

THE HIGH COURT

SIGNET RING DESIGNS

Signet rings are used to mark official documents and seal letters. The following designs don't represent any specific royal house or powerful organization on Golarion. You can select a seal for your noble character, using your own interpretation or one listed beltow.



ANCIENT FAMILY

This design could be associated with a noble house that has ties to monsters or one with a long history.

Interpretations: The tower could represent the ownership of great stretches of land or vigilance in the face of a constant threat. The sun could represent the blessing of Sarenrae, the light of justice, or obvious virtue. The dragon could represent bravery, the guardian of an important treasure, or simply a monstrous threat.



GOTHIC CHURCH

This design could be associated with a powerful worshiper in the church of Pharasma.

Interpretations: The cathedral could represent an actual church or the comfort offered by faith. The avian shapes could represent souls passing into the afterlife or the psychopomps that protect those souls. The border of hourglasses and skulls could represent the inexorable march of time or the judgment of the undead.

COASTAL POWER

This design could be associated with a family of seafaring raiders or a trade consortium.

Interpretations: The ship could represent power gained through conquest or wealth gained through trade. The shieldlike moon could represent the protection given by the dark of night or the wisdom of a good defense. The laurel leaves could represent the presence of the natural world or victory after a long struggle.



HOLY LIGHT

This design could be associated with a powerful worshiper in the church of Sarenrae.

Interpretations: The two rearing horses could represent strength of faith or the struggle between vice and virtue. The gemstone could represent a great deal of wealth or the perfection of the soul. The border of windswept clouds could represent the heavens or the obscuring clouds of heresy that the Dawnflower's light must break through.



DESERT SANDS

This design could be associated with a noble house of a desert city or a large tribe of desert nomads.

Interpretations: The jackal skull could represent the ever-present threat of death or a victory over a group of gnolls. The various symbols to the left of the skull could represent a family history or spheres of influence. The khopesh and bowl could represent collecting sacrifices for a deity or the importance of safety and nourishment.



WISDOM AND PEACE

This design could be associated with a noble family that has ties to Tian Xia or a monastery with influence over the secular world.

Interpretations: The large, stout tree with broad branches could represent a geographical location, a place where people can gather, or an overarching philosophy that accepts all. The well could represent a source of life-giving water or a repository of knowledge that anyone might draw from.



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ON THE COVER



Jirelle duels a drow who has rudely interrupted a sumptuous dinner party in this dashing illustration by Alberto



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REFERENCE

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at paizo.com/prd.

Advanced Player's Guide	APG	Ultimate Intrigue	UI
The Inner Sea World Guide	ISWG	Ultimate Magic	UM
Ultimate Combat	UC		

This product is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game or the 3.5 edition of the world's oldest fantasy roleplaying game



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INTRODUCTION



Although they are diverse in appearance and customs, from the Chelish-inspired nobility of Korvosa to the White Witches of Irrisen, nobles are a mainstay in many of the nations of Golarion. They often make up or greatly influence the ruling body of a country, and as such, they can be found plotting among and against one another.

This book presents rules for characters who are members of the nobility or wish to seek out the favor of such individuals. Though many nobles might look down on the day-to-day duties of a typical adventurer, they do lead interesting, challenging, and even dangerous lives.

COURTLY LIFE

While courtly life varies throughout Golarion, there are a few staples that most noble courts share. They are generally established as a means of rulership within a region, rising from existing families or individuals with impressive sway.

The power of a noble court usually extends to administration and diplomacy. They control the region by establishing laws that tend to be funded by tax collection, and they forge relationships—some cordial, some more aggressive—with neighboring countries. A regular citizen might never meet a noble face to face, but she feels the influence of the local noble court in every aspect of her life.

COURTS OF GOLARION

Presented here is a brief listing of some of the major noble courts throughout the Inner Sea region. Each is accompanied by a trait suitable for a member of that court or someone strongly associated with said nobility.

BLACK DOME

Beneath this imposing beetle shell in the center of Sothis live the city's elite and their representatives, including Pharaoh Khemet III, the Ruby Prince. Access to the Black Dome is so exclusive that it is limited to only 100 members of the public per day.

Bureaucrat's Favored (Social): You have gained favor with the government of Sothis. Once per week, you can attempt a DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidate check to gain access to an exclusive site or event, such as a government building or an aristocrat's ball.

CASTLE OVERWATCH

The watcher-lord of Lastwall meets here with the nation's command councils to ensure the ideals of Lastwall are upheld. Castle Overwatch is also home to the Crusader War College, the training place for one of the greatest cavalries in the Inner Sea.

Rider's Bond (Combat): Your mount keenly understands your commands. If you gain a horse as an animal companion or mount as one of your class abilities, it gains two bonus tricks that don't count against the normal limit of tricks known by the animal.

IMPERIAL PALACE OF EGORIAN

Her Infernal Majestrix Abrogail Thrune II of Cheliax resides in a palace in Egorian riddled with not only nobles and members of House Thrune, but also devils from erinyes to imps. The palace is a place where few dare to tread and fewer dare to cross the monarch.

Infernal Colleague (Social): Your experience working with devils has given you nerves of steel. You gain a +2 trait bonus on Will saves to resist fear effects created by outsiders.

IMPERIAL PALACE OF OPPARA

The palace of Grand Prince Stavian III is situated in central Oppara, where the Grand Prince leads a life of utmost hedonism. Taldor's bureaucracy is left to pick up the slack.

Debauchery Defier (Social): You are particularly adept at resisting addiction. You must fail two saving throws in a row to become addicted to a drug.

PALACE OF FALLEN STARS

Home to the Black Sovereign, Kevoth-Kul, this palace is a center for decadence. The rest of Starfall watches on as the Black Sovereign spends his days consuming strange fluids from the Silver Mount and wallowing in his depravity.

Numerian Fluid Indulger (Social): You have tasted Numerian fluids many times. Once per day after rolling to determine the side effects of consuming a Numerian fluid (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Numeria, Land of Fallen Stars* 28), you can roll on the table again, but you must take the second result.

QUEEN EDASSERIL'S COURT

Queen Telandia Edasseril is the current elven ruler of Kyonin. Nestled deep in the capital of Iadara, the queen's palace is surrounded by structures veiled in constantly shifting illusions.

Inhabitant of Illusion (Magic): Your experience with illusions allows you to discern them easily. When you first encounter an illusion, you can attempt a Will saving throw with a –2 penalty to disbelieve it, even if you don't suspect the illusion. The GM rolls this saving throw in secret.

Umbral Court

The ruling aristocracy of Nidal, the Umbral Court, is composed of Zon-Kuthon worshipers and meets three times a year in the capital of Pangolais. The court works against Desnan devotees and others who wish to pull Nidal from the tyranny of shadow.

Shadow Trained (Combat): You have experience fighting in darkness. Your miss chance while fighting in areas of dim light is only 10%.

Rules Index

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PLAYING A NOBLE

Nobility brings with it a number of advantages and disadvantages. Most nobles hold positions of great power within their respective regions. This gives them great authority over important decisions and daily duties. However, a noble's life can be full of intrigue, and some nobles are threatened by would-be assassins and usurpers. Members of the nobility find their lives to be a constant give-and-take between challenging obstacles and rewarding influence.

FEATS

The feats presented here are well suited for noble characters. The full rules for story feats can be found on page 66 of *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Campaign*.

ASPIRING NOBLE (STORY)

You strive to be seen as a legitimate noble.

Prerequisite: Must be a member of an established family that is yet unrecognized as nobility.



Benefit: You have learned to further your name among the people. Choose a settlement and either Diplomacy or Intimidate. While in your chosen settlement, you gain a +2 bonus on checks with the chosen skill when dealing with the commoners of that settlement. If you have 10 or more ranks in the chosen skill, the bonus increases to +4.

Goal: Have your family recognized as nobility by either three established noble families or a ruling monarch.

Completion Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on checks with your chosen skill when dealing with the rest of the citizens of your chosen settlement. Your bonus to interact with commoners increases to +4, or it increases to +6 if you have 10 or more ranks in your chosen skill.

ENLIGHTENED NOBLE

You to excel in a particular area thanks to your noble family's field of expertise.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, Noble Scion^{ISWG}, Knowledge (nobility) 1 rank.

Benefit: You gain an additional benefit based on the flavor of your noble family chosen with the Noble Scion feat.

Scion of the Arts: A number of times per day equal to your Charisma modifier, you can roll 2d20 for a Perform check and take the better result.

Scion of Lore: You can attempt Knowledge skill checks untrained. If you have 10 or more ranks in a Knowledge skill, the bonus from Scion of Lore increases to +2 for that skill.

Scion of Magic: Once per day, you can gain a +2 bonus to caster level on a concentration check, a Use Magic Device check, or a check to overcome spell resistance.

Scion of Peace: Choose one Wisdom-based skill. Once per day when you take 10 on this skill, you treat the result as if you had rolled an 18 instead of a 10.

Scion of War: After rolling initiative, you can attempt a Bluff check as an immediate action to feint against a creature or an Intimidate check to demoralize a creature. This can only affect creatures that act after you in the initiative count.

NOBLE IMPOSTOR (STORY)

You put on airs and others believe your tales.

Prerequisite: Must not be a member of an established family or a member of nobility.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Bluff and Knowledge (nobility) checks and these skills are class skills for you.

Goal: Convince at least three noble families, a ruling monarch, or a settlement of at least small city size that you are a member of an existing or a previously unknown noble family.

Completion Benefit: You gain followers as if you had the Leadership feat. If you also have the Leadership feat, increase your Leadership score by 3 for the purpose of determining how many followers you have.

NOBLE STIPEND

You receive a small allowance from your noble family or inheritance.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, Noble Scion^{ISWG}.

Benefit: You receive 100 gp at the beginning of every week that you can spend only on services and nonmaterial goods. Services and nonmaterial goods include the following.

- Hiring entertainers, messengers, mounts, servants, transport, workers, and so on.
- Improving your lifestyle quality (see Cost of Living on page 405 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*).
- Obtaining invitations to exclusive events or entry into privileged locations.
- · Paying for lodgings, stabling, taxes, and tolls.

SELF-EXILED NOBLE (STORY)

You chose to leave nobility behind.

Prerequisite: You must have intentionally left your noble family and changed your name or appearance afterward.

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus on Disguise checks, and Disguise is a class skill for you. You gain a +1 bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls against members of your former family.

Goal: Escape your former name by establishing your own noble legacy. In addition, you must decisively defeat a challenging foe from your former family who may wish to return you to your old home.

Completion Benefit: Your bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls from this feat increases to +2 and applies to anyone who threatens your allies or your new noble legacy.

NOBLE SCIONS

Noble houses throughout Golarion train their courts to focus on the ideals and skills most appropriate for their given region. The Noble Scion feat (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 288) provides benefits to noble characters. Presented below are a number of benefits that can be taken in place of the standard selection of benefits provided by the feat.

Scion of Absalom: You gain one of the following languages as a bonus language: Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Halfling, or Orc. You gain a +1 bonus on Diplomacy checks when interacting with a creature that shares this bonus language.

Scion of Brevoy: You gain a +2 bonus on Bluff checks against other nobles or members of a noble court.

Scion of Cheliax: You gain a +1 bonus on Knowledge (planes) checks and treat your caster level as 1 higher when attempting to bind or call a devil.

Scion of Goka: Choose either Sleight of Hand or Stealth. While you are in a small city or larger settlement, you can take 10 with the chosen skill, even while rushed or threatened.

Scion of Highhelm: You use your Constitution modifier instead of your Charisma modifier for the purpose of the Leadership feat.

NOBLES AND POWER

Although nobility brings a great measure of authority, no noble wields this power unchecked. Nobles usually reign beneath some higher power such as a monarch or a city council. These heads of state enact laws and regulations to curb nobles' power, including high tax rates and strict conduct guidelines. Accordingly, a noble cannot expect to freely tap a kingdom's treasury for her own desires, nor does a noble have the final say under the law as to who may live or die. A noble, almost more than any other citizen, is under constant scrutiny. Rulers watch nobles to keep them in line. Other nobles attempt to usurp the power of their peers. Commoners may rebel if treated unfairly. Before creating a character who is a noble or seeks the nobility, work with your GM to ensure that expectations about nobility are well understood.

Scion of Irrisen: You reduce the amount of nonlethal damage you take from exposure to cold by 4 (minimum o).

Scion of Jalmeray: Once per day, you can reroll a save against a psychic spell and gain a +2 bonus on that reroll.

Scion of Katapesh: Once per day, you can attempt a Diplomacy check to reduce the cost of an item by 10% (DC = 15, +1 for every 500 gp of the item's base cost). The item must have a market value of 5,000 gp or less.

Scion of Kyonin: You use your Dexterity modifier instead of your Charisma modifier for the purpose of the Leadership feat.

Scion of Nidal: You gain low-light vision. If you already have low-light vision, you instead gain a +2 bonus on Perception checks in areas of dim light.

Scion of Numeria: You gain a +1 bonus on skill checks when interacting with technology (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Technology Guide* 5) and a +2 bonus on damage rolls against creatures of the robot subtype.

Scion of Osirion: You reduce the amount of nonlethal damage you take from heat exposure by 2 (minimum o). Additionally, you require only a gallon of water per day to avoid dehydration in hot climates.

Scion of Qadira: Once per day, when attempting to negate an attack with Mounted Combat, you can roll twice and take the better result. Ride is a class skill for you.

Scion of the River Kingdoms: Whenever you take 10 on Handle Animal, Knowledge (nature), Perception, Ride, or Survival checks, treat the result as if you had rolled a 13 instead of a 10.

Scion of Taldor: You gain a +2 bonus on Charisma-based checks when interacting with nobles or members of a noble court.

Scion of Ustalav: Once per day as a free action, you can suppress any fear effects affecting you for a number of rounds equal to half your Hit Dice (minimum 1) even if you could not normally take actions due to your fear. Knowledge (religion) is a class skill for you.



COURT ENTERTAINERS

Regal and aristocratic courts are predominantly about administration and the business of rule. Entertainment is important, however, to defuse tensions in the court and to display the court's style and sophistication to all in attendance. Thus, skillful performers are often in high demand. Smaller courts, especially those far removed from a center of power, sometimes depend on traveling acting troupes or itinerant bards for their entertainment needs. But most courts of any true size or substance have resident entertainers.

