use Magic Device attempt is necessary), and likely only used as a last resort so as not to waste them.

Essential Commoner Oils Include:

Align weapon—necessary to harm some foes with alignment-related damage reduction

Bestow grace—handy for boosting saving throws (so long as the user has a high Charisma)

Blur—for countering the vulnerabilities of surprise and sneak attacks

Daylight—great for dark places when your torch goes out or something afraid of light needs to be scared off

Essential Commoner Potions Include:

Cure light wounds—because someone always needs healing

Feather step—for when you don't watch your step or need to escape off a cliff or the like

Fly—handy for getting around

Invigorate—keeps you going when you want to fall on your feet (especially running from something big and bad)

See invisibility—so you don't get turned into sliced n' diced commoner by something you can't even see

Stalwart resolve—useful to keep you going even when you cannot deal with ability loss directly

Touch of the sea—for those awkward moments when you're pitched overboard or are stuck at the bottom of a dungeon and a subterranean river is the only way out

Weapon of awe—multiple benefits to a single weapon from a single potion? Oh yeah!

Scrolls

Scrolls are a primary magical tool in the commoner arsenal because there is no spell level cap to them. Also, they are the most affordable option, and often the most common magical items available. Every adventuring group should have a small library of scrolls available, although most generally avoid those that inflict direct damage or work other types

of offensive magic. This is because even commoners wielding scrolls have few options for piercing spell resistance or even overcoming an opponent's high save. Instead, scroll-wielding commoners focus on restorative magic and boons.

Essential Commoner Spell Scrolls Include:

Break enchantment—vital for breaking free of something's influence when the commoner's poor saving throws are not up to the task

Command undead—remembering that mindless undead don't get a save, this is helpful for dealing with tomb hordes

Comprehend languages—because people insist on speaking different languages outside of your little hamlet

Endure elements—this can get you through incredibly adverse environmental conditions when your gear just isn't enough

Faerie fire—useful for outlining enemies in the dark, providing a point of reference, or shedding some light on things when the torch goes out

Gust of wind—handy for extinguishing all the lights at once or keeping an enemy at bay

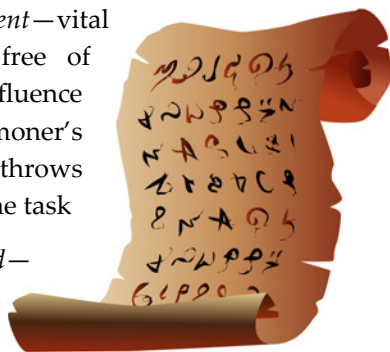
Hide from animals—why hide from a wolf pack up in the trees when you can walk right past them?

Hide From undead—ideal when there are just too many skeletons or zombies to take on, or when you turn a corner and find yourself face-to-face with a mummy or vampire

Remove blindness—how else do you plan on getting your lost eyesight back?

Remove curse—because commoners really cannot afford to be walking around with a curse making them even more vulnerable

Remove disease—commoners aren't exactly known for the sort of heartiness that comes from a healthy diet, nor do they often have fantastic saves to resist illness



Resist energy or *protection from energy*—this could keep you alive long enough to defeat an enemy who expected to freeze, fry, or zap you

Restoration—necessary for fighting many types of more powerful undead

New Arrows and Ammunition

With their reliance on ranged attacks, ingenious commoners have created a variety of alchemical arrows—usually by combining existent alchemical effects with arrows and bolts. As previously mentioned, adventuring commoners will spend a relatively high amount of their gold and other resources to acquire these sorts of weapons and use them often as they can make the difference between life and death.

Because of the awkward construction of the following arrows, they all impose a –1 penalty on any attack roll made using them. Also, their range increments are halved compared to an ordinary arrow or bolt of the same size. These arrows do not deal normal damage; their effects are noted in their descriptions.

Darkflare Arrow

Price: 5 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb. per 10

A darkflare arrow is a modified dark flame, primed to burst into a spray of purple sparks when it strikes.

Any creature struck by a darkflare arrow must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be unable to see with darkvision for 1d10 rounds. Affected creatures can still see in normal light with no penalty. A darkflare has no effect on creatures without darkvision.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 20

A Note About Crossbow Bolts

Crossbow-favoring commoners have deduced ways to convert every trick or specialty arrow into bolt form. When crafting a specialty bolt instead of a specialty arrow, double the cost or add 5 gp—whichever is greater.

Gush Arrow

Price: 10 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb. per 10

This arrow ends in an intricate glass bulb charged with the alchemical equivalent of a *create water* spell. On a successful hit, the bulb explodes, drenching the square with two gallons of water and extinguishing any (non-magical) flame—especially torches. This arrow deals 2d6 damage to creatures made of fire.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 15

Powder Burst Arrow

Price: 10 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb. per 10

This arrow has an oblong head filled with pressurized powder. If the arrow hits an object or creature, it bursts into a gout of sticky powder adhering to a creature for 1d4 rounds. This effect renders an invisible creature visible.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 15

Quickened Phosphorescent Gel Arrow

Price: 200 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb. per 10

This arrow ends with a sealed bulb of specially treated phosphorescent gel. When it strikes an object or opponent (beating their touch AC), it bursts and coats them in glowing phosphorescent gel. At the start of the shooter's next turn, the gel combusts; inflicting 2d6 fire damage and creating a bright light for one round within a ten foot radius.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 30

Rusting Powder Arrows

Price: 75 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb. per 10

This arrow appears to be an ordinary arrow, but it is not. The arrowhead is actually made of pressed rusting powder with a thin layer of protective shellac. When the arrow or bolt hits an object primarily composed of metal, the arrow explodes in a mist of rusting powder. Any metal object struck inflicts 25% of its maximum hit points in damage and gains the fragile condition. A second hit (or a hit on an already fragile item) inflicts an additional 25% damage and inflicts the broken condition. A third hit (or a hit on an object that is already broken) destroys the item.

The AC to hit armor is equal to the touch AC of the creature wearing it. The AC of a weapon is equal to the wielder's touch AC +6.

Rusting powder arrows do not affect gold, silver, copper, bronze, brass, or mithral, but affects iron, steel, and adamantine.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 30

Sticky-Smokey Arrow

Price: 60 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb. per 10

This oddly named projectile is actually a somewhat ingenious cludge of a modified smokestick, alchemist glue, and alchemist glue accelerant. Upon a successful attack against the target's touch AC, the ammunition adheres to the target's armor or body and fills the immediate five foot square with smoke. It then continues to produce smoke for five rounds. This arrow can be removed as a full-round action (and can also then be deposited in an adjacent square), but it will continue to produce smoke (filling whatever square it's in) for five rounds.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 20

New Alchemical Weapons

Enterprising commoner alchemists have learned how to make the following combination alchemical weapons. Each enjoys increased potency and effectiveness at the expense of greater volatility and an increased cost.

Alchemist's Fire Burst

Price: 200 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb

This is a clever combination of alchemist's fire and air crystals. It functions as a more potent form of standard alchemist's fire because its flames are fed by the encapsulated oxygen of the air crystals.

You can throw a flask of alchemist's fire burst as a splash weapon. Treat this attack as a ranged touch attack with a range increment of 10 feet.

A direct hit deals 3d6 points of fire damage. Every creature within 5 feet of the point where the flask hits takes 3 points of fire damage from the splash. On the round following a direct hit, the target takes an additional 1d6 points of damage. If desired, the target can use a full-round action to attempt to extinguish the flames before taking this additional damage. Extinguishing the flames requires a DC 20 Reflex save. Rolling on the ground provides the

target a +2 bonus on the save. Leaping into a large body of water or magically extinguishing the flames automatically smothers the fire.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 20

Flashbang

Price: 75 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

This is a two-part orb, half of which is an ordinary thunderstone and the other half a clear glass bubble filled with coarse gray powder. When thrown, the flash powder ignites concurrent with a deafening thunderclap. Creatures within a 10-foot-radius burst are blinded for 1 round (Fortitude DC 13 negates.) Additionally, each creature within a 10-foot-radius spread must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or be deafened for 1 hour (treat this as a sonic attack.) A deafened creature, in addition to the obvious effects, takes a –4 penalty on initiative and has a 20% chance to miscast and lose any spell with a verbal component that it tries to cast.

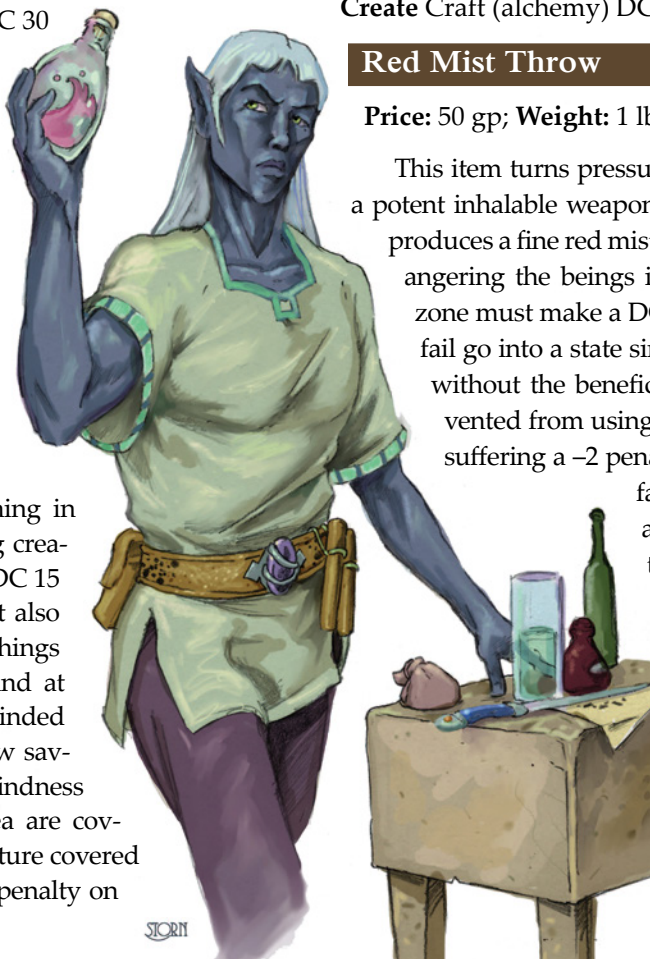
Since you don't need to hit a specific target, you can simply aim at a particular 5-foot square. Treat the target square as AC 5.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 30

Glitterdust Throw

Price: 100 gp; **Weight:** 2 lbs.

This small, silvered orb is filled with alchemically pressurized and highly adhesive sparkling material. When the orb strikes, a cloud of golden particles covers everyone and everything in that single square, causing creatures to become blinded (DC 15 Fortitude save to resist.) It also visibly outlines invisible things for 3d4 rounds (each round at the end of their turn blinded creatures may attempt new saving throws to end the blindness effect.) All within the area are covered by the dust. Any creature covered with the dust takes a –40 penalty on Stealth checks.



STORM

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 30

Poison Shard Gel

Price: 50 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

Much like shard gel, this vivid green gel instantly crystallizes into needle-like shards upon contact with the air. However, this substance has been modified so it can be improved with any single wounding poison its wielder cares to add. You can throw a flask of poison shard gel as a splash weapon.

A direct hit deals 1d4 points of piercing damage as the shards penetrate the target's flesh; this damage is in addition to any poison effects. The target's square and each square adjacent to it are covered in shards that function like caltrops with a similar poison effect. The caltrops last for 5 rounds before dissolving into harmless green sludge. Any effect that deals sonic damage to an area (such as sound burst or shout) immediately destroys all gel shards in that area.

Adding poison to shard gel induces the same risks and checks normally associated with poisoning a weapon.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 25

Red Mist Throw

Price: 50 gp; **Weight:** 1 lb.

This item turns pressurized barbarian chew into a potent inhalable weapon. When thrown, this item produces a fine red mist that fills a ten foot square, angering the beings it affects. Creatures in the zone must make a DC 14 Will save. Those who fail go into a state similar to a barbarian's rage without the beneficial effects (thus only prevented from using certain skills/abilities and suffering a –2 penalty to AC.) Creatures that fail the save by 5 or more are driven to physically attack whatever creature is nearest to them. Mindless creatures, creatures immune to fear or other emotional effects, or creatures already in a rage or fury state are immune to the effects of this item.

Create Craft (alchemy) DC 20

8. Improvised Traps

Arguably more so than any other class, commoners make use of traps as a way to control their environment and gain an advantage over opponents. Without the use of even 1st-level spells like *entangle* or *fog cloud*, commoners are forced to make use of what they have at their disposal to create their traps. Also unlike other classes, commoners know traps need not be elaborate devices or mechanical constructs full of innumerable, intricate moving parts; each one costing several thousand gold pieces with the potential for lasting centuries. Instead, commoners use what are known as improvised traps.

Improvised traps last only a short time because they are not put together with the usual amount of care and consideration. For every 24 hours that

passes following its crafting, there is a cumulative 10% chance an improvised trap will become unusable, meaning none lasts longer than ten days.

Crafting Improvised Traps

When making a check to craft, place, or set an improvised trap, increase the Perception difficulty, save DC and Disable Device DC of the trap by 1 for every 5 by which the roll succeeds. Also, a creature may use Craft (traps) in place of Disable Device to disarm, alter, or reset traps of their own making.

Improvised traps fill a 5-foot square unless otherwise noted.

New Materials

Every improvised trap requires specific base materials and/or tools to set and is only operable in certain environments.

Bait

Bait is dependent on a creature: usually a freshly killed carcass can serve. However, depending on the intended target, something far more interesting may serve this purpose—a newly forged sword for a rust monster or even a sentient creature for a ghoul, for instance.

Whatever the case may be, if the creature being trapped has an Intelligence of 2 or less, baiting a trap increases the Perception and save DCs by 5. If their Intelligence is greater than 2 but less than 8, on the other hand, both DCs are only increased by 2. Creatures with an Intelligence of 8 or higher are generally immune to the allure of such simple bait unless great care—such as from DC 20 Craft (traps) check—is taken to make it appear naturally occurring.

Subject to the Gamemaster's discretion, bait may be more likely to lure a hungry creature with the scent ability.

Wire

Thin, strong tripwire is utilized in the majority of improvised traps. Almost invisible to the naked eye, use of wire while constructing a trap that requires either rope or wire increases the trap's Perception DC and saving throw by 2 (otherwise, it is assumed that improvised traps are made with rope.)

Bear Trap

Type mechanical; Perception DC 15; Disable Device DC 20

Effects

Although intended for trapping large animals, bear traps work as well for trapping humanoids or monsters. The hinged jaws of the trap are attached to a chain, which in turn is secured to a spike driven into the ground to ensure that the victim cannot simply crawl away. Prying open the jaws or pulling the spike from the ground requires a DC 20 Strength check.

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Atk +10 melee (2d6+3); sharp jaws spring shut around the creature's ankle and halve the creature's base speed (or hold the creature immobile if the trap is attached to a solid object.) The creature can escape with a DC 20 Disable Device check, DC 22 Escape Artist check, or DC 26 Strength check.

This is an actual mechanism, unlike a true improvised trap. As such, creating it uses the standard crafting rules instead of those presented here regarding improvised traps.

Craft (traps) DC 20; **Time to Craft** standard; **Materials/Tools** metal; **Alternate Cost** 2 gp; **Weight** 10 lbs.

Unlike standard Craft checks to make a trap, the time needed to create an improvised trap does not rely upon weekly checks and the improvised trap's value. Instead, each improvised trap presents an amount of time to craft the trap on the spot. Failing the Craft (traps) check means this same amount of time must pass to try again. This required amount of time may be halved by suffering a -4 penalty to the Craft (traps) check.

Improvised Traps

The following provides a selection of sample improvised traps commoners (and others) can make use of.

Some improvised traps have an Alternate Cost listing that indicates how much the trap's materials would cost if they were purchased ready-made. This is absent from traps that this is not possible or

appropriate for, such as a pit. You cannot buy a pre-dug pit to place wherever you want without a bit of magic (so you may want to look at the *portable pit trap* on pg 85), although you can negotiate a price to have someone else dig it for you.

Block and Tackle Trap

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 10

Effects

A more advanced deadfall, the block and tackle trap hoists heavy objects into the air in order to crush creatures beneath. A Reflex 25 save is required to avoid the falling debris otherwise 6d6 bludgeoning damage is suffered. Increasing a block and tackle trap's area of effect by a 5-foot square increases the Craft DC by 2 per additional square and the Save DC by 2, but decreases the Perception DC by 2.

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Craft (traps) DC 25; **Time to Craft** ten minutes; **Materials/Tools** a secure point to which the block and tackle can be attached, wire or rope, wood or stone equal to twice the weight of the intended target per 5-ft. square; **Alternate Cost** 5 gp

Traps and Lighting

Attempting to spot a trap in dim light counts as 'Terrible Conditions' and adds 5 to the Perception DC of any trap.

Deadfall

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 12; **Disable Device** DC 12

Effects

This clever arrangement of sticks (and logs) and stones is designed to drop heavy objects onto a creature within the targeted 5-foot square when triggered. A Reflex 15 save is required to avoid the falling debris otherwise 2d6 bludgeoning damage is suffered. Expanding the area of effect by one 5-foot square increases both the required Craft (traps) and resulting Reflex save DC by 2 per square, but decreases the Perception DC by 2.

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Craft (traps) DC 20+ (see previous); **Time to Craft** 1 hour for the first 5-ft. square, +20 minutes per additional square; **Materials/Tools** Wire or rope, wood or stone equal to twice the weight of the intended target per 5-ft. square; **Alternate Cost** none

Deadfall, Improved

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 15; **Disable Device** DC 15

Effects

This superior deadfall is harder to notice and more likely to kill or critically injure any creature affected. A DC 20 Reflex save is required to avoid this deadfalls debris with failure resulting in 4d6 bludgeoning damage. Expanding the area of effect by one 5-foot square increases both the required Craft (traps) and resulting Reflex save DC by 2 per square, but decreases the Perception DC by 2.

