The Elen Dault Impenetrable Shields

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The Ebon Vault: Impenetrable Shields



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Introduction

Shields are an unusual item in the *Pathfinder* roleplaying game, as well as the 3.5 OGL on which it is based. Most often, they serve as a sort of "second armor," for characters who are willing to give up wielding two weapons, wielding a two-handed weapon, or being able to cast spells (or do whatever else) with their off-hand. They're so much like a "second armor," in fact, that most of the special abilities that can be applied to shields are also applicable to armor, and vice versa. The main way in which the two typically differentiate themselves is that shields have a secondary (although, rarely used) function: they can be used as weapons.

Since we pride ourselves, when it comes to *Ebon Vault* products, in creating special abilities that bring out the flavor and unique identity of the item being showcased, this similarity between shields and armor made us focus exceptionally closely on what we could do to help differentiate the two in this book. Obviously some (and perhaps even the majority) of the special abilities in the book would be available for armors as well, but it was important that we knew what a "shield" ability felt like, and how it differed from an "armor" ability. The most obvious difference was the shield bash, and we knew that we would want some offensive abilities to support that, but we also knew that the majority of the abilities should be defensive themed.

In the end, we came up with two main aspects of a shield's identity that don't relate to armors. The first, we determined, was that shields are used for active defense, rather than passive. One doesn't simply wear a shield, like a suit of armor, and hope that it deflects incoming blows. Instead, you deliberately swing the shield to block incoming attacks. We deliberately worked to capture that feel, and you'll notice that many of the abilities in this book are similarly active, rather than passive.

The other thing that was unique to shields was heraldry, the iconic images that knights would paint on their shields in order to make them easily identifiable in battle. Heraldry is more of a flavorful element than a mechanical one, but nonetheless we did our best to make shield special abilities that put a spotlight on heraldic elements, including several abilities in which the image on the shield can come to life and battle on the wielder's behalf.

As with nearly all *Ebon Vault* books, we begin with an exploration of some mundane enhancements that can be added to a shield, allowing even adventurers on a tight budget (such as those at low levels) to be able to customize and optimize their shield as they see fit.

From there, we present no less than 50 new special abilities for shields and armors, ranging from +1-equivalent to +5-equivalent, with a handful that have no equivalent, and only a cost in gold.

Next is a selection of 10 specific shields, each of which has an in-depth physical description and background, as well as one or more unique abilities not seen elsewhere.

Finally, the book closes on a brief primer on heraldry, intended to give players some background and ideas for coming up with their own heraldic designs for their characters, and perhaps even to give GMs some ideas on ways that heraldry can be used to seed adventure hooks.

Mundane Enhancements

Just as shields can be specially-forged out of unusual materials, or enchanted with powerful magic, they can also be carefully crafted with unusual features and improvements that modify their use. The following mundane shield enhancements are special modifications that can be added to shields as they are being crafted. A shield can have any number of enhancements, but all enhancements must be included on the shield when it is forged, and cannot later be added.

Grip and Shape Enhancements

Several of the mundane enhancements included here are either grip enhancements or shape enhancements. Each of these two categories of enhancements indicates what part of the shield is being enhanced. As a result, a single shield can have no more than one grip enhancement and no more than one shape enhancement (although it can have one of each, and as many other mundane enhancements as desired).

New Mundane Enhancements

The following enhancements are presented in alphabetical order. Table 1-1: Mundane Shield Enhancements summarizes the prices and Craft DC adjustments of these enhancements. Enhancements on the table are listed in order of their price, and those whose names are marked with a "G" are grip enhancements, while those marked with an "S" are shape enhancements.

Enhancement	Craft DC	Price
Cross-grip ^G	+1	+100 gp
Guige strap ^G	+0	+150 gp
Rounded ^S	+0	+150 gp
Sturdy	+10	+200 gp
Enarmes ^G	+2	+300 gp
Heraldic markings	15	+300 gp
Kite ^s	+5	+350 gp
Cavalry ^S	+5	+450 gp
Ringing	+10	+450 gp
Spearman's ^S	+10	+1,000 gp

Table 1-1: Mundane Shield Enhancements

Cavalry (shape): Cavalry shields are particularly long, and designed to be worn while on horseback, offering complete protection to the wielder from one side. The shield bonus that a cavalry shield grants to its wielder's AC is increased by +1, but only when the wielder is mounted. The shield is awkward and cumbersome when on foot, and its armor check penalty is increased by 2 whenever the wielder is not mounted.

Craft DC +5; Price +450 gp

Cross-Grip (grip): A cross-grip consists of a pair of looped straps which form an "X" on the back of the shield, and, when properly fitter, allow the wielder to snugly fit his arm beneath them to attach the shield to his forearm

securely. This extra security grants a +4 bonus to CMD versus attempts to disarm him of his shield. Craft DC +1; Price +100 gp

Enarmes (grip): Enarmes are a pair of looped straps which allow a shield to be attached to the wielder's forearm: one buckled near the elbow, and one gripped in the hand. This allows the wielder to make much more natural movements with his shield arm, and if he is strong enough to negate the weight of the shield, it's as though he isn't even wearing it at all. For every 2 points by which the wielder's Strength score exceeds 10, the shield's armor check penalty is reduced by 1 (minimum 0, or 5 for a tower shield), and its arcane spell failure is reduced by 3% (minimum 0%, or 25% for a tower shield).

Craft DC +2; Price +300 gp

Guige Strap (grip): A guige strap is a long strap that is used to hang a shield on the shoulder or neck. A shield with this enhancement can be worn in this way to provide lesser protection. Heavy shields worn in this way grant a +1 shield bonus to AC. Bucklers and light shields do not provide any benefit when worn in this way, and so typically do not have this enhancement. Tower shields cannot have this enhancement. Shields with this enhancement can still be wielded normally, as well.

Craft DC +0; Price +150 gp

Heraldic Markings: Shields with this enhancement are painted or otherwise decorated on the outside with a personal coat of arms or other markings that distinguish and identify the wielder. This grants anyone who sees the shield a +2 circumstance bonus on Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (nobility) checks to identify the wielder (unless the markings belong to someone besides the wielder, in which case the shield imposes a -5 penalty). Additionally, if the wielder's base attack bonus is +6 or higher, the heraldic markings grant a +1 circumstance bonus on all Intimidate checks he makes. Finally, as long as the wielder maintains an honorable and positive reputation, the heraldic markings grant a +1 circumstance bonus on all Diplomacy checks he makes. These skill bonuses do not apply if the heraldic markings belong to someone besides the wielder.

Craft DC 15 (painting); Price +300 gp

Kite (shape): Kite shields feature an elongated "tail" which tapers towards the bottom, giving it a teardrop, or in some cases triangular, shape. This additional length makes it somewhat more cumbersome, but provides much greater protection of the wielder's lower body, which is particularly helpful if the wielder is not heavily armored. The shield bonus that a kite shield grants to its wielder's AC is increased by +1, but only if the wielder is wearing light, medium, or no armor. The shield's armor check penalty is increased by 1, regardless of the type of armor its wielder is wearing. A tower shield cannot have this enhancement.

Craft DC +5; Price +350 gp

Spearman's (shape): Shields with this enhancement have a small hole or gap cut out on one side, to accommodate for the wielder's weapon. The penalty imposed on attack rolls by a shield with this ability is reduced by 1. Because tower shields are generally the only type of shield that impose a penalty on attack rolls, they are typically the only type of



shield to which this enhancement is applied. Craft DC +10; Price +1,000 gp

Ringing: These shields are designed almost as much for their ability to make noise as for their defensive capabilities. When a character wielding a ringing shield beats a melee weapon against it as part of making an Intimidate check, he gains a +2 bonus on that check. This does not affect the type of action required to make the Intimidate check. Despite the name of the enhancement, this enhancement can also be applied to wooden weapons.

Craft DC +10; Price +450

Rounded (shape): Rounded shields are generally shaped like a circle or an oval, and often have a round metal protrusion in the middle, called a boss, which helps them to deflect oncoming blows. Round shields are used by actively swinging the shield into oncoming blows, making them more effective when used for active defense. The wielder of a rounded shield gains a +1 circumstance bonus to AC whenever he fights defensively or uses the total defense action.

Craft DC +0; Price +150 gp

Sturdy: Shields with this enhancement are designed to take a lot of punishment. A sturdy shield that gains the broken condition continues to grant its full shield bonus to the wielder's AC, and its armor check penalty does not increase. A sturdy shield that is reduced to o hit points is still ruined.

Craft DC +10; Price +200 gp

Armor and Shield Special Abilities

The following special abilities can be applied to shields, and, in many cases, to armor, and follow the same general rules and guidelines as the armor and shield special abilities found in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*.

Several of the armor and shield special abilities included here, such as *arcane consumption* and *beneficent*, refer to a weapon's enhancement bonus. Note that in these cases, the abilities are referring to the actual enhancement bonus of the item, not its effective enhancement bonus, and so special abilities that are priced as an enhancement bonus equivalent do not count for this purpose.

Many of the special abilities included here have restrictions on what type of armor and/or shields they can be applied to, such as only being able to be applied to tower shields, or applied to any type of shield but bucklers, etc.. Each special ability's entry has a line detailing what sorts of items it can be applied to.

The following armor and shield special abilities are presented in alphabetical order.

Arcane Consumption

Aura strong abjuration; **CL** 17th; **Price** 2,000 gp (1st), 8,000 gp (2nd), 18,000 gp (3rd), 32,000 gp (4th), 50,000 gp (5th), 72,000 gp (6th), 98,000 gp (7th), 128,000 gp (8th), 162,000 gp (9th) **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *spell resistance*; **Cost** 1,000 gp (1st), 4,000 gp (2nd), 9,000 gp (3rd), 16,000 gp (4th), 25,000 gp (5th), 36,000 gp (6th), 49,000 gp (7th), 64,000 gp (8th), 81,000 gp (9th)

Shields with this special ability can use the arcane powers of spells in order to increase their defensive potential. Three times per day, the wielder of a shield with the *arcane consumption* special ability can attempt to absorb the magical power of a spell which targets him. If he does, the spell is countered and the wielder's shield bonus to AC increases by an amount equal to the level of the spell. This bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to the *spell eater* shield's enhancement bonus. A shield with the *arcane consumption* special ability can only absorb the power of spells up to a certain spell level, from 1st to 9th, determined at the time that the shield is created. If the wielder attempts to use this ability to absorb a spell whose spell level exceeds what the shield can absorb, this ability is wasted and has no effect.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Athlete's Shield

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 3rd; **Price** +200 gp **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bull's strength* or *cat's grace*; **Cost** +100 gp

These shields are often given as prizes to winning athletes and are occasionally emblazoned with images of swift running animals such as hares or leopards. The wielder of a shield with this special ability is better able to perform

Table 2-1: Shield Abilities by Price

Ability	Enhancement Bonus
Athlete's shield	+200 gp
Gleaming	+500 gp
Sunder-shocking	+750 gp
Cloud (light shield)	+1,250 gp
Blocking	+1
Brace	+1
Dueling	+1
Eagle emblem	+1
Elemental deflection	+1
Hoplite	+1
Proof ag <mark>ainst arrows</mark>	+1
Proof ag <mark>ainst spells</mark>	+1
Saving gr <mark>ace</mark>	+1
Underwater protection	+1
Weapon bane	+1
Arcane consumption (1st)	+2,000 gp
Cloud (heavy shield)	+2,500 gp
Blood shield	+2
Defensive might	+2
Force ward	+2
Noble	+2
Power spike	+2
Ray reflecting	+2
Sight shielding	+2
Smashing	+2
Stopping	+2
Wolf emblem	+2
Cloud (tower shield)	+5,000 gp
Arcane consumption (2nd)	+8,000 gp
Battering Peneficent losser	+3
Beneficent, lesser	+3
Burning vengeance Challenging	+3
Channel resistant	+3
Grasping	+3
Griffon emblem	+3
Inspiring	+3 +3
Resilient	+3
Sacrificial	+3
Sword-eating	+3
Arcane consumption (3rd)	+18,000 gp
Beneficent	+4
Eldritch mirror	+4
Hateful blast	+4
Hero's luck	+4
Lion emblem	+4
Medic	+4
Morphic	+4
Phalanx	+4
Spell eating	+4
Stronghold	+4
Visionary	+4
Arcane consumption (4th)	+32,000 gp
Beneficent, greater	+5
Bier	+5
Dragon emblem	+5

Imprisoning	+5
Interrupting	+5
Retribution	+5
Arcane consumption (5th)	+50,000 gp
Arcane consumption (6th)	+72,000 gp
Arcane consumption (7th)	+98,000 gp
Arcane consumption (8th)	+128,000 gp
Arcane consumption (9th)	+162,000 gp

athletics than a creature burdened with a traditional shield. When a shield with the *athlete's shield* special ability is created, the special ability is tied to a specific Strength- or Dexterity-based skill. The armor check penalty of a shield with this ability is reduced by 2 (minimum o) for the chosen skill. This ability can be gained multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each additional time it is applied to a shield, it applies to a different skill.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Battering

Aura moderate abjuration; **CL** 9th; **Price** +3 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bull's strength*, creator must have the Improved Shield Bash and Two-Weapon Fighting feats; **Cost** +3 bonus

Shields with this special ability sing with magical energy that impels them to strike out, and they practically guide their wielder's hand in bashing with them. They deal damage as though they were two size categories larger than they actually are when used for a shield bash attack (1d6 for a Medium light shield and 1d8 for a Medium heavy shield). Additionally, the wielder is treated as though he had the Improved Shield Bash and Two-Weapon Fighting feats for as long as he wields the shield. If the wielder's base attack bonus is 6 or higher, he is also treated as though he had the Improved Two-Weapon Fighting feat, and if the wielder's base attack bonus is 11 or higher, he is also treated as though he had the Greater Two-Weapon Fighting feat. These feats only apply if one of the weapons the wielder is attacking with is the shield, and only if he is attacking with no more than two weapons.

This ability can be applied to light and heavy shields, but not to bucklers, tower shields, or armor of any kind.

Beneficent

Aura strong conjuration; CL 12th; Price +4 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *restoration*; Cost +4 bonus

Armor and shields with this ability often bear the holy symbols of deities associated with healing and mercy, or show other universal signs of the same. If the wielder possesses the lay on hands class feature, he can use it a number of additional times per day equal to the item's enhancement bonus. If the wielder does not possess the lay on hands class feature, he gains it for as long as the *beneficent* item is worn. His effective paladin level for the purposes of this ability is equal to twice the *beneficent* item's enhancement bonus. Additionally, each *beneficent* suit of armor or shield is associated with a single mercy from among those a paladin can select at 6th level (dazed, diseased, or staggered). This mercy is chosen at the time of the item's creation, and cannot later be changed. As long as the *beneficent* item is worn, the wielder is treated as though he has that mercy, in addition to any other mercies he may possess.

This ability can be applied to medium and heavy armor, and to heavy shields and tower shields.