Court attendees and guests expect some form of nightly entertainment, with performances ranging from soft instrumental music during dinner to dramatic poetry recitations. On important occasions, the most ostentatious courts, such as the Imperial Court in Taldor, present fullblown theatrical performances that include dramatic works, choreographed dancing, and acrobatics. While some courts may have only one or two entertainers, wealthy courts sustain a cadre of performers, each with different specialties. These entertainers usually engage in their own schemes, using their performances to vie for favor and influence.

Court entertainers often operate above the law in terms of decorum. Court fools, for example, typically enjoy heckling leaders and guests with impunity. With their seemingly inconsequential roles and constant presence, court entertainers are in the perfect position to overhear state secrets. Whether they choose to become behind-the-scenes manipulators or to protect their lieges from secret threats, they have a true potential for power.

COURT FOOL (BARD ARCHETYPE)

Arguably the oldest and most widespread role for a court entertainer is that of the court jester or fool. This role arose from the need to offset the intense, even deadly, seriousness of court business. The court fool serves as an outlet for the constant pressure of aristocratic dealings, relieving tensions through humor. The motley clad acrobat is a good example of this style of court fool, using physical comedy to generate belly laughs and raise spirits. In other courts, the court fool might ridicule social conventions with bawdy songs or engage in biting satire, parodying manners or even mocking individuals to spread good cheer. The court fool holds up an unflattering mirror to those in charge or speaks truths, however veiled, that no one else can safely utter.

Buffoonery (Ex): A court fool gains a bonus equal to 1/2 his bard level on Acrobatics, Bluff, Climb, and Disguise checks (minimum +1).

This replaces bardic knowledge.

Bardic Performance: A court fool gains the following types of bardic performance.

Distracting Motley (Su): At 1st level, a court fool can startle his allies back to their senses with erratic capering or by fluttering multicolored clothing. Each round, he attempts an Acrobatics check. Any ally (including the court fool) within 30 feet can use this check in place of her own saving throw against confusion and fascination effects. Those already under a confusion or fascination effect can attempt a new save each round using the court fool's Acrobatics check. A court fool wearing an entertainer's outfit gains a +2 bonus on these Acrobatics checks. Distracting motley doesn't work on effects that don't allow saves. This is a mind-affecting effect that uses visual components.

This performance replaces countersong.

Defuse Tension (Su): At 3rd level, a court fool can use a silly performance to comfort a beleaguered ally. That ally must be within 30 feet and be able to see the court fool. The ally ignores the fatigued and shaken conditions (but not more extreme conditions, such as exhausted or frightened) as long as she continues to see the court fool's performance. This performance affects one additional creature at 7th level and every 4 bard levels thereafter. A court fool can't use defuse tension on himself. Defuse tension relies on visual components.

This performance replaces inspire competence.

Caper and Jeer (Ex): At 5th level, a court fool can take 10 on Acrobatics and Bluff checks, even when in danger or distracted, and can use Bluff to create a diversion to hide (as per the Stealth skill) as a swift action. He can take 20 on an Acrobatics or Bluff check once per day, plus one time per 6 levels beyond 5th, even when in danger or distracted.

This ability replaces lore master.

COURT POET (SKALD ARCHETYPE)

Many courts are places of artistic refinement, attracting those performers who wish to revel in an aristocratic art scene. Such artists may aim to become a darling of the court, focusing on the aesthetic requirements of a particular tradition as well as learning details about that court's history and culture. Court poets elevate the skald's love of history and poetry to an aristocratic ideal, captivating courts with complicated poetic traditions and inspiring others with their craft. Some court poets go on to create their own works, weaving their magic and force of personality into their unique performances.

Raging Song (Su): A court poet gains the following raging songs, allowing her to use oratory, music, and other performances to elevate the aesthetic sensibilities of her allies.

Insightful Contemplation (Su): At 1st level, affected allies gain a +2 morale bonus to Intelligence and Charisma and a +1 morale bonus on Will saving throws, but they also take a -1 penalty to AC. While under the effects of insightful contemplation, allies other than the court poet can't use any Strength-based skills or make any physical effort that requires a Constitution check. At 4th level and every 4 skald levels thereafter, the song's bonus on Will saves increases by 1; the penalty to AC doesn't change. At 8th and 16th levels, the song's bonuses to Intelligence and Charisma increase by 2. (Unlike the barbarian's rage ability, those affected are not fatigued after the song ends.)

This ability replaces inspired rage.

Song of Inspiration (Su): At 6th level, a court poet can use raging song to inspire her allies to greater mental clarity. Once each round while the court poet uses this performance, allies within 60 feet who can hear her can add 1/2 the court poet's skald level to a single Wisdom check or Wisdom-based skill check.

This ability replaces song of strength.

Handling the Crowd (Ex): At 2nd level, a court poet gains a +1 bonus to AC and on Perform checks when adjacent to two or more creatures. In addition, her movement is not impeded by crowds and she gains a bonus equal to 1/2 her skald level on Diplomacy checks to influence crowds.

This ability replaces well-versed.

MASTERPIECES

The following masterpieces (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 21) are particularly appropriate for courtly performers.

Anthem of Pageantry (String, Wind)

This lengthy piece gradually increases in power and gravity, conjuring magnificent furnishings and outfits out of thin air.

Prerequisite: Perform (string instruments) or Perform (wind instruments) 7 ranks.

Cost: Feat or 3rd-level bard spell known.

Effect: This piece, developed from ancient Azlanti musical records about the just rewards of honest striving, consists of a series of complicated crescendos, each culminating in a stirring, lengthy refrain. When you complete the performance, a single room or chamber you occupy appears to be swathed in silks and opulent furnishings you envision. You and up to one ally per bard level within the room who can hear you are clothed in illusory exotic fabrics, furs, and jewels while in the room. If you or an affected ally leave the room before the effect's duration expires, the illusion ends. A creature can attempt a Will save to disbelieve the illusion.

Use: 1 bardic performance round per 10 minutes of the effect's duration.

Action: 1 minute.

Melody of Surrender (Sing, Wind)

This gentle, relaxing tune makes its listeners calm and receptive.

Prerequisite: Perform (sing) or Perform (wind instruments) 4 ranks.

Cost: Feat or 2nd-level bard spell known.

Effect: This lilting tune is soothing and repetitive. When you activate the performance, choose one creature per bard level within close range. Any targeted creature must succeed at a Will save or take a –2 penalty on saving throws against enchantment effects and on Sense Motive checks. This effect lasts for as long as you maintain the performance.

Although this performance does have words, it is not a language-dependent effect.

Use: 1 bardic performance round per round. **Action:** 1 round.

WISE KING'S SAGA (ORATORY, SING)

Your saga magically weaves the counsel of sagacious ancestors into the telling.

Prerequisite: Perform (oratory) or Perform (sing) 15 ranks. **Cost:** Feat or 5th-level bard spell known.

Effect: You begin an epic tale of kings and queens in ages past, recounting their lineages and sage deeds. The epic has no fixed form and has substantial room for improvisation; many bards include tales of their own wise ancestors, or the ancestors of noteworthy members of their audience. When you activate the performance, one target creature other than you within close range (25 feet + 5 feet/2 levels) gains the benefit of a *commune* spell. You must continue the performance for the target to receive answers, as your retelling is magically guided to include relevant responses. If you cease the performance before the target has asked all of its questions, or if you run out of bardic performance rounds, any remaining questions are lost.

Use: 10 bardic performance rounds, plus 1 bardic performance round per question.

Action: 10 minutes.



ROYAL DEFENDERS

Though most of Golarion's courts present at least a veneer of civility, betrayal and even death are frequent threats. Most nobles rely on loyal protectors to keep them both intact and in power, expecting their guardians to stop would-be assassins and prevent potentially fatal political missteps. These bodyguards go everywhere with their charges, protecting them at home and on expeditions abroad. These relationships are as strong as, if not stronger than, familial bonds, guaranteeing these defenders' service in the face of any attempt to subvert them.

HIGH GUARDIAN (FIGHTER ARCHETYPE)

As the shield that protects his lord from the myriad dangers around every corner, the high guardian pledges his life to

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keep his charge safe. High guardians epitomize personal devotion, making them especially popular among Taldan nobles envious of the emperor's Ulfen Guard, as well as in the courts of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, the war councils of Molthune and Lastwall, and the refined chambers of Osirion.

Class Skills: A high guardian adds Knowledge (local) and Knowledge (nobility) to his list of class skills, instead of Knowledge (dungeoneering) and Knowledge (engineering).

This alters the fighter's class skills.

Obligation (Ex): At 1st level, a high guardian can spend 1 minute of focused concentration each day to select a single ally as his obligation, vowing to keep that person alive for that day. Once he has chosen, he can't change his obligation until the following day. If his obligation dies, the high guardian must atone for 1 week before he can select another obligation.

Right Hand (Ex): At 1st level, a high guardian can take a 5-foot step as an immediate action, as long as he ends this movement adjacent to his obligation. If he takes this step, he cannot take a 5-foot step during his next turn and his total movement is reduced by 5 feet during his next turn.

This ability replaces the bonus feat gained at 1st level.

Defender's Reflexes (Ex): At 2nd level, a high guardian gains Combat Reflexes as a bonus feat, and he can use his Strength modifier instead of his Dexterity modifier to determine the number of additional attacks of opportunity he can make per round. If he already has Combat Reflexes, he instead gains Stand Still as a bonus feat.

This ability replaces the bonus feat gained at 2nd level.

Unassailable Allegiance (Ex): At 2nd level, a high guardian gains a +1 bonus on Will saves against compulsion spells

and effects. This bonus increases by 1 for every 4 fighter levels beyond 2nd.

This ability replaces bravery.

Royal Protector (Ex): At 4th level, a high guardian gains Bodyguard^{APG} and In Harm's Way^{APG} as bonus feats, though he can use them only to improve his obligation's AC or intercept a successful attack against his obligation.

This ability replaces the bonus feat gained at 4th level.

Thronewarden (Gunslinger Archetype)

As vigilant sentinels, thronewardens identify and head off trouble. First employed in the Grand Duchy of Alkenstar, they are now also found in the jungle courts of the Mwangi Expanse, the lesser chambers of Nex's Council of Three and Nine, and the Hurricane King's gatherings in the Shackles.

Class Skills: A thronewarden adds Sense Motive to her list of class skills, instead of Bluff.

This alters the gunslinger's class skills.

Hair-Trigger Reflexes (Ex): At 2nd level, as long as she has at least 1 grit point, a thronewarden can act in a surprise round even if she doesn't notice her enemies, though she remains flat-footed until she acts. In addition, she gains a +1 bonus on initiative checks. This bonus increases by 1 for every 4 gunslinger levels beyond 2nd. Finally, at 10th level, she can spend 1 grit point to take both a standard action and a move action (or a full-round action) during the surprise round.

This ability replaces nimble.

Eye for Trouble (Ex): At 4th level, a thronewarden can spend 1 grit point when she attempts a Perception or Sense Motive check to roll 1d6 and add the result to the check. She can do this after she attempts the check but only before the result is revealed.

This ability replaces the bonus feat gained at 4th level.

Deeds: A thronewarden has access to the following deeds. *Warning Shot (Ex):* At 7th level as a standard action, a thronewarden with at least 1 grit point can purposely miss a creature that she could normally target with a firearm attack and make it second-guess its actions. The creature is staggered on its next turn. If a thronewarden uses this ability in a surprise round on a creature that has not yet acted, that creature instead loses its surprise-round action if it has one.

This deed replaces startling shot.

Opening Shot (Ex): At 11th level as a standard action, a thronewarden can call her allies to action in a surprise round by spending 1 grit point and shooting a firearm into the air. Any allies within 30 feet who would not normally be able to act in the surprise round can act at the end of the surprise round (their order is determined by their initiative results; they act in normal initiative order in following rounds). Allies who would normally act in the surprise round but who have not yet acted can take a full round's worth of actions instead of just a move or standard action.

This deed replaces bleeding wound.

Witch–Watcher (Witch Archetype)

For reasons known only to them, witch-watchers offer protection to nobles across Golarion. While they serve openly in Irrisen and Varisia, they watch from the shadows in courts in Brevoy, Mendev, the River Kingdoms, and Ustalav, where their presence is barely tolerated.

Diminished Spellcasting: A witch-watcher gains one fewer spell of each level than normal. If this reduces the number to zero, she can cast spells of that level only if her Intelligence score is high enough to grant bonus spells of that level.

This alters the witch's spellcasting.

Covenant Ally (Su): Once per day when preparing her spells, a witch-watcher makes a covenant with her patron to provide protection to a single creature, known as her covenant ally. As a standard action when her covenant ally is within 30 feet, a witch-watcher can grant it one of the abilities listed below. Unless otherwise noted, each ability lasts for a number of minutes equal to the witch-watcher's Intelligence modifier. She can grant a number of abilities per day equal to 1/2 her witch level (minimum 1). Health: The covenant ally gains a number of temporary hit points equal to the witch-watcher's witch level + her Intelligence modifier (minimum 1). The temporary hit points from this ability do not stack with themselves, but additional uses cause the total number of temporary hit points and the duration to reset.

Safeguard: The covenant ally gains a deflection bonus to AC or a resistance bonus on saving throws equal to 1/2 the witch-watcher's witch level (minimum 1). When given, this bonus can be divided between the AC and saving throws as the witch-watcher wishes, up to a maximum of +5 for either.

Solace: The witch-watcher temporarily disrupts a spell affecting her covenant ally by succeeding at a dispel check against the spell, as per *dispel magic*. The ability suppresses a spell effect for a number of rounds equal to the witchwatcher's Intelligence modifier (minimum 1). If the spell affects multiple creatures, this ability suppresses the spell effect only for the covenant ally. At the end of this duration, the spell resumes and the suppressed rounds do not count against its total duration. This ability has no effect on spells that are instantaneous or have a duration of permanent.

Spell Resistance: The covenant ally gains spell resistance equal to 6 + the witch-watcher's witch level for a number of rounds equal to the witch-watcher's Intelligence modifier. At 10th level, the spell resistance increases to 11 + the witch-watcher's witch level. The spell resistance cannot be suppressed, but it doesn't affect spells cast by the witch-watcher.

PROTECTIVE HEXES

These hexes are most often learned by witch-watchers, but any character capable of selecting witch hexes can learn them.