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Craft (traps) DC 25+ (see previous); **Time to Craft** 2 hours for the first 5-ft. square, +30 minutes per additional square; **Materials/Tools** Wire or rope, wood or stone equal to twice the weight of the intended target per 5-ft. square; **Alternate Cost** none

Improvised Crossbow Trap

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 15; **Disable Device** DC 15

Effects

Usually deployed upon doors to shoot an intruder, this trap is typically constructed with an already



drawn crossbow. The crossbow is alchemically glued to a surface with a wire extending from the trigger to a door, to be activated as the door opens, or to a carefully place tripwire. The crossbow is Atk +15.

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Craft (traps) DC 18; **Time to Craft** 1 minute; **Materials/Tools** alchemical glue, rope or wire, crossbow and bolts; **Alternate Cost** cost of components

Improvised Alchemical Weapon Trap

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 17; **Disable Device** DC 15

Effects

This improvised trap consists of a bundle of up to four alchemical weapons (e.g., alchemist's fire) strung together in such a way as to burst when activated by a tripwire or the like. Typically, the alchemical weapons activate by falling or through being crushed from the tripwire becoming taut when pulled upon. The DC of crafting an improvised alchemical weapon trap using one weapon is 17, and increases by +5 for each additional alchemical weapon used. The saving throw DC for avoiding the trap's alchemical weapons is determined by the weapon type; if absent, a DC 15 Reflex save is required.

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Craft (traps) DC 17+ (see previous); **Time to Craft** 1 minute; **Materials/Tools** alchemical glue, rope or wire, one or more alchemical weapon; **Alternate Cost** cost of components

Pit

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 5; **Disable Device** none

Effects

A pit is a very simple but labor-intensive trap, and its use is a typical tactic rural communities employ to deal with dangerous creatures. With a DC 8 Craft (trap) check (which may be made untrained), an individual with a spade or shovel working for three hours can dig a five foot square pit in sand, dirt, or mud. The individual creating the pit must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or become exhausted at the completion of the pit's digging. On a successful save, the individual becomes fatigued instead.

This pit requires a DC 5 Perception check to spot. Anyone attempting to cross it unaware is forced to make a DC 10 Reflex save to avoid falling in, which would inflict 1d3 nonlethal damage from the unexpected drop.

Multiple 5-foot square pits may be created together, adding 1 hour of time for each additional 5 foot square. Additional 5-foot squares can be dug at the bottom of the initial 5-foot pit so that nonlethal damage is suffered at the rate of 1d6 per 10-foot depth. Alternately, several side-by-side pits increase the area affected. A pit 10 feet by 10 feet may be created in this way. For every additional 5-foot square beyond 10x10 the pit is in size, a successful DC 20 Knowledge (engineering) check is required to keep it from collapsing.

Trigger location; **Reset** not required

Craft (traps) DC 8; **Time to Craft** 3 hours for the first 5-ft. square, +1 hour per additional square; **Materials/Tools** shovel and appropriate ground; **Alternate Cost** none (but may hire laborers)

Pit Addition, Camouflage

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC as pit +10 (15); **Disable Device** none

Effects

A cleverly placed spread of branches, grass covered wicker, or even sand covered blanket. This covering obscures the already-existing pit beneath it.

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Craft (traps) DC 15; **Time to Craft** 5 minutes per 5-ft. square; **Materials/Tools** branches or a blanket covered with earth, improvised pit trap; **Alternate Cost** 2 cp per 5-ft. square

Pit Addition, Spikes

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC as pit (5); **Disable Device** none

Effects

Simple, sharp wooden stake sunk into the bottom of a pit, these spikes add piercing damage to a pit (in addition to the falling damage.) The spikes are Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d6 damage each. DC 20 Reflex avoids.

Trigger location; **Reset** not required

Craft (traps) DC 12; **Time to Craft** 30 minutes per 5-ft. square; **Materials/Tools** blade, sticks, improvised pit trap; **Alternate Cost** 5 sp per 5-ft. square

Snare, Ground

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 14; **Disable Device** DC 5

Effects

This trap utilizes a noose-like loop of wire or rope set close to the ground to catch unwary feet moving through the same square. If they do, the snare has a chance to trip the creature as well as keeping them unable to move out of the trap's square, requiring a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid. Snares can be cleared with a full round action by a creature with hands, or through the use of a standard action with a slashing attack.

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Craft (traps) DC 15; **Time to Craft** 15 minutes; **Materials/Tools** wire or rope, something to secure it; **Alternate Cost** 5 sp

Snare, Hanging

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 12; **Disable Device** DC 10

Effects

The trap utilizes a noose-like loop of wire or rope set close to the ground to catch unwary feet moving through the square. If they do, the snare has a chance to hoist up and hang the creature off the ground, requiring a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid. How far off the ground depends on the length of wire or rope used, and how high the snare is hung. Creatures lifted and suspended off the ground are entangled and risk fall damage if freed by a slashing attack. Snares can be cleared with a full round action by a creature with hands, or through the use of a standard action by a creature that is wielding a bladed weapon.

Hanging snares require a DC 10 Craft (traps) check to create a snare capable of lifting a Tiny or smaller creature off the ground. This DC increases by 5 for each size category above Tiny (e.g., 15 for Small, 20 for Medium, 25 for Large.) No creature greater than Large may be snared by this improvised trap.

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Craft (traps) DC 10 to 25 (see previous); **Time to Craft** 1 hour; **Materials/Tools** wire or rope, flexible tree; **Alternate Cost:** 5 sp

Tripwire

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 17; **Disable Device** DC 10

Effects

Only slightly more complicated than a pit, tripwires are often used as triggers for other devices, including bells or alchemical traps. Spaces with tripwires deployed within count as difficult terrain if the tripwires are noticed. A Large or smaller creature moving through a tripwire-trapped square that has not succeeded at a Perception check to spot them must make a DC 10 Reflex save or trip and become prone. (This will also trigger any other trap the tripwire is attached to.) Creatures aware of the tripwire can make a DC 12 Acrobatics check to move through the space normally. Creatures intentionally moving through the space and treating it as difficult terrain do not need to make this check. Even if spotted, tripwires still counts as difficult terrain and will halt a run or a charge.

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Craft (traps) DC 10; **Time to Craft** 1 full-round action; **Materials/Tools** wire or rope, two secure points to suspend the tripwire between; **Alternate Cost** 2 cp

Tripwire, Bells

Type ; Perception DC 14; **Disable Device** DC 12

Effects

This improvised trap is similar to tripwire, but it also has tiny bells or some other form of noisemaker attached. When tripped upon, this variation will act as an alarm as the tripwire's jangling rings the attached bells.

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Craft (traps) DC 12; **Time to Craft** 1 full-round action; **Materials/Tools** wire or rope, bells, two secure points to suspend the tripwire between; **Alternate Cost** 2 sp

9. Wondrous Items

Magic items are, frankly, one of the few things that can help balance things out between a commoner adventurer and the dangerous world they choose to explore. Magic items and armor are a great help, but when it comes to wondrous items, a bit of care and consideration is called for.

Depending on the availability of magic items in your game's world, adventuring commoners may be able to acquire several wondrous items ideally suited to their circumstances. Alternately, if magic items or individuals capable of crafting them are rare, they may only receive a single one at the end of an epic quest. In either case, the following chapter provides insight into (sometimes unlikely and overlooked) items likely to be of great value to commoner characters.

When able to purchase or otherwise acquire items best suited to assist them, adventuring commoners value a different sort of magical item than traditional adventurers. Many commoners will opt for less costly enchanted gear that provides them with unexpected advantages rather than benefits to attacks, saving throws, and the like. In this manner, adventuring commoners focus on increasing the breadth of options available to them rather than trying to adjust the balance of their existing abilities.

Existing Magic Items

For convenience, we've gathered here a selection of wondrous items that can be especially useful to an adventuring commoner.

Boots of the Cat

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 1st

Slot feet; **Price** 1,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

Description

These high-soled, blue boots provide a great deal of comfort and arch support while also making the wearer appear a little bit taller than normal. The boots' wearer always takes the minimum possible damage from falls (as if the Gamemaster had rolled a 1 on each die of damage incurred by the fall.) Also, at the end of a fall, the wearer always lands on their feet.

Such boots can be essential to adventuring commoners with no means to detect pit traps or the like. Escaping overwhelming odds by leaping from seemingly impossible heights and suffering little damage is also helpful.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *feather fall*;
Cost 500 gp

Bracers of Archery, Lesser

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 4th

Slot wrists; **Price** 5,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

Description

These bracers look like ordinary, light protective wear. They empower the wearer to use any bow (not including crossbows) as if they were proficient in its use. If they already have proficiency with any type of bow, they gain +1 competence bonus on attack rolls and no bonus on damage rolls.

So, *bracers of archery* (even the lesser variety) not only provide a bonus to ranged fighters, but al-

low for the expert use of bows for commoners who would otherwise have to spend precious traits or feats for the proficiency. How great is that?

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, crafter must be proficient with a longbow or shortbow; **Cost** 2,500 gp

Gloves of Reconnaissance

Aura faint divination; **CL** 3rd

Slot hands; **Price** 2,000 gp; **Weight** —

Description

Each of these fingerless, worked leather gloves look as though they have seen heavy use, and often bear the stains or scent of grass or wet mud.

On command, the wearer can use the gloves to see and hear through solid material no more than 15 feet thick by placing both hands on that material. The gloves can be used for 10 rounds each day. The rounds need not be consecutive.

Gloves of reconnaissance are perhaps one of the most sought after items for any class. The ability to survey what lays behind a door/wall and preplan tactics (or even avoid an overly dangerous situation entirely) is vital for a commoner who wants to avoid deadly surprises.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*; **Cost** 1,000 gp

Hat of Disguise

Aura faint illusion; **CL** 1st

Slot head; **Price** 1,800 gp; **Weight** —

Description

This apparently normal hat allows its wearer to alter her appearance as with a *disguise self* spell. As part of the disguise, the hat can be changed to appear as a comb, ribbon, headband, cap, coif, hood, helmet, or other headwear.

A *hat of disguise* grants commoners the ability to rapidly change their appearance at a moment's emergency.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *disguise self*; **Cost** 900 gp

Hybridization Funnel

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 3rd

Slot none; **Price** 200 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

Description

This two-spouted funnel is used to safely mix two alchemical splash weapons into a single flask. Using the vial requires 10 minutes and a DC 25 Craft (alchemy) check; a half-elf has a +5 bonus on this check. Failing the check means both splash weapon are destroyed. Success means the two materials are safely mixed into one vial that is the same volume as a normal splash weapon vial. When thrown as a splash weapon, the mixture has the effects of both component substances and creatures are affected as if hit by both.

The mixture becomes inert after 24 hours. Only liquids may be mixed with the funnel.

The bearer can use it to mix an alchemical splash weapon with either *holy* water or *unholy* water, but the Craft (alchemy) DC increases to 30; half-elves still get the +5 bonus on this check. The funnel does not work on potions, elixirs, extracts, or other materials. Mixing a substance with a similar or identical substance (such as alchemist's fire with alchemist's fire) has no effect. A mixture cannot be combined with another mixture.

The *hybridization funnel* allows for greater potency of alchemical weapons—allowing for two weapons to be thrown with one action. Considering their need to get as much bang out of each action as possible, this could be invaluable to adventuring commoners who favor alchemical weapons.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *fabricate* or combine extracts discovery; **Cost** 100 gp

Insistent Doorknocker

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 9th

Slot none; **Price** 5,000 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

Description

This iron gargoyle face holds an iron ring in its mouth. Once per day, when the flat back of the gargoyle face is placed against a wall, floor, or ceiling, it fuses into place, creating a usable door and penetrating the space beyond up to 1 foot as if using *passwall*. Speaking the command word again ends the *passwall* effect, returns the surface to its previous doorless shape, and releases the doorknocker from the surface.

The value of an *insistent doorknocker's* ability to allow adventuring commoners to approach hazards from an unexpected angle cannot be understated. Consider the benefits of opening up a ceiling like a door and raining down crossbow bolts on unprepared creatures or avoiding a door with a deadly trap simply by creating their own, for example.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *passwall*; **Cost** 2,500 gp

Iron Spike of Safe Passage

Aura faint illusion; **CL** 3rd.

Slot none; **Price** 2,000 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

Description

When hammered into place this 9-inch iron spike creates an illusion up to 15 feet high and in a 15-foot diameter centered on the spike. The illusion can be of one of the following: a small hillock of appropriate composition for the terrain, a pile of mundane crates or barrels, a mound of rubble, or a small structure (such as a cabin or canvas enclosure.) The exact size and specific parameters (such as the composition of timber) are chosen when the spike is placed. Interacting with the illusion grants a DC 12 Will save to disbelieve it.

Hammering the spike into place or removing it is a full-round action. The spike can be used any number of times and its effects last until removed.

The *iron spike of safe passage* has facilitated innumerable commoner ambushes against superior forces.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *silent image*; **Cost** 1,000 gp

Quick Runner's Shirt

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 5th

Slot chest; **Price** 1,000 gp; **Weight** —

Description

This shirt is made of light, gossamer-thin fabric embroidered with arrangements of winged feet.

Once per day as a swift action, the wearer can take an additional move action to move on their turn.

By granting an extra move action, *quick runner's shirt* has saved innumerable lives—either by allowing escape, or getting a much-needed potion to a wounded party member.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *haste*; **Cost** 500 gp

Sleeves of Many Garments

Aura faint illusion; **CL** 1st

Slot wrists; **Price** 200 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

Description

These translucent cloth tubes easily fit over their wearer's arms. The wearer of these sleeves can, when they slip them on, choose to transform their current garments into any other non-magical set of clothing. These new clothes fit perfectly and are always clean and mended unless the wearer specifically designates otherwise. When the sleeves are removed, the wearer's clothes revert to their original form.

Sleeves of many garments are a popular choice for adventuring commoners. They use this item to be appropriately dressed for any environmental or social encounter and have ready protection against swarms (*swarm suit*) and other hazards.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *disguise self*; **Cost** 100 gp

Traveler's Any-Tool

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 9th

Slot none; **Price** 250 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

Description

This implement at first seems to be nothing but a 12-inch iron bar lined with small plates and spikes. It can be folded, twisted, hinged, and bent, to form almost any known tool. Hammers, shovels, even a block and tackle (without rope) are possible. It can duplicate any tool the wielder can clearly visualize that contains only limited moving parts, such as a pair of scissors, but not a handloom. It cannot be used to replace missing or broken parts of machines or vehicles unless a mundane tool would have done the job just as well.

The any-tool counts as a set of masterwork artisan's tools for most Craft or Profession skills (although very specialist Craft variations, such as alchemy, still require their own unique toolset). It is an ineffective weapon, always counting as an improvised weapon and never granting any masterwork bonus on attack rolls.

The *traveler's any-tool* is one of the most useful and affordable items a commoner can get their hands on. It is largely limited only by its wielder's imagination.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *major creation*;
Cost 125 gp

Vial of Efficacious Medicine

Aura faint conjuration; **CL** 5th

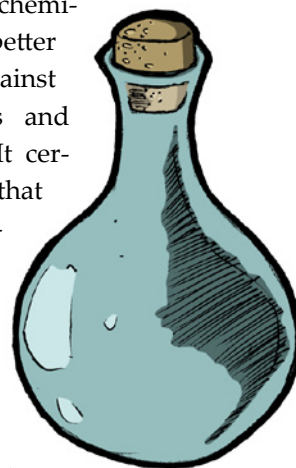
Slot none; Price 700 gp; Weight —

Description

This bulbous bottle is crafted of smoked glass and causes any liquid contained within to take on a significantly darker cast and twinkle with motes of beautiful white light.

A *vial of efficacious medicine* can hold a single dose of an alchemical remedy, such as antitoxin or antiplague. Loading a remedy into the vial is a standard action that provokes attacks of opportunity. When an alchemical remedy is imbibed or applied from the vial, any alchemical bonus it grants on saving throws or checks or to AC or CMD increases by 2. Treat this increase as an enhancement bonus. In addition, the user is healed of 1d8+5 points of damage. A *vial of efficacious medicine* can be used up to three times per day.

This item presents alchemical remedies that better protect commoners against environmental hazards and non-physical dangers. It certainly doesn't hurt that drinking from it also effectively acts as a *potion of cure light wounds* simultaneously.



Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *cure light wounds*, *polypurpose panacea*;
Cost 4,500 gp

New Magic Items

In addition to the provided selection of useful existing items, there is also an arsenal of new (often jury-rigged) magical items that are often found in the possession of adventuring commoners.

Alchemist's Sling

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 8th

Slot None; Price 2,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Description

This item looks and functions like a masterwork sling, with one notable exception. Three times a day, a thrown alchemist's weapon (*thunderstone*, *tanglefoot bag*, etc.) can be placed in the sling pouch where it reduces to the size of an ordinary sling bullet. The alchemist's weapon can then be hurled via the sling with the sling's range increment and benefitting from any usual bonuses (*masterwork* or *enchantment*.)

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, *stoneshape*; **Cost** 1,000 gp

Blessed Spade

Aura moderate transmutation; CL 5th

Slot None; Price 9,000 gp; Weight 5 lb.

Description

This item counts as a +1 spade (commoner weapon) with a number of special abilities. Time required to dig a pit is reduced to 1 hour, and doing so does not produce the fatigued condition. When used to do routine gardening or farm work, this spade allows for four times the expected yield from the plants in question.