Beneficent, Greater

Aura strong conjuration; CL 15th; Price +5 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, greater restoration; Cost +5 bonus

This functions as *beneficent*, with the following exceptions: the number of additional uses of lay on hands granted to a wielder with that ability is equal to twice the item's enhancement bonus, instead of the normal amount. Similarly, if the wielder does not have the lay on hands class feature, his effective paladin level for the purposes of the ability is equal to three times the *beneficent* item's enhancement bonus, instead of the normal amount. Finally, the mercy associated with the item is chosen from among those that a paladin can select at 9th level (cursed, exhausted, frightened, nauseated, or poisoned).

Beneficent, Lesser

Aura moderate conjuration; CL 9th; Price +3 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *lesser restoration*; Cost +3 bonus

This functions as *beneficent*, with the following exceptions: the number of additional uses of lay on hands granted to a wielder with that ability is equal to 1/2 the item's enhancement bonus (rounded down, minimum 1), instead of the normal amount. Similarly, if the wielder does not have the lay on hands class feature, his effective paladin level for the purposes of the ability is equal to the *beneficent* item's enhancement bonus, instead of the normal amount. Finally, the mercy associated with the item is chosen from among those that a paladin can select at 3rd level (fatigued, shaken, or sickened).

Bier

Aura strong conjuration; **CL** 15th; **Price** +5 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *raise dead*; **Cost** +5 bonus

Shields with this special ability often display images of angels and other guardian figures, and frequently bear the holy symbols of one or more deities associated with healing. If the shield is laid upon a flat surface, and the corpse of a creature is placed atop the shield, a command word can cause the shield to restore life to the corpse, as the spell *raise dead*. If desired, whoever speaks the command word can choose to gain one or both of the negative levels (or, when appropriate, Constitution drain) associated with being resurrected in this way, instead of having the recipient suffer them. The shield can be used in this fashion a number of times per week equal to its enhancement bonus. Negative levels (and Constitution drain) imposed by this ability cannot be healed by normal means, but eventually goes away on its own. The amount of time that it takes for such penalties to be removed depends on the shield's enhancement bonus at the time that the ability is used, as outlined on the table below.

Table 2-2: Bier Penalty Duration

Penalty Duration
1 year
6 months
3 months
1 month
1 week

If the shield is destroyed before the penalty expires, the affected creature dies instantly.

This ability can be added to heavy shields and tower shields, but not light shields, bucklers, or armor of any kind.

Blocking

Aura faint transmutation; CL 3rd; Price +1 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *blink*; Cost +1 bonus

One of the simplest and most potent shield abilities, a shield with this special ability can be telepathically commanded to block for the wielder, possibly intercepting enemy attacks. Whenever the wielder is subject to an attack roll, he may activate this ability as a free action. If he does, the creature making the attack roll must roll the attack twice and take the worse result. The wielder can activate this ability a number of times per day equal to the shield's enhancement bonus.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Blood Shield

Aura moderate conjuration; **CL** 6th; **Price** +2 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *stabilize*; **Cost** +2 bonus

This exceptional magical ability empowers shields and armor to defend the body from continuous harm, keeping the blood in the body. The wearer of a shield or suit of armor with the *blood shield* special ability is immune to bleed damage, so long as he has been wearing the armor or shield for at least 1 full minute. Additionally, a creature wearing a suit of armor or a shield with the *blood shield* special ability gains a bonus on Constitution checks made to stabilize equal to the armor or shield's enhancement bonus.

This ability can be applied to any armor or shield.

Brace

Aura faint evocation; **CL** 3rd; **Price** +1 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *gust of wind*; **Cost** +1 bonus A shield with this special ability allows the wielder to take action to protect him from a charge, creating a potent magical barrier which reduces damage from high impacts and possibly repels the attacker. As a standard action, the wielder of a shield with the *brace* special ability can brace his shield against a charge. If he does, the next time he is the target of an attack made as part of a charge action, he suffers only half the damage dealt by the attack (including any precisionbased or magical damage) on a successful hit. If the attack is a miss, the wielder of a shield with this ability instead causes the attacker to be pushed back 10 feet in a straight line.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Burning Vengeance

Aura moderate evocation; CL 9th; Price +3 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *flame blade*; Cost +3 bonus

Whenever the creature wielding a shield with this special ability is damaged by a melee attack, the shield gains a single charge. If the melee attack results in a critical hit, the shield gains a number of charges equal to the attacker's critical multiplier, instead. As a swift action, the shield's wielder can expend one or more of the shield's charges in order to cause the shield to be wreathed in flames, which do not harm the wielder, but do harm those that he strikes with the shield, causing the shield to inflict additional fire damage when used to shield bash, or if the wielder performs other attacks with the shield. The amount of additional fire damage depends on the number of charges expended in this way, as indicated on the table below.

Charges Spent	Fire Damage
1	1d4
3	1d6
5	1d8
7	2d6
10	3d6
15	4d6
20	5d6
25	6d6

Table 2-3: Burning Vengeance

This additional damage lasts for a number of rounds equal to the shield's enhancement bonus. The shield can hold a maximum of 25 charges at any one time, and any unused charges dissipate harmlessly each day at dawn.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Challenging

Aura moderate evocation; CL 9th; **Price** +3 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *divine favor*; **Cost** +3 bonus

If the wearer of a suit of armor or shield with this ability has the challenge class feature of the cavalier class, he adds the item's enhancement bonus to the extra damage



that he deals with melee attacks against the target of his challenge. Additionally, while wearing a suit of armor or shield with this ability, the wearer does not suffer the normal -2 penalty to AC against creatures other than the target of his challenge when using the challenge ability.

If the wearer does not already have the challenge class feature, he gains it. His cavalier level for the purposes of this ability is equal to twice the suit of armor or shield's enhancement bonus. This determines both the number of times per day that he can use the ability and the bonus to damage against the target of his challenge.

This ability can be added to medium and heavy armors, and light, heavy, and tower shields, but not to light armor or bucklers.

Channel Resistant

Aura moderate necromancy; **CL** 9th; **Price** +3 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *death ward*; **Cost** +3 bonus

Armor and shields with this special ability are often decorated either with images of skulls, bones, and other symbols of death, or with holy symbols and angelic themes, depending on the intention of the creator, though they all function the same. The wearer gains a bonus equal to twice the item's enhancement bonus on saving throws made to resist the harmful effects of positive and/or negative energy (including a cleric's channel energy class feature and spells such as *cure light wounds* or *inflict light wounds*, depending on if the wearer is healed or harmed by positive energy). Additionally, the wearer automatically ignores a number of points of damage from such sources equal to 5 times the item's enhancement bonus (to a maximum of 25 damage for a +5 bonus). These benefits only apply to energy that would be harmful to the wearer, and do not in any way prevent or hinder healing energy.

This ability can be applied to any armor or shield.

Cloud

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 5th; **Price** +1,250 gp (light shield), +2,500 gp (heavy shield), +5000 gp (tower shield) **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *gaseous form*; **Cost** +625 gp (light shield), +1,250gp (heavy shield), +2,500 gp (tower shield)

Shields created with this special ability are often decorated with images of clouds or swirling mists, and send a light harmless vapor up from their surface. The wielder of a shield with the *cloud* ability can transform his shield into a cloak of swirling mists to protect him from attacks. Once per day, as a swift action, the wielder of a shield with this special ability can transform his shield into a protective aura of mist for 1 minute. During this time, all attacks against him have a miss chance based on the size of the shield transformed. Light shields provide a 10% miss chance, while heavy shields provide a 20% miss chance, and tower shields provide a 40% miss chance. During this time, the wielder loses his shield's bonus to AC and cannot make shield bash attacks.

This ability can be applied to light, heavy, or tower shields, but not to bucklers or armor of any kind.

Defensive Might

Aura moderate enchantment; CL 6th; Price +2 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *heroism*; Cost +2 bonus

Shields with this special ability are often decorated with iron gauntlets or other symbols of challenge. The magic of this special ability allows the wielder to gain greater defense against the targets of his offensive fury. Whenever the wielder of a shield with the *defensive might* special ability successfully uses it to shield bash or performs another attack with the shield, he gains an additional +2 bonus to AC against attacks made by the target of his shield bash until the beginning of his next turn.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Dragon Emblem

Aura strong conjuration; CL 15th; Price +5 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, summon monster VII; Cost +5 bonus

These shields bear the image of a dragon upon their face, typically stylized in the latest heraldic fashion. Those who watch the shield closely might notice the dragon move out of the corner of their eye, and occasionally the figure seems to change poses. Once per day, on command, the wielder can cause the dragon depicted on the shield to emerge from its face and fight on his behalf. This functions as summon monster VII, except that the summoned creature is always a dragon, and the dragon's color is determined when the shield is made, and cannot later be changed. The age category of the dragon depends on its color, as outlined on the table below.

Table 2-4: Dragon Emblems

Dragon Color	Age Category
Black	Adult
Blue	Juvenile
Brass	Adult
Bronze	Juvenile
Copper	Young adult
Gold	Young
Green	Young adult
Red	Juvenile
Silver	Juvenile
White	Mature adult

The dragon remains for 1 minute or until it is slain, and obeys the wielder's commands. While the dragon is summoned, the dragon image on the shield vanishes. The dragon gains a bonus on attack and damage rolls equal to the shield's enhancement bonus, but the shield loses its enhancement bonus for as long as the dragon remains summoned. If the dragon is slain, this ability cannot be used until three days have passed, during which time the dragon image remains absent from the shield.

This ability can be added to any light, heavy, or tower shield, but not to bucklers or armor of any kind.

Dueling

Aura faint divination; **CL** 3rd; **Price** +1 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *true strike*; **Cost** +1 bonus

Shields with this special ability are specially enchanted with magic which makes them more effective against a single opponent. As long as the wielder of a shield with the *dueling* special ability is only threatened by 1 hostile creature, he gains an additional +2 shield bonus to AC.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Eagle Emblem

Aura faint conjuration; CL 3rd; Price +1 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, summon nature's ally I; Cost +1 bonus

These shields bear the image of an eagle upon their face, typically stylized in the latest heraldic fashion. The image moves as though alive, and can often be seen preening itself or appearing to fly across the surface of the shield. Once per day, on command, the wielder can cause the eagle depicted on the shield to emerge from its face and fight on his behalf. This functions as *summon nature's ally I*, except that the summoned creature is always an eagle, which remains for 1 minute or until it is slain, and obeys the wielder's commands. While the eagle is summoned, the eagle image on the shield vanishes. The eagle gains a bonus on attack and damage rolls equal to the shield's enhancement bonus, but the shield loses its enhancement bonus for as long as the eagle remains summoned. If the eagle is slain, this ability cannot be used until three days have passed, during which time the eagle image remains absent from the shield.

This ability can be added to any light, heavy, or tower shield, but not to bucklers or armor of any kind.

Eldritch Mirror

Aura strong abjuration; CL 12th; Price +4 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *spell turning*; Cost +4 bonus

Suits of armor and shields with this special ability have a mirror-like sheen, and are always in pristine, polished condition, without any effort on the part of the wearer. Whenever the wearer is the target of a single spell, spelllike ability, or supernatural ability that has no other targets, and which offers a saving throw to negate the entirety of its effects, if he succeeds on that saving throw, he can activate this item as a free action. If he does, the spell or ability is rebounded on the original caster, who is affected as though he had been the original target. This ability cannot be used unless the wearer completely negates all effects of the triggering spell. This ability can be used a number of times per day equal to the item's enhancement bonus.

This ability can be added to any armor or shield.

Elemental Deflection

Aura faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Price +1 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *resist energy*; Cost +1 bonus

The magic of the *elemental deflection* special ability allows the shield to repel energy of a certain type, diverting it around the user. In order to gain the maximum benefit of its protection, the wielder must maneuver the shield directly into the path of harmful energy, making it difficult to perform other actions. A shield with the elemental deflection special ability is tied to a specific energy type, such as fire or cold. The wielder of a shield with the elemental deflection special ability reduces all damage of the type of energy it is tied to by an amount equal to the shield's enhancement bonus. If the wielder of a shield with this special ability is fighting defensively or using the Combat Expertise feat, this bonus is doubled. If the wielder of a shield with this special ability uses a total defense action, this bonus is tripled instead. A shield can gain this ability multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each additional time it is applied to a shield, a different energy type may be chosen.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Force Ward

Aura moderate abjuration; CL 6th; Price +2 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *glyph of warding*; Cost +2 bonus

This exceptional magic imbues a shield with a charge of raw force energy which can be unleashed upon impact, damaging anything it comes into contact with. A shield with this ability can discharge a wave of force energy a number of times per day equal to the shield's enhancement bonus. Discharging force in this way is a free action which can be performed any time the wielder of a shield with the *force ward* special ability is hit by a melee attack or whenever the wielder of a *force ward* shield successfully uses it to shield bash an opponent. In either case, the discharge deals 2d6 points of force damage to all creatures adjacent to the wielder who are not also wielding a shield with the *force ward* special ability.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Gleaming

Aura faint evocation; CL 5th; Price +500 gp Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *daylight;* Cost +250 gp

As the name implies, shields with the *gleaming* special ability shine with brilliant luster, reflecting light in a splendid fashion. Shields with this special ability magically reflect and amplify light, sending it out in a fan in front of the shield bearer. The area in a 15-foot cone in front of a shield with the *gleaming* special ability has its light level increased by 1 step. Additionally, any creature with light sensitivity, as well as any creature that is negatively affected by light (but not those specifically affected only by sunlight) who can see the shield with the *gleaming* special ability suffer a -1 morale penalty on attack rolls against the shield's wielder.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Grasping

Aura moderate conjuration; **CL** 9th; **Price** +3 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *black tentacles*; **Cost** +3 bonus

These shields almost universally bear some sort of decorative vines or tentacled creatures on them, either embossed or simply painted on. Three times per day, as an immediate action when he is missed by a melee attack, the wielder of a shield with this ability can cause the tentacles to come alive and emerge from the front of the shield, at which point they attempt to wrench the attacker's weapon from his grasp. Treat this as a disarm attempt using the wielder's CMB, with an additional bonus equal to twice the shield's enhancement bonus. If the disarm attempt is successful, the attacker's weapon is pulled into the shield and stored in an extradimensional space (many, but not all, grasping shields magically incorporate any captured weapon into their decorations). The shield can hold only one captured weapon at any given time, and if activated while already holding a weapon, the previously-captured weapon falls to the ground in the wielder's square. Alternatively, by speaking a command word, the shield's wielder can cause it to expel its captured weapon at any time.

This ability can be added to any light, heavy, or tower shield, but not to bucklers or armor of any kind.