Distraction (Su): The witch can cause a creature within 30 feet to suffer hallucinatory distractions whenever it tries to cast a spell or use a spell-like ability for 1 round. Anytime the creature attempts to do so, it must succeed at a concentration check (DC = 15 + twice the spell level) or lose the spell. A successful Will saving throw negates this hex. At 8th level and 16th level, the duration of this hex is extended by 1 round. Whether or not the save is successful, a creature cannot be the target of this hex again for 1 day. Hexes that affect the misfortune hex^{APG}, such as cackle^{APG}, also affect distraction.

Protective Luck (Su): The witch can cause fate to twist so that it benefits a creature within 30 feet for 1 round. Whenever that creature is targeted by an effect that requires an attack roll, including weapon attacks, the attacker must roll twice and take the worse result. At 8th level and 16th level, the duration of this hex is extended by 1 round. A witch cannot use this ability on herself. Hexes that affect the fortune hex^{APG}, such as cackle^{APG}, also affect protective luck.

Witch Patron

This patron wishes its emissaries to preserve life.

Protection: 2nd—sanctuary, 4th—resist energy, 6th wrathful mantle^{APG}, 8th—stoneskin, 10th—interposing hand, 12th—forbiddance, 14th—greater spell immunity, 16th prismatic wall, 18th—freedom.



ARCANE RETAINERS

A noble is only as powerful as her retinue, whose members range from attendants to alchemists and mages. Without the support of a magical retainer, a noble might find herself outclassed in the perilous life of the aristocracy. Many arcane retainers thus find themselves involved in hidden arms races for the next magical solution to political problems.

BOLSTERING SPELLS

Arcane retainers use a wide variety of spells to help keep noble courts as civil and productive as possible (or to gain the upper hand against more established courts). The following spells are especially common for arcane retainers in noble courts, especially in Taldor's Imperial Palace, who wish to even the diplomatic playing field.

ENCHANTMENT SIGHT

School divination; **Level** alchemist 2, bard 2, cleric 2, inquisitor 2, medium 2, mesmerist 2, occultist 2, paladin 2, psychic 2, sorcerer/wizard 2, spiritualist 2, witch 2

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range personal

Target you

Duration 10 minutes/level (D)

Your irises take on a purplish tinge and you can see whether creatures within 60 feet of you are affected by an enchantment effect. To your eyes only, a creature under the effects of an enchantment spell glows with a simple white light around its head. You can immediately discern whether the brightness of the light is faint, moderate, strong, or overwhelming depending on the highest spell level of enchantment currently in effect (as per *detect magic*). Enchantments of the charm or compulsion subschool glow with a scarlet or emerald hue, respectively.

If a creature under an enchantment effect is in your line of sight, you can attempt a Spellcraft check as a move action to determine the highest-level spell or spell effect (DC = 15 + the spell level, or 15 + 1/2 the caster level for a non-spell effect). Effects that block divination magic also block this spell.

Enchantment sight can be made permanent with a *permanency* spell cast by a caster of 9th level or higher, at a cost of 2,500 gp.

REVEAL EMOTIONS

School divination **Level** medium 3, mesmerist 4, occultist 4, psychic 4, spiritualist 4

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels) Area 40-ft.-radius spread Duration 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw none Spell Resistance yes

You create an area that draws out a creature's emotion aura (*Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 198). Creatures within this area constantly glow with colors that represent their current overall

emotional state and continue to do so for 1d4 rounds after leaving the area. This glow is clearly visible to any creature that can see the creature. Emotionless creatures or creatures unaffected by this spell glow with a dull purple hue while within the area.

SHROUD OF INNOCUITY

School illusion (glamer); Level bard 3, medium 3, mesmerist 3,

psychic 3, shaman 3, sorcerer/wizard 3, witch 3

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Targets one willing creature plus one/2 caster levels, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration 1 hour/level (D)

Saving Throw none (harmless); see text; Spell Resistance no

All affected creatures are veiled with a commonplace appearance. This appearance varies based on the viewer, but is always an ordinary member of that viewer's race, ethnicity, or nationality. This familiarity grants a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks attempted by affected targets against those not affected by the spell.

Creatures with an attitude of unfriendly or hostile toward an affected target can attempt a Will save to disbelieve the effect the first time they encounter that target.

SPEECHREADER'S SIGHT

School divination; Level alchemist 1, bard 1, cleric 1,

inquisitor 1, medium 1, mesmerist 1, occultist 1, psychic 1, sorcerer/wizard 1, spiritualist 1, witch 1

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range personal

Target you

Duration 1 hour/level (D)

If a creature within 100 feet that you can see is speaking a language you understand, you can read its lips with perfect accuracy. Reading lips in this manner gives the exact wording of conversation and does not assist in deciphering any obfuscated ideas such as secret messages or slang. Reading lips requires moderate concentration, and you take a -4 penalty on other Perception checks while doing so.

Speechreader's sight can be made permanent with a *permanency* spell cast by a caster of 9th level or higher, at a cost of 2,500 gp.

DISCOVERIES

The following new discoveries can be taken by any character who can access discoveries and who meets the prerequisites.

Aromatic Extract: The alchemist creates an inhaled version of an extract that is shared among multiple creatures. He must decide that an extract is an aromatic extract when he makes it. When used, the extract grants its benefit to all creatures within a 10-foot spread of the extract. The aromatic extract is treated as having the minimum caster level required for the original extract. An aromatic extract expends one of the alchemist's daily extracts as if it were an extract 2 levels higher. This discovery can be applied only to extracts with a range of touch. An alchemist must be at least 10th level and must have the infusion discovery before selecting this discovery.

Nostrum: When the alchemist creates an infusion, he can mask a delayed poison within the mixture. A nostrum can contain only an ingested poison, and the save DC of the poison is reduced by 2. The poison takes effect a number of hours after being imbibed equal to the alchemist's Intelligence bonus (minimum o) decided by the alchemist at the creation of the nostrum. The poison within a nostrum can be detected as normal by spells such as *detect poison* and similar abilities. Until the nostrum is consumed or destroyed, it continues to occupy one of the alchemist's daily extract slots. An alchemist must have the infusion discovery before selecting this discovery.

Remote Bomb: The alchemist can spend two uses of his daily bombs to create a special bomb that is manually detonated. When the bomb is created, the alchemist also creates a catalyst distillate, which requires no extra time or cost. A remote bomb is inert unless triggered by this distillate. The bomb is detonated as a standard action when the distillate fumes are exposed to the rest of the bomb. An alchemist must be within 60 feet of the bomb for the distillate to successfully trigger the bomb. A catalyst distillate can detonate a bomb even if the bomb has already been hurled at a target. Triggering the distillate outside of the 60-foot range or after 1 hour has no effect.

ROYAL ALCHEMIST (ALCHEMIST ARCHETYPE)

Paranoia runs rampant among the noble courts of the Inner Sea. On account of this distrust. many rulers often hire specialized alchemists capable of concocting protections from both poisons and diseases for the nobles and their guests. The royal alchemist tradition began in the nation of Rahadoum shortly after the Oath Wars as a replacement for the protection once offered by the clerics and priests of the region. Today, royal alchemists are

found in the courts of Cheliax, Galt, Taldor, and, surprisingly, Geb, where living visitors to the Blood Lords are offered protection from the death around them.

Class Skills: A royal alchemist adds Diplomacy and Knowledge (nobility) to his list of class skills instead of Knowledge (nature) and Survival.

This alters the alchemist's class skills.

Alchemical Antidote: At 2nd level, a royal alchemist can blend special mixes of antitoxin, medicine, and other remedies into alchemical antidotes that can be imbibed by anyone. The royal alchemist creates his alchemical antidotes when he prepares his extracts for the day; they remain potent for 1 day before losing their properties, and the cost of the materials used to make them is insignificant. An alchemical antidote does not qualify as an extract or an infusion for the purpose of feats or discoveries.

The royal alchemist has a pool of points equal to 1/2 his alchemist level + his Intelligence bonus that he can divide among any number of alchemical antidotes, though the maximum number of points he can spend on a single antidote is equal to 1/2 his alchemist level (minimum 1). Each point grants the imbiber of the alchemical antidote a +1 alchemical bonus on saving throws against poison for a number of hours equal to the royal alchemist's Intelligence bonus (minimum 1). The royal alchemist can also create an antidote that protects against diseases. For every 2 points the royal alchemist spends from his pool, the imbiber of the alchemical antidote gains a +1 alchemical bonus on saving throws against disease for 24 hours. The royal alchemist can expend 10 points from his pool to provide immunity to diseases or poisons (decided by him at the time of the antidote's creation); this immunity lasts for a number of minutes equal to the royal alchemist's Intelligence bonus (minimum 1) after the antidote is imbibed. An alchemical remedy can protect against either diseases or poisons, but not both.

At 6th level, the royal alchemist can alter the distribution of the bonuses of any unused alchemical antidotes as a full-round action, either combining them or splitting the bonuses further. The royal alchemist must be holding all unused alchemical antidotes he wishes to alter in this way.

This ability replaces the alchemist's poison use and swift poisoning.



Orders of Chivalry

Chivalry is a code of conduct that creates a bond between a liege and a knight, enjoining faithful service from the knight in exchange for rewards and honor from the liege. In each court that operates under a code of chivalry, the details of that conduct and its consequences differ; across these variations, the common ideals encompass charity, civility, fair play, fealty, justice, and the rule of right. Those who uphold a chivalric code often do so with a fervor that can be surprising to most.

CHIVALRIC KNIGHTS

The following knightly archetypes can be found in courts across Golarion. Many gallants serve the lords in the command councils of Lastwall as living examples of chivalry. Virtuous bravos often make their way to Mendev, where their feats of daring against the demons of the Worldwound bring favor in Queen Galfrey's court.

GALLANT (CAVALIER ARCHETYPE)

Gallants embody the virtues of honor, generosity, and civility. Their personal symbol serves as an inspiration to others in a courtly setting as much as on a battlefield.

Code of Gallantry: A gallant must belong to either the order of the blue rose^{UC}, the order of the guard (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Combat* 30), the order of the lion^{APG}, or the order of the sword^{APG}. A gallant must also be of lawful good or neutral good alignment. A gallant who ceases to be lawful good or neutral good, or who violates his order's edicts, loses all class features except armor and weapon proficiencies until he restores his alignment or atones for his violation (see the *atonement* spell), as appropriate.

This alters the cavalier's order.

Symbol of Inspiration (Ex): At 5th level, the gallant's personal crest becomes an inspirational symbol of his chivalrous ideals. As long as he displays his crest on his tabard, banner, or similar item, allies within 60 feet who can see him gain a +2 morale bonus on saving throws against charm, compulsion, and fear effects, and a +2 bonus on damage rolls to deal nonlethal damage. At 10th level and every 5 cavalier levels thereafter. these bonuses increase by 1.

This ability replaces banner.

Symbol of Resilience (Su): At 14th level, the gallant's personal crest empowers his allies to stand firm against evil. While his personal crest is displayed, the gallant can bolster his allies' resilience as a standard action. All allies within 60 feet of the gallant gain DR 5/evil for 1 minute. An ally cannot benefit from this ability more than once per day.

This ability replaces greater banner.

VIRTUOUS BRAVO (PALADIN ARCHETYPE)

Although no less a beacon of hope and justice than other paladins, virtuous bravos rely on their wit and grace rather than might and strong armor.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Virtuous bravos aren't proficient with heavy armor or shields (except for bucklers). This ability alters the paladin's armor proficiency.

Bravo's Finesse (Ex): A virtuous bravo can use her Dexterity modifier instead of her Strength modifier on attack rolls with light or one-handed piercing melee weapons (though if she carries a shield, she applies its armor check penalty to such attack rolls), and she can use her Charisma score in place of her Intelligence score to meet prerequisites of combat feats. This ability counts as having the Weapon Finesse feat for the purpose of meeting feat prerequisites.

Bravo's Smite (Su): When using smite evil, a virtuous bravo doesn't gain a deflection bonus to AC.

This ability alters smite evil.

Nimble (Ex): At 3rd level, a virtuous bravo gains a +1 dodge bonus to AC while wearing light armor or no armor. Anything that causes the virtuous bravo to lose her Dexterity bonus to AC also causes her to lose this dodge bonus. This bonus increases by 1 for every 4 paladin levels beyond 3rd (to a maximum of +5 at 19th level).

This ability replaces mercy.

Panache and Deeds (Ex): At 4th level, a virtuous bravo gains the swashbuckler's panache class feature along with the following swashbuckler deeds: dodging panache, menacing swordplay, opportune parry and riposte, precise strike, and swashbuckler initiative. The virtuous bravo's paladin levels stack with any swashbuckler levels when using these deeds.

This ability replaces the paladin's spellcasting.

Advanced Deeds (Ex): At 11th level, a virtuous bravo gains the following swashbuckler deeds: bleeding wound, evasive, subtle blade, superior feint, swashbuckler's grace, and targeted strike.

This ability replaces aura of justice.

Bravo's Holy Strike (Su): At 20th level, a virtuous bravo becomes a master at dispensing holy justice with her blade. When the virtuous bravo confirms a critical hit with a light or one-handed piercing melee weapon, she can choose one of the following three effects in addition to dealing damage: the target is rendered unconscious for 1d4 hours, the target is paralyzed for 2d6 rounds, or the target is slain. Regardless of the effect chosen, the target can attempt a Fortitude save. On a success, the target is instead stunned for 1 round (it still takes damage). The DC of this save is equal to 10 + 1/2 the virtuous bravo's paladin level + her Charisma modifier. Once a creature has been the target of a bravo's holy strike, regardless of whether or not it succeeds at the save, that creature is immune to that bravo's holy strike for 24 hours. Creatures that are immune to critical hits are also immune to this ability.

This ability replaces holy champion.

FAVORS

Favors are a category of single-use magic items that are activated when given by one creature (called the presenter) to another (the recipient). The presenter must intentionally give the favor to the recipient, and the recipient must intentionally accept it and don it within 1 minute for the favor to activate. Giving a favor to a recipient is a standard action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity; receiving and donning a favor requires as much time as it takes to don an item of the favor's type (usually a standard action). Once donned, the favor provides the indicated effect for the listed duration. In addition, while the favor is active, the presenter can take a standard action to sense whether the recipient is alive (with 4 or more hit points), badly wounded (at 3 or fewer hit points), dead, undead, or neither alive nor dead (as a construct). This effect functions regardless of distance, as long as the presenter and recipient are on the same plane of existence.

