

The Genius Guide to: 110 Spell Variants



PATHFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

Although a vast number of spells are available in the game's core rulebooks, many GMs and players have an insatiable desire for more options. In many cases it's not necessary to create new spell options from scratch, since a few minor changes to an existing spell can create something with a very different feel or impact on game play. These spell variants are based on the idea that you can make a lot of different effects with fairly minor changes to how a spell works, or by combining effects of multiple spells, or by mixing a spell and magic item or even a class ability (preferably from a class not used in the campaign).

Some spell variants are common and fairly obvious, such as having an *iceball* spell that is a *fireball* that deals cold damage. The following list of one-hundred-and-eleven spells variants are slightly more complex and are designed to show how you can create new spells without too much work. One important tip is that when you base a new spell on an old one many details — such as its school, components, duration, and often even interaction with other spells — is already determined. Similarly, you can often create spells that have entirely new themes just by changing casting time and legal targets. This last trick is often a great way to make spells appropriate for new classes.

For example it's fairly obvious a druid class shouldn't have the *haste* spell on its spell list, but a new spell called *pack tactics* that acts like *haste* but can be cast only on creatures of the animal type is perfect for druids. And even better, you already know it's about a 3rd-level spell, since it doesn't do anything the wizard *haste* spell doesn't.

Because the following are all variants of existing spells, we present only a minimal sketch of each spell. Any information not presented or mentioned is the same as the base spell the variant is built off. These spell descriptions are so short, it seems silly to list

each one multiple times if it happens to appear on more than one class spell list. As a result, each spell variant lists what class and level it is designed for after its name. In cases where the spell appears at different levels for different classes, it is listed with the level of the first class to gain it. Other information such as School, [Descriptor], Casting Time, Components, Range, Area, Targets, Duration, Saving Throw, and Spell Resistance are only given if they differ from the base spell.

THE VARIANT SPELLS

0-LEVEL SPELLS

DANCING SHADOWS

(Cleric 0, Sorcerer/Wizard 0)

As *dancing lights*, but it creates 1 to 4 motes of darkness, each reducing light by 1 step.

DETECT ALCHEMY

(Alchemist 1, Sorcerer/Wizard 0)

As *detect poison*, but it detects objects created through alchemy and alchemical reagents rather than magic.

TIE/UNFASTEN

(Sorcerer/Wizard 0)

As *open/close*, but it affects rope, string, lacing, straps, and similar objects that hold knots.

1ST-LEVEL SPELLS

AIL

(Antipaladin 1)

As *magic weapon*, but the weapon gains ability to inflict *flare* (as the spell) on targets that are hit, rather than gain an enhancement bonus.

CAUSTIC CLOUD [ACID]

(Sorcerer/Wizard 1)

As *sound burst* but it deals 1d6 acid, +1 per 2 levels, and targets save or are blinded for 1 round.

DEADEYE

(Cleric/Oracle 2, Ranger 1)

As *bomber's eye* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but it applies to ranged weapons that are not thrown.

DETECT ENEMY

(Ranger 1)

As *detect undead*, but it detects creatures against which you have a favored enemy bonus.

ELEMENTAL BEAST

(Druid 2, Ranger 1)

Target: animal or magic beast touched

As *elemental touch* (*Advanced Player's Guide*).

FLUSTER

(Bard 1)

Target: 1 living creature

As *hold person*, but the target is staggered rather than paralyzed.

FORCE JAWS

(Summoner 1)

As *spiritual weapon*, but "weapons" is the same as the main attack of the summoner's eidolon, and *force jaws* can attack only targets adjacent to the eidolon.

GUARDIAN I

(Druid 1)

As *mount*, but the caster summons a CR 1 animal (same as the spell's level). The same rules can be used to create *guardian II-guardian IX* (summoning CR 2 through CR 9 animals).

MAGIC MACE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 1)

Range: touch

Target: creature touched

As *magic missile*, but it deals d8s rather than d4s.

PROTECTION FROM MONSTERS

(Bard 1, Druid 2)

As *protection from evil*, but it works against creatures of one type (selected as casting) rather than evil.

REJUVENATE FAMILIAR

(Sorcerer/Wizard 1, Witch 1)

As *rejuvenate eidolon* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), except it applies to the caster's familiar.

REPAIR LIGHT DAMAGE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 1)

As *cure light wounds*, but it repairs objects and constructs that aren't destroyed rather than healing living creatures. The same rules can be used to create higher-level *repair* spells, based on higher-level *cure* spells.