Griffon Emblem

Aura moderate conjuration; CL 9th; **Price** +3 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *summon monster V*; **Cost** +3 bonus

These shields bear the image of a griffon upon their face, typically stylized in the latest heraldic fashion. The image moves as though alive, and can often be seen preening itself or appearing to fly across the surface of the shield. Once per day, on command, the wielder can cause the griffon depicted on the shield to emerge from its face and fight on his behalf. This functions as summon monster V, except that the summoned creature is always a griffon, which remains for 1 minute or until it is slain, and obeys the wielder's commands. While the griffon is summoned, the griffon image on the shield vanishes. The griffon gains a bonus on attack and damage rolls equal to the shield's enhancement bonus, but the shield loses its enhancement bonus for as long as the griffon remains summoned. If the griffon is slain, this ability cannot be used until three days have passed, during which time the griffon image remains absent from the shield.

This ability can be added to any light, heavy, or tower shield, but not to bucklers or armor of any kind.

Hateful Blast

Aura strong evocation; CL 12th; **Price** +4 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *magic missile*; **Cost** +4 bonus

These shields always have some focal point in the center of their face, such as the head of a lion with an open mouth, or a glaring, baleful eye. Whenever the creature wielding a shield with this special ability is damaged by a melee attack, the shield gains a single charge. If the melee attack results in a critical hit, the shield gains a number of charges equal to the attacker's critical multiplier, instead. As a standard action, the shield's wielder can expend one or more of the shield's charges in order to cause the shield to release a blast of energy, which erupts from the focal point on the front of the shield and blasts into a foe. Treat this as a ranged touch attack with a maximum range of 120 feet. On a successful hit, the amount of damage inflicted by the shield is based on the number of charges expended to activate the ability, as indicated on the table below.

Charges Spent	Damage
1	1d8
3	2d6
5	3d6
7	4d6
10	5d6
13	6d6
15	7d6
17	8d6
20	9d6
23	10d6
25	12d6

Table 2-5: Hateful Blast

The shield can hold a maximum of 25 charges at any one time, and any unused charges dissipate harmlessly each day at dawn.

This ability can be added to any light, heavy, or tower shield, but not to bucklers or armor of any kind.

Hero's Luck

Aura strong abjuration; **CL** 12th; **Price** +4 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *resistance*, creator must have the Great Fortitude, Iron Will, and Lightning Reflexes feats; **Cost** +4 bonus

The wearer of a suit of armor or shield with this ability adds its enhancement bonus to all saving throws he makes. Additionally, three times per day, when the wearer fails a saving throw of any kind, he can activate this ability as a free action to reroll that saving throw. The wearer can declare that he is using this ability after learning if the initial roll was a success or failure. He must keep the results of the second roll, even if it is lower (although he can use this ability an additional time on the same roll to reroll again, if desired).

Hoplite

Aura faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Price +1 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, shield other; Cost +1 bonus

Shields with this special ability are rumored to have existed since ancient times and embody the noble ideals of brotherhood espoused by ancient societies. As a swift action, the wielder of a shield with the *hoplite* special ability can designate a number of adjacent creatures equal to the enhancement bonus of the shield with this ability. Each of those creatures gains a +1 shield bonus to AC for 1 round (this does not stack with any shield bonus such creatures may already possess).

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Imprisoning

Aura strong abjuration; CL 15th; Price +5 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *imprisonment*; Cost +5 bonus

Shields with this special ability always have a smooth, polished, and highly-reflective surface, free of any decoration or design save for a border of some kind, usually intricately engraved, which surrounds its edges, giving it an appearance almost like a mirror, although everything reflected in its surface is twisted and warped. Once per day, as a standard action, the shield's wielder can activate its ability to attempt to imprison a single creature within the shield. The creature must be within 60 feet, must be able to see the wielder (treat this as a gaze attack for the purposes of averting one's eyes or fighting while blindfolded), and must be Medium size or smaller. For each point of enhancement bonus the shield possesses beyond +1, the creature can be up to one size category larger (Large for a + 2 shield, Huge for a + 3 shield, and so on). The target must succeed on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 the wielder's Hit Dice + the shield's enhancement bonus) or become imprisoned within the shield.

While imprisoned within the shield, the creature appears on the shield's surface. The shield's wielder can release an imprisoned creature as a full-round action. Time does not pass for the creature while imprisoned, as though he were under the effects of a *temporal stasis* spell. A *freedom* spell cast on the shield will also free any creature trapped within it. An *imprisoning* shield cannot hold more than one creature at a time. If desired, the shield's wielder can also use the ability on himself: In this case, he must specify a certain amount of time, and after that time, he is released from the shield automatically. If the shield comes into the possession of another creature in the meantime, the new wielder can release the previous wielder early, in order to make room in the shield.

This ability can be added to heavy shields and tower shields, but not light shields, bucklers, or armor of any kind.

Inspiring

Aura moderate enchantment; CL 9th; Price +3 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *heroism*; Cost +3 bonus

These shields magically change their decoration to match the coat of arms of whoever wields them. If the wielder does not have a specific coat of arms, or deliberately wants the shield to display something other than his coat of arms, he can change it to any image he wishes with one minute of concentration, but the shield will not replicate the image of someone else's coat of arms under any circumstances. Additionally, the *inspiring* shield counts as a banner for the purposes of the banner class feature of the cavalier, as well as any other class features that require a character to have a personal banner. If the wielder has the banner class feature, he adds the *inspiring* shield's enhancement bonus to the morale bonus that he grants to his allies' saving throws against fear effects. Further, he grants his allies a bonus on weapon damage rolls made as part of a charge equal to the bonus he grants them on attack rolls made as part of a charge. If the wielder also has the greater banner class feature, then he also adds the *inspiring* shield's enhancement bonus to the morale bonus that he grants to his allies' saving throws against charm and compulsion effects, as well as on any additional saving throws that he allows his allies to make as a result of that ability.

If the wielder does not have the banner class feature, he gains it as long as he wields the *inspiring* shield. His cavalier level for the purposes of this ability is equal to 5 + twice the shield's enhancement bonus. He cannot gain the greater banner class feature this way, even if his effective cavalier level is 14th or higher.

This ability can be added to any light, heavy, or tower shield, but not to bucklers or armor of any kind.

Interrupting

Aura strong abjuration; CL 15th; Price +5 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield*; Cost +5 bonus

Three times per day, as an immediate action, when the wielder of a shield with this ability, or a creature that is adjacent to him, is the target of a melee or ranged attack, the wielder of the shield can activate this ability to attempt to interrupt the attack by placing his shield in the way at the last second. He must declare that he is using this ability after the target of the attack has been declared, but before the results of the attack roll have been revealed. To use this ability, the wielder makes an attack with the shield, as though making a shield bash attack. He gains a bonus on this attack roll equal to the shield's enhancement bonus. If the result of his attack roll with the shield exceeds the result of the initial attacker's attack roll, then the triggering attack automatically misses. Otherwise, the triggering attack roll is resolved as normal, but the target gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC. For each point of enhancement bonus beyond +1 that the shield possesses, this ability can be used an additional time each day.

This ability can be added to shields of all kinds, but not to armor.

Lion Emblem

Aura strong conjuration; **CL** 12th; **Price** +4 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *summon monster V*; **Cost** +4 bonus

These shields bear the image of a lion upon their face, typically stylized in the latest heraldic fashion. Unlike some other emblems, lion emblems remain stoically in place on the surface of the shield, and cannot be seen to move about. Once per day, on command, the wielder can cause the lion depicted on the shield to emerge from its face and fight on his behalf. This functions as *summon monster V*, except that the summoned creature is always a dire lion, which remains for 1 minute or until it is slain, and obeys the wielder's commands. While the lion is summoned, the lion image on the shield vanishes. The lion gains a bonus on attack and damage rolls equal to the shield's enhancement bonus, but the shield loses its enhancement bonus for as long as the lion remains summoned. Additionally, while the lion is summoned, it grants the wielder, and all of the wielder's allies within 30 feet, a bonus on saving throws made to resist fear effects equal to the shield's enhancement bonus. If the lion is slain, this ability cannot be used until three days have passed, during which time the lion image remains absent from the shield.

This ability can be added to any light, heavy, or tower shield, but not to bucklers or armor of any kind.

Medic

Aura strong conjuration; CL 12th; Price +4 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *cure critical wounds*; Cost +4 bonus

Whenever the creature wearing a suit of armor or shield with this special ability is damaged by an attack, spell, spell-like ability, supernatural ability, or extraordinary ability, the item gains a single charge. In the case of attacks that result in a critical hit, the item gains a number of charges equal to the attacker's critical multiplier, instead. As a swift action, the item's wielder can expend a number of charges in order to gain a powerful burst of sudden healing. The exact amount of damage healed by this ability depends on the number of charges that were expended in this way, as outlined on the table below.

Table 2-6: Medic Healing

Charges Spent	Damage
1	2d8
3	2d10
5	3d8
7	3d10
10	4d10
13	5d10
15	6d10
17	7d10
20	8d10
23	9d10
25	10d10

Whenever he uses this ability, the item's wearer can expend additional charges in order to cure himself of certain conditions. The number of additional charges necessary to do so varies from one condition to another, as outlined on the following table.

Table 2-7: Medic Conditions

Condition	Additional Charges
Bleed	5
Blinded	3
Confused	5
Dazzled	0
Deafened	2
Disease	Disease's DC
Exhausted	5
Fatigued	2
Frightened	4
Nauseated	4
Paralyzed	7
Poison	Poison's DC - 10
Shaken	1
Sickened	1

In the case of poisons and diseases, only poisons and diseases that can normally be cured by a successful *remove disease* or *neutralize poison* spell can be affected. In the case of confusion, the wearer must be able to act normally to activate this ability.

The item can hold a maximum of 25 charges at any one time, and any unused charges dissipate harmlessly each day at dawn.

This ability can be applied to any armor or shield.

Morphic

Aura strong transmutation; **CL** 12th; **Price** +4 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *baleful polymorph*; **Cost** +4 bonus

This ability functions as the *wild* special ability for armor and shields, except that it applies to any polymorph effect, including harmful polymorph spells such as *baleful polymorph*, instead of only applying to the wild shape class feature.

Noble

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 6th; **Price** +2 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *cat's grace*; **Cost** +2 bonus

These shields often have an exceptionally regal and grandiose appearance, and are possessed of a potent magic which makes them capable of serving as the wielder's only defense. A creature wielding a shield with the *noble* special ability receives twice his normal shield bonus to AC, including the shield's enhancement bonus and other modifiers. This ability only functions so long as the wielder is not benefiting from an armor bonus to AC, and does not have a deflection, dodge, or natural armor bonus greater than +3.

Phalanx

Aura strong abjuration; **CL** 12th; **Price** +4 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield*; **Cost** +4 bonus

As a swift action, the wielder of a shield with this ability can grant all adjacent allies a shield bonus to AC equal to the bonus granted by this shield (including the shield's enhancement bonus). This bonus lasts until the beginning of the wielder's next turn. If any of these allies already has a shield bonus to AC, that shield bonus increases by an amount equal to half that granted by this shield, instead (rounded down, minimum +o).

Additionally, whenever the shield's wielder is adjacent to 2 or more allies, he gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Power Spike

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 6th; **Price** +2 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *spike growth*; **Cost** +2 bonus

While these shields come in a variety of different styles, they all possess the dramatic ability to produce brightly colored plumes of energy in the shape of spikes. These "energy spikes" can be conjured by the wielder at various intervals to greatly increase the amount of damage dealt by his shield. Whenever the wielder of a shield with the power spike special ability suffers damage from a melee attack, the shield gains a single charge. A shield with the power spike special ability has the ability to generate one or more energy spikes by expending a number of charges equal to 3 times the number of spikes to be created. Creating a spike is a free action which must be performed on the wielder's turn. For each spike the shield currently bears, the shield deals an additional 1d4 points of piercing damage. Once created, these spikes last for 1 minute. The shield can hold a number of charges equal to 5 times its enhancement bonus. Charges last for 24 hours before dissipating.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Proof Against Arrows

Aura faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Price +1 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, protection from arrows; Cost +1 bonus

A shield with this special ability protects the wielder from missile attacks of all sorts, provided they are not too magical to overcome the shield's abilities. Whenever the creature wielding a shield with this special ability is damaged by a ranged attack, the shield gains a single charge. If the ranged attack results in a critical hit, the shield gains a number of charges equal to the attacker's critical multiplier, instead. As an immediate action, whenever the shield's wielder is the target of a ranged attack, he can choose to expend a number of charges from the shield in order to gain an amount of damage reduction equal to twice the number



of charges expended which only applies to ranged attacks. Ranged attacks with an enhancement bonus higher than that of the shield with the *proof against arrows* special ability automatically bypass this damage reduction. The shield can hold a maximum of 25 charges at any one time, and any unused charges dissipate harmlessly each day at dawn.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Proof Against Spells

Aura faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Price +1 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield*; Cost +1 bonus

A shield with this special ability has an innate ability to protect the wielder from a single specific spell. Each day, the wielder of a shield with the *proof against spells* special ability can choose a single spell, such as *magic missile* or *dominate person*. The wielder is immediately alerted if he ever becomes the target of the chosen spell. If the chosen spell is of a level equal to or lower than the enhancement bonus of the shield with the *proof against spells* special ability, as an immediate action the wielder can activate the shield's magic, protecting him from the spell by effectively granting him unbeatable spell resistance for the purposes of that spell. He can use this ability once per day.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Ray Reflecting

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 6th; **Price** +2 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *spell reflection*; **Cost** +2 bonus

Often polished to a mirror-finish, shields with this special ability possess a potent, if limited, ability to reflect ray attacks, either deflecting them harmlessly or possibly causing them to rebound upon their originator. The wielder of a shield with the *ray reflecting* special ability can attempt to deflect rays a number of times each day equal to the enhancement bonus of the shield. Whenever the wielder is the target of a ray, or similar attack (at the GM's discretion), he can attempt to deflect that ray as a free action. In order to do this, he makes a special d20 roll and adds his shield bonus to AC as a modifier (including any enhancement bonus and other modifiers). If the result of the roll is higher than the attack roll of the ray, the ray is deflected harmlessly. If the result is at least 5 higher than the ray's attack roll, the ray rebounds on the original caster, who is affected as though he had been the original target.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Resilient

Aura moderate abjuration; CL 9th; Price +3 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield*; Cost +3 bonus

Whenever the creature wielding a shield with this special ability is damaged by a melee attack, the shield gains a single charge. If the melee attack results in a critical hit, the shield gains a number of charges equal to the attacker's critical multiplier, instead. As a swift action, the shield's wielder can gain a deflection bonus to AC by expending a number of charges from the shield equal to the amount of bonus he wants to gain squared (1 point for a +1 bonus, 4 points for a +2 bonus, 9 points for a +3 bonus, 16 points for a +4 bonus, or 25 points for a +5 bonus). This deflection bonus lasts for a number of rounds equal to the shield's enhancement bonus, and does not stack with itself or other deflection bonuses. The shield can hold a maximum of 25 charges at any one time, and any unused charges dissipate harmlessly each day at dawn.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Retribution

Aura strong necromancy; CL 15th; Price +5 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *unwilling shield*; Cost +5 bonus

Three times per day, the wearer of a suit of armor or shield with this ability can activate it as a move action, in order to surround himself with retributive magic that punishes those who harm him with a taste of their own medicine. For a number of rounds equal to the item's enhancement bonus, whenever the wielder suffers damage from an attack, spell, spell-like ability, supernatural ability, or extraordinary ability, the source of that damage suffers 1/2 that amount, as well (rounded down, minimum 1). This damage is untyped and not subject to damage reduction or resistance. Inflicting damage to the attacker in this way does not lessen the amount of damage that the wearer suffers. This only applies to hit point damage, and not ability damage or non-damaging effects, such as negative conditions, energy drain, and so on. If the wearer damages himself for whatever reason, this ability does not apply to that damage.