Additionally, once per day as a standard action, the spade can be sunk into earth or stone (even worked stone) and cause one of the following plants to bloom:

- A guardian shrub (see sidebar)
- Goodberry bush that produces 4d4 goodberries, as per the *goodberry* spell.
- Knowledge tree, with a single pear-like fruit that tastes sweetly effervescent. By consuming this fruit, the eater gains a +5 bonus to a single Knowledge check. This bonus lasts for one hour or until used.
- A vine with two small melons. When consumed, these melons each act as a *potion of cure light wounds* (caster level 3.)
- Ten 5-foot squares of brambles which must be continuous and begins at the space the *blessed spade* is sunk into the ground. These brambles count as difficult terrain.

Plants grown by the spade last 24 hours, at which point they wither and turn to dust.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *summon nature's ally* 3; **Cost** 4,500 gp

Bracers of Polearms, Greater

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 8th

Slot wrists; **Price** 25,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

Description

These bracers look like normal protective wear. They empower the wearer to use any polearm (e.g., spears, horsechoppers, ranseurs) as if they were proficient in such a weapon's use. If they already have proficiency with one or more polearms, they gain a +2 competence bonus on attack rolls and a +1

Guardian Shrub

XP 600

N Medium plant

Init +2; **Senses** tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +0

Defense

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 22 (3d8+9)

Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

Immune plant traits

Offense

Speed 5 ft.

Melee tendril +5 (1d4+4)

Space 5 ft., **Reach** 10 ft.

Statistics

Str 17, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17 (can't be tripped)

competence bonus on damage rolls whenever using a proficient polearm. Both bracers must be worn for the magic to be effective.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, crafter must be proficient with some kind of polearm; **Cost** 12,500 gp

Bracers of Polearms, Lesser

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 4th

Slot wrists; **Price** 5,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

Description

These wristbands appear similar to *greater bracers of polearms*, though constructed of lighter material. They function as *greater bracers of polearms*, except that they grant a +1 competence bonus on attack rolls and no bonus on damage rolls.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, crafter must be proficient with a polearm; **Cost** 2,500 gp

Cover Feather Tokens

Aura strong conjuration; **CL** 12th

Slot none; **Price** 200 gp (Barricade), 300 gp (Arrow Slit) **Weight** —

Description

Each of these items is a small feather that has a power to suit a particular need and is usable only once. The kinds of tokens are described below. A specific feather token has no specific features to identify it unless its magic aura is viewed—even tokens with identical powers can be wildly different in appearance.

Arrow Slit: This token creates a 6 foot tall, 5 foot wide, 1 foot thick wall with an arrow slit that counts as improved cover (for one side of a square.) This cover has a hardness of 5 and 30 hit points.

Barricade: When thrown to the ground, this token manifests a defensible barricade (15 feet long, 5 foot wide, and 3 feet tall) that counts as partial cover for the people behind it. The barricade has a hardness of 5 and 60 hit points.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *major creation*;
Cost 100 gp (Barricade), 150 gp (Arrow Slit)

Fidget's Ballista of the Hole in the World

Aura strong conjuration; **CL** 12th

Slot —; **Price** 30,000 gp; **Weight** 30 lbs.

Description

This device resembles nothing so much as an exceptionally ugly, unwieldy, heavy crossbow. Actually a cleverly weaponized combination of a bag of holding and a portable hole, the ballista comes in two parts: a bolt and a delivery mechanism. The delivery mechanism is based on a (heavily modified) heavy crossbow while the bolt is a bulging shaft containing the magical components.

Fidget's ballista works like a single shot weapon with a range increment of 20 ft. Firing the weapon is a standard action whereby the wielder makes a ranged attack against the target's touch AC. Because of the weapon's awkward design and rarity, unim-

peded use requires taking an Exotic Weapon Proficiency. Even individuals who are otherwise skilled with improvised weapons cannot otherwise use it without penalty. If the attack misses, roll 1d4 to determine the direction of the miss (1 for overshoot/forward, 2 for left, 3 for right, 4 for undershot.) For every 5 points the attack roll misses by, the bolt lands 5 feet away from the intended target in this direction.

When fired, the bolt arms and, upon impact with a surface, forces the thinly rolled portable hole into the undersized bag of holding. This opens a gate to the Astral Plane at the point of impact. The bolt and any creatures within a 10-foot radius are drawn to the astral plane (if the creature exists only partially within this radius, it may attempt a DC 25 Reflex save to avoid being sucked into the astral plane. For every additional 5 foot square between this radius and something, lower the save DC by 2.

Construction

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, *plane shift*, *secret chest*;
Cost 15,000 gp

Irresistible Bait

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 5th; **Weight** 3 lbs.

Slot none; **Price** 6,000 gp

Description

What appears to be an ordinary stone is, in fact, a powerful mind-affecting magical item. Once per day, a creature type (or the name of a specific individual) can be whispered to the stone. This causes the stone to look and smell like the most delicious meal imaginable to the target creature(s) for the next 24 hours. Target creatures are compelled to approach and attempt to consume the bait if they can sense it (any targeted creature is treated as having Scent ability with regards to the *irresistible bait*, but with triple normal range.) If the creature has an Intelligence score greater than 8, they may attempt a DC 20 Will save to resist the compulsion to approach. Otherwise its influence is automatic.

Creatures who fail their saving throw suffer a –10 to Perception checks to notice traps or ambushes as they approach the *irresistible bait*. Even if

a threat is noticed, a creature under *irresistible bait's* influence must make a DC 15 Will save to avoid continuing moving towards the bait while ignoring all else, including the perceived threat. The bait's effects cease when a creature under the influence of *irresistible bait* is attacked, takes damage, notices a threat and succeeds at the related Will save, or attempts to bite into it.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *charm monster*;
Cost 3,000 gp

Portable Pit Trap

Aura strong conjuration; **CL** 3th

Slot —; **Price** 300 gp; **Weight** —

Description

The *portable pit trap* is a weaponized lesser *portable hole*. The *portable pit trap* may be placed on any relatively flat surface as a full-round action. Once placed, this item functions as an expertly crafted, covered pit trap with pungi spikes. Retrieving the *portable pit trap* requires speaking a command word and a full-round action.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item; **Cost** 150 gp

Ten-Foot Fingers

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 5th

Slot None; **Price** 1,000 gp; **Weight** 5 lb.

Description

What looks like an ordinary collapsible, ten foot pole ending in a closed fist is actually a useful magical item. When gripped, the fist at the end of the pole opens and whoever is holding the pole can use the hand as though it were their own. This item can be used to wield a one-handed weapon, granting 10 foot reach, but suffering a –6 penalty to hit while doing so.

Construction

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *mage hand*;
Cost 500 gp



10. Tactics and Ambushes

So far, we've described numerous abilities, character attributes, and (mundane and magical) items to give your commoner characters a fighting chance at adventuring. However, all of that is useless without proper, effective tactics. The fact of the matter is, it's usually through clever and devious tactics that commoners triumph or not.

In this chapter, we lay out some guidelines for commoner tactics and provide examples of commoner parties triumphing over much more dangerous opponents. We also offer up advice regarding how Gamemasters can collaborate with players of commoner characters, and reiterate the myriad bonuses that are available to commoners and cautious adventurers both.

General Commoner Tactics

Consider the following tactical guidelines and suggestions when playing a commoner adventurer.

Range Saves the Day

When the choice is yours, attack from maximum range unless your opponents are better archers (or whatever their distance attack may be) than you. The more distance you keep between yourself and your foe at all times, the more of a head start you have if you need to flee.

Position Yourself for Success

If possible, attack from cover and the high ground so counterattacks from your foe are more difficult for them to mount. You will also have superior positioning for ranged attacks. You should also choose positioning that requires your enemy

come to you. Doing so provides commoners with a chance to make the environment between their position and the enemy dangerous.

Make your opponents climb over pit traps, which are in front of caltrops, which are in front of tripwires, which are in front of bear traps, and so on, if they want to get at you. Even filling the area with traps or impairments with a low chance of success can sometimes work in your favor, especially if you lay down enough of them. If you force your opponents to make as many saves as possible before they are within range of attacking you, chances are some of those hazards will help out.

Surprise!

Attack an enemy when and where they don't expect. Even if you don't obtain a surprise by doing so, you may come from a direction they haven't erected defenses against, or where their positioning is weak.

Maximize Your Threat

All party members should rely on ranged attacks for as long as possible, but when enemies get close (or if ranged combat was never an option), commoners drop their ranged weapons and switch to melee weapons with reach. Figure out where the commoners should be located to maximize the number of threatened squares present once their reach weapons are in hand (and overlapping these squares is ideal.)

For example, in the first round of a fight, a group of commoners would choose to locate themselves at the greatest possible distance from their targets, at which they would then fire their crossbows and reload. Keep up the crossbow fire until the enemy moves within

20 feet, at which point the commoners fire their crossbows as a standard action before dropping them as a free action. They can then end the round by pulling up their longspears as a move action.

If the commoners have properly readied their positions and don't have to move, this will leave them ready to receive melee attacks in the following round without expending actions on any other activities. With the long spear, they will gain an attack of opportunity when the oncoming foe moves within reach, likely while keeping themselves out of reach of the enemy's own melee attacks.

A typical group of four commoners employing this tactic should result in ten to twelve successful hits before the enemy gets a chance to attack the commoners in turn. (More if the enemy is surprised!)

The goal is to not let the enemy within 5 feet until they've been hit with at least one ranged attack, as well as an attack of opportunity from your reach weapons. Using the terrain and obstacles in your immediate environment to force enemies to approach your group through your threatened squares is also a good strategy.

Have an Escape Plan

If you feel like you can't win a fight, or might get badly hurt in the process, run away and regroup. Run away a lot, especially against opponents without access to magical or fast healing. Always have at least one (but preferably two or more) ways out of a situation before you start firing crossbows or poking around with longspears. For example, leave a pre-tied, knotted rope you can climb up to safety with that can then be cut behind you when your enemies try to follow.

Obstacles, Obstacles Everywhere

Prepare the ground you'll be fighting on whenever possible. Place marbles, caltrops, barricades, rubble, etc. across approaches to your position, to protect your back, and along your pre-planned escape paths in order to hinder pursuers.

Try to have difficult terrain between you and your enemy so you can run (remember, this pro-

vides quadruple your usual pace!) away if necessary, but your enemies can't pursue at the same rate. This will also prevent charging.

The Right Dog for the Fight

Make use of trained animals to bolster your ranks. A number of trained war dogs could tip the balance of a fight in your favor when you need it most. At the very least, you are presenting more targets to choose from than the player characters alone to your enemies.

The Right (Magical) Tool for the Job

Successful Use Magic Device skill checks for scrolls and wands can be the backbone of any support plan. Use these items to keep your frontline warriors up and capable of staying in the fight while lending a hand from a distance. Remember that consumable items should be used more often by commoners without magical abilities of their own than they are by standard adventurers.

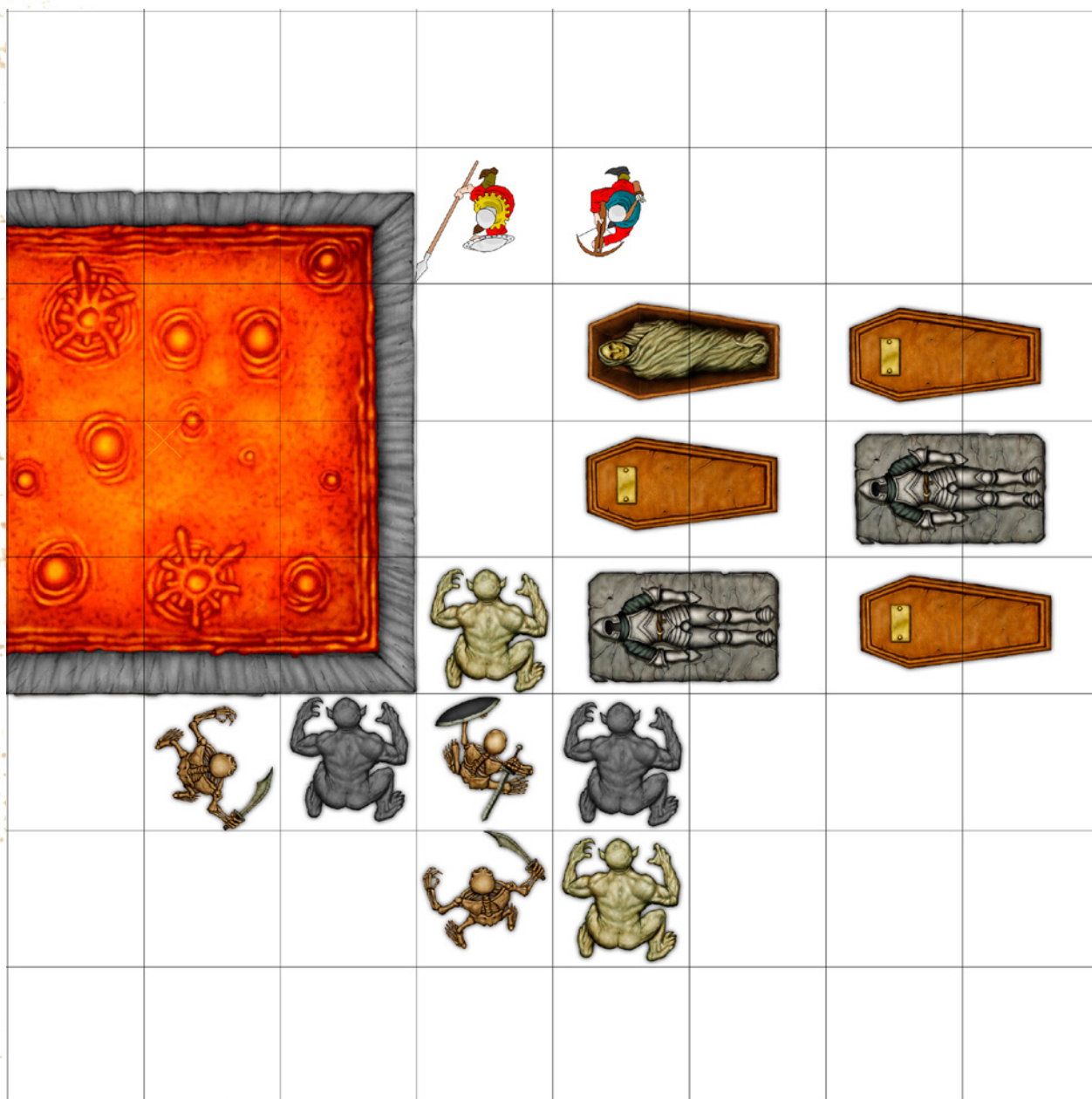
Tactical Withdrawals / Stay Mobile

Since commoners don't receive iterative attacks until 12th level, they need to move as they fight in order to deny opponents their own iterative attacks. Staying on the move means the enemy has to do likewise if they want to keep in the fight. Their pursuit means the enemy will not be able to utilize their iterate attacks, which are of no use to them if they fall behind (unless they have ranged attacks, that is.) Although some enemies may still be able to pounce, use the terrain while withdrawing to prevent pursuers from using a charge action to close the distance.

Commoners with a reach weapon should keep in mind that withdrawing is usually just as good as attacking. With a reach weapon in hand, a withdrawal (which isn't the same as running away!) means the commoner can still enjoy an attack of opportunity when their opponent comes after them. A tactical withdrawal can also present an opportunity to take the fight to better ground.

*When in doubt, kick it in the nuts. Remember: even dragons have nuts! **

** Footnote: Do not attempt to kick a dragon in the nuts.*



Using the lava and graves to create a choke point against a pack of undead.

Keep Your Group Together ...

Stay together unless you have reason to be wary of area effect attacks (like *fireball* or *black tentacles*.) Doing so enables you to watch each other's backs while also keeping everyone close for healing and other types of support in case of surprises.

... But Your Enemy Divided

Keep your enemy separated using prepared terrain and visibility limiters like smoke sticks or the *darkness* spell-like ability. Natural obstacles, corri-

dors, and the like within one's environment can also be helpful for such a purpose.

Choke Points are Your Friend

When possible, commoners should set up on the other side of a space that only one enemy can attack from at a time. Use reach weapons and higher ground to allow more of your group to attack opponents limited in this fashion. And remember, the bigger a creature is, the larger the choke point you can force the enemy to approach through may be.

This means more commoners of a smaller size than the opponent will be able to attack while the latter is still limited to attacking one at a time.

Stack the Odds in Your Favor

Always look for the greatest possible advantage due to favorable circumstances. Ideally, try not to engage the opponent until you have at least two of the following circumstances working in your favor: you are flanking the enemies (you are +2 to attack); they are prone (–4 to their AC and attack); you have the high ground (+1 to attack in melee); you have made a successful Intimidation check against your opponent (they are *shaken*, and –2 to their attack); or you have partial, total, or improved cover (meaning you enjoy bonuses to AC and Reflex saves, and possibly Improved Evasion with the latter!) You can also attempt entangling your foe (they suffer –2 to their attack and AC), deafening them (they are –4 to Initiative and suffer a 20% chance of spell failure), or blinding them (they are –2 to AC and suffer a 50% miss chance.)

See the various Combat Modifiers tables in the core rules for a full list of circumstances that may benefit your commoners.

Focus Fire!

Kill one enemy at a time instead of attacking as many as possible. Commoners have notably less potential to inflict a great amount of damage with each individual attack compared to standard adventurers. As such, they are less likely to down an opponent with a single blow. By spreading out their attacks over multiple opponents, commoners may harm more enemies at once, but they are also less likely to reduce the amount of enemies in a given round. Because each enemy still standing is yet another attack the commoners will have to face, it is better to focus on one enemy at a time in order to cause enough damage to reduce the amount of enemies still in the fight at the round's end.