SCREECH [SONIC]

(Bard 1)

As *acid splash* but it deals 1d4 sonic damage, and you can expend 1 round of bardic performance per 2 levels to deal +1d4 damage.

SCOURGE

(Cleric 1)

As *burning hands* but it deals untyped holy damage, and it affects creatures of opposing alignment only.

SUMMON MINION I

(Wizard 1)

As *summon monster I*, but it summons NPCs from the *Advanced Gamemastery Guide* that have a CR at least 1 lower than creatures *monster summoning I* would produce. The same rules can be used to create *summon minion II–IX*, based on *summon monster I–IX*.

TORCHBEARER

(Sorcerer/Wizard 1)

Duration: 10 minutes/level

Target: Creature touched

Saving Throw: Reflex negates

As *dancing lights*.

WEIGHTY SINS

(Paladin 1)

As *lead blades* or *gravity bow* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but the extra damage applies only against evil targets.

WOODCRAFT

(Druid 1, Ranger 1)

As *crafter's fortune* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but the bonus is to the next Knowledge (nature) or Survival check.

2ND-LEVEL SPELLS

ADAPTIVE ADMIX

(Alchemist 2)

Range: personal

Target: you

As *resist energy*, but the resistance gained applies to the first of the following damage types you are affected by each round: acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic.

ANT'S STRENGTH

Duration: 1 hour/level

(Druid 2, Sorcerer/Wizard 2)

As *bull's strength*, but it grants a +6 bonus to Strength for all purposes *except* the target's attack and damage bonuses.

APOCALYPSE

(Oracle [not Cleric] 2)

As *hideous laughter*, but the target screams denials as dread fates in its future are revealed.

ARGENT BLADE

(Paladin 2)

As *align weapon*, but the weapon is considered silver instead of an alignment.

BAILIFF

(Inquisitor 2)

As *blur*, but it grants full concealment and only does so against targets who confessed to a crime within the past day.

BALEFUL SHIELD

(Sorcerer/Wizard 2)