This ability can be applied to any armor or shield.

Sacrificial

Aura moderate abjuration; CL 9th; **Price** +3 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shield other*; **Cost** +3 bonus

Once per day, when you are the target of a spell or ability that allows a Fortitude or Reflex saving throw to negate some or all of its effects, you can choose to redirect that spell or ability to this shield. The shield makes a saving throw to resist the effect, using your saving throw bonus. If the spell or ability specifically affects objects, it has its normal effect on the shield. If the spell or ability does not specifically affect objects, but deals damage, it deals that damage to the shield (hardness applies, as normal, but energy damage is not halved before applying hardness). If the spell or ability does not specifically affect objects and does not deal damage, then if the shield fails its saving throw, it gains the broken condition for the duration of the spell or ability.

This ability can be applied to any armor or shield.

Saving Grace

Aura faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Price +1 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *resistance*; Cost +1 bonus

Shields with this ability are often marked with doves or other symbols of salvation and purity, and possess a powerful magic which gives the wielder a second chance to avoid a disastrous fate. Whenever the wielder of a shield with the saving grace special ability fails a saving throw which is not denoted as harmless, the shield gains a single charge. As a free action, the wielder can expend a single charge from the shield in order to immediately reroll a single saving throw he has just made. He may choose to reroll the save after success or failure has been determined, but before results of the saving throw are announced. If the wielder chooses to expend a charge in order to reroll a failed saving throw, the shield does not gain a charge as a result of him failing that saving throw. A shield with this ability can store a number of charges equal to its enhancement bonus, and charges held by the shield which are not used within 24 hours dissipate harmlessly.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Sight Shielding

Aura moderate illusion; CL 6th; Price +2 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *invisibility*; Cost +2 bonus

Sight shielding shields are always tower shields which are unique for being completely invisible and partially concealing the wielder. Sight shielding shields are constantly invisible, as the spell invisibility. By hiding behind his invisible shield, the wielder can disappear from sight entirely for a short time. Additionally, as a full-round action, the wielder of a sight shielding tower shield can use the Stealth skill to hide, even while observed. He suffers the normal armor check penalty on this check. Additionally, if he hides in this fashion, his speed is reduced by 10 feet for as long as he attempts to remain hidden.

This ability can only be applied to tower shields.

Smashing

Aura moderate evocation; CL 6th; Price +2 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shatter*; Cost +2 bonus

A shield with this special ability becomes a battering ram in the hands anyone who wields it, allowing even a single man to breach heavy iron gates and other portals. A number of times each day equal to the enhancement bonus of the shield with the *smashing* special ability, it may be activated to serve as a magical battering ram. When activated in this fashion, the shield's wielder can either choose to gain a +20 competence bonus on Strength checks to break down doors, or gain a +5 bonus on all damage rolls made to shield bash an object. In either case, the effect last for 1 minute.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Spell-Eating

Aura strong abjuration; **CL** 12th; **Price** +4 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *spell resistance*; **Cost** +4 bonus

Whenever a creature wearing a suit of armor or shield with this special ability is subject to a spell, spell-like ability, or supernatural ability that allows a saving throw that is not denoted as harmless, the item gains a single charge. As a swift action, the wearer can expend a number of charges from the item in order to gain an amount of spell resistance equal to 11 + the number of charges expended in this way. This spell resistance lasts for a number of rounds equal to the item's enhancement bonus, and does not stack with itself or other sources of spell resistance. The item can hold a maximum of 25 charges at any one time, and any unused charges dissipate harmlessly each day at dawn.

This ability can be applied to any armor or shield.

Stopping

Aura moderate evocation; CL 6th; Price +2 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wall of force*; Cost +2 bonus

These shields are heavily reinforced with metal and magic that allows them to put a stop to energy attacks. Highly valued by dragon slayers and warriors concerned about the powerful elemental magic of the average wizard, these shields can halt such attacks in their tracks, limiting the damage dealt to the wielder and allowing him to protect his allies. The wielder of a shield with *stopping* special ability blocks lines and cones, causing such attacks to halt in their path when they reach him. The attack is only stopped in the path directly behind the wielder (*for example, a* lightning bolt *would be stopped dead at the wielder's location, but a* cone of cold *would continue past the wielder through the squares on his sides*).

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Stronghold

Aura strong transmutation; **CL** 12th; **Price** +4 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *mage's magnificent mansion*; **Cost** +4 bonus

Shields with this ability always feature a tower or castle on their front, though the exact designs vary from one shield to another. Once per day, as a full-round action, the wielder of a *stronghold* shield can plunge the shield into the ground and speak a command word. Doing so causes the shield to rapidly expand and grow into the shape of a stone tower, with a 20-foot square base, and 30 feet tall. The stone walls extend 10 feet below ground, preventing the tower from being tipped over.

The walls of the tower are stone, one-foot thick, giving them hardness 8 and 180 hit points. It has a single 2-inch thick iron door (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 28), with a good lock (Disable Device DC 30, the key is provided when the shield is purchased). The interior of the tower is hollow, with stairs ringing the inside wall all the way to the top of the tower, which has a single trap-door leading to the roof, where there are crenellated battlements. The walls of the tower have ample arrow slits, allowing defenders on the stairs and on the ground to fire outward. The floor is furnished with a simple wooden table with four chairs, and several pallets of straw that can serve as beds.

It takes one full minute for the tower to grow into place, allowing creatures in the area ample time to get out of the way. Even if they choose not to, they are simply lifted up by the tower, and are unharmed. The tower cannot form if there is not enough room for it, or if there are Large or larger objects in the area. The tower can be returned to a shield with another command word, a process that also takes a full minute. Any creatures or objects still in the tower when this occurs (besides the furniture that comes with the tower) are deposited harmlessly on the ground when this occurs.

This ability can only be applied to heavy shields and tower shields.



Sunder-Shocking

Aura moderate evocation; CL 11th; Price +750 gp Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *ironwood*; Cost +375 gp

These shields tremble slightly with a perpetual vibration. These shields enshroud the wielder with a magical aura which makes his items resistant to damage. Every item worn or held by a creature who is wielding a shield with the *sunder-shocking* special ability gains an additional amount of hardness equal to the enhancement bonus of the shield. Additionally, once per day, as an immediate action, the wielder of a shield with the *sunder-shocking* special ability can negate all damage dealt to a single item in his possession.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Sword-Eating

Aura moderate evocation; **CL** 9th; **Price** +3 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *shatter*; **Cost** +3 bonus

Once per round, when the wielder of a shield with this special ability is the target of a melee attack with a manufactured weapon, if that attack does not successfully hit him, he can activate the power of the shield as an immediate action, causing the force of the blow to double back on the attacker's weapon. The attack rolls damage as normal, but the damage is applied to the weapon, and not to you (the weapon's hardness still applies). Add the shield's enhancement bonus to the amount of damage inflicted on the weapon. This ability has no effect on natural weapons.

This ability can be added to any light, heavy, or tower shield, but not to bucklers or armor of any kind.

Underwater Protection

Aura faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Price +1 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *freedom of movement*; Cost +1 bonus

The potent magic of this ability activates when the shield's bearer is entirely submersed underwater, causing the shield to become weightless and using the water surrounding the wielder to move the shield at high speeds, better allowing the wielder to block attacks. Whenever the wielder of a shield with the *underwater protection* special ability is completely submerged underwater, he gains an additional +4 shield bonus to AC and ignores the armor check penalty of his shield for the purposes of Swim checks. This special ability can only be applied to shields (but may not be applied to tower shields).

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Visionary

Aura strong divination; CL 12th; Price +4 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *darkvision, see invisibility*; Cost +4 bonus

A shield with this ability serves as a magical lens, in addition to its capacity as a shield. By speaking a command word, the shield's wielder can cause it to become a one-way transparent window, allowing him to see through the shield as though it were not there. Further, the shield offers several benefits to those who look through it. First, it provides complete protection against gaze attacks and other sightbased abilities of all kinds, allowing the wielder to safely look at creatures with such abilities through the shield without fear of being affected. Additionally, three times per day, on command, the wielder can cause the shield to allow him to see perfectly in darkness (as the spell *darkvision*) or to see invisible creatures (as the spell see invisibility) while looking through the shield. This ability can be used one additional time per day for each point of enhancement bonus that the shield possesses.

Holding the shield in front of one's face in this way makes it difficult to block attacks with it, and reduces the bonus to AC that the shield provides by -2.

This ability can be applied to light, heavy, and tower shields, but not bucklers or armor of any kind.

Weapon Bane

Aura faint enchantment; CL 3rd; Price +1 bonus Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bane*; Cost +1 bonus

A shield with this special quality is especially empowered with defensive capabilities against a specific group of weapons and is far more effective at stopping attacks from weapons of that kind. When created, a shield with the *weapon bane* special ability is tied to a specific group of weapons, chosen from the weapon groups that a fighter could select as a part of his weapon training class feature. The wielder of a shield with the *weapon bane* special ability gains an additional +2 shield bonus to AC against attacks



made with a weapon belonging to that group. Additionally, any attempt to confirm a critical hit against the wielder with a weapon from the selected group suffers a -2 penalty on the attack roll to confirm the critical hit. A shield can gain this ability multiple times. Its effects do not stack. Each additional time it is applied to a shield, a different weapon group may be chosen.

This ability can be applied to any kind of shield, but not to armor.

Wolf Emblem

Aura moderate conjuration; **CL** 6th; **Price** +2 bonus **Construction Requirements** Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *summon nature's ally II*; **Cost** +2 bonus

These shields bear the image of a wolf upon their face, typically stylized in the latest heraldic fashion. The image moves as though alive, and can often be seen in a howling stance or appearing to run across the surface of the shield. Once per day, on command, the wielder can cause the wolf depicted on the shield to emerge from its face and fight on his behalf. This functions as summon nature's ally II, except that the summoned creature is always a wolf, which remains for 1 minute or until it is slain, and obeys the wielder's commands. While the wolf is summoned, the wolf image on the shield vanishes. The wolf gains a bonus on attack and damage rolls equal to the shield's enhancement bonus, but the shield loses its enhancement bonus for as long as the wolf remains summoned. If the wolf is slain, this ability cannot be used until three days have passed, during which time the wolf image remains absent from the shield.

This ability can be added to any light, heavy, or tower shield, but not to bucklers or armor of any kind.

Specific Shields

The following specific shields are, for the most part, generally available for player characters to purchase, or may be found as treasure in any number of ways, and while some of the items described were originally unique, one-of-a-kind items, it is possible to find replications which have similar magical properties. A physical description and background information is given for each weapon, but GMs should feel free to alter the specifics as they feel necessary.

Table 3-1: Unique Shields by Price

Shield	Price
Interceptor	3,155 gp
Immovable shield	11,680 gp
Everwood	12,457 gp
Shield of the blue mariner	21,157 gp
Shield of the undying warrior	36,170 gp
Shield of the sun	37,770 gp
Shield of the slayer	38,670 gp
Shield of vigor	42,680 gp
Discus of destruction	55,170 gp
Shield of doors	69,5 <mark>82 gp</mark>

Discus of Destruction

This shield is also a powerful weapon, and can be thrown great distances to harm far-off foes. It is even capable of ricocheting from one foe to another, then flying back to the wielder's hand, and those who master its unusual abilities come to value it greatly.

DISCUS OF DESTRUCTION

Aura moderate transmutation; CL 9th Weight 5 lbs.; Price 55,170 gp Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, call lightning or lightning bolt, magic stone, telekinesis; Cost 27,670 gp

This +2 heavy steel shield also has several magical enhancements for weapons, and is treated as a +2 shock throwing returning weapon. Its edges are razor sharp, so that, when thrown, it deals 1d8 points of damage on a successful hit, instead of the normal amount. Further, the shield is incredibly lightweight, giving it a range increment of 20 feet, instead of 10.

Finally, a skillful wielder can throw the shield in such a way that it ricochets from one target to another, allowing it to hit more than one target with a single flow. As a full-round action, the wielder can make a single ranged attack with the shield. If the attack hits it deals damage as normal, and if the wielder's base attack bonus is +6 or higher, then the shield ricochets off towards another target within 20 feet of the first. The wielder makes a second attack roll against the second target, with a -5 penalty. If this attack hits it deals damage as normal, and if the wielder's base attack bonus is +11 or higher, the shield ricochets off towards yet another target within 20 feet of the second, with the wielder making a third attack roll with a -10 penalty. If that attack hits, and the wielder has a base attack bonus of +16 or higher, he may make one final attack against a fourth target within 20 feet of the third, with a -15 penalty. The wielder can choose not to make all of his additional attacks, if desired. If none of the attacks miss, the shield ricochets back to the wielder's hand when it is done, effectively returning at the end of the action, rather than the beginning of his next turn, and therefore allowing him to benefit from his shield bonus to AC. No single target may be attacked in this way twice in the same turn. Any distance that the shield travels after hitting the first target does not impose a penalty due to range.

None of a *discus of destruction's* abilities count as an enhancement bonus equivalent, and it is treated as a +2 *heavy steel shield* for the purpose of determining the cost of further improving its magical abilities as a shield, and a +2 *shocking throwing returning* weapon for the purposes of further enhancing its abilities as a weapon.

Physical Description

The designs of these shields are incredibly varied, and there are nearly as many different designs and appearances as there are smiths who make such shields. Often they bear images of Valkyries, angels, or other winged warriors, though just as many bear leering demons or devils brandishing pitchforks, instead. Another popular theme is for the shield to feature a thunderbird, often wrought in gold, in its center. Frequently these designs are repeated four or more times in a circle around the center of the shield, so that no matter how it spins, it always shows that image in several directions. Other shields take a different approach to the shield's frequent spinning, and feature designs or patterns that are brightly colored and look pleasing (or create certain images) when the shield is spun rapidly.

Background

According to legend, the origin of these shields comes from a terrible demon by the name of Urxithox, who made his way to the material plane and was ravaging the countryside. Urxithox was a huge, towering, winged monster who is said to have been able to transform himself into a great, winged boulder, and fly about with incredible speed, knocking down buildings and crushing all in his wake. Many tried to defeat the foul creature, but he quickly proved beyond the ability of the knights of the realm to slay, and his rampage went all but unopposed as he flew across the countryside leveling villages and gobbling up innocent peasants.