Gamemastering Tactics and Terrain

In a normal adventure, the Gamemaster often presents terrain as just one challenge the heroes must face. Intelligent (or merely fortunate) adversaries make fights interesting by hampering the heroes through effective use of the environment—a shambling mound moving through the swamp that counts as difficult terrain for the party or harpies harassing the heroes on a narrow bridge, for example. In a commoner game, however, the Gamemaster should be prepared to reverse these roles, providing opportunities for the characters to lead powerful beasts into a narrow valley where they can drop rocks, or providing materials for setting up makeshift barricades before opening a crypt.

When running a game for commoners, think about your players' relationship to their environment and allow them a chance to turn it to their advantage. Mention environmental items and features that can be used to hinder or wound, and actively collaborate with your players regarding ways their environment may be used creatively.

Here is a partial list of mutable features your players' commoner characters can use to set the stage and increase their chance of surviving against much more powerful opponents.

- Flaming braziers (lighting, setting fires)
- Tapestries (concealment, flammable)
- Torch sconces (lighting, suspended traps)
- Boulders/avalanches (block access, traps)
- Furniture (barricades, obstacles, flammable)
- Loose ground (hazards, traps, palisades)
- Paving stones (loosen for tripping, conceal traps, make walls, drop on enemies)
- Fallen timber (flammable, stakes, barricades)
- Corpses (concealment, distraction, barricades)
- Alleys/canyons (slow or obstruct, concealment, ambushes)
- Chandeliers (suspended traps, distractions, leverage)
- Storage containers (alchemical traps, obstacles)
- Rubble (obstacles, barricades, worsen terrain)
- Vines (tripping, holding things together)
- Wall/ceiling support struts (collapsing traps, suspending traps)

Ready Yourself against Spellcasters

If fighting a spellcaster from range, don't attack normally at the first opportunity. Instead, ready an action to attack when they start finger wagging. This allows you to make the same attack you would normally that round, plus it has the benefit of offering a chance to disrupt their spell.

Keep Them in the Dark

Always be aware of and understand lighting conditions (normal light, dim light, and no light) and how they can affect a battlefield. Use the current conditions to your advantage, not your enemy's, by forcing them to fight in less than ideal lighting while using gear or the like to counter its affects on yourself. For example, dim light offers concealment, so attackers suffer a 20% miss chance. No light at all presents a 50% miss chance against you, and that is only *if* they know where you're in to begin with, which they often won't if you've prepared well.

Specific Combat Advantages and Disadvantages

More often than not, players ignore many ways of gaining advantage in combat, relying instead on the Gamemaster to tell them how something like going prone will affect them. Commoner player characters do not have the luxury of waiting for the Gamemaster to point out circumstantial advantages, however.

Commoners do not enjoy the usual options for gaining combat advantage over an opponent that typical adventurers enjoy, including spells and class abilities. As such, adventuring commoners gain the advantage by forcing opponents into a position of disadvantage (or by placing themselves in advantageous ones.) This means commoners should always be very aware of all the ways they might obtain an advantage in a given situation. It is highly recommended that commoner player characters become incredibly familiar with the following charts, bookmarking the relevant pages or perhaps even photocopying or printing them out to accompany their character sheet.

Also, players and Gamemasters should work together to imagine and create interesting ways to enjoy and inflict (respectively) advantageous or disadvantageous conditions. Perhaps the commoners attack their opponents at dawn with the sun at their back, forcing their opponents to squint into the light and gain the dazzled condition, for example. Always be aware of your surroundings and how it may be used to obtain or impose the following conditions.

Attacker Combat Advantages and Disadvantages

Attacker is	Melee	Ranged
Dazzled	-1	-1
Entangled	-2 *	-2 *
Flanking defender	+2	—
Invisible	+2 **	+2 **
On higher ground	+1	+0
Prone	-4	—±
Shaken or frightened	-2	-2
Squeezing through a space	-4	-4

* An entangled character also takes a -4 penalty to Dexterity, which may affect his attack roll.

** The defender loses any Dexterity bonus to AC.

± Most ranged weapons can't be used while the attacker is prone, but you can use a crossbow or shuriken while prone with no penalty.

Defender Combat Advantages and Disadvantages

Defender is	Melee	Ranged
Behind cover	+4	+4
Blinded	-2 *	-2 *
Concealed or invisible	See Concealment	
Cowering	-2 *	-2 *
Entangled	+0 **	+0 **
Flat-footed	+0 *	+0 *
Grappling (but attacker is not)	+0	+0
Helpless	-4 ±	+0 ±
Kneeling or sitting	-2	+2
Pinned	-4 ±	+0 ±
Prone	-4	+4
Squeezing through a space	-4	-4
Stunned	-2 *	-2 *

* The defender loses any Dexterity bonus to AC.

** An entangled character takes a -4 penalty to Dexterity.

± The defender is denied its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class.

Sure, a wizard can try and make their giant opponent smaller, but a better idea is forcing the thing to try and fight its way through a too small opening. Commoner debuffs for the win!

Concealment and Commoners

Making use of concealment is an essential aspect of survival for adventuring commoners. Forcing one's opponents to waste time looking for you, let alone the advantages concealment offers, can make the difference between life and death for commoners in battle.

To determine whether a target has concealment from a ranged attack, choose a corner of the attacker's current square location. If any line from this corner to any corner of the target's square passes through a square or border that provides concealment, the target has concealment.

When making a melee attack against an adjacent target, the attacker's target has concealment if their space is entirely within an effect that grants concealment. When making a melee attack against a target that isn't adjacent to the attacker, use the rules for determining concealment from ranged attacks.

Additionally, some magical effects provide concealment against all attacks, regardless of whether any intervening concealment exists.

Concealment Miss Chance

Concealment gives the subject of a successful attack a 20% chance that the attacker missed because of the concealment. Make the attack normally—if the attacker hits, the defender must make a miss chance d% roll to avoid being struck. Multiple concealment conditions do not stack.

Considering the armor restrictions commoners tend to fight under (they cannot normally wear especially effective armor without restrictions and detriment), this 20% miss chance can be a lifesaver. When considering a commoner's armor issues

and comparably low hit points, even a one-in-five chance of an attack missing can be crucial to keeping a character in the fight.

Concealment and Stealth Checks

Characters can use concealment to make a Stealth check. Without concealment, they usually need cover to make a Stealth check. This can be especially helpful to commoner characters that need to make their Stealth check untrained, given such characters' limited skill selection and relatively few skill points.

Total Concealment

If a character has line of effect to a target but not line of sight, the target is considered to have total concealment from the character. The character can't attack an opponent that has total concealment, though they can attack into a square that they think the target occupies. A successful attack into a square occupied by an enemy with total concealment has a 50% miss chance (instead of the normal 20% miss chance for an opponent with concealment.)

An attacker can't execute an attack of opportunity against an opponent with total concealment, even if the attacker knows what square or squares the opponent occupies.

Maintaining total concealment may be the cornerstone of an effective strategy against a superior opponent. The stealth total concealment can provide to weaker commoners is often the advantage that allows the latter to carry through a successful ambush—its value should not be underestimated.

Ignoring Concealment

Despite its general usefulness, concealment isn't always effective against all opponents. An area of dim lighting or even total darkness doesn't provide any concealment against an opponent with darkvision, for example. Similarly, characters with low-light vision can see clearly for a greater distance than other characters with the same light source.

Even invisibility is not entirely proof against the chance of detection. Although invisibility provides total concealment, sighted opponents may still make Perception checks to notice the location of an invisible character. An invisible character gains a +20 bonus on Stealth checks if moving, or a +40



bonus on Stealth checks when not moving (even though opponents can't see you, they might be able to figure out where you are from other visual or auditory clues), but a Perception check to notice them is still permitted.

"... there is nothing sweet nor fitting in your dying. You will die like a dog for no good reason."

- Ernest Hemingway

Obviously, he never played a commoner game."

Commoner Combat and Tactics Examples

To better understand how a group of adventuring commoners can use the advice provided in this chapter to defeat superior foes, let's look at some examples. Each example squares the commoners off

against an opponent they must employ sound strategy and cleverness against to defeat.

Four Level 1 Commoners vs. a Traditional Level 2 Party

The local tavern owner has reached out to the party of commoners because a group of adventurers have run up a large tab they refuse to pay. The adventurers keep coming in night after night, carousing, causing trouble, and threatening to "gut" anyone who stands in their way. The local watch captain has refused to intervene, believing the bartender should simply forgive the debt rather than cause further issue.

The tavern-keeper has a different idea.

The commoners wait several hours into the evening, arriving at a time the barkeeper has stated most of the regulars clear out by. They move into the bar separately and, at the sound of a signal whistle, they attack with alchemical weapons.

During the initial surprise round, the two least dexterous members throw one fungal stun vial and one thunderstone onto the adventurers' table. The

Dealing with Opponent DR and Fast Healing

Most commoner tactics and empowerment options rely on stacking their advantages, their opponents' disadvantages, and focusing fire while denying an opponent's ability to effectively counter attack. However, such standard tactics usually fail outright when encountering opponents with high amounts of damage reduction and (to a lesser degree) fast healing. While many bonuses can be gained and abilities emulated through the proper use of tactics and alchemical items, raw damage output is mostly something generated through appropriately leveled class abilities, something commoners simply don't have. This makes overpowering a foe's impressive DR or fast healing difficult for commoners.

Gamemasters may want to consider a "down and dirty" fix to the problem DR represents to adventuring commoners by removing DR (or even fast healing) from a creature's abilities and instead granting it bonus hit points equal to double its DR. In the case of fast healing, the bonus hit points would be (HD x fast healing.) This approach will still present a creature with incredible fortitude that won't easily die while still providing damage inflicting challenged commoners a (admittedly narrow) path to victory.

rogue, the fighter, and the wizard are all stunned for a round, and the cleric and the fighter are deafened. The other commoners throw a tanglefoot bag at the fighter (entangling him, but failing to lock him in place) and a shard gel at the rogue (dealing 2 damage and covering the surrounding area in temporary caltrops.)

On the start of the next round, the commoners all unsling their ranged weapons and fire at the cleric. Only three out of the four ranged attacks hit, but it's enough to down the cleric.

The rogue manages to stand and moves next to the nearest commoner. That commoner withdraws, not wishing to face the rogue's twin blades while the rest fire at the wizard, downing him.

From there, it's a hard fight.

While the party was able to down the casters before retribution, they are now left going toe-to-toe with strong opponents. They make careful use of withdraw actions in addition to the difficult terrain (tables and chairs) and shard gel caltrops to stay as far out of their opponents' reach as possible. However,

Commoners, Gaining Experience, and CR

Even with the best possible strategy, clever play, inventive tactics, and the absolute best use of the widest range of material, adventuring commoners die. What's more, no other class is as inherently likely to suffer from total party kills, being felled by several unlucky rolls, or dying without the ability to do anything to prevent it. Similarly, every character is susceptible to being felled by an ill-timed critical, but commoners are susceptible to *any* critical at any time. Ironically, the higher their level, the more likely commoners are to die suddenly, without recourse.

To begin with, the difference in power between a level one commoner and a level one core or base class adventurer is not as great as one may assume. The difference at this point is a matter of some basic magic, an extra point of base attack bonus, a few extra hit points, etc. At lower levels, these advantages do not elevate base or core class characters that far above typical mortals, including commoners. However, this difference in power grows increasingly noticeable with every level gained. Hence, so too grows the risk of death and failure no matter how well a commoner character is played. Comparably, commoners only become *more* vulnerable as they level (assuming they're facing opponents determined using the standard CR encounter system.) This is because the CR system for determining "fair" encounters for player characters takes for granted the adventurers will be comprised of core and base class characters, not commoners, so using this system will increasingly skew to favor the party's opponents rather than the commoners as the latter's level rises.

But knowing death can so easily come is part of the fun of playing commoner characters. The fact that death is ever hanging over the players' heads makes their victories sweeter and more memorable. Even so, a Gamemaster should ensure everyone is on board with this kind of game before proceeding. All players must understand (and even learn to enjoy) that with every level gained by their commoner characters, the possibility of death increasingly slides towards inevitability.

er, before the commoners are able to down the rogue, the fighter has managed to down one of them. In response, the commoners switch to reach weapons, and after a flubbed attempt at tripping, one trained with a horsechopper manages to trip the fighter. When the fighter tries getting up, the remaining commoners stab him into unconsciousness.

It will take their friend days to fully heal, and they spent a fair amount of their starting wealth on single use alchemical items, but the party is victorious.

Four Level 1 Commoners vs. a CR 4 Monster

A party of adventuring commoners has been contracted to eliminate an owlbear nesting near their small village. Taking pains to ask around, they hear that all the owlbear sightings and attacks have occurred at night. As such, the group concludes they are safest to start their mission during the day.

Due to their lack of survival training and the fact that they take extreme caution, it takes the commoners three days to locate the probable owlbear nest. On the fourth day, they arrive a little past noon and prepare their ambush.

First, the commoners quickly cover the area directly outside the cave with caltrops, ready to run if the beast shows itself. When it doesn't, they then take their time to set bear traps (if the Game-master allows the advanced material in this guide, the party supplements this with improvised traps.) Additionally, they send their best climber up a nearby tree with knotted rope. He takes his time to string rope from tree to tree to allow (relatively) easy movement (DC 10 Climb checks) from one tree to the other. Finally, shortly before sunset, the party sets some torches alongside the cave mouth so that they will easily be able to see anything coming out. Then they scream and yell, drawing out the beast.

Roaring from inside the cave, the owlbear charges into the assorted caltrops and bear traps as it rushes out to meet the expected threat. It manages to step on several caltrops (taking 3 damage) and trigger a bear trap (taking 7 damage, and being stuck in place) while doing so. As the beast struggles to free itself from the

trap (failing its first DC 26 Strength check), the party peppers it with crossbow bolts and sling stones from maximum range. Half of them hit, with a total of 18 damage before the limping owlbear is almost upon them.

The party flees towards the tree line. As they do, the slingers continue to use hit and run tactics while the crossbowmen climb one of the pre-staged tree ropes. If the owlbear climbs up after them, the commoners make use of the additional ropes to switch trees. If the owlbear attempts to use the ropes, the commoner cut them, dropping the beast to the ground. Eventually, in the ongoing hail of slingstones and crossbow bolts, the beast dies.

The party moves into the cave to find their true reward: a clutch of meeping owlbear chicks. Training the creatures will provide the party with much needed frontline fighters or an infusion of currency when sold at market.

Mmmmmm, owlbear –the other, other, OTHER white meat.



11. Commoners and Communities

Too often, commoners and other NPC characters are dismissed by players (and their characters) as inconsequential and beneath notice. Commoners are assumed to be virtually defenseless against adventurers and other notable threats, and wholly reliant on enlisting the aid of core and base class characters merely to continue to exist in a dangerous fantasy world.

So, while the rest of **Adequate Commoner** chronicles how (and why) to make commoner player characters more effective and enjoyable, this chapter is all about how to make engaging, helpful, or downright terrifying commoners and other NPC characters. This chapter addresses how active, engaged “everyman” NPC characters can be a major help or hindrance to the party, and potentially the most memorable part of your campaign.

Much of the advice, options, and concepts provided throughout the rest of **Adequate Commoner** can easily be used to make compelling commoner NPC characters and we’d prefer to avoid repeating ourselves here. When looking at the rest of this work, a good rule of thumb is to remember to reduce optimization when creating a (non-adventuring) NPC character. Adventurers—even commoner adventurers—are assumed to be more likely to have a unique mixture of abilities and background details to make them able to counter tremendous odds. However, their NPC counterparts are probably less suited for this role because they have other goals and drives.

The Commoner Mindset

Perhaps the most important aspect of creating memorable commoner NPCs is to keep in mind

that they do not exist solely in the interest of propelling the party’s story forward. They must at least behave as though they have more going on than merely pointing the adventurers in the direction of the threat. Indeed, creating this verisimilitude of life and independent existence is perhaps one of the most important ways a Gamemaster can encourage their players to fully engage with the game’s world. A quick way to explain this process may simply be to state “everyone is the hero of their own story.”

Most people are (and hence most characters should be) primarily interested in themselves, their family, and their friends. While a bit of awe and hero worship is appropriate when adventurers save the day, everyone still has their life to live when all is said and done. The necessity to keep on with one’s life is what will drive commoner characters perhaps more than anything else. Commoner (like all people everywhere) NPCs lie, cheat, steal, give, heal, kill, and so on based on a complicated set of morals and justifications.

And they should attempt to do all of these things to your player characters when appropriate.

The following present some ideas regarding how commoner NPC characters can interact with your party in exciting ways:

- A hero-worshipping child follows the party, and act that terrifies their parents and inconveniencing (or endangering) the party.
- A commoner with some ability to Bluff warns the party of a danger or begs them to help in such a way as to put them into extreme danger (see the following.)
- Commoner bandits set up camp just outside a dungeon the party has just entered. The bandits

- A veteran commoner teaches the player characters life-saving tactics they've thus far been ignoring in favor of their class abilities.

With this in mind, a community's strategic reserves against such eventualities may consist of minor alchemical or magical tools designed to counter specific threats. Using the game's rules as written, even the smallest communities (thorps) should have four magical items of 50 gp or less for sale, can afford to purchase single items of 500 gp, and somehow have access to first level spellcasting. These items would be employed in the community's defense if the situation called for it. (It is an unwise merchant indeed who wouldn't let go of a sellable wand if it meant the difference between the community surviving or dying—there is no profit in being consumed by a Hodag.)