Range: touch

Target: creature touched

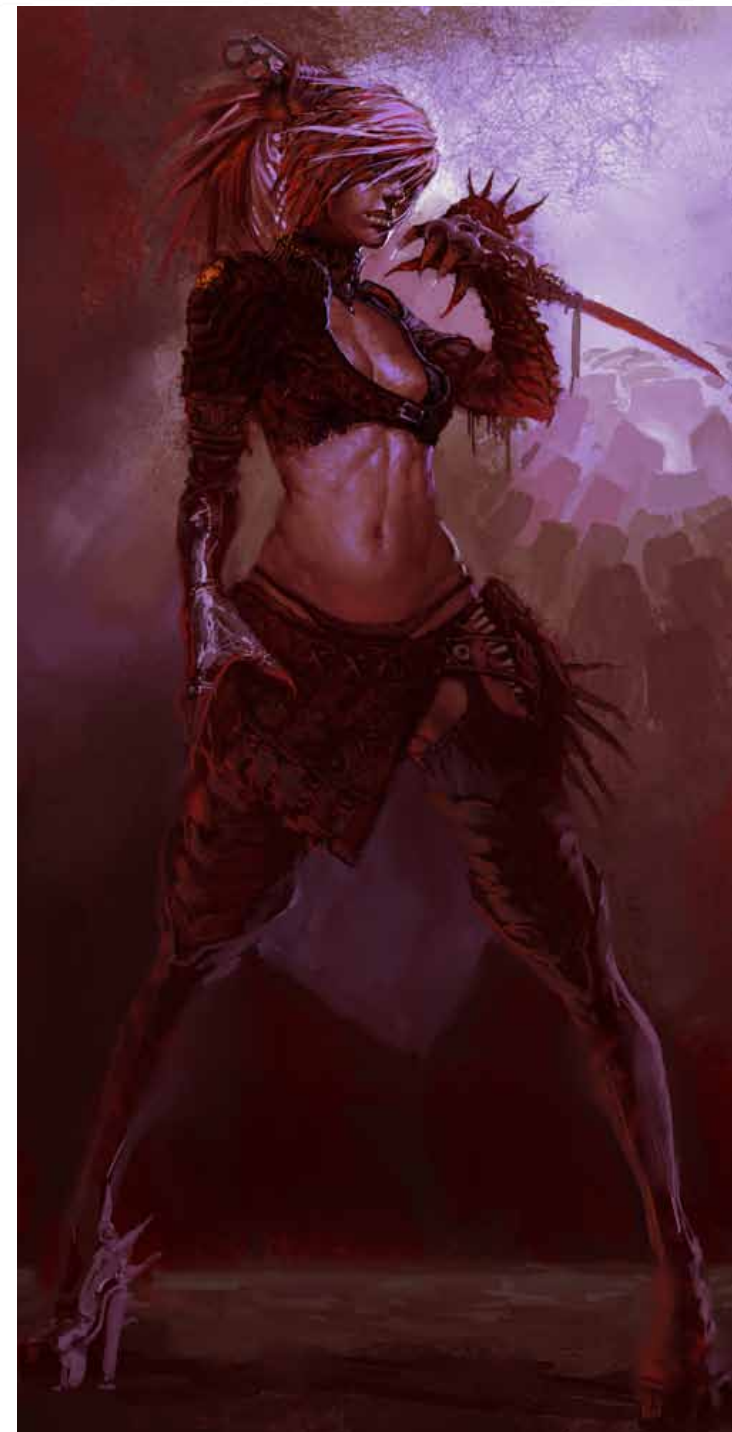
Spell Resistance: yes

As *shield*, but AC applies only against efforts by allies to heal or aid the target.

DETECT CURSE

(Cleric/Oracle 2, Inquisitor 3, Paladin 3)

As *detect magic*, but it detects cursed items and creatures rather than magic.



INEFFABLE ENIGMA [LANGUAGE-DEPENDENT]

(Oracle [not Cleric] 2)

Duration: concentration

You reveal to the target horrific secrets mortals were not meant to know. As *lesser confusion*.

MUD PIT

(Druid 2, Sorcerer/Wizard 3)

Duration: 10 minutes/level

As the “overgrowth” option of *plant growth* but no plants are needed and spells that enhance or modify earth/stone/rock are enhanced rather than spells that enhance plants.

PACK LEADER

(Druid 2)

Target: animal touched

As *heroism*.

PERSECUTION

(Inquisitor 2)

As *versatile weapon* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but it applies to all your attacks and you must expend a daily use of your judgment ability to cast it.

PROPHECY

(Oracle [not Cleric] 2)

Casting Time: 1 hour

Range: same plane

Duration: 1 day/level

You foresee good fortune for one creature. As *bless*.

REMOVE CHARM

(Bard 2, Inquisitor 2)

As *remove fear*, but works against all mind-affecting effects.

TOTEM I

(Sorcerer/Wizard 2, Witch 2)

School: transmutation (polymorph)

Range: touch

Target: your familiar

Duration: 10 minutes/level (D)

You turn your familiar into a creature from the *summon monster I* chart. The same rules can be used to create *totem II*-*totem IIX* (turning your familiar into creatures from the charts from *summon monster II*-*summon monster IIX*).

TOUCH OF FRAILTY

(Sorcerer/Wizard 2)

As *touch of idiocy* but it reduces Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution rather than Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. It might make feats useless if their prerequisites are no longer met.

VANGUARD

(Paladin 2)

Duration: 1 round/level

Targets: All adjacent good creatures.

As *rally point* (*Advanced Player's Guide*).

VILE MARK

(Antipaladin 2)

As *scorching ray* but you only ever receive 1 bolt and the target is affected as by a *brand* spell (*Advanced Player's Guide*).

WAR STAFF

(Sorcerer/Wizard 2)

Target: Staff in your hands

As *magic weapon* but your staff makes 1 attack/round as a free action, using your caster level as the attack bonus. This ability cannot be used when the staff is in anyone else's possession.

3RD-LEVEL SPELLS

ANIMATE CONSTRUCT

(Cleric 3)

School: transmutation

As *animate dead*, except it creates animated objects of the same CR as the undead you could create with *animate dead*.

ARCANE BOW

(Sorcerer/Wizard 3)

As *gravity bow* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but the effect is to gain the arcane archer's imbue arrow power.

BACKHAND

(Antipaladin 3)

Casting Time: 1 swift action

As *inflict light wounds*, but a target that fails its Fortitude saving throw is also knocked prone.

BEAST SENSE

(Druid 3)

As *share senses* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but it grants you the senses of any creature you can wild shape into rather than the normal benefit.