At one such village, Urxithox landed in the town green, as was his custom, and demanded that all the women who had not yet reached their 21st year be brought to him, that he might gobble them up. He told the villagers that if they did not do so, he would kill them all and destroy their village. This was a lie, and he intended to do so regardless of what they did, but the villagers did not know that, and so, out of fear of the mighty demon, they gathered up their young women and brought them to him.

One of these young women was a farmer's daughter named Brighidde, who was both very clever, and very brave. When she was brought before the demon she looked at him



in disbelief and exclaimed "I thought you were supposed to be a big, scary demon. You don't look that scary to me."

Urxithox was enraged, and shouted down at her "I will show you how terrifying I am by becoming a boulder and crushing this town and everyone in it!"

But Brighidde was unimpressed, and said "It's easy to knock down these little huts, but I bet you can't knock down those big trees over there," pointing to a nearby forest.

"Ha ha! That is easy," cried Urxithox, who transformed into a boulder and knocked down all the trees in the little forest, then came flying back, all in a few moments. "Now, I shall gobble you up!"

But Brighidde was unperturbed. "Well, I guess that was okay, but I would be *really* impressed if you could knock down that mountain over there."

"Of course the mighty Urxithox can knock down a puny mountain," the demon cried, and transformed himself, throwing himself at the side of the mountain. There was a great shaking as the demon rebounded off the mountain, but determined to prove himself, he threw himself at it again and again, but still the mountain stood. Finally, growing angry, the demon hardened himself, transforming his body to steel, and threw himself at the mountain again. This time he pierced the mountain, but became stuck on the inside, and was trapped.

The villagers built a mine on the mountain and mined the demon, who was trapped as a giant ball of iron. The first thing they made with the iron was one of these shields, which they gave to Brighidde as thanks for saving their town.

Everwood

This stout, wooden shield is alive with primordial energies, giving astonishing powers related to growth and rejuvenation.

EVERWOOD

Aura moderate transmutation; CL 7th Slot none; Price 12,457 gp; Weight 10 lbs. Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, spike stones; Cost 6,307,gp

These ancient wooden shields appear at first glance to be nothing more than a simple +3 heavy wooden shield; however, each has a number of powers both ancient and potent. The most notable property of an everwood shield is that when it strikes a creature, it can lodge wooden shards of itself in the target, which begin to grow within the creature's skin. This ability can be used 3 times per day as a free action whenever the wielder of an everwood shield successfully hits a creature with a shield bash. When this ability is activated, the target immediately suffers 3d4 points of piercing damage, then continues to take an additional 3d4 points of piercing damage at the beginning of his turn each round until the shards are removed. A creature that is currently suffering from this ability cannot be affected by it again, until the shards have been removed. Removing the shards requires a successful Heal check (DC 15) and is a standard action.

In addition to its noted shard ability, *everwood* shields are famed for being highly resistant to fire. When set alight, an *everwood* shield burns continuously for 10 minutes without taking damage, at which point it is immediately extinguished. During this time, the magic of the shield empowers and twists the fire with primordial energy, causing any shield bash made during this time to inflict an additional 2d6 points of fire damage. Setting the shield on fire is a full-round action that can be accomplished with a pint of oil and a flint and tinder. Any other activity which causes the shield to catch fire also allows use of this function. An *everwood* shield is only immune to persistent fire damage, and can still be damaged by instantaneous sources of fire damage (including attacks from *burning* weapons).

Finally, an *everwood* shield is extremely difficult to destroy, as it heals its own wounds over time. An *everwood* shield regains 1010 hit points every minute. This ability ceases to function if the shield is reduced to o hit points.

None of an *everwood*'s abilities count as an enhancement bonus equivalent, and it is treated as a +3 *heavy wooden shield* for the purpose of determining the cost of further improving its magical abilities.

Physical Description

Clearly old, this wooden shield lacks the flourish and decoration of modern shields, bare-faced except where blood stains have been left to dry. Made entirely of wood, the shield lacks even iron straps and reinforcements or leather handles, requiring the wearer to grasp an expertly crafted wooden handle. Despite the obvious age of the shield, it shows no signs of wear, except from extremely recent conflicts, and even these blemishes diminish with time.



The shield hums with power when held, vibrating softly with raw life energy. If observed long enough, the shield can be seen to grow and heal its wounds with this same energy. Curiously, the power of the shield always results in the creation of weather-beaten and aged, though sturdy, wood. When lit on fire, the shield burns merrily without losing integrity.

Background

The first *everwood* shield was crafted in ancient times, and is thought by many to be a myth. It spent much of its early history in the hands of one or another subterranean warlords, and it was only recently that the shield has seen sunlight.

Deep underground, in a distant and maligned cave hidden away from the sun and far from any water, a miracle occurred in an age long past. There in the darkness grew a tree, stretching from the unforgiving rock to the cavern ceiling 400 feet above, with great reaching branches covered in shining blue-green leaves. Though born in isolation, over time it would come to be visited by many tunneling things; beasts and monsters in great antiquity would pass by the mighty tree, fearing its size and unfamiliarity, while spirits were drawn from far and wide to shelter in the sheer life of this tree. When civilization, in the form of an alliance of dwarves and men, first found the tree, they debated endlessly over its origins and purpose, even as they sheltered in its branches and took succor from its life-giving fruits.

Eventually the questions of the tree's origins were forgotten by the alliance, which founded a great city near

to the tree, and the people there worshiped the miracle as some extension of the divine. As the community grew larger and more influential, however, they also found themselves with many enemies. Chief among these were the goblins of deep. In those ages, now long past, goblins were far larger and fiercer than they are today. Hateful and ferocious, the goblin horde set their eyes upon the alliance and their beautiful city and descended upon them like locusts upon a field. The peaceful druidic culture of the alliance was crushed as their city was sacked and their people killed or enslaved to the goblin horde. The chief of the goblins, called Gargoral, declared that the tree should be cut down, for its very presence defiled his subterranean kingdom. And so it was done. However, though Gargoral ordered the tree burnt, a goblin high shaman secretly harvested some of the wood from the tree while it still lived in order to fashion a weapon he could use to challenge the clan chief. The shaman worked all his magics and poured his malice into the wood, to turn it into a spear for his wicked purpose. However, try as he might, he found the wood of the tree would not bend to his desire: it would not be used to forge a weapon. The shaman was clever, however, and forged the wood into a shield which was corrupted by the hateful desire of goblinkind into a weapon both cruel and deadly.

Unfortunately for the shaman, when he tried to take down Gargoral, he was killed by the goblin chief, who claimed the shield for his own. Gargoral was ignorant of its origins, of course, and declared the powerful device a symbol of rulership. For many years, the goblins fought to control the shield and the fate of their clans; warlords would claim the shield, then either lose it or pass it down to heirs who would claim absolute authority, only to be met with defiance. The goblin clans were never unified again, and as they began to degenerate and slowly destroy themselves, eventually the shield became lost to them. The dwarven hero Riengolir, who was himself a descendant (if somewhat distantly) of the ancient alliance, took the shield in a clan war, and upon recognizing its significance, placed in a hold of his people.

Upon his death the shield was to be brought out and displayed at his funeral. However, when his kinsman tried to retrieve the shield it was discovered to be missing. A human thief by the name of Kasup eventually confessed to the theft, though he claimed he lost the shield when fleeing from a band of troll mercenaries. The whereabouts of the original shield are currently unknown. However, with the aid of powerful magic, the skilled dwarven craftsmen were able to create several similar shields to replicate the abilities of that original heirloom, and these still turn up in various places from time to time.

Immovable Shield

These spectacular shields are part tower shield and part immovable rod, providing a stout barrier and convenient battle platform.

IMMOVABLE SHIELD

Aura moderate transmutation; CL 10th Slot none; Price 11,680 gp; Weight 45 lbs. Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *levitate*; Cost 5,930 gp

These powerfully magical tower shields have the ability to be held in place defiant of gravity, allowing them to be used as a convenient platform or defensive barrier. An immovable shield functions as a +2 tower shield and comes equipped with a button on the shield's back which allows it to stand immobile. When the button is pushed (a move action), the shield does not move from where it is, even if staying in place defies gravity. Thus, the owner can lift or place the shield wherever he wishes, push the button, and let go. An immovable shield can support up to 16,000 pounds before falling to the ground, and can allow a Medium creature to stand on it (when placed parallel to the ground) without difficulty. If a creature pushes against an immovable shield, it must succeed at a DC 30 Strength check to move the shield up to 10 feet in a single round. If placed perpendicular to the ground when activated, the shield provides cover and is considered to occupy one face of a single 5-foot square (the face must be specified when the shield is activated). When placed in this way, the wearer can still benefit from the shield's shield bonus to AC so long as he holds the shield, though he cannot move if he does so. While he holds on in this fashion, the wearer cannot be bull rushed or otherwise forcibly moved from his square by any means, except by teleportation magic (or similar non-physically oriented magic, at the GM's discretion), unless the moving force succeeds on a DC 30 Strength check. If the wearer is not attending the shield or is holding onto its handle while suspended in midair, he does not benefit from the shield's bonus to AC, though he may still be able to benefit from cover provided by the shield, depending on the angle of the attack and the GM's discretion. If the wearer falls while wearing an immovable shield, he can press the button as an immediate action, if he succeeds on a DC 20 Reflex save.

None of an *immovable shield*'s abilities count as an enhancement bonus equivalent, and it is treated as a +2 tower shield for the purpose of determining the cost of further improving its magical abilities.

Physical Description

An immovable shield is jet black and obviously magically, its surface seeming to swim like a liquid shadow, though proving to be both solid and smooth to the touch. A single sigil stands out in bright and vibrant gold on the shield's surface, appearing as a vertical line with a perfect circle which intersects its center. A convenient and discrete button which serves to activate the enchanted shield's magical ability is located just below the shield's crest, on its reverse side. A large handle on the shield's back is convenient both for easy use and to serve as a bar from which to hang if the shield is left midair. Despite its immobility magic, the shield is not any heavier than a typical tower shield, even while immobile, allowing strong wielders to hold the shield with great comfort.

Background

These shields were designed by Alonso Thonze, a former thief-turned-warrior, who felt he understood what a truly well-rounded adventurer really wanted. In the early part of Alonso's career, he made a name for himself by taking to the second story of buildings using a pair of immovable rods, which he would use as both mobile grappling hook targets, quick bars for doors, and impromptu ladders. When war came to Alonso's homeland, however, he was pressed into service for his kingdom and clever tricks gave way to hard fighting. During the lengthy campaign, Alonso learned to trust in his shield and in the shields of his brothers-in-arms to keep him alive.

When the war ended, Alonso had a new appreciation for the people of his home country and had little desire to rob the people he had fought so hard for. Instead, he decided to take to a career of protecting people while turning a profit. Using his skills, he founded a company of adventurers on the basis of doing things the smart and safe way. Comprised mostly of former thieves and soldiers, the Shielded Heart company made a name for themselves as a group who could get things done and come back alive with your relics and trophies. Eventually, his group's success attracted a powerful wizard by the name of Kienzew Callamond, who offered his services to make items for the company. Alonso's first request for invincible armor that made the wearer constantly invisible was dismissed as being beyond the wizard's abilities, so he settled for the next best thing: a magical shield which combined the best aspects of his immovable rods and the heavy tower shields favored by the Shielded Heart.

The new shields were distributed to his men just in the nick of time, as following their deployment Alonso's kingdom once again fell under attack, this time from a group of wyvern-mounted beast lords. The shields gave the company a huge edge over other soldiers, allowing them to both engage the beast lords in the air, and to hold keeps almost indefinitely against their battering rams and war beasts. Alonso saw that his countrymen were dying all around him, however, as they lacked the tactical advantage provided by the shields. Seeing another chance to help his people and stop the invasion of foreign powers, he made the shields available for purchase at a steep discount to any man or woman who swore to fight for his homeland.

Ultimately, the battle was won and the beast lords repelled. The king, impressed with the Shielded Heart's patriotism and skill at arms, officially declared his support for the company, and his flow of coin has made the Shielded Heart a potent force for good in the world. Today, the company has grown to outstanding size and the spectacular shields are just one of a number of potent magical items the guild provides to adventurers willing to lay their lives down the smart way—for a good cause.

Interceptor

This shining buckler is an exceptional example of the armorer's trade. While lightweight and easily maneuverable, the buckler is covered in intricate weights and counterweights which activate magically to maneuver the buckler at high speeds.

INTERCEPTOR

Aura faint abjuration; CL 1st Slot none; Price 3,155 gp; Weight 5 lbs. Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, shield; Cost 1,655 gp

This +1 buckler has a simple and highly effective defensive charm from which it gains its common name. Once per round, whenever the wearer is attacked, as an immediate action, he may choose to gain an additional +3 shield bonus to AC against that attack. He may choose to use this ability after it has been determined that the attack will hit the target, but before damage is rolled, and before the confirmation roll of any critical hit which might result from the attack. If the wearer chooses to use this ability, he does not gain the shield bonus to AC normally granted by the *interceptor* shield until the beginning of his next turn. The wearer cannot use this ability if he is not currently receiving a bonus to his AC from the *interceptor* shield.

None of an *interceptor's* abilities count as an enhancement bonus equivalent, and it is treated as a +1 *buckler* for the purpose of determining the cost of further improving its magical abilities.

Physical Description

A typical example of a finely made buckler, this piece is made from steel and stiffened leather to be both stylish and practical. Complex and intricate bands of metal form a complex web of magically bound steel surrounding the shield. A few examples have been known to feature a stylized pegasus on the front, surrounded by beautiful elven script which says nothing in particular, but which has long been alleged to be a protective charm.

The same writing appears on the moving bands and is known to shine a brilliant gold when its magic activates. Users of these shields describe them as being exceptionally light and easy to maneuver, except when the magic is activated, at which point the shields are described as being uncomfortable and liable to cause injury. When activated, the complex bands and circles whirl and rotate madly, possibly causing damage to the wearer.

Background

Ghelor's Love was the first of what would become many similar bucklers (eventually called *interceptor* shields), designed for dueling by renowned armorsmith Ghelor Relinti. The original shield was crafted personally by Reliniti for a half-elven adventuress named Reina, who saved his life during the Broken Spear Rebellion.



Ghelor marveled at Reina's courage and warrior skill and quickly became enamored with her sharp wit and sense of personal honor. During the revolt, the two became fast friends, with Relinti providing Reina and her adventurous companions with a wide variety of gear which saw them through the rebellion. After things had settled down somewhat, having become very close, Ghelor and Reina vowed to stay together. It soon proved, however, than Reina's risky lifestyle was too much for a craftsman like Ghelor to keep up with, so the two of them reluctantly split ways.