The favor's effects end immediately if the favor is removed or otherwise leaves the recipient's possession, or if the recipient fails a saving throw against a fear effect. For this latter reason, favors are preferred by creatures immune or resistant to fear, such as paladins and halflings. A creature can be the recipient of only one favor at a time; if the recipient voluntarily accepts a new favor, the effects of any existing favor immediately end. Once a favor's duration expires or its effects end, the presenter is immediately aware that the favor has lost its magic.

KERCHIEF OF REMEN	MBRANCE	PRICE 600 GP
SLOT arm or wrist	CL 3rd	WEIGHT —
AURA faint divination		

This favor is a simple checked kerchief worn around the arm or wrist. For 1 week, the recipient can automatically call to mind

a detailed recollection of the presenter's features, even if his memory has been impaired or modified (such as by *modify memory*). In addition, the recipient can take a standard action to know the presenter's status in the same manner that the presenter can take a standard action to know the recipient's status.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS COST 300 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, modify memory, status

LAUREL OF THE CHAMPION		PRICE 2,000 GP
SLOT head	CL 3rd	WEIGHT —
AURA faint transmutation		

This favor is a garland of leaves, often presented to the winner of a joust or other competition. For 24 hours, the recipient takes a -2 penalty on Disguise checks and can roll twice and take the better result on Diplomacy checks.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS		1,000 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, eagle's splendor, status		

LUCKY BUTTON		PRICE 1,200 GP
SLOT none	CL 3rd	WEIGHT —
AURA faint evocation		

This favor is a pretty button that does not need to be donned, but merely placed in a pouch or pocket and carried by the recipient. A *lucky button* is activated as soon as it is given by the presenter. When the presenter bestows a *lucky button*, he names a single skill. For 1 week, the recipient gains a +2 luck bonus on skill rolls of that type.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 600 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>guidance, status</i>	

PAPER FLOWER		PRICE 800 GP
SLOT headband	CL 3rd	WEIGHT —
AURA faint abjuration		

This delicate example of papercraft is often given to a paramour, with the promise that the love of the presenter will protect the recipient. A *paper flower* is worn behind the ear. For 24 hours, the first creature to directly attack the wearer (even with a targeted spell) must succeed at a DC 12 Will saving throw or be unable to follow through with the attack (as per *sanctuary*).

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 400 GP	
Craft Wondrous Item, sanctuary, status		

TOKEN OF GALLANTR	Y	PRICE 2,400 GP
SLOT none	CL 3rd	WEIGHT —
AURA faint transmutation		

This favor is a lace handkerchief or scrap of silken clothing that is tied around the pommel or haft of a melee weapon. For 24 hours, that weapon becomes good-aligned for the purpose of bypassing damage reduction. As long as the favor is active, the token does not become soiled or bloody.

COST 1,200 GP

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS Craft Wondrous Item, align weapon, status



COURTLY RACES

All of Golarion's major races play a role in courtly life, although each race has its own distinct courts and aristocratic traditions. Despite common functions of administration, lawmaking, and political interaction, many of these courts seem completely dissimilar. For example, the grim, tradition-bound dwarven halls of Highhelm are nothing like the violent, drug-fueled barbarian courts of Starfall.

Some creatures manifest talents and abilities not normally associated with the creature's race that make them ideal courtiers. Examples of these alternate racial traits are provided below. These racial traits can be selected instead of the applicable race's standard traits.

DWARVES

Dwarven courts are steeped in tradition, often incorporating formal greetings, modes of dress, and administrative processes that are millennia old. These practices have been expanded over the generations, so even a simple matter brought before a dwarven ruler might require days or weeks of traditional acknowledgments, gift giving, and responses before the business at hand begins. The court procedures of Highhelm are known to be particularly elaborate affairs, but dwarven courtiers would not dream of attempting shortcuts.

Dwarves are keenly aware of their place in dwarven society and are well versed in how to deal with their social inferiors and superiors in their complex hierarchy. Dwarven leaders carefully study the network of fealties and honor-debts that connect them to other dwarven rulers. Dwarves often have little use or respect for non-dwarven courts, seeing them as puerile and transient undertakings lacking proper decorum.

Conservative Diplomacy: A dwarf can embrace predictable

traditions to avoid social missteps. A dwarf with this racial trait can rely upon conservative tactics when attempting a Diplomacy check; this choice must be made before the Diplomacy check is attempted. The dwarf treats any roll of less than 5 on such a Diplomacy check as though she had rolled a 5, but she treats any roll higher than 15 on such a check as though she rolled a 15. This racial trait replaces stonecunning.

ELVES

Elven courts are often breathtakingly beautiful. The physical space of the court is likely blended with the natural environment, with living plants carefully grown and pruned to complement soaring arches and enormous windows. Elven residents of the court display their affinity for art and fashion, dressing in elaborate and refined styles.

Elves are the longest-lived of the primary races of Golarion and therefore take a far-reaching view in most of their actions and dealings. Although elven courts are not as tradition-bound as dwarven courts and some human courts, their social intrigues play out on a far grander scale. Elven courtiers in other races' courts use their longevity and experience to their advantage, carefully collecting favors for use years or decades later.

Elves often serve as councilors and advisors in the

courts of other races. Their guidance on interacting with the natural world is highly prized by some nonelven rulers.

> Fey Wisdom: Elves tend to be too aloof and capricious to make reliable diplomats, but some elves specially train to serve as ambassadors to fey courts. Elves with this racial trait gain a +1 racial bonus on Diplomacy Knowledge and (nature) checks, and Knowledge (nature) is a class skill for them. This racial trait replaces keen senses.

GNOMES

Because gnomes are mercurial folk prone to wander, they are often simply visitors in most of Golarion's courts. Gnome entertainers, who master whimsical and unique performances or play instruments of their own invention, can often find

eager courtly audiences. Their love of travel and learning new languages also makes gnomes good ambassadors to foreign lands. Some courts keep resident experts on hand to advise about narrow specialties; such a gnome advisor might provide perspective on fey relations, technological innovations, or whatever esoteric subject she has mastered.

The primary court in the Inner Sea region consisting principally of gnomes is that of King Drum Thornfiddle, the self-proclaimed king of the town of Brastlewark in Cheliax. King Thornfiddle is a fickle ruler and a loyal vassal of the infernal empire, so his court, though small, is a dangerous place for courtiers and visitors alike.

Genial Magic: Gnomes with this racial trait add 1 to the DC of saving throws against enchantment spells that they cast. Gnomes with Charisma scores of 11 or higher also gain the following spell-like abilities: 1/day—*charm person, guidance, message,* and *prestidigitation.* The caster level for these effects is equal to the gnome's level. The DC for these spells is equal to 10 + the spell's level + the gnome's Charisma modifier. This racial trait replaces gnome magic.

HALF-ELVES

Half-elves have a lifetime of experience in straddling the worlds of elves and humans, making them natural ambassadors and diplomats. Exclusively half-elven courts are rare, but half-elves are fixtures in many courts across Golarion. Half-elven envoys work hard to develop reputations as peacemakers and skilled negotiators, building personal reputations that allow them to stand out among their peers.

Half-elven entertainers and courtiers often find favor in human courts due to the physical comeliness and regal bearing inherited from their elven side. Such half-elves cultivate this aura of sophistication, dressing in elaborate fashions and honing their wits to keep their positions secure, knowing better than most the harsh sting of rejection.

Fraudulent: To obtain and keep a position at court, some half-elves aren't shy about exaggerating or fabricating claims to nobility. Half-elves with this racial trait gain a +1 racial bonus on Bluff checks, Knowledge (nobility) checks, and Linguistics checks to create forgeries. They need to spend only half as much on accessories (such as the jewelry required to accessorize a courtier's or noble's outfit) to appear suitable in a courtly setting. This racial trait replaces keen senses.

HALF-ORCS

Often unfairly viewed as barbaric monsters, half-orcs typically rely on their physical abilities to succeed. This is no different in courtly settings, where half-orcs are valued as bodyguards or in physical entertainments such as gladiatorial matches. When attempting to fit into a different role at court, half-orcs face discrimination or outright ridicule. Half-orc courtiers and administrators are prevalent in only the most cosmopolitan courts, such as those found in Absalom or Katapesh, or in barbaric courts where brute strength is valued over social grace, such as in the courts of the Free Captains of the Shackles. **Vigilant Gaze:** Half-orcs trained as bodyguards in foreign courts develop a keen eye for trouble, but their night vision, unnecessary in well-lit courts, dwindles. Half-orcs with this racial trait gain low-light vision and have a +1 racial bonus on Perception and Sense Motive checks. This racial trait replaces darkvision.

HALFLINGS

Halflings have few courts of their own, with the informal court of pirate lord Jolis Raffles in the Shackles being a notable exception. Yet they are ubiquitous in human courts. Halflings prefer to keep quietly in the background, and are therefore most frequently encountered as servants or advisors. They also make excellent spies due to their small size and keen senses. Some courts employ halflings trained to act as innocent servants while they lurk unobtrusively at the fringes and eavesdrop on visitors.

Halflings are also prized as court entertainers, as their nimble fingers and keen hearing make them talented musicians and singers. They excel as bards and court fools, delivering rude observations or scathing witticisms without drawing ire—partially because of their good cheer, whether real or feigned, and partially because their small size makes them seem less threatening. In all these ways and more, halflings use the tendency of other races to overlook them to their advantage.

Surreptitious: Halflings skilled in eavesdropping on suspicious visitors are highly prized in human courts. These halflings are skilled at maintaining innocuous disguises and vanishing before being confronted. Halflings with this trait gain a +2 racial bonus on Disguise and Stealth checks. This racial trait replaces sure-footed.

HUMANS

As architects of cities and nations, humans are the prevalent race on Golarion, and most of Golarion's courts are humandominated. Humans' drive to succeed—coupled with their boundless energy—makes them energetic political players in any venue. Human diplomats, courtiers, entertainers, and advisors can be found in the courts of any race.

Many humans feel that dramatic architecture and elaborate ceremony reflect their lofty ambitions and successes. Human courts are therefore impressive structures filled with art and pageantry. Exactly what this extravagance entails varies as widely as humans themselves,; human courts range from the dread Umbral Court of Nidal draped in shadows and echoing with laments to the colorful, crowded spectacle of the Imperial Court in Taldor.

Powerful Presence: Humans with a regal bearing and strong personal magnetism can apply their presence more forcefully than others. A human with this trait treats her Charisma score as 2 points higher for the purpose of meeting feat prerequisites. In addition, humans with this racial trait gain Persuasive as a bonus feat. This racial trait replaces the bonus feat trait.



COURTS OF THE EAST

Courtly intrigue is hardly exclusive to the Inner Sea region. To the east, mighty empires dominate the continent of Casmaron, each with its own complex web of politics. The greatest of these are the Padishah Empire of Kelesh and the Impossible Kingdoms of Vudra, both millennia-old empires. Centuries of negotiation with powerful otherworldly beings (and the potency of wishcraft) have dramatically influenced the courtly culture of these lands. These empires' territories in the Inner Sea have inherited those influences and are often host to the machinations of their distant courts.

JALMERAY

The staggeringly opulent courts of Jalmeray, called *yarabhars* in the Vudrani tongue, are but a hint at the wonders of the kingdoms of Vudra. Kharswan, thakur of Jalmeray, is a lesser lord only by the standards of the Impossible Kingdoms, yet his palace is no less glorious. Great menageries of exotic creatures, countless servants both mundane and otherworldly, and wealth beyond the imagination of the greediest pirate—all can be found in abundance in Jalmeray's yarabhars.

Kharswan is all too aware that his authority is limited; the Maurya-Rahm, his innumerable advisors and administrators, hold the true power and responsibility of Jalmeray's rule. This decentralization of rulership leaves endless opportunity for intrigue, with many of the Maurya-Rahm scheming to increase their influence. This politicking is subtly encouraged by the thakur, who takes gentle amusement in setting his underlings against each other.

Numerous powers vie for control of Jalmeray, both via the Maurya-Rahm and through less mundane channels. Ageless psychics and monastery masters seek to prove the supremacy of their mystic arts; noble Vudrani families struggle for control of the gateway to the Inner Sea's markets; and the ancient spirits of Jalmeray itself demand appeasement in service to age-old oaths. In addition, the vast wealth of Jalmeray and Vudra—both monetary and magical—draws the interest of Inner Sea nations, particularly Nex (whose Arclords have never forgotten their defeat and expulsion from Jalmeray). Unwary visitors to the island nation may become ensnared in this web of intrigue without even realizing it.

The arts of manipulation and influence are taught at the Conservatory of Jalmeray. Students learn how to effortlessly draw out secrets, how to best tempt others into compliance, and how to achieve their goals through intermediaries.

CONSERVATORY-TRAINED

Your training at Jalmeray's famed Conservatory on the island of Grand Sarret helps you perceive others' interests and leverage them for your benefit.

Prerequisite: Sense Motive 1 rank.

Benefit: You gain an insight bonus equal to your Wisdom modifier on discovery checks using the individual influence system (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue* 102). In addition,

when you discover an NPC's strength, the next influence check an ally attempts that incorporates that strength receives a +2 bonus.

PAGEANTRY (PSYCHIC DISCIPLINE)

The act of ritual, no matter how ostentatious, can be a route to mental strength. By engaging in esoteric and intricate routines, you have unlocked potent psychic power.

Phrenic Pool Ability: Charisma.

Bonus Spells: Bless (1st), calm emotions (4th), slow (6th), overwhelming presence^{UM} (8th), seeming (10th), heroes' feast (12th), mage's magnificent mansion (14th), divine vessel^{APG} (16th), heroic invocation^{UC} (18th).

Discipline Powers: Your mastery of intricate rituals allows you to wield great power, given time.

Ritual Unity (Su): You receive a +2 bonus on all skill checks attempted as part of an occult ritual (*Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 208). When you take the aid another action to assist an ally with a skill check and succeed at a DC 20 check, you impart a +4 bonus to your ally instead. When you successfully aid an ally in this way, you regain 1 point in your phrenic pool.

Power from Pageantry (Su): When casting a spell with a casting time of 1 standard action or less, you can spend 1 point from your phrenic pool to extend the casting time to 1 full round. If you do, the caster level and saving throw DC increase by 2.

Force of Habit (Su): At 5th level, you are so accustomed to complex tasks that you can maintain focus on multiple mental foci simultaneously. If you spend 1 point from your phrenic pool as you cast a psychic spell that requires concentration, you can maintain concentration on that spell as a swift action. In addition, you can cast other psychic spells while concentrating on that spell.