CHOIR

(Bard 3)

As the ‘*summon 1d3 monsters*’ option of *summon monster II*, and creatures summoned can maintain a bardic performance you begin.

DIVINE GRANT

(Cleric 3)

As *divine favor*, but the bonus applies to caster level checks and concentration checks rather than the normal benefit.

EXIGENT SHIELD

(Cleric 3, Witch 3)

Range: Long (400 ft. +40 ft./level)

As *shield other* but works only on damage that would kill or knock unconscious a target.

FEY HOLT

(Druid 3)

Target: One tree with branches

As *rope trick*, but cast in the branches of a tree rather than at end of a rope.

FUMES

(Druid 3, Sorcerer/Wizard 3)

School: Conjuration [fire]

As *obscuring mist*, but creatures take 2d6 fire damage each turn they are in area.

GLIDE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 3)

As *spider climb*, but you don't need any free limbs to move, and you ignore difficult terrain rather than climb up walls.

MUTE

(Bard 3, Sorcerer/Wizard 4, Witch 3)

Target: 1 creature

Effect: Silence the sounds of target creature.

As *silence*.

POSSE

(Inquisitor 3)

As *haste*, except targets gain use of one judgment you are currently using rather than *haste's* normal benefits.

RECONJURE

(Summoner 3)

Target: Your eidolon or a creature you have summoned

As *jester's jaunt* (*Advanced Player's Guide*).

REVITALIZE

(Cleric 3)

Duration: 10 minutes/level

As *greater restoration*, but it also fixes staggered, and its effects last only for the spell's duration.

SECRET POCKETS

(Sorcerer/Wizard 3)

Target: one bag, pouch, pocket, or similar container

As *greater magic weapon*, but it turns containers into *bags of holding* (the type equals 1 every 4 caster levels) rather than the normal benefit.

SPEAK WITH VERMIN

(Bard 5/Druid 4/Witch 3)

As *speak with plants*, but it works on vermin rather than plants.

TRUE ASPECT

(Cleric 3, Sorcerer/Wizard 3)

As *true form* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but it applies to illusions concealing appearance, including invisibility, rather than the normal benefit.

4TH-LEVEL SPELLS

ALLFEAST

(Ranger 4)

As *allfood* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but is tasty and also provides the bonuses (though not curative) of *heroes' feast*.

ARCANE FORGE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 4)

As *greater magic weapon*, but you can forgo some of the enhancement bonus granted for special weapon abilities for which you meet the prerequisites to craft.



ASPECT OF THE DRAGON

(Sorcerer/Wizard 4)

As *aspect of the wolf* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but you take on a draconic appearance and the bonuses granted are +4 to Constitution and Charisma, and +2 to caster level checks.

BANISH WARD

(Inquisitor 4, Witch 4)

As *banish seeming* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but it works against abjuration spells rather than the normal effect.

BARRAGE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 4)

As *true strike*, but the effect is the arcane archer's 'hail of arrows' power rather than the normal benefit.

CAVALRY

(Sorcerer/Wizard 4)

As *mount*, but you summon 1 mount/level, and summoned mounts serve anyone you designate.

COMET SWARM

(Sorcerer/Wizard 4)

As *scorching ray*, but bolts deal 4d4 damage, and you get 1 bolt per 3 caster levels. As a swift action in the next round, when you cast the spell and miss, you can redirect the bolt at a new target within range.

CRUSADER'S BLESSING

(Cleric 4, Paladin 4)

As *blessing of courage and life* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but it grants a +2 morale bonus to AC and attack rolls and the burst of healing energy heals 3d8 + caster level.

ELEMENTAL COMPANION I

(Druid 4)

Range: touch

Target: 1 creature of animal type

As *elemental body I*. It is possible to use the same variant to create *elemental companion II*, *III* and *IV* from *elemental body II*, *III* and *IV*.

EXTRACTION

(Sorcerer/Wizard 4)

As *king's castle* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), except you don't move, and the target arrives in a space adjacent to you.

IMBUE WITH SKILL

(Bard 4, Witch 4)

Duration: 8 hours

As *imbue with spell ability*, but you grant the target skill ranks in one skill up to the target's HD. You lose the same number of ranks in the same skill for the spell's duration. You cannot grant more ranks in a skill than you possess.