During their time apart, Ghelor continued to ply his trade as an armorer while Reina followed her quest for fortune and glory, eventually becoming a famous duelist. One day, Reina returned to Ghelor's hometown to serve as a champion to the local baron, who had accepted a duel to the death against an ogre warlord who had been eyeing the baron's wealth and estate for some time. Despite her skill, Reina had heard that the ogre could slay even the mightiest of knights with a single blow. She turned to her old friend Ghelor for aid in the duel. Wanting to thank her for all that she had done for him in the past, he created a custom buckler overnight, which he claimed to able to block any attack. During the duel, the ogre unleashed attack after powerful attack, only to find that Reina would intercept his blows with her tiny shield at every turn, much to his humiliation. Ultimately, Reina was successful in the duel and slew the ogre. When confronted with the enamored crowd who were eager to know how she defeated the ogre, she said that it would not have been possible without the long friendship of Ghelor Rintiri, whose armor was crafted with true care. The crowd read more in to this than Reina intended, and came to the conclusion that the two were romantically involved, and that Ghelor's shields were somehow powered by how much he cared for the recipient.

Eventually, it became clear that this wasn't the case, and the shield commonly referred to as the *interceptor* quickly became one of the most popular dueling tools of the period. It thus came about that though Rintiri took the secret of their construction to the grave, there were enough pieces widely available for people to copy his design and ensure the lasting legacy of the *interceptor* today.

Shield of Doors

These tower shields are, surprisingly, found more often in the hands of thieves and assassins than in the hands of mighty warriors. While not lacking in defense, their true value comes in their ability to double as magical doors, which can be placed on any wall to create an opening, and can even serve as a doorway to other dimensions.

SHIELD OF DOORS

Aura moderate conjuration; CL 17th Weight 30 lbs.; Price 69,582 gp Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, gate, passwall; Cost 34,881 gp

When one of these +3 tower shields is placed against a wall or similar surface, and a command word is spoken, it magically fuses to the wall, forming a magical doorway that allows passage to the other side. While fused in this way, the shield of doors functions as a standard door, and opens on hinges that appear on one side and connect it to the wall. If opened, a passageway with the same dimensions as the shield, and 5 feet deep, is revealed on the other side. If the wall is wider than 5 feet, this passageway comes to a dead end. Otherwise, an identical door can be found on the other side of the wall (if the wall is less than 2 inches thick, there is no passageway and only one door). The shield can be removed from the wall by grasping either door and speaking the command word. This ability can be used 3 times per day.

Additionally, the *shield* of *doors* can also be used to open doorways to other planes. Once per week, the shield can be placed against a wall or similar surface, and another command word can be spoken. This causes the shield to fuse to the wall, as with the previous ability, but upon opening the door that appears, instead of a short passageway, the wielder finds a portal to another plane of existence. In order to make a portal to a specific location, the wielder must concentrate on that location when he places the shield and speaks the command word. Doing so requires a successful Intelligence or Wisdom check (DC 20). Failure on this check means that the portal opens to a random location on a random plane other than the one that the wielder is on. Success indicates that it opens to a location 5d10 miles from the intended destination on the desired plane. Success by 5 or more indicates that it opens as near as possible to the intended destination. If the wielder has not seen the intended destination, or the place that he visualizes does not exist, the check fails automatically. This ability functions as the spell *gate*, and can never be used to create a portal to another location on the same plane.

None of a *shield of doors's* abilities count as an enhancement bonus equivalent, and it is treated as a +3 *tower shield* for the purpose of determining the cost of further improving its magical abilities.

Physical Description

Whether it is to make their purpose more clear, or to camouflage them when they are used as makeshift doors, or simply from an odd sense of humor on the part of the creator, most *shields of doors* are, in fact, made to resemble doors, albeit slightly small ones. Whether made of wood or iron, it is not unusual for doors of this type to bear decorative knobs, locks, bars, hinges, and sometimes even ornamental knockers or peepholes. A very small few come with functioning locks and keys, and can be effectively locked when in door form. Those that are not fashioned to resemble doors often have clues on them as to their purpose: most often they feature a key, gateway, or keyhole as a prominent charge on their front (gold keys on a black background are most common).

Background

The origin of these shields is unknown, and it is quite likely that whoever first created them went to some lengths to ensure that his name would not be associated with them, given their obvious applications for thievery, assassination, and other illegal and unsavory activities. Some magic item historians believe that the first such shield was created by Montivor "Monty" Kindfellow, also known to history as "Monty the Black" and "The Puppetmaster of Tessup," though such claims would be all but impossible to prove now, over 300 years after his death.

Montivor is now regarded as a genius of magic item creation, and many popular magic items available today have been accredited to him, but during his lifetime he was scorned by much of the local magical community, in part because of his lack of pedigree, in part because he was remarkably poor at other aspects of spellcasting, and in part simply because of his attitude, which, by all reports, was dark and moody. Eventually expelled from the local arcane university for a malicious prank perpetrated against one of his instructors, Montivor became involved with the local thieves' guild, offering his magical talent to aid them in their endeavors. His magic items quickly became indispensable to the guild, and, by all reports, it was not long before he secretly gained control of the guild, using the old guildmaster as a puppet ruler and manipulating things from behind the scenes.

Though the inventor of the shield of doors is not known, it is a fairly well-established fact that one of these shields served as the starting point for the career of an infamous cat burglar known as "The Basilisk," (real name Thaddeus Wurt). Though he would eventually become one of the best-known thieves of the multiverse, known for his habit of leaving a stone imitation of any stolen treasure behind as a calling card, Thaddeus began his career with almost no skill in any of the thieving arts, having stumbled into the shield, realized its potential, and used it to steal great treasures without any real skill or talent. As he grew more bold (and, over time, more skilled), he eventually made use of the shield's second ability to perform daring multiplanar heists, and he is said to have stolen precious items from the treasuries of such exotic places as the Grand Caliph's treasury in the City of Brass, the vaults of Mammon, and, according to some stories, he even snuck into a celestial record house and scrawled his name into the infamous Book of Deeds, ensuring himself a place in one of the heavens in the afterlife.

Eventually, however, a band of adventurers (no doubt hired by one of his victims) caught up to him and he was imprisoned. Having relied on the shield too heavily for the entirety of his career, he was unable to escape, and died in prison, though not before sharing his story.

Shield of the Blue Mariner

This shield, which bears the image of a ship sailing on stormy waters, is beloved by seafarers and mariners of all sorts. In addition to being an effective defense against creatures of the sea, and making it easier for wielders to stay afloat, it can also transform into a fully-functional sailing ship.

SHIELD OF THE BLUE MARINER

Aura strong transmutation; CL 15th Weight 10 lbs.; Price 21,157 gp Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, polymorph any object; Cost 10,657 gp

This +2 heavy wooden shield is prized by all those with a love for the sea, and especially those who seek out adventure on the azure horizon. The first, and often most prized, ability of these shields is their ability to float. This negates the shield's armor check penalty on Swim checks, and it actually grants a +2 bonus on Swim checks made to stay afloat or move towards the surface of the water. If unattended in a source of water, a *shield of the blue mariner* will always stay atop the water, and if forcibly pulled beneath the waves, will rise up to the surface again as soon as it is unattended. The shield also provides an additional +2 bonus to AC against attacks made by creatures with the aquatic subtype.

A somewhat flashier feature of the *shield of the blue mariner* is its ability to transform itself into a sailing ship. One need merely allow the shield to float on a body of water and speak the command word, and the shield will transform into a sailing ship, with all the sails, rigging, rope, and other gear necessary to make it work. The transformation is slow enough that nearby creatures are not harmed, and if any obstacles are in the way of the transformation, the emerging sailboat will gently be pushed out into open water that can accommodate it. If in an enclosed area that is too small to accommodate a sailboat, the shield will not transform. While a sailboat, a *shield of the true mariner* grants a +2 bonus on checks made to pilot it. None of the shield's other abilities function while it is in sailboat form.

A separate command word causes the sailboat to return to shield form. Any creatures on the boat, and any loose objects on the deck of the boat, are deposited harmlessly in the water when this occurs. Objects stored belowdecks, as well as any weapons or other objects installed on the deck of the sailboat, are held in an extradimensional space when this happens, allowing for supplies to be kept in the hold and weapons to be installed on the sailboat.

Some of a *shield of the blue mariner's* abilities count as an enhancement bonus equivalent, and it is treated as a +3 *heavy wooden shield* for the purpose of determining the cost of further improving its magical abilities.

Physical Description

A shield of the blue mariner is made of several planks of wood stacked horizontally, and bound around the edges in iron. The front of these shields is painted to resemble an ocean scene. This is usually heavily stylized, with the bottom half a dark blue and the top half either grey or black, with a wavy line of white dividing them. In the middle of the shield is a depiction of a sailing ship, typically with white sails, and often depicted at the crest of a large wave. In a few rare instances, the depiction on the front of the shield is magically animated, with the waves rocking the ship to and fro, and rain pounding down upon the deck. One notable case actually depicts dozens of tiny sailors running to and fro on the ship, though they are nowhere to be seen if the shield is transformed.

These shields always carry a faint but persistent scent of saltwater and sea air, and though it can be overpowered in areas of intense stench, it is impossible to remove from the shield for long. It has been reported by many that they can hear the sound of waves crashing against a lonely beach when they place their ears to the shield, but this apparently varies from shield to shield or from person to person, and is too faint to be audible otherwise, in any case.

Background

These shields were originally commissioned by Lord Garron Tesk, a baron whose holdings were located along the northern coast of Hardovis, across the Green Sea from the lucrative southern territories of the Endorak empire, including the rich port city of Yrador. Garron Tesk was a rather ambitious man, and, as the Endorak empire was rather weakened during those days due to political infighting and an incompetent emperor, he decided to take a piece of his northern neighbors for himself.

Garron Tesk knew that Yrador had little in the way of soldiers, and was confident that if he could successfully get his armies to the city, he would have little difficulty capturing it. Unfortunately, the city's port was very well-defended against naval invasion, and had successfully repelled much larger fleets than Lord Tesk would ever have been able to muster. To make matters worse, much of the southern shore of Enodrak was rocky cliffs, unsuitable for docking ships. The only way to effectively get his men to the city would require landing much further north, and making a long journey south by land through enemy territory, a prospect that seemed doomed to failure.

Instead, he commissioned 120 of these shields, and gave them to captains in his army, each of whom had 20 or so men under his command. The fleet then launched and sailed across the channel to Yrador, but never arrived. Instead, the ships were turned back into shields about a half-mile from shore, and the armies swam the rest of the way, scaled the cliffs, and assaulted the port city by land seemingly out of nowhere. The invasion was a success, but short-lived, and the city and nearby conquered holdings were reclaimed by the Endorak empire a short 12 years later.

The shields, however, were passed down from those commanders through their families, lost in gambling debts, sold, found, and otherwise travelled to the corners of the globe. Numerous imitations have also been made, some much more elaborate and decorative than the originals. To date, however, the shields have not become particularly popular for large military assaults.

Shield of the Slayer

Obviously created to defeat dragons, these shields have a long and storied history of doing just that.

SHIELD OF THE SLAYER

Aura faint enchantment; CL 1st Slot none; Price 38,670 gp; Weight 15 lbs. Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bane*; Cost 19,420 gp

These shields were created with the single purpose of slaying dragons, offering dragon slayers significant protections against their greatest foes. A shield of the slayer always functions a +1 heavy steel shield, but grants its wearer an additional +6 shield bonus to AC against attacks made by dragons. Additionally, the wearer adds twice the shield's enchantment bonus as a bonus on Will saves made to resist fear effects, and is immune to the aura of fear produced by true dragons. Finally, the wearer of a shield of the slayer is able to protect himself from the breath attacks of dragons and similar creatures. Whenever the wearer of a shield of the slayer would be affected by a breath weapon, as an immediate action, he may choose to use the shield of the slayer to block the attack, granting him a +4 bonus on the saving throw made to resist the effects of the breath weapon. Further, if he succeeds on this saving throw, he suffers no damage from the breath weapon, and suffers only half damage on a failed save. Breath weapons which do not deal damage have their normal effects on the wearer of a shield of the slayer.

Some of a *shield of the slayer's* abilities count as an enhancement bonus equivalent, and it is treated as a +4 *heavy steel shield* for the purpose of determining the cost of further improving its magical abilities.

Physical Description

These shields are always made from brightly polished steel and are cut in a triangular or kite shape. The highly reflective surface bears an image of a weapon grasped in an iron fist, outlined in deep azure which is also highly reflective. The image of the weapon changes to match the weapon wielded by the wearer. If the wearer is not wielding a weapon, the shield displays a grasping fist, instead. These shields feel heavy for their size, and weigh the wearer down with the weight of the work of slaying dragons.

Background

The first *shield of the slayer* was forged by the dwarven king Egrior for his son Carnor during the life of the great red dragon Raxmyth. Raxmyth was a terror even by dragon standards, and ruled over vast mountain lands in the north in a time only half remembered by scholars today. It would come to pass that Raxmyth would extend his rule to the Silver Mountain, which housed Egrior's kingdom. The dragon attacked without warning, destroying the dwarven city on the surface and forcing them into the depths of the mountain, where Egrior vowed vengeance against the beast. To mete out his revenge, Egrior forged three items of wonder from the mountain's core, imbued with the magic that the very land had held since creation, and molding it to the needs of his people. Egrior crafted a sword which could pierce even the dragon's impenetrable hide, which he took for himself to lead his sons to battle. He crafted a net which was made of iron and which no dragon could ever escape, which he gave to his elder son Hermor, whose quickness was legendary, particularly among the dwarves. For his youngest and stouter son, Carnor, Egrior created a shield which would keep him from any harm the dragon could do.

Together the dwarves marched against Raxmyth, sure of their victory. The dragon first breathed fire to destroy the dwarves, but Carnor used his shield to stop the flame from reaching his brother and his father. Hermor bound the beast with the net so that it could not get away, and Egrior struck the beast with the sword, gravely wounding it. Knowing the end was near, Raxmyth thrashed mightily in his binds, and his incredible strength brought the entire mountain crashing down upon him and the dwarves, killing them all and burying their memories.

The shield would not be seen again for centuries, when a heroine name Helen Vale visited the oracle of the Shattered Silver Pass at the height of Firmolis's War. Time was growing short for the Broken Kingdoms, which, in their defiance of the dragon overlord Firmolis, had earned certain death at her hands. Helen Vale was the last survivor of her kingdom and a champion of those who would not bend knee to the terrible beast. When she came to visit the oracle, the oracle told her that the only hope for victory lay buried in the rubble of the Silver Mountain: a shield which would protect her from Firmolis's fire and turn aside her claws. The oracle told Helen of the dwarves and their battle with Raxmyth and where to find the shield.

Helen recovered the shield, but rather than immediately ride for battle, she took the shield through the Broken Kingdoms and told the story of the dwarves and of a time when men stood tall against tyrants. The people flocked to her example and marshaled behind her, filled with zeal and prepared to pay for their freedom, even if it meant oblivion. The dragon's troops were overwhelmed and she was humbled by Helen during the final battle, never laying a single claw upon her as she hacked at Firmolis with her trusty battleaxe. In the end, Firmolis was slain while trying to flee, taken down by the arrows of a people thirsty for freedom and peace. Upon the great heroine's death, the elven wizard and historian Vedrismelor replicated the shield and recorded the stories that Helen told as a means of respecting her memory. Today, these shields are in the hands of heroes and kings with the power to hold off dangerous and ambitious dragons looking to rid the world of such distasteful items.