Unrivaled Focus (Su): At 13th level, your powers of concentration become unmatched. Whenever you attempt a concentration check, you can spend 1 point from your phrenic pool to treat the result of your die roll as a 20. You must choose to use this ability before rolling the check.

KATHEER

For all its strength and influence, Qadira is but a satrapy of the unfathomably mighty Padishah Empire of Kelesh. Qadira's ruler, Xerbystes II, wields near-absolute power on domestic matters; however, international policy is the domain of his vizier, Hebizid Vraj, the Padishah Emperor's personal appointee to Xerbystes's court. The young satrap lusts for war with Taldor but lacks the authority to declare it. In frustration, he demands ever-greater deeds from his heroes.

In the courts of Katheer, political maneuvering comes in many forms and the stakes are often higher than they first appear. The numerous princes, princesses, and other nobles of the court possess shrewd minds and keen talents for misdirection, and the truth is never as it seems—making diviners and soothsayers in great demand. Some act as both advisors and bodyguards, offering the wisdom and protection of the divine.

The giving of luxurious gifts, whether they're in the form of material wealth or potent magic, is common among the nobility. This is both tradition and wisdom, for it is thought better to cultivate an alliance than to risk insult. Qadira's nobles are prideful, but rarely rash, and may wait years to repay a slight. When they do, their wrath is legendary. Keleshites can be forgiving, though, and many bitter feuds some generations old—end with hated rivals becoming sworn friends or devoted lovers.

The Peerless, Xerbystes's great heroes and advisors, are hardly exempt from politics. Some are personally selected from among the students of the satrapy's colleges of war, while others are recognized through great deeds. No matter how they came to possess the rank, the Peerless are known to have the favor of Xerbystes II; between this and the Peerless's reputation for mighty acts, the wise think twice before offering them insult.

Many Peerless learn to embody their heroic reputation; tales of their heroic exploits serve them well even in distant lands. For example, a paladin of Sarenrae could become known for her silver tongue, an enigmatic dervish might be thought to effortlessly see through lies, or a deceitful duelist might instead cultivate a (false) reputation for great honesty.

PEERLESS COURTIER

As a favored hero of the satrap, you've learned to translate skill at arms into social influence.

Prerequisites: Cha 13, base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: Choose one of the following skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, or Sense Motive. You can substitute your base attack bonus for your ranks in the chosen skill. That skill also becomes a class skill for you.

Special: You can select this feat up to three times. Its effects do not stack. Each time you select this feat, choose an additional skill to benefit from this feat.

Inerrant Voice (Oracle Archetype)

An inerrant voice serves as a spiritual advisor to either a monarch or noble. Most Qadiran nobles retain one's services, for both guidance and protection.

Recommended Mysteries: Ancestor^{UM}, intrigue^{UI}, life, lore.

Bonus Spells: An inerrant voice gains the following bonus spells: *shield other* (2nd), *augury* (4th), *divination* (8th), *vision* (14th). These replace the bonus spells at those levels gained from the oracle's mystery.

Revelations: An inerrant voice must take the following revelation at 3rd level.

Vigilant Protector (Su): Each day when you recover your spells, you can select a specific person you know other than yourself as your ward. When your ward becomes the target of an attack or spell and you are aware of the attack, you can cast an abjuration spell you know on the ally as an immediate action. You must expend the appropriate spell slot and be able to target the ally as normal for the spell. At 11th level, as an immediate action when you know your ward is targeted, you can transpose yourself with your ward, teleporting into the original target's square (and becoming the new target of the attack or spell)

while your ally is teleported into yours; this is a teleportation effect that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. You can use this revelation once per day, plus an additional time at 7th level and every 4 oracle levels thereafter.



COURTS OF THE DRAGON EMPIRES

The royal palaces of Tian Xia differ dramatically from the courts on the other side of the world, beyond just cultural and architectural distinctions. In Tian Xia, many rulers are more than mortal; they are celestial representatives, long-lived dragons, or divine beings. Furthermore, many Tian courts have sprawling bureaucracies that are centuries or even millennia old. Several Tian courts are presented below, along with a feat useful to functionaries and visitors in each one.

Minkai

The large nation of Minkai has long been ruled by an emperor selected from one of five divinely appointed families. Although the country's provinces have often been at odds with each other—exacerbated by political scheming and backstabbing among the provincial governors—the emperor

prevented any extended conflicts. Over the last few decades, however, all members of the five families have died or disappeared under mysterious circumstances, leaving a figure known as the Jade Regent in control.

The Jade Regent is despotic, ruling with an iron fist from the Imperial Palace in the city of Kasai. The Jade Regent's courtiers pay lip service to the tyrant, but most fear that their ruler cannot control the governors while sating his growing vices. Some courtiers are spies from neighboring nations, hiding secret agendas behind veils of loyalty. Minkai courts are more likely to host foreign visitors than other courts in Tian Xia, as the nation is connected to Avistan by a trade route, but these foreigners often become pawns in the court's deadly games.

Veiled Contempt

You are skilled in disguising your dissatisfaction with the current regime or authority.

Prerequisite: Bluff 3 ranks.

Benefit: The DC for Sense Motive checks to get a hunch about you is equal to 20 + your ranks in Bluff, instead of the normal 20. If the Sense Motive check is specifically to assess your allegiance or trustworthiness, the DC is equal to 20 + two times your ranks in Bluff.

Po Li

Once the heart of the Lung Wa empire, Po Li is now focused on discovering the reborn Eternal Emperor who will assume the empty *Five Dragon Throne*. This legendary throne of precious materials stands in the imperial city of Changdo, sequestered in an inner city that is forbidden to all except the Oracular Council and its most trusted factotums. Lesser ministers and lords maintain separate courts surrounding the restricted parts of the city, creating a ring of pavilions and pagodas in which the nation's practical administration takes place.

Courtly life in Po Li revolves spiritually as well as physically around the empty *Five Dragon Throne*. The most influential political figures in Po Li are blue-robed oracles who commission massive statues and shrines to the absent emperor. Anyone in the courts of Po Li seeking political advancement, whether visitor or native, is advised to openly venerate the Eternal Emperor.

Seeker of the Eternal Emperor

You lend some of your oracular powers to the leaders of Po Li in their search for the reborn Eternal Emperor, learning useful techniques to extend your divinations.

Prerequisites: Enlarge Spell or Extend Spell, oracle's curse class feature.

Benefit: Treat your oracle level as 1 lower (minimum 1st level) when determining the effects of your oracle's curse. You don't require additional time to spontaneously cast divination spells modified by the Enlarge Spell or Extend Spell metamagic feats. **Normal**: Applying a metamagic feat to a spontaneously cast spell increases the casting time of the spell.

Tianjing

A benevolent council of celestial-blooded advisors rules the idyllic aasimar nation of Tianjing, where visitors to the court are met with warmth and hospitality. Although gossip is as much a part of courtly life in Tianjing as it is elsewhere, courtiers also discuss art, philosophy, and social justice.

Tianjing remained independent of the Lung Wa empire primarily due to the diplomatic skills of its envoys and ambassadors. Lung Wa's emperor believed his people would earn the ire of Heaven for attacking the land, and Tianjing diplomats did nothing to discourage these assumptions. They instead painted Tianjing as a peaceful, sacred place—which, in truth, is not much of an exaggeration—and the emperor turned his juggernaut of expansion elsewhere.

STUDENT OF SULUNAI

You have studied the life and works of the aasimar Sulunai, who led the people of Tianjing in a time of nationwide chaos. You know that second chances are opportunities for salvation.

Prerequisite: Aasimar.

Benefit: Whenever a creature within 30 feet of you rerolls an ability check, saving throw, or skill check, you can give the creature a +2 insight bonus on the new roll as an immediate action. You can also cast *divine favor* as a spell-like ability once per day, using your character level as your caster level.

Xa Hoi

Xa Hoi, Empire of the Dragon, has been ruled by a sovereign dragon named Pham Duc Quan for over 200 years. The Dragon King is but the latest in a long line of draconic monarchs stretching back millennia. Towering above the capital city of Ngon Hoa, the palace is an airy structure crisscrossed with vertiginous bridges for the Dragon King and his siblings, who oversee various aspects of the imperial government.

Life as a courtier in Xa Hoi is daunting. Not only must one serve at the whims of inhuman creatures that have unsurpassed intellects and plots that span centuries, but punishments meted out by the Dragon King are swift and harsh. An entertainer who displeases the Dragon King in a performance might lose his hand, and a minister who fails to keep meticulous tax records might lose her life. However, where there are dragons, there are riches, and skillful courtiers in the Empire of the Dragon can amass incredible fortunes.

INURED TO DRACONIC MAJESTY

You have spent enough time around dragons to believe that much of their fearsomeness is bluster.

Prerequisite: Favored enemy (dragon) or Knowledge (arcana) 1 rank.

Benefit: You gain a +4 bonus on saving throws against extraordinary or supernatural fear effects (such as a dragon's frightful presence). If a failed saving throw against an extraordinary or supernatural fear effect would make you

frightened, you are instead shaken; and if a failed saving throw would make you panicked, you are instead frightened.

Chadao Tea Ceremony

The chadao, or tea ceremony, is a pillar of Tian society, and is practiced in courts across the continent. Although the chadao has several specific steps (including laying a fire, sharing small confections, brewing the tea, sharing the tea, and cleaning the tea set), variances reflect the current season and the social prestige of the participants. Performed well, the chadao allows participants to greet one another peacefully and serves as a point to begin business negotiations, courtly diplomacy, or a romantic liaison. Executing the chadao improperly brings dishonor upon all, particularly if the ceremony is rushed.

Although the chadao is most often conducted with an ordinary tea ceremony set (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 97), much more ornate and valuable tea ceremony sets are used in the courts of Tian Xia. Ancient practitioners of esoteric rites developed the following occult ritual (*Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 208), a subtly different version of the standard tea ceremony.

CHADAO BENEDICTION

School transmutation; Level 4

Casting Time 40 minutes

- **Components** V, S, M (enough green tea leaves of exceptional quality to brew a pot of tea), F (a tea ceremony set worth at least 150 gp), SC (at least 1 and up to 4)
- Skill Checks Diplomacy DC 30, 2 successes; Knowledge (nobility) DC 30, 2 successes

Range touch

Duration 24 hours; see text

- Saving Throw none; Spell Resistance no
- **Backlash** The primary caster takes a –4 penalty to Strength and Dexterity for 24 hours.

Failure All casters can't benefit from morale bonuses for 1 week.

The primary caster brews a pot of tea and serves it to the secondary casters in a formal ceremony. Everything, from the amount poured into each cup to the tea's temperature, must be precise. During this time, the casters can either remain silent or speak politely to one another, but never of anything crude. If the tea ceremony is interrupted in any way, the ritual fails, no matter how many successes the casters have accrued. When the casters have finished drinking the tea and successfully completed the ritual, they are filled with a sense of serenity. Each caster receives a +4 morale bonus on saving throws against fear effects for the next 24 hours.

Any caster can dismiss the ritual's effect for herself as an immediate action and gain one of the following benefits.

- The caster gains 2d10+4 temporary hit points that last for 4 hours.
- The caster is immediately cured of a single poison affecting her.
- The caster can reroll a failed Will saving throw, taking the better result. If this saving throw is against a fear effect, the caster still gains the +4 morale bonus on the reroll.
- The caster can cast a single spell of 3rd level or lower as if it were a silent and still spell.



Ecclesiastical Courts

In addition to the usual obligations of secular governance, courts in theocracies must interpret and enforce issues of religious doctrine and determine how religious laws affect everyday affairs. Theocrats usually occupy a dual role as the head of state and the head of their faith, and local nobles must balance these two hierarchies. Religiously oriented courts are not unique to theocracies; any nation with a powerful state religion (such as Cheliax) also finds spiritual tenets coloring courtly life. Several ecclesiastical courts are presented below, along with a feat useful to adherents or visitors to each of the areas presented.

CHELIAX

House Thrune acquired its stranglehold on Cheliax through the strength of its pact with Asmodeus. Diabolists remain firmly in control of the vast and sprawling Chelish bureaucracy, with Her Infernal Majestrix Abrogail Thrune II at its heart like a spider at the center of a web. Businesslike devils can be found in courts throughout Cheliax, lending malevolent overtones to all aspects of the nation's courtly life. Although worship of Asmodeus is not strictly required in Cheliax, it is a major offense to denigrate the Prince of Hell.

Countering Loophole

You can spot loopholes in magical commands, escape their effect, and bind the caster in turn.

Prerequisite: Improved Counterspell.

Benefit: When you successfully counter a charm or compulsion spell, you immediately redirect the spell against the caster as though you were the caster of the spell and the caster were the target (as long as you can cast a spell of that level). Even if the spell originally targeted multiple creatures, the caster becomes the sole target of the redirected spell. The spell's save DC remains the same, but you make any decisions about the effects of the spell (revising a *suggestion* or the conditions of a *lesser geas*, for example).

Normal: If you successfully counter a spell, both spells automatically negate each other with no other results.

Druma

The unapologetically materialistic nation of Druma is governed by adherents of the Prophecies of Kalistrade, and High Prophet Kelldor is its undisputed ruler. Although the dictates of the Prophecies are open to all, only the staggeringly wealthy merchant-lords serving in the nation's Resplendent Bureaucracy hold any real power. Anyone wishing to participate in Drumish courtly life must adhere to the strange proscriptions of the Prophecies, display ostentatious wealth, or both.

LEGALISTIC READING

Your ability to find loopholes in technical, legalistic writing extends even to magical writing on scrolls.

Prerequisites: Scribe Scroll, Linguistics 3 ranks.

Benefit: Any Wisdom check you attempt to avoid a mishap when casting a spell from a scroll fails only on a natural 1. When you cast a spell from a scroll, you can attempt a caster level check with a DC equal to 25 + the scroll's caster level as a free action. If you succeed, the magical writing does not vanish for 1 round; if the spell's casting time is no longer than a standard action, the scroll can be used again in the following round before its writing fades. You can't use this feat on a scroll a second time, and you can't use this feat if the spell on the scroll requires a material component worth more than 10 gp.