Below is a list of magic items that would be typical of the sort cached in a strategic reserve (depending on the types of threats community is likely to face, that is):



- Regardless of the type of militia that can be rallied, the defense will begin with the community's layout and construction. In villages, hamlets, and smaller communities where people are likely to be spread out, houses have tiny windows and doors secured by a large bar at night. If possible, the community's core will have an enclosed, walled area or strong building that can serve as a final rallying point.

A Commoner Community vs. an Adventuring Party

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A single kobold sniffing around the village is a thief. A dozen kobolds marching towards the village is a raiding party.

A kobold, dripping with magical items and in the company of two to five other weirdos is an adventurer and should not be angered!

- First and foremost, commoners ambush such threats when their enemies sleep (commoners can be fairly stealthy, perhaps with an appropriate bonus for knowing the terrain and land better than any non-local.)
- Hit and run ambushes with particular emphasis on sundering divine foci, material components, and other valuable-yet-vulnerable equipment and resources.
- Leading enemies to chase them into tall grass littered with caltrops and/or bear traps, often coupled with an ambush timed for when their adversaries' movement is hampered. The first couple of times a commoner flees, they attempt to lead the adventurers into more trouble with the hope of causing paranoia within the threat's ranks. Paranoid adventurers may be reluctant to pursue in the future or spend enough time keeping their eyes open for danger that the commoners will be able to escape.

- Commoner communities may be lucky enough to have one or more snipers capable of using longbows, perhaps with the Far Shot feat. These snipers would specifically target spellcasters, either looking to kill them with a single well-timed volley or by hiding in camouflaged blinds in order to target adventurers who the sharpshooters' allies into the wilderness.
- Make good use of situational or environmental hazards. Commoners can attempt to lure the threatening adventurers into a dry forest or other flammable area and then igniting it, for example.

All such tactics should be considered when dealing with a known threat approaching a village, even when it is a group of adventurers. Once that threat has reached the village, the commoners can then revert to standard militia tactics, calling up their strategic reserves, and creating as many improvised traps as they have time for.

If forewarned, by the time the threat reaches the village, the commoners will hopefully have had enough time to create a simple trench (perhaps with sharpened, wood stakes) and earthen walls around the village. The villagers should also have abandoned (and preferably trapped) the outlying, indefensible homes and fortified a building from which to mount their defense

When creating a compelling village, feel free to intermingle any of the commoner characters from the following chapter into the local population in addition to using them as player characters.



12. Commoner Sample Characters

Bekan of Rivenford, Militia Veteran

"You'll either pay with sweat now or blood later, but either way you're paying."

Bekan was born to humble origins, and fully intended to live the ordinary life laid out for her as a farmer's future wife. When she was thirteen and the echoes of some distant necromancer's death forced her village's dead to walk, every able-bodied person was conscripted into the community's defense. That incident was just the first of a wave of events calling the militia into action. Marauding orcs, hobgoblin slavers, and even frenzied animals urged on by an insane druid all required Bekan step up to protect her people.

Bekan lost friends in these attacks, but she always held the line and the village's forces always triumphed. Through the innumerable fights, sieges, and monster hunts, Bekan grew in experience. She eventually rose to the rank of Militia Captain.

Perhaps inevitably, the village elders decided it was time to abandon the community's current location, as its placement made it too vulnerable and its people had suffered too much loss as a result. Bekan didn't agree with the decision, but she couldn't prevent everyone from leaving. Rivenford is now just a ghost town full of derelict buildings.

Bekan is now adrift, defender of a place that doesn't exist anymore. She wanders, searching for ways to use her hard-won skills to help keep others safe (at a fair price, of course.) Perhaps one day she'll find another place to settle down and call home.



This former militia captain is a tough, no-nonsense woman who is motivated to protect the weak. Although not exceptionally bright, Began nonetheless draws from extensive experience to devise clever tactics and plans. She often proposes shockingly simple solutions to problems that would never occur to more learned adventurers.

Began uses her sling for as long as she's able and then switches to her horsechopper when melee is joined. She prefers to wait for some manner of tactical advantage before attacking and is known to retreat several times before engaging in order to obtain the upper hand.

Before combat, Began will spend as much time as she has available preparing barricades, digging traps, planning an escape route, and doing anything else she can to give herself an advantage.

During combat, Began uses her sling for as long as she can, eventually dropping it to switch to horsechopper in melee. She does her best to trip opponents with her horsechopper while using withdrawal actions and attacks of opportunity to deny her foes their iterative attacks.

Appearance

Began is a twenty-something human woman whose worn-by-the-world life makes her appear older. Despite (or because of) the zig-zag of her oft-broken nose, many consider her attractive. She is 6'1" with a body well-muscled from toil, and has brown hair, gray eyes, and tan skin. Belkan wears simple studded leather armor and keeps a well-stocked pack.

Began of Rivenford CR 1/3

XP 135

Female human commoner 1

LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; Senses Perception +5

Defense

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex,)

hp 12 (1d6+6)

Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +1

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee horsechopper +5 (1d10+6 */x3)

Ranged sling +2 (1d4+4)

Statistics

Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +0; CMB +5 (+6 horsechopper); CMD 16

Feats Additional Traits, Commoner Weapon Proficiency (sling), Toughness

Traits Armor Expert, Bred for War, Heirloom Weapon (Horsechopper, Proficiency), Reactionary

Skills Climb +8, Craft (traps) +4, Perception +5

Languages Common

Combat Gear studded leather armor, horsechopper, sling, sling bullets (20), alchemist fire

Other Gear crowbar, grappling hook, rope, fighter's kit, powder (2), holy water, alchemist fire, 50 sp

Getava Omak, Big Mouthed Bully

"Oy, you've had enough now shove on out of here before I have to loosen my whip."

Getava Omak grew up on the streets, the child of two working class half-orcs. His father a former slave, his mother a human inquisitor for a god of order, his parents did everything they could to provide him with a better life than they had. Getava has nonetheless had his life and prospects shaped by society's expectations.

As part of his upbringing, Getava's father taught his son to use the whip the former took from his overseer during his escape. His father emphasized the whip's importance as a weapon that could win fights without resorting to killing. Along with his skill with the whip, Getava has used his natural fearsomeness and the hard lessons of the street to gain employ as a bouncer for a seedy bar in the wrong side of town.

Despite his fearsome appearance, Getava Omak abhors violence and kills only as a last resort. His parents began as bitter enemies before showing each other mercy and eventually finding common ground, and their son seeks to follow this example. Doing his job while rarely resorting to physical violence is a mark of pride for Getava.

He is somewhat listless, having grown bored seeing the same drunks day in and day out. Inspired by his father's daring escape from slavery and fierce battles against the slave lords, Getava has been considering a life of daring-do and is looking for the right group of adventurers to venture out with.

If at all possible, Getava Omak uses intimidation to avoid combat entirely, bullying and frightening his opponents into submitting or surrendering. If this proves ineffective, Getava uses his whip to take his opponents off their feet and relies on his allies to deal direct damage.

Before combat, Getava is always alert for signs of trouble, often noticing small details his allies overlook. Though he rarely possesses alchemical or magical items to help him in combat, his perceptive nature allows this half-orc to avoid many conflicts before they begin.

During combat, Getava will use his first round to intimidate his opponents and pull his whip if he feels significantly threatened. If the enemy continues to engage, he will use his whip to entangle or trip them. He then follows up with his fists or allow his allies to attack the downed opponent while he turns his attention elsewhere.

Appearance

Getava is 6' 3" tall and quite handsome for a half-orc. Taking pains to meticulously groom himself, Getava sports a perfectly shaped mohawk and has light brown skin and small tusks (which he reveals only when intimidating opponents.) His arms are decorated with tattoos commemorating the epic history of his family.

Getava Omak CR 1/3

XP 135

Male half-orc commoner 1

N Medium humanoid (half-orc)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

Defense

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 8 (1d6+2)

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee whip +4 (1d3+4); unarmed +4 (1d3+4)

Ranged sling +2 (1d4+4)

Statistics

Str 18, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 7, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

Feats Intimidating Prowess

Traits Bully, Unnatural Presence

Skills Intimidate +10, Perception +5

Languages Common

Combat Gear leather armor, sling, sling bullets (20), whip

Other Gear fighter's kit, grooming kit

Josom Nightwalker, Hunter in the Shadows

"If your enemies can see you, you've already lost."

Josom is the child of a human mother and an elven father. Growing up, he had vivid dreams of 'The Man in the Shadows,' a black skinned figure that visited him at night. He whispered the secrets of slipping through the darkness as well as well as "hand-talk" to the youth. It wasn't until years later that Josom realized this personage was actually his light sensitive father, an exiled drow who worked as an enforcer for the local Thieves Guild.

His mother enrolled him at a premier arcane academy, but Josom dropped out after mastering only the rudiments of magic. Instead, he ran through

a series of failed apprenticeships while he spent his evenings practicing with his mother's longbow. Josom's sensitivity to bright light led him to doing most of his play at night, preventing him from developing many social skills. When his mother grew ill, Josom resorted to petty theft to bring money into the house, a practice that has continued to grow.

To this day, his father still watches over him, continuing to influence his son.

Quite abrasive, Josom is almost wholly mercenary. Not evil, this half-elf nonetheless deals extensively (and comfortably) with criminal and monstrous elements. His worst quality involves his belief that all women are in need of "saving," which only becomes more pronounced the more the female in question insists otherwise.

Before combat, Josom will stalk his prey or observe a target before committing to combat. He will try to arrange at least one distraction (*dancing lights*, *faerie fire*, *darkness*, or the clever use of the environment) before acting.

During combat, Josom attacks from maximum range. He uses natural darkness against opponents without darkvision and *darkness* or a smoke arrow against those who do.

Appearance

Josom is lithe and extremely pale. His ears are only slightly pointed and he keeps himself wholly shaved. He prefers black-dyed clothing or leather armor. When out on jobs, he tends to cover his face with a hood.

Josom Nightwalker

CR 1/3

XP 135

Male half-elf (drow-blooded) commoner 1

N Medium humanoid (half-elf)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

Defense

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +5 Dex)

hp 8 (1d6+2)

Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +0 (+2 vs enchantment)

Immune sleep

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee longspear +0 (1d8/x3)

Ranged longbow +5 (1d8/x3)

Spell-Like Abilities

1/day—*darkness*, *faerie fire*, *dancing lights*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 20, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 7

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 15

Feats Additional Traits, Commoner Weapon Proficiency (longspear)

Traits Arcane Dabbler (*message*, *prestidigitation*), Heirloom Weapon (Longbow, proficiency), Slippery, Vagabond Child (Disable Device)

Skills Disable Device +10, Perception +6, Stealth +10

Languages Common, Elven, Drow Sign Language

SQ light blindness

Combat Gear leather armor, longspear, longbow, arrows (20), smoke arrow, blunt arrows (20)

Other Gear rogue's kit, grappling arrow, 20 sp

Rezzah Ruk-Ruk,

Bag o' Tricks Bounty Hunter

"When you see black wings on the horizon, best be right with your neighbors."

Rezzah Ruk-Ruk grew up with a small family of tengus in a city known for slightly xenophobic humans. Bullied from a very young age, Rezzah was trained with the traditional weapons of his family's homeland as a way to connect with his past—although he often found more use for a simple sling.

This tengu has much to prove and deliberately takes on bounties that push him beyond his ability to safely handle. He wants to show tengu superiority over other sentient races—humans in particular. He hopes to found a society for the advancement of the tengu race.

Rezzah uses the appropriate weapon for the situation, relying on a range of combat tricks to gain an advantage.

Before combat, Rezzah will assess his opponents and try to gain the high ground by climbing to a vantage point.

During combat, Rezzah begins by attacking at range with his sling. He is not afraid to get in close and attack in melee, however. He typically begins with his poison sand tube, and will then try to disarm, trip, or grapple opponents using his kusarigama or kyoketsu shoge, appropriately. He will use his meteor hammer up close against easily struck foes.

Appearance

Rezzah has a chipped orange beak and is covered with mottled black and gray feathers. Even among his own people, he appears unkempt and verbally edgy. Though some tengu appreciate his desire to advance the cause of the tengu people, many feel his abrasive nature may not make him the most ideal diplomat.

Rezzah Ruk-Ruk CR 1/3

XP 135

Male tengu commoner 1

LN Medium humanoid (tengu)

Init +5; **Senses** carrion sense; low-light vision; Perception +7

Defense

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 10 (1d6+4)

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d3+3); meteor hammer -1 (1d8+4); kusarigama +3 (1d3+3/1d6+3); kyoketsu shoge +3 (1d4+4)

Ranged poison sand tube (special); sling +3 (1d4+3)

Statistics

Str 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 7

Base Atk 0; **CMB** +3 (+5 disarm, grapple, or trip w/ weapons); **CMD** 16

Feats Commoner Weapon Proficiency (sling), Toughness

Traits Reactionary, Slippery

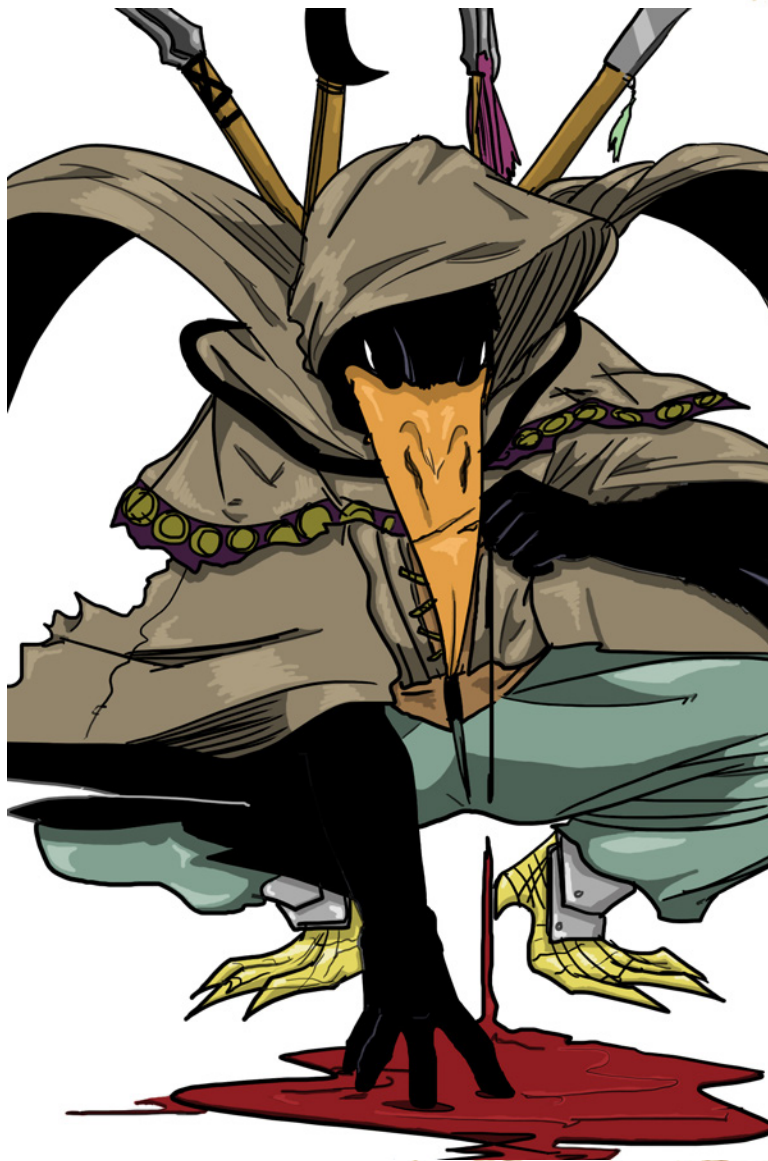
Skills Climb +7, Perception +7, Stealth +10

Languages Common, Tengu, Tian

SQ carrion sense (scent against dead or creatures with 50% or fewer hit points), swordtrained

Combat Gear leather armor, sling, sling bullets (20), meteor hammer, kusarigama, kyoketsu shoge, sand tube

Other Gear fighter's kit, grappling hook



Geribediah “Schnoz” Schinozameningen, Magical Support

“On Schmedely, to adventure!”

Geribediah “Schnoz” Schinozameningen was born to a summoner father and rogue mother, both famed adventurers who hoped for a different path for their only child. As such, they redirected their son’s interest away from swashbuckling epic tales to more mundane, lucrative, and safe concerns. As often happens, their reluctance to share their adventuring careers had the opposite effect on young Schnoz.

Denied access to a proper magical college by his parents’ desires, Schnoz worked obsessively to develop his own inborn gifts and get his hands on every magical device he could find. When he reached his 39th birthday, the gnome broke into one of his parents innumerable chests to borrow both gear and gold (and what magic items he thought he could handle.) He then saddled up his riding dog Schmedely to venture into the wider world.

Schnoz is now obsessed with having adventures of his own. While not foolish, Schnoz is overly optimistic. He is kind to his friends and is always on the lookout for adventure.

Schnoz will attempt to talk his way through trouble first, rarely understanding that his mouth was what got him in trouble in the first place. When combat is joined, Schnoz orders Schmedely to protect him before firing his crossbow. In exceptional circumstances, the gnome will use his scrolls or alchemical weapons to support his party.

Before combat, Schnoz will hide outside of combat and observe opponents if he has the chance, then use ranged attacks. If possible, he will cast *produce flame* to catch an area between himself and enemies on fire, then throw the flame at the most dangerous target before the *flame* expires.

During combat, Schmedely will protect Schnoz to the death, tripping opponents that are threatening his master and attacking until told otherwise. Against more mobile enemies, Schnoz will ride Sch-

medely while throwing alchemical items or firing his crossbow.

Appearance

Schnoz is 2’ 6” tall and has a too-wide, large-toothed grin. His face is ringed with a shock of green hair that he attempts to keep hidden under a leather cap with a strap that follows his jawline.