Shield of the Sun

These shields shine with light which can be bright as the sun, and can eclipse itself to create an area of deadly shadows.

SHIELD OF THE SUN

Aura strong evocation; CL 13th Slot none; Price 37,770 gp; Weight 15 lbs. Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, deeper darkness, sunbeam; Cost 18,970 gp

These shields, marked with the image of the sun, can glow with the radiance of the sun or turn to darkness deep and devouring. Always functioning as a +3 heavy steel shield, a shield of the sun constantly raises the light level in the area in a 30-foot cone in front of it by 2 steps, and raises the light level by 1 step for a further 30 feet. Additionally, once per day, the wearer of a shield of the sun can speak a command word, which can cause it to glow with the brightness of the sun, blinding creatures within a 30-foot cone for 1d4 rounds unless they succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the shield's enhancement bonus). If the wearer of the shield can channel positive energy, the DC is instead equal to the DC for the wearer's channel positive energy ability + the shield's enhancement bonus. Creatures who succeed the saving throw are dazzled instead. This light persists for 3 rounds and is treated as sunlight for the purposes of any creature specifically harmed by sunlight.

A second command word can be used to cause the sun on the shield to eclipse, creating an area of deeper darkness in a 15-foot cone in front of the wielder and decreasing the light level by 2 steps in the area 60 feet beyond that. In the area in a 15-foot cone in front of the wielder, it is impossible for creatures other than the wielder of a shield of the sun or creatures that can see in supernatural darkness (such as devils) to see at all, and all light spells of 6th level or lower fail to function in the area. Additionally, any creature that begins its turn within this 15-foot cone suffers 2d6 points of cold damage and is staggered unless he succeeds on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the shield's enhancement bonus). If the creature wielding the shield can channel negative energy, the save DC is instead equal to the DC for the wearer's channel negative energy ability + the shield's enhancement bonus. Creatures that succeed the save are immune to the effect. The darkness created by this shield lasts for 3 rounds, or until dispelled by a light spell of 7th level or higher.

The wearer of a *shield of the sun* can only use one of these abilities in a 24-hour period, even if he regains daily uses of his item's abilities before that time (though he may use the same ability he used earlier again). The eclipse and sunlight abilities counter each other if two creatures each wielding a *shield of the sun* use the opposite abilities in the same area, immediately ending both effects.

Some of a *shield of the sun*'s abilities count as an enhancement bonus equivalent, and it is treated as a +4 *heavy steel shield* for the purpose of determining the cost of further improving its magical abilities.

Physical Description

A shield of the sun is a round shield, approximately 2-½ feet in diameter, made of black iron. The image of a bright yellow sunburst stands out on the surface of the shield, appearing as a bright sun in the night sky. When the shield's sunlight ability is activated, the blackness becomes gold and the shield glows with the extreme white light of the sun without the filter of atmosphere, making it nearly impossible to look at. When the eclipse ability is activated, the sun turns a deep red color and the black background swirls with malicious intent, though few creatures can actually see these changes. The shield is of typical weight and feels slightly hot to the touch, though not enough to cause burns.

Background

Originally these shields were exclusive property of the Cult of Solar Enlightenment, a cloistered religious order which worshiped the sun as the source not only of life, but also of all the nonliving things in the physical universe. In the beginning, the shields lacked anything more than basic, if powerful, defensive enchantments. They were given to the warrior priests of the cult in order to defend them from inquisitions and the monsters common to their tropical island home. As time passed, however, the shields would come to take on greater power during a civil war which all but destroyed the cult.

About 300 years after the cult's founding, the high priests began to personify the sun, deifying it and worshiping it through several different personas. This was heretical to the ancient church's doctrine, and resulted in a bloody feud between established church leaders and the younger radicals. The two groups were evenly matched in terms of power, but the traditionalists had greater numbers and forced the new branch of the cult into exile. Not long after, the exiles were approached by what they believed to be a persononification of the sun in the aspect of eclipse. The being called herself Quartara and bestowed the gift of darkness that could block out the sun upon her chosen people. She granted the priests new and more powerful spells and blessed the shields of the warriors to devour light, that they might destroy their enemies. In fact, the being was none other than a powerful devil who, though quite capable of granting these gifts, had nothing to do with the cultist's personified sun goddesses.

Armed with these terrible powers, the Cult of the Eclipse (as they were now calling themselves) marched on their former order and began to win battle after battle, seeming poised to destroy it in short order. When all hope seemed lost, the warrior priests appealed to the sun for aid, and, as if in answer to their prayers, their shields reflected the light from the sun in all its glory, allowing the traditionalists to fight back against their betrayers. Following the strife, the cults were both all but destroyed and the remaining members left their island homes to die in obscurity or go into hiding elsewhere. They left behind a series of disorganized, poorly understood, conflicted, and confusing beliefs recorded in the scriptures of two cults, each claiming the same heritage. Their temples now stand as ruins filled with monsters. The only real legacy of the Cult of Solar Enlightenment are a handful of superior javelins, mystical cloaks, and these shields which wield the power of light and darkness.

Shield of the Undying Warrior

This potent shield ensures that its wielder will not die in battle as long as it is held, and the shield itself is all but indestructible. While this protection is not insurmountable, it ensures that only the most dedicated of attackers has any chance of truly slaying its wielder.

SHIELD OF THE UNDYING WARRIOR

Aura strong conjuration; CL 17th Weight 15 lbs.; Price 36,170 gp Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, mending, true resurrection; Cost 18,170 gp

This +4 heavy steel shield carries powerful wards that protect both itself, and anyone who wears it, from coming to lasting harm. If damage would cause a shield of the undying warrior to be reduced to o or fewer hit points, it is reduced to 1 hit point, instead. The shield still gains the broken condition if reduced to less than half its maximum hit points, and this ability does not prevent it from being destroyed in other ways that do not involved dealing damage. Further, as long as the shield is held, if the shield's wielder suffers enough damage to give him a number of negative hit points equal to or greater than his Constitution score, he instead gains enough damage to give him a number of negative hit points equal to his Constitution score minus 1, and automatically becomes stable and unconscious. Anything that allows the wielder to continue fighting after being reduced to o or fewer hit points (such as the Diehard feat) does not prevent him from falling unconscious in this case. If the wielder is somehow prevented from falling unconscious, this ability does not apply. Once the shield of the undying warrior is removed from the unconscious wielder (whether he drops it as he falls unconscious or it is removed separately later), nothing prevents further damage from slaying the wielder.

None of a *shield of the undying warrior's* abilities count as an enhancement bonus equivalent, and it is treated as a +4 *heavy steel shield* for the purpose of determining the cost of further improving its magical abilities.

Physical Description

These shields come in a variety of shapes, and can bear numerous different decorations. Typically, the front of the shield bears an image of an angel (or a similar figure, such as an azata or a kami) kneeling beside a fallen knight, shielding him with her wings and tending his wounds. Another popular device for these shields is an engraved or embossed sword, which appears heavily nicked and chipped, to show its extensive use and battle scars. Some of these are even ensorcelled so that a new nick or chip appears each time that the shield prevents a wielder from dying. A more minimalist (and macabre) version of this effect has the front of the shield bare, with a small engraved skull appearing each time the shield prevents a wielder from dying. Some rumors state that these "score-keeping" versions of the shield eventually fall apart after preventing enough deaths, but such claims have never been substantiated.

Anyone wielding the shield feels a pleasant sensation of warmth and comfort, and has an inexplicable but



nonetheless certain feeling of peace and safety. In fact, this feeling is so strong that recently several prominent healers have begun using shields of this sort to help treat victims whose minds have been permanently affected by traumatic events and magic.

Background

The very first of these shields was a gift, bestowed upon a famous and beloved knight named Guy de Lourdeaux by the queen of Frildisjar, Wendolyn the Forlorn, before she gained that title. Guy came from a rather humble background as the son of a lesser knight who had barely enough land for his horse to graze, but his skill at arms and natural Charisma had caused him to rise quickly to prominence and fame, especially amongst the peasantry. He captured Wendolyn's attentions during a joust at the summer festival, and the two had a brief but passionate courtship, about which bards still sing songs to this day.

That winter, however, war broke out between Frildisjar and the neighboring barbarian tribes of Ghurt, which rallied under the banner of the warlord Kraagmar the Ravager, and began spilling into Frildisjar and raiding en masse. Wendolyn attempted to persuade Guy to stay at her side, but he would not hear of it, and insisted on going to the front lines to defend his kingdom. Before he left, however, Wendolyn commissioned and gifted to him the very first *shield of the undying warrior*, and made him swear an oath that he would return home alive.

Unfortunately for both of them, while Guy was indeed very popular throughout the kingdom, that kind of popularity often attracts jealous enemies, and in his case, Guy's success was quite offensive to several of the greater knights and nobility, who felt that the "pauper knight" had gone beyond his station, and were scandalized and incensed that he should be so close to the queen, or that she should be bestowing such magnificent gifts upon him. Guy never made it to battle against the barbarian horde, but was instead ambushed and waylaid en route by his own countrymen, who, knowing the secret of the shield, defeated him, claimed it for themselves, and then slew him as he lay unconscious. Though the men involved were eventually found out and hanged for their treason, Wendolyn was inconsolable, and never truly recovered from the loss of her love.

Shield of Vigor

These shields protect their wielders from a variety of non-combat foes, allowing them to focus more on fighting. In addition to protecting against poisons, diseases, fatigue, and the ravages of time, these shields also make their wielders physically stronger. They are highly prized by knights, paladins, and other chivalric warriors throughout the realm.

SHIELD OF VIGOR

Aura moderate transmutation; CL 11th Weight 45 lbs.; Price 42,680 gp Construction Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, age resistance, bull's strength, neutralize poison, remove disease; Cost 21,430 gp

This +1 tower shield protects its wielder as much from metaphorical enemies as it does from physical ones. As long as he is wielding the *shield of vigor*, the wielder is immune to the fatigued and exhausted conditions, gains a +4 enhancement bonus to his Strength score, and is immune to poisons, diseases, and magical aging effects. Further, each day that the wielder holds the shield for at least 8 hours, he does not naturally age that day.

None of a *shield* of *the vigor*'s abilities count as an enhancement bonus equivalent, and it is treated as a +*i* tower shield for the purpose of determining the cost of further improving its magical abilities.

Physical Description

Most *shields* of *vigor* are commissioned by noble knights, and so bear the knight's coat of arms upon their front, which is typically embossed or engraved in meticulous and highly-detailed fashion. Such shields are passed on from generation to generation, and, considering the long-lived nature of their owners, can become antiques in the span of just a few generations. In these cases, there is rarely anything to set a *shield* of *vigor* apart from any other magical shield, at least as far as their appearance, but not all shields of vigor are specially commissioned in this fashion. Those that are made with the intention of selling them to the public are usually somewhat more distinctive. For one thing, they almost always feature strong, powerful beasts as their emblem, which are all but universally en rampant in pose. Although such creatures as dragons, griffons, and lions are popular on other types of shields, and would certainly be considered strong and powerful by many, makers of these shields tend to prefer oxen, bears, minotaurs, and other creatures that are more focused on brute strength. Additionally, a major element of the shield's design is always made of gold. This is typically the bestial image, but sometimes particularly high-end shields will have a colored beast set on a field of gold, instead. Either way, flowers, especially roses, are popular imagery on these shields, either held in the fist or claw of the beast image, piled at its feet, or in a ring around the edge of the shield.

Because of the shield's strength-enhancing abilities, it feels quite lightweight to those who first pick it up. Additionally, the wearer of such a shield is filled with energy and enthusiasm, and *shields of vigor* have been known to improve the wielder's mood nearly as much as his body.

Background

According to legend, all *shields of vigor* are, despite their potent magical protections and great desirability amongst knights and other elite warriors, pale imitations of a legendary artifact known as the *Aegis of the Eternal Warrior*, which is said to have been a gift from a goddess to a knight who swore to protect his kingdom from enemies not until his death, but rather until the end of time. In some versions of the story, this is not so much a solemn promise of servitude but a drunken boast, and the shield is not so much a gift as it is a curse, but since the details of the story (like the names of the warrior, the kingdom, and the goddess) have all been lost to time, it is impossible to tell for certain.

In any event, the warrior is said to have taken to patrolling the kingdom's borders, making slow but steady circles around the kingdom, constantly on the move and on the lookout for any enemies of the crown. Rumor has it that he continues his eternal vigil to this day, and, given the abilities of the *shield of vigor*, this seems entirely plausible. Supposedly, at one point, after centuries of such vigilance, the knight received permission from the goddess to bring his miraculous shield to a great smith and show it to him, in order to teach him how more such shields could be made, in the hopes that they would allow other knights to take up a similar calling. Whether he did this to further reinforce the country's protection, or because he was reneging on his promise and finally retiring (or at least taking a holiday) again varies from one teller to the next. Either way, while the greatest smiths in the land were unable to perfectly duplicate the shield, it is said that they captured at least part of its essence quite well.

The abilities of the Aegis of the Eternal Warrior, if indeed it ever existed, can only be guessed at from the shields made to imitate it, but it seems clear from the legend that it, too, grants the ability to live forever and ignore the effects of aging, just as the lesser shields do. Any other abilities it may possess are unknown, and, in fact, some smiths argue that it may be entirely possible that the original shield may not have had any other abilities, and that the ingenuity of generations of craftsmen may actually have allowed the *shield of vigor* to surpass its originator, as more and more features (enhancement to strength, immunity to poison, disease, and fatigue, and so on) are added throughout the ages.



A Beginner's Guide to Heraldry

It is hard to think of medieval shields without conjuring to mind images of fanciful coats of arms with bright colors, meaningful symbols, and intricate designs. While it's certainly possible to have a shield without a coat of arms on it, this book would be lacking if it did not include some mention of heraldry and its relation to shields. The following section provides some background information about heraldry that may prove useful or inspiring to you in your games. Please note that while the information provided here is generally accurate and should be more than sufficient for use at most game tables, it should not be treated as a scholarly source. Our primary concern is to provide entertainment, and it is entirely possible that there may be minor inaccuracies.

Origins

Heraldry, in its most basic form, can be traced back as far as ancient Rome, where members of a given military unit would all bear the same distinct insignia or design on their shield, acting as a sort of uniform for members of that specific unit (much in the same way that modern military might have a distinctive badge or patch on their uniform to indicate what regiment, platoon, and/or division they belong to). The concept of using imagery as an individual identifier can actually be traced back further, and in ancient Egypt, members of the royal family used images of animals to represent themselves, and it is speculated that these personal glyphs eventually evolved to become the famous Egyptian hieroglyphic system.