MENDEV

Mendev is a nation of idealistic crusaders worn down by the rigors of constant war against the demons of the Worldwound. Crusader Queen Galfrey serves as its leader and as an influential paladin in the church of Iomedae, leveraging both positions to bring badly needed troops to the front lines. Queen Galfrey's court is staffed with military and religious advisors who prioritize the war effort over other matters of state, a situation that irks several local lords and governors. Some of Mendev's courtiers and commanders display allegiance to other lawful or good deities such as Torag and Erastil; commitment to the war effort outweighs adherence to the Iomedaean faith.

RIGHTEOUS ORATOR

You know words are weapons, and you allow no evil creature to best you in a social setting.

Prerequisites: Diplomacy 3 ranks, smite evil class feature.

Benefit: While in a verbal debate, such as a court proceeding, negotiation, or verbal duel (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue* 176), you can target another creature participating in the debate as a swift action and expend one of your uses of smite evil. If you target a creature that is not evil, your smite is wasted with no effect. If the target is evil, you add your level in the class granting the smite evil feature as a bonus on your Diplomacy checks and on your Sense Motive checks against deceit attempted by the target. You also gain a morale bonus equal to your Charisma modifier on Will saves against effects originating from the target. This effect remains until you or the target is no longer actively participating in the verbal debate.

NIDAL

Nidal's Umbral Court holds absolute power in that shadow-haunted land, but the extent—and even some principal members—of its hereditary aristocracy are wholly unknown to outsiders. Most of the business of governance occurs in the manors and minor palaces on the fringes of Pangolais, where the dictates of the Umbral Court are presented by loyal factotums and interpreted by magistrates and senior bureaucrats. The Umbral Court expressly forbids the worship of gods other than Zon-Kuthon within the nation's borders. Faith in the Midnight Lord alone is so pervasive as to be automatically assumed by most people in Nidal's shadowy courts—something that dissidents can use to their advantage.

CONCEAL AURA

You can weaken your alignment aura to hide the true extent of your faith.

Prerequisite: Chaotic, evil, good, or lawful alignment.

Benefit: As a full-round action, you can reduce the power of the aura generated by your alignment for 1 minute. During this time, for the purposes of spells that detect alignment, your aura's power is lessened by one step (for example, if you are a 12th-level neutral good fighter, your aura power is faint rather than moderate). You also gain a +2 bonus on Bluff checks to send secret messages.

RAZMIRAN

The cunning human Razmir has convinced his nation that he is a living god, and the bureaucracy of his nation and the church of his faithful are one and the same. The most powerful political figures in Razmiran are Razmir's priests, and anyone doubting or worse, outright defying—the faith faces exile or execution. An apostate's worldly goods are claimed by her political enemies, making intrigue and treachery commonplace despite the harmonious facade the nation presents to outsiders.

Sense Magical Interrogation

You have developed an uncanny sixth sense for detecting when your words are subject to magical scrutiny.

Prerequisites: Sense Motive 3 ranks, Spellcraft 3 ranks.

Benefit: Whenever you are subject to a spell, spell-like ability, or supernatural ability that can discern whether or not you are telling the truth, you are automatically aware of such magic. You are not immune to such spells or abilities, but you can choose to remain silent or avoid answering questions. If you concentrate as a full-round action, you detect the source of the spell or ability and can attempt a Spellcraft check to determine the exact spell, spell-like ability, or supernatural ability being used (DC = 15 +the spell level, or 15 + 1/2 the caster level for a non-spell effect).

Subdomains of Rule

Throughout Golarion, religious scholars and priests who are affiliated with ecclesiastical courts often learn to focus their deities' influence in unique ways. The following subdomains (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 86) reflect the influences of a court within a theocracy or with a powerful state religion.

CHIVALRY SUBDOMAIN

Associated Domain: Glory.

Associated Deities: Iomedae, Shizuru.

Replacement Power: The following granted power replaces the touch of glory power of the Glory domain.

Bolstering Touch (Sp): You can touch a willing creature as a standard action, bracing it against frightening situations and allowing it to remain calm. The first fear effect that would affect the subject within the next hour is suppressed for the first 1d4 rounds of its effect. If you touch a creature currently suffering from an ongoing fear effect, this ability instead suppresses the ongoing fear effect for 1 round. The rounds during which the subject ignores the triggering fear effect

still count against the effect's duration. If the fear effect is suppressed

for longer than it lasts, the subject isn't affected by the fear effect at all. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

Replacement Domain Spells: 1st—remove fear, 3rd—heroism, 6th—greater heroism.

Sovereignty Subdomain

Associated Domain: Law.

Associated Deities: Asmodeus, Dispater, Iomedae, Lissala, Zon-Kuthon.

Replacement Power: The following granted power replaces the staff of order power of the Law domain.

Demand Subjugation (Sp): At 8th level, you can force a defeated creature to accept a binding pact as a condition of its surrender, as if you are using lesser geas, except the creature must have a number of Hit Dice equal to or less than your cleric level. At 16th level, this ability functions as per geas/quest. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Wisdom modifier.

 Replacement
 Domain
 Spells:

 2nd—castigate^{APG},
 5th—mass

 castigate^{APG},
 9th—overwhelming

 presence^{UM}.



INVESTED WITH DIVINITY

The designs of deities are inscrutable to mortals, even to those who rule empires. Rarely, rulers receive supernatural boons demonstrating their divinely sanctioned right to rule. Some of these invested regents have held this protective power since birth; others acquire it when they are appointed as a successor by a holy figure or ascend to a throne. Still others suddenly receive this divine sanction for no clear reason at all, but then acquire a position of leadership much later in life. The only commonality is that these divinely appointed regents have a destiny to rule. Invested regents can deflect blows, recover from disastrous injuries, and swiftly dispatch those who would end their divinely protected lives.

The following archetype is available to any monk, including the unchained monk presented in *Pathfinder RPG Pathfinder Unchained*.



INVESTED REGENT (MONK ARCHETYPE)

The invested regent has been handpicked by inscrutable divine forces to command others—either at the present or at some future time. The invested regent can harness a divine spark to perform superhuman stunts, influence others, and escape injury. Invested regents come from all races and walks of life, but they are more likely to be nobleborn in their cultures. Although some invested regents are acutely aware of their powers' divine origins (such as powers gained from an investment ceremony to Asmodeus in the nation of Cheliax), others do not know the source of their abilities. Invested regents have strong personalities and a destiny to rule.

Investiture (Su): An invested regent gains a pool of investiture points, supernatural energy he can use to call upon amazing abilities and divine protection. The number of points in the invested regent's investiture pool is equal to 1/2 his monk level + his Charisma modifier. As long as he has at least 1 point in his investiture pool, the invested regent can select one of his saving throws as a swift action and gain a +1 sacred bonus on saving throws of that type for 1 round. If he spends 1 point from his investiture pool during this swift action, he instead gains a sacred bonus equal to his Charisma modifier on the saving throw selected.

A character with this feature and the ki pool class feature tracks investiture points and ki points separately.

This ability replaces the bonus feat gained at 1st level.

Vested Power (Ex or Sp): At 2nd level and every 4 monk levels thereafter, an invested regent can select a vested power (see the Vested Powers section below) for which he qualifies in place of selecting a monk bonus feat. The invested regent need not do so and can instead take the bonus feat, but once the decision to take a bonus feat or a vested power is made, he can't change it.

This replaces the bonus feat the invested regent gives up for the vested power.

ν_{ested} Powers

Vested powers are abilities that draw on an invested regent's investiture pool. Vested powers are divided into two categories: feats and spells.

Requirements: All vested powers have a minimum level requirement to select them. An invested regent who hasn't reached the required monk level cannot select that vested power.

Activation: Most vested powers require the invested regent to spend investiture points; the exact amount is listed after the vested power. Vested powers that cost o investiture points don't require the invested regent to have any investiture points in his investiture pool to use the ability. The saving throw against an invested regent's vested power, if any, is equal to 10 + 1/2 the invested regent's monk level + his Charisma bonus.

Feats: These vested powers duplicate the effects of specific feats. An invested regent doesn't need to qualify for a feat to select it as a vested power. For example, an invested regent can select Spring Attack as a vested power even if he doesn't meet the prerequisites for selecting Spring Attack as a feat. Activating one of these vested powers is a free action on the invested regent's turn; until the start of his next turn, the invested regent is treated as if he had that feat. Feats marked with an asterisk (*) can also be activated as an immediate action when it isn't the invested regent's turn.

Spells: These vested powers duplicate the effects of a spell and are spell-like abilities. An invested regent's monk level is the caster level for these spell-like abilities, and he uses Charisma to determine his concentration check bonus. Activating one of these vested powers is a standard action.

2ND-LEVEL VESTED POWERS

Comprehend languages (2 investiture points) Divine favor (1 investiture point) Dodge* (0 investiture points) Entropic shield (1 investiture point) Expeditious retreat (2 investiture points) Feather step^{APG} (self only, 1 investiture point) Hide from undead (self only, 1 investiture point) Sanctuary (self only, 1 investiture point) Shield of faith (self only, 1 investiture point)

6th-Level Vested Powers

Calm emotions (1 investiture point) Cloak of winds^{APG} (self only, 2 investiture points) Enthrall (2 investiture points) Gaseous form (self only, 1 investiture point) Helping hand (1 investiture point) Heroic Defiance^{APG}, * (1 investiture point) Heroic Recovery^{APG}, * (1 investiture point) Protective spirit^{APG} (2 investiture points) Remove disease (self only, 2 investiture points) Sidestep^{APG}, * (1 investiture point) Snatch Arrows * (1 investiture point) Spring Attack (1 investiture point) Tongues (self only, 2 investiture points)

10th-Level Vested Powers

Air walk (self only, 2 investiture points) Death ward (self only, 2 investiture points) Dimension door (self only, 2 investiture points) Discern lies (3 investiture points) Divine power (3 investiture points) Freedom of movement (self only, 3 investiture points) Improved Blind-Fight^{APG, *} (1 investiture point) Improved Great Fortitude* (1 investiture point) Improved Iron Will* (1 investiture point) Improved Lightning Reflexes* (1 investiture point) *Mark of justice* (3 investiture points) *Meutralize poison* (self only, 3 investiture points) *Restoration* (self only, 2 investiture points) *Spell resistance* (self only, 2 investiture points) Wind Stance (2 investiture points)

14th-Level Vested Powers

Antilife shell (3 investiture points) Disarming Strike^{APG} (2 investiture points) Greater Blind-Fight^{APG}, * (2 investiture points) Greater command (3 investiture points) Greater forbid action^{UM} (3 investiture points) Lightning Stance (3 investiture points) Shadow walk (self only, 3 investiture points) Unwilling shield^{APG} (3 investiture points)

18TH-LEVEL VESTED POWERS

Divine vessel^{APG} (3 investiture points) Foresight (self only, 3 investiture points) Greater restoration (self only, 3 investiture points) Regenerate (self only, 3 investiture points) Repulsion (3 investiture points)

Vested Feats

Some rulers chosen by divine powers focus both their energy and their training to hone the abilities granted to them. The following feats are particularly useful for such invested regents.

ENNOBLED RESISTANCES

The protection and resilience granted by your investiture is particularly strong.

Prerequisites: Investiture class feature, character level 4th.

Benefit: When you improve one of your saving throws with your investiture class feature as a swift action, select a second type of saving throw to gain the same bonus.

Extra Investiture Points

Whatever power has invested you to guide your destiny has instilled you with additional energy.

Prerequisite: Investiture class feature.

Benefit: Your investiture points increase by 2.

Special: You can take Extra Investiture Points multiple times. The effects stack.

Extra Vested Power

You have been invested with additional powers to guide your destiny.

Prerequisite: Vested power class feature.

Benefit: You gain an additional vested power. You must meet the level requirement for this vested power.

Special: You can take Extra Vested Power multiple times.



ENEMIES OF RULE

No sovereign is without enemies. Every court hosts conspirators who envision themselves upon the throne, and without agents to thwart these plots, a ruler won't reign for long. These royal agents serve many functions. Some focus on neutralizing (or manipulating) rival nations' spies, others seek out and disrupt traitorous plots, and still others forward the ruler's agenda by any means necessary. Their victories bring little public glory, for their strength lies in anonymity. Still, these agents know that their tireless efforts are key to the preservation of their sovereigns' rulership.

DIRTY WORK

Doing a ruler's bidding can often be messy, requiring both a sharp blade and an even sharper mind.

BUTTERFLY BLADE (SLAYER ARCHETYPE)

Followers of a tradition dating back to the ancient empire of Yixing, the yellow-robed agents known as butterfly blades now operate primarily in Goka, where many serve the city's politically savvy ruler. Butterfly blades work in the shadows, eliminating threats with their namesake weapons and intimidating troublesome nobles.

Studied Stalker (Ex): A butterfly blade gains the stalker class feature at 1st level, rather than at 7th level. The butterfly blade doesn't add his studied target bonus on Knowledge or Survival checks.

This ability alters studied target and replaces track.

Bonus Feats: Whenever a butterfly blade would gain a slayer talent, he can instead select a feat from the following list: Cutting Humiliation^{UI}, Enforcer^{APG}, Intimidating Prowess, Nerve-Racking Negotiator^{UI}, or Threatening Negotiator^{UI}. The butterfly blade does not need to meet the feat's prerequisites.

This alters slayer talents.

Butterfly's Kiss (Ex): Butterfly blades train to inflict painful cuts rather than lethal ones. A butterfly blade can deal nonlethal damage with butterfly swords (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment 25*) without taking a penalty on attack rolls. At 3rd level, a butterfly blade gets a +1 bonus on attack rolls with butterfly swords, and the damage die of any butterfly sword he wields increases by one step; at 9th level and again at 15th level, the attack bonus increases by 1 and the damage die increases by an additional step.

At 6th level, the butterfly blade gains the knockout class feature (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 24), as per a brawler of his class level -2.

This ability replaces sneak attack.

Innocent Butterfly (Sp): At 7th level, a butterfly blade can use *aura of the unremarkable*^{UI} once per day as a spelllike ability. At 11th level, he can use it twice per day, and at 14th level, it becomes a constant spell-like ability that he can activate or deactivate as a free action. The ability's caster level is equal to his slayer class level, and the DC is equal to 10 + the number of ranks the butterfly blade has in either Bluff or Intimidate, whichever is higher.

This ability replaces stalker, swift tracker, and quarry.

Deadly Butterfly (Ex): At 19th level, a butterfly blade becomes a bloody whirlwind in combat. When he strikes a foe with a butterfly sword, he automatically confirms critical threats. In addition, any butterfly sword he wields is treated as if it has the *speed* weapon special ability. If the weapon already has the *speed* weapon special ability, this doesn't stack.