Geribediah Schinozameningen CR 1/3

XP 135

Male gnome commoner 1

CG Small humanoid (gnome)

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +2

Defense

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 Size)

hp 8 (1d6+2)

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0; +2 vs illusions

Defensive Abilities defensive training

Offense

Speed 20 ft.

Melee dagger –6 (1d3–2/19-20); short sword –6 (1d4–2/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +2 (1d6/19-20); alchemist fire +2 (1d6); acid +2 (1d6);

Spell-Like Abilities

1/day—*dancing lights*, *flare*, *prestidigitation*

2/day—*produce flame*

Statistics

Str 6, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 14, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 18

Base Attack +0; **CMB** –2; **CMD** 11

Feats Additional Traits, Commoner Weapon Proficiency (light crossbow)

Traits Dangerously Curious, Extremely Fashionable, Naturally Gifted, Rich Parents

Skills Bluff +5, Craft (alchemy) +8, Diplomacy +5, Handle Animal +8, Perception +2, Ride +3, Use Magic Device +9

Languages Common, Elven, Gnome, Goblin, Sylvan, Undercommon



SQ gift of tongues, gnome magic, weapon familiarity

Combat Gear dagger, short sword, light crossbow, crossbow bolts (10), flash powder (2), alchemist's fire (5), acid (5), alkali (5), antitoxin (2), signal and silent whistles, belt pouch, bandolier (8 slots for alchemical items), scroll case (*cure light wounds* x2, *summon monster I* x2), tanglefoot bag (2)

Other Equipment: backpack, belt pouch, blanket, candles (10), canteen, flint & steel, grapple bolt, grooming kit, hooded lantern, scrivener's kit, scroll box, silent whistle, signal whistle, silk rope, small tent, whetstone, waterskin, mess kit, polished metal mirror, saddlebags, riding dog (Schmedely), vermin repellent (6)

Schmedely

CR 1

This burly dog is fitted with a small saddle. A low, menacing growl rumbles up from its chest.

XP 400

N Medium animal

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +8

Defense

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, +2 leather barding)

hp 13 (2d8+4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Offense

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d6+3 plus trip)

Statistics

Str 15, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15 (19 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Acrobatics +6 (+14 jumping), Perception +8, Survival +1 (+5 scent tracking); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Acrobatics when jumping, +4 Survival when tracking by scent

Gear leather barding

Benjamin Todd, Trap Maker and Poisoner Extraordinaire

"Drop, drap, drep. So sorry, seems I've knicked you, and now the blood drips off my razor."

Benjamin Todd once considered himself blessed by the gods. He had a beautiful wife and a beautiful daughter, but both were taken from him by a corrupt bureaucrat who had poor Benjamin exiled. Unable to escape his fate, Benjamin has settled into a futile life, dreaming of revenge.

He is known throughout the community as a brilliant barber and a gifted surgeon. However, late at night, dark rumors used to circulate about his demeanor and the occasional missing gentleman. When the time came for townsfolk to defend their home from goblin invaders, Benjamin was called upon, no doubt due to these very rumors. He found within himself a deep well of bloodlust which he channeled upon the invaders. His ability to take them apart was made that much easier by his skill at putting others back together.

Although his pharmaceutical skills were of great value during his adventuring career, Benjamin quickly began to see the value in the crafting of traps. He came to take an obscure delight in watching his opponents fall victim to his malice without ever setting their eyes upon him.

Inspired by the success of his traps, and in combination with his alchemical talents, Benjamin began to experiment with poison, however tentatively. He also began to take delight in wielding his straight razor in ways he had not previously done.

Before combat, Benjamin Todd poisons his blade and doffs his potion of invisibility. If there's time, he also sets several traps.

During combat, Benjamin Todd attacks via surprise while invisible, attempting to poison his opponents. He then uses his *shirt of quick running* to evade, outrunning his opponent and trying to lead them into his prearranged traps.

Appearance

Benjamin Todd is a tall human male with black hair with a shock of white.

Benjamin Todd

CR 8

XP 4,800

Male human commoner (surgeon-barber) 10

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +12

Defense

AC 23, touch 17, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 luck, +2 natural)

hp 60 (10d6+20) (70 with *belt of physical might* +2)

Fort +6 (+7), **Ref** +7 (+8), **Will** +3 (+4)

Offense

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor)

Melee +1 *keen commoner straight razor* +8 (1d4+2/17-20)

Ranged light crossbow +9 (1d8/19-20)

Statistics

Str 11 (13), **Dex** 19, **Con** 14 (16), **Int** 14, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20

Feats Commoner Poison Handling, Commoner Surprise Attack, Commoner Weapon Focus, Commoner Weapon Proficiency (straight razor), Simple Weapon Proficiency (light crossbow), Trap Master, Unremarkable

Skills Acrobatics +5, Appraise +7, Craft (alchemy) +15, Craft (traps) +15, Diplomacy +8, Heal +14, Knowledge (local) +3, Knowledge (nature) +8, Knowledge (planes) +3, Knowledge (religion) +3, Perception +4, Profession (Surgeon-Barber) +6, Sense Motive +1, Stealth +5

Combat Gear *jingasa* of the fortunate soldier, origami swarm (3), potion of cat's grace, potion of cure light wounds (2), oil of darkness, potion of levitate, quick runner's shirt, wasp nest of swarming, acid (2), bloodroot, blue whinnis, greenblood oil, oil of taggit, smokestick, swampseer poison, terinav root, thunderstone, wolfsbane; +2 leather armor, +1 keen commoner straight razor, crossbow bolts (10), light crossbow, amulet of natural armor +2, belt of physical might +2 (Dex, Con), cloak of resistance +1, elixir of hiding (3), eyes of the eagle, feather step slippers, handy haversack, nightdrops, ring of protection +2, stubborn nail, poison shard gel (worth 50 gp, 1 lb), flashbang, glitterdust throw

*With all the wit and wisdom
I've shared in this volume,
you choose "Feh" as my iconic
quote? You know what? You can
go feed your gizzards to an owl-
bear. I'm done helping out with
this miserable excuse for a book
about commoners.*

This exceptional commoner will not fight unless he has numerous advantages working in his favor. He first carefully surveys his opponents (often utilizing trained animals and scroll summoned creatures for this purpose) and then attacks at a time and location of his choosing. He will prepare an area with many traps, and utilize his many wondrous items creatively. For example, he may produce heaps of twine from his robe of infinite twine to fill rooms and make them difficult terrain that he can move over without incident.

Before combat, Felix uses his stealth skills to survey his opponents, often watching them for hours or even days. He then carefully prepares a plan.

During combat, Felix often begins with a probe of a variety of (scroll) summoned monsters, selected based on perceived weaknesses in his opponents or to set the battlefield. He uses his thundering longbow to try and deafen opposing casters, and his smokesticks to escape if at a disadvantage.

An aged, light skinned human, notably missing some of his teeth. He sports a perpetual glare for the world and everything in it.

XP 153,600

Human commoner 20

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; Senses Perception +24

AC 24, touch 20, flat-footed 21 (+6 armor, +5 deflection, +3 Dex)

hp 202 (20d6+100) (262 with *belt of mighty constitution* +6)

"Feh."

Felix Feckle began life as a simple son of a farmer. Deciding that there was not enough reward from laboring in the fields all day, Feckle set out to be an adventurer, a profession he has been excelling in for the last sixty years. He has forgotten half of the things he's done in his life but if you've heard about other adventurers doing it, chances are Felix Feckle has done it, too (or was around someone doing so.)

Fort +11 (+19), **Ref** +11 (+16), **Will** +7 (+12); +2 resistance bonus vs. visual effects

Defensive Abilities evasion

Offense

Speed 30ft

Melee longspears +10/+5 (1d8/x3)

Ranged +3 *thundering darkwood longbow* +20/+15 (1d8+4/19-20, x3)

Statistics

Str 11, **Dex** 20, **Con** 20 (26), **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 25

Feats Additional Traits, Commoner Weapon Proficiency (longspear), Deadly Aim, Improved Critical (longbow), Manyshot, Martial Weapon Proficiency (longbow), Nemesis (Completed), Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Stealth), Skill Focus (Use Magic Device)

Traits Armor Expert, Dangerously Curious, Fate's Favored, Highlander (hills or mountains)

Skills Acrobatics +25, Perception +24, Stealth +34 (+35 in hilly or rocky areas), Use Magic Device +30

Languages Common

SQ Underneath his clothing and inscribed on many of his items he has had 14 instances of *explosive runes* written. These are designed to explode catastrophically if his body is looted.

Combat Gear *necklace of fireballs type 8, goggles of brilliant light, hand of glory, quick runner's shirt, ring of delayed doom, ring of evasion, mithral breastplate, +3 thundering darkwood longbow, longspear, belt of mighty constitution +6, greater bracers of archery, cloak of resistance +5, ring of protection +5, tangleburn bag (5), fungal stun vials (3), scroll of summon monster 5 (7), smokestick (2; in wrist-mounted sheathes), parchment wrap of explosive runes*

Other Gear *feather step slippers, gloves of reconnaissance, headband of fortune's favor, miser's mask, handy haversack, portable hole, robe of infinite twine, scroll of reduce person, scroll of pass without trace, scroll of stoneshape, scroll of obscuring mist, potion of expeditious retreat, potion of protection from evil, potion of protection from good, scroll of gust of wind, scroll of fly, potion of blur, scroll of dimension door, potion of greater invisibility (3), potion of invisibility, scroll of stoneshin*



Appendix A.

Cooks' Day Out

An Adventure for Beginning Adventurers

Background

In this adventure, the player characters will play as cooks—failed adventurer who decided to switch careers. Taking the first job they could find and wanting nothing more than a steady monthly wage and to generally not to be bothered, the cooks signed on with a caravan. Unfortunately for the player characters, the caravan in question was nothing but a front for a group of adventurers. These “hereos” are intent on crossing the ice-encrusted Northlands to overthrow a corrupt evil government so they can get the rightful queen enthroned. (Or something equally epic, terrifying, and likely to end in everyone’s death. They’re all a little fuzzy on the details.)

Upon finding out the truth, the cooks are likely inclined to flee except for one problematic fact. One of the heroes (and the player characters' self-pro-

A Pre-Adventure Reminder

Before the adventure begins—and potentially during the game—remind the players that they are failed adventurers. They are low fantasy mooks in a high stakes, high fantasy world. As such, they may well face challenges they will not be able to overcome in the traditional adventurer, murder-hobo fashion.

Creative thinking, cheating, and running away are all valid strategies.

claimed boss) is a terrifying nagaji inquisitor (see Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game: Advanced Race Guide™ for details on the nagaji) with delusions of culinary grandeur. As scared as they are of ending up as collateral damage in the new adventure they've been caught up in, the player characters are likely to be more afraid of Antax. As one of his first acts of cruelty upon hiring them, for instance, Antax will have robbed the cooks of their names. He has insisted on calling them some derivative of "cook" (Cooks, Cookie, Cooked, Cook, Cooker, and so on.) On bad days, the cooks may have trouble remembering what their original names even were.

What was supposed to be the player characters' simple retirement from adventure has turned into a harrowing trek where each day brings a new deadly threat. They will be faced with trolls, bandits, northmen raiders, werebears, owlbears, bugbears, or even actual bears. The group can play through this part of the trip or just jump directly to the portion covered by the adventure.

But all of this danger is not really the cooks' adventure—it belongs to their employers, the “heroes.” The heroes have more or less been dealing with the more terrible monsters and maniacs (and, at one point, will march off into a dungeon to redeem some kind of cursed something or other). Instead, the cooks have been given a much simpler task (although their chances of survival are roughly the same.) Amidst a multitude of larger plots and world changing magic, the cooks' quest is to explore the northmen's capitol city, Skirgourun, gather several ingredients, and prepare the evening's feast.

Provided Characters

Level 2 adventurers (with 10 point buys) and one core class level and one level of commoner (cook, pg 22) are presented later for use with this scenario at a traditional challenge level. Feel free to swap these out for level one commoners to increase the degree of challenge, if desired.

Summary

The cooks will have to draw upon their rusty adventuring skills (such as they are, given the player characters are low-level commoners) and formidable culinary craft to decipher the instructions Antax provided regarding the meal they are to prepare. They must then gather the ingredients (both rare and mundane), and finally make a meal built around traditional nagaji boar sausage. They'll do all of this while dealing with thieves, food-based hazards, and an alien culture in an unfamiliar city of Skirgourun.

To complete the quest, the cooks must locate the necessary ingredients. They are given 25 gp plus the resources listed on their character sheets to obtain the required components. As the party searches for the meal's components, they will run into a variety of challenges, including pickpockets, honor enslavement, vermin hunting for additional funds, and more. Finally, the party will bring their gathered ingredients together to cook a meal for their employers.

Player Handout 1

Write out the following list of ingredients on a piece of paper and hand it to the players.

Tripe
Ground Shock Lizard Horn
Boar Meat (Highest Quality possible!)
Beef Tripe
Honey
Oats
Thyme

Act 1: Caravan Introduction

First, make the players aware of the adventure's setup by familiarizing them with the adventure's background. Inform them of the how and why of their signing on with the caravan and the abuses and hardships they have since suffered. With that done, let's get the adventure underway!

Read the Following to the Players

Snug in your beds in one of the caravan wagons, you wake to horrible, monstrous noises. Standing in front of you in full combat gear is Antax, the most terrifying being in your world. Antax is screaming, and some part of you thinks that this is it—he's finally snapped and is about to kill you all. But, as the tirade continues, you realize that he's woken you to instruct you all to prepare the next meal. He's in a rush to go off on some fool's errand and needs you to cook a dinner for the caravan, to be ready when they return.

You try to calm your nerves and piece together what he's saying, praying you haven't missed some key instruction ...

Moving On

Antax (nagaji inquisitor level 5), in a rush to get on to the next part of his adventure, hurriedly gives the cooks instructions on what they need to prepare that evening's feast. Between their sleepiness and Antax's terrifying nature, the player characters must make a DC 15 Will save against fear to understand Antax's instructions.

If a player character fails by greater than 10, their mind is filled with nothing but images of how they wish they'd never left their hometown.

If a player character fails the save an amount between 5 and 10, they only understand the words "sausage" and "meal."

If they fail by 5 or less, they understand "sausage," "meal," "sides," and "courage feast."

Antax's Prized Cooking Knife

Treat as a +1 *dagger* in combat. Antax's knife also carries a slight enchantment, applying its +1 bonus to any Profession (cook) check it is used for.

If they succeed, they understand "sausage main course," "pick sides and a pairing," and "traditional nagaji courage feast."

With that, Antax drops a sack of 25 gp and a list of ingredients (turn over **Player Handout 1** to the group now) for the cooks, throws down his prized cooking knife, and stalks out to his (unrelated) adventure. From here, the cooks can go after ingredients in any order they choose.

The caravan already has several sacks of oats and an abundance of dried thyme. Beef tripe can be bought without incident from one of several butchers in the Great Houses District for 1 gp. However, if the cooks take time to seek out fresh oats and thyme (spending 5 gp total on the ingredients) give them a +2 bonus to their Profession (cook) checks when preparing the final meal.

Travel throughout Skirgourun

The player characters have 12 hours to complete their tasks and prepare the feast. They begin in the Guest District where their caravan is parked; it takes roughly 1 hour to move across and between districts.

Below is a list of the districts in Skirgourun, as well as a quick summary of what each district is known for and what ingredients the cooks might find there. The Ember and Golden Chain districts have inns and restaurants that may possess the needed ingredients. However, the items' cost will be double unless the player characters succeed at a DC 20 Bluff, Diplomacy or Intimidate check, as appropriate to their negotiations approach.

Ember District: The most outsider-friendly of the city districts, this is where most inns, taverns, playhouses, and other forms of entertainment are to be found. This includes many of the less-than-legal ways to amuse oneself while visiting the city.

Gnarl District: Woodworking, carpentry, stonemasonry, and lumber processing are all housed in this district.



Ingredient Substitutions

The cooks can roll Profession (cook) (or any roll the Gamemaster deems appropriate) to find an acceptable substitute for an ingredient if they are having trouble locating it. Any substitutions they make are likely to create an inferior meal (thus angering Antax).

One or more ingredient substitutions inflict a –5 penalty on their Profession (cook) check to create the meal at the end of this adventure. For each Profession (cook) check made to locate a substitute ingredient that succeeds by 5 or more, the player character manages to find a product of fine enough quality to gain a bonus for creating the final meal (see **Bringing it all Together**, on page 124.)

Boar substitution DC 10: venison or pork

Honey substitution DC 20: agave nectar or simple syrup

Shock lizard horn shavings substitution DC 25: nutmeg

Golden Chain District: The city's (legitimate) banks and moneylenders are to be found in this heavily patrolled and guarded district. Anyone who seems out of place will likely be carefully scrutinized by the City Watch and private guardsmen.

Great Houses District: This mercantile district is where the great Trade Houses and independent traders and markets are to be found. This is also where boar meat, oats, beef tripe, and thyme may be purchased.

Honored Guest District: This district is home to the city's slums, visiting caravans, and others excluded from housing in (and sometimes even visiting) the city proper.

Kirin District: Foreigners from the Far East and most of the foreign traders who cannot afford to set up shop in the Great Houses District end up here. The area is filled with open-air markets. The shocker lizard horn shavings and thyme can be found here.

Scales District: Metalsmiths, forges, and academia are all stuffed into this city district. The ringing of metal and shouted debates between students and professors alike fill the air equally. The **Vermin Hunt** assignment (pg 116) may be acquired while visiting this district.

Straw District: The city's brewers, beekeepers, resident farmers, and blacksmiths call this simple district home and their place of business. The beef tripe and honey ingredients may be found here.

Once the characters have asked around and learned a bit about the city, it's time to enter and get on with their chores!