The modern concept of the coat of arms, however, dates back to the high medieval period of Europe, around 1100 or so. Individual knights would put designs on their shields, often very simple and straightforward designs, with bright colors and clear and distinctive imagery, which allowed them to be easily distinguished from one another on the battlefield, something that can be particularly difficult if everyone is wearing full armor and helms that hide their faces. In addition to making it easier to determine friend from foe (assuming you know who has which designs, that is), easy identification was also particularly important for wealthier and higher-ranking knights, because being properly identified on the battlefield allows your foes to know that you are worth sparing and ransoming, rather than killing, should the battle turn against you (this practice was quite common in medieval Europe).

As time went on, and the use of heraldry spread, designs needed to grow more and more complex in order to allow everyone to have a unique design on their shield (after all, a coat of arms becomes much less useful when the most it can tell you is that the person you're facing is *either* the Duke of Normandy or some Parisian merchant who liked the design). Further, countries began to develop formalized systems of registering heraldic designs, to ensure that each one was unique, and a system of laws was created to protect an individual's right to his coat of arms, as well as a particular set of languages and symbols that was used to precisely and accurately record the colorful and fanciful designs without having to reproduce them on paper with costly and rare colored inks. Eventually, as the nobility shifted away from being a warrior class, and medieval combat began to fall by the wayside, coats of arms moved away from shields and began to be used more as personal seals and signets, or simply prestigious decoration, and they became more and more complex, often incorporating several elements outside of the traditional shield, such as supporting figures depicted holding the shield up, banners with mottoes, crowns or helmets rested atop the shield, and so on.

Components of a Coat of Arms

An official coat of arms is a complex thing, with several components. Further confusing matters, these components use a very precise terminology and set of rules that are specific to heraldry. The following section outlines some of the major components of a coat of arms.

Tincture

The tincture of an object in a coat of arms refers to its color. Traditionally, heraldry recognizes only a very limited number of colors, and doesn't bother itself with subtle distinctions of shade, so a bright tomato-red color would not be distinguished from a dark blood-red color. Tinctures can actually be sub-divided into three groups: colors, metals, and furs. The traditional colors used in heraldry are black (referred to as sable), blue (azure), green (vert), purple (purpure), and red (gules). The two traditional metals are gold (referred to as or) and silver (argent), though when such metals are not actually available, yellow and white may be substituted, respectively. Finally, there are two patterns, known as furs, which are also treated as tinctures: these are ermine and vair, which represent the coats of winter stoats and squirrels, respectively. In recent years additional colors have been added to the list of acceptable tinctures, including a sky blue (blue celeste), reddish-purple (murrey), and dark orange (tenne).

There is a general rule in heraldry, known as the rule of tincture, which states that in a coat of arms' design, metal must never be placed on metal, and colors must never be placed on colors. Originally arising from the need to ensure that designs were easy to read on the battlefield, it has since evolved into a rather firm tradition, at least as far as official heraldry is concerned. Note that the rule doesn't apply to divisions, meaning a gold lion could appear on a background that was half blue and half black, but you wouldn't traditionally have a black lion on a blue background, or vice versa.

Field

The background of the shield in a coat of arms is referred to as the "field." In very basic coats of arms, this can be a single color, but more often the field is complicated in one or more ways. There are two basic ways that a field can be made more complex: a division, and a variation.

Divisions of the Field: These split the shield into two or more sections, usually centered around the middle of the shield. A shield can be divided vertically (per pale),





Ermine (left) and vair (right) patterns.

horizontally (per fess), diagonal (per bend, or per bend sinister if going from top-right to bottom-left), or in several other ways. The line where the division occurs can be a simple straight line, or it can take one of several patterns, including embattled (alternating square segments resembling a battlement), engrailed (jagged wavy lines, like ocean waves), indented (alternating triangles), and more. Divisions of the field are not subject to the rules of tincture, allowing for a field to be split between two colors or two metals.

Variations of the Field: These also essentially divide the shield into multiple parts, but instead of creating a small number of large sections, centered around the middle, it forms a repeating pattern across the entire shield. For example, a shield split by six vertical lines would be referred to as "paly six," while one split by eight horizontal lines might be "barry eight," and one with a dozen diagonal lines would be "bendy twelve." Other patterns which don't have specific numbers associated with them are chequy (checkerboard pattern), lozengy (a diamond pattern), seme (a repeated image, such as a rose, printed across the field). Several other specific patterns exist, such as fish scales (papelonny), bricks (masoned), or wheat (tapisse). As with divisions of the field, lines used for variations need not be straight, but unlike divisions of the field, the rule of tincture does apply, meaning that traditionally, only one of the two variations can be a color and only one a metal.

Combination: It's also possible to have a combination of division and variation: for example, a shield could be divided vertically (per pale), with the left side being a red field showing a pattern of gold bats (seme of bats), and the right side being divided into eight black and gold horizontal stripes (barry eight).

Charges

The word "charge" applies to the various objects, figures, and other designs that can appear as decoration on the field of the coat of arms. Some of the most well-known charges involve popular creatures like lions, eagles, and dragons, but various designs (such as crosses and chevrons) are also incredibly common. In practice, nearly anything can be a charge. While the choice of a charge is personal, and usually a given charge has a particular meaning or importance to the person who made the coat of arms, there are no universal meanings applied to all charges.

Honorable Ordinaries: In the early days of heraldry, simple, easy to distinguish shapes were favored over anything else, and as designs got more complicated, these simple designs came to be called "honorable ordinaries." There is some debate among heraldic scholars about exactly what qualifies as an "honorable ordinary," but one popular list includes the cross (a wide vertical line intersecting a wide horizontal line of the same color, both lines stretching to the edge of the shield), a chief (a wide horizontal line along the top of the shield), a pale (a wide vertical line down the center of the shield), a bend (a wide diagonal line across the center of the shield, or a bend sinister if going from top-right to bottom-left), a fess (a wide horizontal line across the center of the shield), a saltire (similar to a cross, but with diagonal lines), a chevron (a pair of diagonal lines going from the bottom corners of the shield and meeting in the center, but stopping there and forming a point), and a border (a wide line that goes around the entire perimeter of the shield. These can often be used in "diminutive" form, in which one or more narrower versions are placed side-by-side (such as three narrow chevrons, one above the other, or four narrow horizontal lines).

Other Charges: Nearly anything that you can imagine can be used as a charge. Animals are very common, as are stylized crosses (of which there are dozens of different types). Human body parts (hands, eyes, and so forth) are also common, although full images of humans are rare. Suns, mountains, clouds, towers, and so on also appear fairly frequently.

Because animals are so common, there are a few specialized terms that were developed which apply specifically to them. Certain features of animals may be of a different tincture than the rest of them: an animal is said to be "armed" with a color if its claws, horns, tusks, or similar natural weapons are that color, and they are said to be "langued" if their tongue is that color. "Attired" refers to the color of antlers or horns, and "crined" refers to the color of a



Several different methods of dividing a shield per fess. From left to right: wavy, engrailed, indented, and embattled.

horse's mane or a man's hair. There are also numerous words for the position that the animal is in. The most common are "passant" (or walking), and "rampant" (up on two legs, with front legs in the air) for four-legged creatures. "Naiant" (swimming), "guardant" (head facing viewer), "regardant" (head facing backward), "couchant" (lying down), "courant" (running), "salient" (leaping), and "sejant" (sitting on its haunches) are just some examples of poses that such creatures can take.

Often only an animal's head will appear. In this case, it can appear "cabossed," in which it is cleanly separated from the body, or it can appear "erased," with a ragged neck dangling below it, giving the appearance that it had just been ripped from the body. The latter was very common historically.

Other Elements

There are several other components in a traditional coat of arms, which surround the shield. While these are important elements in an official coat of arms, they are difficult (in most cases impossible) to incorporate for a knight who is on the battlefield, and are only designed for use as a signet or a decorative piece. As such, this book will touch on them only briefly. They are listed as they appear on the coat of arms, from bottom to top.

Motto: Typically descripted as a roll of parchment or a scroll waving in the wind, this appears at the bottom of the coat of arm and has a short phrase. These phrases can generally be changed more easily than other elements of the coat of arms, and having a different motto is not sufficient to differentiate one coat of arms from another.

Compartment: This is a surface on which the rest of the coat of arms rests. Often depicting lush green grass, it sometimes takes the form of a hill or mountain, or displays a particular flower or other plant. In theory any type of solid surface could be used.

Supporters: These figures stand on the compartment and hold up the shield of the arms. Typically this consists of one figure on either side, but in some cases a single figure behind the shield is used instead, and in rare cases there may be six or more supporters. Animal supporters are always shown *en rampant*.

Helmet: Traditionally, a helmet is placed on top of the shield in the coat of arms. Different styles of helmets represent different ranks, with more prestigious helmets only being allowed in the coats of arms of certain members of the nobility. In general, open-visored or barred helmets are reserved for the most prestigious ranks. The coats of arms of clergy members generally replace the helmet with something more appropriate, such as a bishop's mitre (for a bishop, naturally).

Mantling: This is a cloak or drapery which is attached to the back of the helmet, and creates a backdrop for the shield on the coat of arms. They are often depicted to be fanned out and billowing in dramatic ways. Often the mantling is two colors, one for each "side" of the fabric. The outer color is often the same as the principle color on the shield, and the inner color is often the same as the principle metal.

Crest: The crest is a decorative piece that appears atop the helmet. These can take any number of fanciful shapes, such as the heads of beasts, towers, mountains, stylized lightning bolts, and so on. The coats of arms of towns and cities often have battlements or skylines as a stylized crest. Simpler crests, such as plumes of feathers or arrows are not uncommon, either.

Heraldic Culture

There are several aspects of heraldry and coats of arms that have developed into a unique culture throughout the centuries. The following section explores some of the intricacies and social faux-pas relating to heraldry and coats of arms.

Family Coats of Arms and Cadences

The popular conception of a "family" coat of arms one that applies to all members of a given family, or even simply everyone with the same last name—is not historically accurate. While you can no doubt find any number of gift shops happy to sell you shirts and mugs with your "family crest," in actuality, a given coat of arms belongs to a single person, not an entire family. In fact, there are some rather complex rules that govern how a coat of arms can be passed down from one generation to another (it is essentially something that can be inherited, and is treated as property, at least in English law).



Only the eldest son is allowed to inherit his father's coat of arms. Any subsequent sons may take very similar coats of arms, but must place special signifiers (referred to as cadency) on the shield's design to differentiate them. The first son also uses a cadency until his father dies and the coat of arms passes on to him. There is supposed to be a specific symbol associated with each particular son, in order (the first has a three-pointed strip called a label at the top, the second has a crescent, the third a five-pointed star referred to as a mullet, and so on), however, historically, these were frequently ignored. It's also worth noting that, historically speaking, the only way for a woman to inherit a coat of arms is if she is her father's only offspring, in which case the coat of arms is passed on through her. Certain countries did not follow this tradition, and Canada even has a specified list of cadences for daughters, separate from the cadences for sons.

Marshalling

Marshalling is a method by which two or more coats of arms can be combined into a single one. This generally occurs when a person inherits more than one coat of arms, or to represent a separate claim to a piece of land or an office. There are a few different styles of marshalling. Commonly, the field of the shield is divided into either two or four parts, with one coat of arms placed in each part. In the case of shields divided into four parts, any extra parts simply repeat previous ones. In a less-used type of marshalling, called dimidation, each of the two coats of arms is divided in half, with the left half of one coat of arms being placed on the left half of the new shield, and the right half of the other placed on the right half of the new shield.

The other main method of marshalling is called inescutcheon, which basically consists of putting a small version of one coat of arms in front of a large version of the other. There are two basic times when this is used. The first, used in England, is called an "escutcheon of pretense," and is used in the arms of married couples when the wife is also a heraldic heiress (having inherited her father's coat of arms because she had no brothers). The wife's coat of arms is place in front of the husband's, and any heirs from that union would inherit both coats of arms, but would marshall them using one of the other methods, listed above. The other time that inescutcheon marshalling has historically been used is in conjunction with other styles of marshalling, to show the territories ruled by the bearer. In this case (seen more commonly in continental Europe), the bearer's personal coat of arms is on the smaller shield, while the larger shield behind it shows the coat of arms of his territories (often marshalled, showing more than one territory's coat of arms).

Emblazoning and Recording Coats of Arms

"Emblazoning" a coat of arms refers to the process of recording it in the traditional method. They are generally recorded in plain text with each element described in a very particular order, using all the precise terminology. If pictures were included, each tincture had a specific method of shading to indicate it in a black and white picture (vertical lines for red, horizontal for blue, checkered for black, dots for gold, etc.). Not much care is typically given to the exact placement of charges or the exact way in which they are designed, historically speaking. Records of the blazons of various coats of arms are generally kept by heraldic authorities, who oversee the granting of coats of arms, and ensure that no one uses another person's coat of arms illegally, or registers a coat of arms with embellishments that are beyond their rank (for example, in England, special dispensation is required to have supporters on one's coat of arms, and in most countries with established heraldic traditions it would be improper for a knight or baron to use a helm or crown reserved for higher nobility, etc.). These officials are generally appointed by and answer to the royalty of the land, and traditionally the crown has the ultimate authority in all matters relating to coats of arms.

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Shield Yourself!

Shields are an invaluable tool for fantasy warriors. Not only are they good for deflecting incoming blows, they also double as handy weapons in a pinch, and, if decked out in your personal heraldry, can serve as a sort of badge and nameplate all rolled up into one. The *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* does little to differentiate shields from armor, however, with the few shield-only magic abilities mostly being those that are related to shield bashing. This book provides over 50 new magic shield (and, in some cases, armor) special abilities that capture the flavor and identity of shields. The abilities range from some that cost less than a +1 enhancement bonus to six +5-equivalent abilities, with an even distribution in between, ensuring something for everyone.

Absorb spells cast upon you and use them to enhance your AC with the arcane consumption special ability, or turn your shield into a true engine of bashing destruction with *battering*, which not only makes it deal damage as though it were two sizes larger, but also improves your ability to wield your shield and another weapon at the same time. If you prefer to use your shield to attack from a range, the *hateful blast* ability allows it to gain charges as you take damage, and then unleash a mighty discharge of hateful, damaging energy on your command, or you could simply watch as the dragon from your *dragon emblem* shield comes to life and devours your foes for you.

The book also contains several mundane enhancements for shields, allowing characters of even 1st or 2nd level to be able to purchase customized, enhanced shields. Finally, there are 10 new specific shields, each of which has a rich history and physical description, making them evocative as soon as they're dropped in your game, and each of which also contains a special ability unique to them, such as the *discus of destruction*, which, when thrown, ricochets from one target to another, for a devastating mass attack, or the *shield of the undying warrior*, whose wielder can never be slain as long as he holds it.

All this and much more awaits you in this latest installment of the critically acclaimed *Ebon Vault* series. Don't wait. Shield yourself today.