This ability replaces improved quarry.

Dragonscale Loyalist (Vigilante Archetype)

Since the disappearance of the Rogarvias, Brevoy draws ever closer to civil war. The rule of King-Regent Noleski Surtova grows increasingly tenuous; to hold his position, he sends handpicked agents into the kingdom's courts to flush out traitors to the Dragonscale Throne. When not acting as courtiers, these agents don fearsome draconic masks, becoming anonymous protectors of the kingregent's rule.

Ruby Courtier (Ex): Surtova's minions pose as minor nobles studying the Aldori swordlord traditions common throughout Brevoy. At 1st level, a Dragonscale loyalist gains Exotic Weapon Proficiency (Aldori dueling sword^{ISWG}) as a bonus feat. His social identity must appear to be that of a noble, and he can't select double time, many guises, or any social talent inappropriate for a noble social identity.

This ability alters social talents and replaces the 1st-level social talent.

Reflexive Reaction (Ex): A Dragonscale loyalist lacks the conviction of other vigilantes, but his reactions are keenly honed. At 3rd level, if a Dragonscale loyalist acts during a surprise round, he can take a full round's worth of actions. If he does, he is staggered during the first full round of combat.

This ability replaces unshakable.

False Allegiance (Ex): Eventually, a loyalist begins training to infiltrate one of Brevoy's great houses. At 5th level, a Dragonscale loyalist chooses one of the seven houses of Brevoy, gaining a bonus feat and a special ability appropriate to the chosen house. He need not meet the feat's prerequisites.

House Garess: The Dragonscale loyalist gains Sure Grasp^{UC} and dwarves' stonecunning racial trait.

House Lebeda: The Dragonscale loyalist gains Skill Focus (Appraise). He can also resell items for 60% of their listed value, rather than 50%. The purchase limit of the settlement must be high enough to accommodate the increased value.

House Lodovka: The Dragonscale loyalist gains Sea Legs^{UC}. When attempting Swim checks, he ignores the armor check penalty of light or medium armor. If the loyalist has the heavy training vigilante talent, this applies to heavy armor as well.

House Medvyed: The Dragonscale loyalist gains Endurance and the druid's resist nature's lure class feature. House Orlovsky: The Dragonscale loyalist gains Call Truce^{UI} and a +3 bonus to his CMD.

House Rogarvia: The Dragonscale loyalist gains Skill Focus (Knowledge [history]) and a +2 bonus on Diplomacy checks to gather information. This bonus increases to +4 when gathering information related to the Rogarvias.

House Surtova: The Dragonscale loyalist gains Persuasive and a +4 bonus on Sense Motive checks against creatures that profess to be his allies.

This ability replaces startling appearance.

Dragonscale Vigilance (Su): A Dragonscale loyalist becomes supernaturally perceptive to plots against his lord. At 11th level, while in his vigilante identity, a Dragonscale loyalist is treated as constantly being under the effects of *perceive betrayal* (see below). This effect's caster level is equal to the Dragonscale loyalist's vigilante level, and he doesn't require material components or a focus.

This ability replaces the vigilante's

frightening appearance. Conqueror's Wrath (Ex): Inspired by the deeds of Choral the Conqueror, a loyalist can rampage through enemy ranks. At 17th level, as a fullround action, a Dragonscale loyalist can make a full attack and move up to his speed. The loyalist can pause at any point or points during the movement, make one or more of his attacks, and continue moving. Creatures making attacks of opportunity against the loyalist during this movement gain a +4 bonus on their attack and damage rolls. Using this ability counts as using a vigilante talent.

This ability replaces stunning appearance.

Infiltration Spells

Both potential traitors to the crown and those sworn to protect it can benefit from the following spells.

FALSE FACE

School transmutation (polymorph); Level alchemist 1, bard 1, inquisitor 1, mesmerist 1, sorcerer/wizard 1, witch 1 Casting Time 1 standard action Components V, S, M (a folded-paper mask)

Range personal Target you

Duration 1 hour/level

This spell alters details of your appearance so that you are no longer recognizable as yourself. Your new appearance is within the norms for your race, ethnicity, and gender. You lack control over the details of your appearance; however, when casting *false face*, you can choose an appearance you previously used, allowing you to maintain specific identities.

PERCEIVE BETRAYAL

School divination; **Level** cleric 6, inquisitor 4, sorcerer/wizard 7, witch 6

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S, M (12 drops of blood), F (a silver circlet

worth 500 gp)

Range personal

Target you Duration 1 hour/level

By donning a silver circlet anointed with blood, you gain the ability to sense traitorous intent toward a single person to whom you defer, designated when you cast the spell. The spell alerts you when a creature with traitorous intent is within 200 feet, although it doesn't identify the source. By concentrating, you can learn the strength of the greatest threat, based on the following categories. *Ill Will*: Someone dislikes your liege, but

isn't planning to act against her.

Plotting: Someone is actively conspiring against your liege.

Imminent: Someone is in the process of carrying out a plot against your liege.

Creatures that are immune to mind-affecting or thought-detecting effects cannot have their intent detected by *perceive betrayal*.

PIERCE FACADE

School divination; Level alchemist 1, bard 1, cleric 1, inquisitor 1, psychic 1, sorcerer/wizard 1, witch 1 Casting Time 1 standard action Components V, S, M/DF (an eagle's eye) Range touch Target creature touched Duration 10 minutes/level Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); Spell Resistance yes (harmless) The target gains a +5 insight bonus on Perception checks to see through disguises. This bonus increases to +10 at caster level 7th.



CONDUCT AND DECORUM

A courtly setting is a unique environment where words are weapons and allegiances are armor. Any visitors to a court must present themselves with proper conduct; for most courts across Golarion, this means good manners and strict adherence to social hierarchies. Only the most confident rulers allow courtiers and visitors to be armed in their presence, making verbal sparring and social combat the best methods for earning allies and eliminating rivals.

SKILL OPTIONS

Characters who find themselves immersed in courtly politics must display creativity and decorum while bringing their skills to bear. Each description below expands the options for one or more skills. Checks using these new options work as normal for the relevant skill except where noted.

Assess Lineage (Knowledge [nobility])

You have an encyclopedic knowledge of aristocratic families, enhancing your ability to spot pretenders.

Check: When you attempt a Sense Motive check to oppose a Bluff check from someone pretending to be a member of the aristocracy or you attempt a Linguistics check to detect a forged patent of nobility, letter from an aristocrat, or similar document, you can attempt a Knowledge (nobility) check and use the result of the Knowledge check in place of your Bluff or Linguistics check result. You must be trained in Knowledge (nobility) to use this skill option.

Action: None when used to oppose a Bluff check, or 1 round per page examined when used to detect a forgery.

COURTLY MANNERS (DIPLOMACY)

You are skilled in focusing your diplomatic skills on a key member of a court, thereby improving your standing in the eyes of everyone present.

Check: While in a courtly setting, you present yourself to an NPC ruler or other leader (such as the head of a trade delegation) with appropriate pleasantries and decorum. Attempt a Diplomacy check to change the initial attitude of this leader as usual. The number of steps you adjust this leader's starting attitude also adjusts, by the same number of steps, the starting attitude of everyone who is loyal to the leader and can see and hear your interaction. For example, if you adjust the attitude of a queen from indifferent to friendly, you also adjust the attitude of her bodyguards from unfriendly to indifferent and the attitude of her sycophantic courtiers from friendly to helpful. If you worsen the leader's starting attitude with a failed Diplomacy check, you also worsen the attitudes of nearby attendants; attendants made hostile may attack or expel you to protect their leader's honor.

Action: Using Diplomacy to demonstrate your courtly manners requires at least 1 minute of continuous interaction with the leader.

Leverage Influence (Intimidate)

You can threaten an opponent with your powerful allies and associations rather than your physical size and prowess.

> Check: Attempt an Intimidate check to force a target to act friendly to you as usual. You must mention your influential allies and the dire consequences they could bring to bear on the target as part of this check, and your target must understand your words. If your claim of association is patently implausible-such as a ragged beggar claiming to be a confidant of the duke-your check automatically fails. When attempting this check, don't include any modifiers that involve bullying the target with your physicality, such as from the Intimidating Prowess feat or for being larger than your target. You don't take a penalty on this check for being smaller than your target. For every 5 by which your Intimidate check result exceeds the DC, the duration of the effect is extended by an additional 1d6×10 minutes.

> > Action: Using Intimidate to leverage your position requires 1 minute of continuous interaction.

Persuasive Suggestion (Diplomacy and Intimidate)

You can explain the detrimental effects of a creature's action or inaction, encouraging it to change its intended course to instead act as you suggest and thus avoid harm.

Check: You can describe to your target that its current course of

action will lead it to some degree of harm and insist that it act differently to avoid that end. For example, you might try to convince a guard not to turn away an important ambassador, as doing so will get him in trouble later, or you might attempt to dissuade a ruler from attacking a well-defended neighboring nation to prevent a costly war. You must genuinely believe in the harm that will result; for example, you must think it likely that the guard will be reprimanded for turning away the ambassador. If this is not the case, the Bluff skill should be used instead.

You first attempt a Diplomacy check to convince the target to listen to you while you explain the consequences of its action or inaction. This Diplomacy check has the same DC as a check to adjust the target's attitude, including any of the following modifiers that apply.

C	iplomacy DC
Situation	Modifier
Degree of resulting harm is small	+5
Target believes the harm is speculative or unlikely	+5
Degree of resulting harm is fatal or catastrophic	-5
Target believes the harm is immediate or likely	-5

You then attempt an Intimidate check to force the subject to act friendly to you with respect to changing its intended course of action. If you succeeded at the Diplomacy check, reduce the Intimidate DC by 5; reduce the DC by an additional 5 if you succeeded at the Diplomacy check by 10 or more. If you failed the Diplomacy check by 5 or more, instead increase the Intimidate check DC by 5.

Action: Logically presenting the consequences with Diplomacy and insisting on an alternate course of action with Intimidate each require at least 1 minute of continuous interaction. This can be difficult to arrange with a hostile creature.

$\mathcal{V}_{\text{ERBAL}}$ Duels

Verbal duels (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue* 176) can represent the complex social interactions found in a court. The following new tactics are particularly useful in courtly verbal duels.

CREDIBILITY CHALLENGE

You insinuate that your opponent's arguments are invalid or desperate because of his personal failings, criminal background, or low birth.

Associated Skills: Intimidate, Knowledge (history), Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility).

Interaction: You take a -2 penalty on the associated skill check when using a credibility challenge to counter the presence tactic. You gain a +2 bonus on the associated skill check if your opponent or your audience is aware you have a higher social standing than your opponent. This higher social standing might be due to noble birth or to life circumstances; for example, an honest trader might be deemed to have a higher social standing than a criminal (even a reformed criminal).

Special: Courtly audiences usually have a positive bias toward a credibility challenge. A character that successfully seeds a positive bias in a courtly audience earns 2 edges rather than 1; her chosen duelist can spend these only on a credibility challenge.

Polite Befuddlement

You pretend to be unclear about your opponent's points, encouraging him to explain further, provide examples, or otherwise become distracted from his main point. When he provides a poor example or contradictory explanation to your feigned ignorance, you pounce on his error in order to invalidate his position. Polite befuddlement is most effective when countering tactics based on structure or reason.

Associated Skills: Bluff, Diplomacy, Perform (comedy).

Interaction: You gain a +2 bonus on the associated skill check when you use polite befuddlement to counter the allegory, logic, or rhetoric tactics.

Special: You can't use polite befuddlement as an opener. As polite befuddlement relies on an impression of poor understanding or simple thinking, audiences rarely have a positive bias toward polite befuddlement.

PSYCHOLOGICAL MANIPULATION

This insidious tactic is used to carefully attack an opponent, rather than an opponent's argument. You subtly question your opponent's memory and sanity, insisting that past events are not as your opponent remembers them or trivializing your opponent's position. Psychological manipulation is most effective when the opponent lacks witnesses to draw upon for support.

Associated Skills: Bluff, Intimidate, Perform (act).

Interaction: A duelist takes a –2 penalty on the associated skill check when countering psychological manipulation if the duel has no audience.

Special: When you win an exchange with psychological manipulation, your opponent is thrown off balance and loses 1 edge of her choice (if she has any).

Spurious Argument

You refute an argument that is similar to, but subtly different than, your opponent's actual position. This allows you to exploit the difference to make your opponent's position seem erroneous or foolish. A spurious argument is particularly useful against nebulous emotional appeals, but crumbles beneath rigid logic that identifies the tactic's false distinctions.

Associated Skills: Bluff, Perform (act), Perform (oratory).

Interaction: You gain a +2 bonus on the associated skill check when you use a spurious argument to counter the allegory or emotional appeals tactics. A duelist using logic to counter spurious argument gains a +2 bonus on the associated skill check.

Special: You can turn a well-crafted spurious argument against your opponent later. When you win an exchange with a spurious argument, you gain 1 edge that you can use only with mockery, a red herring, or wit.



COURTLY REGALIA

In the courts of nobility, one's first impression is made before a single word is spoken. Those who hope to have any influence must dress and accessorize properly, whether in the salons of Caliphas or the Black Sovereign's palace in Numeria. Beyond this, each court has its own unwritten dress code, and adventurers and courtiers alike must take care how they present themselves. Pomp and ceremony are the norm, and those who exceed their stations or dress with an insulting degree of informality—knowingly or not—face humiliation and ruined ambition. The following items are useful to anyone seeking to walk the halls of the powerful.

MANNERLY DRESS

The following items help those who want to look their best.

LONG GLOVES

PRICE 15 GP Weight —

These full-length gloves of layered silk are popular among Kalistocrats and others who disdain physical contact. The wearer gains a +4 circumstance bonus on saving throws against contact poisons on objects he touches.

LOVER'S BREATH	PRICE 200 GP
LUVER 3 DREATH	WEIGHT —

This alchemical perfume is distilled from a blend of humanoid pheromones and fey sweat. When applied as a full-round action, it grants the wearer a +2 circumstance bonus on all Charisma checks and Charisma-based skill checks for 1 hour. During this time, the wearer takes a -2 penalty on saving throws against charm and fascination effects originating from fey.

Long-term use of lover's breath eventually results in physical changes, causing the user to vaguely resemble a fey creature such as a nymph or dryad, although these changes are only cosmetic.

OSTENTATIOUS GARMENT

PRICE 10 GP WEIGHT 1 lb.