POLYMORPH WEAPON

(Sorcerer/Wizard 4)

Target: 1 weapon

As *polymorph any object*, but you can polymorph weapons into other weapons with the same magic abilities only.

REDUCE MONSTER

(Sorcerer/Wizard 4)

Target: 1 living creature

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates; **Spell**

Resistance: yes

As *reduce animal*.

REJUVENATE FAMILIAR

(Sorcerer/Wizard 4, Witch 4)

Target: your familiar

As *rejuvenate eidolon* (*Advanced Player's Guide*).

SCOUT

(Ranger 4)

Target: 1 animal of magical beast friendly to you

As *share senses* (*Advanced Player's Guide*).

SWAP

(Summoner 4)

Target: Your eidolon or a creature you have summoned.

As *king's castle* (*Advanced Player's Guide*).

TYPHOID TONIC

(Alchemist 4)

Range: personal

Target: you

Duration: 1 hour/level

As *contagion*, except for the spell's duration you can infect targets (as *contagion*) with a touch attack. You can affect a maximum of 1 target per 2 levels.

WHITEOUT

(Druid 4)

School: conjuration [cold]

You summon a flurry of snow. As *darkness*, but it drops light levels two steps in the area, and it doesn't counter or get countered by light spells.

5TH-LEVEL SPELLS

AEGIS

(Sorcerer/Wizard 5)

Effect: Magic sigil on one shield touched.

As *sepia snake sigil*, except it is cast on a shield and targets a creature that knocks-out or kills the shield-bearer with a *sepia snake sigil*.

ARCANE NOVA

(Sorcerer/Wizard 5)

As *summon monster I* but it summons a lantern archon with 10 hp/caster level. The archon casts spells as a sorcerer with an effective level of 1 per 3 caster levels.

CONTROL VERMIN

(Druid 5)

As *control plants*, but it affects vermin rather than plants.

FAUX FIND

(Cleric 5, Sorcerer/Wizard 5)

As *nondetection*, but failed divinations also create random false detection of target elsewhere within the divination spell's range.

GIANT STRIKE

(Cleric 5)

As *strong jaw* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but it affects unarmed and weapon attacks.

GRAVE INFLUENCE

(Cleric 5, Sorcerer/Wizard 6)

School: necromancy [language-dependent]

Targets: one undead/2 levels, no two of which can be more than 30 feet apart

As *mass suggestion*.

MAGE FIRE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 5)

As *flameblade*, but it deals 1d4 damage per 3 levels, and as a standard action you can cast a touch spell and deliver it with an attack by the *mage fire* (dealing fire damage normally). If you miss this attack, the touch spell is lost.

MASS BREAK

(Sorcerer/Wizard 5)

Targets: All objects of one kind (in other words, "short swords"), no two of which can be more than 30 feet apart.

As *break* (*Advanced Player's Guide*).

SCRY TRAP

(Bard 5, Sorcerer/Wizard 6)

Range: unlimited

Duration: 1 day/level or until discharged (D)

As *alarm*, but when the alarm goes off it automatically shows you a vision of the area alarmed, as the *scry* spell.

SEA LORD

(Sorcerer/Wizard 5)

As *freedom of movement*, except it does *not* grant the benefits of that spell's first paragraph, and it does grant the power to breath underwater for the spell's duration.

SPIRITUAL WARRIOR

(Cleric 5)

As *spiritual weapon*, except damage is 2d6 +1/level, and the weapon threatens adjacent spaces (though it can't actually make attacks of opportunity).



6TH-LEVEL SPELLS

BLACK BLOOD

(Alchemist 6)

Range: personal

Target: you

Duration: 10 minutes/level

As *poison*, except that creatures that hit you with natural or unarmed attacks are affected as by the *poison* spell.

DRAGONBANE

(Druid 6, Inquisitor 6)

School: abjuration

As *unholy aura*, but the bonuses and effects apply only against targets of dragon type.

FLOATING SPHERE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 6)

As *telekinetic sphere*, but the sphere is only as tough as a *wall of stone*, and it takes a move action to direct it to fly.

FORM OF MADNESS

(Sorcerer/Wizard 6)

As *beast shape IV*, except it allows you to become a Small, Medium, or Large aberration rather than assume any of the normal forms.

HIBERNATE

(Druid 6)

Range: personal

Target: you

As *temporal stasis*, but it ends when a condition (for example: "when this torch is lit," "when winter ends) defined by you (at casting) is met.