Act 2. The Finest Boar in Town

As it is the essential ingredient of Antax's meal, finding the boar meat should be the player characters' first goal. Asking around the Honored Guest District or a successful DC 10 Knowledge (local) check reveals the most likely location to purchase boar meat will be the Great Houses District. It is here that the merchants of the Grand Bazaar are based.

If the cooks decide to travel to the Great Houses District in search of boar to purchase, read the following:

After a cursory glance from city guards, you are waived into the city and wind through the bustling streets to the Great Houses District. There, you are quickly thrown into the tumult of a bazaar where merchants cry every ware from silk sheets to rutabagas. You note several spice merchants and maybe half a dozen butchers within view, but only a single stall from which hangs a beautiful boar carcass: "Marcu's Bounty of the Forest." In front of the stall, a merchant is haggling with a well-dressed northman.

If the cooks do not interrupt, Marcu Thrice-Blessed (expert 2) and James Oggliber (expert 3) haggle for several minutes. James is the mean-spirited head chef of Chateau Les Vikkingarde, the premier eatery in town. He enjoys rubbing other cooks' faces in his success. Marcu is a long-suffering mer-

chant who likes James' coin, even if he's not a fan of the man himself. When they are done haggling, James says he'll "have to think about it" and begins to stroke his chin while the exasperated merchant turns to the player characters.

Whether from interruption or an eventual lull in the conversation with James, Marcu turns to the player characters and asks, "And what can I help you with today?"

When asked about the boar, Marcu informs the cooks that they can have the freshly killed carcass for 15 gp, at which point James immediately offers 20 gp for it. If the cooks insist that this isn't fair, Marcu shrugs his shoulders and states that since James is a regular customer he'll accept the offer. The merchant does, however, have non-boar pork meat, as well as a boar killed several days before that has gone "a little gamey."

If the player characters will not outbid James and are unable to change Marcu's decision, James states that he might be willing to allow them a chance at the boar for a "little wager." He is willing to pit Antax's prized cooking knife against the boar meat in a three-part cooking duel. Because of their obvious disadvantages (to his mind), James will even allow the cooks to select a different individual to compete against him in each of the three challenges. James twirls around a knife (DC 15 Sleight of Hand check to avoid stabbing himself) as he speaks. A small, murmuring crowd gathers as James dumps vegetables onto an abandoned market stall with a flourish.

Appreciative of the attention his shop is getting, Marcu volunteers to act as judge.

James challenges the player characters to the following three culinary challenges as a wager to see who will go home with the boar meat. Any tie will require a tiebreaker that increases the DC by an additional +1 (and so on, increasing by +1 with each additional tiebreaker required.)

The player characters can cheat, either by distracting James with a Bluff or using Sleight of Hand to cause him to stumble. The DC for each check is the roll James made for that challenge. For example, if James rolled a 16 for the first No Tears Onion challenge, the player character could transform it into a failure by obtaining a 16 or higher Bluff check.

Any player character may make a Bluff check, but only the participating player character may make a Sleight of Hand check to cheat. Although James will complain about verbal distraction (Bluff checks), Marcu sees it as a normal part of competing.

Marcu will stop the competition if he notices direct interference (Sleight of Hand checks) and declare James as the winner.

If the player characters win at least two of the challenges, James reluctantly pays for the boar, acknowledging the cooks are "not without skill." If James wins, he demands Antax's knife as his prize. If the cooks refuse to give up the knife, James stalks off in a huff vowing "they'll never work in this town again." Marcu is a fair merchant, so if the player characters lose and refuse to give James Antax's knife, the merchant will only sell the boar to the player characters at James' 20gp price.

First Challenge: No Tears Onion Chop

This challenge involves dicing onions without becoming distracted by sulfur irritation. Participants each make three Fortitude Saves at DC 11, 12, and 13. James' Fortitude bonus is +1. The participant with the most successes of the three saves wins.

Antax's knife may be used in this challenge.

Second Challenge: Rondelle Carrot Dice

Participants make three Dexterity checks at DC 12, 13, and 14. James' Dexterity bonus is +1. The person with the most successes wins.

Antax's knife may be used in this challenge.

Third Challenge Potato Mash

This challenge is a series of attacks on a pot of potatoes with a mallet. The potatoes have AC 5 and the wooden mallet deals 1d2 + Strength bonus damage. The person with the most damage after three rounds wins. James has a BAB +2 and +1 Strength bonus to damage. If a tiebreaker is required, continue beating the potatoes for as many additional rounds as are necessary for someone to win.

The Boar Hunt

Alternatively, the player characters can hunt boar beyond the city limits, as they saw some boar on the

ride up to Skirgourun. Hunting a boar takes 3 hours of stalking following a successful DC 15 Survival check. This time is reduced by 1 hour if the check succeeds by 5 and by 2 hours if it succeeds by 10 or more.

Read the following when the player characters finally run down their boar:

This ill-tempered beast's tiny, bloodshot eyes glare angrily above a mouth filled with sharp tusks.

Boar CR 2

XP 600

N Medium animal

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision, scent, Perception +6

Defense

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural)

hp 18 (2d8+9)

Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities ferocity

Offense

Speed 40 ft.

Melee gore +4 (1d8+4)

Statistics

Str 17, **Dex** 10, **Con** 17, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 14

Feats Toughness

Skills Perception +6



Act 3: A Thief Run

While in the market, a young human boy, Brendon Casamire, attempts to pick the pocket of the cook holding the money (DC 20 Sleight of Hand.) The cooks may be allowed opposed Perception checks to notice. If the cooks don't choose to follow the thief as he makes off with their money (or don't notice the attempt in the first place), they must find a way to make up the money. Doing so may include performing or finding menial work (see the **Vermin Hunt**, pg 116.)

If the cooks decide to chase the thief, they must avoid Brendon's caltrops (DC 12 Perception check to spot; only one cook needs to succeed for the group), navigate hazards of the thick market crowd (DC 10 Intimidate or Bluff check to clear a path, or DC 10 Acrobatics or Athletics check to dodge through the crowd), and dodge overturned barrels and stall boxes (DC 14 Acrobatics check.) If at least one player character succeeds at all four checks, they catch Brandon.

If all player characters fail at least one check, Brendon runs into a tavern called the Ruddy Goose for help. Inside, Brendon Bluffs a failed fighter, now local drunk named Gumption into helping him from "bad men" chasing him. If the player characters follow Brendon into the Ruddy Goose, Gumption will intervene. (**Note:** any cooks who fail the barrel check arrive two rounds into the confrontation with Gumption because they have to catch up due to their fall.)

While the cooks fight the drunk, Brendon jeers from the side. However, Gumption will surrender if reduced to less than half hit points, at which point Brendon will surrender as well.

Brendon Casamire CR 1

XP 400

Male human rogue 1

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +3

Defense

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+1 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Fort +1, Ref +5, Will -1

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee sap +0 (1d6 nonlethal)

Ranged dart +3 (1d4)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 13

Feats Deft Hands, Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Appraise +5, Bluff +6, Disable Device +9, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +7, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +3, Sense Motive +3, Sleight of Hand +12, Stealth +7

Languages Common, Halfling

SQ trapfinding

Combat Gear bag of caltrops; **Other Gear** padded armor, darts (4), sap, disguise kit, thieves' tools



XP 400

Male human commoner 1 / warrior 2

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception –1**Defense****AC** 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor)**hp** 23 (1d6+2/2d10+6)**Fort** +7, **Ref** +0, **Will** –1**Offense****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** club +3 (1d6+1); dagger +3 (1d4+1/19–20)**Ranged** club +2 (1d6+1); dagger +2 (1d4+1/19–20)**Statistics****Str** 13, **Dex** 11, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 13**Feats** Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack**Skills** Climb +5, Handle Animal +3, Intimidate +3, Profession (butcher) +3, Ride +4, Swim +5**Languages** Common**Combat Gear** leather armor, club, dagger**Other Gear** gallon jug of ale

Act 3b. Vermin Hunt (Optional)

If the player characters run out of funds, a DC 15 Diplomacy or Knowledge (local) check to gather information puts them in touch with or point them towards Glaren Furst in the Scales District. Glaren is the warden of the city's sewer system.

Upon entering the office, read this to the players:

You enter a small, neat office. Every wall is plastered with diagrams of sewer works, each surface covered with at least twenty sheets. A large, darkwood desk dominates the room, and behind it sits a

small northman with a pockmarked face who smiles in greeting.

"Well 'ello, 'ello. What brings you to humble Mr. Furst's office today?"

Once the cooks introduce themselves, Glaren Furst explains that he's always looking for help keeping the city's waste pipes (more or less) free of dangerous vermin. Glaren is willing to pay the cooks for proof of each monster they kill (tongues, claws, ears, etc.) The rate is 5 gp for every dire rat, 10 gp for every cave fisher, and 15 gp for anything bigger.

For every hour spent in the sewer, roll a d6: if a 1–3 is rolled, the cooks encounter 1d4 dire rats; 4–5 means they come across a single cave fisher; 6 means they catch the attention of a solitary ettercap (in this case, they have to make a DC 20 Perception check or one of the cooks walks into an ettercap noose trap.) The cave fisher and ettercap can be encountered only once each.

The Dire Rats

As you walk, you begin to become aware of small noises behind the walls, beady red eyes staring at you from small cracks. Every time you turn to attack, the faces disappear. Trekking through the muck, you become increasingly aware of hungry noises about you, almost like whispers. From too-small cracks in the walls, squeeze dog-like creatures that snarl and rush up to you!

Dire Rat

CR 1/3

XP 135

N Small animal

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent, Perception +4**Defense****AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 size)**hp** 5 (1d8+1)**Fort** +3, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1**Offense****Speed** 40 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.**Melee** bite +1 (1d4 plus disease)**Special Attacks** disease

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 17, **Con** 13, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +0; **CMB** -1; **CMD** 12 (16 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Climb +11, Perception +4, Stealth +11, Swim +11; **Racial Modifiers** uses Dex to modify Climb and Swim

Disease (Filth Fever) (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 11; *onset* 1d3 days; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

The Cave Fisher

Before you, unconcerned with your presence, something that looks like a crab tears bits of flesh from what was once a man. In the flickering torchlight, you see it pass bits of gibbets into its squirming mouthparts.

Cave Fisher

CR 2

XP 600

N Medium vermin

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Perception +0

Defense

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 22 (3d8+9)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1

Immune mind-affecting effects

Offense

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d4+3)

Ranged filament +3 (drag)

Special Attacks pull (filament, 10 feet)

Statistics

Str 17, **Dex** 12, **Con** 17, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 4

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5 (+9 with pull); **CMD** 16 (28 vs. trip)

Skills Climb +11

Filament (Ex) A cave fisher can fire a thin filament of

sticky silk as a standard action. This touch attack has a range of 60 feet and no range increment. A creature struck by a cave fisher's filament becomes attached to the sticky thread. As a standard action, a creature can rip the filament free with a DC 20 Strength check. A caught creature can also attempt to escape a filament by making a DC 25 Escape Artist check. A filament is AC 14 (touch 12), has 5 hit points, and has DR 15/slashing. An application of liquid with high alcohol content (or a dose of *universal solvent*) dissolves the adhesive and releases the creature caught by the filament. A cave fisher can have only one filament active at a time.

Pull (Ex) A cave fisher has a +4 racial bonus on CMB checks made using its pull special attack.

Treasure on the corpse the cave fisher was consuming, the cooks can find 50 sp, a masterwork sap, two potions of cure light wounds, and a "treasure map" through the sewers. Close inspection reveals the "map" is actually an elaborate ruse shaped like a rude gesture.

Wounded Ettercap

The player character who succeeds at their Perception check to spot the ettercap's noose gets a chance to yell "stop!" otherwise read the following:

As you push deeper into the sewer, (Name one of the player characters randomly) feels a noose cinch around their neck. They claw for air, and as they twist the torchlight reveals a nearly invisible thread leading from their neck to a purple, spider face abomination dragging them to its hole with its sickle-shaped claws. Its jaw hangs loosely as though it had been recently smashed and deep gouges on the creature reveal it has been wounded by something. Still, its hunger remains all too apparent.

Ettercap

CR 1

XP 800

NE Medium aberration

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Perception +9

Defense

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 14

Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +6

Offense

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d4+2)

Special Attacks traps, web (+6 ranged, DC 15, hp 4)

Statistics

Str 14, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 15, Cha 8

Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 18

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative

Skills Climb +14, Craft (trapmaking) +8, Perception +9, Stealth +7; **Racial Modifiers** +8 on Craft (trapmaking)

Languages Common

SQ spider empathy +7

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 15; *frequency* 1/round for 10 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Dex; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution based.

Spider Empathy (Ex) This ability functions as the druid's wild empathy, save that an ettercap can only use this ability on spiders. An ettercap gains a +4 racial bonus on this check. Spiders are mindless, but this empathic communication imparts to them a modicum of implanted intelligence, allowing ettercaps to train giant spiders and use them as guardians.

Traps (Ex) The ettercap is particularly skilled at crafting cunning traps with its webs. Deadfalls, nooses, and spear traps are the most common traps ettercaps build with their webs. An ettercap doesn't require gold to build its traps, merely time.

Ettercap Noose: CR 1; *Type* mechanical; *Perception* DC 20; *Disable Device* DC 20; *Trigger* location; *Reset* repair; *Effect* +15 CMB check (grapple).



Act 4. Honey

Assuming the cooks travel to the Great Houses District for their ingredients, they are able to get most of it without issue. However, there is simply no honey to be bought. It's the middle of mead brewing season, so all the honey in the city has been purchased or consigned by a meadery.

The player characters may attempt to steal honey from a merchant's cellar if they wish. Doing so starts with a DC 20 Stealth check to not to be heard entering and DC 20 Disable Device checks to open the locks. A DC 20 Stealth check is then required to not to be heard leaving, and great care not to leave any clues.

Another option is to try a DC 13 Diplomacy or Knowledge (local) check. If they succeed, a friendly merchant suggests—since none of the local merchants have any honey—the cooks might have better luck traveling directly to the source in the Straw District. Once there, they discover all the honey has been sold since the bees have begun to settle down for their hibernation and cannot be roused safely.

If they press for more details or if the cooks seem ready to give up, a passerby will volunteer that there might be honey still available. One of the beekeepers—an idiot-savant named Freda Wulfgar—had been breeding bees specifically to have a longer production cycle (as well as an extremely territorial disposition.) However, but he hasn't been seen for several days. It is assumed that those same bees may have killed him. As the farmers have all been busy, and Freda has no family or friends to speak of, the situation has been left uninvestigated. If the cooks insist, one of the local farmers can show them to Wulfgar's house.

When the player characters reach Wulfgar's house, read the following:

Abutting the large city wall stands a simple shack with high fences plastered with warning signs. As you peer through the cracks in the fence, you see a swarm of angry bees buzzing around the shambling corpse of a tall northman. The body moves with the telltale gait of a zombie, and overlarge bees move into and out of its mouth and the sockets where its eyes once were. In the bulbous, over-stung flesh of its hand, it holds a black stick. (A DC 20 Perception check reveals this to be an unused smokestick). In the back corner, a small white hut drops with honey.

Shambling Freda Wulfgar Zombie

Wulfgar had designs on revolutionizing bee husbandry, but when he failed to get his smokestick activated in time, the very productive (and very aggressive) bees killed him. The bees, for their part, are busy re-situating their hive from the hut to the flesh of the zombie, a process that should be finished just before winter.

The zombie (and the bee swarm surrounding it) lurches towards any intruder in the backyard (favoring whoever is closest) but is otherwise content to mill about, bumping into the fencing. Exposure to a smokestick (like the one in Wulfgar's hand) will put the swarm to sleep for 3d4 rounds. Wulfgar's smokestick can be activated while held by the zom-

bie or if struck by a ranged attack (AC 20) that deals at least 1 point of fire damage.

It takes two rounds with an appropriate container (succeeding at two DC 10 Sleight of Hands checks to do so under pressure) to gather enough honey for the meal from the hut. The player characters can search Wulfgar's house, requiring a DC 15 Disable Device check to pick the lock or a DC 15 Strength check to force the door. Inside they find several empty jars, an additional smokestick, gnomish pornography, a rotting pot of beans, and 15 gp.

Human Zombie

CR 1/2

XP 200

NE Medium undead

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Perception +0

Defense

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (+2 natural)

hp 12 (2d8+3)

Fort +0, **Ref** +0, **Will** +3

DR 5/slashing; **Immune** undead traits

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +4 (1d6+4)

Statistics

Str 17, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 14

Feats Toughness

Special Qualities staggered

The Bee Swarm

A low, ominous buzz hangs in the air amidst a mass of many thousands of angry, stinging bees.

Bee Swarm

CR 3

XP 800

N Diminutive vermin (swarm)

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

husband. She has been struggling with the resulting increased duties.

When the Cooks ask about shocker lizard horn, Mrs. Seino raises an eyebrow and says, "Oh, I didn't think you'd be into that sort of thing. No judgment mind you, just ... wow." She then searches through some of the drawers, muttering to herself, before finally smacking herself in the head.

"Oh, shocker lizard. Yeah, just had one delivered and it ... err. It got out. Downstairs, in the basement. I was going to wait for Sven to come by and handle it, but perhaps you'd care to make a deal. If you can go downstairs and bring it back, I'll get you a dose of powdered shocker lizard horn. If you bring it up dead, I'll sell you powdered horn at cost (5gp), if you bring it up alive, I'll give you a dose for free."

When the cooks enter the basement, read the following:

As you step into the basement, the door slams shut behind you.

"Alright dearies, you know the deal. Now, I can't open the door until you get what I need. Three quick knocks ok? And be careful, I think some other deliveries might have gotten loose as well."