This term covers items not listed elsewhere, such as elaborate wigs, silk-lined cloaks, and ruffled blouses. While such garments usually offers no benefit beyond fashion, a silksworn occultist must wear several such garments of suitable quality to access her magic.

VEII	PRICE 40 GP
VEIL	WEIGHT —

Whether made of sheer gauze or thicker material, a veil is useful for hiding one's facial expressions. While worn, a veil grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Bluff checks; however, the wearer treats all other creatures as having concealment. The wearer has a 50% chance to avoid gaze attacks, as if averting his eyes.

REFINED ACCESSORIES

When a courtier of means on an important mission acquires an audience with a noted ruler, she often employs one or more of the following magic items to assist her in her duties.

CHOKER OF BODY ALTERATION		PRICE 2,400 GP
SLOT neck CL 3rd		WEIGHT —
AURA faint transmutation		

This unobtrusive but fashionable velvet choker allows the wearer to change certain aspects of her physical form. Once per day on command, the choker can alter the wearer's body in one of the following ways: adopt the physical characteristics of a different gender, appear up to 10 years older or younger, become up to 10% taller or shorter, or become up to 10% thinner or heavier. This is a polymorph effect. This alteration does not change any of the wearer's statistics, such as size category or ability scores, although it does provide a +2 circumstance bonus on Disguise checks. The choker can provide only one alteration at a time, and its effects last until the choker is removed or 24 hours pass, whichever comes first.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 1,200 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, alter self, wizened appearance ^u or youthful	
appearance ^{um}	

HEADBAND OF SOCIAL COMPETENCE		PRICE 1,000 GP
SLOT headband CL 1st		WEIGHT —
AURA faint divination		

This simple yet elegant silver headband mentally warns the wearer before she commits a social misstep, which includes any action that would increase the DCs of Diplomacy checks to alter the attitudes of those around her or worsen the attitude of a person that the wearer considers very important. This effect functions similarly to that of a *phylactery of faithfulness*, except no contemplation is required; the headband simply alerts the wearer of the consequences before she can perform the action.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS COST 500 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, cultural adaptation

PHANTOM ENTOURAGE		PRICE 9,000 GP
SLOT shoulders CL 6th		WEIGHT —
AURA moderate illusion		

This fashionable silken shawl is incredibly light. Once per day on command, a *phantom entourage* surrounds its wearer with 1d4+2 illusions of attractive socialites. These illusions cluster closely around the wearer, laugh at his jokes, and generally stroke his ego with fawning flattery. This functions similarly to a *mirror image* spell, except an attacker has a 50% chance of ignoring the effect (as the illusions don't match the wearer). In addition, for every two illusory socialites the wearer currently has attending to him, he gains a +1 circumstance bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Perform (sing) checks and takes a -2 penalty on Stealth checks. This effect lasts for 6 hours.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS COST 4,500 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, Extend Spell, mirror image

HEROES OF THE HIGH COURT

SILKSWORN (OCCULTIST ARCHETYPE)

Occultists who recognize that flashy garb and fashionable accoutrements can be just as powerful as psychically charged relics in the right situations are known as silksworn. They draw their power from wearing luxurious garments and can be found in many noble courts throughout Golarion, though they often keep their abilities secret. Silksworn are even found among the mystics and the magical practitioners of Nex, each seeking the patronage of one or more of the Arclords.

Class Skills: A silksworn adds Bluff and Knowledge (nobility) to his list of class skills, instead of Knowledge (engineering) and Knowledge (planes).

This alters the occultist's class skills.

Spells: A silksworn's spells are considered arcane spells, not psychic spells, and his spells use verbal and somatic components instead of thought and emotion components.

This alters the occultist's spells.

Implements: When a silksworn chooses an implement school, he does not choose a specific object. Instead, a silksworn must be wearing an ostentatious garment or magic item worth 10 gp or more of the appropriate type and in the appropriate slot: abjuration (wrists), conjuration (shoulders), divination (eyes), enchantment (neck), evocation (hands), illusion (head), necromancy (chest), and transmutation (feet). A silksworn who does not meet this requirement is treated as lacking the appropriate implement for the purpose of his class features, including spellcasting.

This alters the occultist's implements.

Cantrips: Each time he selects an implement school, a silksworn gains one cantrip, or o-level arcane spell (including when he selects a school that he has already learned to use). These cantrips otherwise behave as an occultist's knacks.

This ability replaces knacks.

Mental Focus (Su): The silksworn's available mental focus is equal to his occultist level + his Intelligence modifier + his Charisma modifier.

This ability alters mental focus.

Devoted Mystic: A silksworn is proficient with only simple weapons and isn't proficient with any armor or shields.

At 1st level, the silksworn gains access to four implement schools instead of two. At 2nd level and every 4 occultist levels thereafter, the silksworn gains access to an additional implement school, to a maximum of nine schools at 18th level.

At 8th, 12th, and 16th levels, the silksworn increases the number of spells of each level he can cast each day by one. This does not allow the silksworn to cast spells of a level he does not yet have access to.

This ability alters implements and the occultist's weapon and armor proficiencies, and replaces outside contact.

Silksworn Eloquence (Ex): At 8th level, a silksworn gains a +1 bonus on Bluff and Diplomacy checks for each magical article of clothing occupying one of his implement schools' magic item slots. This ability replaces magic circles.

Silksworn Deception (Su): At 12th level, a silksworn can hide his speech and gestures within his extravagant clothing. Whenever the silksworn casts a spell, he can attempt a Bluff check opposed by Sense Motive checks from those observing him. Those who fail are unaware of his spellcasting, unless an effect obviously originates from the silksworn.

This ability replaces binding circles.

Silksworn Arcana (Su): At 16th level, when a silksworn casts a spell while wearing a magic article of clothing in the appropriate school's magic item slot, the spell's saving throw DC increases by 2.

This ability replaces fast circles.

Implement Mastery (Su): At 20th level, a silksworn chooses two implement schools instead of one, and implement mastery's effects apply to both. The silksworn gains 4 additional points of mental focus for each school's implement.

This alters the occultist's implement mastery.



IMPLEMENTS OF RULE

Many rulers across Golarion wield specific symbols of their power, such as crowns or scepters. These items are often heavily ornamented and legitimize the ruler's authority when worn or wielded in public, and some of them have been signs of rulership for many generations. More than mere items (even for magical ones), these implements represent the rightful authority to rule and can be priceless within the ruler's domain.

Emblems of Royalty

The following items are emblems of royalty that might be found in a variety of courts.

BASTION CROWN		PRICE 4,500 GP
SLOT head CL 5th		WEIGHT 2 lbs.
AURA faint conjuration and conjuration		

Often worn by paranoid rulers, this simple iron crown is thick and heavy. The wearer is immune to ninja, rogue, and slayer talents that add effects to a sneak attack, such as bleeding attack or crippling strike, though the wearer takes the extra damage from sneak attacks as normal. In addition, the wearer gains a +4 insight bonus on saving throws against death effects and an assassin's death attack ability. Finally, the wearer can cast *neutralize poison* on himself once per day, using the caster level of the item for any caster level check required.

 CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS
 COST 2,250 GP

 Craft Wondrous Item, death ward, neutralize poison, stoneskin

BOOMING SCEPTER		PRICE 34,000 GP
SLOT none CL 7th		WEIGHT 4 lbs.
AURA moderate evocation		

This bejeweled scepter constantly emits a low hum that amplifies the wielder's voice. A *booming scepter* acts as a +1 *thundering light mace* that grants the wielder a +5 competence bonus on Intimidate checks and the ability to use *shout*, as per the spell, once per day. When a *booming scepter* is held in both hands, the wielder's voice carries far enough to be heard by all creatures within 1 mile, regardless of ambient noise or intervening obstacles, although this feature cannot penetrate the area of a *silence* spell. **CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS COST** 17,000 GP

Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Rod, shout, ventriloquism

CHASTISING BATON		PRICE 5,000 GP
SLOT none CL 7th		WEIGHT 3 lbs.
AURA moderate necromancy		

This short metal rod is etched with the outlines of various weapons and is usually owned by strong-armed rulers who keep a tight rein on their nation's military. A *chastising baton* adds 1 to the saving throw DC of any compulsion spell cast by the wielder and adds the pain^{UM} descriptor to the spell. Creatures that succeed at a Will save against a compulsion spell cast by the wielder are racked with pain, taking 1d6 points of nonlethal damage and becoming sickened for 1 round.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 2,500 GP
Craft Rod, <i>pain strike</i> ^{APG}	

CROWN OF FALSE RULE		PRICE 30,000 GP
SLOT head CL 5th		WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA faint illusion		

This item appears to be a crown studded with gems, but its valuable metals are only veneers and its gems are clever fakes. The wielder can alter the crown's appearance at will to that of any crown or circlet she has seen before, but only for as long as she wears the crown. In any form, the crown is detectable as a valueless fake with a successful DC 30 Appraise check. The wearer of a crown of false rule is considered the rightful political ruler of wherever she is for the purposes of magical spells or effects; for example, the wearer can receive the benefits of a magic throne (see below), draw a sword that can be removed only by a king, open a vault that unlocks at the duchess's touch, and so forth. This ability does not function in areas without a monarch or similar ruler (such as in a democracy), and it is not effective against discern location or the actions of deities or similarly powerful beings. For the purposes of detect spells (and spells with similar capabilities), crown of false rule does not appear to radiate a magical aura.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS COST 15,000 GP Craft Wondrous Item, magic aura, veil

MAGICAL THRONES

A ruler's physical seat is as much a symbol of authority as a scepter or crown. Many courts enforce stiff penalties including execution—for unlawfully sitting upon or even touching the throne of a rightful ruler. Some thrones are invested with magical power to match their reputations.

A magical throne is a stationary magic item used to focus the power of a ruler at a fixed point. A throne is normally 5 feet wide, 5 feet long, and 10 feet high, although specific dimensions vary considerably. Thrones are heavy and always fixed in place; a successful DC 25 Strength check is required to uproot or move them (though this could be a higher DC, depending upon a throne's size and weight). Moving a throne purges its magical abilities, although the throne's magic can be restored with a lengthy and expensive rededication ritual (generally taking several weeks and costing half the market price of the throne).

All magic thrones are designed with a magical connection to a specific kingdom, nation, or tribe. Most magic thrones grant a *heroism* effect to the current ruler of the kingdom for as long as the ruler is seated upon the throne. Regardless of the throne's size, only one creature can receive this effect at a time. While a ruler is seated on a magic throne, another creature within 20 feet of the throne can kneel, bow, or

HEROES OF THE HIGH COURT

otherwise make an obeisance to gain a temporary blessing from the throne (treat this as speaking a command word to activate a magic item). The creature need not feel genuine allegiance to the ruler to gain this blessing; the physical act of loyalty is sufficient to receive the throne's blessing. The effect of this blessing is described in the individual throne entries. Unless otherwise specified, this blessing ends after 24 hours. The throne can provide its blessing only once per creature per day. Because a throne can affect many dozens of courtiers in a single day, it is possible that all courtiers in a court with a magic throne have that blessing each day.

A magical throne is otherwise like any other permanent magic item and can be crafted with additional abilities, be intelligent, and so on.

THRONE OF ARDENT DEFENSE		PRICE 16,000 GP
SLOT none CL 10th		WEIGHT 350 lbs.
AURA moderate abjuration and enchantment		

This heavy throne is made of elaborate wrought iron and decorated with shields bearing the ruler's heraldry. A ruler seated upon a *throne of ardent defense* gains the throne's continuous *heroism* effect. Acknowledging a ruler sitting upon the throne grants the ability to cast *shield other* as a spell-like ability once in the next 24 hours. The spell ends if the subject of the spell moves more than 50 feet from either the caster or the throne.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 8,000 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, heroism, shield other	

THRONE OF FETTERS	S	PRICE 16,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 10th	WEIGHT 500 lbs.
AURA moderate conjuration a	and enchantme	nt

This imposing stone throne is ornamented with heavy chains radiating outward from the central seat. A *throne of fetters* provides a continuous *heroism* effect to the ruler or anyone related to the ruler by blood or marriage seated on it. Acknowledging a ruler (or a member of the ruler's family) seated upon the throne grants a +2 circumstance bonus on Constitution checks and a +1 morale bonus on Fortitude saving throws for 24 hours. A creature can choose to expend this blessing before the duration expires as an immediate action by crying, "My freedom for yours!" Doing so causes spectral fetters to appear around the creature's ankles, reducing its base land speed by 20 feet (to a minimum of 5 feet) and granting a *freedom of movement* effect to the creature seated upon the throne. Both of these effects last for 1 minute.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Craft Wondrous Item, bear's endurance, freedom of movement, heroism

COST 8,000 GP

THRONE OF PLEASING MIEN		PRICE 8,000 GP	
SLOT none	CL 10th	WEIGHT 350 lbs.	
AURA moderate abjuration and enchantment			

This beautiful throne is delicately crafted from pale stone carved

with images of dancing nymphs and frolicking satyrs. A *throne of pleasing mien* imparts its continuous *heroism* effect to anyone seated upon it. A creature that bows or otherwise offers fealty to anyone sitting upon the throne (regardless of whether the person is a rightful ruler or not) gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Charisma-based skill checks and a +1 morale bonus on Will saving throws for 24 hours.

 CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS
 COST 4,000 GP

 Craft Wondrous Item, eagle's splendor, heroism, resistance



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DISCOVER YOUR NOBLE SIDE!

Adventure is not limited to forbidding dungeons and grimy back alleys; sometimes the greatest risks and rewards are found in the gleaming halls of queens and emperors. *Pathfinder Player Companion: Heroes of the High Court* presents everything you need to take your escapades into the royal courts and noble houses of Golarion. Learn how to dress and act in high society, gain access to the echelons of political power, and take advantage of the privileges afforded to those who have mastered the arts of courtly intrigue!

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- ► Archetypes for a variety of classes, such as the court fool bard to the butterfly blade slayer, who performs a noble's dirty work in the shadows.
- ► Equipment and magical courtly regalia suitable for any ruler, including thrones that grant great power to whoever earns the right to sit upon them!
- ► New traits, feats, and spells for characters who wish to mingle with nobility, as well as new tactics that let a participant of a verbal duel cut her opponent down to size.

This Pathfinder Player Companion is intended for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game and the Pathfinder campaign setting, but can easily be incorporated into any fantasy world.







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