MAUL OF ANARCHY

(Cleric 6)

School: evocation [chaotic]

As *spiritual hammer*, except targets hit are affected as by the *chaos hammer* spell rather than the normal damage.

MASS MODIFY MEMORY

(Bard 6)

Targets: 1 creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 feet apart

As *modify memory*. All targets get same memory.

MOLTEN GLASS BOLT

(Sorcerer/Wizard 6)

As *acid arrow* but it deals 5d6 fire/round and target is slowed.

PRIMAL FORM I

(Druid 6)

As *form of the dragon I*, but it allows you to become a primal dragon from *Bestiary II*. *Primal form II* and *III* can be created by applying the same changes to *form of the dragon II* and *III*.

RING OF FIRE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 6)

Range: personal

Target: you

Effect: A ring of fire that moves with you

As the circle option of *wall of fire*.

TIDAL WAVE

(Druid 6, Sorcerer/Wizard 6)

As *aqueous orb* (*Advanced Player's Guide*), but Colossal, deals 6d6, passes 30-foot walls, and affects Gargantuan targets.

7TH-LEVEL SPELLS

EMBODY

(Sorcerer/Wizard 7)

Components: V, S, M (1,000 gp diamond dust), F (one corpse)

As *reincarnate*, except dead creature is brought back in a specific dead body you have, which acts as the focus.

OOZE FORM

(Sorcerer/Wizard 7)

As *gaseous form* without the effects outlined in the first 5 sentences, and no fly speed. Gain 30 feet swim and climb rates, plus succeed at all Climb and Swim checks.

PESTILENCE

(Cleric 8, Druid 7, Sorcerer/Wizard 8, Witch 7)

Duration: 1 hour/level

As *summon swarm* but any creature damaged by the swarm is targeted by a *contagion* spell cast at your caster level.

PORTAL

(Cleric 7, Sorcerer/Wizard 7)

As *transport via plants*, except travel is from doorway to doorway rather than plant to plant.

SYMBOL OF LUST

(Cleric 9, Witch 7)

As *symbol of death*, but targets act as if under an *elixir of love* for 10 minutes/level.

SUMMON SIREN

(Druid 7, Sorcerer/Wizard 7)

As *summon monster VI*, except you summon one succubus who has *piet piper* (*Advanced Player's Guide*) as if you cast it.

8TH-LEVEL SPELLS

ALTER REALITY

(Cleric 9, Sorcerer/Wizard 8)

School: Illusion (shadow)

Components: V, S

As *limited wish*, but it creates effects that could exist without magic only, and if you duplicate the effects of a spell with a material component that cost 1gp or more, you must provide powdered onyx worth the same value.

DENY

(Cleric 8)

Casting Time: immediate action

As *greater dispel magic*, but it can be used to counterspell instantaneous spells in addition to normal options.

EDICT

(Cleric 8)

As *dictum*, but the effects are different, as follows: deaf equals *command* (as the spell), staggered equals *geas* (as the spell), paralyze equals *charm monster* (as the spell), dead equals target's alignment permanently becomes lawful.

PRISMATIC SHIELD

(Sorcerer/Wizard 8)

As *shield*, but foes striking you with a melee attack are hit by one ray from the *prismatic ray* table.

9TH-LEVEL SPELLS

ANALOGUE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 9)

As *clone*, but you can create a duplicate of yourself only and the clone acts as a *simulacrum* (as the spell) until used to resurrect you.

FLYING CASTLE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 9)

As *secure shelter*, except the area is 100-square-feet/level, and the structure has a 60-foot fly speed and moves as you direct.

INFILTRATOR

(Sorcerer/Wizard 9)

Range: unlimited

As *charm monster*, but the target is also affected by *share senses* (*Advanced Player's Guide*) and *telepathic bond*, giving you the ability to control it easily at vast range.

PRISMATIC BLADE

(Sorcerer/Wizard 9)

As *flame blade*, except each successful attack produces one effect from the *prismatic ray* table instead of the normal damage.

POST SCRIPT

Most of these spell variants began life as twitter entries on author Owen K.C. Stephens Twitter account (@Owen_Stephens). New variant spells are regularly featured in the author's posts, and marked with the hashtag #Spelltweet. Also, some compiled spelltweets can be found at www.d20pfsrd.com/extras/3pp-previews/-spelltweets.



WE ERR ON THE SIDE OF AWESOME!

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