As your eyes adjust to the gloom, you see tottering stacks of cages each filled with some strange squawking, clutching, or screeching beast. As you venture further into the darkness, you note that several of the pens have been ripped open.

The basement is the (temporary) home to innumerable unhappy creatures, both mundane and magical. Two will be of particular interest to the cooks because they are roaming free and may represent a threat.

The shocker lizard is cowering in a small hole in the wall hiding from the hungry ankheg. When the cooks enter the basement, the ankheg scuttles up the wall into its burrow where it can watch the intruders without exposing itself. When the cooks are busy dealing with the shocker lizard (or otherwise seem vulnerable), the Ankheg will jump down and attack.

(Starving) Shocker Lizard

This dog-sized lizard has two horns—one on either side of its head—and green scales that crackle with sparks of lightning.

Shocker Lizard

CR 2

XP 600

N Small magical beast

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., electricity sense, low-light vision, Perception +8

Defense

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 19 (3d10+3)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

Immune electricity

Offense

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d4)

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 15, **Con** 13, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Climb +8, Perception +8, Stealth +17, Swim +8; Racial Modifiers +2 Perception, +4 Stealth

Stunted Ankheg

This, bug-like monster scuttles about on six legs, drooling noxious green ichor from its clacking mandibles.

Ankheg

CR 2

XP 800

N Large magical beast

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense 60 ft., Perception +8

Defense

AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16 (+7 natural, -1 size)

Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +2

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Str 16, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 1, Wis 13, Cha 6

Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

Skills Climb +8, Perception +8

Spit Acid (Ex) Once every 6 hours, an ankheg can spit a 30-foot line of acid. Creatures struck by this acid take 3d4 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 14 halves). Once an ankheg uses this attack, it must wait 6 hours before using it again. Additionally, during this time period, its bite attack does not inflict any additional acid damage. As a result, an ankheg does not use this ability unless it is desperate or frustrated, most often spitting acid when reduced to fewer than half its full normal hit points or when it cannot not successfully grab an opponent. The save DC is Constitution-based.

After acquiring the last ingredient, the cooks—given their obvious dedication to the profession—are eventually approached by Ragnar Emberkindler. He is a recruiter for the ancient and venerable order of chefs, the Culinguarde.

Exiting a nearby building, Ragnar approaches.
Read the following:

A large, confident man approaches you with an easy smile. He's wearing the immaculate chef white (or what passes for it in a far northern city.) He raises a hand in greeting.

"Hail cooks. My, my, you've had some adventures today. Now, I'm sure you'd like nothing better than to return to the caravan and prepare the feast you've worked so hard to gather the ingredients for, but if you'd indulge me, I have a little proposition. I represent the Culinguarde, a venerable order of chefs, cooks, pâtissiers, and meat burners. If



you have a moment, we can see about getting you initiated. I promise it will be worth your while."

Ragnar will explain nothing more, although a Sense Motive check confirms he is telling the truth and bears no ill will to the cooks. If the cooks are reluctant, Ragnar can offer any ingredients they are missing, or a finely crafted pot or cooking utensil. He can even provide a complete recipe for nagaji courage sausage.

If the cooks accept his offer to become initiated, they are blindfolded and led to an enormous estate. Ragnar explains there are three possible challenges, of which each cook must accomplish at least two if they hope to be initiated. Each challenge lies behind one of three doors, the first two of which must be attempted individually.

First Culingaurde Initiation Challenge

While blindfolded, the cooks must identify nuances in spices. The player characters must succeed in at least two of three Profession (cook) or Perception checks. The rare ingredients are:

Cinnamon (DC 12)

White Lavender (DC 14)

Yeager's Mountain Salt (DC 16)

Second Culingaurde Initiation Challenge

A room is littered with pots and pans all about the floor. In the back corner, a soufflé is baking. The cook's challenge is to remain silent (DC 17 Sneak check) as they put another log on the fire under the oven so as not to collapse the delicate confection.

Third Culingaurde Initiation Challenge

This dangerous challenge involves entering a sealed room and defeating a "culinary experiment that got out of hand." This challenge may be attempted as a group.

As the cooks open the door, a twisted amalgam of food, baked goods, and cooking utensils slumps towards you; glistening in the light from the stoves.

Animated Object

CR 2

XP 800

N Medium construct

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, Perception -5

Defense

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (+4 natural)

hp 20 (3d8)

Fort +1, **Ref** +1, **Will** -4

Defensive Abilities hardness 3; **Immune** construct traits

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +5 (1d6+3)

Statistics

Str 14, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 15

SQ construction points

If the cooks are unable (or unwilling) to complete any tasks, Ragnar sneers and then waves to unseen ninja-waiters to take them away. If the cooks accomplish only a single task, Ragnar shrugs and says "Perhaps I was too hasty, maybe someday ..." before having the cooks whisked away. If the player characters accomplish two tasks, Ragnar declares "Welcome to the Culingaurde!" and collectively awards the cooks a single chef treasure (see below.) If the cooks accomplish all three tasks, Ragnar cheers, proclaiming "I knew I was right about you!" and offers the cooks two of the chef treasures.

Culingaurde Chef Treasures

Choose from the following, as appropriate:

Prize 1: Nagaji courage sausage recipe. This grants a +5 bonus to Profession (cook) when preparing Antax's meal. **Value** 1 gp

Prize 2: An *enchanted wok*. Adds a +1 competence bonus to any Profession (cook) Check. **Value** 60 gp

Prize 3: A sample set of extremely rare spices. Add a +5 competence bonus to a single Profession (cook) check per dose. **Value** 100 gp (5 doses)

Prize 4: High quality version of any ingredient the cooks were unable to secure. This provides a +2 competence bonus to the final Profession (cook) check to create Antax's meal. **Value** 10 gp

Act 5c. Slaver (Optional)

While rushing back to the caravan, some slaver steps in front of the least dexterous cook and drops a small statue to shatter on the ground. The slaver responds with mock indignation.

Read the following:

"You clumsy oaf! That was a family heirloom, and your clubfeet just broke it. I demand weregilt. You owe 20 gold pieces or three weeks service in compensation." The dangerous looking man draws a knife with a wicked edge to it. "Or, I'd settle for your blood on the street. Your call."

Several amused men crowd around, eager for a show while acting like they'd seen this sort of thing before.

The cooks must decide to either talking the local guards into settling manners or defeat the slaver in single combat. (Or they can agree to do the work or pay up if they are extremely desperate.) The slaver is sufficiently proud that he'll fight to the death. Should the player characters wait for the authorities, several guards will arrive and remind the slaver that a one-week cool down period is required before blood claims may be made.

Slaver CR 4

XP 1,200

Male human fighter 2 / ranger 2

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +8

Defense

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 30 (4d10+8)

Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee masterwork guisarme +9 (2d4+4/×3); masterwork sap +8 (1d6+3 nonlethal); spiked gauntlet +7 (1d4+3)

Ranged bolas +7 (1d4+3)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with guisarme)

Special Attacks favored enemy (humans +2)

Statistics

Str 17, **Dex** 14, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19

Feats Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bolas), Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (bolas), Weapon Focus (guisarme)

Skills Climb +7, Handle Animal +3, Knowledge (geography) +4, Perception +6, Ride +6, Stealth +7, Survival +5 (+6 to follow tracks), Swim +7

Languages Common

SQ combat style (archery), track +1, wild empathy +1

Combat Gear feather token (whip), tanglefoot bags (2), masterwork studded leather, bolas (3), masterwork guisarme, masterwork sap, spiked gauntlet, drow poison (2)

Other Gear climber's kit, manacles

Act 6. Bringing it all Together

Finally arriving back at the caravan with the ingredients (or at least adequate substitutions) in hand, the cooks scrub down to prepare the feast. Have them decide who will be the lead cook, which cooks will assist, and who will handle side dishes, etc.

The lead cook (and every cook helping them) must attempt three Profession (cook) checks. These rolls are averaged to determine the final quality of Antax's dish. Since the cooks are unfamiliar with nagaji courage sausage, an average result of 19 and

Nagaji Courage Sausage Cooking Modifiers

- If the cooks forget to prepare side dishes, apply a –5 penalty to the final result.
- If the cooks make a side dish that surpasses a DC 12 Profession (cook) check, apply a +2 bonus to the final result.
- Apply bonuses for any acquired Culingaurde chef treasures (pg 123.)
- If the cooks made one or more substitutions, subtract applicable penalties (see the substitutions sidebar at the beginning of this adventure, pg 112)
- If the cooks remember to serve beer or wine, add a +2 bonus to the final result. If the cooks take the time to identify the *correct* beer or wine for the meal, this bonus becomes +5. A DC 15 Profession (cook) or Profession (brewer) check is required to correctly identify an appropriate drink for the meal.
- If the cooks took the time and money to get higher quality versions of the staples (e.g., oats, thyme, etc.), apply a +2 bonus to the final result.
- If rotten or lower quality food was used for any part of the meal (even if purified with magic), apply a –5 penalty to the final result.
- If the meal is late, apply a –10 penalty to the final result.

below is fair, a 20 to 24 is good, a 25 to 30 is excellent, and anything over 30 is superb.

Eventually, night falls and Antax and the other adventurers return. Cleaning off the monster gore that coats them, they sit down to eat. Antax sniffs at the food and takes a single bite.

If the player characters managed a fair (19 or less) final result for their meal preparation, Antax berates them mercilessly

If they managed a good (20-24) final result, Antax berates them mercilessly but cuts it short to return to eating. He admits that he is ravenous and that, despite their incompetence, "hunger is the best seasoning."

If they obtained an excellent (25-30) final result, Antax smiles before quickly suppressing the unusual expression and admits that the food is adequate.

If the cooks managed a superb (31+) final result, a single tear of joy drips down his scaly face when Antax tries the food. He then flees to his wagon, sobbing, confessing "I'll never be as good as you!" before sequestering himself away. In that case, later that night, Antax visits each of the cooks and gives them back their names.

On the other hand, if the cooks forgot to rigorously clean themselves (after potentially fighting monsters, tromping through sewers, and handling

all manner of filth), things will turn out bad, regardless. Everyone who ate their meal suffers terrible food poisoning the next day.

Congratulations! Your players have completed **Cooks Day Out!**

Ready-to-Go Characters

Each prepared character offers three story elements:

An **Obvious Secret**, something they believe only they know but is readily observable.

An **Actual Secret**, something the character has successfully kept from others.

A **Goal**, something the character aspires to achieve. In *Cooker's* case, the character's Goal has been replaced with a **Temptation**.

Cooked

Cooked is a failed adventuring fighter-come cook. She alternates between being a braggart and grim humor. Cooked specializes in MEAT!

Obvious Secret: Despite being something of a badass, she actually likes frilly things.

Actual Secret: Despite the danger involved, Cooked would actually try adventuring again.

Goal: To prove herself as an adventurer or a cook, whichever seems easier at the time.

Cooked CR 1

XP 400

Female human fighter 1 / commoner (cook) 1

N medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +0

Defense

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor)

hp 22 (1d10+5/1d6+3)

Fort +4, **Ref** +0, **Will** +0

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee greatsword +4 (2d6+3), gauntlet punch +4 (1d3+3), or kitchen knife +4 (1d3+3)

Ranged kitchen knife (thrown) +1 (1d3+3)

Statistics

Str 16 **Dex** 10 **Con** 14 **Int** 10 **Wis** 10 **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 14

Feats Rugged Northerner, Self-Sufficient, Toughness

Traits Grim Optimism, Strong Cook

Skills Climb +7, Craft (Clothing) +4, Heal +2, Profession (cook) +9, Survival +6, Swim +7

Languages Common

Combat Gear greatsword, scale mail, kitchen knives (4), tanglefoot bag, thunderstone, alchemist fire,

Other Gear cook's uniform, cook's hat, needle and thread, fabric samples, sleeping bag, torch, rope, fuzzy pink manacles, butterfly net, jar (4), 80 sp

Cookie

Cookie is (absolutely not!) a goblin rogue turned cook—he would have everyone believe he is merely a short human and disguises himself as such. He has a tendency to sing while he works and is prob-

ably the most talented cook of the four characters. Cookie specializes in stews, puddings, and mashes.

Obvious Secret: Cookie is actually a goblin in a terrible disguise

Actual Secret: Sometimes, Cookie just isn't sure if fireworks/lighting fires is all it's cracked up to be.

Goal: To secretly kill and serve the caravan members dog one of these days.

Cookie CR 1

XP 400

Male (not a) goblin rogue 1 / commoner (cook) 1

N small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Perception +4

Defense

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +4 Dex)

hp 15 (2d6+5)

Fort +2, **Ref** +6, **Will** +0

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee oversized ladle +0 (1d4–1)

Ranged small sling +5 (1d3–1)

Special Attacks sneak attack 1d6

Statistics

Str 8, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +1; **CMB** –1; **CMD** 12

Feats Improved Initiative

Traits Dexterous Cook, Rude Songs

Skills Craft (junk sculptures) +4, Disable Device +9, Knowledge (Local) +4, Linguistics +1, Perception +4, Perform (sing) +5, Profession (cook) +10, Ride +8, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +12

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ trapfinding

Combat Gear oversized ladle, sling, 20 sling bullets, alchemist fire (2), masterwork hide shirt

Other Gear fireworks (small), grain alcohol, tinder, sparkmaker, cook's outfit, cook's hat, junk sculptures (4)

Cookbook

Cookbook is an elven illusionist turned cook, much to the eternal disappointment of his tribe. Having lived long and supped on a variety of exotic dishes, Cookbook is a master of crafting unusual flavor combinations.

Obvious Secret: Cookbook doesn't actually like physical violence, and tries to avoid it whenever possible.

Actual Secret: This elf doesn't mind having their name taken away by Antax. "Cookbook" seems a better alternative to this former wizard than their real name.

Goal: Taste something they've never tasted before.

Cookbook CR 1

XP 400

Male elf specialist wizard 1 / commoner (cook) 1

N Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision, Perception +6

Defense

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 11 (+1 Dex)

hp 7 (2d6–2)

Fort –1, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2; +2 vs enchantment

Immune magic *sleep*

Offense

Speed 30 ft.

Melee masterwork quarterstaff (bonded object) +1 (1d6/1d6)

Spell-Like Abilities

6/day—*blinding ray*

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 1)

0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *prestidigitation*

1st—*charm person*, *color spray*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *sleep*

Specialty School: Illusion

Opposed Schools: Abjuration, Transmutation

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** 8, **Int** 16, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +0; **CMB** 0; **CMD** 11

Feats Cosmopolitan

Traits Intelligent Cook, Reactionary

Skills Bluff +6, Craft (origami) +7, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +7, Perception +6, Profession (cook) +8, Spellcraft +8

Languages Aklo, Common, Draconic, Elven, Goblin, Terran, Undercommon

SQ elven immunities, elven magic, extend illusions, scribe scroll, weapon familiarity

Combat Gear bonded masterwork quarterstaff

Other Gear folding (rolling) papers, spellbook, pipe, pipeweed, torch, cook's uniform, cook's hat, cigars (5), old love letters

Cooker

Cooker was a dwarf cleric of the God of Wine and Ale, but switched careers to become a cook.

Obvious Secret: Cooker dislikes Cookie for being both a better cook than him and a goblin.

Actual Secret: This dwarf has a crush on Cooked.

Temptation: Cooker has used *purify food* to buy rotten foodstuff and save yourself coin. He splits the money saved by donating some to his former church and keeping some for himself. He's only ever done it on a small scale, but he may be willing to do it for the chance to prepare a larger portion of the meal (although this may have unknown taste repercussions.)

Cooker CR 1

XP 400

Male dwarf cleric 1 / commoner (cook) 1

N Medium humanoid (dwarf)

Init +0, **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., Perception +0 (+2 vs. unusual stonework)

Defense

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 shield)

hp 13 (1d8+1/1d6+1)

Fort +3 **Ref** +1 **Will** +5; +2 vs poisons and spells

New Commoner Traits

Dexterous Cook: Thanks to your nimble fingers, you can prepare ingredients with incredible precision. You can use your Dexterity modifier in place of your Wisdom modifier for Profession (cook) checks, and you gain a +1 trait bonus to Profession (cook.)

Intelligent Cook: You've memorized innumerable recipes studying cookbooks in your free time. You can use your intelligence modifier in for your Profession (cook) checks, and you gain a +1 trait bonus to the skill.

Strong Cook: Whether it's cutting chicken, tenderizing tri-tip, or mashing mutton, you do not tire in the kitchen. You gain a +1 trait bonus to Profession (cook) and you may use your strength modifier instead of your wisdom modifier for any Profession (cook) check.

Offense

Speed 20 ft.

Melee rapier +0 (1d6/18-20)

Ranged light crossbow +0 (1d8/19-20)

Special Attacks channel positive energy 1d6 (DC 11, 1d6; 6/day)

Spell-like Abilities

6/day—*door sight, strength surge*

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 1)

0—*create water, guidance, purify food and drink*

1st—*command, enlarge person*
D, *obscuring mist*

D domain spell; **Deity** Wine and Ale; **Domains** Exploration, Strength

Statistics

Str 10, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 10

Feats Extra Channel

Traits Competitive, Grounded

Skills Craft (beer) +4, Knowledge (religion) +4, Profession (cook) +8, Sense Motive +7

Languages Common, Dwarven

SQ aura, defensive training, greed, hatred, spontaneous casting (healing spells), stability, stonecutting, weapon familiarity

Combat Gear heavy wooden shield, scale mail, rapier, light crossbow, crossbow bolts (20)

Other Gear growlers of beer (4), 20 sp



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The author and Misfit Studios would like to thank the following for helping to back and fund this project. Carry on, commoners! (Our apologies if anyone was accidentally left off the list.)

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